

```

/*****
Don't Look At Me
When I'm Coding

**
 * @author Yuqian Ma
 * @memberof IMA_LowRes_23
 *
*****/

```

Please, don't look at me, when I'm coding.
I'm Yuqian. This is the title of my project.



This is my installation. Only two laptops? Yes, just two laptops.

But they are coding!

On the side of the black screen, it's where I'm writing the code for this project, but it stops as soon as you look at it!

There's a video of me underneath the code, like a screen reflection. You can sense my resistance when I'm being watched, like just now!

On the side of the white screen, it's where the AI outputs code. Conversely, it only outputs code when you are watching it.

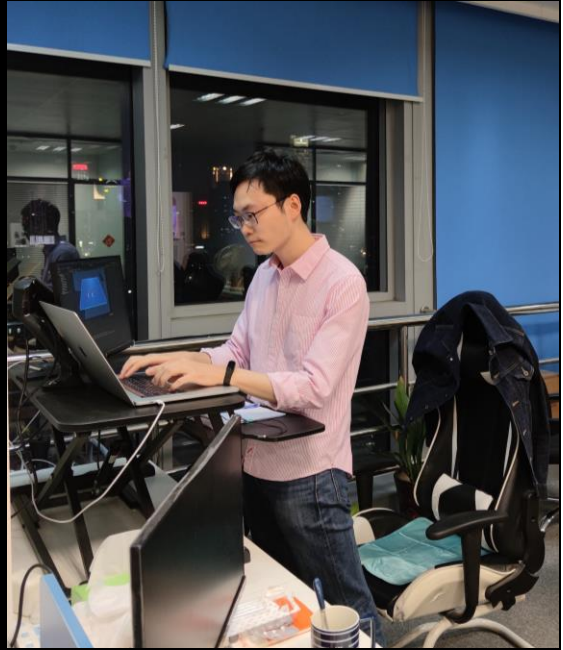
Why did I create this and what do I want to express? Let me explain to you.

Yuqian

8-Year Frontend Engineer

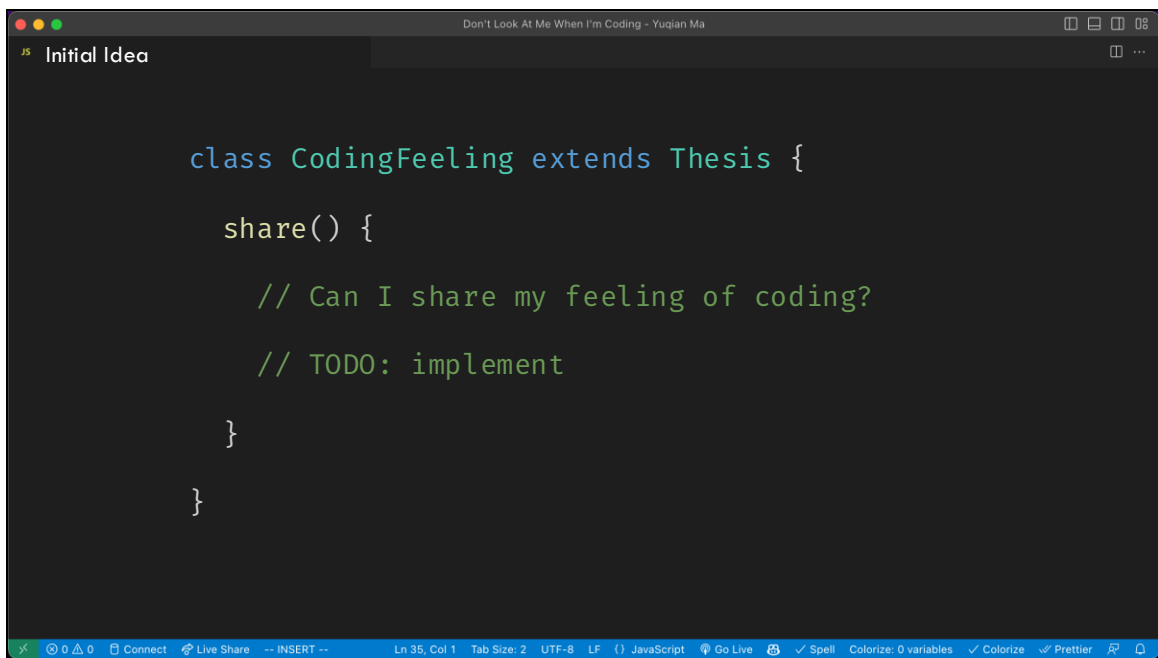
made my first webpage in elementary school

I enjoy coding



I'm Yuqian,
a front-end engineer for 8 years.
I made my first webpage when I was in elementary school.

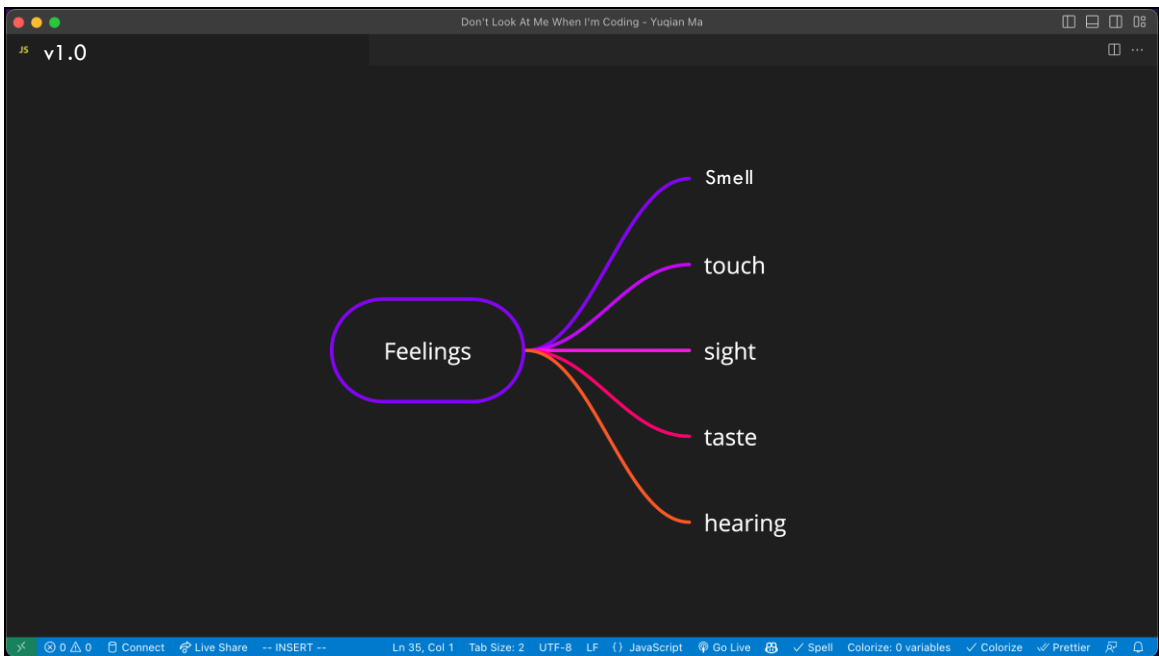
I enjoy coding.
I find coding extremely interesting, but many people don't know this feeling.



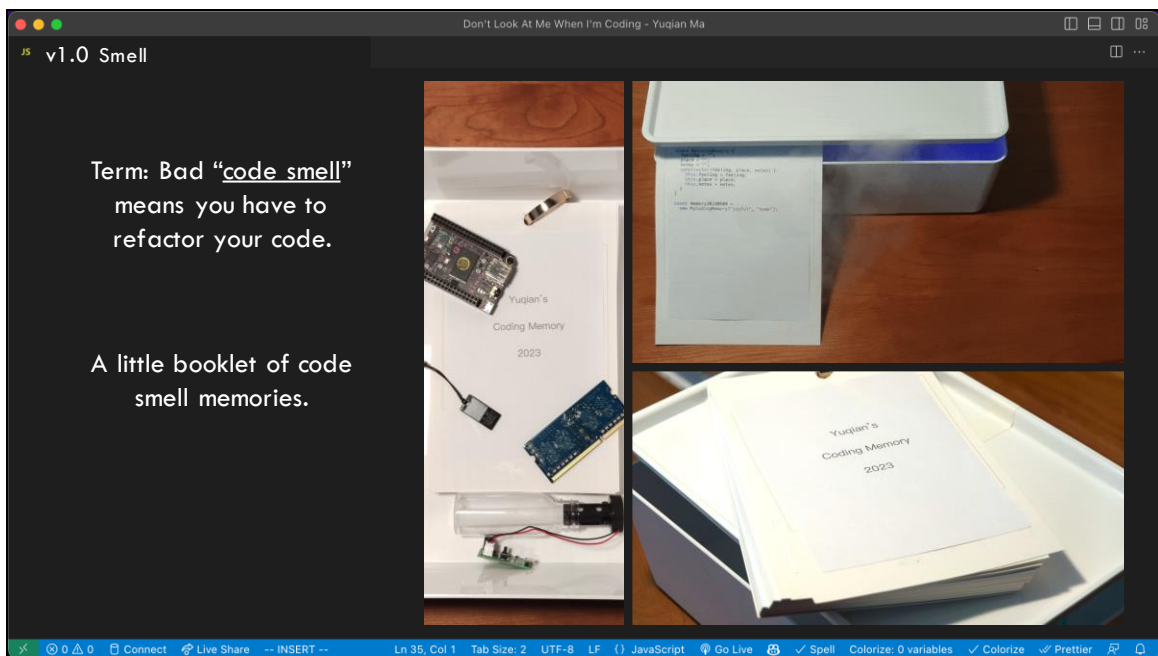
The screenshot shows a code editor window with a dark theme. The title bar at the top reads "Don't Look At Me When I'm Coding - Yuguang Ma". The editor's tab is labeled "Initial Idea". The code is written in JavaScript and defines a class named `CodingFeeling` that extends `Thesis`. The `share()` method is defined with two comments: `// Can I share my feeling of coding?` and `// TODO: implement`. The status bar at the bottom displays various settings: "Ln 35, Col 1", "Tab Size: 2", "UTF-8", "LF", "JavaScript", "Go Live", "Spell", "Colorize: 0 variables", "Colorize", "Prettier", and a refresh icon.

```
class CodingFeeling extends Thesis {  
  share() {  
    // Can I share my feeling of coding?  
    // TODO: implement  
  }  
}
```

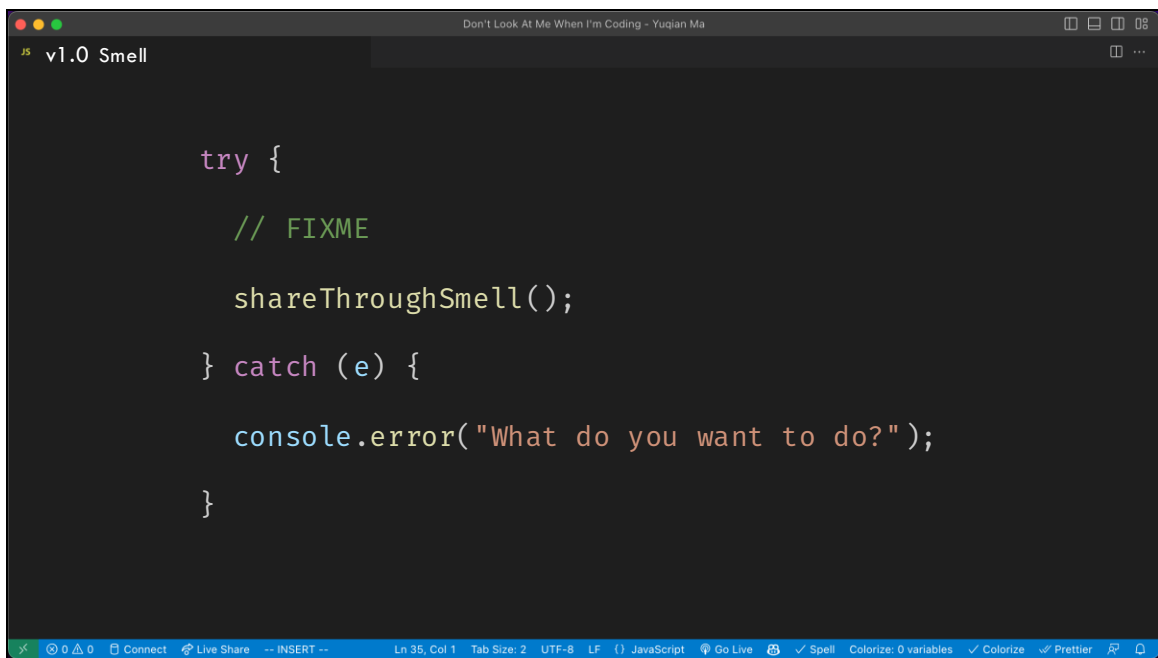
So, can I share my feeling of coding?



When we talk about feelings, naturally, we think about touch, sight, taste, and {next} smell.



There's a term in programming called "Code Smell". A bad smell means you need to refactor your code.
It's very familiar to programmers.
And smell is quite unique, so I created this code smell machine.
Collecting code blocks, making them into cards, each corresponding to a scent.
Hence, I have a little booklet of code smell memories.
It looks fun, fancy, and cool.

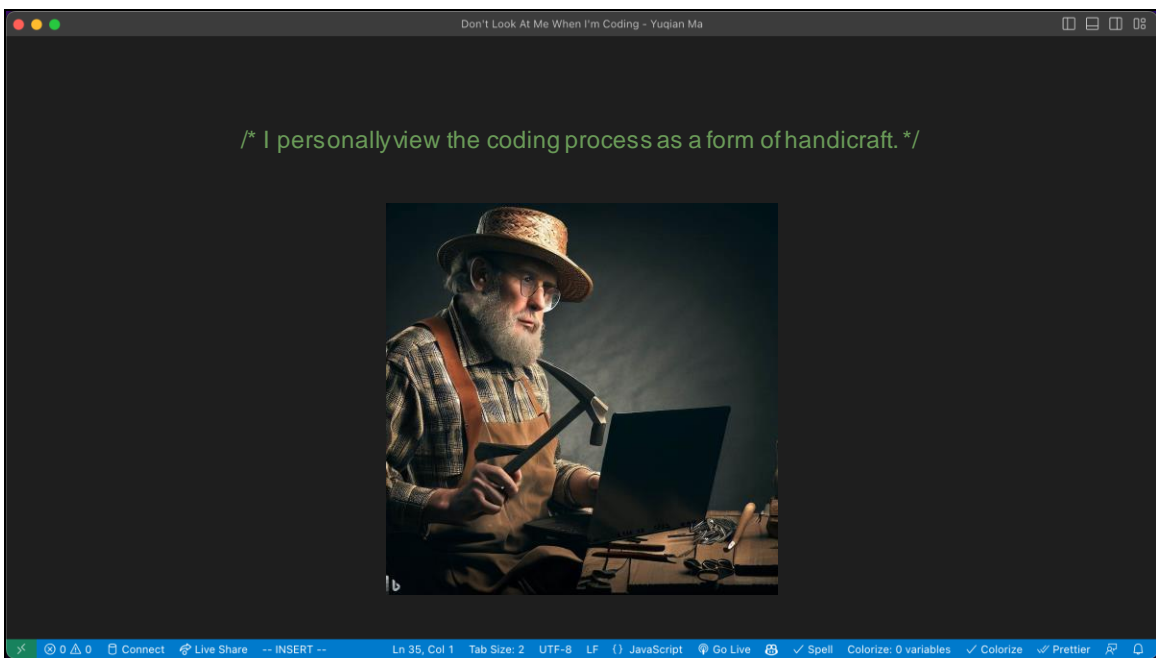


```
try {  
    // FIXME  
    shareThroughSmell();  
} catch (e) {  
    console.error("What do you want to do?");  
}
```

But, does it really express my feelings?

No, it doesn't!

Let me think back, what am I really trying to do?



To me, coding is not just a typing process. In fact, I see coding more as a craftsmanship - I'm creating a piece of craft.
Not just me, many coders share a similar pursuit. I can see it from their code. I want more people to understand this.

1912:

“People do not want good boots, it seems.”

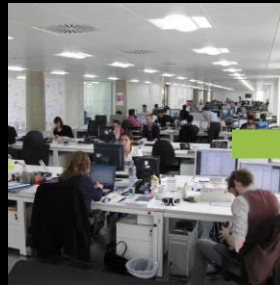
— In an industrial age
Quality (1912), John Galsworthy



2025:

“People do not want good **code**, it seems.”

— In an AI era



And, with the advent of the AI era, perhaps we are the last generation of coders to write code by hand. Just like people no longer order custom-made boots after the industrial era arrived.



Shoemakers' feeling in the past?

Carpenters' feeling in the past?

Coders' feeling in the past?
... lost...

While we have images to retain some memories,
{click}

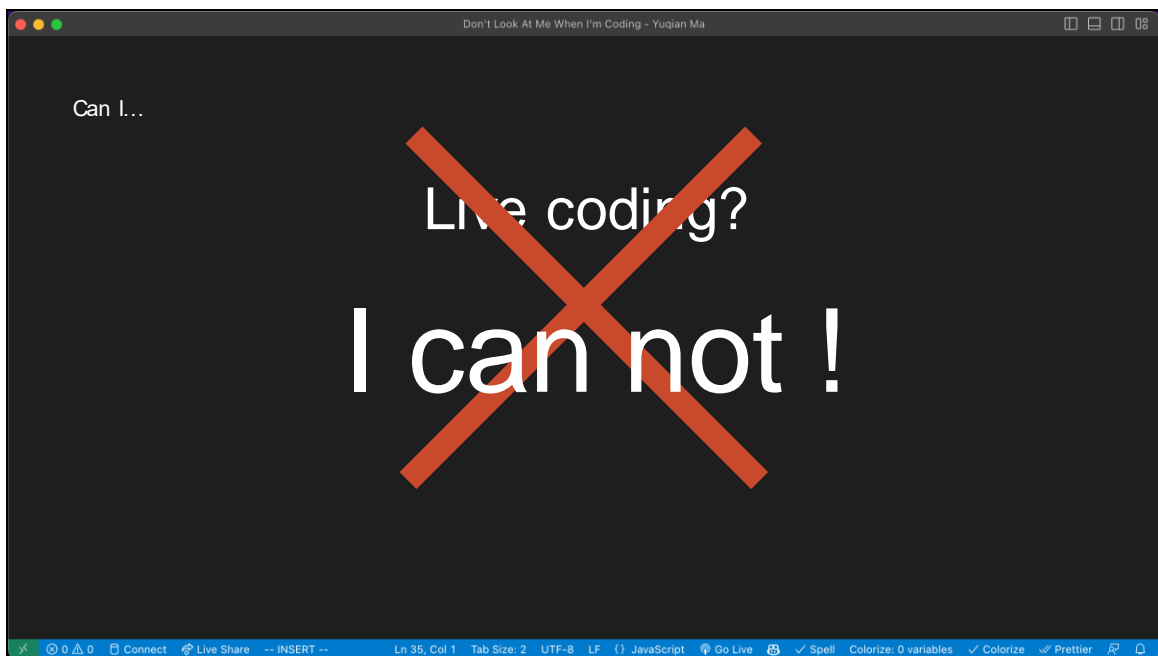
future generations can only rely on imagination to understand.

What did it feel like to be a shoemaker in the past?

What was it like for a carpenter?

Years from now, will someone ask, what did it feel like to be a coder?

The feeling of a coder could be lost forever.



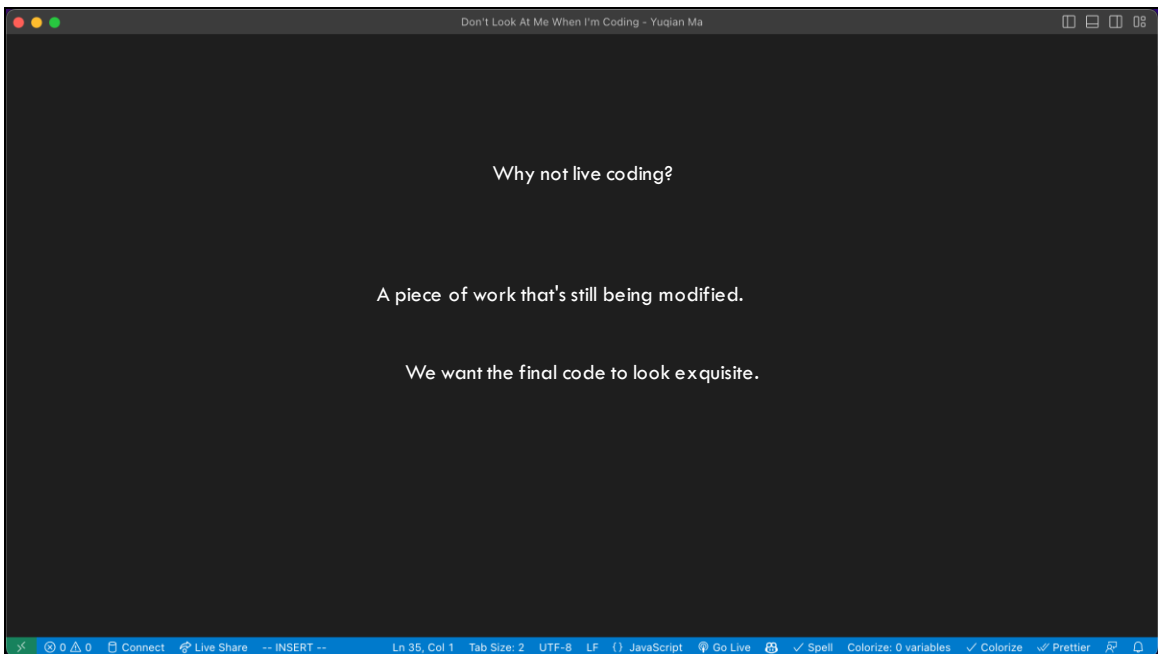
So, some people asked, can you perform Live Coding?

{click}

Others can see it directly, and we can also record it.

{click}

But no. No, no, no, I can't.



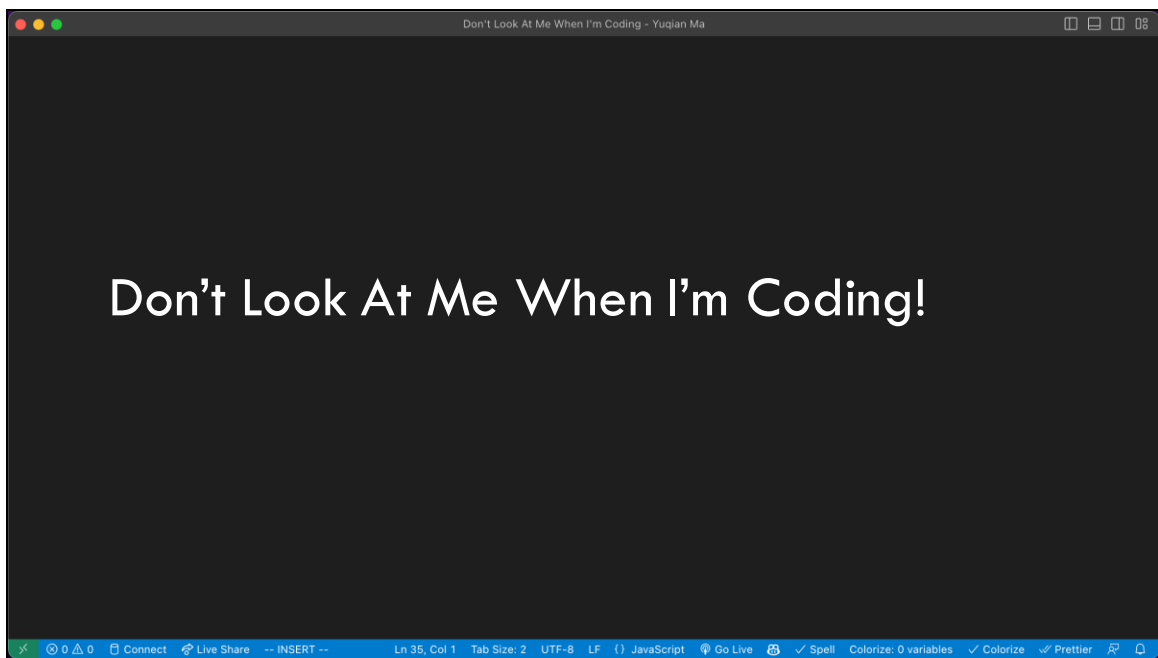
Many coders can't. We don't stand behind a coder at work, watching him or her write.

Even though, the code won't even be shown in front of people. Unlike other products, the code will be compiled. You can't see the code when you use the software.

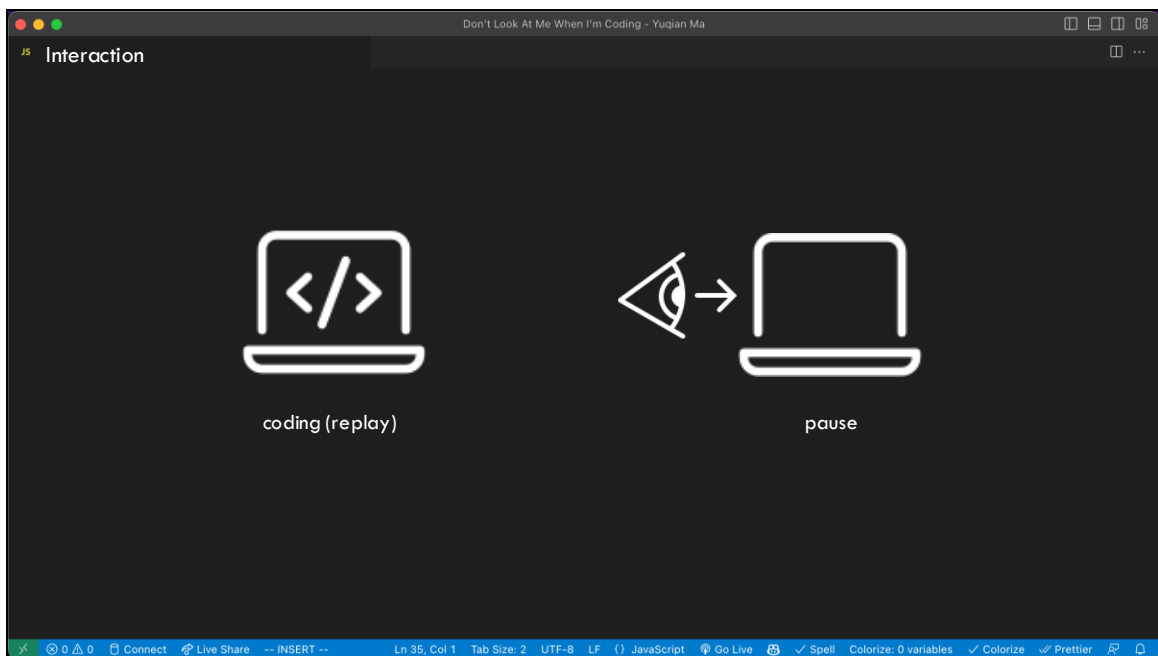
But coders care.

It's like a piece of work that's still being modified, every coder has some small habits, some steps, we don't want others to see.

We want the final code to look exquisite.

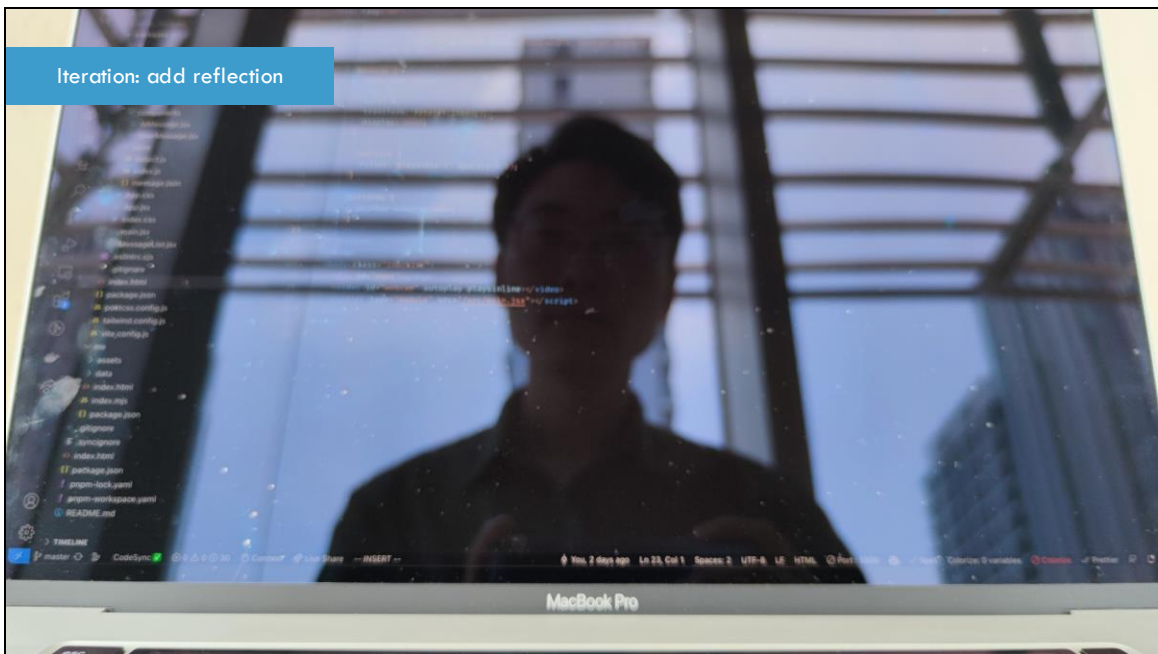


So, that's where the name of my work comes from: "Don't Look At Me When I'm Coding".



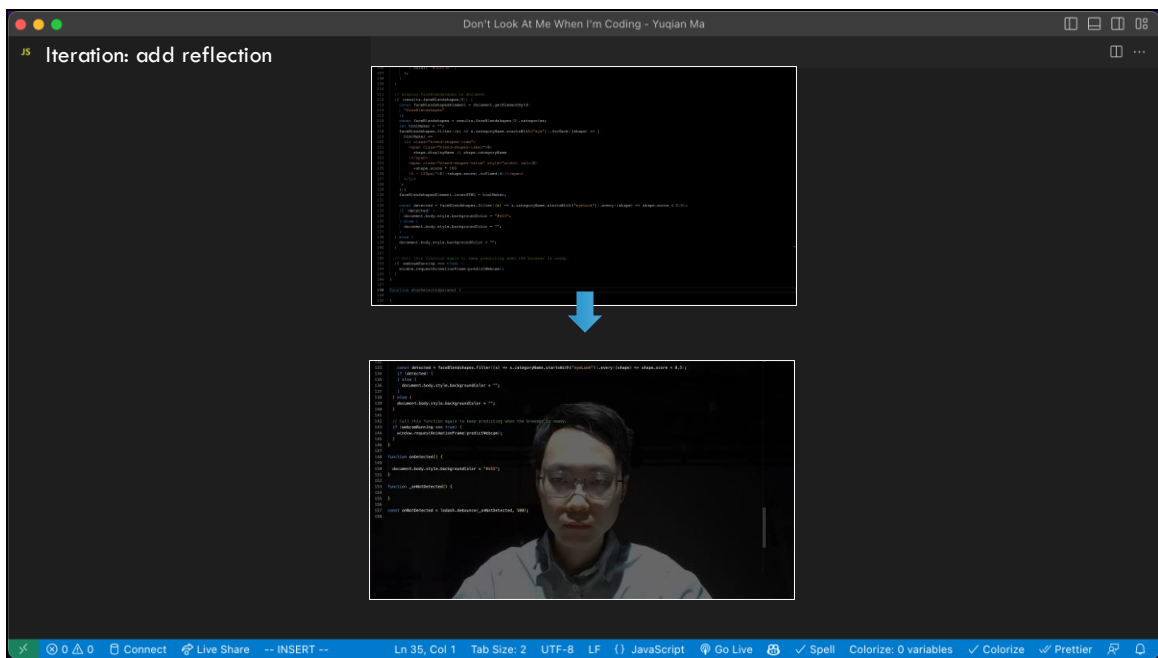
The interaction is simple:

It replays the code data I wrote for this project, just as if I am coding. But it stops when someone is watching.

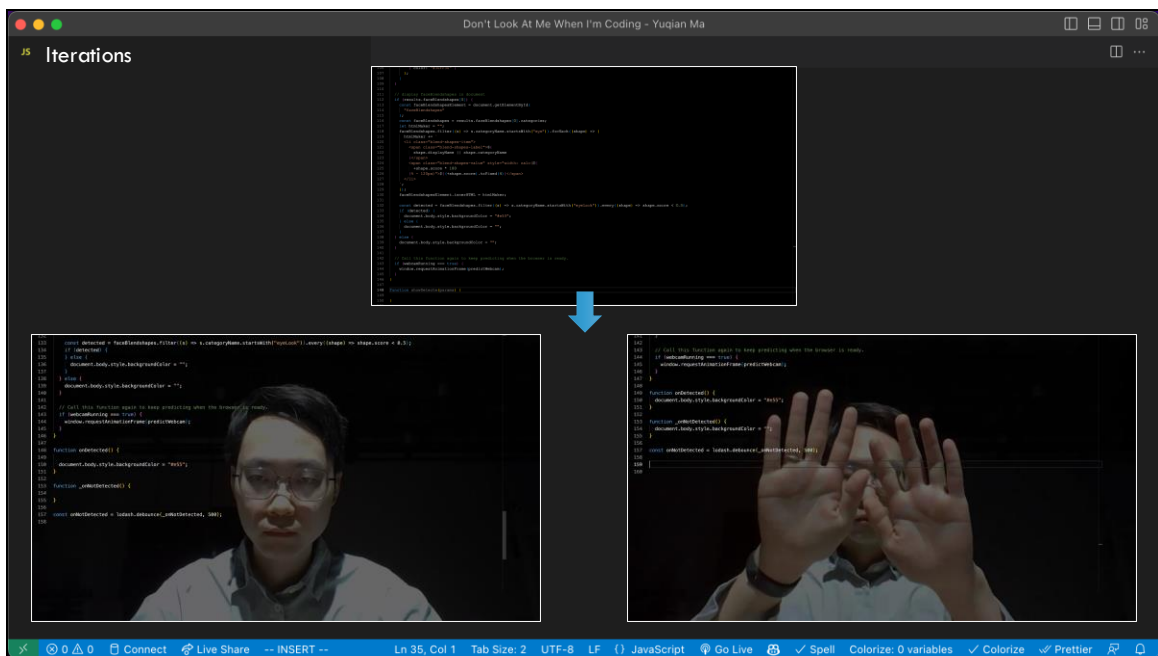


Then I received some feedback:

Thanks to Sharleen for reminding me that when I'm coding, there's a "me" in the screen: my reflection.



So I included the video of me. It's more interesting than just the code.

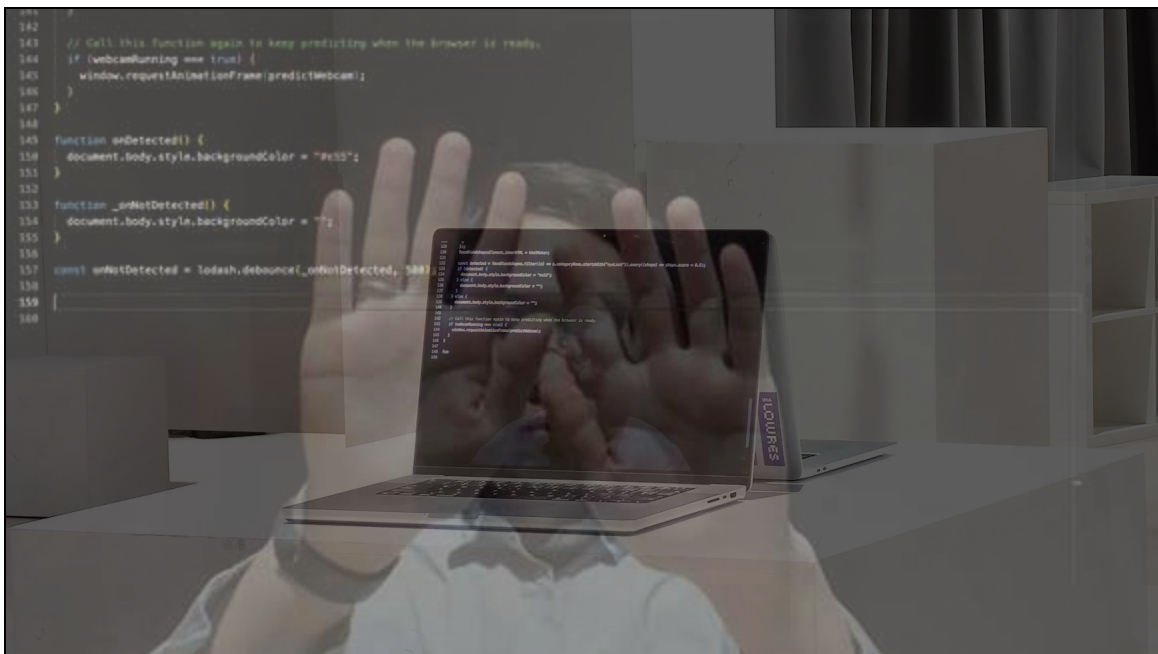


Then, some people thought I could express myself more intensely. So I showed a lot of resistance.

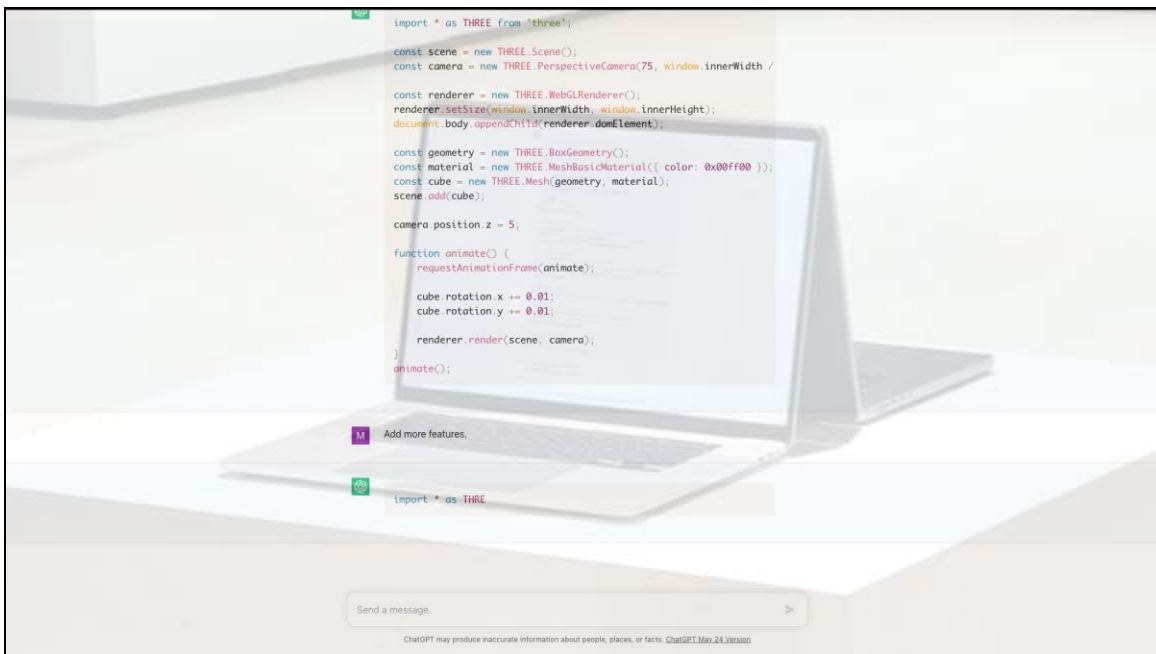
I also added the sound of typing, which sounds very lively.

Many people laughed when they saw this installation.

I'm happy with this result because, after all, coding is fun.



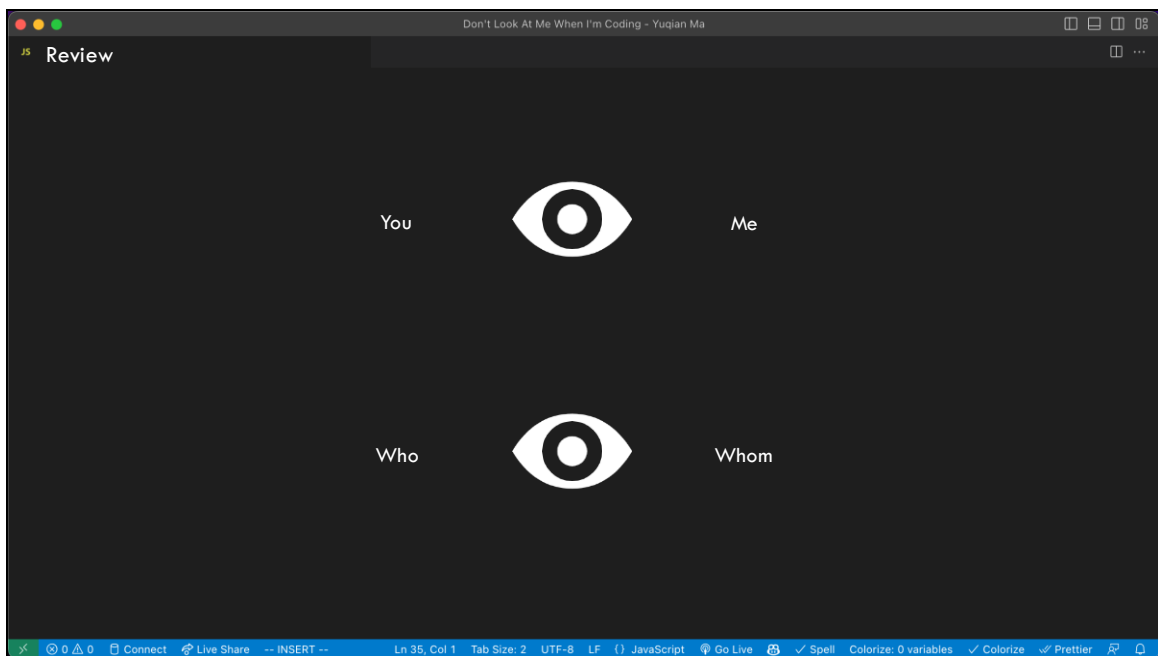
In addition, there is also the concept of "reflection" in programming. "Reflection" means that you can modify your own behavior. I stop because I am being observed, which is like a kind of self-reflective behavior. It's my reaction to the outside world. Because people have emotions.



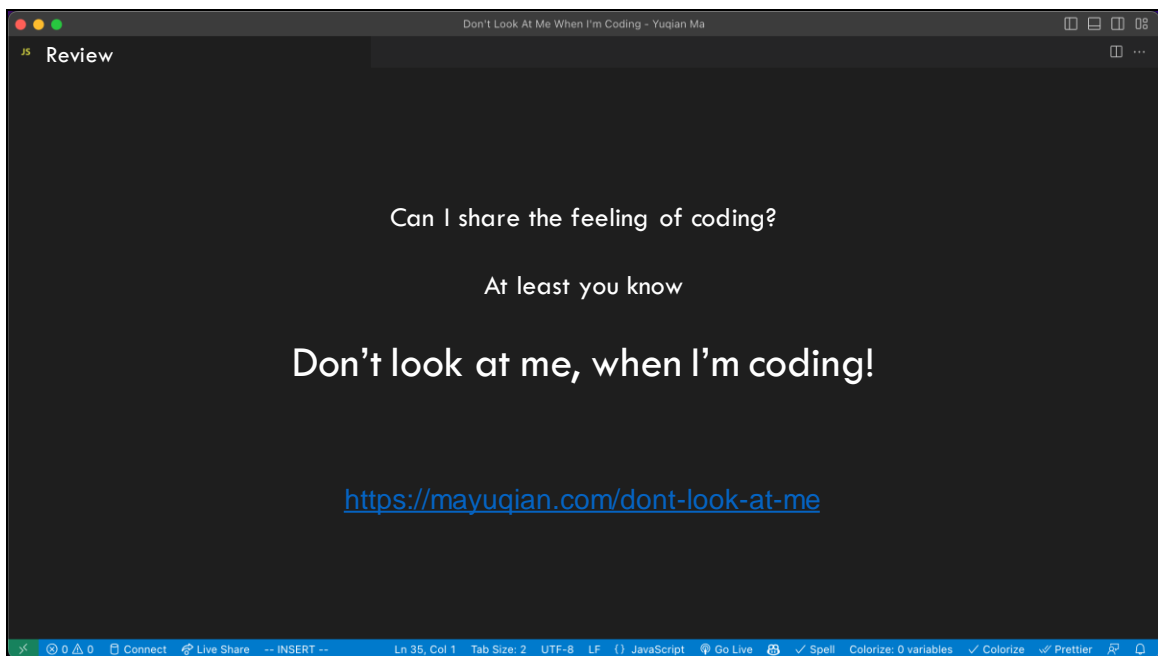
Unlike humans, AI actually requires your input prompt. It only writes code when you ask it to.

So in contrast, this is another part of the installation. A ChatGPT interface, it's grey when no one is watching it.

Only when you look at it does it regain color and output code. And you can keep watching it output code, it has no emotions, it's not shy.



Through these two types of "looking", you can think about: who is looking at whom.

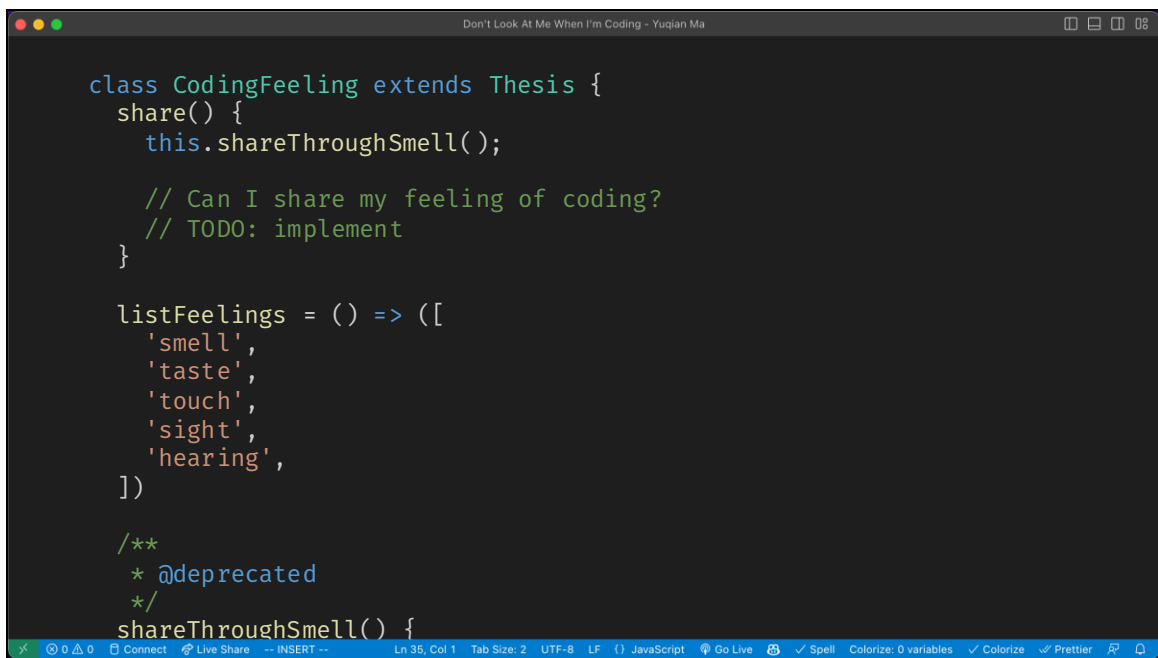


So, let's review.

Can I share the feeling of coding?

At least, you know

"Don't look at me, when I'm coding!"



```
class CodingFeeling extends Thesis {
  share() {
    this.shareThroughSmell();

    // Can I share my feeling of coding?
    // TODO: implement
  }

  listFeelings = () => ([
    'smell',
    'taste',
    'touch',
    'sight',
    'hearing',
  ])

  /**
   * @deprecated
   */
  shareThroughSmell() {
```

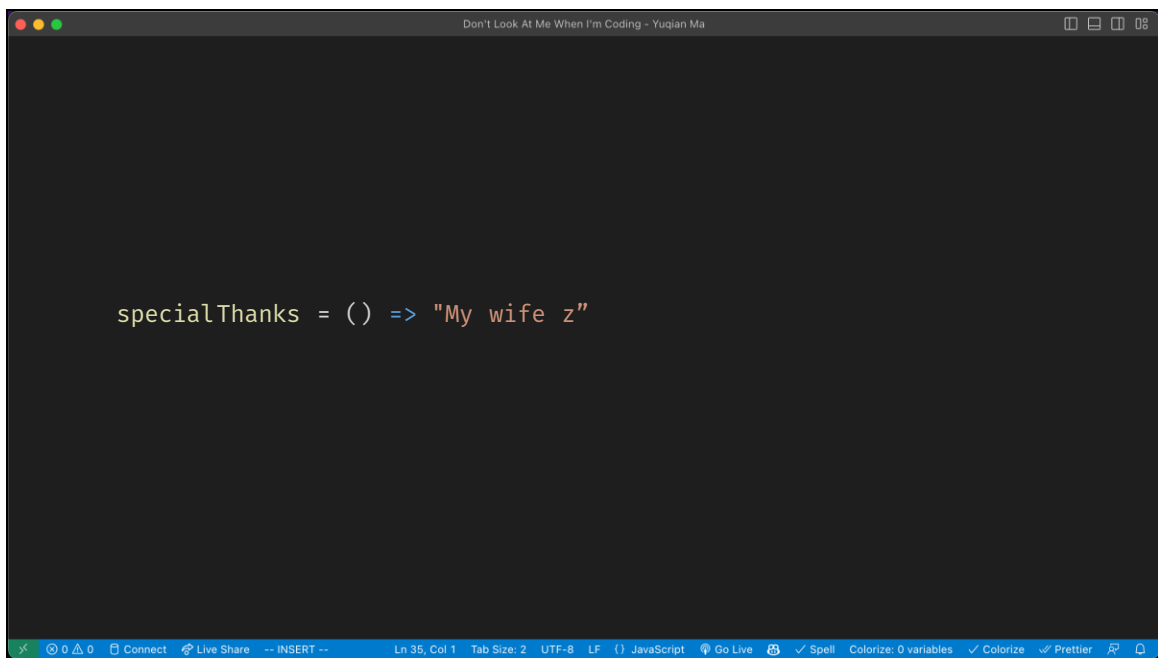
{next}

```
thankYou = () => ([ 'Ada Huang', 'Ai Xia', 'Ann Chen', 'Anney Norton', 'Beth Fileti', 'Brian Ho', 'Carrie Wang', 'Chelsea Heard', 'Christian Grewell', 'Cici Liu', 'Craig Protzel', 'Daisy Lu', 'Dan O'Sullivan', 'Danni Wang', 'Dante DelGiacco', 'David Rios', 'Dora Do', 'Elizabeth Engelman', 'Ellen Nickles', 'Emily Zhao', 'Eric Mao', 'George Agudow', 'Ian Stewart', 'J.H. Moon', 'Jamie Allen', 'Jamie McCoy', 'Jason Snell', 'Jaye Cho', 'Jeff Fedderson', 'Jheanell Bailey', 'Jun Shu', 'Katherine Park', 'Kruliuskaite', 'Lane Shi', 'Lu Song', 'Marcel Oliver-Rose Truxillo', 'Mathura M Govindarajan', 'Max Bittker', 'Midori Yasuda', 'Monika Lin', 'Nicole Padilla', 'Noah Dixon', 'Nuntinee Tansrisakul', 'Patrick Warren', 'Pierre Depaz', 'Renton Ling', 'Ruta', 'Ruta Kruliuskaite', 'Sarah Grant', 'Sarah Hakani', 'Sarah Rothberg', 'Sehmon Burnam', 'Sharleen Smith', 'Shawn Van Every', 'Siri Zhao', 'Suri Li', 'Tony Patrick', 'Wentao Wang', 'Xingchen Ian Zhang', 'Xinran Kong', 'Yaoyao Zhuang', 'Yinyi Hu', 'Yiyang Cao', 'Yueqing Dai', 'Yunshan Jiang', 'Zaida Aleman', 'Zoe-Alanah Robert' ] );
```

This is the entire process of my thesis.

Thank you all!

After many years of work, the sincere and ageless atmosphere of this project makes me feel incredibly youthful.



The image shows a screenshot of a VS Code editor window. The title bar at the top reads "Don't Look At Me When I'm Coding - Yujian Ma". The editor area has a dark background and contains the following JavaScript code: `specialThanks = () => "My wife z"`. The code is syntax-highlighted, with `specialThanks` in blue, `=` in orange, `()` in orange, `=>` in orange, and `"My wife z"` in green. The status bar at the bottom is blue and displays various icons and text: a green checkmark, a magnifying glass, a triangle, a circle, "0", "Connect", "Live Share", "-- INSERT --", "Ln 35, Col 1", "Tab Size: 2", "UTF-8", "LF", "JavaScript", "Go Live", "Spell", "Colorize: 0 variables", "Colorize", "Prettier", and a refresh icon.

```
specialThanks = () => "My wife z"
```

Thanks!