

Sword Art Online – Infinity Moment Interviews

Taketatsu Ayana & Itou Kanae



—First of all, could we have a comment on your thoughts about finishing the recording for the 2nd cour of the TV anime and the game? Let's start with one for the TV anime.

Taketatsu: I only appeared from the 2nd cour onwards, so it was over in the blink of an eye. I always took the stance of watching over Kirito-kun in his comatose state in the «Aincrad» arc, so when I finally met onii-chan, who woke up, as Suguha-chan and Leafa-chan in the «Fairy Dance» arc, I kind of felt like I was really happy.

I've always cheered for Kirito-kun while watching the broadcast, so I could go through the dubbing session being really happy about him actually waking up, but when he got back, he was already with Asuna—I do dare to call her “Asuna” here, though (haha)—even if it's in-game, he was already married to her, so it was an dubbing session of painful experiences.

But still, I believe those who watched the anime's ending theme would understand, but the hearts between the two who kept away from each other in the past got closer, so I thought that was really lovely. The sentiments for onii-chan came to be, and Asuna was able to wake up too, so... it's complicated, but I'm glad.

—How did the game's recording go?

Taketatsu: As for the game, Kirito-kun and Leafa-chan met in a way different from the TV anime or novel, so I believe that's an interesting point. I was alone during the game's recording, but it turned out to be a really fun dubbing session. There are quite a few amusing lines, so I would like everyone to take note of those.

—I see. By the way, were there quite a lot of dialogue between characters?

Taketatsu: There are, there are! There were chances to talk with quite a variety of different characters, so it was very fun thinking about “How should I reply to this line?”.

—How about you, Itou-san?

Itou: I mostly started participating from the 2nd cour as well. I appeared in the «Aincrad» arc once, but I vanished right away and watched the broadcast in loneliness for a bit while thinking, “Kirito-kun's really cool, huh!” (haha). I'm happy about being able to become a fairy and appearing again in the «Fairy Dance» arc. Yui-chan truly loves her Papa and Mama, and I think she acts based on that thought alone. She's honest, warm-hearted and really cute while showing her innocent, or rather, childish side at times, and I acted the role with the thought that “I want to protect this child”.

On the other hand, I was also took note that she was in the system as an artificial intelligence. Therefore, she was fawned on plenty by Kirito and Asuna in the time she could stay as a child. Yui-chan in the game shows her “childishness” quite a lot.

—Can you define what you mean by “childishness” in more specific terms?

Itou: That's right, she troubles her Papa and Mama by driving questions straight at them like a naive child, she's innocent, but a troublemaker because of that; that's what she feels like. There're some parts that rely on that as a gag, but the girl's loneliness of not being able to go out to the world outside is depicted in the game as well. I'll be glad if everyone could enjoy playing the game even more while experiencing Yui's forlorn feelings.

—Please tell me about the scenes in the game that made an impression on you.

Taketatsu: Sad scenes of Suguha-chan constantly thinking about her onii-chan took the limelight in the anime, but as for the game, there's development in her love life as well; just

when you think he's getting close to Asuna... that's how it is, you can raise flags with various characters, so that's the amazing charm of the game, or rather, the interesting part.

Itou: Papa's hitting on everyone, isn't he (haha).

Taketatsu: Yep! (haha) I was happy, being able to act out that lovey-dovey feeling. What about you, Yui?

Itou: Hmm, let's leave that as something to look forward to, when playing it.

Taketatsu: I'm curious! Leafa had some developments that made me think "Eeh!?" quite a bit, so for those who thought Leafa was miserable after watching the anime, I'll be glad if you do try adventuring with Leafa.

—Does Leafa know that Kirito is her brother in the game?

Taketatsu: She does. She shouts out "Onii-chan!" from the very beginning. Throughout the game, she calls him "Kirito-kun" or "Onii-chan", changing based on the scene. "Onii-chan" right after she appeared, "Kirito-kun" when she's paying attention to her speech, and especially at times like when everyone's around, she gets a little tense, so she says "Kirito-kun's—" and all, but loosens up when it's just the two of them and calls him "Onii-chan"; I think that sort of change is cute as well.

—Were there any scenes that made an impression on you, Yui?

Itou: Let's see... there was a scene, or rather, an astonishing meeting. This will end up a spoiler, so I hope you'll check it out for yourself when you play it. The roles are different from the story in the anime, so do take a careful look at that.

—The roles may be different, but Kirito being the Papa and Asuna being the Mama doesn't change?

Itou: That's right. Fundamentally, that doesn't change. Yui tries to absorb various things, so she's sensitive to the words from the girls around her. Therefore, when she has any doubts, she asks "What is that?", troubling those around her. It's something similar to the "What is love?" line in the anime.

—To be specific, what sort of scenes are there?

Itou: There's a scene with everyone playing house and the part where she went "I'm the Mama here!" was fun (haha). Her Mama isn't the only girl thinking about Papa, and there aren't any chances when she gets to pick on that in the anime and such, so that would be the fun part.

—You just said that the other girls like Kirito as well, but what would you do if Kirito gets close to a girl aside from Asuna? I do believe it happens in the game, though...

Itou: Hmm, even in the anime, Kirito goes around with the other... if that happens, I'll get mad and end up yelling out "Papa!" in anger. And then, maybe I'll ask something like "What is love!?" while being angry (haha). I'm completely supporting Mama, huh. I might go like "I don't care about you, Papa!" no matter what Papa says.

—That's something to take note of in the game, huh. I wish to ask TT as well, but to Suguha, when Kirito woke up from a 2 years long sleep and was already with Asuna...

Taketatsu: He did get married with Asuna, after all! I think I would probably be shocked if I were Suguha. Not to mention how they can't get away from each other since they live under the same roof. If it was someone else, there's still the idea of not getting in touch with him. But she can't run away from him, so I think it's really hard on her.

Itou: Even if they aren't connected by blood, they are still siblings. That might be true, considering how it isn't some outsider.

Taketatsu: She might start isolating herself from society from the shock, huh. There's leaving to live on her own too...

—How about a message for Suguha with that in mind...?

Taketatsu: I want to tell her "There's many other good men around!" (haha). Nagata-kun's a good kid, isn't he? I personally like the real Nagata-kun's appearance more than Recon's. With that timid honours student look and glasses on (haha). I believe Nagata-kun will definitely treat her well. But— I'm sure Suguha will still end up thinking about her onii-chan...

—Is there anything you would like to tell Yui, Itou-san?

Itou: Yui-chan came in search for her Papa and Mama while feeling lonely, so I want to tell her "You won't be lonely from now on". Acting out the first scene was really painful, so I want her to know "It's great that you got to meet a gentle Papa and Mama, huh?".

—Which characters do you like aside from your own?

Taketatsu: Characters I like... that would be Yui, huh. I really love her.

—What do you like about her?

Taketatsu: Her tininess! She's small enough to go into a pocket in the «Fairy Dance» arc and to add on to that, she's a kid, isn't she? The sight of her caring for her Papa and Mama so sincerely is so irresistibly cute that it makes me want to go "there, there" on her (haha).

Itou: She's cute when she's pocket-sized, isn't she?

Taketatsu: Yeah. Cute! It makes me recall "Minami-kun no Koibito".

Itou: That takes me back-!

Taketatsu: I've always adored that! I always had the thought, "It'll be so nice if the Rika-chan doll I got started moving". I'll be frightened out of my mind if it started moving now though (haha).

Itou: How scary, how scary (haha).

Taketatsu: I think that tiny size's really charming.

—Who do you like, Itou-san?

Itou: The character I like would be Lisbeth. When I saw Lisbeth's lovable appearance the time I watched her episode, the thought "This girl is so!" came to mind. I want to hug her tight.

—I see. Certainly, the last scene when Asuna came in did give off that feeling, didn't it.

Itou: Yes, that's it! The feeling Liz gave off when she guessed the relationship between Kirito and Asuna when she came in was more than I could bear. The sight of that girl frantically hiding her own feelings for the sake of her beloved friend was just... it hurt looking at it. I thought about wanting to be there for her.

—If the two of you were to log in to «Sword Art Online», what will you do?

Taketatsu & Itou: Eeh!?

Taketatsu: A death game where our lives is actually on the line... you mean?

—Yes. For example, working to complete the game like Kirito, supporting the clearing group players as a merchant like Lisbeth, and I believe there's other things, like passing time by fishing as well...

Taketatsu: The fishing episode was interesting, wasn't it. That space on the 22nd floor was lovely.

—What do you think you'll be doing?

Taketatsu: If I were to log in myself, I don't think I'll fight. I'll end up living the rest of my life in «Sword Art Online». Because I'm a chicken (haha).

—There certainly were a lot of players who didn't get out of the «Starting City» in the original work and anime.

Taketatsu: That's right. I think I'll be one of those people.

—What about you, Itou-san?

Itou: I almost don't play online games at all, but I'm scared of fighting too. My life would really be at stake, wouldn't it? So I don't think I'll leave the «Starting City» either.

Taketatsu: We're both cowards (haha).

Itou: I do want to support somehow, though...

Taketatsu: Hmm, even if you focus entirely to healing, it's scary thinking about the lives of others are in your hands. I would work hard, but an incident like "Ah, I can't heal!" were to happen for example, just thinking about an ally dying before my eyes in the next instant is...

Itou: Scary, scary...

Taketatsu: It feels like it'll become a trauma... As I thought, I'll huddle into a ball in a inn (haha).

Itou: Me too (haha).

—Well then, how about when playing a normal online game, not «Sword Art Online»?

For example, would you play a character of the same gender as yourself?

Taketatsu: I change based on my mood and the game. For example, how much the face can be changed in that particular game. Like if there's a really cool character, I can be male too, if I can choose a girl with a really cute face, I'll pick that girl.

—Depending on the character customisation... you mean?

Taketatsu: The outfits and the class I want are important as well. Like the outfits for the girls in this game are cuter, or I want to be a magician in this game. I think about stuff like "If I'm a magician, would this outfit look better on a male or female?" while I choose.

Itou: The appearances are important, aren't they (haha).

Taketatsu: The appearance is important!

—Are you the type to take note of your personality while playing?

Taketatsu: It changes, it changes! If it's a male character, I won't use emoticons at all like a man and keep my messages simple, like "Yo"; if it's a female character, I'll go like "Nice to meet you ☺"... I really do change.

—What about you, Itou-san?

Itou: That conversation earlier was all gibberish to me (haha).

Taketatsu: No kidding...

—If you were to play a game, would you think that it's better to be a female character like yourself?

Itou: I would like it to be a cute girl as expected. But would a male character be stronger?

—There's games like that too, and there's games that depends on class instead than gender as well.

Itou: I'm a beginner, so I think I'll decide based on whether it's strong or not. Also, I'll get scared and run away if the enemy gets close, so I'll prefer to do weak attacks from far away (haha).

—Thank you very much. Now then, last of all, a message for all of the users eagerly awaiting the sale of the game.

Taketatsu: In this game, you raise flags with all sorts of girls while enjoying the original story. I think it's really hard to Kirito-kun and the rest for not being able to log out when they thought they cleared the game. However, more drama happens from that point and characters uninvolved in the anime gets involved and the story goes on. Those hope that didn't come to fruition in the anime too... there's parts like that too, so I hope you'll please play it for yourself and look for the one you like, clearing this death game.

Itou: Yui-chan couldn't interact much with characters with from her Papa, Mama and Leafa, but she questions and talks with various characters in the game, allowing you to see many facets of her that couldn't be seen in the anime. Nothing would please me more than to have people enjoy those parts. Yui may be naive, but as a result of that, she can say out things that the other girls can't, straight to the face, so please keep an eye on her. Please enjoy it!

Hidaka Rina



—Please tell me your thoughts on recording for the anime and game.

Hidaka: I received the role, Silica, from the audition and got to take part in the events too, but I don't appear anywhere aside from the 1st, 4th and last episode. However, when playing Silica again after the over-1-cour break in between the 4th and last episode, I felt really happy since it'd been so long. Also, in the game, I got to act out what wasn't depicted in the anime, the new side of Silica and her relationship with Kirito-kun, so I do feel some emotional attachment towards her as a character.

—You were mainly featured only in the 4th episode, but it seems you were pretty popular.

Hidaka: Yes, that's right! I received many requests each week going "Silica, please appear" after SAO started broadcasting. But please talk to the director instead (haha). Still, I was really glad about receiving those messages.

—If you were able to send a message to Silica, what would you like to tell her?

Hidaka: You may be calling Kirito "Onii-chan" in the anime and game as a little sister-character, but Kirito-kun has a proper little sister of his own, so leave the little sister-character position to Leafa-chan. Silica, you like Kirito-kun too, so get rid of that little sister-character position and go right at Kirito-kun as a girl! That's what I want to say (haha).

—If you were to get logged in to «Sword Art Online», how would you spend the time?

Hidaka: I like peaceful times, so I somewhat doubt I'll be able to clear the game. I think I'll do some business and fish while living without a care (haha).

—If you were to act as a character aside from Silica, which would you like to try?

Hidaka: I was troubled over whether to go for Silica or Yui at the audition, so honestly speaking, it would be Yui. But I want to try acting as Sachi who appeared in the 3rd episode. It's

because of the character as well, but it's also because I love Hayami Saori-san who played Sachi (haha).

—Have you ever played a MMORPG?

Hidaka: I've never played any, but I hear it's a game without an end. Those who like it will probably continue playing it, but I think I might just shout out "When will I get to the goal~!?" instead (haha). But one of the charming points of online games is being able to fight together with various people, isn't it? I do want to try that out once.

—If you were to play one, do you think you will pick a male or girl character?

Hidaka: I heard that female characters are more kindly and well-received, so a female one, perhaps (haha).

—Were there any scenes in the game that made an impression on you?

Hidaka: There are times when Silica gets jealous and all, or becomes rather assertive in the game. And it's not in battle, but there's a whole lot of lines where Silica tries to get her feelings across that will make your heart throb, so those made Silica really girlish. Also, there's an event where several people got dragged into playing house with Yui, but that was extremely amusing, so please try it out yourself!

—This is a game where Kirito gets to adventure together with a partner, but if you were the one playing it, which character would you like to partner up with, Hidaka-san?

Hidaka: I act as Silica, so I do feel like I would "like to partner up with Kirito-kun", but... if I was in Kirito's place, Asuna would be nice too. Asuna's cool even from a woman's viewpoint, yet not too cool and liked by men as well; she's a character that's popular with both men and women, isn't she? I personally want to try becoming a cool woman like Asuna too.

—And finally, a message for the users looking forward to the game, please.

Hidaka: Silica didn't appear very much in the anime, but she gets to speak a lot in the game, so please look forward to it.

Takagaki Ayahi



—What were your feelings when you heard that 『SAO』 will become a game?

Takagaki: 『SAO』 was originally a story about a game, so I wasn't that surprised about it becoming a game, but I did wonder, "How exactly will it end up if it really becomes a game?". It's not like we could really go into the world of «Aincrad» and the Nerve Gear isn't created yet (haha). And after I read through the game's script, I was startled at how different it was from what I imagined.

—What did you mean by it being different from what you imagined?

Takagaki: I thought it would be a game that followed the original story, but it was completely different, huh. Despite it being derived from the original work, the original development of clearing from the 76th floor onwards was surprising. Also, after I thought everyone would be partying together and fighting, it turned out to be fighting as 2 with a partner, didn't it. I had the image that Kirito's partner was Asuna or Leafa, so I looked forward to seeing how Liz the blacksmith would fight as his partner. The development of fighting and clearing together with Kirito was truly startling.

—Liz is a «Master Macer», so she's fighting with a mace, isn't she?

Takagaki: She did say "I can do it too" in the anime, after all (haha). In the anime, she partied up with Kirito in episode 7, "Warmth of the Heart", and her relationship with Kirito from there was... that's how things went, so it was nice teaming up with Kirito once again in the game. I would like to say that I'm glad.

—If you were able to send a message to Lisbeth, what would you like to tell her?

Takagaki: It's especially obvious in the game, but Liz charges straight in once her switch's flipped, so there were some shocking bits while I was recording. There are times when Liz was conflicted between her feelings towards Kirito and her desire to cheer for Asuna, at Kirito's side. I personally think "There's no need to care about Asuna, just go straight for it" sometimes,

though (haha). But she still can't get between them all the same... Liz really is a good person, though.

However, there's plenty of time she could be together with Kirito in the game and times when Kirito acts for Liz's sake, so I would like to send a message telling her that I'm glad for her being able to adventure together with Kirito.

—If you were to get logged in to «Sword Art Online», how would you spend the time?

Takagaki: Fighting with a bang using «sword skills» seems fun, but I don't think I can fight by myself, so I would like to try fighting after getting a party.

—If you were the one playing this game, which character would you like to partner up with, Takagi-san?

Takagaki: I'll be Kirito, right? Then I'll like to make Liz my partner immediately and go for the Liz route.

—Were there any scenes in the game that made an impression on you?

Takagaki: The last scene that could be said to be the finale of «Sword Art Online» was really impressive and shocking. It's an original episode unique to the game; a scene that I was very fond of, so I'll be glad if you could clear the game and experience it for yourself.

—And lastly, a message for the users looking forward to the game, please.

Takagaki: I think the lovely part of the game is how you get to enjoy a story that goes a little different from the original work. Please enjoy the story unique to the game and deepen the bonds between the characters!

Tomatsu Haruka



—When did you first hear that 『SAO』 was going to become a game?

Tomatsu: Halfway through the dubbing session for the anime, during the 1st cour, if I'm not wrong. Because I saw Matsuoka (Yoshitsugu)-kun recording a commercial for the game. The original story of 『SAO』 used a game as its base, so it was like a dream for it to actually become a game.

Aincrad was cleared on the 75th floor in the original work, but the game explores how things will turn out if it continues on from the 76th floor, giving a chance to play what everyone imagined about, huh. I'm really looking forward to it. Also, it was a full-dive-type game in the original work, but that's impossible right now, though it would be nice if it returned as something like that someday.

—Have you already taken a look at the game's media and such?

Tomatsu: The recording is already done, but I haven't seen anything outside of the commercials and promo videos yet.

—In the game, Kirito goes around with the other girls and... there's how things go sometimes, but what do you feel, Tomatsu-san, acting as his legal wife, Asuna?

Tomatsu: Kirito-kun in the game assumes an attitude that doesn't oppose any of the heroines completely, so I do wonder about how it would be sometimes. He did get forced into pairs with girls and went through things similar to dates in the anime, but he goes even further in the game (haha).

There weren't many scenes where Asuna got jealous in the anime, but there were plenty in the game. Also, there's times when she misunderstands what Kirito-kun and his partner were doing, and interrogates them for answers (haha).

—Even so, does she properly maintain her legal wife status?

Tomatsu: Of course (haha). It's not just Kirito-kun; there are family-like scenes where Yui's there as well and scenes showing how she spends time alone with Kirito-kun too.

—In the game, Kirito, or rather, the player gets to choose the other heroines as well, but what do you think is a charm point of Asuna that belongs to her alone, that would make Kirito turn to look at her?

Tomatsu: Hmm, if I were to say the one thing she surpasses all of these girls at, I guess it would definitely be her skill at cooking, won't it? Not that the way to Kirito-kun's heart is through the stomach (haha), but that in terms of cooking skill, I doubt she would lose to anyone.

—That's true (haha). Well then, have you found any new aspects of Asuna, especially in the game?

Tomatsu: There were those scenes where she got jealous too, but even though she appears mature, I realised Asuna really still was a 17-year-old girl. There are glimpses of her childishness every now and then. She's cool when fighting, though (haha).

Also, there are many scenes of peaceful daily life in the game, which made me realise this was how Asuna and the rest lived in «Aincrad». Asuna in her daily life, or rather, her off mode is extremely girlish and cute, you know.

—Then, if we suppose the rest of the heroines are rivals, who would Asuna think is her greatest rival?

Tomatsu: Hmm, Lisbeth, maybe. Among them.

—And the reason?

Tomatsu: It's just elimination, though. Leafa's his sister, so it's fine, and I don't think he sees Yui as anything more than family, so. Next, he said Silica resembled his little sister, so he probably doesn't have any romantic interest in her either (haha). Thus, the great rival is Lisbeth!

—If you were to play a MMORPG, what character would you like to try using, Tomatsu-san?

Tomatsu: I believe I'll probably make a female character. Also, I do think I'll go for a type that supports from the back, rather than one that fights in front. However, I don't mean that I want a character that can only support during team matches, but one that can fight somewhat even when alone.

—Asuna was in the clearing group, but if you were a player in 『SAO』, what do you think you'll be doing, Tomatsu-san?

Tomatsu: I guess I'll probably be fishing around the middle floors. Also, having fun with quests every now and then, participating in events, and stuff. I really would be a little scared to go as far as to take part in boss battles, so...

—If you were able to send a message to Asuna, what would it be?

Tomatsu: Asuna does have her position as the legal wife, but there's many girls around Kirito-kun, so I hope she'll make sure that Kirito-kun doesn't flirt around and grab a hold of his heart properly. I personally believe going for his heart through his stomach would be a reliable plan (haha).

—Which scenes in the game made an impression on you?

Tomatsu: There were many scenes that left an impression, but the one that could be considered the top would be when everyone did a cooking showdown. Everyone made food, and then made Kirito-kun eat up all of it... It was a scene where everyone's cooking had their own individual touches and I had much fun reading through the scenario too.

—By the game, it seems there's a scene like this in the game as well...

It's a naked apron scene, isn't it (haha).

—So it really was naked apron, wasn't it (haha). It looked like it, but I did think that might not be it...

Tomatsu: That's right. Kirito-kun said "I want you to do a naked apron" all of a sudden. I was truly surprised when acting it out too. I was wondering what exactly went over Kirito-kun.

—Let's leave the details until actually playing the game! Well then, lastly, a message for the users waiting for the game's sale, please.

Tomatsu: The game is filled to the brim with interesting developments such as Asuna going with Kirito-kun and Yui-chan like a family or lovers, or fighting with the rest of the heroines. You get the chance to see Asuna get jealous, so please play it over and over again.

Matsuoka Yoshitsugu



—First, please tell us your thoughts on finishing the recording for the TV anime's 2nd cour and the game for 『Sword Art Online』 (SAO below).

Matsuoka: It was truly over in the blink of an eye. I was made to go drinking with the director after my role got decided. At that time, the director told me, "It's because you're the only one who can be counted on for the whole of 2 cours". My seniors said, "The leading actor has to be the one to pull everyone together as the leader of the production" to me, so I always pondered over things like "Aren't there anything I can do for the actors as the leader?" or "How should I get the people who came to this place for the first time up to speed?".

Due to that, I figured the best form of etiquette towards those people would be to let my voice out with all my heart to give them a feel of the atmosphere of the place, and more or less put all of my spirit into acting. I believe that might have increased the area's morale as a result.

—And the dubbing session was a battle against such pressure as a result, wasn't it?

Matsuoka: Kirito was really a role with many shouting scenes, so I dealt with it as though my life was being shaved away during the dubbing session, but there was also a time near the beginning when my manager warned me with a "Be sure to think about the next scene too".

However, I personally hate half-baked efforts when creating a work the most, so I acted with all I had.

—What if you could send a message to Kirito?

Matsuoka: "Isn't it about time to settle down?" (haha). Kirito's still a 16 – 17 years old boy, though.

—Which meaning of "Isn't it about time to settle down?" were you referring to?

Matsuoka: He has a wife in Asuna after all, so in various meanings, Kirito-kun's already... I thought it would be best for him to be prepared to settle down anytime (haha).

—That certainly might be true, huh (haha). If you were to get logged in to «SAO», how would you spend your time, Matsuoka-san?

Matsuoka: I do wish to try for the clearing group if it wasn't a death game. But if it's «SAO», there's the risk of death too, so the battles would be filled with fear, won't they?

—Well then, are there any characters you wish to act as?

Matsuoka: If that's the case, I do want to try acting as an enemy.

—By enemy, do you mean monsters or such?

Matsuoka: A villain role in Laughing Coffin or something. For villain roles, although part of it comes from the character, you don't have to be bound by morals, right? And you get to let out the concept of evil held by the actor as well, so to speak. I wonder just what sorts of evil deeds are being conducted in the world of «SAO» (haha). I do wish to go "Hyahaaaaa!" while berserking (haha). Also, I do hope to get a chance at playing a last boss-type villain role like Heathcliff.

—Could I ask about the dubbing session for the game?

Matsuoka: To be honest, I haven't done that much voice recording for this game. The adventure parts, the endings for each character, the system voices and dialogues from the allies and attacks... to split it loosely, there's roughly 3 patterns for my performances. Hence, I honestly don't know very much about how most of the game's going to be.

The game's setting is the clearing of the 76th floor onwards; a story completely absent from the original work and anime, and the depictions of the stories for each character after that feel very fresh, making those if-developments extremely attractive.

The script I received made the story totally fragmented, but still, it was really fascinating, making me extremely curious over what happened in that span of time while I was doing the recording. This might be a little of a spoiler, but you start this game married to Asuna, you know. And yet he gets close to the other characters and all, and in the endings... such things made me wonder about what exactly happened to Asuna (haha).

—If you were to set out on an adventure, who would you pick as a partner, Matsuoka-san?

Matsuoka: That's right... I'll be choosing Liz as my partner. I love Liz! And if I had Yui in her navigation pixie form, it would be perfect (haha).

—Then, let's change the topic; if you could say a word to Kayaba Akihiko, what would it be?

Matsuoka: That's complicated... But first would be "Thank you very much for creating the game, «SAO»". Many people died, but he certainly created the foundation of the fulldive technology and exerted a large influence over the world of 『SAO』. It was because this person was there, that the Nerve Gear was produced and as a result, produced many more fulldive-type games.

It's a thank you very much with various depths of meaning to it. And at the same time, "Apologise a little at least!". The end of the 14th episode of the anime was all that, but there were times when I thought "Don't you just get all satisfied over being in the know by yourself!".

—Well then, finally, a message for the users looking forward to the game, please.

Matsuoka: This may be an if-story that unfolds on the PSP as its medium, but its world is filled to the brim with settings and experiences that would be impossible in anything but a game. I hope you enjoy playing through it over and over again. It's on a portable device, so I believe you can take some time playing it during the breaks for transportation and such, so I sincerely hope that you can take all of the characters to their endings.

Credits

- Translation – Tap