

Welcome to the July 2024 Patreon Q&A. I'm recording this later in the month than usual because I had a little break during like the middle of the month, but I am back now and ready to answer all of these questions people sent in. So, let's just get into what everybody asked.

Hi, hope you're doing well. You're doing a great job so far! *Thank you.* I believe you said before that at some point you're going to be releasing a full beta Moment per month. Do you have any idea when that will be?

Right now, I don't have any estimate on when that will happen. There always seems to be something that comes up in a month that keeps things too busy to program even more, or there might not be enough art available to release the entire Moment in a single month, unless we include like just a blank image saying, you know, "Add the proper background here later", or something like that. If people wouldn't mind that, then maybe we'd be able to do it sooner instead of later. But we're working towards being able to program scenes more in a month, but right now there's still some basic features that are being worked on that, you know, take away from time that could be spent programming. And obviously there's a lot of art that's needed for every new Moment that happens. But right now, I don't see it in the immediate future. Maybe at the end of this year, maybe next year.

Okay, I think I've finally got a question that can be answered. Is it possible Tamarack is neurodivergent? A lot of her behavior stuff I find relatable as someone with autism. Apologies if this has already been answered. And thank you for everything you do.

Thank you too. But Tamarack isn't autistic. She definitely has some difficulties in social situations. She hasn't spent a lot of time around other kids her age. She was homeschooled before moving to Golden Grove, and she does outgrow a lot of those difficulties in social situations and not being able to read cues and things like that. So, I'm not sure if she will continue to feel relatable to you in that way. Or the older she gets, the less she will feel like she has that in common. But obviously, if people want to headcanon that she's autistic, that's entirely fine. But it's not something that's going to canonically come up in the game.

Woo! It's question time. I had these questions saved up from June when they came after I already made my comment. Thank you for always doing these. It's

nice seeing the creative process. Enjoy your fun break with your friends this month. *Thank you very much. I did enjoy that.* **1. For the *Our Life* leads. You always pick a defining hair trait. So I was wondering what made you choose them, as in Cove's wavy brows, Tamarack's hair speckles, Qiu's uneven hairline, over any other in the running?**

Well, originally it wasn't my plan to do that. Cove's wavy eyebrow was a suggestion that the original sketch artist gave, where I had like, "This is the outfit I want him to have. I want him to have this hairstyle and he's got a cast and glasses, etc." But they were the one who said, "You know, he could have these bent eyebrows to sort of make him look extra sad all of the time." And I was like, "That's a great idea." And the waviness fits like the beach theme. And then I ended up, you know, liking it so much, came up a lot in the script. But I only decided myself to have that unique hair quality be a theme once *Our Life 2* came along, since I had not originally thought of that for Cove.

1.5 For any other hair traits in the running, which ones were some strong contenders for the leads?

There were obviously none for Cove, but when trying to come up with something for Qiu and Tamarack, my first idea was to give one of them gradient hair like Kyra has in *Our Life 1*. And that was obviously the first thing I came up with, because that gradient was an idea I had, and that was always part of her design. But then I came up with Tamarack's hair sparkles, and I liked that a lot more for her. And then for Qiu, I didn't really want to give them the gradient because I liked the idea that they had was considered more uninteresting, just brown hair and brown eyes, which I think is really nice and very fitting for fall. And I didn't want to try and make it extra fancy by having a gradient, so I had to think of something else. And that's why I decided to go with a more unique shape of the hairline to have some sharpness to their overall face, and I thought that was nice.

2. If you were to put the *Our Life* leads into *XOXO Droplet's* setting, would you see being romantically compatible with who, whether during attendance at SSB or post-graduation?

That's actually a really hard question. If theoretically we're imagining that they live their life there in Southern California going to that private school, I mean, if I really sat down and thought about it, I'm sure I could come up with ways and reasons for why they might end up with various different people from that place. But just sort of thinking about

what I actually know about them and their history, you know, I don't see any of them getting together with someone from *XOXO Droplets*. I guess I will say that they do meet Pran in *Our Life: Now & Forever*, so Tamarack and him getting together might be funny if that worked out. And when he is older, he probably could be someone not entirely incompatible with Tamarack, but he only dates women, so Pran and Qiu wouldn't be a possible relationship. And as for everybody else, I don't know. I'd definitely have to spend a lot more time sort of imagining their existence in an entirely different story.

3. For Project W, I'm not sure what all I can ask since this has been in the early development stages, but I hope you're having fun with the process. With all the changes you've been making, is that character you were attached to able to become a lead in this version you're currently crafting?

And no, they're not a lead. They never were a lead. And originally when I made all the changes, I had cut every character, including that one. But after figuring out things more, I was able to bring that character back in with a lot of significant changes. But the most core parts that I like are still there. So, in that way, the character does still exist, and I'm still very attached to them, but they're not one of the three leads. But, you know, the thing I like most about them is that, in my opinion, they're one of the best antagonists in the story. So, making them one of the three main leads would kind of put a damper on being a very entertaining antagonist.

Hi! The only question I really have is what inspired you to start making games and what led you to making the highly customizable games that the *Our Life* series is? Thank you for the fun games. I hope you are doing well.

Thank you. I hope you're doing well too. And what inspired me to start making games is that there was a point in my life when I was really, really into the *Harvest Moon* series, which is now called *Story of Seasons* in English domains, and I was at the same time really getting into visual novels. And I was on this forum for the Ren'py visual novel engine, and I was playing these games just made by random people online, and they were just these short little games, totally free. And you just downloaded them off this random forum. And I really liked that. And I was on a different *Harvest Moon* forum where I was talking about fake *Harvest Moon* game concepts that would be fun and cool. And I had like these OC characters, and I imagined what the *Harvest Moon* game with them would be like. And then I was like, "Wait a second, I could make a game where people could talk to my *Harvest Moon* characters using this visual novel engine",

because there was no way I was going to make an actual farming game. And so that's what I did. My very first game is just a little visual novel where you go around talking to these *Harvest Moon* inspired characters. And I fell in love with the concept of making games in general, and I've just been doing it ever since. You know, I immediately went into a new project, and then the next and the next and the next. And now, sadly, I don't even play *Harvest Moon* anymore, but I still love making visual novels. And the reason I decided to make a highly customizable game is because I wanted to do the childhood friend trope. That's a big favorite trope of mine, and I wanted it to actually start in childhood, so you got to have those memories with that person later in the future when you have a more serious relationship as adults. You actually got to live those experiences and memories that are referenced later in, rather than starting out as an adult and just being told that there was a prior relationship, or maybe seeing a flashback. And while trying to make that happen, I was constantly unsure of what the relationship in the past should actually be like. I'd be like, "Should these kids immediately have crushes on each other? Or should they just start out as kind of friends? Or maybe they don't even like each other at first." And then I was like, "Well, you know what? I'll just let the player decide what they feel about it, and then, uh, it'll be perfect that way." But then it's like, "Do they have a more jokey dynamic or a more protective dynamic? Or they shy with each other?" And I could never settle on one thing that was perfect to me that would make this great relationship for everyone. And so, I just constantly defaulted to letting the player choose it themselves, and eventually realized what I was doing is just making a fully custom main character. And I really leaned into that, and I liked how it all came together with *Our Life 1*, I thought it was exactly the kind of thing I had imagined, and now it's something I'm sticking with for future games.

Hello. I hope you're all doing well. Thank you. I think I'll just ask a couple of fun questions, but no worries if you can't answer any. 1. What pet do you think kid Qiu and Tam would want if they could have one?

I feel like as kids, both of them would want a puppy though a kitty would be good too. And maybe Tamarack would want a pony.

2. If Qiu and Tam were teachers, what subject do you think they'd they teach using their child selves as points of reference?

Qiu would probably pick being a gym teacher or some kind of coach, or teaching dance, if the school had dance classes for some reason, and Tamarack would probably do Home Ec if she knew what that was as a child. Or maybe she would also just be a gym teacher.

Stay healthy and have a great month!

Thank you again.

Hi! I was wondering if we will be able to become friends with the forest boy?

The answer to that is the Forest boy is this game's equivalent of Jeremy from *Our Life 1*. So, you can become friends with him to basically the same degree you could become friends with Jeremy. Which means to say that he is never going to officially call you his good friends, but you can still have some kind of fondness between each other. And you will be able to invite him to your wedding if you get all of the scenes with him

Hello! I've recently discovered your *Our Life* series and I absolutely love the way you tell your stories. I was wondering where you draw your inspirations from. I enjoyed all the Moments from *Our Life 1*, they're so wholesome and heartwarming, and sometimes I caught myself thinking, "Have these Moments been lived by someone, somewhere?" Of course, not precisely the same way, but maybe some parts, some detail. They truly feel like Moments from someone's childhood. Sorry if that's too personal. I'm not looking for specific details. Just curiosity, good old "I wonder what the author was thinking."

Well, thank you very much for that. And there are a lot of parts from *Our Life 1* and *Our Life 2*, that were inspired by my own childhood and the experiences of people I knew. It's definitely relatable in many ways to myself, and a lot of it is also just me imagining what I would have wanted to happen at that age, and sort of taking things that did happen and twisting it to be more engaging than it actually was. Or doing things that I never got to do myself. But I'm glad it felt like it could have been someone's real childhood.

Hello! Hope you're hydrating well this hot summer, and eating and resting well too. Thank you. Excited I've never done one of these, but I've always tried to listen to them, even if it's not the whole thing. I've always been curious on the thought

process of the Moments. Do you pick more fall related things, or do you have different processes when deciding what the themes of them will be like?

I definitely do try to have things that feel quintessentially fall in a lot of the Moments. But I also think a lot about the level of drama and the way time is divided between the characters, and how many characters are involved. Because I want that to be a good balance between scenes that are entirely fun, Moments that have some more serious Moments, but then are mostly fun, and then Moments that are mostly more dramatic and emotional. And I want to have Moments where it's pretty much just you and the leads, or it's you and the leads and adult characters, or the boys club. And then it's also "Do you spend time all together or are you choosing between different activities?" And so, I definitely am considering a lot of different elements when creating the whole set of Moments, so that hopefully all of the pieces come together to feel unique but cohesive.

Hello, I'm here quite recently, so this is my first Q&A. Either way, that's not important. I'm a big fan of *Our Life 2* and recently played *Our Life 1*. Both games I adore. And oh, the art style of *Our Life 2* has me on a chokehold. Of course, done with the pleasantries. And now on to the questions. Apologies beforehand if they've been answered before, are not well worded, or don't follow the guidelines. Well thank you. I'm glad you liked the art. I think it's very good too. The artists on the team are very talented.

1. Will there be an option for the MC to be absolutely mute, deaf, have allergies, etc. or is that more of a "user came up with that idea and can just imagine it throughout the game" thing?

You will just have to imagine those to be true. You can be lactose intolerant, but you can't be absolutely mute or deaf or officially diagnosed as having depression or autism, things like that. Just because it would be too difficult for us to implement every symptom to every possible degree, for every kind of condition someone might have. And so, we generally just leave it up for people to headcanon for themselves.

2. Per each Step, how many Moments will there be? Will the amount be different each step, including both DLC and base game Moments?

There are ten Moments per Steps in Step One, Two and Three. And then Step Four is just an Epilogue. So, it's just one long series of scenes that's not broken up into

Moments. And there's always five free Moments and then five extra Moments you get in the DLC for Steps One through Three. It's just like how it was in *Our Life 1*, basically.

3. Can the user change the MC's preferences during newer steps like in Step One? MC could choose their favorite color and can that color be changed in the following Steps? Or as I said in the first question, will it be a "user came up with the idea and can just imagine it throughout the game" thing?

You will be able to change your preferences at the start of each Step. You can change your favorite color; you can change your attitude towards people. Those aren't set in stone forever.

4. I've not dug into the *Our Life 2* side of Patreon as much as I'd like, but from the Step Two preview, I suppose Step Two in general would be a bit more serious? As in going through identity crises with Qiu, or with feeling out of place with Tamarack?

Yes, there is a lot of angst going on in the teenage years. It's not all sad. There's definitely still fun times, but the current preview does show that it is got some more serious stuff going on, and the two leads aren't getting along in that point in time, which adds even more to the drama.

5. A bit on the character side of the questions, what would the allies go to activity be to blow off some steam or stop their sadness? Maybe go into the forest, take a swim, hit something, eat a lot of chocolate and ice cream?

I can only really answer for Step One, and Qiu would want to go on a bike ride or meet with friends, and Tamarack would like to go into the forest and maybe hit her pillow. She also might swing or spin really fast in the tire swing in her backyard.

6. Which LIs are dog, cat, reptile kind of people? Or what would their favorites animal/pets be?

Cove likes fish. Derek would like dogs, but probably won't actually own one unless he's with a partner who has one or wants to get one with him. Baxter is, I guess he would go for a cat if he had to pick something, but he's not super into the idea of having pets. I mentioned before that as kids, Tamarack and Qiu would both be into dogs and cats.

7. Would any of the LIs like to dye their hair? If so, which color and when?

The only one who would want to dye the hair is Baxter, who dyes it black.

Thank you and your team for all your hard work. *Thank you too!* My question is, will it be stated or implied that the MC and LIs have a sexual relationship in the game?

I'm not sure which game you mean. I'm guessing *Our Life 2*. And the answer is no, neither of the *Our Life* games do anything to actively imply that something sexual happens. You can potentially headcanon that is happening off screen, but there's not any like fade-to-black moments, or actually explicit content in *Our Life 2* or *Our Life 1*. And if you mean a different game, then most of the other games don't have that either.

Are the LIs morning or night people?

Cove and Derek are morning people. Baxter is a night guy. And as kids, Tamarack and Qiu are not night or morning people. They don't like getting up in the morning, but they are little kids and cannot stay up that late.

You teased us with the “Moving Out” Moment card last month. Tam isn't actually moving in Step Two, is she? My adorable little gay character would hate that.

No, she's not going to move. She's going to be there for the whole game. That Moment is about the main character, but it used Tamarack's umbrella because that umbrella appears in that Moment because it's raining, but it was not meant to imply that Tamarack is the one moving away. It's more just about how people have moved already, and I did decide to rename that Moment because of the confusion.

Hello, hope you are doing well! *Thank you.* I'm really curious about the *Our Life* games. What was the decisions to have the games focused on a certain season? Summer for *Our Life 1* and fall for *Our Life 2*?

Well, I really wanted to have a strong aesthetic, essentially. I didn't want it to just be a vague time and place. I wanted it to feel very specific and have certain consistent iconography, and setting it in a single season that I could really go hard in and make that kind of the theme of the events and all of the designs was a very easy way to do that. And it also helped that it meant we didn't have to completely redo all of the art and outfits for different seasons for that many different time periods. And I had hoped that after *Our Life 1*, I would be able to make a second entry into the series, and giving them different seasons would make the two games very clearly distinct. So that was another

idea I had in mind, that was, “If there are going to be more than one *Our Life* game, then I should do something that makes them stand out from each other.” So really, it was just the only thing that I felt would make sense and work for what we were doing here.

Hello! I just wanted to say I really enjoy your games and absolutely fell in love with the Baumann family. *Thank you.* Is there anything you can tell us about Tamarack's dynamic with her parents? I know they weren't present much in her life, but did she get along well with them when they were together? Does she hold any resentment towards them for leaving her with her grandparents? And if so, will we ever see her hint at it to her parents?

Well, right now I can only talk about Step One, and in Step One, she hasn't been away from her parents for that long. And while she is having fun staying with her grandparents, she does actually have some feelings about the situation that come up in certain scenes. And later in the game, those feelings will stay, but they can also change and grow and lessen and come back. So, I can't say specifically how it will all work out, but her relationship with her parents is something that's very relevant to her overall story.

Hey! I was interested to know if there will be any sort of search for our MC's donor or maybe doing a DNA test if they completely no contact. My mom was adopted, and though the experience is different, I know she had a lot of questions about culture and health, even though she would never consider her birth parents her mom/dad. I'm sure some donor kids have similar questions. Just curious if this aspect would get a bit of attention or not.

No, you're never going to be able to learn anything specific about your dad on screen, because the point of him being an off-screen donor is so that the game doesn't become even more complicated with a second, entirely customizable parent. If, you know, you did get to learn what he was like, it would just be very difficult to take into consideration everything that the players potentially need that parent to be to make sense for the MC that they've created. So, we're just going to have to leave that up to headcanons, unfortunately.

Hi! I hope you have a great month. *Thank you.* I notice you use a lot of neat symbolism for storytelling and character development in your games. It's fun trying to interpret the OL2 character designs, Qiu's notebook and Tamarack's

bag, and the beta Moments for that sort of thing as they develop. But talking about that would spoil things. So, are there any bits of symbolism in your other games that you are especially proud of? Things that players might not have picked up on, either in character designs or in the stories themselves? Hopefully that makes sense. Thanks!

Well thank you. I'm glad you liked that. I think a very obvious one that I still thought was fun is Cove's Scar. You know, he starts out as a kid with this big neon cast, and that's sort of the start of when sort of this painful thing he's going through has happened. And then in Step Two, the big cast is gone, but you can still see a large scar left behind. And then Step Three, the scar is smaller, and Step Four is even smaller as, you know, the pain of what he has gone through becomes less of a major part of who he is. And then another little thing is Derek in Step Two. He's got that sports jersey that's pretty big on him. It's got really baggy sleeves and it goes down really long on his legs, and obviously it makes him seem like small and that this sporty jockey idea he has of himself doesn't really fit. And so, I think that is actually quite fitting for Derek, considering his story. And then there's one more thing that I'll mention that is not from *Our Life*, it's from an older game. And if I say too much, it's actually a very big spoiler, but there's a character with a part of their design that stands out a lot compared to the rest of the game's look. And it seems almost, you might say, unnatural to have that kind of look for that part of themselves. And then if you play the game, you find out, "Oh, there perhaps is a reason why that seems somewhat out of place."

How huggable are the *Our Life 1* and *2* LIs, and how willing are they to be hugged?

Well, I'd say all of them are huggable. *Our Life 2* specifically mentioned Tamarack as being a good, huggable person, but all of them are. And how willing they are to be hugged would depend on their age and the relationship they have with the MC, so it depends a lot. They could range anywhere from absolutely not to, yeah, definitely all the time.

This might be a silly question, but would Qiu be fine with dating a cisgender guy or girl, but they are demi sexual?

Yeah, that would be fine. She is willing to date people of all different types of genders, and being demi sexual wouldn't be a problem at all.

Hi! I really adore your work. *Thank you.* I don't know if this has been answered before, but can I ask about Liz's sexuality? I was writing a fanfic and realized that I didn't really know anything about Liz's preferences.

Liz is a straight lady. I thought it might be a little funny if she has two non-straight moms, but then she's just a straight girl. But Liz is never that fussed about finding a partner. She definitely puts friendships and family relationships high up on her list of importance. She's not someone who thinks only romantic relationships are worth pursuing. If she was going to date a guy, she'd probably want him to be someone that she could take seriously and even consider like a rival. She wouldn't want someone like Cove, who's very soft and sensitive, or even someone like Derek, who's very self-sacrificing and willing to give the other person what they want. But she also wouldn't like Baxter because he's too eccentric and flirtatious, so she doesn't take him very seriously.

Hi, happy July and happy Disability Pride month! *Happy July to you too.* I have two main questions. 1. Would there ever be an option to add more accents for names? For example, my MC right now is Chinese and he calls his mom *māma*, but I can't put that into the name because it always shortens to *mma*, since it doesn't recognize that.

If you're not looking at the text transcript, there is an accent over one of the A's in “*māma*”. And the font we use is just a free to use font, we didn't create it ourselves, and it doesn't have accent letters. So, if you add in an accent letter, it makes the letter not appear. And we might be able to find a different font to use that fits the game style and does have accent letters. Unfortunately, there are a lot of fonts that don't include those, and we're not able to make a completely custom font ourselves, but potentially we will be able to do something about that.

2. What was the creative process like for making each character? Did you have an idea of what they'd be like at the start, or did they slowly come together over time?

All the characters come together slowly. The more important of a character they are in a story, the longer they take to sort of fully come together, and the less of a role they have, then the less time I sort of spend fleshing out details about them. I'm not really the kind of person who comes up with tons of information that never is relevant in the story. I usually focus in on what is going to impact them, even if it is like a subconscious thing that doesn't technically get mentioned in the script, but does impact how they act. I do

think about that, but I usually won't come up with, you know, a favorite color if that character is never going to talk about a favorite color.

Hello. Thank you for answering. 1. Will there be more hair options added? Specifically to the back.

Yes, there will be. There's going to be quite a lot more added once we start implementing player custom requests that Kickstarter backers sent in, and then we'll probably add in a few more of our own design.

2. What role will the sensitivity people play? Is it for Qiu, Tamarack, or more so MC?

The sensitivity readers are giving feedback on the story as a whole, all three of the major characters, and the side characters as well. So, it really could apply to anything that they think they want to comment on, really.

3. Will the others remember our negative thoughts on them, lack of including them, and will they be able to bring it up later?

Yes, if you have some difficult times with characters in the past, they might end up bringing that up later. I can't specifically say "This scene in Step One will be mentioned again in this scene in Step Three", because I haven't written anything but Step One. But your prior interactions do still matter in later Steps of the game.

4. why must you deny Qiu the pleasure that is cheese? They deserve one mozzarella stick.

Well, I'm glad that you feel for them! I don't know, I just thought it was fitting for their character. I'm also lactose intolerant, so I can relate to what that's like. And now I can write a character who is going through it as well.

5. What's your favorite summer activity?

Honestly, I don't really know. I like writing stories that are very seasonally themed, but my life is not very seasonally themed. I just do whatever in really any season. And you know, really, only winter with snow is the only time the weather might actually change things. But summer there's nothing I do that I wouldn't really do in spring or even fall. I guess summer is the best time of year to enjoy, like cold drinks and, like, sit in front of a fan. That's kind of nice. And it's- I like blue sky, so going outside and seeing clear blue

skies is really nice, though I hate the heat, so I don't actually go out that much when it's hot. I'd rather stay indoors.

Hi hi! I was wondering if *Our Life 2* will continue to keep the same system for flagging your mic as non-verbal, or if that will be something you'll be able to choose manually in future updates. I really adore all the non-verbal options you get in the game. It's very important to me, so thank you very much and thanks again for taking the time to answer our questions.

You're welcome. And right now, I imagine it will continue to work the way that it has. Where in the Prologue of Step One keeps track of how often you choose non-verbal options, and then if you do it a lot, you're either considered, you know, a silent protagonist, or someone who's not very talkative, or someone who always tends to talk, and then that will apply to the rest of the events in Step One. And as I'm working on the Prologue of Step Two, I don't really imagine that you'll just choose if you're someone who speaks a lot or not, and instead the game will bring the points back to zero, and then you will spend the Prologue making the choices you want, and that will be what decides if the game considers you talkative or not. I just think that's more fun than having a ton of choices where you just choose what you're like instead of it being something the game picks up on based on the normal choices you make.

How was Cliff, a recent divorcee and young single father able to afford a beachfront property in SoCal? Fully furnished too? This haunts me. Please answer.

Well, some of that furniture did come from the prior home they had together, and some of that furniture was given to them by Kyra's family and things like that. But Cliff was able to make money doing some like shady gambling stuff when he was younger, and then he was able to put that into a legitimate business, and the business was going well even when he was at that younger age. And so that's how he was able to afford this kind of life.

Hi, GB! I hope you're having an awesome day. *Thank you.* I just have some silly questions. 1. If *Our Life 1* MC got married to Baxter or Derek, and Cove was MC's best friend, would he cry during their wedding just because he's emotional his best friend is getting married?

Yes, I imagine he would. He would cry during the ceremony, you know, very moved at how their life has reached this point. Now they're getting married and going on to this next step, and obviously it'd be happy tears, but it would still be very emotional.

2. What are Dorothea's and Ernst's real hair colors or are these their real ones?

And they are both blondes. Dorothea used to have a brighter blonde, and now it's really faded now that she's older. And Ernst used to be a platinum blonde like his son, but now his hair is mostly gray and silver.

3. This might be way too early in development or you can't answer it right now, so feel free to skip it, but would Project W have another iconic green haired character? lol

None of the characters have designs right now at all, but somebody's got to have green hair. There will be unnatural hair colors. And funnily, I'm considering a design choice that would have a lot of green involved. If I do go with that, but we will see you.

This has probably been answered before, but will we ever find out more about our house in *Our Life 2*? Like the previous tenants/owners, or the general history of the house? It's something I'm very curious about, but understand it's not necessarily important to the story, so it makes sense if it's not something that comes up.

Right now, I'm not planning on any specific details for the house's history or the prior owners, but it's possible my mind will change somewhere in the development. But for now, you can assume that probably not.

I don't know if this has been asked, but does Opal and the MC have any extended family? I know it's probably unlikely we will see them, but I'm really curious if Opal's parents are around, and if she has/had a good relationship with them, and if there are/were any siblings.

You don't get to meet or even talk to extended family in the game for the same reason that you can't meet your dad or learn anything about him: because I don't want to get in the way of people coming up with their own family ideas, but we also can't make enough alterations for the family to be exactly what everybody imagines. So, I don't think the game will ever explicitly tell you that Opal has no siblings, or that Opal's parents have passed on, or that they are alive, or that she has a good relationship with them or not.

It'll just be stuff that you feel in yourself between the periods of times that don't appear on screen, like, you know, they might call during that in between section of the Steps, or maybe they are dead. It's up to you.

Will there be more saved files? It looks like/I'm assuming there will be around the same amount that *Our Life 1* has, but since it looks like the game will measure out to be much longer than *Our Life 1*, I'm wondering about how many save files there will be, as I often end up saving to keep alternate choices easily accessible at times.

There will not be more save files. There are 240 save files with the four slots per page, and then 15 pages in a tab, and then four different tabs, with 15 pages each. So that's 240 save slots. And I'm afraid that is just gonna have to be as much as the game has. And if you use all 240 save files, I'm impressed.

Also, about how long is the entire game plan to be with DLC and all? With how Step One is going, is there an idea of what the entire word count might be/an estimated range of hours of gameplay to complete?

I can never give hourly estimates because it depends so much on the choices you make, and if you do all of the Moments or none of the Moments, and if you have a close relationship with them or you're just neighbors with them. So, it vastly depends on the player how long the game is, because also it depends on how quickly you make choices. If you're someone who does it fast, or someone who takes a long time to think about it. But yeah, so I can't give an estimate on that. As for word count, Step One is 465,000 words approximately. So, if we assume the other Steps are a similar length, then it's going to be well over a million words. And with Step Four and the wedding DLC, it might end up pushing 2 million words. So, that's gonna be about how long it is. Of course, the reason it's that long is because there's so many little alterations. It's not going to be almost 2 million words from start to end. You'll probably only get maybe a third of those words in a single playthrough.

When moving from *Our Life 1* to 2, was there anything you set out and decided for sure you weren't going to do/include again?

Yes. I definitely wasn't going to include the warm/cold and sporty/studious feature that was in *Our Life 1*. You know, I think it was interesting to try, but it's definitely not something that I ended up loving for how your dynamic ends up being unique with

Cove. And I definitely wanted something different for *Our Life 2*, which is why there is the dynamic system, where you just have an entirely custom relationship with the leads, and it's about how they are with you specifically, rather than their general personality. I also decided I didn't want to have another story about a single dad after everything that happened with Cliff, and so that's why Opal is a single mom instead. And before I started making *Our Life 2*, I had told myself I wasn't going to include any kind of body of water because *Our Life 1* was set on the beach. And then before that I had a game called *Lake of Voices*, which was set entirely on a lake. And so, I was like, "No more bodies of water!" But if you played the game, you can see that there is one location that does have a little stream, because I couldn't help it. So, that was kind of a failure.

Also, it might be too early to tell, but will Pran get a later Moment similar to Shiloh with "Serendipity"?

Yes, Pran will get more time later. You'll get to continue to see him around every so often.

At some point in their marriage, did Kyra actually leave Cliff stranded without a ride?

No, not in their marriage. But I imagine that probably happened while they were dating, or even before they were officially together. And it was probably like something minor and very jokey. Not like seriously abandoning him, but probably like forcing him to walk somewhere for like 20 minutes or something, instead of getting a ride back.

Hi! I hope you're all right and kicking. Thank you. As per usual, thanks for indulging us with these. So, two-ish (sort of two and a half?) questions this month for me, though obviously it's not as if you had to answer any. 1. In the previous Q&A, you explained how would Ren feel and act if the MC was to take her place as Qiu's best friend from Step Two onward. Since I will have Qiu set as "Best Friend" for my playthrough, I assume it will be the case for that playthrough. But would her feelings be different if she was as close with MC as the game allows, and if MC always did their best for her to feel included? Also, will acting that way be an option in game per se? Or would that be up to headcanon more than anything, considering she's an important but still side character?

It's nice of you to want to include Ren and make her feel welcome, but I'm afraid I don't think it would help very much, because she would still be sad that her best friend or

former best friend that she's known since she was a toddler, basically is kind of moving on and getting new friends that are now more important than she is. And the MC being nice about it couldn't fix that, though she would still appreciate having another friend. And yes, you will be able to be friendly towards Ren. I'm going to make that as possible as I can, but obviously she will remain only a side character and it won't get to rival the types of relationships you have with Qiu and Tamarack.

A very random one now. In *Our Life 1*, if a Baxter romancing MC (once in a relationship post Step Four) listens to - or plays, if they can play instruments - the song they and Baxter danced to during Step Two because it's one of MC's most cherished memories, would Baxter recognize the song if he happens to overhear? And how would he feel about that in general?

Baxter would be able to recognize it. He's got a good memory, and especially for remembering songs that he's danced to. And so, he definitely would remember that it was from that Moment when they first met. As for how he'd feel, he'd probably be happy, but also potentially a little bashful about it. He'd probably be wondering, "Do they know what that song is? Is it a coincidence? Surely they also remember, and I'm just second guessing myself." And you know, if the MC did go over and talk to him about it, he would be very happy that they too remembered.

I don't know if this question is completely forbidden, and I hope not. Could we know what year Qiu, Tamarack, and MC meet? I would like to join *Our Life 1* and *Our Life 2*, but I don't know how old Cove and the rest would be, taking into account that Baxter and Renee appear two years older than the rest of them.

Renee is two years older, but Baxter is three years older. And *Our Life 2* takes place in 2010. And Cove would either be 12, or he could have just turned 13 himself because Baxter turns 13 in May, and Cove turns 13 in November.

I understand that Cove is destined with *Our Life 1* MC, in many of the universes, I think I read it on his wiki or other platform. Would it be possible for *Our Life 2*'s MC to count as his possible romance, or that has nothing to do with it?

Cove would not romance the *Our Life 2* MC in any canon way. I mean, technically you can headcanon if you want to, but I personally wouldn't say that Cove would ever get together with the *Our Life 2* MC. He probably wouldn't get together with anyone if he's not with the *Our Life 1* MC, because Cove isn't really that prone to romantic

relationships, and he kind of needs someone he's known basically his whole life in order for him to end up feeling that strongly about it.

*And there was another part of the question that I'm not entirely sure I'm understanding it right, but I think you're asking: **Is there any aspect of the MCs that the characters don't like? It can be answered either with the love encounters or the love interests of *Our Life 1* or *Our Life 2*.***

And if that is what you mean, then there can be things that the leads don't like about the main character, but it really depends on the choices you make and how you treat them, and the sort of habits that you have that might potentially bother them. So, it is possible, but there's not one thing that they all always dislike about the main character.

Maybe I couldn't have known your work much before, but believe me, I love how various styles of art are worked on, and how everyone in general strives to provide wonderful work. I'm eager to see how *Our Life 2* turns out, although I hope you don't get too careless to finish the project soon. We love you so much! Well, thank you very much. I appreciate the support.

Hello, thank you so much for making such a great game! I've had such a fun time playing it so far and can't wait to see what's next. I hope you and your team get a restful break as well. *Thank you very much.* And my questions would be: 1. What would the *Our Life 2* character's signature scents be? We already know that Tamarack smells like her granny's perfume at times, in Step One at least, but what about Qiu and the boys club?

Tamarack, Qiu, and Ren probably all smell a bit like the outdoors, like woodsy and leafy and even kind of dirty. And Baxter probably has more of a florally, more pristine kind of scent, even at that age. But none of them are wearing anything that's actually scented. It would just be like the soaps and shampoos that they use, which then might be covered up by how much they're running around outside and jumping into leaf piles and stuff.

And the second question is about the kinds of pets they have, which I answered before.

3. OL2 love interests' favorite ice cream flavors?

Qiu would like chocolate, probably with chocolate chips or brownies in it. Or like a fudge swirl, and maybe like whipped cream on top. Tamarack would probably like birthday cake ice cream, or cheesecake ice cream, with lots of candies and sprinkles and all sorts of stuff mixed in. Or like a cake batter kind of ice cream, if they have that something that's like another kind of dessert in ice cream form. And of course, this would be for Step One. I'm not entirely sure what their favorites would be in later steps.

Hello! I hope you and the team are doing well, and thank you for all of your hard work so far. I can't wait to see what you all do next. *Thank you very much.* My question is in relation to *Our Life 1*. You've told us how the LIs would react if the MC was a singer, but what if the MC was an actor?

I'd say they'd probably react in the exact same way. If the MC was like a famous actor, it would be very similar to being a famous singer, where they would be able to watch them on TV or avoid watching them if it made them nervous, and where they like, go out and support them like a fan, or they treat it like a normal career, depending on which guy you're talking about. I imagine any kind of celebrity status would generally get the same kind of reaction that I mentioned before about how they are with the famous singer MC.

This next question is related more to Baxter. If MC becomes popular/famous, we know he wouldn't go around telling everyone that information, but what would happen if a couple he was working with offhandedly mention that they're fans of the MC's work, would he find it funny? Not in a bad way, of course, more like a "Oh, you have no idea what I know" way. Would he tell the MC if he heard that?

He probably would do, like, a little snort laugh and then, like, apologize and say "No, never mind. Go on with what you were saying." And he wouldn't say anything more about it. But when he got home, he would bring it up to the MC about how "Isn't that nice that my clients are your fans" and you know, "If you want to give them a wedding gift, maybe you could give them your autograph or something." And you know, obviously if the MC wanted to meet them or actually do something nice for their wedding, he would be happy for them to do that, but he wouldn't try to like force them to get involved with this because, you know, that's his job and they don't need to know what his personal life is like or who his connections are.

I think that's it for my questions. As always, feel free to skip any of them. Thank you again for making such impactful games, and thank you and the team for really bringing everything to life!

Thank you too!

1. It's Cali - do the *Our Life 1* love interests have any thoughts on cannabis use and/or MC using?

I imagine that they're all pretty fine with it. They don't think of it as like a shocking thing. It's probably something they're quite used to. I feel like Cove would probably never use it for real. Maybe the most an MC could do is get them to like, inhale it one time in his whole life. I think Baxter and Derek probably tried it in their teenage or young adult years. I don't really imagine either of them doing it later into adulthood, though. And if the MC didn't - or if the MC *did* it - they wouldn't be shocked or horrified. But they probably wouldn't want the MC to smoke in the house. Probably, like do it in the backyard. That's assuming the MC either has a house with them or was going over to visit them at their house. If it was the MC's own house, then obviously they wouldn't tell them what to do.

2. What kinds of things do Baxter and Qiu get up to when they hang out one on one in *Our Life 2* Step One, like in the "Fancy" Moment, for example?

The two of them often just go around town, they might play video games, they might watch TV shows, and they probably practice dancing, either showing each other different moves or being the other person's partner while they practice their own dancing. And I'm sure they talk a lot and maybe walk around, or slowly ride bikes. Baxter doesn't do too many super childish things, like he's not going to play with action figures or something. And Qiu is able to have a good time with someone who is less energetic and prone to playing like little games like hide and seek or whatever.

3. Does "in for a penny, in for a pound" mean something more to Baxter, other than being a phrase that keeps coming to mind?

When he uses it in Step Three, it is pretty flippant, but once the MC comes back into his life, and he starts deciding to be a part of their life as well, he is more aware of what he's saying and kind of what it means. And so, it is more impactful than it was when he first said it years ago.

4. Does Liz actually mean anything to Shiloh? Does she actually understand him, or will she always be a little naive?

And I do think Liz is a bit naive when it comes to Shiloh, but after Step Three, she does sort of accept the fact that she probably doesn't fully understand him, but she still cares about him regardless. And as for whether or not Shiloh actually cares about her, I'm afraid that's left up to interpretation. Shiloh can be many potential people, and some of them are worse than others, which is why there's four different versions of him that can appear at the wedding, and more versions that choose not to go at all.

Hello! I woke up thanks to my baby (I'm 33 weeks pregnant, almost there) and I needed to do something to fall back asleep. So here we are! *Well that's amazing! Congratulations.* 1. When you started working on *Our Life 2*, did you intentionally want a different art style or were artists from *Our Life 1* not available? The art looks awesome, I was just curious.

I did want a different art style. *Our Life 1*'s artists were chosen specifically because they had a very vibrant and shiny look that I felt fit the summer vibe. And *Our Life 2*'s artists were chosen because they have a softer, more painterly style that I think fit better for the autumn setting in that game.

2. In *Our Life 1*, the choices had different colors on them to help players understand the tone, if I'm remembering correctly. What did each color represent in *Our Life 1*? And will there be a similar feature in *Our Life 2*? Hopefully I can fall back asleep now.

I hope you did fall asleep! And for the question, those colors did mean something. It was about like the tone and emotion you were going for. But I tell people like, I'm incapable of writing *Our Life 1* now, even if I wanted to. And that is true because I don't even remember what they were. Ah man, like, I know I can't, I can't even guess. I'd have to go and read like the tutorial, because I think it does mention vaguely in there what the colors mean, but I do not even remember what they were myself at this point. I've forgotten so much about how *Our Life 1* worked in terms of script style. But yeah, so those were there to kind of help people get a vibe of what the choice was like before they picked it. And *Our Life 2* doesn't have that kind of color thing. Instead, more of the choices just include an explanation on the emotion, whether that be like "You said so annoyedly" or "You said with a sigh". And if it doesn't include that sort of attached emotion, then it's usually pretty obvious what the emotion is like. They'll be saying, like,

“I love that”, so it won't be like, “‘I love that you,’ said happily”, because you could probably guess that that is a positive response without the extra description.

I've seen other Patreon members call you a “Kab” sometimes, and I've always wondered where that came from. I remember that your name is Katelyn, but what's the ‘b’ in Kab for?

That is true, my name is Katelyn, and sometimes people call me Kab. And that is a very old nickname. For some reason, people were asking if I had ever had other usernames besides going by GB Lady or GB patch, and I remembered Kab as an old name I used to use online, and so I kind of have brought it back in some Discords. But that name came from when I was a young child, back in the day when video games only had at most three save files. And I grew up in a family of five, and so there was not enough save files for all of us children, which meant some of us had to share save files. And I thought I was being very smart because I willingly decided to share a file, and so I got to pick who I was sharing with first, and I chose to share a file with my younger brother because he was the youngest of all of us, and he was too young at that point to really even do anything with a video game. He'd just like wander around. And that meant I got to make all the actual progress. And my little brother is named Benjamin. And so, our save files were K-A-B, for “Katelyn and Ben”, shortened to Kab. And because he never even used the files, really, I became attached to that name, Kab, and I associated it more with myself than as a name for me and my brother. And so, when I started going online, I started using that as a username. And now I still remember it fondly to this day. And so that is where the nickname came from.

Hi, I love your games. Thank you for making them! *Thank you for playing.* Currently, do you have a favorite character from the *Our Life* franchise? And who was/is the most fun to write dialogue for?

My favorites are the characters who are the most important. So, the leads are my favorite characters, and then the side characters who have the most screen time. Those are the ones that are my favorite side characters and I'm pretty good at creating the characters I like most as the ones that get the most screen time. I can't really think of an instance where a very minor character ended up being someone I really loved. It's always the ones who get the most spotlights that are my favorites. However, in terms of writing, I really enjoy writing the dialogue for Jeremy and Shiloh, and all of the *XOXO Droplets* cameos, because those are main characters from a different game of mine,

and so I'm also very attached to them, and they're always really funny in how they interact with people.

Even though I've already paid tons of money in the Patreon and currently play the betas, will I still have to pay more money for the official DLCs? By the way, I'm not complaining or anything. I'd buy everything on all your games ten times over!

Well, I appreciate the support! Unfortunately, Patreon can't be used like a storefront. Paying money here can't automatically get you the DLCs because Steam would have a big problem with that. The main thing you're getting are previews and access to the betas, being able to play the game before it actually launches. So, if you were to stop using the Patreon today, then when the DLCs come out, you would still have to buy them even though you supported the game already.

Hope your team is taking care of themselves, including you. Thank you. Silly question, but since "Sleepover Part 2" will be out this month, do Qiu and Tam have a favorite movie night movie they like to watch with their friends? Stay safe!

Thank you. I imagine there's multiple movies they'd be happy to watch. Tamarack would probably like a Barbie movie or Scooby-Doo movie or Disney movies. But I don't like Disney as a company. And Qiu would probably watch the Bionicle movie or *How to Train Your Dragon*, if that, I think that was probably out. Something like that, that's like got cool robots or monsters in it.

Are you guys going to do the voiced names again for this game? If so, how would that work?

Yes, *Our Life 2* will have voiced names. It was a reward for joining the Kickstarter, and people have already submitted the names, and we're in the process of collecting them. The way it's going to work is that we're going to hire eight voice actors, four for Qiu, four for Tamarack, for each of the four Steps. And all eight of those voice actors will say the name once or twice, and then that name will be played at appropriate Moments in the script. So that's going to be a lot of voice name files! Eight for every single name, or even potentially 16 recordings for every single name. So, we'll see how big that ends up making the voiced name DLC.

Hello, I hope you're having a lovely summer and, by the time you answer this, enjoyed your vacation. Thank you! I did have a good vacation. I have a question

about some of the behind-the-scenes: How does planning character designs work with the artist? Do you provide them a description or sketch, or do you give the artist more design freedom?

So, it's usually not 100% set in stone. What I'll do is I'll create these little design bio sheets where it lists, you know, like: "their eyes are shaped like this", "their eye color is this shade", "their eyebrows are thick or bushy or thin". And then their outfit, "they've got, like, this kind of outfit that's, like, tucked in or buttoned or unzipped". And I'll decide if it has, like a pattern or not, but usually, at least with the clothes I usually give like some freedom for the exact shade of color on the different pieces or the exact pattern. I might just say like it has stripes and they decide exactly how thick those stripes are. But usually with things like the skin tone and the hair color and the hair style and the face shape and all of those details, those are usually very specific, and there's no flexibility with that. But the clothes are a little less "It must be this exact shade of green" or whatever. So, I'll usually include, like various reference pictures of outfits or single clothing pieces that are what I have in mind, and they can copy the references or make it something a bit different from the reference, but still the general idea. And so that's ultimately how it ends up coming together.

Also, because it's summer and I'm missing Cove: We all know Cove loves the beach, but would he want to visit other beaches (East coast, Gulf of Mexico, and even other countries) or is he happy with his familiar California beaches?

Cove is definitely happy with his California beaches, but for, you know, on vacation or something, he would be excited to go see a new beach. And if the MC needed to move somewhere else for work or whatever, he'd go with them if they were in a relationship. And if there was a new beach there, he'd come to grow attached to that beach as well.

Hi! I hope you have an amazing day. *Thank you.* I have a few questions about this amazing game. Sorry if they've been asked before. You don't have to answer any.

1. How would Tamarack and Qiu react to the MC having a small crush on Renee or Baxter? Would they find it weird?

In Step One, they'd both think it's like pretty, like amusing and kind of juicy. Like, "Oh, first name has a crush on Renee or Baxter." Tamarack would be more like cutesy about the romantic prospects, and Qiu would be more teasing about it, especially because those are their friends. And, so it would seem extra funny to them that someone liked them romantically. So, they'd overall be having a fun time with that bit of information.

2. If the MC had an accent of any sort, would they find it funny or intriguing or something else?

Tamarack would definitely be intrigued. At first, she'd asked why you were speaking like that, where you were from, and would be very excited to hear any information about it, and she'd probably enjoy hearing the MC pronounce things in new ways that she hadn't heard before. Qiu would be much more polite and wouldn't comment on it. Possibly not ever. Maybe if there seemed like a good Moment, they might ask where they're from and sort of guess that their accent is also from that place. But they wouldn't really be badgering you about it like Tamarack would.

3. Do you think that MC would be able to have time to get to know Baxter or Renee in any of the steps, like to the point where they may actually consider MC a friend?

Baxter Step One through Three is not someone you can, like, really have any kind of genuine friendship with. He's not even in Step Three. Baxter Step One and Two cannot be like a genuine friend. Renee can kind of like you, think you're pretty cool in Step One. In Step Two, you can be friends. You're not going to be her best friend, but she can think of you as a friend. And then in Step Three, you can definitely be good friends.

Thank you so much. I love your games. They bring me a lot of comfort. Keep up the good work.

Thank you very much!

Hello, I hope you and your team are doing well this month. *Thank you.* I have two questions. I know that Qiu's arc in Step One is that they are over accommodating, going more than above and beyond for other people. But what made Qiu become this way exactly?

Well, it has a lot to do with being one of the very few non-white kids in this small Oregon town. Qiu didn't have anyone else who was Chinese to grow up with. And they have a Chinese name, and most of the kids there have never heard of it and don't even know how to spell it or pronounce it. And that made Qiu stand out or be excluded when they were even younger. And so, they kind of took it upon themselves to be someone acceptable who both won't be rejected by others, but helps others not feel like they are rejected. They want things to be fun and for everyone to be happy. They understand

what it's like to feel sad basically all the time. And they don't want that. They want to have a good life, and they want to belong here in the place where they were born and have always lived, and are trying to make that happen.

My second question is about Step Two. You can ignore it if you can't answer, but does Qiu resent the fact that they live in a small town? Would they prefer to live in a city or just a larger town?

In Step One, they don't resent it at all. Golden Grove is all they know, and they don't really think things will be better somewhere else. But they obviously don't know that much about the world. They can't imagine what life will be like in, you know, some other part of the country or in some other country. But as a ten-year-old, they're like, "Yeah, I mean, how different could it be? I'm sure it's not really worth moving and losing everything I have here to go somewhere else". Because Qiu at this point is quite happy with their life. They feel like they've really, you know, made themselves a local and that they are an important part of this town, and that the town is important to them. When they get older, especially in Step Two, I imagine that they don't feel as comfortable in this small town as they were as a child.

Hi, I hope you were having a great hot summer. *Thank you.* I haven't thought about such important questions this month, but I don't want to miss the opportunity either. As always, feel free to answer whatever you like. 1. Have you thought about what kind of person Renee is attracted to as a partner in terms of personality, appearance, gender, etc.?

No, I haven't. When I was first conceptualizing the game, Renee, I always had in my mind, as someone who could be a side character romance option, which means she would have to like people of all personalities and all genders. But now that it's come to a point where we won't be able to give her a DLC, I haven't started coming up with a more specific type of person she likes. I might still leave her as someone who could be with anyone, so that players can at least headcanon that their MC gets together with Renee.

2. I understand that in stage one, we spend the same amount of time with both the LIs to get to know them, but from stage two, will we have the choice of who we want to spend more time with exclusively, or will we have Moments more focused on one love interest?

I can't give any real specifics because Step Two isn't written, but I imagine it will stay pretty similar to Step One, where they're- the two leads are in every single Moment, but sometimes you have to spend time with one, and you spend time with the other later. Or sometimes you choose between spending time with one character or spending time with the other. And I think possibly in Step Two, rather than the characters doing completely different things, it might be there's one activity to do, and you just get to choose if you invite one or both of them to this, whatever activity is happening. But there won't be any Moments that are only for one of the leads.

3. Do Qiu and Tamarack have a favorite flower? Which would it be?

I have not chosen a favorite flower for either of them. Maybe I will someday, but right now that's not really a part of their themes or symbolism. So, they don't have favorite flowers.

In the special clothing options, what cultures are represented, and will there be suggestions taken to represent more cultures/cultural heritages?

Well, we are going to include that information in the game later on. There's Chinese cultural clothes and German clothes, and obviously several others right now. But that's not all that there's going to be. And the game will eventually include the details on all the cultures that are represented. But we do want to take suggestions at some point so that people can suggest cultures that they themselves actually have, and perhaps even include reference pictures for the exact type of clothes that they'd like to see, so it's not just us kind of trying to guess what people might want to use, but that won't be a Patreon exclusive thing. That will be something that all players can participate in. And I guess we'll just wait for when that happens, and when there are more updates about the cultural clothing later on. And hopefully when everything is finished, it'll be a really satisfying element to the customization.

And that is everything for July! This is another really long one. Thank you to everybody who sent in questions. I hope that was enjoyable to hear the answers to, and I will talk to you again next month. Take care, everyone!