

things of 2025



warframe



If you're in tune with me and my larger social structure this probably doesn't come as a surprise. Warframe hit a subset of us this year like it was released by the CIA into a minority community. What started as poking our head into something we'd been tangentially aware of for years became a full blown obsession.

A meme in the Warframe community is asking what Warframe even is. This is a silly question as it's very obvious: it's a video game. You jump around and shoot bad guys with a gun. You farm loot and craft things. You kill a thousand guys with a sword. You clear daily missions for the battle pass. You pick herbs, mine, and fish. You hold control points and race. You attempt to hit certain keys in time with music on a downward scrolling track. You buy NPCs gifts so they'll like you more.

The thing is the game is good. And because it's made of all these composite parts added in piecemeal since 2013, because your expectations are low for a 12 year old free to play looter shooter that had ads that read NINJAS PLAY FREE, it all hits even harder than you would think. And when the story is also good well baby you got a stew going.

Something that the Warfriends and I were talking about was how the most recently added main story quest starts in media res. In abstract, okay, whatever, that's one of the most commonly used literary tools in history. But hold on, think for a moment, when is the last time that a game you played did an in media res section at any point other than when you pressed New Game? Sure, we'll cut to new scenes, but they'll broadly feature a traditional clarifying intro. It is very rare that games want to have meaningful conversations occur without the player. And it was striking enough that Warframe trusted the player enough to understand that narrative function that we noticed. There are a few times where maybe its minimalism errs a bit too trusting, but I'm much more partial to that problem than the other.

It's fairly common that our friends who aren't playing will joke (mostly) that we're playing it for the sexy robots. And make no mistake - the robots are sexy. They've talked in interviews about trying to find the right balance between being interestingly provocative and just kind of bodily exploitative. But they're also interesting. In a world filled with generic anime gacha characters or Pixar hero shooters, absolutely nothing looks like Warframe. If I'm reminded of anything it's the sort of surrealist Japanese characters you would get in early PS1 games by artists like Yasushi Nirasawa, but more in the ability to conjure a unique style. Sadly their original lead artist, Michael James Brennan, passed away in 2024.

What further helps the robotics is that Warframe's very good story is actually deeply concerned with bodies. Bodily autonomy and who gets to enjoy it is a very common concern within the game. Every major villain revolves around taking it from someone. Perhaps one of the most clearcut demonstrations of this is the very second planet you go to, Venus, and the friendly faction you meet there. You visit the debt-colony of Fortuna, filled with people who owe money to the capitalist-religion The Corpus, toiling endlessly to work off debts who interest they will likely never close. Every single one of them has machine parts, having had to sell off or use as collateral actual, physical pieces of their body. None of them have their head.

Now, I'm a trans nonbinary little cynic. When most people talk about trans representation in video games, I tend to roll my eyes. Oh Bioware put a button where you can say "I'm trans"? You can choose your genitals in Cyberpunk? Cool, I don't care. And yet, Warframe's story made me have the most trans feelings that I've had in, maybe any game. Not for any explicit reasons - there is a trans character in the game but she hasn't really had any updates in years, with her main role being the vendor for the Valentine's Day event - but for these questions and statements it makes about bodily autonomy in its story. And I'm not alone in this - while not every of the Warframe friends feels it as much as I do, we're all in agreement that it is there and it hits.

And it does this while you are also shooting guys with a boombox infested with an alien parasite that spits its young out to burrow inside of guys' skulls and kill them with their innate magnetism.

coney



There are approximately ten billion streamers in the world. It is completely impossible to try and convince someone to watch a new one. I'm gonna say "I think he's funny" and you're going to go yeah i kind of assumed so if you watch him.

I reckon that no one is as good at interacting with chat as Coney. That's kind of a dumb thing to say in a vacuum, everyone interacts with chat. It's kind of the whole thing that enables most of them to make money. I'm only partially talking about actually talking with chat, though. Rather, Coney's ability to make even some of the most mundane stream days feel like an event is fantastic. Even something simple like "I am thinking of a video game character and you have to guess them" is turned to a delight via his showmanship of it.

His marathons are also notable highlights. One of the ones that first brought him to my attention is the one where he locked himself inside a cabin (I mean a nice one, he could stream from it) until he beat every single Mario Party minigame. Due to my proclivities, I have a particular appreciation for one where he trapped himself in an arcade until he won enough tickets for the most expensive prize. As the hours wind down and the noise becomes more dissonant, he truly begins to believe that he is in hell. Then Dracula traps him.

Onto the next item, SHALL WE?

digimon story time stranger



WELL WELL WELL. SUDDENLY SOME OF Y'ALL PUTTING A LOT MORE RESPECT ON GABUMON'S NAME, HUH? LOOK WHO'S ALLLL SAD ABOUT THEIR DIGITAL TREES, AND NOW YOU COME TO ME?

It is pretty wild watching a wave of Digimon love on the internet. The kids these days talk about how rare it is to be "multi-fandom" but back in my day we didn't care we just watched Pokemon,

and Digimon, and Monster Rancher (monsters rule). But the way things shook out, most people stopped caring about Digimon, because the games just weren't there. And now with Time Stranger coming out, it really drives home that all you need to make people feel good is a good looking game. Which is funny because there's honestly a lot of middling aspects of Time Stranger.

Very early on it starts feeling like you're playing a very dated game. A lost PS2 classic, graphically updated. It's really easy to break, cutscene pacing is completely random, dungeon puzzles are borderline non-existent, and you spend the first 5-10 hours in a sewer. Then you move on to the next area and the first dungeon is a completely different sewer.

BUT: The digimon are well-animated. They each have a bespoke attack animation and victory pose. And that's kind of all people actually care about.

There's a cynical way to interpret that, the classic "oh all people want is good graphics huh" and the thing is for a Monster Taming game yeah they kind of just want fun and realized little guys. They will ignore a ton of really boring dungeons and brainless dated fights if you give them that. Because all that is is setpieces to use their funny little guys on. Nail that, and you'll have thousands of people posting that you made the second best jrpg of the year.

Me though? Lexi and I have been waiting for this game for a decade. They started this shit after they finished the last game. Presumably they went "this isn't coming together let's work on some other projects" and weren't LITERALLY working on it that whole time but y'know. Seeing its trailer pop up for the first time together was WILD.

## digimon movie 3



The third Digimon movie might be the single worst entertainment experience I had this year. This isn't a list of the best things of 2025. This is just the things of 2025. And my ass keeps having the memory of how dogshit this was creep up.

In America, the Digimon movie was of course a chopped and screwed version of the first three Digimon OVAs in Japan, since there wasn't really room in the American market for people to understand why you would watch an OVA. So Lexi and I are watching through the three OVAs and I'm like yeah it's nice to engage with these in their original forms, like even with some of their problems it's still a smoother story than how I originally experienced it. Then we got to the third one.

I would generously call Digimon Adventure 02: Digimon Hurricane Landing 10 minutes of story spread across 70 minutes. The first draft of this, that sentence read 40 minutes. I didn't realize it was another 30 minutes long, because I genuinely could not imagine that it had that much additional time wasted.

Digimon Hurricane Landing takes place in a fictionalized version of the United States where it is possible for several Japanese children on holiday to walk from South Dakota to Colorado without food or drink. New York looks like the Pacific Northwest. The plot is that at some point some kid who Digimon has never shown before had a Digimon who was corrupted by a virus in a clear metaphor for death and now that Digimon is going to fight the Digidestined and also turn some people into children because it wants to go back in time. The cast from Digimon season 1 are kidnapped off screen and put in the Turn Into A Child dimension. The Digimon fight and defeat the evil Digimon while their trainers also get turned into children, despite not being in the

Turn Into A Child dimension. They run out of budget during the fight scene so some shots are just still images.

By weight this film is 80% walking down Interstate 90, which is surrounded by tall grass in a way that implies that the animators may have thought that was corn or wheat stalks.

I watched good movies with my girlfriend this year. They're not on this list. Digimon Hurricane Landing is on this list. That's where we're at.

silksong



I heard this was popular? I didn't wind up beating it. I just sort of fell off it as other things happened. To be totally honest I kind of thought I was going to have more to say about it when I put it on this list but now that I'm rolling it through my head I don't know that there's anything that other people haven't said.

It was pretty funny that everyone decided to do Difficulty Discourse over this instead of From Software's latest release for once. Presumably because that was a multiplayer game, everyone went "Oh that's not a proper Artistic Experience. Single player games are though, so it's important that they be available to every single person to play at any difficulty".

We fixate on the achievement of completion. There are people who think that if they do not roll credits on a game, they have wasted their time. Farcical, of course. Either all moments matter or none of them do. I never got the Best Ending of the original Hollow Knight. Just didn't find the platforming of that final section very interesting. But every part of the game I played until then had completely held my interest, so, what time could possibly have been wasted?

Likewise, I had a lovely time playing Silksong. I fell off it for some various reasons, and I'll probably come back to it eventually. Maybe I won't beat it that time either. That's cool though. I'll play it for as long as I find it fun, and then I'll stop when it isn't. Probably the point of these things.

monster hunter wilds



I bought a fuckin' ps5 for this thing man. It was coming out on next gen and PC, and I told myself there is absolutely no fucking way that this thing is going to run on PC I've seen the engines Capcom uses. And as I write this they have just announced that at some point in 2026 they're going to ACTUALLY patch the performance of the PC version. I was fucking RIGHT dog.

The fights in Wilds are some of the best the series has made and it's crazy how much it gets in your way when you want to do them. While the story is going you are constantly told "no no no, go talk to the next person" when you try to wander out and enjoy the world and monsters they made. Once the story is done, monster health is so low that you barely get to enjoy most of the fights unless you go out of your way to find buffed versions of the monsters.

Back in the day, we only got Monster Hunter games in the west once they were DONE. Expansion, bonus quests, collabs, higher ranks, all that shit came with a product like Monster Hunter 4 Ultimate. Some of the discourse around Wilds really drove home to me that a lot of people would probably prefer that. Though of course they also want to get the new thing immediately and those two things are in conflict yada yada you don't need me to tell you that The Consumer is stupid. Monster Hunter has changed so much over the years to try and find the sweet spot of being a big seller in both the east and west that it's almost surprising that they adhere to some of these older principles, like G-Rank being something that we probably won't see until 2027.

Still, ton of hours in this thing. Some of the friendliest player customization the series has ever had. Had a great time. I bought a fucking ps5 for this thing man.

house md out of context



Thing Out of Context accounts are a pretty standard gimmick on social media at this point but House really lucked out and had a moment with theirs. Man: that show is RACIST! But in that liberal wink wink I'm acknowledging the problems with society right I'm just showing you the real things that happen way.

Still fun though because at the end of the day Hugh Laurie is just turning in a generational performance. TV used to be good even when it was bad, man. Lexi and I got sick as balls together this year and if Dr House wasn't there for us it would have been pretty rough.

romolla



I feel like, if I have to explain why Romolla, a fellow tgirl who has a past career as a professional fighting game player and who now streams things like Nubby's Number Factory and Stuart Little for the Game Boy Colour while asking chat if there is a philosophical overlap because monsterfuckers and the desire to believe in the Loch Ness Monster, is an appealing watch to me..

Well you've probably come across this document randomly, without actually having met me or knowing who I am, and you know what? That's neat, ain't it? The internet is so big and filled with such possibility.

majuular ultima retrospective



Majuular's video series on the Ultima games has been going for a WHILE - the first one dropped November 2023. So there are ways in which it's a little silly to call it a thing of 2025 specifically. This year featured the videos on Ultima Underworld 1 & 2 and Ultima 7 1 & 2 though, and these really hit a high point, and brought a large enough picture together that it's really fun a few times a year to just have the whole thing run and reflect on it all.

I imagine most people like me who got their gaming start on things like the N64, PS1 & 2, or handhelds have a huge hole in their knowledge when it comes to the early PC scene. In my head I know that things like Wizardry are a huge influence on the RPG genre and there are interesting divergences in how Japanese and Western developers interact with and interpret these games, but tangibly it's hard to truly contextualize that. While Majuular's series shines a light only on Ultima, it's hugely illuminative on one of those black holes of knowledge.

I assume, anyway. Dude could be lying through his teeth to me and I wouldn't know.

To see Ultima Underworld take form as one of the first true 3d games on computers is wild. To have seen it got to that point from the absolute dog-shit looking lines of Garriot's Akalabeth is unreal (No, that's a different PC series). With a lot of innovation in gaming now slowing down -

graphics in particular now moving at a glacial rate - the speed at which these earlier, simpler games were able to iterate and build upon their concepts is something that you cannot help but wish you were there for. Just listing their features makes you form connections in your head of things you played years later that you now know were pulling from here.

There are other people who look at these old games and explain them, but to be honest if there's someone doing it with Majuular's professional editing, audio work, script organization...I haven't found them yet. I would love to, but I haven't. But as long as work like this is coming out I know that in time it'll influence others like it.

momo



This is not a list of my favourite things to have happened in 2025. This is about the things that have stuck with me. And unfortunately 2025 is always going to be the year that I lost Momo. It will never be something else.

So Momo starts out not as our cat. Rather, he was first in the care of my sister's partner, Fel. They'd swept him up off the street because, you know, the middle of the street is a bad place for

a cat to be. There's cars there. Once Fel and my sister reach the point of their courtship where they're regularly staying over for a prolonged period of time, they want Momo to come hang out with them too.

Momo doesn't want to hang out upstairs with them. Momo wants to hang out downstairs in the cool basement, where I live. And you know, Momo's a pretty cool dude so I'm chill with that. He maybe wants to knead my dick a little more often than I'd like but other than that it's great. It reaches a point where when he's brought over he immediately trots downstairs, I hear his little jingling collar, and he walks in and yells at me as I say hello. At one point he tries to sleep in bed with me like he thinks he's human, like he lies on his back and rests his head on the pillow and it's like bro the second I start moving during my sleep you're gonna hate this.

Time passes. Fel moves in. He becomes more of a general housecat, enjoying every bed and couch. He still usually likes to come down for the night, though. The other cats don't come by as much. This is his space, where he feels comfortable.

Bit more than a year ago, Fel's mom dumps some cats on her. Technically they're supposed to be a "gift", to try and mend some bridges she's not necessarily burnt but maybe hasn't been maintaining super well. Not gonna do a psychological profile of Fel's relationship with their mother here, that's a little fucked. Suffice it to say that while Fel knows they're already spread thin with their existing cats they can't bring themselves to just abandon these new ones and make them someone else's problem. This is relevant because one of them fucking hates Momo.

So Momo goes from preferring to hang out in my room (at this point regularly sleeping behind me in the computer chair, or between the keyboard and the monitor (with varying definitions of "between")) to being locked in the area so that he isn't attacked. Broadly this suits him fine he doesn't really care. Work is done to try and smooth over the relationship between the two cats but it isn't really going anywhere.

One day Momo starts having trouble breathing. Then he has a LOT of trouble breathing. Turns out his lung has collapsed. Turns out from there, he has lung cancer. Lung cancer is, a particularly tough one to learn about, for a pet. None of them are good, of course. Lung is one of the ones that you don't really learn about until it's pretty progressed. He gets his lungs reinflated, he gets steroids to help him fight, and it all gives him about an extra month. Enough time to make sure he gets outside more, gets some treats. Gets to sleep on your chest.

I've dealt with depression in various forms for basically my entire adult life. Probably a bit before that too but you know, can only make so many guesses without a diagnosis. Momo came into my life during a period of time where I had some pretty long shut-in periods. It would not be an exaggeration to say that there are multiple times in my life where Momo was my best and most reliable friend.

I dunno how often pets die. In the world, I mean. I know that every day thousands of people are playing out a tragedy just like this. I'm not gonna do some pithy saying about our shared

humanity and connection with our loved ones or whatever. Platitudes aren't gonna matter when you're in it. This is just the year that I had to be in it, and it sucked, and it's great that a bunch of people were there for me. I hope that when it happens to you a bunch of people are there for you too, and I'm sorry that it sucks.

bobo



This is not gonna be some corny life goes on shit, I swear.

So Bobo is actually the only other cat of Fel's (Well other than those aforementioned blowjob brothers that their mom dropped). They agreed to foster a kitten while it recovered from surgery (a hernia, so young! fucked up), and the thing that happened when you agree to foster a kitten happened and he didn't wind up leaving. He's a bit runty and he's got just the smallest hidden nub of a tail, but he's bigger than he looks, he just scrunches up.

Bobo has anxiety. Now to what degree I don't know I'm not some pet doctor. I don't know if when he pulls some of his fur out he's doing it because he's anxious or if he's doing it because he's developed some sort of itch we're struggling to fix. But Bobo does not like being in a big world where a bunch of things happen. When people come home, even people he knows, he is going to hide for a moment just to make sure it's safe. When he's sitting at the window and sees people approaching the house he growls at them like a dog.

It took years for Bobo to become a cat of the house and not just a cat who lives in our house. The pandemic was great for him, finally the door rarely opened and closed. He appreciated the

basement because it was very quiet and very dark, but as time marched on he also appreciated getting his back slapped even more.

Now, when Fel got those cats dumped on them, funny story. The other one of the two, the one that was fine with Momo, did NOT like Bobo. And so Bobo has also been living downstairs for that entire time.

Over the past several months, Bobo's affection and love have nearly doubled as his comfort grows. Being locked in the basement where none of the other cats can bother him is absolute heaven. It has reached the point where it is not possible for me to be on the couch and not have him also sitting there, usually trying to climb into my lap. He will sleep with me and there is nothing you can do to stop it.

I don't think this is some "oh he was sad with Momo passing, he needed more companionship". Frankly I think he probably appreciates not having to share the space, the selfish shithead. I think this is a case of a cat being put in a place where he is able to more fully live how he wants to live, and growing much more comfortable with the humans around him as a result. For all the frustration 2025 has given me, 2025 will also be the year that Bobo started climbing into my lap so frequently I actively have started to worry about thigh bloodflow.

There are other things in 2025 of course but y'know. What do I really have to say about them that you haven't heard elsewhere? Yeah I played shit like Fantasy Life and Hades 2 this year. They were fun! They were fun for all the reasons you probably already know. Writing on the internet is about picking your battles for shit that you think you can actually say something interesting about. Lotta people don't get that these days, y'know? Lotta posts about shit everyone already knows. I'm not saying you can't live how you want to. I just think maybe people should try and focus more on the things they really have thoughts about, rather than the thing that they're reacting to because it just happened. I don't think history will say that there were many interesting reactions.

Read my porn