

Intro+Addressing Rumors

Before you read the next section, “Statements and Allegations”, I ask you to please read everything in this “Intro” portion first. (Please utilize the Chapter Links in the Statements later for a proper understanding of what happened.)

Context for some of the Statements made:

-Several of the allegations written on her termination were due in part to the differences in cultural background between NIJISANJI, an agency based in Japan, and Zaion, a streamer catering to a global audience.

-None of her VODs were privatized by her decision. She did not believe in hiding her mistakes in this way, and always wished to own up to them. (Thus, this document’s purpose.)

-On the “shotacon” topic: this was a long running joke stemming from before she was Zaion, coming from her origins as mainly a Genshin Impact streamer. Those who do not play Genshin wouldn’t know this, but in the game (ever since the first released units), **several of the “meta” units were characters that had the appearance of young boys.** They were mostly expressed to be quite old, Venti a several thousand year old god, Kazuha is 18+, Scaramouche is several thousands, etc. (Note that Xingqiu and Chongyun are 17 and Zaion has never made any sort of implication towards them.)

But, the point is that, as a player who cares about being able to clear content, Zaion would make jokes about wanting these characters because they coincidentally happened to be “shota” designs. **She is not at all attracted to them in any sexual way, and is appalled at the idea.** NIJISANJI also never brought this up as an issue throughout the course of her employment.

-Zaion agreed that separating would be best for both sides, but the parties were not able to reach an agreement on a joint statement.

-While attempting to argue for a more peaceful narrative than the termination statement NIJISANJI wished to make, **Zaion did get written confirmation that NIJISANJI had no intention at the time to cut off or discourage her from interacting with or remaining friends with other NIJISANJI lives.** She also confirmed that **NIJISANJI would not avoid commissioning or working with any creators that work with her in the future.**

Reference: <https://imgur.com/a/kCWTIFj>

Regarding the harassment and doxxing Zaion has received.

She has been doxxed down to a home address, name and face by those expressing malicious intent. This happened right after her indefinite suspension on February 9th was announced, and NIJISANJI did not communicate that it would take action against the doxxers. (There is substantial video and written proof of threats including death and SWATting, however links will be omitted for legal reasons.)

In December of 2022, NIJISANJI released a [statement](#) declaring their efforts against doxxing and harassment. Despite that announcement, NIJISANJI did not inform Zaion that it would be taking action against the spread of personal identifying information, defamatory misinformation, and daily harassment towards Zaion while she was suspended as an active liver.

I admit I did not understand exactly what victims of harassment went through, how mentally and sometimes physically damaging it is, and how hard it is to get any kind of help against it. Personally, I'm grateful for this experience so I can properly understand and empathize with others regarding this type of treatment.

Thank you in advance for reading, for understanding, and for granting us some of your precious time.

Statements and Allegations

I'd like to preface this by saying **I do NOT want any third parties to use what myself or Zaion are about to reveal or twist our words in any way to damage the reputation of NIJISANJI or its Livers.**

We understand that NIJISANJI as a brand had to do what it felt was in the best interest for its business.

The following will be providing context and responding to the statements and allegations against Zaion.

1. “Using a copyrighted song in her stream without prior authorization.”

The vague usage of copyright infringement claimed here by NIJISANJI is actually referring to December 18th, 2022, when **Zaion chose to play the first cover song release of one of her genmates on stream to support them by showing her own fanbase.** Zaion was not aware that was considered a breach of copyright, and was corrected by staff and told to request specific permission for this in the future. **Zaion did agree to this, and apologized thusly for her mistake.** However, this still remained on her record, and was also one of the reasons for her first suspension during New Years that we'll refer to as the “New Years suspension”.

2. “Revealing internal information that can potentially cause issues for stakeholders during her stream.”

This statement refers to the instance in Zaion's last Good Job! stream where she spoke about permissions regarding playing Hogwarts Legacy on stream. Seen here from 30:00 to 30:36.

https://archive.ragtag.moe/watch?v=98p0-ANf_Nc

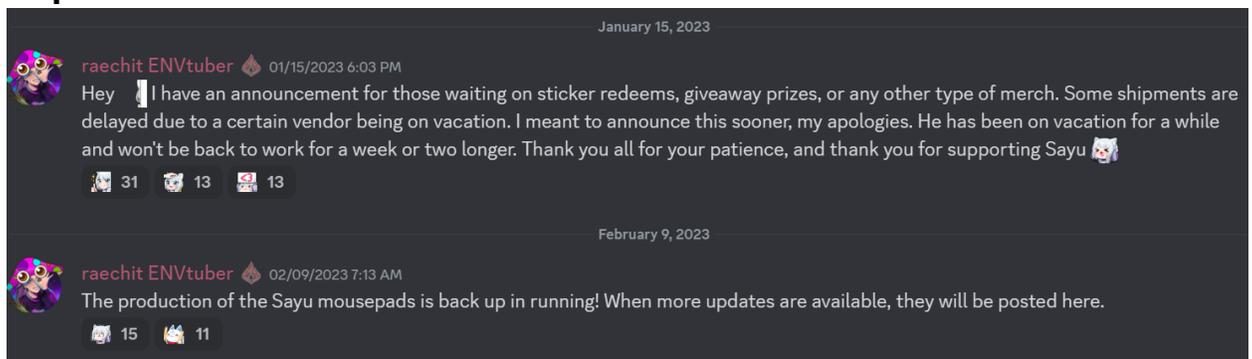
The alleged mistake here was that Zaion stated that they did have permission to play the game at some point. Zaion spoke about this like any other game they had gotten confirmed permissions on that was a publicly released game, and this was after staff requested that EN not play the game. Zaion recognized that the controversy around the game is a difficult topic.

3. “Making statements that could lead to speculation or leaking of internal information using social media accounts that she personally operates during her activity suspension time.”

This is referring to two instances.

First, as Zaion was forcefully locked out of all of her accounts during her second suspension, she resorted to using her PL Twitter account to browse Twitter. **She did make the mistake of “liking” a random reply that she was browsing through, and did “unlike” it after realizing her mistake.** It was not her intention to bring attention to nor imply anything, but the mistake was made. **Zaion did apologize profusely to staff and explained her mistake.**

Second, this also refers to **Zaion’s previously owned Discord server’s admin making a post about how production for mouse pads that were owed to previous subathon supporters were finally being made. No intention to sell these as merchandise products was ever emphasized.**



However, this could have been perceived as her planning to leave the company, and hinting fans at doing so. Zaion did explain the situation in a voice call to staff; however, after claiming that they would “check the facts” for each of these instances, they still listed on her termination letter, “showing absolutely no signs of remorse for [her] behavior.” An excerpt of the Cancellation Notice is shown below.

Reference:

5. However, on February 9 of the same year, immediately after your suspension, with your past life Twitter account which is prohibited to use, you "liked" a tweet mocking the fans who were angry at your inappropriate behavior as a Virtual Liver, and you made an announcement through the Admin on your past life Discord server that the production of your past life activity merchandising had resumed, showing absolutely no signs of remorse for your behavior.

4. “Offensive remarks regarding discrimination and sexual assault.”

This also refers to two separate instances.

First, on the topic regarding sexual assault, Zaion felt horrible that she made this mistake. This refers to a joke made during her stream of the game “The Karaoke”, a Chilla’s Art horror game. A lot of streamers, Zaion included, turn on “streamer mode” in their brains to try to keep a several hour stream constantly light hearted and entertaining and making a joke out of everything that goes on. Unfortunately, **she forgot the situation of the space she was in, and made a joke that was inappropriate. There was no malicious intent, and she takes full responsibility. The comment was not aiming to make light of SA or its victims. Since it could not be said at the time, Zaion apologizes for this.**

This stream and its contents were not one of the stated reasons for Zaion’s suspension. (Seen at 2:04:48)

<https://archive.ragtag.moe/watch?v=mLF2qIJSZgs>

Second, regarding any offensive remarks involving discrimination, **no serious remarks were ever made towards any specific people or culture.** There is one instance in Zaion’s second ever livestream on December 11th, where a viewer jokingly asked her if they could use the term “Zionists” as a fan name for her community. She clearly stated “I don’t think we can do that” in response, knowing full well that it was not her place to use such a term. Unfortunately, NIJISANJI characterized Zaion’s nervous laughter when addressing this viewer’s comment as “remarks mocking political or religious beliefs” in her termination letter, even though this was not the case.

Clips of this instance can be found online, but links are omitted for legal reasons.

5. “Several infringements of the Rules pertaining to the use of games defined by ANYCOLOR Inc. (including intentional infringements) and repeated false justifications given to ANYCOLOR Inc. regarding these infringements.”

This may be referring to several items.

First, a stream on February 4th, that was a Nintendo game. Zaion had many successful Nintendo streams in the past leading up to the stream on the 4th, complying to rules which will not be stated here. However, **on the 4th, Zaion made a mistake. YouTube has an autofill function for its video descriptions. She used it that day and missed the adjustment of part of the description, and was notified by her manager as such mid-stream. Her manager adjusted it for her; Zaion thanked them for that, and apologized for her mistake.**

Second, regarding the FFXIV account in use. Simply put, **Zaion made a choice that was not what was agreed on, and thus this was completely the fault of Zaion. The rumor of Zaion using mods is false.**

What staff wanted was a new character, upon a new account. New accounts require the game, (along with subsequent story skips or level boosts), to all be officially bought from the Square Enix store in order to participate in the content that Zaion had readied. No form of compensation for this (or for new Genshin or other game accounts) was discussed.

Zaion regrets that she had a poor lapse in judgment. **She chose to use a character she already had, that simply had little to no logs.** While she changed the character name and no PL (Past Life) issues came up, she did tell her manager she would make a new character and did not. **She explained this to staff and apologized for her lack of compliance with this.**

6. “Expressing her will to perform streams using illegal games (also referred to as pirated games)”

This seems to be taken out of context as well, Zaion did reply to a chatter saying that she used to play ROM hacks which is technically a pirated form of a game. She recognized in retrospect that ROM hacks are technically piracy it was a violation of company policy. **Zaion recognizes that piracy does go against company policy which is why she’s never condoned piracy nor streamed emulated games.**

This comment as well as Zaion’s answer was cut out of the vod on December 11th/12th per staff’s request:

<https://archive.ragtag.moe/watch?v=ZikpNTbHzpY>

7. “Comments that can be considered offensive to the rights holder of a game during a stream.”

This is referring to the stream where Zaion was playing UNO. Ubisoft’s multiple user interfaces results in it being incredibly difficult to change a username, so **she criticized the game for not being user friendly.**

8. “Giving false information to other NIJISANJI EN Livers regarding the contents of her communications with ANYCOLOR Inc.”

This is only referring to a misunderstanding regarding Zaion using her Genshin and other PL gacha accounts. **Zaion did not tell her genmates that “she was told that using her old accounts would be okay.”** She merely told them that “she was not told in the interview process that it was not okay.” This was conveyed to staff as well during their discussions about using PL game accounts, (see “[Debut Week 1: First Privated Vod](#)” conversations) and **Zaion was not aware until receiving this Cancellation Notice that this misunderstanding existed.**

Reference:

Dec. 20: Using an account used in a previous life (before becoming a member of the Company’s) without prior consultation with the Company.

*In addition, you falsely told other members of your unit, XSOLEIL, that the use of your previous life account was permitted at the time of your employment interview.

9. “Falsely claiming to have received permission from ANYCOLOR Inc. after a viewer commented on Zaion performing an action prohibited by the Rules.”

This may refer to **Zaion opening her YouTube memberships after checking that all of her membership perks were within the rulings of NIJISANJI.** She had gotten the emotes and badges approved by her manager, and thus assumed that as long as her perks were also within ruling, she could activate them for Christmas for her fans after they had asked. **She apologized to staff for not asking for their approval.**

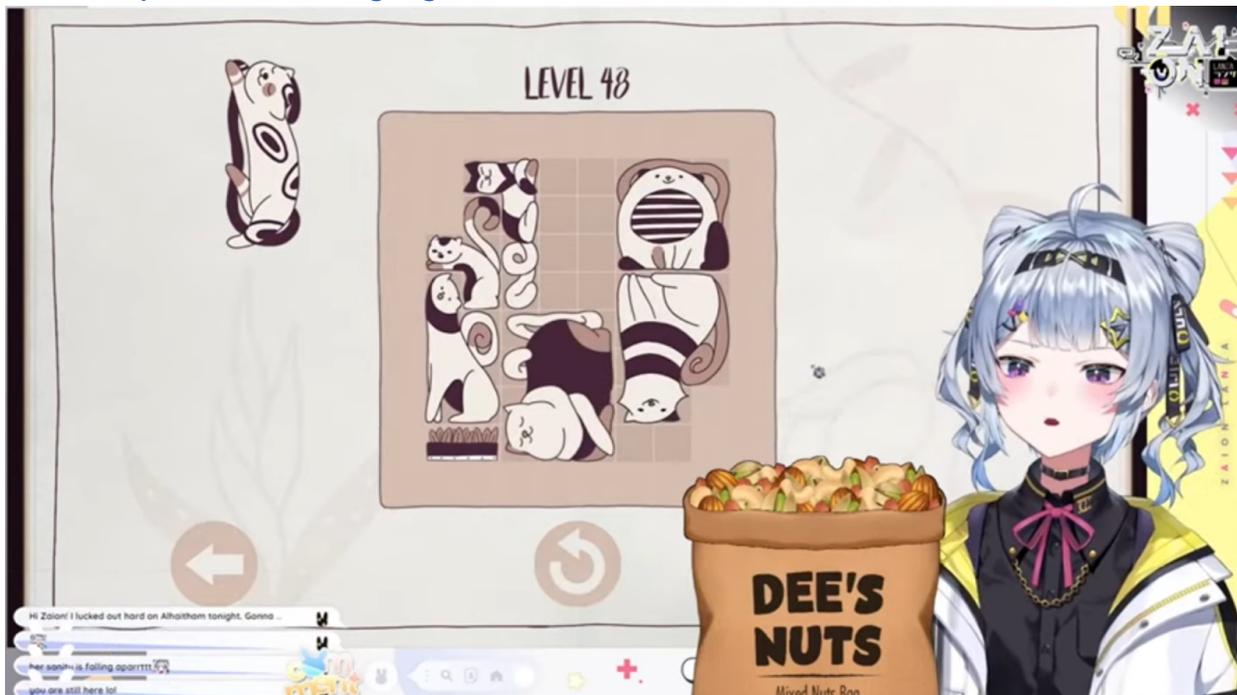
10. “Falsely claiming to be sponsored by a brand during a stream.”

The Cats Organized Neatly stream that was done by Zaion had a running gag where she commissioned an artist to make her an asset of a bag of nuts labeled “Dee’s Nuts”. Many jokes were made over the stream including: “Oh boy, I really love Dee’s nuts,” “Yeah I’ve been supporting Dee’s Nuts for a long time now,” etc. and, in actuality, she was not sponsored by the pre-existing Dee’s Nuts brand that, was not known to her, existed when the asset was created.

“Falsely claiming to be sponsored” is wrong because “deez nuts” is not a brand.

Nevertheless, she was asked by her manager to private the VOD for the reason that they felt that she was claiming to be sponsored by the “Dee’s Nuts” company during this bit, and she apologized and complied. Link to the privatized stream:

<https://archive.ragtag.moe/watch?v=Gble9FIdQN8>



11. “Giving “likes” to comments falling under defamation of NIJISANJI Livers and ANYCOLOR Inc. using social media accounts that she personally operates.”

This is inaccurate in some capacity. Only one “like” was given on accident to a single tweet which Zaion liked on her private account during the time she was suspended in February. She was not aware that this had happened until it was mentioned to her. However, Zaion does not excuse herself from this mistake. The liked tweet was an image post of a crude meme created by a community member that was in support of Zaion’s content style, but **did not “like” comments making negative statements. Due to the harassment (death threats) and doxxing caused by the suspension announcement, Zaion overlooked her accidentally giving a “like” to the image. Zaion apologized to staff profusely for this mistake, and strongly tried to emphasize it was not her intention to do so.**

12. “Numerous other actions and comments infringing the contracts and Rules.”

This statement is too vague to comment upon as there are no specifics that can be mentioned. However, it suggests that Zaion committed other wrongdoing.

Their Important Conclusion

In their last call, Zaion begged for them to consider a more professional approach to future commentary between the two sides. To this, **NIJISANJI refused, stating they “needed to protect their brand.”** Some of the allegations written are untrue or uncontextualized which negatively impacted Zaion’s character.

Zaion agrees with the decisions. She did make mistakes and agreed that separation was appropriate for both sides. I believe that there were a lot of things provided without proper context that negatively impacted her character.

In the end, Zaion wishes things could have gone differently. Some NIJISANJI members have spoken about Zaion’s termination and she wishes to avoid giving context on that here, as she does not wish to direct harassment towards anyone else. That aside, Zaion sees this as a huge learning experience and sincerely hopes everyone can move on from this chapter.

Zaion's Personal Experience

I'd like to preface this by saying **I DO NOT want any third parties to use what I'm about to reveal or twist my words in any way to damage the reputation of NIJISANJI or its Livers.** This is simply Zaion's first hand experience chronologically listed from the moment she was onboarded, to her final moments.

I want to ask everyone to put themselves in Zaion's shoes for a moment in the present. As a content creator who has been doing this full-time for over a year (way before joining NIJISANJI), it's hard going about your day, supporting your friends on Twitter multiple times every single day, and reading their content as you used to. Then, when the suspensions and termination happen, you're told you must obey the silencing contract. But, what this results in is suddenly being blocked or unfollowed by several people who you have considered to be your friends or who you've cared deeply for for a long time. People who knew her as a person, and still cared for her in return, are even harassed for caring for their friend.

Zaion became increasingly afraid of hurting the few friends she had left, and avoided many of them completely.

She still doesn't know how some friends feel about her now.

She still lives in a constant fear of making everyone feel uncomfortable just by being around them.

Zaion was someone who was always incredibly excited to spend time with her friends IRL at cons, and would go out of her way to do so. The constant cycle of guilt and trauma drove Zaion to a very dark place and still does. There were people that she trusted and told her struggles to. Some understood, and some understood this as her gaslighting or guiltting them, when she confided in them.

It's true that most of them didn't really know Zaion as a person. But it's not fair that the simple way they knew her is now forcefully replaced by this storm of complicated and strong words that don't actually have "her" in them.

It goes without saying that the characters we play online aren't the full "us". You can't assume how bad someone feels, how sad they are, just because they play a happy character online. Just speaking for myself, what banner I'm under or what character I play never changed my own style.

I did read as much as I could about what everyone was saying, be it on YouTube news videos, various posts on Twitter, posts on my YouTube account, or

yes, even DMs sent to my Twitter. **I want to make it known that I read every Twitter DM, and just about every YouTube comment.** After everything, Zaion felt like a failure. She felt like her dream, and who she was at her core, was now ruined because of this experience. She did desire to end her own life. But each and every kind message pulled her back from the brink. Without all of you, a person would no longer exist.

Some of her stories will be omitted for legal reasons. Please respect this.

❖ **August Interview: Asked about my current monthly income.**

When I received the first email asking me to interview with NIJISANJI, I confirmed a time slot that they had already listed as an offer, and waited. However, I realized that the day of, that I still didn't have a link to the online interview call. (Their email had stated it would be with Microsoft Teams.) Exactly 4 minutes before I was meant to be on the call, I messaged them again to ask for the meeting link.

Then 2 minutes after the confirmed meeting time, they sent me a new email with the link.

The interview itself felt fine. There were two people on the call. It felt like they were asking questions based on the answers I gave, which made me feel like they were listening and did care about the person I was. There wasn't any information told to me regarding specifics of their company, like how they ran things differently from other VTuber or talent agencies. Things like: being unable to use my current social media or streaming accounts forever vs simply for a short amount of time, being unable to use any current game accounts or allowing certain ones, etc. None of that was included, it was a simple interview.

What was interesting, came at the very end though. I had mentioned that I previously had a job at a tech company. One of the interviewers, who hadn't said a single thing until then, asked me in Japanese, how much I used to make as an independent streamer. I told him how much from subscriptions, sponsorships, etc, and he responded: "mm".

Then immediately following that, he asked how much I used to make at my tech job. I answered that I actually made less than I currently did as a streamer. He gave me the same "mm" and then said he had no further questions.

I thought, well, if they're gonna ask questions like that, then I'll ask one that I wasn't sure if I could ask. And I asked: "Do you guys have a monthly salary or minimum per month that you pay to your talents?"

That interviewer answered, "No, but I can tell you that if you sign under us

that you'll make more than you're making right now." I'll never forget that. But at the time the compensation structure was not discussed.

Fast forward to the 21st of August. I made it through to the final interview with the CEO. This was the only time in the entire time I had been there, that I would get to even see his presence in my, or the talent's, vicinity, let alone speak with him.

He asked questions that I thought were very good and well thought out. Things such as "what kind of character do you want to play?" to which I answered, "I'm usually the anti-hero. I like saying things that make people laugh or surprise or shock them. I love getting reactions out of people." He also asked how much I wished to act for my future character on stream. I said, "that depends on how much content the company and I end up expecting of myself. If I do shorter hours per day, then of course that makes it easier to keep up a persona further from myself. If I do longer hours like I'm used to doing however, then it would be easier if I was being more myself."

Again, nothing regarding how they ran the company or what they expected me to "give up" was mentioned.

❖ **October Prep: Debut song asked to be fully recorded before even hearing genmate's voices.**

Fast forward to October. They messaged me back saying that the debut song for my generation was ready. They requested that I record my lines and turn them in within a week. This would be our most important song, yet, at this point I had not even met my genmates or known what they sounded like.

I asked them to push the deadline back, because I would be gone at Twitchcon. The new due date turned out to be after I would hear my genmate's voices for the first time, but that was all the knowledge I'd have.

After I submitted my recordings, they messaged me back saying the producer said my recordings were no good due to some background noise, and that I would need to go to an actual studio to record my lines or "clean them up". So I asked a friend who dabbles in DJing as a hobby to clean up the **same** audio files for me, and submitted them again. At this point I received no more updates on the song, so I assumed they were fine.

❖ **November Debut Planning: Organizing and managing.**

Around the end of October is when we were finally able to start planning for our debuts. I had experience debuting as a VTuber for my own activities, so I was familiar with all the elements needed and how to manage planning with

all the different people I'd work with. Regarding the question of what was needed for the debut and subsequent streaming activities, the managers informed that "nothing is really required. It's up to you how much or how little you want to have for it."

I personally incurred the cost of planning a successful debut. Our lore was written by ourselves. I had to find people who had the skill sets needed for the graphics and animations myself, and pay for them myself. By the time we debuted, I was already hugely in the red, in order to plan and execute a debut befitting of a talent of such a big company.

❖ **Meeting the other NIJI EN Livers.**

They were incredibly kind, considerate, and immediately included us and made us feel like one of them. I will never forget their kindness and how much effort they put into being there for us, and each other. Unfortunately things did change as time went on, but that was not until the very end.

❖ **December: Given a manager who was a 2-week-old hire.**

For me, I see a manager as someone who helps us strategize and build upon our own style of content and character personality.

But that was far from what we got. The manager they assigned to manage our whole generation of 6, was someone who was a 2 week old hire. It was not the manager who trained us for the whole month of November with whom we developed a bond, nor the person who worked with us through the onboarding.

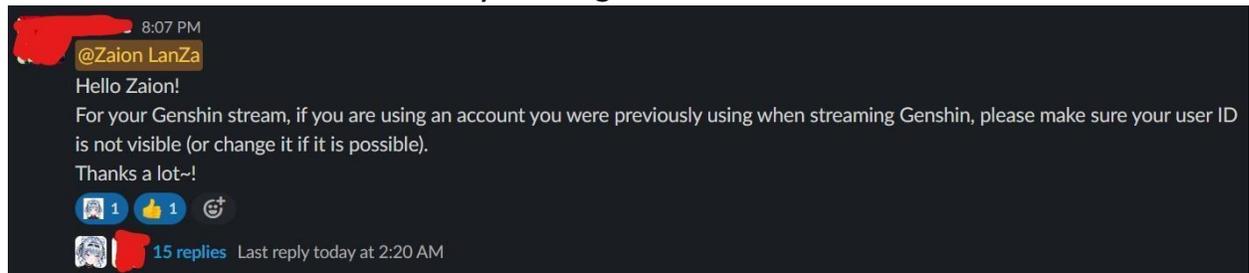
Anytime I had a call with our manager to discuss something, THEIR manager was also there. And it was pretty much just me asking him stuff while she sat there and nodded her head. If there was something I wished to do, or something I thought was worth fighting for, it felt like it wasn't fought for. All I experienced was the expectation to bow your head down and not to question the system.

❖ **Debut Week 1: First Private Vod: Genshin PL Account**

Here's where things started to fall apart. Just to double check, I asked my manager if I could use my Genshin account of nearly 3 years. This game was huge for me. I had a longstanding relationship with the game as a content creator, and it was a significant part of my career growth. I would stream that game multiple times each week on Twitch as an indie, and it was my comfort place.

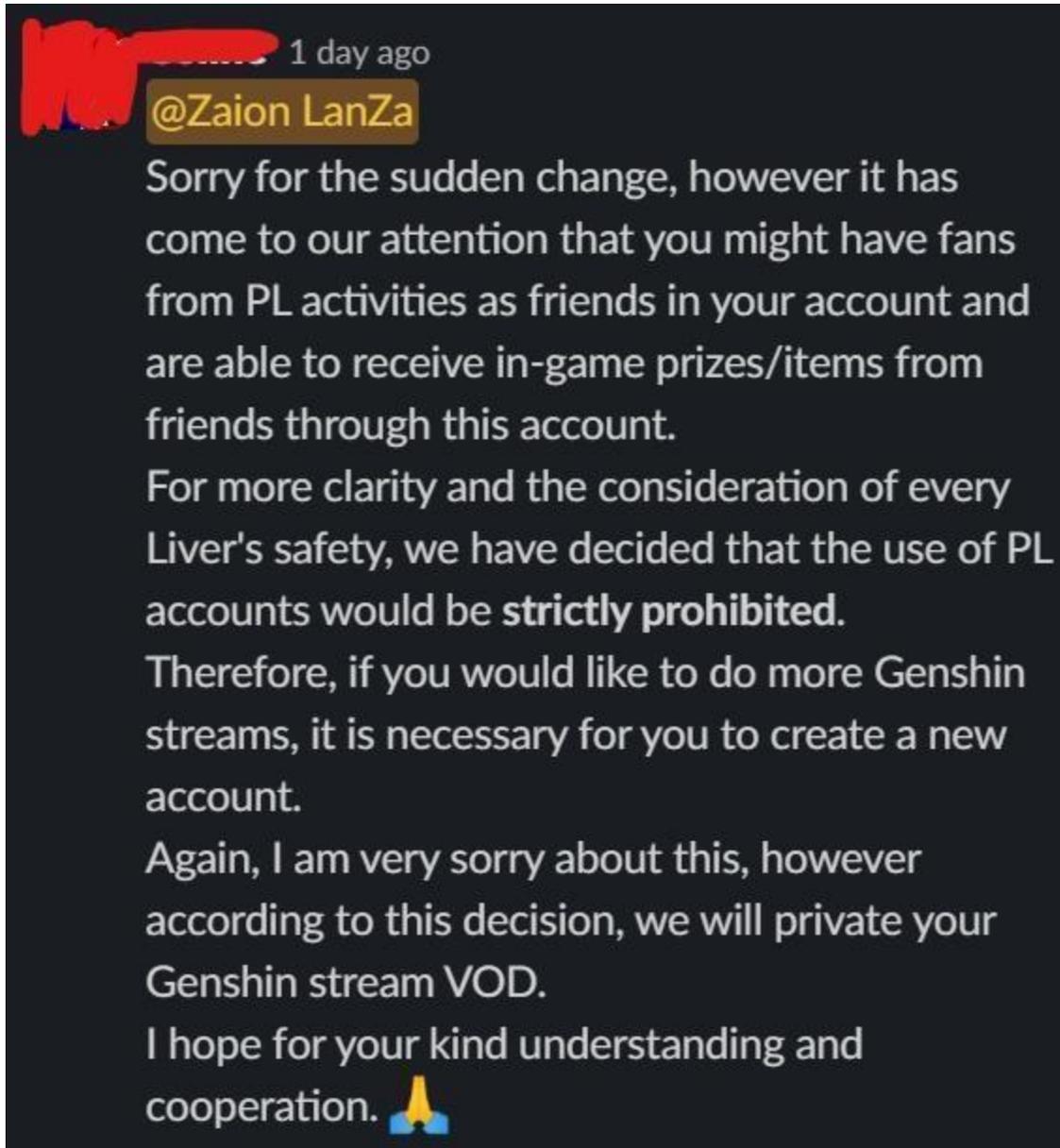
Several other talents in the EN branch were also streaming while using game accounts they owned before joining the company. Even though the

precedent was there, I was trying to see if there were any other rules they wished for me to follow. And my manager said:



And thus, I covered my ID and we had an incredibly fun stream. Most corporate streamers who play Genshin on stream are usually newer players who try it because their viewers wanted to, inexperienced players, or just doing it because of a sponsorship. So many fans expressed how enjoyable it was to see someone play who actually cared a lot about the game and played it seriously. It's an honor for me to represent that.

However, not long after the stream had concluded, I got another message from my manager:



Other livers are able to use their past accounts and I was not. I had a 2 year-old account I wished to use, and a lot of content planned for my future streams centered around it.

Having the stream VOD from that day privated also meant that I could no longer earn money from new views on it, and consequently stunted my growth analytics because—as one of my most successful streams—it was no longer visible content to the public in my debut week. Fans were asking me where that stream went. And I wasn't allowed to tell them what happened. **Many people attacked me for using my old account which I had received permission to use, then had taken away, saying that it was “my fault for probably using it without permission.”** My manager and their manager

told me to tell people that it was like a "peek into my hard work of the past, and now I'll start something new together with my new fans". And that's the lie I painfully ran with.

I did my best to argue for the rights to use that Genshin account, saying that this was not the term I entered the company on. And that plenty of other talents in the company used, and still were using, their old accounts. I had a call with my manager and her manager, and they told me that the reason I couldn't use my old accounts now was "because they existed before Zaion LanZa did." When I said I could not agree with that, we had a second call, and nothing changed. Finally, I told my genmates what was going on, asking them for help. Since some of them had past accounts, they were also under the impression they would be able to use them. We all had a group call with the two managers.

Once again, the narrative was changed. The managers said that they would consider past game accounts on a "per game basis", and approved of a game that my genmate wanted to use. When mine was brought up, they said "it's because [you were] an official Genshin content creator and that counts as a sponsorship. And you can't use accounts that were previously sponsored."

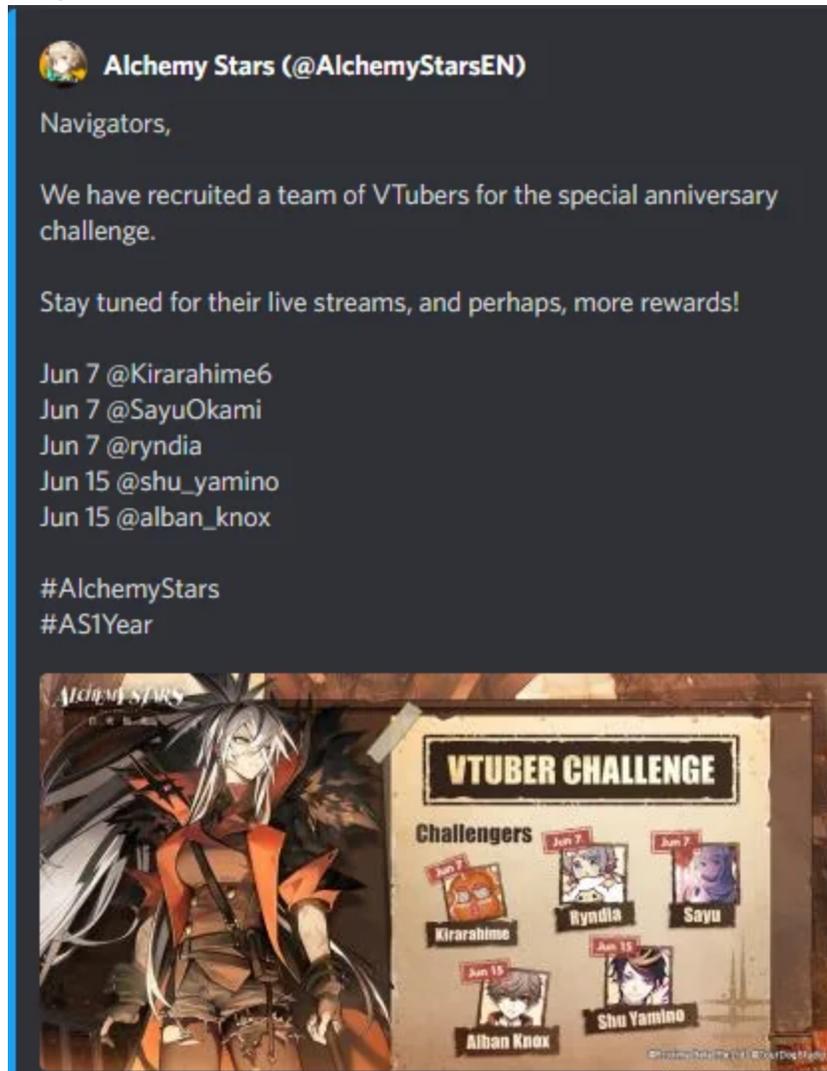
This expanded the scope of the matter beyond just my Genshin account. But first, I rejected that claim, because in the official rules for being an "official Genshin Impact Content Creator" explicitly states that it does NOT count as a sponsorship in any way. "Official Genshin content creators" do not get paid for creating Genshin-related content. Also, in preparation for joining NIJISANJI, I purposely did not reapply for my position as an official Genshin content creator, and thus I hadn't been part of the program for 2 months.

Then, the managers said "but [you were] a pioneer for the game, so a lot of people know that account." This was yet another completely new argument from them. This normally would hold no weight, because no single Genshin account can be distinguished from another. Every account is able to get every character, every item, every outfit. Nothing is unique except for the user ID that could be hidden.

At this point, I had my suspicions about their real reason, and I gave up on arguing any further.

So, I moved onto my other game accounts, such as Alchemy Stars and Guardian Tales. Because I had been sponsored by those game's companies twice each, I greatly enjoyed working with them and we had a great working

relationship. I relayed this to my managers, and they said **because those accounts were sponsored at any time in their existence, I could not use them here. I felt like I was being punished for my past success.** Prior to hearing this, I was under the impression that NIJISANJI would be happy to have someone who had been on good terms with several other companies whom they also worked with. Funnily enough, one of those Alchemy Stars sponsorship events was WITH two of their own EN talents who were now my senpais.





❖ **Debut Week 2: Reaching out for help in DMs to Managers and being suspended for it.**

At this point I had messed up in several ways, including playing my genmate's cover without realizing I couldn't, showing a stranger's face in a Twitter post on my stream by accident, etc. I was having a hard time not messing up, and I felt horrible about it. I suffer from clinical depression, and have been going a little while without meds at this point. At this point, I felt incredibly trapped, I felt like I couldn't fit in, and my content wasn't welcome (all my hard-work on gacha games from the perspective of an experienced/dedicated player); I felt like I was a failure.

So I reached out to the two people who had onboarded us at the start. They were not our direct managers, but they were people who I trusted and felt comfortable with. I DMed them stating how bad I felt that I kept making mistakes, that I didn't know what to do (in order to continue being creative but not infringing on one rule or another). I DMed them saying I was sad, asking if there was anything that could be done about my Genshin account, and saying that overall I just felt uncomfortable.

And one of them responded. The person who trained us was someone I loved a lot, and it seemed like everyone did. She was kind enough to have a voice call with me, and talk through my feelings and issues, and even offered to try to fight for the Genshin account issue. That was enough for me. I knew that it was a difficult thing with a company that big, and I didn't have any expectations past her just trying. I was incredibly grateful that I just had someone in the staff that I could speak to.

But we would never speak like that again. In a call between my manager and their manager, I was told of my New Years suspension, and that DMing a manager was one of the reasons I was being suspended. I felt hurt and shocked; even my genmates had said they'd DMed managers before. I hadn't said anything that would hurt anyone or was a secret. But that was that.

❖ **New Years Suspension: Dec. 31st-Jan. 9th**

Demanding a 2 week break so early into me being here was way too long and detrimental. Even as an indie the longest break I had taken was maybe 1.5 weeks. So during the call in which I was told of my forced suspension, I begged my manager's manager, and asked if we could please reduce it to 1.5 weeks. He thought for a moment and said "can you really come to a serious decision within that time? [of whether or not I wanted to stay in NIJISANJI]" and I said "yes, because even before this call, I had already been thinking about this since debut." I know he was trying to pressure me into agreeing to 2 weeks. But after working so hard on my own for over a year, I knew how breaks go. You get used to doing nothing and you get lazy. I wouldn't let myself get into such a habit after all this struggle.

Finally, he acquiesced. At the end of the call, my manager's manager asked me what I'm going to tell my fans. This was asked in a manner that made me feel pressured to say, "Oh, I'm...just going to say that my family asked me to come on a last minute holiday trip."

Because of what happened with a prior graduation in the company, I had already been told by my senpais that oftentimes suspensions would be disguised as "breaks" by the talents. Now, I understand why.

So the New Years countdown that I promised my fans, of course, could no longer happen. And I told them that "my family rarely does anything out of town so I had to go on this last minute trip." That I would be gone from the 30th and return on the 10th.

That never happened; I just stayed at home and tried to see if there were any IRL friends around who didn't already go on vacation elsewhere or weren't too busy.

At the same time, Haku, one of my two cats, 4 years old, was suffering from a liver disease that required me to feed him every few hours. So it would morbidly work out that I had the time to take care of him, however it was incredibly expensive and even now I'm still trying to pay off the incurred bills.

❖ **Trying to Lay Low**

Upon returning I turned down the creative ideas a notch, in an attempt to reduce the risk of breaking any more rules. I only streamed games because I knew which had confirmed permissions for sure. No “Just Chatting” or creative streams, at least for a while. That was the plan and I stuck to it.

❖ **T/W: Pet death. February 7th: Haku’s Death+Ending.**

I had been taking care of my cat, Haku, who had been suffering from liver disease for a month. He passed away the day after my indefinite suspension began.

I did not feel supported by my manager when I shared this information. The subsequent distress was compounded by the fact that staff had locked me out of all of my accounts. Forced to sit in all of this alone, this would be one of the most difficult times of my life.

Everything past this is history. There was a lot I enjoyed about being in NIJISANJI. There were a lot of people I looked up to, who I liked, who I trusted with all my heart. There were some really fun times. But as much as I wanted to stay and with how hard I tried to do something different each time I messed up, I knew I wouldn’t be able to compact my style of entertainment into what they wanted without regrets.

I feel that I need to say that during my time there, I felt trapped, felt like a failure, and did not feel like staff cared about me as a person (or for my own creative style), as the managers I was forced to work with did not show an effort to understand me beyond the surface of our work relationship.

I am still incredibly grateful for the opportunity, I’m grateful for the friends I did get to make there, and I’m grateful that a place that had such history saw value in someone like me at all.

Thank you for reading. I’ve learned a lot from this, and hope we can close out this chapter here.

[Trigger Warning: Last picture with Haku below.]

