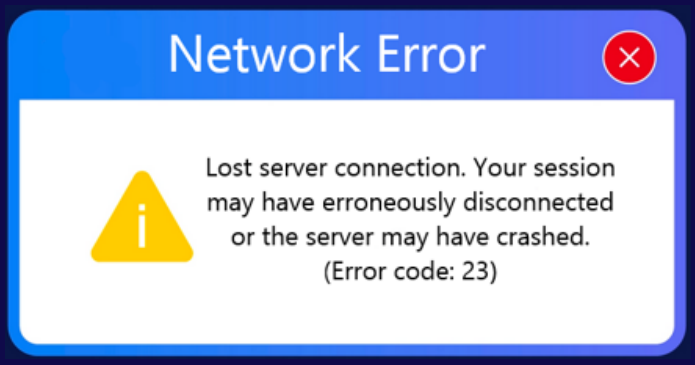
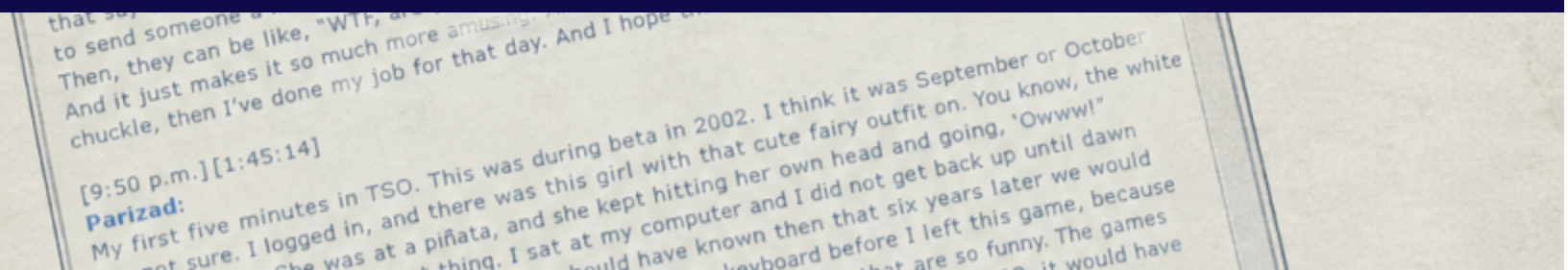
See You Soon



See you soon is a short larp about online identity, virtual worlds and real connections. Players take on the roles of the last few users of *Agora* who have joined an 'End of the World' party hosted by the community's largest content creator.

Agora is a long-running online virtual world. After several failed attempts to draw in new users, the developer has announced that support for *Agora* will be discontinued. The servers are being shut down, and many of the remaining users have already left.

On the night the server will finally go offline, a small group of players have gathered one last time in the virtual world that has meant so much to them. They are here to celebrate, to reminisce, and to witness a world blink out of existence.



Copyright © 2026 by Silas Urwin

See You Soon is distributed under a BY-NC-SA Creative Commons license



https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/

This license enables you to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format for non-commercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator. If you remix, adapt, or build upon the material, you must license the modified material under identical terms. CC BY-NC-SA includes the following elements:

BY: credit must be given to the creator.

NC: Only non-commercial uses of the work are permitted.

SA: Adaptations must be shared under the same terms.

This larp is based on the ‘See You Soon Party’ and the shutdown of TSO (an event that was recorded and archived as part of Stanford University’s *Archiving Virtual Worlds* project), and on interviews with users of Second Life and VRChat.

Contents

Summary 3
GM Guide 3
Mechanics 6
Structure of the larp 7
Playing the host: 8
Workshop 11
Music and Audio 14
Debrief 15
Characters 15

Summary

Players: 5-15
Facilitators: 1-2
Duration: 2 hours
Themes: Identity, connection, anonymity, online personas, virtual worlds, digital archiving

GM Guide

What you need:

- 5-15 players
- A room big enough for up to 15 people to sit comfortably and move around.
- Masks/veils (1 per player)
- A way to play music and your chosen audio tracks downloaded
- Printed copies of the character sheets at the end of this document
- Character name tags (or tape and pen to make these)

What you do:

- Before the larp: welcome the players, set up the space, run the workshop (see the workshop section below)
- During the larp: keep track of the timing (see the larp structure below), play the songs and audio tracks, play the host NPC (if you have two facilitators one should play the host while the other manages timing and audio)
- After the larp: check in with the players, facilitate a debrief (see the debrief section below), answer any questions

Timing at a glance

Time	**Phase**
00:00–00:30	Workshop
00:30–00:35	Opening (host intro)
00:35–01:40	Alternating group scenes / meta scenes
01:40–01:45	Final song, ends with dial tone
01:45–02:00	Debrief

(Full scene-by-scene suggested timings are in the Structure section below)

The setting

This section provides some background on the setting of the larp and the online game, Agora, that the scenario takes place in. This may be useful for the workshop and for playing the host NPC.

What is Agora?

Agora is a social virtual world, not exactly a game, but a persistent online space where users create avatars and exist in the virtual world. There are no specific goals or objectives in Agora, the point is simply to be there and explore, create and talk with other users. In some ways it's like an online town, it has different neighbourhoods, public spaces, quiet corners etc, most of which are designed and built by the users themselves. The world has been running for around 10 years and has its own history, famous locations and residents etc.

Users of Agora create avatars and usernames that persist across sessions. People are able to choose how they are perceived in the world, and they develop a reputation and place in the community, while remaining entirely anonymous if they choose to.

Why is Agora shutting down?

Agora has been in decline for several years. New users have stopped arriving, partly due to newer games offering more to players, and partly due to a lack of updates and support from the developer, who never found a sustainable business model for the game. The active user base is now very small, and most of the remaining players are people for whom either Agora as a world, or the other players, are particularly important.

The announcement that the servers would be shut down came a few months ago. It didn't come as much of a surprise, and since the announcement even more users have left the game. The 'End of the World Party' has been organised by 'the host', who is a well known Agora content creator, with help from one of the Agora dev team known as "Pan". At the start of the larp the party has just ended, and the remaining players have a short amount of time to talk, celebrate and reminisce before the world disappears.

The host is also arranging for the final hours of the game to be recorded and archived to preserve something of the world.

Mechanics

The characters in the larp know each other well from years spent in Agora, but do not necessarily know who each other are in real life. The mechanics exist to make that gap visible.

Face coverings: Players wear face coverings during the larp. These should not obscure the player's vision too much, as they will still need to see to move around and interact with one another, but they should obscure the face enough to create anonymity and hide facial expressions. Options for this would be a dark coloured gauze veil or a blank paper mask. If a player is not comfortable wearing a face covering they should have some other visual indication of whether their character is anonymous to the person they are interacting with (e.g. a headband or scarf).

Voice chat and meta scenes: While no song is playing, all communication is in the server's main voice chat. Anything a character says is heard by everyone else. This is the mode for group scenes.

Music is used to indicate a meta scene. While the song is playing, everyone is free to move around and interact one on one or in small groups, representing private messages. Players may also choose not to interact with others during these scenes. When the song ends they should return to their seats in the group.

Private messaging interactions: When characters are communicating one to one in the meta scenes they should not stand directly face to face, but slightly alongside one another, so that they are speaking into each other's ear and not seeing each other's faces. It's worth demonstrating this to the players during the workshop.

Keeping in touch: The exception to this is if a character chooses to exchange contact details with another character. To do this they say the words "I'd like to keep in touch." This represents them offering the character they are talking to some way to contact them in real life or on another platform.

When a character does this they may remove their veil/mask when talking to the character they have offered this to. If both characters have exchanged contact information with each other, they may stand face to face, without veils/masks, when interacting with each other from then on. With anyone they have not exchanged this with, they should still wear their veil/mask, even if they have already removed it for someone else.

It is possible that a request to keep in touch is declined by the other character. This is fine, the declining character should not remove their veil/mask, but the offering character should still do so.

Structure of the larp

The total run time of the larp is around 2 hours, including the workshop and debrief:

00:00-00:30	Pregame workshop	*See the Workshop section below*
00:30-00:35	Opening	*Play the intro song then introduce the first group scene as the host. See script below*
00:35-00:45	Group Scene	*The host can welcome everyone by name. May also read the message from Pan, the Agora dev*
00:45-00:50	Song 1 - Meta Scene	
00:50-01:00	Group Scene	*The host should discuss the recording and archiving project. Ask what anyone would like to say to people watching the recording.*
01:00-01:05	Song 2 - Meta Scene	
01:05-01:10	Group Scene	*Encourage characters to reminisce about what Agora has meant for them*
01:10-01:15	Song 3 - Meta Scene	
01:15-01:25	Group Scene	*Things you wish you'd said to one another.*

		What you'll miss
01:25-01:30	Song 4 - Meta Scene	
01:30-01:40	Group Scene	*Goodbyes and thank yous. The host says their own goodbye in the lead up to the final song. See the script below*
01:40-01:45	Final Song - Meta Scene	*The larp should end around 2 minutes into the final song with the dial tone sound effect*
01:45-02:00	Debrief	*Allow a couple of minutes after the larp ends then run the debrief (see the section below)*

Playing the host:

As facilitator you will play the role of 'the host' during the larp. The host is an NPC who is one of Agora's longest-running content creators, and is the organiser and host of the 'End of the World Party'. The main function of the host as a character is to provide structure to the scenario by introducing and playing the songs, and to encourage group discussion between the characters in the group scenes.

The host's Agora username is Mercury. As they are well known in the community most of the characters will already know the host's real life identity and name - Alex Munger.

The host's persona should be warm, slightly performative, and self deprecating. Think something along the lines of a radio DJ. They are quite good at hiding how devastated they truly are to be losing Agora, but as the larp goes on they should start to let this facade crack and show some more emotion. They should become less polished in their 'performance' and allow more of their true personality to show.

The host will:

- Speak the first words of the larp, welcoming the remaining users to the afterparty and explaining that although they don't know exactly how long is left they plan to stay online to the end.
- Speak briefly at the start of each group scene. Encourage others to speak in the group scenes if necessary. If the players have lots to say, the host should not intervene, but if things are stalling the host may prompt conversation by, for example, asking others to share a particular moment they remember from Agora, discussing a memory they have, or passing on a message from one of the devs of Agora who was involved in setting up the party but is not present.
- Introduce the songs in the way a radio DJ might, you may choose to talk a little about why you are playing this particular song or may dedicate a song to a particular character.
- Introduce the final song with an emotional thank you/goodbye to the world and the characters.

The host may be involved in the meta scenes if required (for example if a player wants to send a message to the host character) but don't take the initiative to speak in the meta scenes unless the situation calls for it. As host you don't wear a face covering as you have already publicly shared your identity and contact details with the server (and will likely do so again during the evening).

Tone and running the group scenes: This is a larp about endings, gratitude, and the ambiguous line between an online world and a real one. Most characters are sad to be losing Agora, and most are here to say goodbye and thank people who have meant a lot to them. The tension in the scenario isn't between opposing opinions on the shutdown, it's in the individual characters' experience. They may be certain their online friendships were real and still privately wonder if any of it survives past tonight.

Aim to have the group scenes bring up specific memories and feelings rather than general statements. Encourage the characters to describe particular moments, people or places, rather than asking what Agora has meant to them. In general, if a group scene is stalling, prompt for a memory rather than an opinion.

There are a few things worth watching for and drawing out over the course of the group scenes, without forcing them. Some characters are more comfortable with the anonymity of an online environment, while others crave offline connections with others

here. Some of what people did for the Agora community such as moderating, teaching, and supporting others is easy to overlook, and some characters wish their efforts were noticed more.

You don't need to steer every scene toward a big emotional beat, let there be some silence and some quieter scenes. Let there be some more upbeat scenes if that's the direction things go.

Optional host scripts: These are example scripts for particular scenes the host is involved in. You can use these exactly as they are, or use something else that's similar in tone and content.

Welcome:

"Well the party's officially over, but I can still see a few of you active in the server. I'm going to stay online to the end. I don't know exactly when that will be, Pan told me the shut down was scheduled for 10pm and we're already past that, so it could be any time I guess. But until then, I'm going to hang out here with those of you who are left, I'm going to keep archiving the session too. It's not just the party I want to have recorded, but as much of this place as we can. Anyway, I'll play some more songs too, and let's keep this celebration going"

A message from Pan:

"Okay I promised I'd read this out, so bear with me. This is from Pan, you all know Pan, at least I hope you do, but none of this could have happened without her. No one else on the dev team has cared about this place the way she has, and I know she would have been here tonight if she could. She wanted me to pass this on:"

"Hey. It's Pan. Sorry I'm not there. There's still work to do on this end, believe it or not.

Funny story. Not funny, exactly, but — you know me. When the servers crashed at three in the morning we used to joke Agora would rather die than take an update.

So, we saved what we could. Wikis, forums, a few of the builds. Not everything. There was never going to be enough storage, or time, or anyone above me who wanted to pay for it once the numbers dropped. A lot of stuff is going to go tonight that isn't in any file we kept. I'm sorry about that. And not because someone told me to say it.

But here's the thing. I've read years of bug reports off that server. Forum threads, login times, more of them than anyone should have to. And underneath all of it was just you lot. Showing up for each other. On top of a game I mostly just tried to stop catching fire. I don't think I'll build anything again that matters to people the way this accidentally did.

So I'm not going to say goodbye. I hate that word for this. So see you later. I like to think some of what happened here doesn't just switch off with the servers.

Thanks for being part of it and take care of each other."

***Introducing the final song**:*

"Hey all, so this is the last time you're going to hear me speak, or well, the last time before Agora goes down anyway. I just want to thank you all. I want you to know this has been an amazing experience, it really has. I promised I wouldn't make myself cry doing this, but I can't stress enough how much you have all meant to me over the last… however many years it's been. It really has been awesome. You know, some people don't let themselves get attached to things, or say that something like this isn't real… but when you make friends, the kind of people I've met in this game, it's actually really hard.

So I'm going to play one last song. It's Sarah Brightman and Andrea Bocelli - "Time to Say Goodbye". I hope you'll contact me on my discord, my id is AlexM12345, A-L-E-X-M-1-2-3-4-5. Good luck in life everybody, I love you all and it's been great knowing you. Thank you"

Workshop

Spend around 30 minutes on the workshop. A suggested structure is as follows:

1. **Introduce the larp to the players**. Explain the background to the world and the setting (what Agora is, why it is shutting down, why the characters are here etc.). Explain the tone of the larp and themes that will be present. You can also use this opportunity to ask your players if there are any specific themes they would like to avoid and then clarify to the players what topics will and won't be part of the larp.

2. **Characters**. Allow players to choose characters from the options provided. There are keywords at the top to help you choose characters with themes you are particularly interested in playing on. Once everyone has a character and has had a few minutes to read their character sheets get everyone to introduce their character to the group briefly. Players should also wear name tags with their character's name.

3. **Establish memories and relationships**. Allow around 10 minutes for players to establish some shared experiences and memories with one another. Encourage everyone to establish at least 2 or 3 specific shared experiences with other characters present, or more if they like. There are ideas for possible relationships on the character sheets but players are free to come up with their own ideas. The aim is to establish details of how the characters feel about each other, and about the shared world. Note that none of the characters know each other offline, and do not know each other's real names. If a player wants their character to reveal their real name during the larp they may choose any name they like (character's real names are not on the character sheets).

4. **Mechanics**. The key mechanics to explain to the players are:
    a. **Veils/Masks**. Players wear face coverings during the larp. These should not obscure the players' vision too much as they will still need to see to move around and interact with one another, but they should obscure the face enough to create anonymity and hide facial expressions. Options for this would be a dark coloured gauze veil or a blank paper mask. If any player is not comfortable wearing a face covering they should have some

other visual indication of whether their character is anonymous to the person they are interacting with (e.g. a headband or scarf).

b. **The use of music to indicate a meta scene**. Explain that while the song is playing everyone is free to move around and interact one on one or in small groups, representing private messages. They may also choose not to interact with others during these scenes, that is also fine. When the song ends they should return to their seats in the group. While no song is playing, all communication is in the server's main voice chat. Anything you say is heard by everyone else.

c. **Private messaging interactions**. When characters are communicating one to one in the meta scenes they should not stand directly face to face but slightly alongside one another so that they are speaking into each other's ear and not seeing each other's faces. Demonstrate this to the players. The exception to this is if a character chooses to exchange contact details with another character. To do this they say the words ***"I'd like to keep in touch"***, this represents them providing the character they are talking to with some way to contact them in the real world or on another platform. When a character does this they may remove their veil/mask when talking to the character they have exchanged contact information with. If both characters have exchanged contact information with each other they may stand face to face, without veils/masks, when interacting with each other. With anyone they have not requested to keep in touch with they should still wear their veil/mask. It is possible that a request to keep in touch is declined by the other character. This is ok, the declining character should not remove their veil/mask, but the offering character should still do so when interacting with that character.

d. **The dial tone**. Explain that the larp will end suddenly when the server finally goes offline. This will be indicated by a dial tone being played. When this happens all communication should stop immediately.

e. **The host**. Explain that you as the facilitator will be playing an NPC who is the host/DJ of the party. The characters are free to interact with you as

the host if they choose to. You are present for the group scenes and will lead the discussion to some extent there.

5. **Safety**. Explain the safety mechanics you will use during the larp. Use whichever mechanics you and your players know or prefer. As a suggestion:
    a. Open door policy: Players should feel free to leave the larp at any point and for any reason, without having to explain themselves.
    b. “Cut”, “Brake”, “Off-game”: Players can say “cut” at any point to stop the larp. “Brake” can be used to de-escalate or end an interaction without stopping the larp. Players can use the phrase “off-game” to indicate that they are communicating something out of character to the other player/facilitator.
    c. Physical touch: physical touch is not expected or required in this larp.

Music and Audio

Music and sound effects are important to the larp. If you have a second facilitator available it may be easier to have them handle the audio while you play the host. If you are facilitating alone it is important to have the songs and audio set up in a way that will be easy to manage, have the songs cued up and ready to play, you need to be able to move between songs without searching etc. If you are able to edit the final track to include the dial tone this will make things easier.

The songs are heard by the characters in-game, and they are also used to indicate that a meta scene is taking place. When a song is playing the characters can move around and interact one-to-one, when the song finishes they should return to their places in the group.

A dial tone sound effect is used to signal that the server has disconnected and the larp is over.

A suggested playlist is included below, but if you are running the larp feel free to use whatever songs you like. Aim for a mix of higher energy music and slower melancholy songs, with more of the slower songs played towards the end of the larp. The intro

song is used to start the larp and does not signify a meta scene. The final song should be cut off part way through by the dial tone that signals the end of the larp.

Suggested playlist:

1. (Intro song) *Radiohead – No Surprises (Chiptune Version)*
2. *Macklemore feat. Kesha - Good Old Days*
3. *Pink Floyd – Comfortably Numb*
4. *The Cure – Pictures of You*
5. *The Cranberries - Linger*
6. (Final song) *Andrea Bocelli & Sarah Brightman - Time to Say Goodbye*

Debrief

After the larp everyone should remove their veils/masks if they have not already done so. There's no fixed format for the debrief, but a simple and effective approach is to gather everyone in a circle, then go around and have each player say:

- Their own real name
- Who they played and one thing about the character that they related to, or didn't relate to
- One thing about how the larp felt for them, or a moment that stood out

If anyone would prefer not to share something that is also fine, but ensure everyone is given a chance to speak.

Characters

Below is an overview of the characters in the larp. Any combination of the characters can be used depending on your players' preferences. Each character sheet has the central themes of that character at the top to allow players to find a character they are interested in playing without having to read the whole sheet for every character. Before the larp print out all 15 full character sheets.

Character	Central Themes	Description
Combito	Community, Loneliness, Gratitude	A full-time carer who found much-needed companionship and respite in Agora while caring for their injured partner.
Denis	Understanding, Companionship, Grief	A middle-aged fishing business owner who found a community on Agora that understood the grief he struggled to share offline.
Echo	Connection, Beauty, Gratitude	A young textile designer who uses Agora as a space for creativity and self-expression, and feels surprisingly at peace with its ending.
Scream	Community, Anxiety, Sadness	A socially anxious young adult who found friendship and a sense of safety online that they fear losing with Agora.
Rodrix	Growth, Friendship, Sadness	A young data analyst whose confidence and sense of purpose grew through the friendships and community he found on Agora.
Mika	Creativity, Illness, Possibility	A former theatre set designer whose health ended their career but who found a new creative outlet and social life in Agora.
Visenatic	Identity, Community, Acceptance	An indie game developer who used Agora to explore their identity and found a place where they could be themselves without judgement.
Kris	Knowledge, Friendship, Gratitude	A respected educator and community contributor who is tired of being valued for their knowledge and wants to connect with people more personally.
Speed	Friendship, Adolescence, Hope	A sixteen-year-old who has found meaningful friendship and recognition online that they struggle to find among their peers offline.
Aoki	Creativity, Identity, Hope	A young artist living with a conservative family who uses Agora to express parts of themselves they cannot easily show at home.
Torren	Purpose, Invisibility, Tenderness	A long-serving volunteer moderator who has quietly kept Agora running for years and secretly hopes someone will recognise what they gave to the community.
Cobi	Recovery, Reinvention, Fragility	A person in recovery who found a safe social world in Agora and worries about what will fill the space it leaves behind.
Berry	Distance, Friendship, Belonging	An expatriate who found a sense of home and belonging in Agora after moving far from the place they grew up.
Sirragen	Parenthood, Self, Rediscovery	A parent who uses Agora to reconnect with the younger, more carefree person they have largely lost beneath their responsibilities.
Manda	Neurodivergence, Masking, Relief	A research assistant with autism for whom Agora's slower, avatar-based social world makes connection feel easier and less exhausting than life offline.

Combito

Community – Loneliness – Gratitude

Your Agora username: Ax_Combito

Known in the community as: “Combito”

Active Agora user for: 6 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your early 40s and are currently a full-time carer for your partner, who suffered a severe accident. You are also working nights, something you have done on and off for the last few years to top up your partner’s welfare payments. You are more or less permanently exhausted and have let a lot of your friendships and hobbies fall away. Agora was a lifeline of community and friendship for you when you had very little of either one in your real life. You have found lasting friendships in Agora. You have told friends here about the struggles you face, and they have been a support that you honestly think you would not have been able to cope without.

Who you are in Agora

You don’t have a separate persona in Agora. You are yourself.

Why you are here tonight

You want to thank everyone for being there for you for the last few years. And you want to say goodbye, you are realistic in understanding you are not going to be in touch with these friends as regularly after tonight however much you might want to.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- A friend who knows more about your offline life than almost anyone else.
- Someone you have regularly spoken to late at night when neither of you could sleep.
- Someone who relied on you for support, without realising how much their friendship helped you in return.

What you fear

That everyone will promise to stay in touch tonight and that, six months from now, you will discover that the friendship depended on Agora existing.

Denis

Understanding – Companionship – Grief

Your Agora username: Denis022
Known in the community as: “Denis”
Active Agora user for: 3 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your mid 50s and work in a small family fishing business that was run by your sibling. They died a few years ago and you have struggled with the loss every day since then, they were your closest friend and someone who had been with you for all the highs and lows of life. Losing them feels like you’ve lost a part of yourself. You found grief isolating in a way you hadn’t anticipated. People either wanted to avoid the topic, or tried to rush you through it. You first started using Agora late one night when you were feeling particularly alone. You didn’t say much at first, just sat on a bench near a virtual lake. At some point someone came and sat next to you and said ‘you don’t have to talk if you don’t want to’. Agora became part of your routine. Sometimes you still don’t want to talk to the other users, but the companionship is enough.

Who you are in Agora

You are yourself, at least this new version of yourself that grief has turned you into. You regularly meet up with a group of users who have lost loved ones which you find comfort in. But even the other friends you’ve found on Agora have made you feel more at ease talking about your sibling. You can talk about them without feeling like you’re making everyone uncomfortable. People’s response feels so different to the responses you get offline. Here you say ‘they would have liked this place’ and people will simply nod, or ask what they were like.

Why you are here tonight

You need to get some closure on this community that has given you a lifeline for the last few years. Lately the sharpest edges of your grief have eased more than you expected, and there are nights now when you don't feel compelled to log on. You haven't said this to anyone in the community. It feels disloyal, like admitting you might not need this place as badly as you once did, and you're not sure how to sit with the possibility that saying goodbye tonight might come as something closer to relief than heartbreak.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone you met early on who encouraged you to come back regularly.
- Someone who has often listened to you talk about your sibling, and shared personal things with you.
- Someone who you have avoided telling about your sibling.

What you fear

That people will judge you for not grieving the loss of a virtual world. That people will think you don’t care.

Echo

Connection – Beauty – Gratitude

Your Agora username: EchoesLeft
Known in the community as: “Echo”
Active Agora user for: 4 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your late 20s and work as a freelance textile designer. You have been active online for basically your whole life, and see that as an important part of your world. When you first started using Agora regularly you were drawn to the shared experience. You have wandered through many public worlds and have found connections with all sorts of people who you wouldn’t have interacted with offline. You find this very enriching. You love hearing people’s stories or just spending time noticing the things people have created for their avatar or for the world. You try to spread positivity wherever you can, you make a conscious effort to compliment other users’ work and notice the small details. You have made real friends in Agora, people you feel completely comfortable with and could tell anything. This has become your happy place, somewhere you can log on to and feel calm.

Who you are in Agora

You are the version of yourself that you aspire to be. Calmer, more confident, intentional and appreciative of the beauty around you. You find it easy to be this person here, you wish you found it as easy to be this person offline.

Why you are here tonight

It feels important to say goodbye. To mark the occasion somehow. And you knew many of your Agora friends would be here, so in some ways it’s an evening in your happy place, like any other. You have mostly made your peace with the fact this will all be going away, but it still hurts.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone whose creations you have followed for years.
- Someone who thinks your positivity is effortless when you know it is something you consciously practice.
- Someone who has seen you behave badly or insecurely and therefore knows the “perfect” Agora version of you is not the whole truth.

What you fear

That the version of yourself you have found here won’t survive without this place to hold it.

Scream

Community – Anxiety – Sadness

Your Agora username: ScreamingFern33

Known in the community as: “Scream”

Active Agora user for: 5 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your early 20s and have recently finished studying. You have always found it difficult to make friends. You are socially observant, but inwardly anxious. You worry about when to speak, what to say, what you should have said differently. You like having people around you, but the anxiety always follows, and this has left you feeling left behind by people around you who seem to thrive at parties and in social situations. Your closest friendships have been made online. The first time you played Agora you found a small café space and sat there listening. Nobody demanded an introduction or an explanation, eventually someone on a nearby table typed “feel free to hang out”. There was no pressure, it felt safe. You kept coming back, and before long people recognised you, and they became familiar parts of your day. You began to make friends there. Even on bad days you could log in and just feel less alone, without having to say anything.

Who you are in Agora

You are less anxious and feel more yourself. You have your closest friends around you. Agora is your social world, the friendships you have made here are very real. And your socialising here doesn’t have that shameful sense of being a performance that you often feel in offline situations. In Agora you don’t feel like you’re failing at being social, you feel like you’re part of the room.

Why you are here tonight

Because this is the end. It’s come so quickly since it was announced. The thought of starting again from scratch in a new community fills you with dread. This is your place, these are your friends, and it’s all ending tonight. You don’t have the words to explain what you’re losing, or what these people have meant to you. You hope above everything that you will be able to keep in touch with the friends you’ve made here.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who was one of the first people to welcome you.
- Someone who you disliked when you first met but are slowly changing your opinion of.
- Someone you desperately want to stay friends with but have never had the courage to ask.

What you fear

That without Agora you will disappear back into being invisible, and no one will notice you have gone

Rodrix

Growth – Friendship – Sadness

Your Agora username: Rodrix
Known in the community as: “Rodrix”
Active Agora user for: 2 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your late 20s and work long hours as a data analyst. You feel like your life has stalled over the last few years. You’ve had the same job, the same routines, and your circle of friends has gradually shrunk as people have moved or gotten married. A friend had recommended Agora to you as a fun social community where you could create and experiment. You had dismissed it at first, but one day when you were missing having friends around you decided to try it out. And you have been obsessed with it ever since. The game itself doesn’t interest you particularly, but the people do. You joined a collaborative space where users designed and created environments together, and you were surprised by how quickly you made real friends. Friends who motivated you to become a better version of yourself, to try new things. And you have found yourself becoming more motivated and confident offline too.

Who you are in Agora

You have become an important part of the community. You like to mentor new players and show them around, introducing them to people and helping them to fit in. This feels fulfilling and gives you a sense of purpose. You also view it as a way to give back to a community which you are very grateful to for how they treated you when you first started. People in Agora recognise you and know you. Many times you’ve seen others posting messages to new players saying ‘you should talk to Rodrix if you’re feeling lost or don’t know what to do here’. This always makes you swell with pride. Privately, though, you sometimes wonder whether the people you've helped over the years think of those moments the way you do. There's a chance you're the only one who remembers it so vividly, and you're not sure it would land the way you hope if you brought it up tonight.

Why you are here tonight

You’re really struggling with the idea that Agora is shutting down. You want to make the most of the last bit of time here, so you have to stay to the very end. You want to thank the rest of the community for what they have given you, and how special they have made this place, but you’re not sure you know what to say.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone you personally welcomed when they first arrived.
- Someone you have mentored repeatedly.
- Someone who became much closer to you than you expected when you first helped them.

What you fear

That without a role here to give you purpose, you will slide back into feeling stalled and unnoticed in real life.

Mika

Creativity – Illness – Possibilities

Your Agora username: MikaDono2
Known in the community as: “Mika”
Active Agora user for: 4 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your late 30s and worked as a set designer for theatre companies for almost a decade. A worsening of a chronic autoimmune condition has meant you’ve had to give up that work that you loved. Now there are days when you can’t get out of bed, and even more where you can’t leave the house. Agora has given you a creative outlet, one that has no deadlines, no physical strain. You love when other users visit locations you’ve designed and ask questions about them, or just wander around and linger. This has been a place where your illness hasn’t defined what you can contribute, so for several years now when your body won’t let you go anywhere else you come to Agora.

Who you are in Agora

A designer, a creative; everything you are in real life but which your illness has been stopping you from expressing. You have designed thousands of community assets in Agora and some of the most popular maps, something you are very proud of. You have told people in the community about your theatre work, but you haven’t spoken much about your illness.

Why you are here tonight

To say goodbye to the people and the places that have been so important to you in recent years. You are glad that there will be an ‘ending’, a single moment that you can look back on. You don’t know exactly how it will feel to say goodbye to all of this. You’re glad some of this world may be recorded and archived. If nothing else survives, you’d like there to be proof that you built something here. You’re trying to work up the nerve to actually ask for that.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who regularly visited spaces you designed.
- Someone who collaborated with you creatively.
- Someone who thinks they know you well but has no idea about your health problems.

What you fear

Having so much of your creative work deleted, and the thought that it could happen again if you were to start over

.

Visenatic

Identity – Community – Acceptance

Your Agora username: ATVisenatic

Known in the community as: “Visenatic”

Active Agora user for: 8 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your mid 20s and work as a developer for a small indie game studio. You first joined Agora on a whim, before the game became more widely known. This was around the same time that you were questioning your gender. You didn’t have the language, or the safety, to explore this part of yourself offline, but Agora gave you a platform to experiment and figure things out. You are tremendously grateful to the Agora community for the acceptance and kindness they showed you, in those early days and in the years since. You love this game and the players who make it what it is. You are devastated to be losing this community. It still hasn’t fully sunk in yet that this is all going away.

Who you are in Agora

You are yourself. Your true self who you are rarely fully comfortable being in the offline world. You log on almost every day and are a long-time member of the community.

Why you are here tonight

You have to be. Nothing would make you miss this and you need to be here for every second that’s left. You know you are going to be sad, but you hope you can hold it together enough to thank everyone and tell them what this game has meant to you. This world deserves to be preserved in some form. The recording being made tonight leaves you with feelings you haven't fully untangled. Part of you wants proof that this world, and the person you became in it, existed. Another part of you is wary of a permanent record tying your real identity to a period of your life you haven't necessarily shared, or fully resolved, outside this game.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who knew you before you became comfortable with your identity, and has supported you throughout.
- Someone who you were able to help.
- Someone who knows the real you better than anyone in your offline life.

What you fear

That without Agora, you will lose the only place you have ever felt fully and safely yourself.

Kris

Knowledge – Friendship – Gratitude

Your Agora username: KrisB93

Known in the community as: “Kris”

Active Agora user for: 3 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your early 40s and work in education. You have always been interested in knowledge sharing in online communities and after reading a blog post about ‘Town Hall Discussions’ in Agora you signed up and have been active in the community ever since. The type of learning that takes place in Agora is a pleasant contrast to the structured curriculum of your day job. The community you found in Agora are endlessly curious, and view learning as a shared pleasure.

Who you are in Agora

You are well known in the community. You now chair the ‘Town Hall Discussions’ that first brought you into the community. You also host Ask Anything sessions which have been very popular. Users from all walks of life have taken part; artists, programmers, retirees, teenagers. Sessions are informal and friendly and have led to lasting friendships. However, you feel a bit performative in your roles in Agora. You don’t often talk about personal things going on in your life.

Why you are here tonight

To thank the community and to say goodbye. It was a great thing while it lasted, but everything has to end sometime. You were told the party would be recorded and you are glad something from this world is going to be preserved in some form. You would also like to make a personal connection with some of your friends here, something you wish you had done more of previously.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone whose questions you particularly enjoyed answering.
- Someone who regularly challenged you.
- Someone who knows the public version of you extremely well, but almost nothing personal.

What you fear

That people only know the polished, public version of you, and that you will never get the chance to be known any other way.

Speed

Friendship – Adolescence – Hope

Your Agora username: 00Fr3SPEED

Known in the community as: “Speed”

Active Agora user for: 1 year

Who you are in real life

You are 16 years old and about to finish high school. You have enjoyed online games for your whole life and have become good friends with people you only know by their usernames. You have always been a bit quiet in school and have felt rather left behind by your classmates. People are changing so much, friendship groups changing so rapidly, and you aren’t sure where you fit in. You have been on Agora for over a year now and have loved it so much. The focus on social spaces and community has allowed you to build meaningful friendships that feel chosen rather than accidental. The people you have met here mean a lot to you, they have given you advice and support when you’ve needed it. You have been able to talk to them about things you wouldn’t dream of telling your parents or your school friends.

Who you are in Agora

You are an equal and valued part of the community. In Agora people don’t fail to take you seriously because of your age or your looks or any of that stuff. You have friends here, and you are a friend to others here.

Why you are here tonight

It feels profoundly important that you stay to the very end and witness the moment Agora is gone forever. You don’t know how you will feel about it yet, but you hope it will be a fun evening of reminiscing about the good times and planning to keep in touch with one another.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone older who has given you advice.
- Someone closer to your own age who treats you as an equal.
- Someone who remembers you from when you first joined.

What you fear

That without Agora you will go back to feeling invisible and left behind, with nowhere that already knows and values you.

Aoki

Creativity – Identity – Hope

Your Agora username: AokiThalamus
Known in the community as: “Aoki”
Active Agora user for: 4 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your early 20s and are currently back living with your parents after graduating university. Art and writing are everything to you, when you’re not drawing or writing you love discussing art with anyone who will listen. Your parents disapprove of your creative side. Your family comes from a culture that is socially or religiously conservative, and you understand that the way you express yourself artistically is never going to be acceptable to them. Online communities such as Agora have allowed you to be your creative self without any fear or shame. You love the variety of creativity on display and the positivity from the community.

Who you are in Agora

An artist. You share your work with a wonderful, accepting and positive community in Agora. You feel free to be a more flamboyant and truer version of yourself here. You sometimes worry that the confidence you have in Agora is dependent on people not knowing who you are offline.

Why you are here tonight

You want to see it all one last time, and say your personal farewell to a world that has meant a lot to you. You also want to make sure you have a way to stay in touch with others from the community here, either in real life or on another platform.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who regularly encourages your art and has become a close friend.
- Someone whose work, of whatever kind, inspired your own.
- Someone who knows about the tension between your Agora identity and your family life.

What you fear

That the confidence you have found here depends entirely on nobody knowing who you are offline.

Torren

Purpose – Invisibility – Tenderness

Your Agora username: Torren

Known in the community as: “Torren”

Active Agora user for: 7 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your mid 50s and spent the last seven years working as a volunteer moderator in Agora. In your offline life you work in logistics. Your job is functional, solitary, and gives you very little of the human contact you once had. You were married for a long time, but divorced a few years ago. It wasn’t particularly dramatic, it was just a recognition that you had become two people who were no longer particularly interested in one another. Your children are grown and live elsewhere. You are not unhappy, exactly. You are just a person whose life became smaller than you expected it to. Moderating Agora gave you a purpose you hadn’t realised you were missing. You handled disputes, welcomed new users, kept the worst of the internet out. For seven years, you have been the person who made a lot of this possible without ever demanding attention or praise for yourself.

Who you are in Agora

The person who keeps things running. You know more about this community than almost anyone and you are on first-name terms with almost everyone here tonight, but you’re not sure many of them know very much about you.

Why you are here tonight

Because you helped build this place, and you want to see it out. You are not sure anyone will think to thank you for what you did here, and you have made peace with that, mostly. What you feel tonight is a tenderness toward all of it: the community, the arguments, the people who drove you mad, the people who made it worth doing. You know you’ll get a lot of satisfaction from hearing people talk about what Agora has meant to them. You would also like, just once, for someone to recognise how much you’ve given to this place, and to thank you for it, the work you and other moderators did deserves to be archived and recorded as much as anything else here. You’re not sure if you want to keep in touch with the friends you made in Agora, here you have a defined role, in real life you’re not sure who you’d be to them.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone you repeatedly helped through difficult situations.
- Someone whose argument you moderated, who you suspect has never quite forgiven you for how you handled it.
- Someone who made you feel seen and valued in the community.

What you fear

That nobody will think to thank you for what you did here, and that outside of your role you are not sure who you would be to any of them.

Cobi

Recovery – Reinvention – Fragility

Your Agora username: Cobi194
Known in the community as: “Cobi”
Active Agora user for: 5 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your late 30s and are in recovery from alcohol dependency. Five years ago your life was in a state of serious disrepair. You had lost a job you were good at, damaged relationships that mattered to you, and arrived at a point where you could see clearly, maybe for the first time, what you were doing to yourself. Getting sober was the hardest thing you have ever done and you are still doing it. You don’t talk about it much. You’re not ashamed, exactly, but it feels like something deeply yours, and you’re careful with it. You found Agora during the early months of your recovery, when your social life had effectively collapsed. Most of your old friendships were built around drinking, and removing alcohol had removed most of your social world along with it. You needed somewhere to be around people without the particular dangers of being around people. Agora was that. It had a rhythm to it. You could show up every day if you wanted, and people would be glad to see you.

Who you are in Agora

Sociable, a bit dry, dependable. You have become someone people confide in here, which surprised you at first. You suppose that people who have been through difficult things develop a patience for other people’s difficult things. You have never spoken about your recovery in Agora, not because you’re hiding it, but because here you are just Cobi, someone people like to talk to and open up to. You like being that person.

Why you are here tonight

Agora has been part of your recovery in ways you have not fully articulated to yourself. The routine of it, the community, the daily proof that you could show up somewhere and be a person other people were glad to see, that has mattered a lot more than you’ve let on. Losing it tonight is going to take something with it that you’ll need to replace, and you’re not sure yet with what. You’re not sure exactly how it will feel but you know you want to be present for the ending.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who regularly checks in on you.
- Someone who confides in you.
- Someone whose routine has become part of yours without either of you noticing.

What you fear

That maybe you, and others here, have become a bit too dependent on this game and on each other, when you don’t actually know each other.

Berry

Distance – Friendship – Belonging

Your Agora username: BerryNoorElA
Known in the community as: “Berry”
Active Agora user for: 4 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your early 30s and moved from the Middle East to Northern Europe for work around five years ago. The move was something you had planned and worked toward for a long time, and it was the right decision, and you are glad you made it. And it is also true that it was lonelier than you expected, for longer than you expected. You are still building a life here — the language, the weather, the social customs that are different enough from home to catch you off-guard at odd moments. Your family is there. Some of your oldest friends are there. The time difference makes even phone calls feel like an effort. You found Agora through a friend from back home who was living in another country and had the same problem of being caught between two worlds. For the first few years you mostly spent time in Agora together — a virtual room where geography was irrelevant, where you were both just there. Your friend has since moved back home and no longer plays. You kept coming, because by then you had made Agora your own.

Who you are in Agora

You are yourself. You feel at ease here in a way that still surprises you. Somewhere along the way, Agora became one of the first places you have felt genuinely at home since moving. Not because it resembles anything familiar, but because you built your place in it yourself.

Why you are here tonight

You have been thinking about your friend from home, who doesn’t know tonight is happening and wouldn’t quite understand why it matters so much. You want to honour what this place gave the two of you. And you want to say goodbye properly to the community that became yours. You would also really like to keep in touch with some of the others you have got to know during your time here. You hope some of them will be up for that.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who remembers the early days when you and your old friend used to play together.
- Someone who became your closest Agora friend after you moved countries.
- Someone who has taught you things about their own culture and life.

What you fear

That you never hear from the friends you’ve made in Agora again after tonight.

Sirragen

Parenthood – Self – Rediscovery

Your Agora username: SirragenGraves
Known in the community as: “Sirragen”
Active Agora user for: 3 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your early 40s and are the parent of two young children. You love so completely that it still catches you off-guard sometimes. You also know that in the years since they were born, you have slowly become someone whose entire identity is organised around other people’s needs; the children’s, your partner’s, your employer’s. Somewhere underneath all of that is a person who used to have their own enthusiasms and interests: music, poetry, long aimless conversations. You miss that person and sometimes you’re not sure they’re still there. Your sibling sent you an invitation to Agora and said you needed a hobby that wasn’t work or parenting. You rolled your eyes and signed up at midnight when you couldn’t sleep, fully intending to log in once and forget about it. Instead you found yourself in a conversation that went on for two hours, with people who were funny and strange and interested in things, and you stayed. You log on in the evenings, sometimes for only twenty minutes, sometimes longer. Your partner knows. They think it’s good for you.

Who you are in Agora

Something like your younger self. Curious about everyone. You ask a lot of questions and you’re genuinely interested in the answers. You have found in Agora a space where you are not anyone’s parent or anyone’s employee. Here you’re just a person at a party, which is something you had almost forgotten you knew how to be.

Why you are here tonight

You only have a limited window before you need to be back. You always have a limited window. But you wanted to come, because this community has given you something in the last three years that you didn’t know you needed: evidence that the person you were before is still in there somewhere. You want to say thank you for that, and you want to say a proper goodbye to a place that has felt like a small, reliable door back to yourself.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who has opened up to you about their personal life and you feel a strong connection to.
- Someone who shares your love of music or poetry and has become a close friend.
- Someone who has noticed that you always leave early and asked you several times about it.

What you fear

That perhaps this isn’t as meaningful and real as it feels. That perhaps it never was and you were just pretending you could still be this person.

Manda

Neurodivergence – Masking – Relief

Your Agora username: Mandadrift
Known in the community as: “Manda”
Active Agora user for: 7 years

Who you are in real life

You are in your late 20s and work as a research assistant at a university. You were diagnosed with autism in your mid teens, after years of not quite understanding why social situations felt so much more difficult and tiring for you than they seemed to be for everyone else. The diagnosis was clarifying, but it didn’t make the offline world easier, it just explained why it was hard. You have learned to mask fluently enough to function in most situations, but it’s exhausting in a way that is difficult to explain to people who have never had to do it. You manage, and you are good at managing, and you are tired. Agora changed something for you. Text-based communication at your own pace, an avatar standing in for a face, the ability to think before you speak and to leave when you’ve had enough without having to explain yourself or navigate anyone’s feelings about it. Here you don’t have to manage how you are perceived in the same relentless way. Here you can just be in the conversation.

Who you are in Agora

Yourself, with the volume turned down to a manageable level. You are thoughtful and precise with language and people here seem to appreciate that rather than find it strange. You have deep, long-running friendships here, the kind that are built slowly through consistent, considered conversation. You will miss those friendships terribly. You are worried about whether you can build them again somewhere else, and whether you will have the energy to try.

Why you are here tonight

Because this place has been genuinely restorative in a way that very few things in your life are, and you want to mark the ending of it with the seriousness it deserves. You are also very apprehensive about the goodbye itself. Goodbyes in groups are exactly the kind of social event you find difficult, and there is something a little bittersweet about the fact that even here, at the end, there are social demands being made of you. You are here anyway. You wouldn’t be anywhere else.

Possible relationships

You might have:

- Someone who you remember from the first few times you logged on, for a good or bad reason.
- Someone who shares a particular niche interest with you.
- Someone who has become your best friend over the course of the last few years.

What you fear

That you won’t have the energy to build friendships this deep again, and that tonight’s goodbye may be the last easy connection you get to keep.

m.][0:34:50]
:
ars ago, we came up with a new(indistinguishable) for the servers. We being of course
tners) and I. And the reason we did this is because anyone can get a message at 6 a.m.
ys, "Hey! Blazing Falls is offline, please help us, ASAP!" But it's so much more amusing
someone a message at 6 a.m. that says, "Help! Blazing Balls is not coming back on!"
hey can be like, "WTF, are you on something?" And you can say "No, I work for EA on TSO."
just makes it so much more amusing. And if there's ever a time that I can make people
le, then I've done my job for that day. And I hope that story didn't offend anyone.

) p.m.][1:45:14]
zad:
first five minutes in TSO. This was during beta in 2002. I think it was September or October
not sure. I logged in, and there was this girl with that cute fairy outfit on. You know, the white
d silver one? She was at a piñata, and she kept hitting her own head and going, 'Owww!"
hought it was the funniest thing. I sat at my computer and I did not get back up until dawn
e next day when I had to go to work. I should have known then that six years later we would
ave to shut off the servers and pry my fingers off the keyboard before I left this game, because
t became addicting from day one. There are so many things here that are so funny. The games
that you guys have made are so wonderfully creative. This... this game, this TSO, it would have
been nothing, absolutely nothing without your creativeness. You guys are the best!

[5:26 p.m.][3:23:12]
Parizad:
One of our insider jokes on the TSO team was "Pineapple". Let me explain. A few years ago,
one of our players told another player to go... uhh... make love to herself with the rough end
of a pineapple, and I'm cleaning it up of course. Now mind you, it was very well deserved;
that other person was a complete jerk when they were told this. So after that, when one of us
said something extra funny, other people would say "Pineapple" and we knew exactly what it meant.
When TSO moved from EA Mythic, I came with it. On my very first day, I went to my cube. And Randy,
our very own Maxis Randy, he had left a pineapple on my desk. On it was a note that said,
"Welcome to EA". I laughed so hard. I'm truly going to miss you guys, and I'm going to miss
everyone I work with. We had tons of good times. Not just us the dev team, but us and you guys,
and you guys doing all the stuff that made us laugh. You're truly wonderful.

[1:16 a.m.][4:02:24]
Parizad:
Years ago, before I started working for TSO... no, no... before I suckered EA into paying me, haha
suckers! I was working for a government agency, and I'm not going to say where or which one.
They were so very much opposite of what I am, of what my sense of humor is; I have no idea
what I was doing there you guys. Thank god for TSO; it saved me. I love that long hair. You know,
that long hair that women have in TSO where it's either blonde, black or purple? I loved it so much
I got my hair dyed purple just for that, and I went into work. You should have seen their faces.
One woman marched into the director's office, and was telling her that I had to put on a wig,
and blah blah blah, how unseemly it was. Hoy... and the director was like, "So what? Parizad doesn't
have any contact with the outside people." And that's kind of true to this day! Why is it that I get
jobs where people lock me up in my cube? Hah! I think I have some thinking to do.

[3:58 p.m.][5:15:54]
Parizad:
Hey guys, thank you so very, very, very much for playing this game and for being such wonderful
Oh except for those people who are jerks and you know who you are. Well, okay I'm a jerk. But bac
oment. I so much have enjoyed meeting all of you and hearing about your lives, and your
ll of you are incredibly fantastic, fascinating, just such wonderful people.
. I truly, truly am so grateful that I had a chance to work
it on the blog when I said it was a See You Later,
you, from the bottom of our hearts.
ul selves with us.