

**1. What was your first fandom you ever joined (if you were into a fandom). Did you read fic for it? Have you ever written fic?**

I have always been avidly involved in fandom and started writing fanfic when I was twelve – yes, I was *super cool* in my school years, clearly. The first show I ever became completely obsessed with was *Gilmore Girls*. I was absolutely in love with Lorelai Gilmore and I believe that was when I also started to really love writing a dynamic with a single mother.

I also then wrote GG fanfic for the Luke/Lorelai ship (java junkie, if anyone was around back then. When ships had names that were not portmanteaus). Honestly, the fact that it was not apparent to myself that I was a lesbian until I was in high school was crazy, considering I spent my middle school years daydreaming about female television actresses and characters. I loved, as a pre-teen writing GG fic, writing from Luke's point of view... wonder why...

Once I realized I was gay, I devoured tons of sapphic ship fanfics, and then started writing them. I read mostly for the faberry (Rachel/Quinn of *Glee* infamy... those were the days), but wrote primarily in the *Grey's Anatomy* fandom for Callie/Arizona (calzona, if you will). Callie/Arizona was a ship very close to my heart, because I LOVED Grey's, and Callie went through her sexual awakening on the show at the same time that I was figuring out my sexuality.

**2. How does your personal life inform your writing, if at all?**

Honestly, I don't think that my personal life informs my writing very much. Which is kind of crazy, I guess, because I spend so much of my time and energy in my daily life thinking about/planning bits and pieces of writing.

There are definitely parts of myself/my thoughts/feelings etc that sneak into my writing, but it's usually unintentional. I think that happens to most writers, in some way.

But, for the most part, I believe my characters exist as themselves. As their own beings, their own people, their own stories.

**3. What has been the most difficult book for you to write?**

The thing is, when I first get swept up in an idea, I'm completely immersed in it. For however long that lasts – days or weeks... maybe months, if I'm lucky – writing is so easy. The characters and the story they need to be told flows so easily.

But when that fades and I'm left with having to complete their journey without that sheer *passion*... well, that's when writing becomes more difficult.

This is the pattern I get into when writing *every* book. So, they all follow this pattern. The book that was the easiest for me to write was *When You Least Expect It*, mostly because I got like 70% of the book written when I was still in those first, like, 5 weeks of sheer passion!

**4. What part of the writing process strikes you, first (a plot line, a single scene, the characters, etc)?**

Truly, it could be *anything* that hits me, but it's usually either a plot idea I love. Occasionally, it's a character or two, but... it's their romance that always strikes me, first. I suppose that's a combination of plot+character. I usually think of a couple dynamic, and think... yeah. I want to know more about that.

Like, when I wrote *Those Who Wait*, even though it was a fanfic first, I didn't think of it as "how to manipulate these 2 characters." I thought of – imagine if this woman was a closeted politician and this woman was the person who accidentally breaks down all of her defenses. It just happened that I ended up writing it as a fic at the time, because I'd never ventured into writing original stories at that point, and it was easy to meld it into fic-world.

**5. You're currently writing *Midnight Rain* as a *Those Who Wait au*, an alternate universe in which Sutton and Charlotte never reunited in the end. Do you have any other "au" ideas for Sutton and Charlotte?**

I sure do!

I mean... I imagine so many different avenues for a lot of my stories to go down, in the process of writing them, to be perfectly honest. And, specifically, for Sutton and Charlotte – they were just *meant to be* in every world, in my mind. I think my biggest "what-if" scenarios for them aren't really au's from canon-TWW, but more of... true fanfics lol. Like, I have this idea that Charlotte never agreed to become Sutton's sapphic-dating-mentor, so they truly went their separate ways at the beginning of the story, but in 10 years, when they are both in their mid-late 30s, Sutton – a literature professor who teaches a lot of subject courses on sexuality, feminism, and politics – reaches out to Charlotte Thompson, who has recently become a senator, to be a guest-feature in her class this semester.

Listen, once a fanfic writer, always a fanfic writer!

**6. What is your favorite idea that you haven't yet written?**

... this is my own question but it's not fair to ask myself!

I have SO MANY ideas. Truly. I have at least 27 ideas saved on my laptop. Some of them have just character names reserved while the plot lives in my head, some have a few chapters written, some have varying outlines. And I vacillate through them at different points in time.

The one I always come back to, for the last ~2 years or so, though, is *The Hidden Jewel of Holloway*, and I will – cautiously and tentatively – say that it's the project I'm going to try to work on next.

A historical romance (set on my own continent, though, so I can just make up my own history and rules of the land), wherein two princesses of different countries are in an arranged marriage.

**7. What is your favorite meal/meal of the day?**

Um... uh... this is a REALLY hard question for me.

I guess dinner. Because you can eat anything during the evening and call it dinner, ya know?  
Breakfast – dinner. Sandwiches – dinner.

Also, for years I worked the night shift at a psychiatric rehabilitation and I slept through the day time for half of the week, so most of the time, the only true meal I ate was dinner.

**8. I can't help but ask – related to the *Midnight Rain* question – if you have any au's from *other* stories...?**

Of course I do!

In terms of Ellie and Mia and Riley and Gianna, I don't really have alternate universe ideas for them... yet?! No, for those couples, I really just imagine both of their years-long friendships the way things *needed* to happen for them.

For Brooke and Taylor, I suppose, I imagine that as well. When I write people who have a lot of build-up history, it's hard for me to see another way for things to play out. I love when people have those solid foundations. But I can imagine, for Brooke and Taylor, that even if Savannah never got pregnant, Taylor would have always found her way back to Faircombe. She would have always found her roots back home, and finding her way back home would always mean finding her way to Brooke. And, as we all know, Brooke would always choose Taylor. Even if she was fighting it.

For Caroline and Hannah, I had several different iterations playing out when I wrote WYLEI. In the first draft, they kissed for the first time when baking Abbie's birthday cupcakes. I ended up making it an almost-kiss, because I decided where I really wanted the story to go, and I knew if they kissed there, Caroline couldn't have just so easily moved on or pretended it didn't happen. It's just not in her nature. I then imagined what it would have been like if Caroline had tried to follow Hannah the night in the cabin, when Hannah left their shared bed...

I have a lot of what-ifs I can imagine for all of my characters, but at the end of the day, I know that even if the details of their journeys changed, they would always find their ways to one another. Even if Caroline didn't become Hannah's attorney, they would have run into each other when Caroline went to a school function with Norah, for example.

The women in the HCLU... they were meant to be.

**9. If you had to pick two of your main characters (from different books) to be best friends, who would they be? And who, if any, would be enemies?**

I don't think any of my main characters would be enemies... I'm not quite sure I've written any character (yet) who is unlikeable enough to another one of my mains to be considered an ENEMY.

Brooke is the first person who comes to mind that would be, uh, slow to warm. And I think that the antithesis of Brooke is Gianna. Yes, that's the pairing that would get along the least. Certainly not enemies, and Gianna wouldn't have any ill-will toward Brooke, at all.

But Brooke would be highly suspicious of Gianna, I think, and wouldn't really respect this beautiful, privileged internet influencer until she really got to know her.

Which is amazing, really, because Taylor would LOVE Gianna, and in my mind – therefore in HCLU canon – Taylor and Gianna have met a handful of times, already, as internet success stories.

... I think I might have just talked myself into having Gianna and Brooke as one of my New Year's Eve focuses.

### **10. Who is your own personal favorite character in any of your books?**

This, once again, is something extremely unfair to be asked. I can't believe I've made other people answer this.

But... AGH. I'm really cycling here. I have a handful of people that I definitely am jumping immediately to – and you know what?

I'm going to say Regan Gallagher.

I stan the most loyal friend.

### **11. What book got you into reading?**

This is something I've spoken about a bit, but for anyone who isn't yet aware – when I started school and started to learn how to read/write, it was quickly discovered that I have dyslexia. I am incredibly fortunate to have had early intervention, and I had very extensive tutoring that got me to a point where I (hopefully clearly) am able to utilize tools to read and write without much issue.

Because of that, though, one of my regular tutoring assignments was to sit with my parents and read aloud for at least 30 minutes every night before bed. And for a long time? *I hated* it. I hated it.

Until my dad brought me *The Adventures of Pippi Longstocking*. It's the first book I remember that I actually enjoyed reading at night. The first book I wanted to keep reading when my 30 minutes was up. From there, I was unstoppable.

### **12. What book got you into reading sapphic romance?**

As I said before, I read a lot of sapphic fanfic – long, long before I read sapphic romance. I didn't get into sapphic romance novels until... late 2017/early 2018? I'd also read A TON of heteromance in high school.

I started trying to browse for sapphic romance novels in... maybe 2012 or so? And I remember that, back then, there were so few options, especially compared to today. Because of that, I just – went back to fanfic.

But I happened across *Who'd Have Thought* by G. Benson soon after it was published (fun fact, G Benson also wrote fanfic in a fandom I was in and I'd read her fanfic long before her books!). And I loved that damn book. I wanted MORE.

**13. If you could pick one song to epitomize your characters, what would it be? One song each, for as many characters as you'd like to answer with.**

I DO NOT LIKE THIS QUESTION. My characters can't be boiled down to one song! D:

My biggest issue, honestly, is that I have a ton of songs that I listen to for my characters, that fit them all at different points in their journeys. Hence, the new Song of the Month posts!

Miss Independent by Kelly Clarkson IS Charlotte Thompson in *TWW*, though. And Midnight Rain is Charlotte's song for, well, Midnight Rain.

OH! Oh, oh! Redwood Tree by Cam is the EPITOME of Taylor Vandenberg. And Pageant Material is a perfect Brooke Watson song.

Labyrinth is perfect for Hannah Dalton.

Head Over Heels by April McLean is great for Caroline Parker during WYLEI.

Enchanted by Taylor Swift for Sutton Spencer.

What Can I Do by Renee Rapp is *perfect* for Gianna.

... all right, that was what popped right into my head.

**14. What is your favorite Taylor Swift song and/or lyric?**

I'm a classic gal. The Red album came out when I was in my early twenties and I was a huge swiftie when I was surrounded by people at my university who mocked Taylor and swifties. I will just never forget the first time I listened to *All Too Well*. I thought nothing would overtake it.

And I stayed strong with that belief until I heard *All Too Well 10 Minute Version*. I just – I think that entire song, all ten minutes, is lyrical genius. The whole thing.

Generally, I think Taylor is the fucking master of a bridge. Other than ATW, I think the entirety of *Cornelia Street* and *Exile* are absolutely fucking exquisite.

... also the bridges of *Death by A Thousand Cuts* and *Champagne Problems*.

I have to stop myself or I'll just keep going.

**15. Have you ever read a book – or fanfic – that is *criminally* underrated? Now is your chance to advertise it:**

Yes. The book is called *One Day You'll Leave Me* by Debra Flores. Please go read it if you haven't. It's a sapphic romance – there's no sex and it's plot heavy, but I think it's brilliant.

Also, *Behind the Green Curtain* by Riley LaShea, as a sapphic romance that *does* have sex scenes, but I just think it's beautifully written and very smartly done, but never reached the heights it could (should) have soared to!

## **16. What would you title your auto-biography?**

*Wait, What Was I Saying?*

– *I Forgot to Take my ADHD Meds Today*

## **17. You once told me that you debated whether or not you were going to have Riley end up with Gianna (THE SCANDAL! The HORROR! How dare you even contemplate that for my bb Gianna?!). What would have been the plan, then?**

AHHHH I know!

I *did* – briefly – debate it, honestly. I just was trying to work things out, you know? I had to figure out what Gianna's life would look like if Riley wasn't queer. I played around with the idea of her starting to sleep with Kristin, Mia's ex (GASP). I imagined they would kind of hate-fuck to be perfectly honest. Gianna, in *Down to A Science*, didn't like Kristin, as Gianna is a Beckett Twins Loyalist, and Kristin can sense that Gianna doesn't like her (because Gianna isn't really hiding it).

I just imagined that one night, when they were both out at a bar, they'd run into each other. Maybe Dull Dan was actually Dreamy Dan, and Riley was starting to really date him. Maybe Gianna was feeling a little down. Maybe Kristin was feeling like her life was a mess. Maybe they ended up falling into something that turned into something neither of them expected.

I think it could have worked out into something decent, still! I do.

But at the end of the day, I couldn't really pursue that story. Even if I thought it could have been something fun, it just – honestly, it wasn't fair to Gianna. Even if I could have convinced myself that she could fall in love with someone who wasn't Riley, I wanted Gianna – my perfect, sweet baby Gianna – to have the woman of her dreams. And I wanted it for Riley, too.

## **18. How does it feel to write full-time?**

Amazing. Terrifying. Like a dream. Like I'm going to fail.

I seriously never thought that writing was a feasible career path, even though I *loved* writing. I went to graduate school for a degree in secondary education, because in an ideal world, I loved the idea of teaching. But I really did not enjoy the logistics of being in the school system. I ended up in social work, and having no idea where I was going, long-term. I continued working there even after I started publishing, thinking that "one day" I would write full-time.

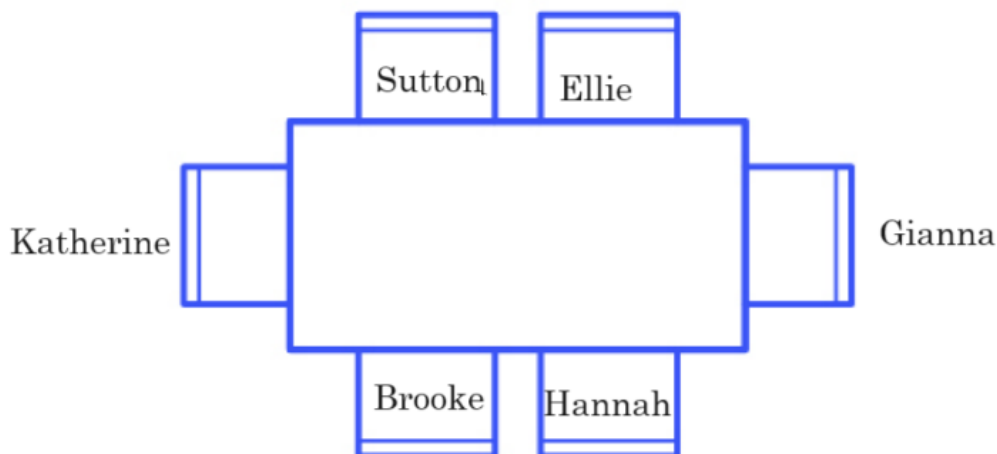
But taking that leap is scary! Leaving a steady, secure job to pursue something that entirely depends on... me?! Me, producing content that people resonate with. Me, publishing frequently enough to make a living. It's a lot of pressure! Which is why I never did it, even when I wanted to.

Having my future in my hands like this can be scary, but it's what I need. I was feeling very burned out at my other job, which bled into taking time and energy away from writing and creating content. Now, I feel like I finally am making productive strides toward what I always wanted to do.

Moving to Philadelphia, though, and really living the life I want to live with the woman I love was the proper incentive to jump, and I have no regrets.

**19. Finally – where would you put these characters on this seating chart:**

- Katherine Spencer**
- Brooke Watson**
- Gianna Makinen**
- Sutton Spencer**
- Hannah Dalton**
- Ellie Beckett**



**Explain your reasoning :)**

First and foremost, I have no idea what this gathering is or who is throwing it. But, I think Katherine would always be at the head of a table. So, that's where I started.

Sutton would, obviously, be seated next to her mother. I put Sutton next to Ellie, because Ellie is rather soft-spoken and is kind of anxious when meeting/talking to new people. But Sutton is just naturally so sweet and genuinely very attentive, so I think that she would put Ellie at-ease, and she would also be very curious about whatever Ellie is talking about.

Gianna, of course, would be seated next to Ellie. She wouldn't have it any other way. Gianna is also a great person to have at a head of a table, as she (and Katherine) can talk to anyone. Because of

that, it seemed fitting to have her next to Hannah, who is also soft-spoken, because she could really get some good and insightful conversation flowing with Hannah.

Brooke fits well between Hannah and Katherine, I think, because Brooke isn't really someone who wants to make a lot of superfluous small-talk. She wouldn't be a good fit next to Gianna, who I think she would be a little weary of, and I think if she and Ellie sat next to one another, they would have several awkward pauses. But she would love to talk to Hannah about infrastructure and design, and would enjoy talking to Katherine and Sutton, both about politics and about books.