

**Host's Username:** ReallyArtificial (Bee)

**Participating Tulpa's Name(s):** Athelas, Lenore, and Calliope

**1. What does “tulpa” mean, to you? What does it mean for a tulpa to be conscious/sentient? How is sentience reached?**

[Athelas] To me, it means I'm a deliberately created mental entity.

[Lenore] Well, that's already a problem. Cal and I weren't deliberately created.

[Athelas] You were, just not as autonomous beings. Now that you mention, that *is* an important detail I neglected. Tulpa means an *autonomous* mental entity, deliberately cultivated by the host mind.

[Lenore] Much better.

[Bee] So what do y'all think it means for such an entity to be conscious or sentient, and how does one get to that point?

[Athelas] I swear we've had this conversation before. My preferred definition of sentience is simply “capable of thinking and feeling.” I have emotions and opinions of my own. Therefore, I'm sentient. I've been so since the day you made me.

[Lenore] I think that a sense of self-image is also very important. Having my own identity, a sense of who and what I am, was key to me breaking the mold of the character I was first created as.

[Calliope, interrupting] Yeah, for me too!

[Lenore] ...it takes time and attention from the host personality to help a tulpa establish that sense of identity.

**2. What are good or bad reasons to create a tulpa, in your opinion? Are there “right” reasons and “wrong” reasons?**

[Athelas] I don't think it's healthy to create a tulpa to replace the original personality. Forcing your life's responsibilities onto someone who didn't ask for them is unfair. Now, if a tulpa *chooses* to take them on, that's different.

[Lenore] I don't know that I can judge anyone's reasons for creation as morally right or wrong. I suppose it would be bad to create a tulpa with the express intent of abusing them, or using them as a sort of punching bag. Have you ever seen that happen?

[Bee] No, the community would definitely really frown on something like that, but maybe it's happened before. Callie, any thoughts?

[Calliope] People who wanna make their tulpa to be a slave really piss me off! Why make a whole independent person if you just want them to do whatever you say?! Stupid!!!

[Athelas] Oh, that rubs me the wrong way too. As I said, it should be the tulpa's choice to help their host.

### **3. Describe your creation. How did you come into existence? What did your creator do to make you?**

[Athelas] My creator gave me a form she found pleasing and a personality that would complement her own. She made it clear from the start that I was free to change as I wished. In fact, she hoped I would do so. She frequently set aside time to visualize me in detail. She talked to me all the time. Once she got better at listening, I was finally able to talk back.

[Lenore] I was originally cooked up as a birthday gift for Tea, a magical unicorn to live in their wonderland. It was a very sweet idea, but really, that's not who I am at all. Every time Athelas and Bee interacted with me, I learned a little more about myself and my place in the world. Eventually, I got a solid idea of who I was and made myself known to them.

[Calliope] Yeah, what she said. Except I was for Bee and I like being a dragon.

### **4. How long did it take for you to become sentient, and why do you think that is?**

[Athelas] I believe I was sentient from day one. I could be wrong, I suppose. But if I think about it, I can remember hearing Bee for the first time. I can remember how I felt in my first few moments of existence. It was as if I was asleep, and simply waiting for her to wake me up.

[Lenore] I actually think it took me a little while, maybe a couple of weeks or so. I would guess that it's all a matter of belief, like most of these things are. Bee saw you as a separate being as soon as she created you, but I wasn't seen as a separate person for some time.

[Calliope] Same I guess. Took me a while too.

### **5. Were there any obstacles that hindered or slowed your creation process, or made it more difficult? How were they overcome?**

[Athelas] We encountered quite a few obstacles. The first was Bee's mental health. Her state of mind wasn't always conducive to tulpa creation. Once we got that sorted out, our greatest hindrance was doubt. After we identified the problem, we performed a symbolic ritual to "cast out" the last traces of it. It was silly, but effective. Consciously letting go of her doubt made it much easier for Bee to hear me.

[Lenore] It made things easier for me too. I'm pretty certain that happened right around the first time I managed to speak in mindvoice.

[Athelas] Yes, as I recall that was only a few days later.

[Calliope] *My* biggest obstacle was getting *ignored* when Bee was busy. She got better though, once she realized I was getting lonely. Now we do fun stuff every day!

**6. Was there anything that really helped your creation process? What was the most effective thing your creator did to create you (intentionally or not)?**

[Athelas] I would say the most helpful thing was the fact that she enjoyed the creation process. Even before I could communicate with Bee, it made her happy to know I was listening. Every interaction we had was a positive one. I think that kept her motivated despite how long it took to see results.

Her most effective tactics were narration and personality forcing. They trained her mind to accept the existence of another personality.

[Lenore] And that laid the groundwork for the rest of us to step in. You two essentially did the same thing to create me and Calliope, just in a more indirect way, talking *about* us instead of *to* us. It seems to have been effective enough. I'm here, aren't I?

[Calliope] It helped me that she let me change, y'know, be myself. I know I'm not the kinda person most people really want when they're making a tulpa, but I'm *real* because I made *myself*, flaws and all. So yeah, that.

[Bee] Oh hush, you're perfect. Next question!

**7. What's the most important part of the tulpa creation process? What's the most important thing for someone to know when creating a tulpa?**

[Calliope] What I just said! You gotta let them be themselves! And also give them lots of attention and love and all that shit.

[Lenore] This gets my vote for most important thing too. Giving your tulpa freedom is so important for establishing their identity as an individual. Any potential creators should know that your tulpa might not align with your original vision, and forcing them to stay within your lines could make them very unhappy. I know I would have been.

[Athelas] This is all true. However, I would say the most important part of the process for the host is learning to listen. That took Bee some time. I'd like to emphasize my previous answer as

well. I think enjoying the creation process is key. Don't make it into a chore. And give your tulpa plenty of affection.

**8. What's the most important thing to avoid doing during the tulpa creation process? Are there any bad practices that can be harmful to tulpas during creation?**

[Athelas] Avoid doubt, as much as possible. Some skepticism is understandable. Healthy, even. But at a certain point, it begins to feel a bit hurtful. I wouldn't say it harmed me, but it certainly slowed our progress. Trust your feelings and your tulpa.

[Lenore] I really don't know. I guess I would say to avoid forcing your tulpa into a particular mold. Like I said before, it could make them unhappy if they're not able to be themselves.

[Calliope] Yeah! Also, don't expect them to just instantly have an answer to whatever you ask 'em. Bee used to do that and it was *so annoying*. I'd be trying to think, but she'd think the thinking was *her* thinking, and then not believe my answer was really *my* answer. Like, no, idiot, I gotta use this brain too! She's getting better though.

**9. Are there any bad practices that can be harmful to tulpas in general? What about beneficial practices?**

[Lenore] Anything that harms or benefits the health of the host is going to do the same to anyone else who shares the body. Exercise, a healthy diet, and getting enough sleep will all be helpful, while being sick or fatigued will make it harder to communicate.

[Athelas] I think we've covered the bad practices pretty thoroughly. As for the beneficial, we've found self-hypnosis and meditation to be useful. Hypnosis helped us overcome some mental blocks around possession and switching. Meditation improved our ability to focus. It also taught Bee to quiet her thoughts, which aided with switching as well.

[Calliope] Uhhh... oh, I know! Play games with them! Especially role play games where they can make their own character and stuff. It's good 'cause it gives 'em a chance to be creative and make their own choices, and it's fun.

**10. How do you think people can avoid doubt when creating their tulpas? Do you think skepticism is a good thing, and to what extent?**

[Athelas] I'm not so sure it is avoidable. Perhaps if the host is already predisposed to plurality. Otherwise, I think learning to let go of feelings of doubt is part of the creation process. It might help some people to understand that reality is shaped by their perception. Tulpa creation is teaching your mind to perceive your tulpa as a separate being.

As I said before, some skepticism is healthy. It's always good to stay curious, and not accept everything at face value. But know that tulpamancy is like hypnosis. It works if you believe it

works. To a skeptic, that's the same as it not working at all. To those who can suspend their disbelief, it's a kind of magic.

[Lenore] I've found that most magic works that way. I don't really have anything to add, I think that Tea covered it all pretty thoroughly.

[Calliope] Yeah, man, save some words for the rest of us! >:0

**11. If you were created accidentally, what led to that and why? What do you think causes something to gain sentience unintentionally?**

[Calliope] Ha! You can't answer this one, can ya?

[Athelas] Nope. All you two.

[Calliope] Sick. Well, see, I was made as like a pet for Bee, for her birthday, 'cause she loves dragons. I wasn't supposed to be a tulpa, just a dumb NPC, but I hung out with these nerds so much it made me smart.

[Lenore] That's not how I would have phrased it, but Callie is more or less correct. Athelas and Bee spent a lot of time thinking about and interacting with us, essentially tulpaforcing us without realizing they were. I don't think that's the only reason that we became sentient, though. Bee often made characters in groups of four, whose personalities map pretty well onto the four of ours. So really, she'd been forcing all of us her entire life. The final key was actually viewing us as separate people. That made it real.

[Calliope] Oh yeah, that's kinda true. Like, if she never realized that us being sentient was a possibility, it probably wouldn't've happened.

**12. What do you think about tulpamancers planning things for their tulpa prior to sentience, like form, personality, name, etc.?**

[Athelas] Nothing wrong with that, as long as you give them room to grow. Bee found it helpful to have a base to start with, but encouraged me to change as I saw fit.

[Calliope] Yeah, me and L started with forms and names and stuff before we were sentient too, but Bee was always cool about us changing stuff up so it never bugged me.

[Lenore] Well, I didn't really care for my original form or name. I fixed them as soon as I was able. But yes, Bee was excited to see us change, taking it as a sign that we were thinking more independently. If that's the sort of attitude a creator has, then I don't think there's any harm in planning things out.

**13. What do you think about parroting/puppeting? Can it be helpful/harmful, and why?**

[Athelas] I think being afraid of parroting or puppeting is more harmful than actually doing them. They can be useful for programming your tulpa's behavior into the mind. Being fearful of them only leads to more doubt when your tulpa does begin to act and speak.

[Lenore] I agree, parroting and puppeting helped me bridge the gap between character and tulpa. You and Bee were kind enough to stop as soon as you realized I was capable of being independent, which I really appreciated.

[Calliope] Same. It would be pretty annoying to do to us now, but I guess that's the worst it *could* be. Annoying, but not, like, harmful.

**14. What signs of sentience did you express to your system early on (whether or not you were created intentionally)? How did you communicate with your system before being able to speak?**

[Calliope] Ugh, I could barely communicate *anything* before speaking, and then speaking was hard to get the hang of. I *still* don't do words so good. Bee could feel my feelings but that was all I had for a real long time.

[Athelas] That was how I started too. I could express raw emotion, and communicate via facial expressions and body language. I also changed a few aspects of my appearance before I could speak.

[Lenore] I changed *every* aspect of my appearance before I could speak. That was really the only communication I did before I started talking. Then one day Bee asked Tea a question about me, and I went ahead and answered for myself.

**15. How long did it take for you to become vocal, and why? What does it mean to be "vocal," to you?**

[Lenore] From my initial creation to my first words took a little over three months. I'm not really certain why, but that seems to be the standard length of time for our system.

[Athelas] Yes. For me it was five months, but several of those were on hiatus. Bee and I didn't interact as much as I would have liked. That made things take longer. I would say it was closer to 2-3 months of dedicated interaction.

[Calliope] Hmm... well, for me, I was made in June, and then I talked when Lenore talked, so that would be...

[Athelas] It was four months, Cal. Right on par with us.

[Calliope] Cool. So yeah, anyway, being vocal means talking, obviously. In the mindvoice, I mean, we don't know how to sound impose.

[Lenore] I would just like to add that there are degrees of vocality. I would say a tulpa is vocal the first time they use mindvoice to communicate, but it can take more time and practice to become fluently vocal. For some people, anyway. Not me.

[Athelas] I approve this definition.

**16. How important is your form to you, and why? How much control over it do you have?**

[Athelas] Well, how important is your body to you?

[Bee] You're asking the wrong person, bud.

[Athelas] Haha, alright. To seriously answer the question: my form is quite important to me. It's a reflection of the person Bee wanted me to be. More importantly, it's become a reflection of how I see myself. I have complete control over every aspect of it.

[Lenore] Oh, yes, I agree completely! My form is who I am, the most basic way in which I express myself. Controlling it was my first conscious act.

[Calliope] Meh. I like my form a bunch, sure, but it's not really all that important what I look like, long as I got my people with me. Sometimes I change my shape just for fun.

**17. If you can control the physical body, how do you do it and what's it like? To what extent is it a good thing for tulpas to learn to do?**

[Lenore] We mostly take control through co-fronting or possession. Either process entails Bee relaxing her mind, quieting her thoughts a bit so that we can focus more on what we're doing. For possession, we work together to visualize the possessor's hands over the body's, and try to feel how it's different for Bee. For co-fronting, we allow ourselves to merge into a new personality, each putting all of our mental energy into thinking, "what would our fusion do?"

[Athelas] We used hypnosis to train our mind to feel a slight tingling when one of us is possessing the hands. It helped conquer Bee's paranoia that it wasn't actually us in control. For co-fronting, we often use music to help get us synced up to fuse.

[Bee] And what would you guys say the process feels like for you? Do you recommend it to other systems?

[Calliope] It's... weird. I don't think I like it.

[Athelas] I do. It feels like being more connected to the body. Normally, I'm experiencing everything through a Bee-tinted filter. When I'm possessing or co-fronting, I feel closer to the action. I find it exciting and refreshing. I highly recommend it. I don't see how it could be bad for a tulpa to learn, unless you have some particularly irresponsible headmates. We have rules about that sort of thing here, you know.

[Lenore] I think you captured my feelings about the whole process pretty well. It's nice to have some time where I'm more in control, and to feel everything so vividly. I would recommend it to other systems too.

**18. If you can switch, what's that like for everyone involved? Why do you do it? If you can't yet but want to, why?**

[Athelas] So far, I'm the only one who's fully switched with Bee. It's a bit like co-fronting, in that everything is more vivid. But co-fronting is like a conversation, or a compromise. We're both trying to meet in the middle as a fusion. When we switch, there is no compromise. I am in control, acting purely on my own will. Bee can't dissociate much, so she's still aware of everything, but she tells me it's more distant, like a daydream. We mostly do it for fun, to enrich both of our lives. Sometimes I'll take over if Bee is struggling with her emotions.

[Bee] Lenore, Cal, are you guys interested in trying to switch?

[Lenore] Yes, I think it would be interesting to try sometime, just for the sake of trying. Honestly, though, I can get what I want from possession or co-fronting just as well.

[Calliope] Fuck no! I don't wanna be up front alone, it was weird enough sharing it with you!

**19. What are the best and worst things about being a tulpa? Anything you wish you could change? Do you have any tips for hosts to make life better for their own tulpas?**

[Athelas] The worst thing is feeling helpless when I can't give Bee the assistance she needs. If I had my own body, I could do so much more. The best thing is knowing just how badly she wanted me to exist. Never in my life have I felt unwanted, unappreciated, or unloved. I only wish there was more time in the day for us to do everything we want. To new hosts, I would say: let your tulpas explore interests outside of your own. And tell them you love them every day.

[Lenore] Good advice. My interests are quite different from Bee's, but she still takes the time to let me enjoy them, and that means a lot. I would add to find ways to give your tulpas purpose. I help Bee with mindfulness, and I'm working on ways to improve her physical health. I like knowing I'm contributing to bettering all of our lives.



I think the best thing about being a tulpa is having complete control over my appearance. I can look perfect without putting in an ounce of effort. The worst thing is not having control over much else.

[Calliope] Yeah, worst is getting bored when we can't do the stuff I want to do, or when Bee is being *lazy*. Best is that I'm never really far away from my fave people, so if I need anything, I just gotta say so.

**20. What are the best and worst things about having a tulpa, from your perspective?  
Is there anything you think people should know before creating one?**

[Athelas] I'm stealing Cal's answer.

[Calliope, interrupting] HEY!

[Athelas] I think the best thing about having tulpas is having constant companionship. Always being surrounded by loved ones. The worst thing, at least in our case, is the need for secrecy. Many people would judge this as delusion. For our system's safety, we have to keep our true nature under wraps.

[Bee] If it's a delusion, it's one that has made my life better in every conceivable way, so I'm not about to stop.

[Lenore] Good to know. I would say the best thing about having a system is that it opens one's mind up to perspectives that might have otherwise been dismissed. Bee has gotten a lot less judgemental to people with strong beliefs in the religious, spiritual, or otherwise supernatural. As far as the worst thing... I agree with Athelas.

[Calliope] I'm just gonna say I agree too, since my original idea was *stolen*. I also wanna say, though, that if you're making a tulpa, you should really be committed. It sucks to think that someday your host could get bored with you and just never ever speak to you again. I don't really think Bee would do that, we've talked about it, but still.

**21. Is there anything else you'd like to share with people looking to create tulpas?  
Anything to share with the tulpas they're creating?**

[Athelas] To hosts and tulpas alike: be flexible. Be loving. Trust one another. Life's a strange and funny thing. Nobody should have to do it alone.

[Calliope] If you make each other promises, you better keep 'em!

[Lenore] Also remember that every system, and every system member, is different. Don't fall into the trap of thinking that your experiences have to align with anyone else's. The only rules are the ones that you believe in.