



**LAYOFFS  
IN GAMING**  
Not even the  
successful  
are safe

**THE  
STRUGGLES  
OF FULL TIME  
CONTENT  
CREATION**  
What they  
are + are not

**NYXX THE  
GODDESS**  
Wrestling  
to Create  
HERstory

# KIA SANGRIA

THE NYC COSPLAY POWERHOUSE TELLS ALL

# Letter from the Editor

JULY 2024

Otaku Asylum Magazine

Dear Otaku Asylum Readers,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of Otaku Asylum! I'm thrilled to share this moment with you as we embark on an exciting journey into the world of anime, manga, and cosplay. Otaku Asylum is a passion project born from the love of Japanese pop culture and the desire to create a vibrant community where enthusiasts can connect, share, and celebrate all things otaku.

Starting Otaku Asylum as a community has been a labor of love, and it wouldn't have been possible without the support of our dedicated team and the Otaku community in Memphis and so many that have joined far and wide. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed their time, creativity, and passion to make this magazine a reality. Your enthusiasm is what drives us forward, and we are committed to delivering content that reflects the diverse and dynamic world of otaku.

As we move forward, we welcome your feedback, suggestions, & support. Otaku Asylum is your magazine, and your voice matters. Together, let's make this a space where we can celebrate our favorite characters, stories, and creators.

Thank you for joining us on this adventure. I hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed creating it. Here's to many more issues to come!

Your Certified Geek and Bonafide Nerd,

TheOtakuSauce, Omar  
Editor-in-Chief  
Otaku Asylum Magazine



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## **Kia Sangria: Crafting Dreams in Fabric**

In this interview, Kia discusses her creative process, her admiration for costume designer Sandra Gray, and the profound impact cosplay has had on her life. Join us as we explore the artistry and community that make Kia's cosplay journey so remarkable.



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## **Nyxx: The Goddess of the Ring**

In this interview, Nyxx discusses her wrestling journey, from initial training to her current achievements, including work with Ring of Honor and TNA. She shares insights into her motivation, preparation methods, and the development of her wrestling persona inspired by Greek mythology. Nyxx also talks about her recent feud, influences from anime, and her dream matches.

# What's Inside

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## **Full Time Struggles: What it is & what's it not**

I got a chance to talk to AlexNorimaki and KalesDad in between their busy schedules about the day to day, the struggles, and the misconceptions of Full Time Content Creation.



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## **Layoffs in Gaming: A gamer's rant & plea**

TheOtakuSauce, Omar, talks about the alarming amount of layoffs in gaming and the lack of hope for the future if nothing changes.

Content Creators

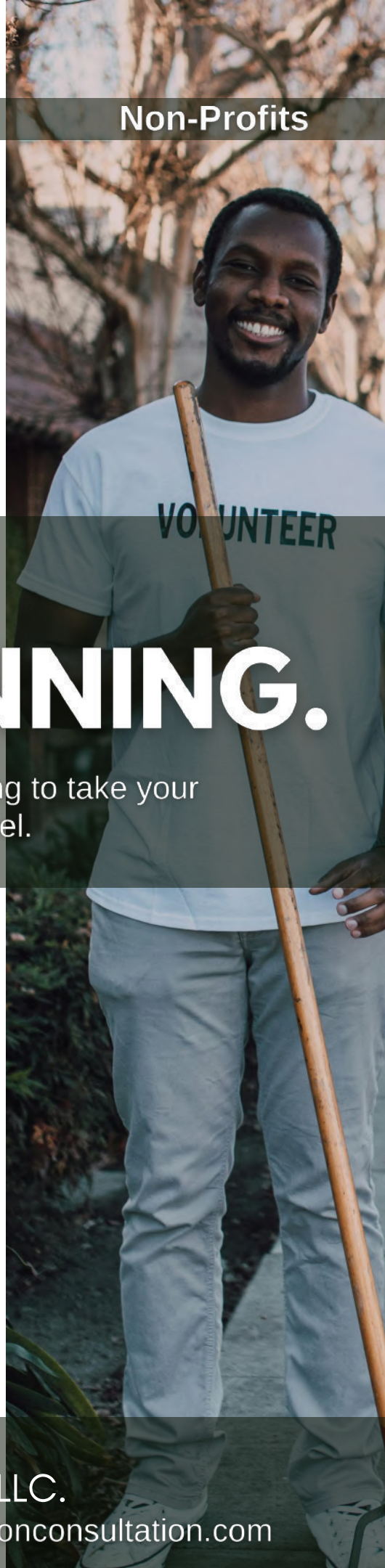
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# Full Time Struggles

Becoming a full-time content creator is a dream for many, but the path is filled with challenges, misconceptions, and hard-earned wisdom. We spoke with two dedicated creators, AlexNorimaki and KalesDad, who have taken the leap into full-time content creation. Through their experiences, we uncover the realities of this demanding career, the lessons they've learned, and the advice they offer to aspiring creators.



**@AlexNorimaki**

A Twitch Streamer of the hyperfixation variety, she plays whatever she is feeling at the moment and loves on it for a few weeks. Alex is a huge Zelda & Sonic lover and during her streams

you'll see that love everywhere. She is also a cosplayer, sometimes building her cosplays on stream! Catch her on Twitch, YouTube, and IG and join the Penguin Village for shenanigans.



**@KalesDad**

KalesDad, aka Kris, is a streamer that proclaims his love for Gaming, Music, and (obviously) his son, Kale. He is also a recording artist with some killer beats and soundtracks.

Watch him sing, rap, and talk mess while playing indie titles, games with his community, or watching wild videos. Check him out on Twitch and YouTube.

## What is something you wish you knew before going full time?

**KalesDad:** The WHEN (Let me explain). This is a journey and if you don't fall in love with the journey, and only focus on the end result, you will constantly want to give up. I've been on Twitch for 5 years now and I haven't made partner yet. Does that deter me sometimes? Yes. Because I feel like I put in a lot of time and effort when it comes to my streams and the connections that I make with people. But will I let that stop me? No. Not by a long shot. I love this, and I love my community too much to throw in the towel. It's just the WHEN, that will start eating at you. WHEN will you get there? WHEN will you get that golden opportunity that you've been waiting for and WHEN it arrives, will you be ready for it?

**Alex:** I think I wish I knew how to workflow better. As in, I'm not the most organized person when it comes to how I create, edit and post content. It's a bit all over the place and I'm only just now really sitting down to prioritize things and organize how I do stuff. When you go full-time, you're working with brands nearly daily, trying to post consistently on all the platforms you're on, answering communication in multiple places, editing, and so much more. Organization and prioritization is definitely something I should've gotten straight first. And someone should've told me!

## **What are some common misconceptions about becoming a full-time content creator?**

**KalesDad:** People think that it's easy and at times it can get quite annoying to hear that. It takes real mental fortitude to stay up to date on everything and put out content on it all on a consistent basis. Consistency and care go hand in hand when attempting to produce great entertainment for the masses.

**Alex:** The biggest misconception is that this is an easier job than a standard 9-5 position. With a 9-5, you work a set number of hours each day, 5 days a week. When 5pm hits, you stop working until 9am the next workday. With content creation, there is no "stop working here until tomorrow at this time." Especially in the beginning before you're really established. A typical day for me looks like this: breakfast, workout, morning, chores, answer emails and DMs, shoot content/work on cosplays, editing and scheduling, 30 minutes of downtime, planning and ideas, stream time, dinner, clipping and editing stream + analyzing metrics, repeat.

This is assuming I'm not traveling for an event, doing work for my own business, doing work for my part-time job, sick, or otherwise indisposed. These days are long. Way longer than 9-5. You're doing the jobs of a marketing team of 5-7 people by yourself. It is by no means an easy job.

## **What's something that is hard to do that you thought would be easy going into this line of work?**

**KalesDad:** POSTING ON SOCIALS. Ugh, I swear I want a social media manager because posting on multiple sites on a schedule, (especially when some let you schedule and some don't), is so time consuming. It goes back to having the mental fortitude and real care to want to turn yourself into a bigger personality. Finding what the algorithm on all these sites is and then matching your content to it is absolutely exhausting. One time, I posted a bunch of gaming clips and none of them really hit, but the one that got over 1000 views was when I thought I was gonna sneeze. Riddle me that. \*Laughs\*

**Alex:** The creation part of being a content creator. Being full-time means, this is more than just you making cool things and showing them off. Now, it's making cool things, showing them off and making sure they're valuable to prospective brands you want to work with and get paid by. It's easy to lose yourself in all that.

## **Is there an aspect of community building that surprised you that is different now that you are full time?**

**Alex:** Oddly enough, community building was never something I really focused on. I don't really focus on it now. I treat my community like a huge house party that anyone can walk into, and we'll make them feel welcome and included. That doesn't really need to change just because you go full-time. Which, to some, is probably pretty surprising.

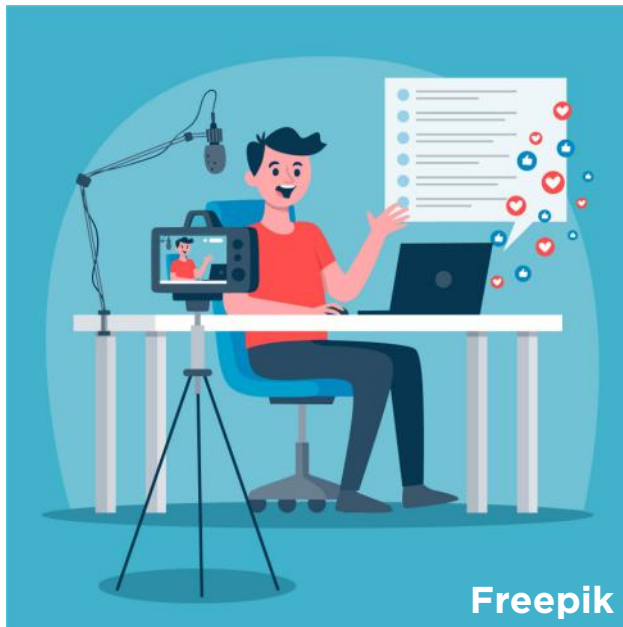
**KalesDad:** Not really. I've always had a pretty solid community that I built upon. Of course it wasn't always this way though. When you first start out you're just talking to the void. No one is there, but it's okay, use that time to practice. I guess what I will say about the difference is who you allow into your community. I don't have a rigorous test that people have to go through, but you do have to at least be a cool person. If anything arises after that, me and my mods come together and handle it.

**Continued on 7!**

## What was the biggest factor in you going full time versus running the regular rat-race of having a normal job?

**Alex:** I got my master's degree and tried desperately to get and keep a job. Right now, it's ridiculously hard to get hired. In 2023, I submitted something like 450 job applications. I was laid off in May from a job I'd only had 6 months, was hired after spending 5 months unemployed, then was affected by lay offs again only 6 weeks into that position. It felt like a sign to go full-time. I'd been doing relatively well on the side; might as well put everything I have into it.

**KalesDad:** I've worked customer service my whole life. I've continuously given to these big businesses that care so little about us. I would wake up early, come home late, get reprimanded for things out of my control, be told that i couldn't take the sick days or vacation time i earned off because the job needed me. If i could do all of that for a business that didn't care about me or my family, why not do it for myself?



**What is the most important thing about resting or burnout protection that you would give other potential full timers?**

**Alex:** Learn your own signs that you're stressed, not burnt out. Stress comes before the burnout. If you can recognize those signs, you can develop your own self-care methods (because they're different for every person) and avoid burnout. It's really common in this industry, but it's not supposed to be a normal thing we go through like clockwork. Schedule regular breaks throughout your day,

throughout your week, and take time off every once in a while! I take a week off at the beginning of each quarter. Do what works for you, but hustle culture is vile and unsustainable.

**KalesDad:** Please make time for yourself. If nothing else, make time for you. You are your own boss, and at times you'll feel like slowing down is costing you. Costing you views, subs, or donations. But what you're really doing is depriving yourself of much needed rest and relaxation. I get it, you need to get this video edited, or you have to stream for X amount of hours to hit a certain goal. Take it from a man who's done a 36 hour stream straight with no sleep to raise money for his album. TAKE A BREAK. Hell, schedule them in just like the breaks you would take at a regular job. Your body and mind will thank you.

**The journey in content creation is different for everyone. Do it your way, but prioritize your peace, organize yourself, and stay the course. I've watched so many take the leap before they were truly ready and didn't make it out. I have seen tears live on stream for the good and the bad. If you follow the advice here, it will definitely give you the means to keep moving. However, remember the your journey is your own. Thank you to KalesDad and Alex for their time!**

# Cosplayer Spotlight

## Lunar Kitty

Twitter: @lunarkittycp  
IG & Threads: @lunarkittycp  
Twitch: LunarcyCP





# SAVING

## SANGRIA

From her early days of crafting to major brand collabs and being a cosplay mentor, we take a closer look into the cosplay journey of the NYC based cosplayer, from her influences, favorite projects, and the vibrant cosplay culture she helps to foster in the NYC.

**In the vibrant world of cosplay, few names resonate as passionately as Kia Sangria. With a deep-rooted love for anime classics like Dragon Ball Z and Sailor Moon, Kia's journey into cosplay began with a childhood dream of donning the iconic scout uniforms. In this exclusive interview, Kia shares her creative process, the inspirations behind her intricate designs, and the transformative impact of cosplay on her life. From her admiration for renowned costume designer Sandra Gray to the joy of connecting with fellow cosplayers, Kia's story is a testament to the artistry and community that define the cosplay experience.**

**What got you started in cosplay? How were you introduced to it?**

I owe my start in cosplay to growing up watching shows like Dragon Ball Z & Sailor Moon. Sailor Moon especially because I loved the scout uniforms and so badly wanted one of my own.

**Can you share some insights into your cosplay creation process? How do you select materials, plan the design, and bring the character to life?**

I select my cosplay materials based on affordability and if they will work for the character I have in mind. Unfortunately, I cannot draw so every costume idea I have ever had lives in my head and then I put needle to fabric to create it. One day I will learn how to draw, \*laughs\* but that day hasn't come yet.

**Are there any specific genres or types of characters you haven't cosplayed yet but would like to explore in the future?**

I feel like I've done a bit of everything under the sun but I will say that I really want to do more Anime cosplays. I feel like I do not have enough of those in my closet. I just need to sit down and actually watch some more Anime to grab ideas.

**Now that you've started creating your own clothing, you've mentioned how you admire the work that goes into creating wrestling gear. What aspects do you see differently now that you hadn't noticed before?**

Clothing and cosplays are so different when it comes to producing and I wasn't that prepared for the culture shock of it at all. I have always liked the look of wrestling gear and I am an avid follower of Sandra Gray (@sgovintage on Instagram). She has sewn costumes for WCW, WWE & AEW and I have always admired her work. My favorite costumes are the ones with rhinestones and she made this one jacket

for Cody Rhodes that lives in my head RENT FREE.

The thing that has caught my attention with wrestling gear is how much work goes into creating pieces that have to stand up to being brutalized and beaten. I've watched clips of Sandra working and she is very meticulous in every aspect of the creation of wrestling gear. It's incredible to witness.

**Fashion wise are there any wrestlers that you especially enjoy right now?**

Yes! Timeless Toni Storm! She's absolutely hilarious and I love that her current bit is vintage glamour! Her on screen In-ring personality is just so exaggerated. I love when she's giving commentary ringside because she's fully committed to the role in her quips!

**If someone reached out, would you be willing to create wrestling gear for them?**

I am currently not taking commissions due to time and space constraints but mostly because I have doubt in my abilities. I constantly question if I am good enough to do this for others.

**Have you cosplayed any wrestlers or do you plan to in the future?**

I once upon a time made gear for a wrestling themed party and in fact, I was given guidance by Sandra Gray herself when I embarked on making it after I sent her DM on Instagram to ask about technique. I do like the idea of making wrestling themed cosplays for my favorite characters now that's something to explore.

**Continued on 11!**

**What's the most rewarding experience you've had while cosplaying? Is there a specific convention, event, or interaction that stands out?**

Honestly my most rewarding experience when it comes to wearing cosplay is when I run into other people who cosplay the same characters as me. It's always fun to not only meet someone cosplaying the same character but also getting to their take on certain cosplay details. It's inspiring and motivating even better when they're open to me asking questions about their costumes.

**Cosplay communities can be incredibly supportive. How has being a part of the cosplay community impacted your life?**

Being a part of the cosplay community quite literally allowed me to meet my husband of 8 years and since all of our friends also cosplay our entire wedding was cosplay themed and no one batted an eye about it. Cosplay is quite literally weaved into every area of my life and that is just the way I like it.

**Are there any cosplayers, costume designers, or artists who inspire your work? What do you admire about their creations?**

I've mentioned her so much throughout this article but I have to once again gush about my love for Sandra Gray and her work. I would love to meet her one day and I would love the opportunity to study under her even if it was only for a weekend. Like the very idea of ever meeting her makes me cry because her work means so much to me and I think she's just so amazing and talented. Actually, probably best we never meet because knowing me I would be a mess the entire time! \*laughs\*

**What does cosplaying mean to you personally? How has it impacted your life and brought you joy?**

Cosplaying has allowed me to discover a love for sewing. If not for sewing cosplay I never would have even considered sewing clothes and other things. While I don't have plans to stop cosplaying any time soon, I know that if I ever did, I would still be making costumes and clothing pieces.





**What got you started with making your own clothing? What are your favorite pieces so far?**

Truthfully, I got tired of looking like a bum outside of Cosplay. \*laughs\* Also because I'm currently saving for some important adulting milestones I'm not able to go to cons as often as I would like. With that in mind I still have 5 sewing machines that need something to do so when I'm not sewing cosplays, I'm sewing clothes because I want to be outside this summer in a unique wardrobe.

My favorite pieces that I've recently made are my 1950s Inspired dresses. They're absolutely glamorous and have that old Hollywood charm that you just cannot buy off the rack these days. Living in NYC my outfits always draw attention because it's just something you don't see every day and it's always a source of pride when I get to tell people I made said outfit myself!



**Have you learned anything about yourself through the creative process of making your own clothing?**

I learned that I don't have to wait for something to make a comeback to the mainstream when it comes to my wardrobe. I see posts all the time on social media that consist of a series of photos showcasing a very niche fashion with the caption "Bring back X" and in my mind I'm like yeah! I totally agree with that; that style WAS cute and then 5 minutes later, I'm on Pinterest and fabric sites looking to recreate the look. So yeah, I learned that I can literally shape-shift my style to something unique on a whim. That's my super power in a world where fashion retail is based on mainstream trends.



**What advice do you have for anyone want to start making their own clothing through sewing?**

Embrace the humble beginnings of learning how to do something new. It took lots of time and experimenting to improve my sewing skills to where it is right now where I can not only make quality costumes for events but also unique clothing pieces that I can wear for everyday activities. The best part about my journey is that literally anyone can get started on learning to sew right now and I encourage anyone to take control of their style in this way.

# Streamer Spotlight

## Jayy Astroo

**Twitch:** JayyAstroo  
**X/Twitter:** AstrooJayy  
**Instagram:** JayyAstroo  
**TikTok:** JayyAstroo



JayyAstroo, aka Sailor Astroo, is the cool cousin you hang out with to talk anime and game with. His various chaotic antics are egged on by his even more chaotic community, the Astrooverse. His art will wow you, just as much as his GTA V RP escapades will shock you. Go check him out on all his socials and join the Astrooverse!

### Games they play



### Teams they are on



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NOT EVEN LAWS!



# Mayra

Goddess of the Ring

**From her first training session in Greenwood, MS, with North Delta Championship Wrestling to her current status as a rising star in the wrestling world, Nyxx has had an inspiring journey. Despite the early challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, she found her home with All Pro Wrestling in Marianna, AR, and has since made significant strides, including working with Ring of Honor and TNA.**

**Nyxx also delves into the development of her wrestling persona, inspired by Greek mythology and her alter ego, Nyx, the goddess of the night. We discuss her recent feud with MKZ Mackenzie Morgan, where she drew inspiration from anime, highlighting the complexities of heroism and villainy.**

**Join us as Nyxx opens up about her favorite anime heroes, her dream matches, and her ongoing journey in the world of wrestling. Get ready to be inspired by her resilience, dedication, and the unique blend of myth and reality that she brings to the ring.**

**Can you share a brief overview of your wrestling journey, from your training to your current status?**

I had my very first training ever in Greenwood, MS with North Delta Championship wrestling. I already knew before that that wrestling is for me but taking that first bump really locked everything in place for me. Then a month later, COVID shut everything down. A year later, Gio Savage told me about All Pro Wrestling in Marianna, AR and that's been my home company ever since. After I started training and working there in 2021 I've done a bunch of things from wrestling for Ring of Honor to doing extra work for TNA. I'm currently working on a few bigger things but I'd rather wait to talk about it after it happens.

**How did you first become interested in wrestling, and what motivated you to pursue a career as an independent wrestler?**

My older brothers would watch wrestling when I was younger and I would watch with them. They tested out moves on me too and I loved that so I've loved wrestling my whole life. The thing that motivated me in the end to pursue it was Edge making his return in 2020 at the Royal Rumble. If he can come back from a broken neck, I can get off my butt and start training.

**How do you stay physically and mentally prepared for your matches and the unpredictable nature of the industry?**

Working out, tape study, prayers, and a solid support system is how I stay prepared. All of those things keep me grounded because the wrestling world is not for the faint of heart.

**How did you develop your wrestling persona or character? Is it an extension of yourself or a completely separate creation?**

When I debuted, I did it with a guy working under the name Psychopomp. A psychopomp is a Greek mythology creature that guides souls to the underworld so I did more research into Greek mythology and found Nyx, the goddess of the night, feared by all including Zeus. Nyxx is an extension of me in a way, but a lot of times she's an alter ego.



**Continued on 16!**

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**Recently, you had a feud with the MKZ, Mackenzie Morgan. During that feud, I had a nagging feeling that the way it went was influenced by a few Anime style story elements. Am I right to assume that?**

It is. But the main point with that feud is that the “hero” is only the hero based on who tells the story and the “villain” or in my case villainess is honestly just a misunderstood hero. Everybody wants the hero to become (the) cute, clean-cut individual but real heroes go through a lot more than people realize and have to go to some dark places to actually be a hero. In a lot of cases, the real heroes sit back while others take the accolades

**Do you currently watch any anime series, and do you have a favorite?**

I’m not watching any right now but a few of my current favorites are Inuyasha, Attack on Titan, Demon Slayer, and Assassination Classroom

**Who are your favorite examples of real heroes in anime that sit back and only save the day while others take the credit?**

I would say Sesshomaru (Inuyasha) and Itachi (Naruto) are a couple of my favorite examples of that.

**What dream match runs through your mind currently?**

In no particular order:

Nyxx vs Mickie James

Nyxx vs Bianca Belair

Nyxx vs AJ Lee

Nyxx vs Willow Nightingale

Nyxx vs Trish Stratus

Nyxx vs Becky Lynch

Nyxx vs Charlotte

Nyxx vs Rhea Ripley

Nyxx vs Athena

**Finally, what championships or goals do you have for the new year?**

I want to work for all of the major companies I worked for last year and this year more, work for some new ones like Mission Pro, WOW, MCW in Maryland, TSW in Texas, NWA, get booked out of the country, and God willing get myself a contract. Championships will come wherever I work.

# Layoffs in Gaming

A rant from Omar Owens aka TheOtakuSauce

Recently, I've seen so many layoffs in gaming. From Microsoft to Ubisoft to BHVR, it's scary to see how many people have been let go due to so many factors. PC Gamer reported over 16,00 layoffs in FEBRUARY, and there have been more layoffs since then. Well-known companies like Twitch, EA, SuperMassive have so many layoffs in their ranks and even more among independent companies. Even after the success of Hi-Fi Rush, Tango Game Works let go of over 150 people and was shut down by Microsoft. I'm not sure what needs to happen to change this, but maybe we should look at the reasons the companies gave. Maybe they can give clarity to such a disastrous time in the industry.

After reading a few stories on IGN and PC Gamer, especially one from Rebekah Valentine, it seems as though layoffs can be to three things. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, unrealistic expectations, and executives betting on risky technologies.

During COVID lockdowns, so many people stayed home for work, games were a good break from the status of sitting tight holed up at home. Steam sales were every week, Epic giving out games and skin, new games were released en masse, life was good. After everyone started going back in the office and inflation went up to massive levels, people couldn't play games as much and therefore, gaming wasn't as profitable.

Companies were either downsizing to save their skin or heaving large projects on smaller teams.

According to articles and, if we are to believe X/Twitter and Reddit, online outrage, so many developers were pushed to their limit, asked to move right before companies laid off their entire team, given busy work because of over-hiring, and so many other issues. I saw one guy that got laid off from a company because they invested in NFTs and Blockchain twice and got burned. Mismanagement was, and seems to still be, rampant.



Image by yanalya on Freepik

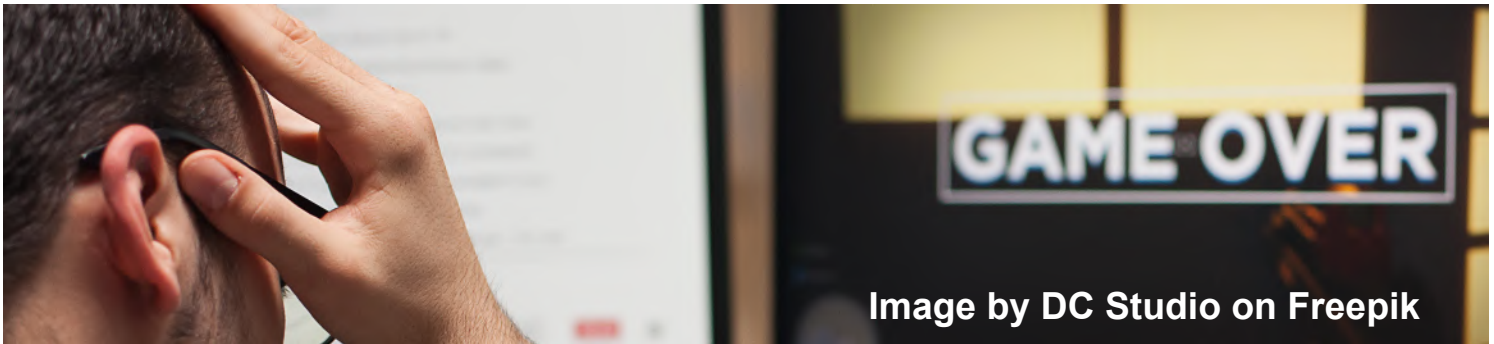


Image by DC Studio on Freepik

The impact on the people of the gaming industry was deafening. So many people moved to their job sites and cities, some from other countries. They would then get settled only to find the rugs pulled out from under them and need to find a way to support themselves in new cities or sometimes new country. Even worse are the people that are disabled and need jobs to receive health insurance.

Some have to find something immediately to keep benefits. Other people have to leave the industry because of instability just to ensure they can keep their benefits for a long period. If you are unlucky enough to not find anything, the rat race to get visits and medication ordered and paid before time runs out. The confidence in the industry stability started to wane quickly. I saw developers quickly think about leaving. Rebekah's story on IGN had a few stories about people not believing they were good enough to work in gaming anymore. Others found a dream job that collapsed into nightmare fuel. Then, you have the people who survived the cuts. The feeling of am I next or even looking out at who is gone and wondering "why them?" or even "why did I get to stay and my friend/colleague is in the wind?". Even successful games studios weren't safe, so that fear sent shock waves through everyone. Where were they to turn? So many Developers, Artist, and Directors even just chose to leave gaming, because of how volatile the industry seems.

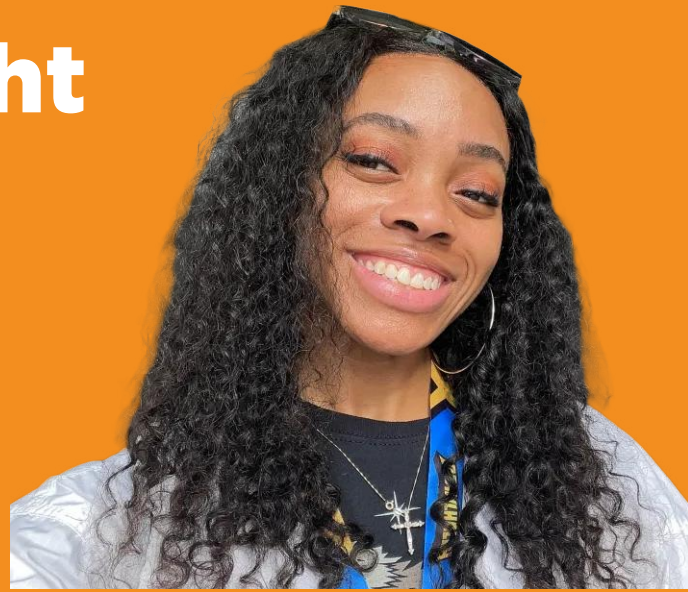
With so many studios closing, Embracer Group closing 10 within itself, I believe, people wondered what the people at the top were thinking. Phil Spencer went on record after Microsoft cut 10k saying, "This is a challenging moment in our business, and this week's actions were painful choices." The choices leading to the layoffs of course caused all this, but I feel saying that solely blames Paul, and that just isn't fair. Many people's hands go into these decisions, but where did the buck stop? FromSoftware president, and Elden Ring creator, Hidetaka Miyazaki said it won't happen on his watch. he specifically said, "While we can't say 100%—we can't say with complete certainty what the future's going to hold for From and Kadokawa—at least as long as this company is my responsibility, that's something I would not let happen." when he spoke with PC Gamer in May. It's very heartwarming to hear, but how long can he keep that promise in this turbulent climate?

Wrapping this long rant of mine up, I think the real issue is something way outside the gaming world. People don't have time or money to have fun anymore. Rent due, Bills due, Student loans, Car notes, Housing looming over our heads. There is barely time to justify playing anything. Other bets the industry leadership made impacted layoffs as well, but for me as a consumer, I know that I'm too tired from surviving to try an game these days. I hope that changes very soon, so I can get back on the games I love.

# Cosplayer Spotlight

## IdiosynAnca

Twitter: @IdiosynAnca  
IG & Threads: @IdiosynAnca  
Twitch: IdiosynAnca  
TikTok: IdiosynAnca



# THANK YOU FOR READING THE FIRST ISSUE!

We hope you join us for the next issue coming in  
September 2024!

Until next time, Stay Certified!



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