



### **EDITOR**

**Dickson Max Prince** 

@ @dicksonprincemax

### **CONTRIBUTORS**

\*Anita .W. Dickson

\*Efenudu Ejiro

Michael

\*Bekesu Anthony

\*Samuel Obadiah

\*Dickson Max Prince

\*Ernest .O.

### **PUBLISHERS**

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titimag.com
For more info
info@titimag.com
+2348134428331
+2348089216836

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# Wasteland 3

Wasteland 3 is a role-playing video game developed by inXile Entertainment and published by Deep Silver. It is a sequel to Wasteland 2 (2014) and was released for Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 4 and Xbox One on August 28, 2020. It was ported to Linux and macOS on December 17, 2020.

### **Gameplay**

Wasteland 3 is a squad-based role-playing video game featuring turn-based combat. Played from an isometric perspective, the game features synchronous and asynchronous multiplayer. In the game, players need to make various choices, which would have different impacts on the game's world and the story. The game introduces a vehicle that the players can use to traverse the world and store supplies. The main campaign can be played cooperatively with another player.

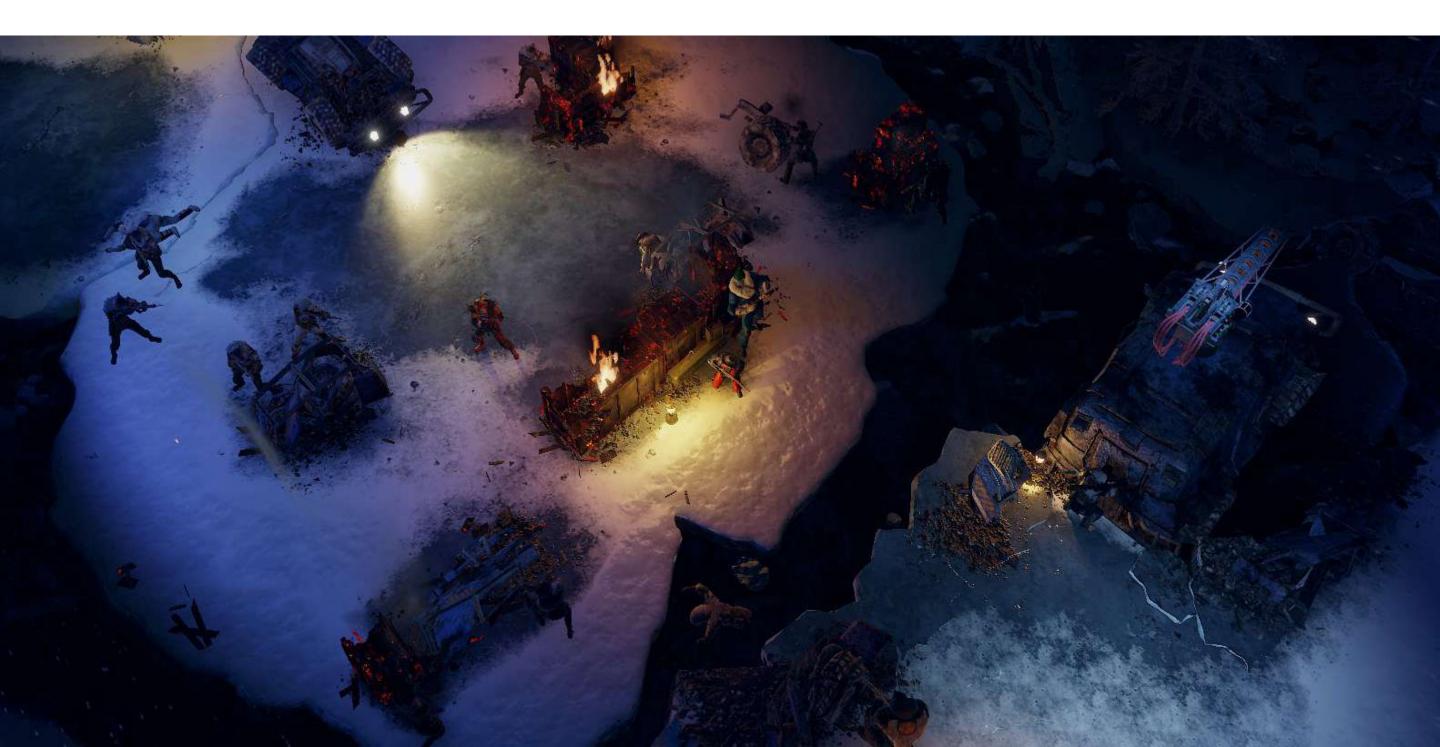
### **Plot**

Wasteland 3 is set in the frozen wastelands of a post-apocalyptic Colorado. The player takes control of two members from Arizona Ranger Team November, who survived after their unit was ambushed while on a mission in Colorado. The two survivors are subsequently forced to work with the local ruler, known as the "Patriarch", in order to earn his support for the Arizona Rangers - after the last game, and the choice between Highpool and Ag Center, the Rangers are struggling to keep order in the face of increasingly severe shortages of food and water. Once arrived and settled, the rangers are informed by the Patriarch that they are to hunt down and rein in his three heirs, who have gone wild and begun fighting each other to succeed him, as well as fight to preserve his rule over the many settlements and scattered populations that make up Colorado. However, as the story unfolds, the rangers discover the extent of the Patriarch's brutality, and are contacted by Angela Deth (a returning NPC from previous Wasteland games) who asks for their help in sparking a rebellion against the Patriarch. Player must then decide whether to uphold the original bargain or work to free Colorado and potentially endanger the future of Arizona.

### **Development**

Wasteland 3 was announced by inXile Entertainment in September 2016. Wasteland 3 is being developed using the Unity game engine. The development team is composed of people who worked on Torment: Tides of Numenera (2017). As with Wasteland 2, inXile chose to crowdfund the development of the game. Unlike their previous Kickstarter projects, inXile chose to use equity crowdfunding service Fig. The crowdfunding campaign launched in October 2016, and concluded a month later with over \$3 million raised.

The game was scheduled to launch on Linux, PlayStation 4, Windows and Xbox One in Q4 2019. After Xbox Game Studios acquired the company, inXile hired more staff for the game's development and delayed its release date to early 2020. The game's budget was three times more than Wasteland 2. The additional budget was mostly spent on implementing conversational scenes and hiring voice actors. It was delayed again due to inXile's remote working conditions from the COVID-19 pandemic., while the Mac and Linux versions have been postponed to an undisclosed date due to developer's "decision to focus Wasteland 3's initial release on Windows 10, Xbox One, and PlayStation 4". It was eventually ported to Linux and macOS in December 2020.







### Soundtrack

The soundtrack received special attention from inXile's Brian Fargo when he hired Mary Ramos, known for her work as Quentin Tarantino's music supervisor to create music for Wasteland 3. Inspired by the idea of future civilizations not having context for the meaning or intent of a piece of music or lyrics they might find, the soundtrack includes post-apocalyptic versions of the Welcome Back (Kotter) and Green Acres theme songs, Wang Chung's "Everybody Have Fun Tonight", as well as American anthems and bible hymns. Mark Morgan (Wasteland 2, Fallout, Fallout 2) returned to add his unique take on an atmospheric score for the post-apocalypse.

### Reviews

The game received generally positive reviews upon release, getting a score of 85/100 from critics on review aggregator Metacritic.

It was nominated for the category of Best Role Playing at The Game Awards 2020, but lost to Final Fantasy VII Remake.

TiTi Magazine did give the game a good rating; scoring the game at 8 out of 10.





# Immortals Fenyx Rising

Immortals Fenyx Rising (originally known as Gods and Monsters) is an action-adventure video game developed by Ubisoft Quebec and published by Ubisoft. The game was released for Amazon Luna, Windows, Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Stadia, Xbox One, and Xbox Series X and S on December 3, 2020 to favorable reviews.

The story, narrated by the gods Prometheus and Zeus, tells of the journey of Fenyx on her way to save her brother who has been turned to stone, and becomes embroiled in the escape of the evil Typhon.

# Gameplay

Immortals is an action-adventure video game played from a third-person perspective. At the beginning of the game, players can customize the gender, voice, and the appearance of Fenyx using Aphrodite's Beauty Chair. At any point in the game, they can return there to make further changes. The game is set in a large open world consisting of seven distinct regions inspired by the Greek gods. The player character is accompanied by a companion bird named Phosphor, which can identify locations of interest on the map. Fenyx can traverse the world quickly through climbing cliffs, riding on a mount, and flying using the wings of Daedalus. The full open world will be accessible from the start of the game. As players explore the world, they would encounter rifts which would teleport them to the Vaults of Tartaros, which are a series of platforming challenges that require players to utilize both Fenyx's combat and traversal abilities. Players can also complete various side-objectives and optional puzzles.

The world of the Golden Isle is occupied with various enemies inspired by Greek mythology, including minotaurs to cyclopes. There are two modes of melee attack: light attacks with a sword are fast but weak, and heavy attacks with an axe are slow but strong. Fenyx can also use bows and arrows to defeat enemies. Players need to manage Fenyx's stamina during combat as they will become exhausted after repeated attacks. As players progress in the game, they can unlock powerful godlike abilities. For instance, Fenyx can unlock Ares' Wrath, a group of spears that thrust enemies into the air. Armor and weapons can also be upgraded by collecting sufficient crafting resources.

### Story

After spending eons imprisoned under a mountain by Zeus, Typhon manages to escape and takes his revenge on the Olympian gods, severing them from their godly essences and robbing them of their powers. Zeus flees and meets Prometheus, seeking to secure his aid in battling Typhon. Prometheus instead makes a wager with Zeus that if Typhon can be beaten by a mortal, then he will be freed from his imprisonment. Prometheus then uses his power of foresight to tell the story of Fenyx.

Fenyx, a young Greek shield-bearer of the Delian League, barely survives a shipwreck and washes up on the Golden Isle. She (or he if the player chooses to make them a male instead) is shocked to find that the surviving crew and the Golden Isle's residents have all turned to stone. After recovering several artifacts belonging to legendary Greek heroes and receiving a prophecy, Fenyx rescues a young stranger who later turns out to be Hermes. He informs her about the situation and the grave threat Typhon poses as he seeks to break the barrier between the mortal realm and Tartaros and reform the world in his own image. Determined to stop Typhon and save humanity, Fenyx agrees to venture out into the Golden Isle to restore the deposed Olympian gods. Through her efforts, Fenyx befriends a magical bird companion named Phosphor and manages to restore Aphrodite (who became a tree without her passion), Ares (who turned into a rooster without pride), Hephaistos (who became one of his automatons without suffering), and Athena (who turned into a child with no judgment). Fenyx also defeats the spirits of Achilles, Atalanta, Herakles, and Odysseus, who had all been corrupted by Typhon.







However, despite the gods having been restored, they quickly begin to fall to bickering and infighting when they cannot agree on a plan to stop Typhon. Fenyx's older brother Ligyron, who somehow escaped the petrification curse, then arrives and tells the gods of his plan to steal Hephaistos' chains from Typhon, enchant them using the blood of the gods, and use them to imprison Typhon once again. The gods agree to Ligyron's plan but Fenyx is frustrated that he refuses to bring her along in order to protect her from danger. However, the gods encourage Fenyx to go after Ligyron so as not to let him steal the glory Fenyx deserves.

Fenyx scales the mountain at the center of the Golden Isle and manages to witness Ligyron collaborating with Typhon, collecting all the ingredients necessary to create a poison capable of killing the gods. In return, Typhon will allow Ligyron to become a god in his new world and rule the Golden Isle. Fenyx confronts Ligyron and defeats him, forcing Ligyron to flee to Tartaros. Fenyx follows him and confronts Typhon himself, being able to best him battle. With his last breath, Typhon reveals that Fenyx is actually a demigod and Hermes' child.

Throughout the story, Zeus comes to realize how much he has mistreated his children and the other gods and becomes regretful at how he had become such a poor parent and husband. However, he interrupts the story when he hears Fenyx is supposed to be Hermes' child, pointing out it should not be possible. Prometheus then admits that he had manipulated and fabricated parts of the story. He arranged his Titan brother Atlas to free Typhon and shipwreck Fenyx on the Golden Isle. In addition, he hid details that Fenyx is actually one of Zeus' children and that in reality, Typhon told him that it was Zeus who turned all of humanity to stone. At that moment, Fenyx arrives with Typhon's poison, confirming the entire story was part of Prometheus' plot to have Zeus killed.

Zeus admits that even though he created them, he wanted to destroy humanity due to their flaws, but has come to realize that humanity's flaws are merely a reflection of the flaws the gods and he himself possess as well. He feels he doesn't deserve to live and doesn't put up any resistance. However, Fenyx reveals she doesn't have any intention of killing Zeus, instead of wanting to inspire him to be a better father to his children and a better god. Typhon then reappears, furious that Fenyx will not kill Zeus as planned. He consumes the poison to empower himself and captures Zeus, taunting Fenyx to come and try to stop him. Fenyx follows Typhon back to Tartaros and battles him again, but Typhon manages to slay Phosphor and Fenyx begins to lose ground against him until Zeus escapes and rallies the other gods to come to Fenyx's aid. Working together, they are able to defeat Typhon once and for all as he succumbs to the very poison he consumed.

Afterward, as a reward for helping defeat Typhon, Zeus agrees to return humanity to normal, restores Phosphor as a new creature, the phoenix, and invites Fenyx to live on the Golden Isle with the gods. Fenyx agrees, as long as she gets to keep an eye on Zeus to make sure he's committed to becoming a better god and father. Meanwhile, Zeus sends Ligyron to free Prometheus as part of the wager, but not before tormenting Prometheus by having Ligyron tell his own story of Fenyx, much to Prometheus' annoyance.

### Development

The game was developed by Ubisoft Quebec, the team which created Assassin's Creed Odyssey. Game director Scott Phillips added that the project originated from a software bug the team discovered during the development of Odyssey, which changed the humans on the player's crew into giant cyclopses, and decided that it would be a good idea to create a separate game that embraces the mythological side of Greece. Due to the positive reception of Odyssey, Ubisoft's management agreed to greenlight the project.





The game was officially announced as Gods and Monsters during E3 2019. Initially set to be released on February 26, 2020, the game was delayed in October 2019 after another Ubisoft tentpole release, Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Breakpoint, failed to be commercially successful. According to Ubisoft, the delay gave additional time for the development team to "ensure that their respective innovations are perfectly implemented so as to deliver optimal experiences for players." Quebec studio used the additional time to add Zeus and Prometheus as the game's duo narrators, replacing Greek poet Homer, who was initially intended to fulfill this role. A work-in-progress build of the game was leaked on Stadia under the codename Orpheus in June 2020. It was re-revealed as Immortals Fenyx Rising on September 10, 2020. The studio decided to rename the game to reflect its narrative focus and put more emphasis on Fenyx, the game's protagonist. The change appeared to be a result from a trademark dispute with Monster Energy, which challenged the Gods and Monsters name, believing it would cause confusion.

Right now our heroes are being shown on camera all the time. We see them being selfish, we see them being clumsy falling down stairs, we see them making all kinds of mistakes. At the same time everyone is under such pressure to curate their Instagram story to have the perfect relationship, the perfect food, the perfect house, there's all this pressure to be perfect, but it's also increasingly impossible to be perfect. I feel like [Greek] mythology is the perfect lens to examine that.

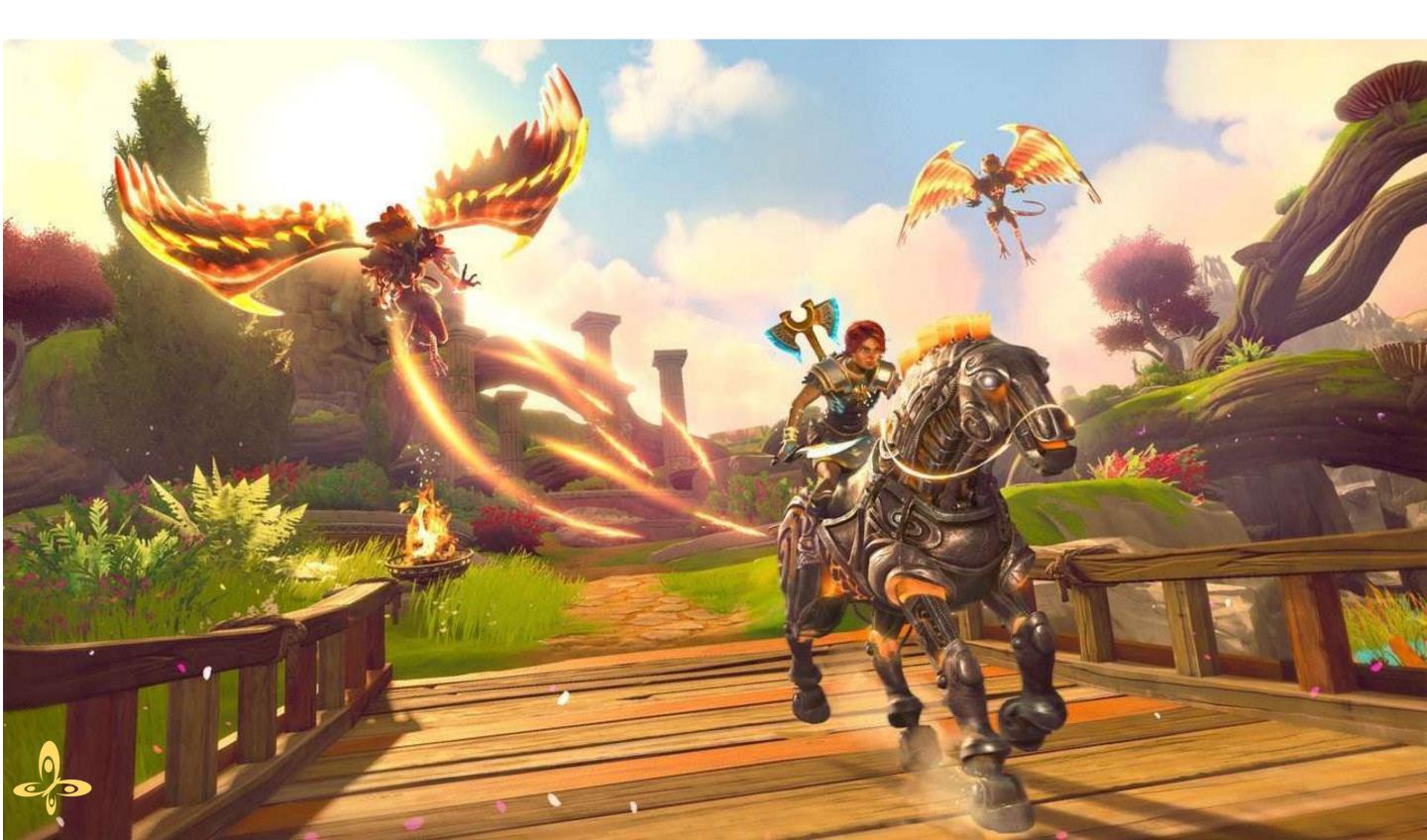
Jeffrey Yohalem, who wrote for previous Ubisoft titles such as Assassin's Creed II, Far Cry 3, and Child of Light, served as narrative director and lead writer for the game. The humour of the game – particularly that involving the bickering between the narrators Zeus and Prometheus – was inspired by films such as Robin Hood: Men in Tights, The Princess Bride, and The Naked Gun. In regards to adaptating Greek mythology for modern audiences, Yohalem explained that he didn't want to avoid the darker aspects of its gods and heroes (providing the example of Theseus's kidnapping of Helen of Troy), and instead wanted to specifically highlight those elements through a modern perspective, as it "[speaks] to our current political climate and who we are as human beings on social media." Yohalem believed that the capability of Greek gods and heroes to commit evil acts made them more human, saying that "[the] Greeks believed in balance where what makes us human and makes us complete are both our strengths and weaknesses."

Gareth Coker, who previously worked on Ori and the Blind Forest and its sequel Ori and the Will of the Wisps, composed the score for the game. Ancient Greek instruments such as lyre and kithara were used when he was recording the music. Coker commissioned these instruments from a Greek luthier and had them transported across the Atlantic.

The game was released on December 3, 2020 for Windows, Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4, PlayStation 5, Stadia, Xbox One, and Xbox Series X and S. A free demo for the game was released for Stadia users before the game's official launch.

### Downloadable content

The first of three DLC packs for the game, A New God, was released on January 28, 2021. Myths of the Eastern Realm and The Lost Gods will release later in the year and feature different playable main characters.





# Fast & Furious Crossroads

Fast & Furious Crossroads is a hybrid racing & action-role playing video game based on the Fast & Furious film franchise. It was developed by Slightly Mad Studios, a subsidiary studio of the British video game developer Codemasters, and published by Bandai Namco Entertainment. The game was scheduled to release on Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 4, and Xbox One in May 2020, but was delayed to August 7 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic following the postponement of F9. Upon release, the game received negative reviews.

### Gameplay

Fast & Furious Crossroads is set across global locations and features main characters from the Fast & Furious film franchise. The game offers a new storyline and action, with loads of cars. In addition to the single-player mode, which focuses on the story, a multiplayer mode will also be available in the game.

While the majority of Fast & Furious Crossroads is focused on racing, the characters must also defeat enemies and avoid traps by using equipped weapons on their cars.

### **Development**

The game was announced during The Game Awards 2019, and was set to be launched in May 2020 for Microsoft Windows, PlayStation 4, and Xbox One following the release of F9 to theaters. However, the COVID-19 pandemic forced both works to postpone. On May 27, 2020, it was announced that the game would be released on August 7, 2020.

### Reviews

Fast & Furious Crossroads received "generally unfavorable" reviews on all platforms, according to review aggregator Metacritic.

TiTi Magazine gave it 3.5 out of 10, saying it "lacks all the essential components in the fast and furious franchise; that it is not worthy to be associated with the franchise" and "a waste of time and funds".

IGN gave the game a 4 out of 10, calling it "short, shallow, and surprisingly simple, and it's nothing less than a crashing disappointment in virtually every department".

Giving Fast & Furious Crossroads a 2 out of 10, Metro GameCentral stated it to be "the worst thing to happen Fast & Furious since the death of Paul Walker" and "another deeply disappointing Fast & Furious game that's all the more upsetting because of the obvious talent it wastes in terms of both developer and cast".



# EST& EURIOUS CROSSROADS













# Spiritfarer

Spiritfarer is an indie management sim and sandbox action game developed and published by Canadian studio Thunder Lotus Games and released for Microsoft Windows, macOS, Linux, PlayStation 4, Nintendo Switch, Xbox One and Stadia on August 18, 2020. The main character, Stella, becomes a "Spiritfarer" whose job is to ferry spirits of the deceased to the afterlife. It received generally positive reviews from critics, praising its slow-paced gameplay, detailed animation, orchestral musical score and unique themes.

On February 21, 2021, Thunder Lotus announced they were developing new content to be released throughout the course of the year, adding four new spirits to the game.

### **Plot**

The player takes the role of Stella, accompanied by her pet cat Daffodil, who takes over from the mythological Charon as the new Spiritfarer, a ferrymaster who must sail the sea to find spirits and granting their last wishes and finally take them to the Everdoor, a gateway to the afterlife. In order to assist with her journey, Charon gifts both Stella and Daffodil with the magical Everlight.

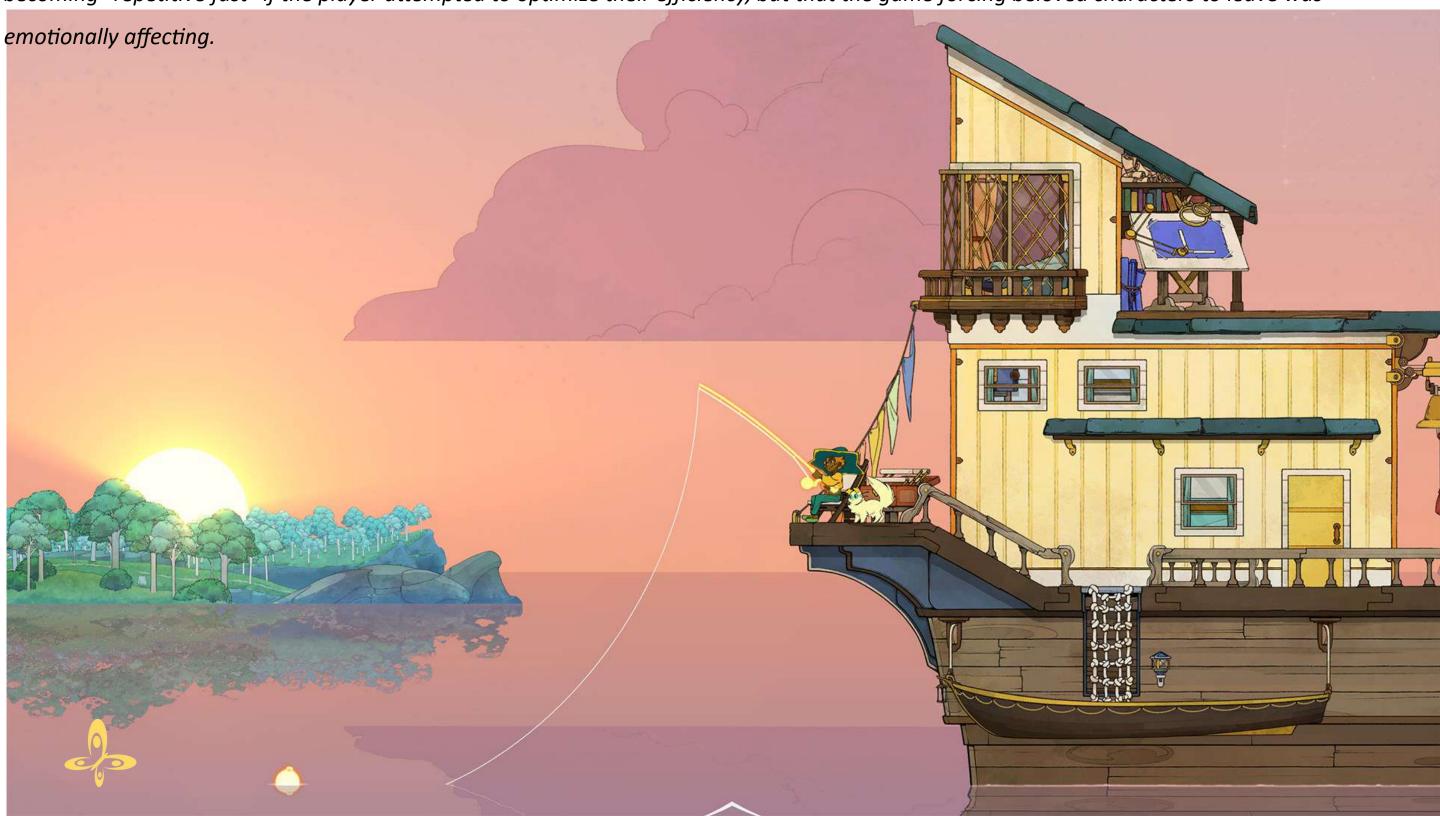
After Charon passes through the Everdoor, Stella procures a ship of her own and begins travelling the world, picking up spirits and helping them fulfill their last wishes while befriending them along the way. As she picks up more spirits and collects resources, Stella expands the ship and its capabilities further. However, eventually, Stella must begin sending the spirits to the Everdoor, with each of them giving an emotional send off as they thank Stella for everything she has done for them. As Stella sends off more and more spirits, she soon begins occasionally encountering Hades, in the form of a giant owl. Hades shows Stella images of what are apparently her past life as a palliative care nurse, taking care of terminally ill patients before falling terminally ill herself. Hades then questions Stella's motivations, wondering whether her desire to help spirits is truly altruistic or simply a selfish means to ease her own insecurities.

Eventually, Stella sends off the last spirit through the Everdoor and she has one final confrontation with Hades. Hades reveals that Stella's real body is on the verge of death in the real world, and it is now her time to pass through the Everdoor. With her purpose fulfilled, Stella sails back to the Everdoor with Daffodil one last time. She passes through the Everdoor with Daffodil and they both become a constellation in the sky.

### Reviews

Spiritfarer received "generally favorable reviews" for the PC version, according to review aggregator Metacritic.

IGN's Tom Marks rated the game 9/10 and gave it the Editor's Choice award, comparing the game to a combination of Animal Crossing and an action platformer. He stated that, while the game "tackles the heavy topic of death and those left behind in its wake", it is nonetheless "colorful" and "feel-good". He called the campaign "full of charming characters with somber, touching stories", though stating that "not all the characters are as impactful as others". He stated that the backtracking got "tiresome" and the formula of the game became predictable, with mundane tasks becoming "repetitive fast" if the player attempted to optimize their efficiency, but that the game forcing beloved characters to leave was











Prince Max Dickson of TiTi Magazine rated the game 9.5 out of 10 saying "it carefully explore the topic death in a well crafted manner, while still giving players a good game to enjoy; he still commended Thunder Lotus Games for the way they displayed the afterlife in the game".

Rachel Watts of PC Gamer rated the game 85/100, saying that it is a "wholesome life-sim" that "deals with the topic of death and compassion with masterful balance". However, she criticized the "purposeful vagueness" about the nature of the afterlife and its inhabitants as "muddling the clarity of the characters' intentions". Eric Van Allen of USGamer rated the game 4/5, saying its writing is "warm, funny and charming", and the game is "best enjoyed in small pieces".

It was nominated for Games For Impact and Best Indie Game at The Game Awards 2020. It is also a finalist for the Nebula Award for Best Game Writing.







Back stabber, my secret breaker,
Unfaithful and disloyal to the core;
Dragging my soul like raindrop,
Limiting me like hailstones.
For whose cause is no longer just;
The war is a never ending torment with you by my side;

Free my soul you reaper.



# Nioh 2

Nioh 2 is an action role-playing game developed by Team Ninja and Kou Shibusawa. Both prequel and sequel to Nioh (2017), the game was released for the PlayStation 4 on March 13, 2020, where it was published by Koei Tecmo in Japan and Sony Interactive Entertainment worldwide. Versions for Microsoft Windows and PlayStation 5 titled Nioh 2: Complete Edition featuring all the previous downloadable content were released on February 5, 2021.

### **Gameplay**

Similar to its predecessor, Nioh 2 is an action role-playing game. Players can create their own playable character, who was a yokai spirit. Players are equipped with a variety of weapons such as odachi and kusarigama, and earn new skills as they progress in the game. When players defeat a hostile yokai, some of them may drop a "Soul Core". They allow players to use yokai abilities and transform into a yokai after being deposited in a shrine.

At locations named "Benevolent Graves", players can summon other players, controlled by artificial intelligence, to assist them in combat. The game also features a three-player cooperative multiplayer mode.

### **Synopsis**

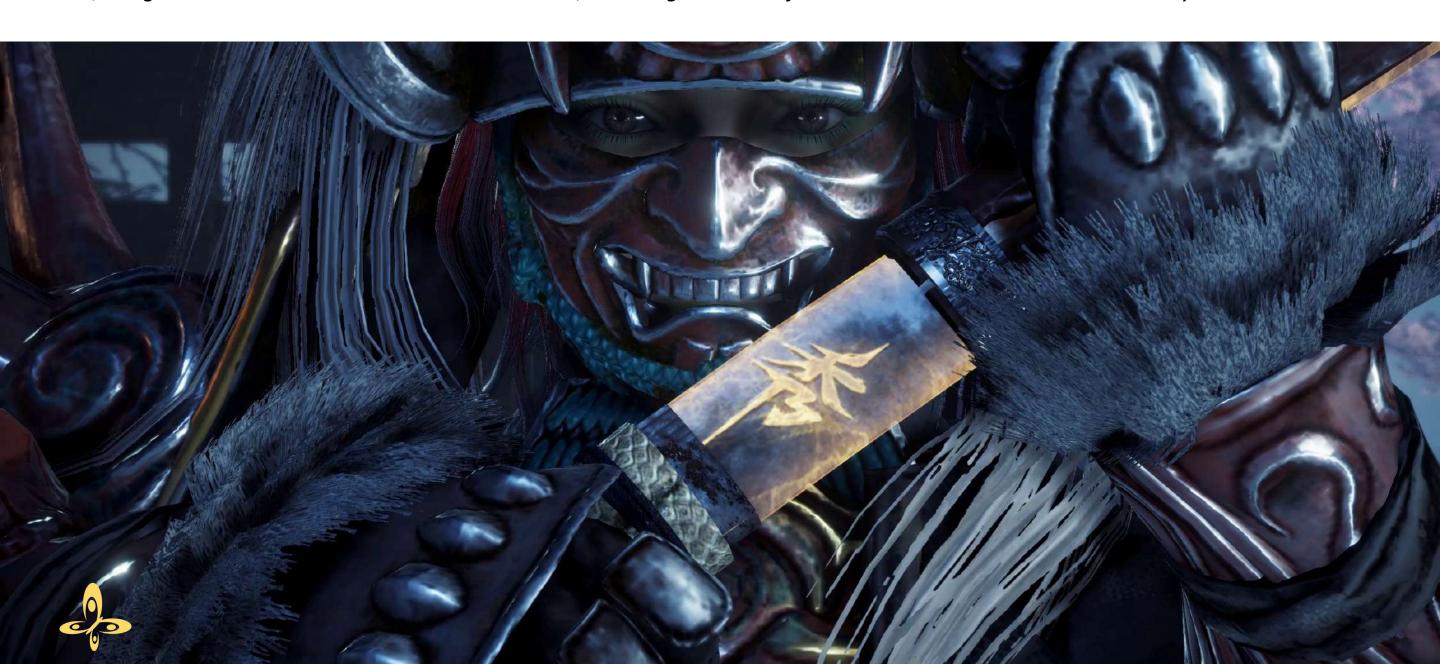
### Setting and characters

Set in Japan during the late 1500s, most of Nioh 2 storyline chapters are a prequel to Nioh, while the end chapters of the story take place after the first game's last storyline following the Siege of Osaka. Players take the role of a character named Hide, a half-yokai referred to as a "Shiftling" whose appearance and gender is decided by the player. Hide's journey through the Sengoku Era begins when they befriend Tokichiro, an ambitious merchant seeking out Amrita, and Mumyo, a demon hunter of the Sohaya group, eventually playing a critical role in the rise and fall of the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Kashin Koji serves as the main antagonist, a mysterious entity linked to a powerful yokai known as Otakemaru, who obstructs Hide's progress at every turn and is responsible for manipulating many of the events that take place through the game. One key item featured in the game is the Seven-Branched Sword, here known as the Sohayamaru, the sword used to slay Otakemaru in the past and the namesake of the Sohaya.

During their journey, Hide encounters and serves with several historical characters such as Saito Dosan, Takenaka Hanbei, Hachisuka Koroku, Oda Nobunaga and his wife Nohime, Oda's sister Oichi, Akechi Mitsuhide, Shibata Katsuie, Saito Toshimitsu (father of Fuku from the first game), Maeda Toshiie and his nephew Keiji. Hide also encounter and fights against Imagawa Yoshimoto, Saito Yoshitatsu, Magara Naotaka and Nagamasa Azai.

Returning historical characters from the first game includes Tokugawa Ieyasu, Tadakatsu Honda, Saika Magoichi and Oda's African retainer Yasuke. Other historical figures such as the Heian period onmyoji Abe no Seimei, tea master Sen no Rikyu, Kato Danzo and Okuni also appear to aid Hide in their adventures. Nioh's protagonist William returns near the end portion of the game which takes place after the events of the first, still in pursuit of Maria, with Hattori Hanzo making a cameo appearance: The Hanzo encountered by players here is his father Masanari.

Nioh 2 received three downloadable contents following its release, each DLC taking place post-game where Hide is sent back in time to the Heian period to solve the mystery of the Sohayamaru's origins and Otakemaru's hatred towards humanity. The first, "The Tengu's Disciple", takes Hide to the end of the Genpei War where they encounter Minamoto no Yoshitsune and his ally Benkei. The second DLC, "Darkness in the Capital", has Hide allying with Abe no Seimei, legendary demon slayer Minamoto no Yorimitsu and her Shitenno against Ashiya Doman's plots. The last DLC, "The First Samurai", brings Hide into an encounter with Suzuka Gozen, revealing the truth of their ties with Otakemaru and the Sohayamaru.





### **Main Plot**

The game begins with the protagonist, Hide, being awoken from a recurring nightmare and after saving a villager from a Yokai, finds a mysterious letter leading them to Jusanzakura. There, after clearing the village of Yokai and bandits, Hide fights the giant Yokai, Mezuki, and succeeds but begins to lose control of their Yokai power until Tokichiro, the sender of the letter, saves them. The two befriend each other and enter the employ of Saito Dosan and meet the demon hunter, Mumyo. Dosan's successor, Saito Yoshiatsu, rebels, with Hide and Tokichiro attempting to save Dosan, who reveals he is Hide's father, sacrificing himself to stop a large group of Yokai from following them.

Hide and Tokichiro seek an audience with Oda Nobunaga, who recruits the two companions to his forces, sending them to Okehazama to attack Imagawa Yoshimoto, then to Sunomoto to help Maeda Toshiie, Shibata Katsuie, and Hachisuka Koroku (another Shiftling like Hide) construct a castle there. After meeting Takenaka Hanbei and purifying his Guardian Spirit, Hakutaku, with Spirit Stones, Hide and Tokichiro head to Inabayama Castle, where Hide confronts and slays Saito Yoshitatsu, discovering that Yoshitatsu is not only a Shiftling but Hide's twin. Kashin Koji, the mysterious man from Hide's nightmares, appears from Yoshitatsu's corpse and vanishes. While celebrating the subjugation of Mino, Nobunaga grants Hide and Tokichiro's request to be known by a single name: Hideyoshi. While fleeing Kanegasaki, Hide and Mumyo find an abandoned village where the souls of the dead villagers incapacitate Mumyo while Hide fights the giant owl-like Yokai, Tatarimokke, slaying it and using their dagger to free the unquiet spirits of the dead villagers, changing Mumyo's attitude towards Hide. As Nobunaga and Tokugawa leyasu's armies fight the Azai and Asakura clans, Hide reaches Otani Castle to protect Nobunaga's sister, Lady Oichi, but is confronted by a transformed Azai Nagamasa, who Hide defeats. Kashin Koji emerges from Nagamasa and vanishes after Hide protect Lady Oichi from him, but not before warning Tokichiro about his dream of using the Spirit Stones.

While Hide deals with Saika Magoichi and the Saika Clan's attack on Ishiyama Honganji as well as the appearance of the enormous Yokai, Gyuki, Tokichiro meets with Saito Toshimitsu, who bears the same red eyes that Yoshitatsu and Nagamasa had when possessed by Kashin Koji, who persuades Tokichiro in continuing his new dreams, giving him the Guardian Spirit, Yumehami. When Akechi Mitsuhide attack Honnoji, resulting in the deaths of Nobunaga and his wife, Orihime, Hide tries to rescue them but is stopped by Saito Toshimitsu, who summons a Kasha to deal with Hide, who is promptly slain by Hide. Toshimitsu betrays Mitsuhide, transforming into the conjoined twin Yokai, Ryomen Sukuna, who is defeated by Hide. Kashin Koji leaves Toshimitsu's body as the latter is killed by Tokichiro and his forces, forcing Hide to flee as he realises that Tokichiro is being manipulated by Koji, joining forces alongside Mumyo with Mitsuhide.

Hide allies with Tokugawa leyasu, meeting Hattori Hanzo (the predecessor of the Hanzo who appears in the first Nioh) and Nekomata. Hide reaches Kitanosho Castle, defeating Maeda Toshiie, who allied with Tokichiro, and a crazed, Yokai transformed Shibata Katsuie. After meeting with Mitsuhide's new persona, Tenkai, and the tea master, Sen no Rikyu, Hide heads to the battlefield of Komaki and Nagakute to confront Tokichiro, killing him. Unbeknownst to the leaving Hide, Kashin Koji approaches Tokichiro's corpse, resurrecting and possessing him. Koji causes the sky to glow red, turning all the Yokai that allied with the Tokugawa forces into crazed beasts, with Hide forced to fight and slay a crazed Hachisuka Koroku. After slaying the gigantic Yokai, Daidara Bocchi, Hide is confronted by the resurrected Tokichiro, who stabs them with their own dagger. Hide awakens in The Interim, a gathering place for deceased souls, and is met by the deceased Takenaka Hanbei, who leads them to Hide's mother, Miyoshino, who reveals that Kashin Koji is Otakemaru, a powerful Yokai that was sealed by the Sohayamaru and responsible for Miyoshino's death. Hide is sent to





Byodo-In to search for clues about the Sohayamaru, finding the possessed Tokichiro there, who undoes the seals of the two Yokai contained in the temple: the Nine-tailed Fox and Shuten Doji, the latter of which stays behind to fight Hide but is defeated. Hide and Mumyo learn that Sohayamaru can be restored by combining the former's dagger with the latter's sword guard talisman and a large quantity of Spirit Stones. Learning of Tokichiro's large supply of Spirit Stones at Jurakudai, Hide and Mumyo sneak in, finding a dying, captured Rikyu. The duo is confronted by Lady Osakabe, a gigantic Yokai in the form of a castle and they defeat it, using the Spirit Stones it contained to restore Sohayamaru. They head to Daigoji to confront Tokichiro one last time, with Hide freeing Tokichiro from Kashin Koji's influence before he passes away. Koji appears to fight Hide but is defeated, leaving behind one of his horns.

Hide heads to Byodo-In, using the Sohayamaru on Koji's horn to seal Otakemaru in the temple forever, with Mumyo staying to watch over the comatose Hide. Sometime afterwards, William, the protagonist of Nioh, arrives at Kuroshima in search of Maria, leading him to Byodo-In and inadvertently releasing Kashin Koji, who briefly uses Hide's body to fight William before fleeing. Returning to their senses, Hide reunites with Mumyo and allies with William to stop Maria from resurrecting Tokichiro, believing he will continue to fan the flames of war. Koji tries to possess Tokichiro but Hide stops him, forcing them to fight Koji as he transforms into Otakemaru. With help from Tokichiro in the form of his Guardian Spirit, Hide vanquishes Otakemaru and after experiencing a vision of heroes who once wielded Sohayamaru, is reunited with the revived Tokichiro. As William captures Maria and returns to his son and Hattori Hanzo, Hide and Mumyo bid farewell to Tokichiro as his spirit moves on to the afterlife.

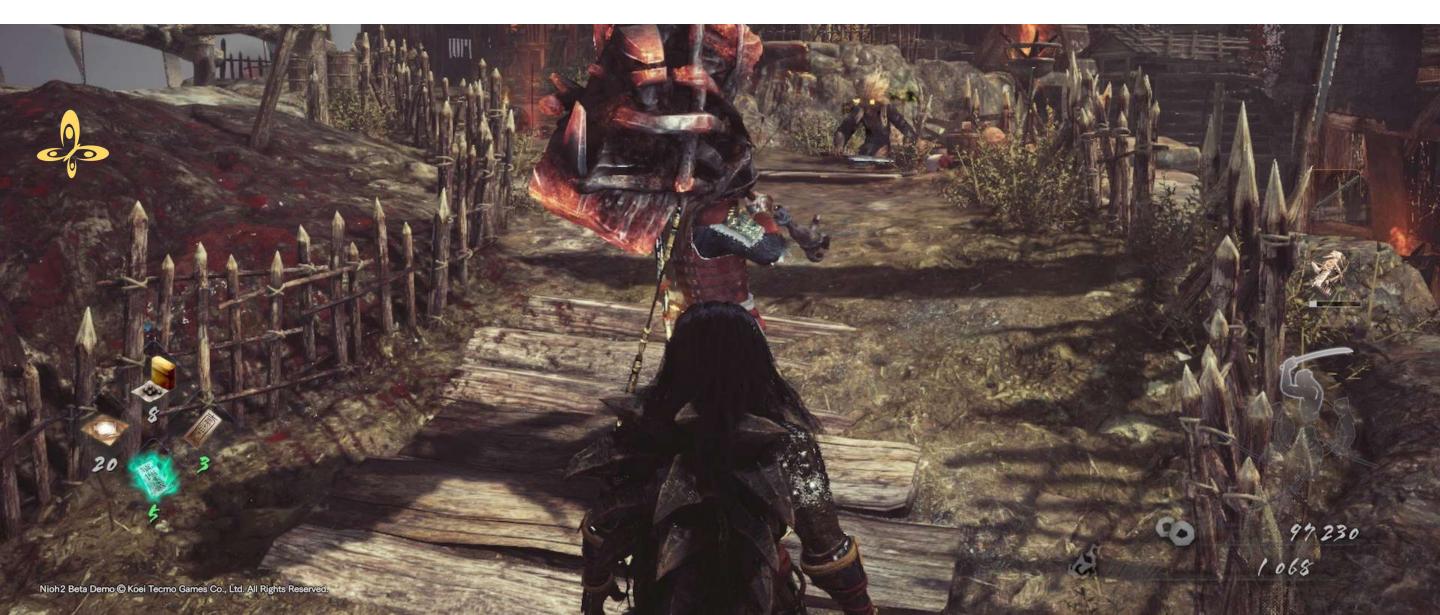
### The Tengu's Disciple

While seeking out signs of potential unrest, Hide encounter an ancient shrine that resonates with Sohayamaru and causes the Guardian Spirit, Kurama Tengu, to appear, sending Hide back in time to the Heian period, where they encounter Minamoto no Yoshitsune, the wielder of Sohayamaru at the time. After encountering Benkei and helping Yoshitsune deal with the Taira Clan and the colossal water Yokai, Uminyudo, Yoshitsune recruits Hide to help him in his war against the Taira to restore peace to the land. Hide meets up with Yoshitsune, who is under attack from

Fujiwara troops in Hiraizumi. When they catch up to Benkei, the latter is killed trying to protect his master. Yoshitsune is overcome with rage and transforms into a Yokai, killing the enemy troops before turning on Hide. Hide succeeds in defeat Yoshitsune and restoring his senses, not before experiencing a vision of a woman wielding Sohayamaru. Yoshitsune entrusts Hide with the mission of uncovering the truth behind Sohayamaru's origins, and his flute, with Hide transported back to their time.

### Darkness in the Capital

Continuing Yoshitsune's mission, Hide encounters the Guardian Spirit, Oh, who leads them to an ancient shrine containing a small box, which upon opened, pours out light which resonates with Sohayamaru. Hide is transported back in time to the middle of the Heian period where they encounters Minamoto no Yorimitsu, who attacks Hide, believing them to be an evil Yokai. When Yorimitsu is called upon by her retainer, Sakata no Kintoki, to head to Rashomon Gate, Hide follows them as they encounter and are captured by the spider Yokai, Tsuchigumo. Hide slays it and frees the two, not before encountering Ashiya Doman, who transforms the two Nigitama in Yorimitsu's employ into Aratama but they are slain by Abe no Seimei, who recruits Hide to help deal with Doman. At the Imperial Palace, Hide finds Doman, who summons dark spirits to attack them but is stopped by Nekomata, who is transformed by the spirits into the White Tiger, fighting Hide until he's defeated and restored by Abe no Seimei. Hide defeats Doman but not before the latter summons the Lightning God of Yomi, which Hide later defeats. Kashin Koji, who had possessed Doman the entire time, emerges from his corpse and vanishes. At Byodo-In, Seimei and Yorimitsu sacrifice themselves to seal the Nine-tailed Fox and Shuten Doji, but not before Yorimitsu shares with Hide her Guardian Spirit, Oh, and urges them to solve the mystery of the young demon slayer, with Hide returning to their time and restoring Yorimitsu's box to the ancient shrine.





### The First Samurai

In a deserted village near the Suzuka Pass, Hide finds another ancient shrine where a Guardian Spirit dragon emerges from a pictured scroll inside it, resonating with Sohayamaru and sending Hide back in time to the early days of the Heian period. Hide hears of their mother telling them the story of Otakemaru, a demon once loved by humans but when they grew fearful of Otakemaru, he turned on them, laying waste to the entire village until he's confronted by a mysterious woman and her Guardian Spirit dragon. Hide finds Otakemaru and the two fight, with Hide almost losing control and being turned into a Aratama. However, Hide is rescued by Suzuka, Otakemaru's sister. Trusting Hide, Suzuka heads off in pursuit of her brother, encountering Tate Eboshi, a yokai loyal to Otakemaru. Suzuka is repelled, leaving Hide to fight and slay the yokai. Suzuka uses the last of her strength to give Hide her Guardian Spirit, Sohaya, to them and transform her sword with the Spirit Stones Tate Eboshi gathered into Sohayamaru, the process taking a toll on Suzuka. With the newly created Sohayamaru in their possession, Hide heads to Onigajo to confront Otakemaru, who transforms his Guardian Spirit, Yumehami, into an Aratama, fusing with it to become the Nightmare Bringer. Hide vanquishes the Nightmare Bringer, with Otakemaru sharing Yumehami with them, his heart now cleansed of all the pain and hatred that dwelled within it. As Suzuka arrives, Kashin Koji begins to materialise from Otakemaru's cut off horn, forcing Hide to seal him with Sohayamaru, disappearing and returning to their time. Suzuka would recount these events as a fairy-tale to the child Hide (not knowing that Hide is the hero of the legend). In the afterlife, Otakemaru, now restored to this original appearance, is reunited with Miyoshino, whose memories as Suzuka have returned, and the two pass on together.

### **Development**

Nioh 2 was announced for the PlayStation 4 at E3 2018 during Sony's press conference. An open beta of the game began on November 1, 2019. It released on March 13, 2020.

### Reviews

Nioh 2 sold 91,892 copies during its first week of release in Japan, which made it the bestselling retail game of the week in the country. It was also the bestselling game during its first week of release in the UK.

The game received mostly positive reviews. IGN stated, "Nioh 2 is an impressive evolution of its predecessor, strengthening everything that was already great, while mostly leaving its already existing issues alone. Its stellar combat is elevated by the addition of Soul Cores, Burst Counters, and the ways in which those two main new mechanics affect enemy AI and how you approach battles. It's depth is impressive, even though that can also make it feel a little overwhelming due to how much time must be spent managing Nioh 2's many systems. If you're up to the challenge, Nioh 2 is no doubt one of the most difficult and rewarding games of this generation." While GameSpot stated, "Ultimately, that excruciating difficulty and the feeling it evokes are baked into Nioh's DNA, though, and its boss fights remain compelling even as they vex and frustrate. Though it sometimes feels like a curse as you play, it is a testament that Nioh 2 successfully grabs and holds your complete attention so close for so long."

TiTi Magazine gave the game 9/10 saying "the best hack and slash game of the year".

### **Stars**

By December 2020, the game had shipped over 1.4 million copies worldwide.

It was nominated for Best Action at The Game Awards 2020.





#### Raid: Shadow Legends

Raid: Shadow Legends is a freemium mobile game developed and published by Israeli game developer Plarium Games. A PC port for Raid: Shadow Legends was released on January 21, 2020

#### Gameplay

Raid: Shadow Legends is a fantasy-themed, turn-based role-playing gacha game. The game's story takes place in the fictional realm of Teleria, which has been subjugated by the Dark Lord Siroth. Players take the role of an ancient Telerian warrior resurrected to defeat the Dark Lord and restore peace and harmony to the territory. Players must assemble an army for battles in settings such as castles, dungeons, deserts and temples defended by enemies and possible allies. Throughout the game, players accumulate Shards, vessels containing the souls of past warriors. Shards come in four types with different properties. The game has two forms of currency: Silver, which is relatively easy to come by, and Gems, which are a lot more difficult to acquire. There is also a cost in Energy for running any of the campaign and dungeon stages. Without Energy you can't progress in the campaign, it runs out quickly, and after the first day players will have to be very careful not to waste it.

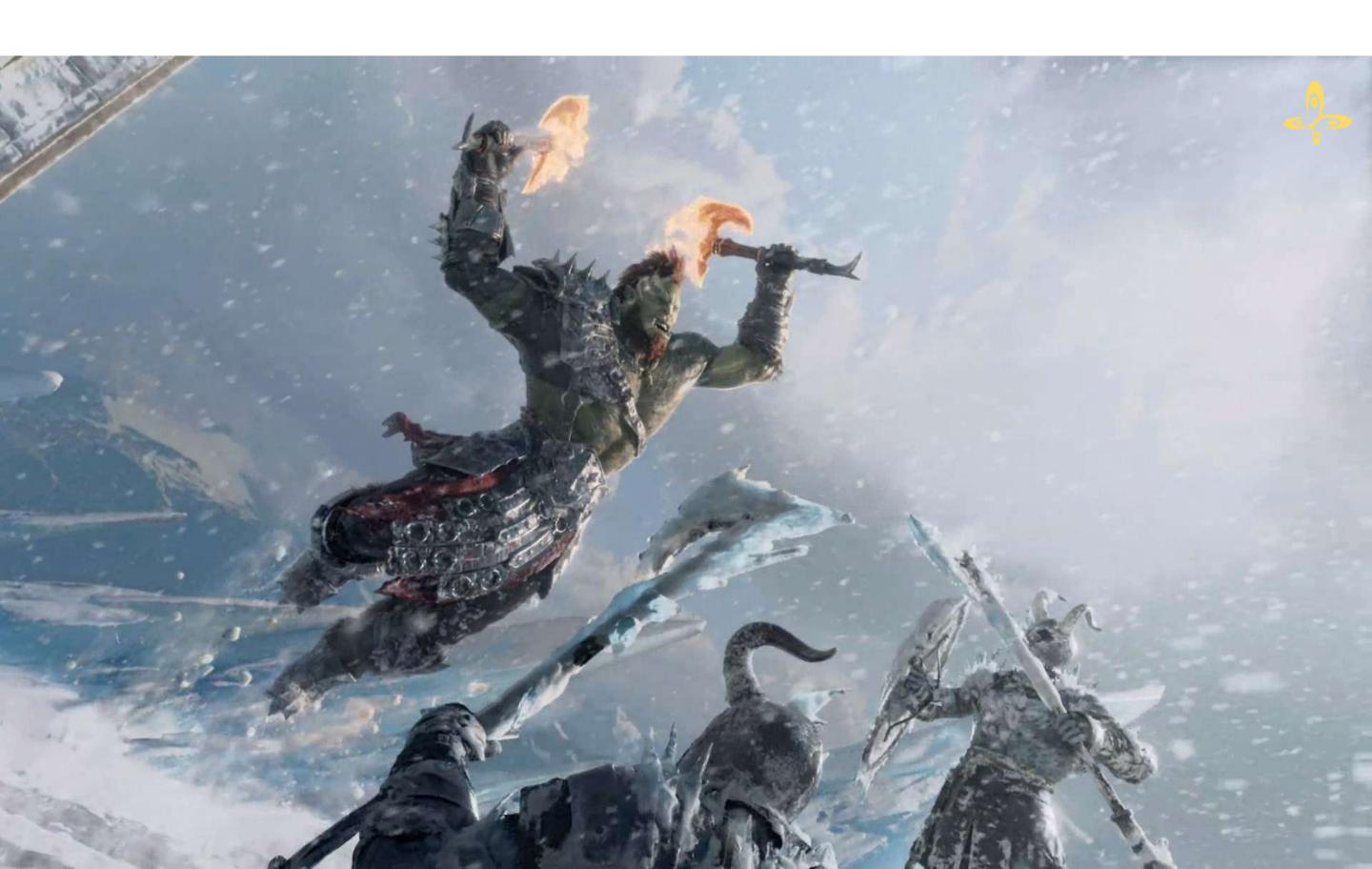
The game consists primarily of story-driven single-player campaign with twelve levels, each level made up of seven stages with three levels of difficulty.[3] The single-player campaign is interconnected with a multiplayer component, the Arena, to decide player rankings. Players can also join Clans, through which members fight a Clan Boss together, which brings advanced rewards.

The game's narrative was written by Paul C. R. Monk, and the game adopts a Western art style, with realistic characters, and settings inspired by dark fantasy.

#### Reviews

The game has achieved negative attention for its extensive advertising campaign, most notably its sponsorships with a number of YouTube and Twitch content creators. This had led to it becoming an internet meme. It has been praised for its graphics but criticized for its microtransactions. Pocket Gamer welcoming the "sheer graphic quality", "beautifully rendered and animated" characters as well as a "generous experience for new players". However, the game's aggressive monetization has also garnered attention.

TiTi Magazine wrote "impressive graphics and animations, good characters, not so good Monetization".











Gamezebo praised the game for trading "the typical anime-style visuals for a more realistic, dark fantasy look", going on to write about "the truly stunning experience, with some of the finest attack animations and environmental effects we've seen in the genre so far." However, the article also criticises the game's underlying monetization, pointing out that progress is difficult, "particularly if you don't plan on spending any actual money on the various upgrades". In its review, BlueStacks also praised the visuals, saying, "The animations are simply spectacular, with the quality the likes you seldom see in these games," and concluding that "players that enjoy fantasy combat with a more realistic approach—similar to Lord of the Rings—will likely have a very good time with Raid: Shadow Legends."

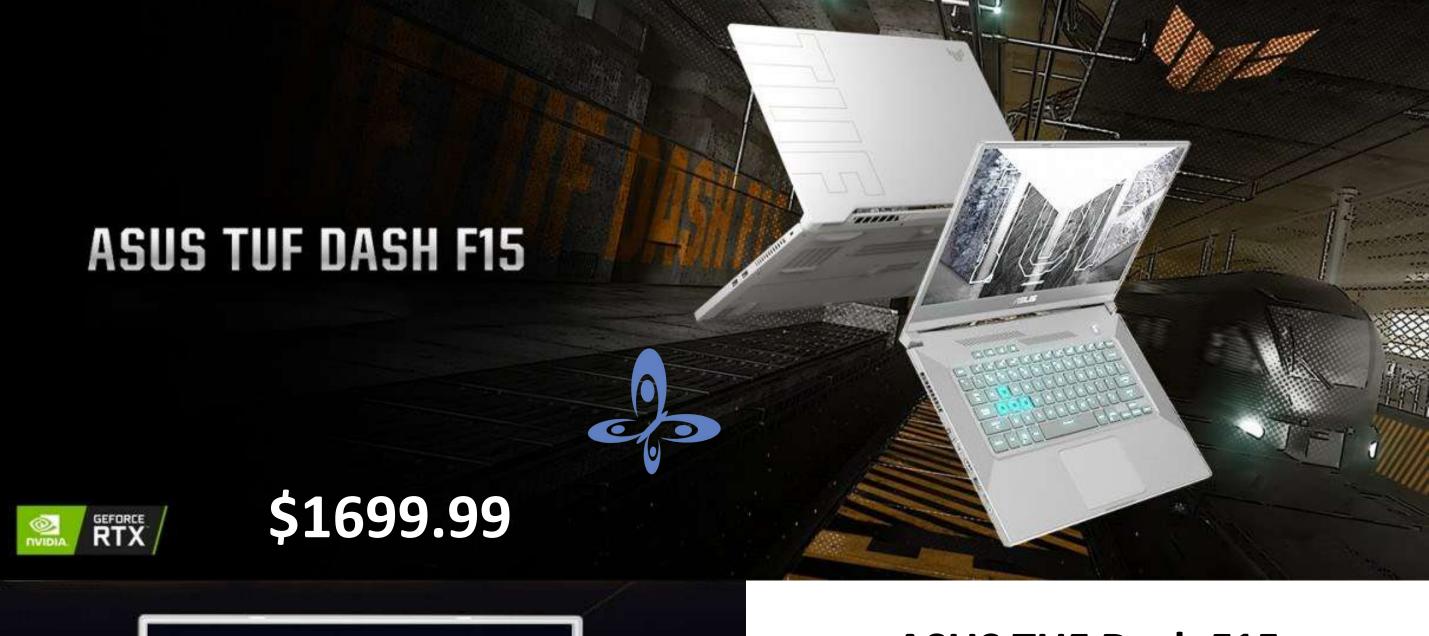
South African technology website htxt.africa praised the graphics, but overall found it boring with too many microtransactions.

Droid Gamers said it brings nothing new to the gacha RPG genre.











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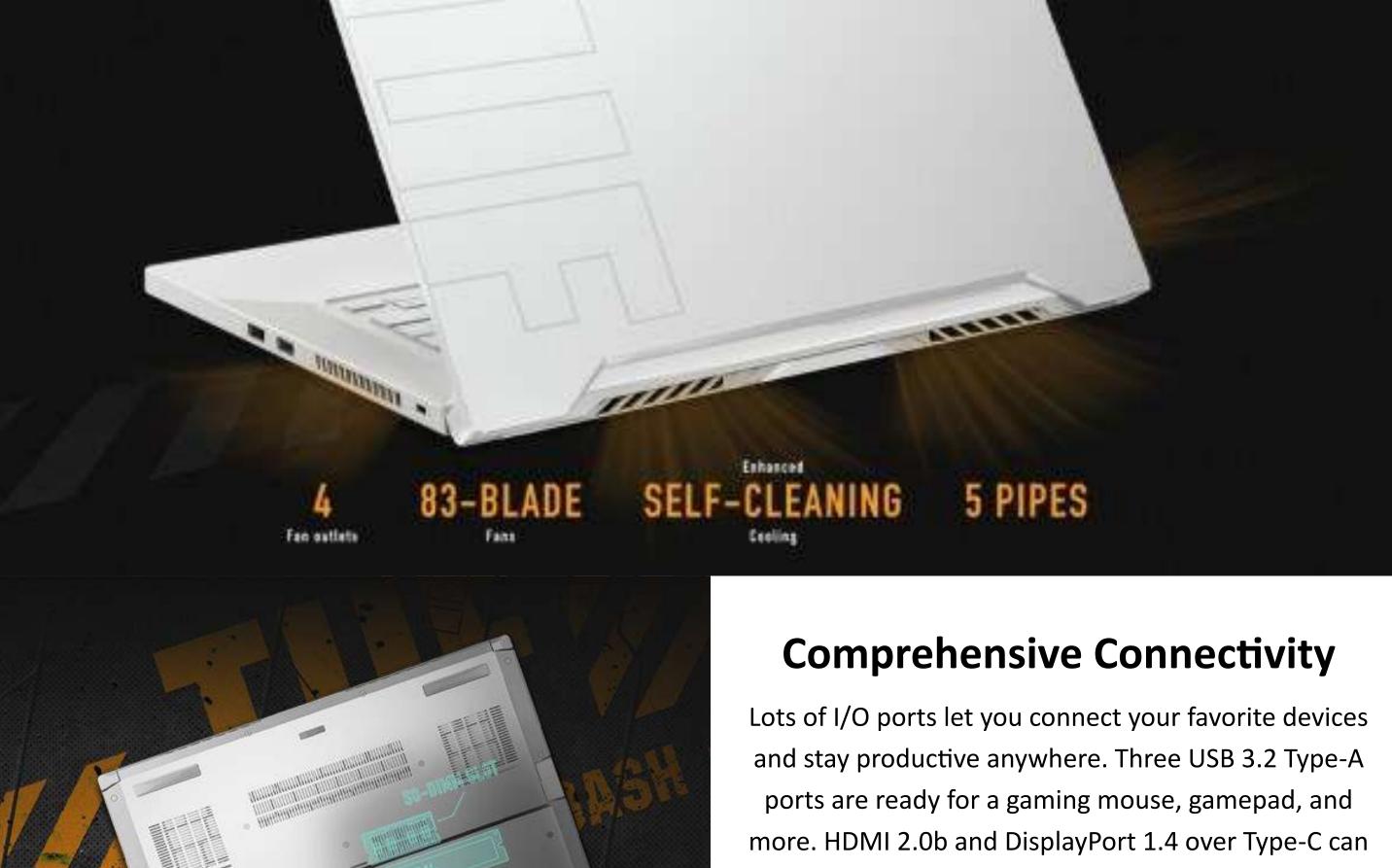
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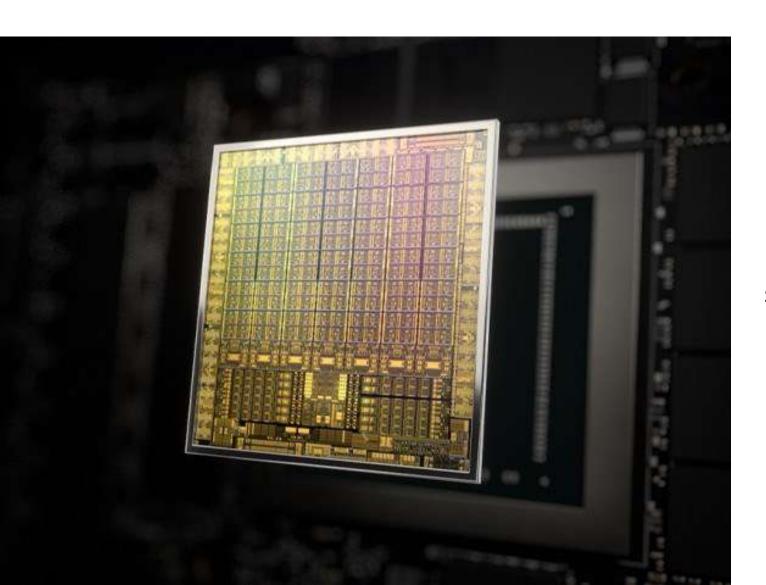
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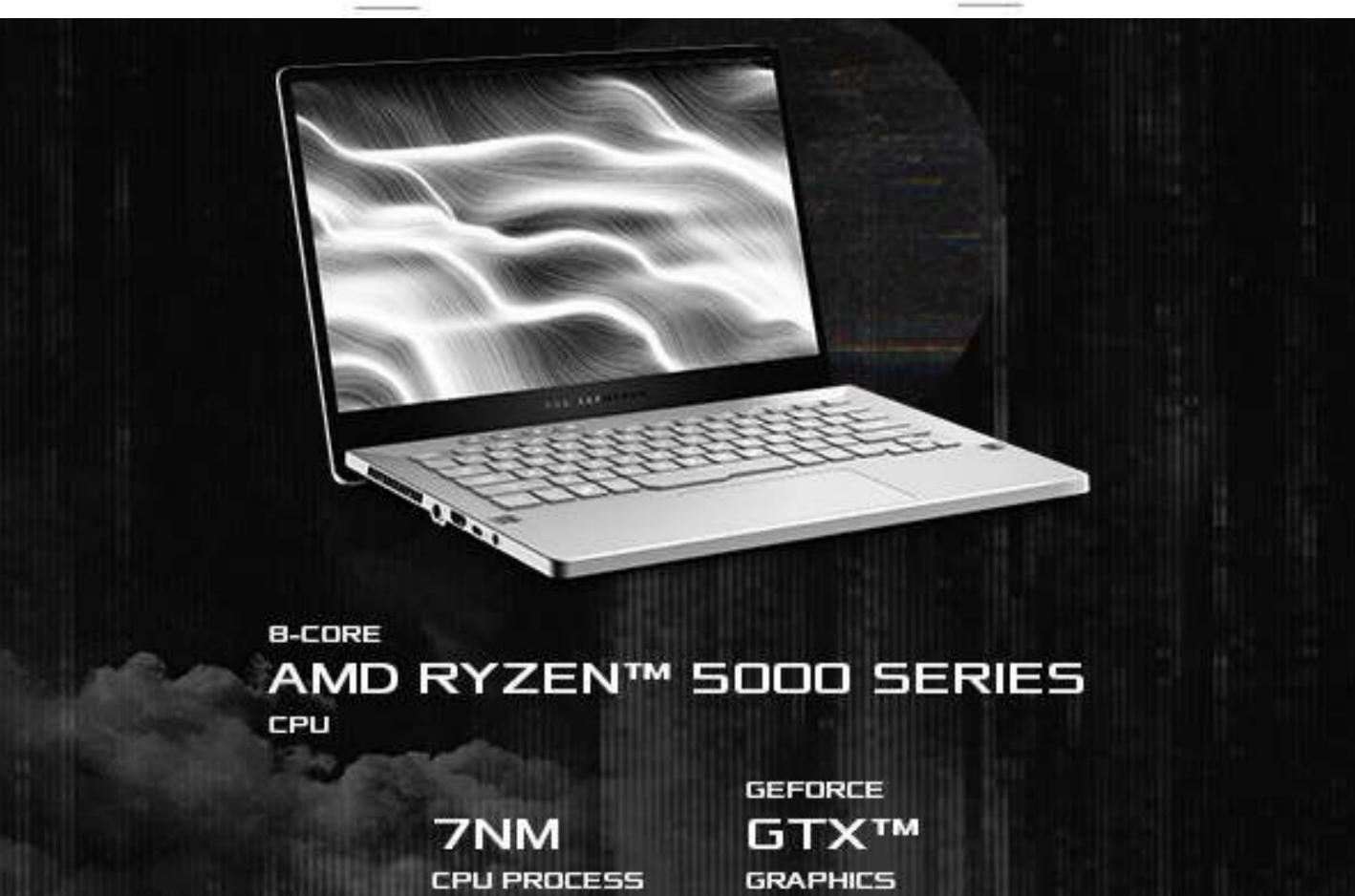
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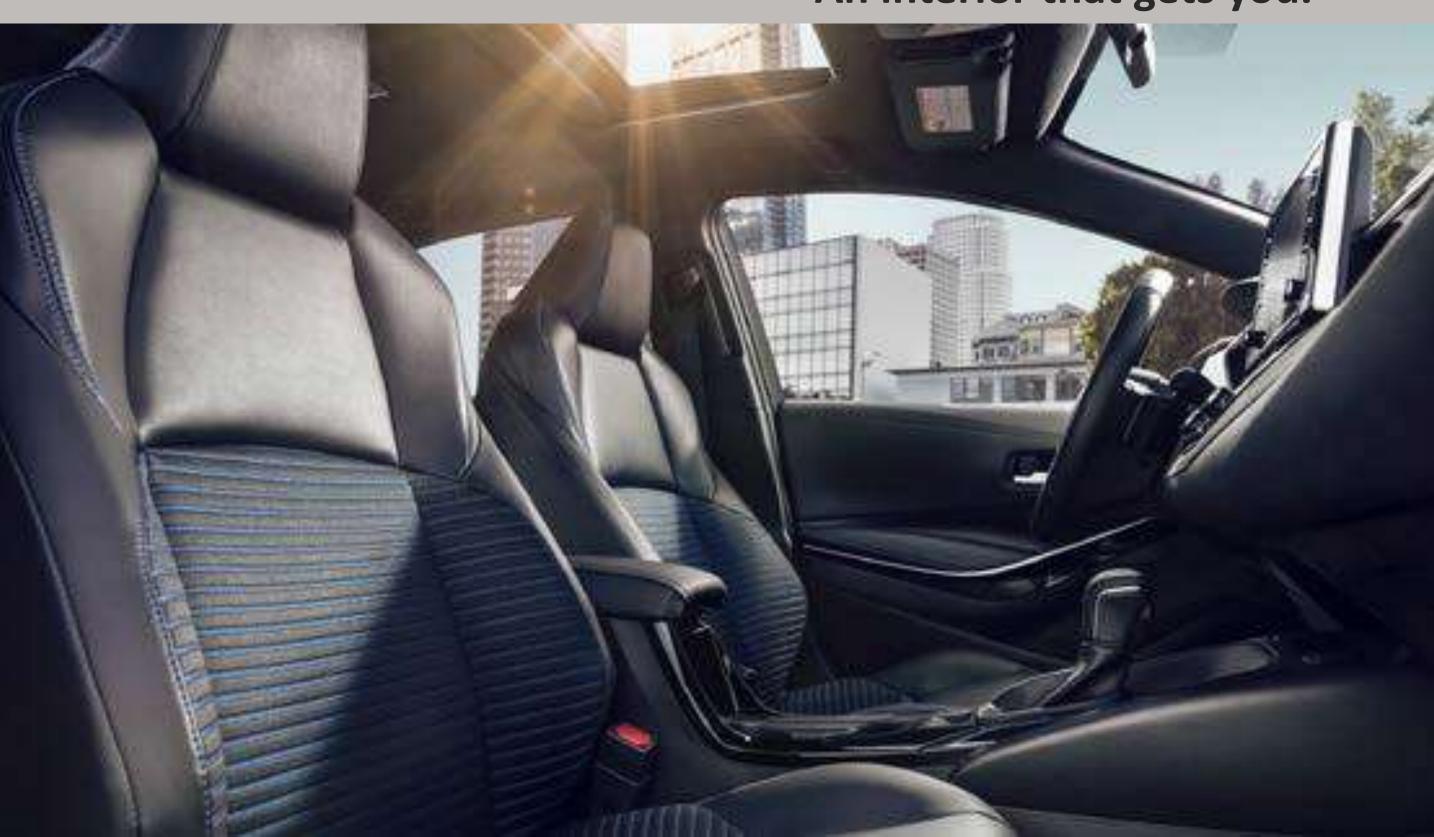




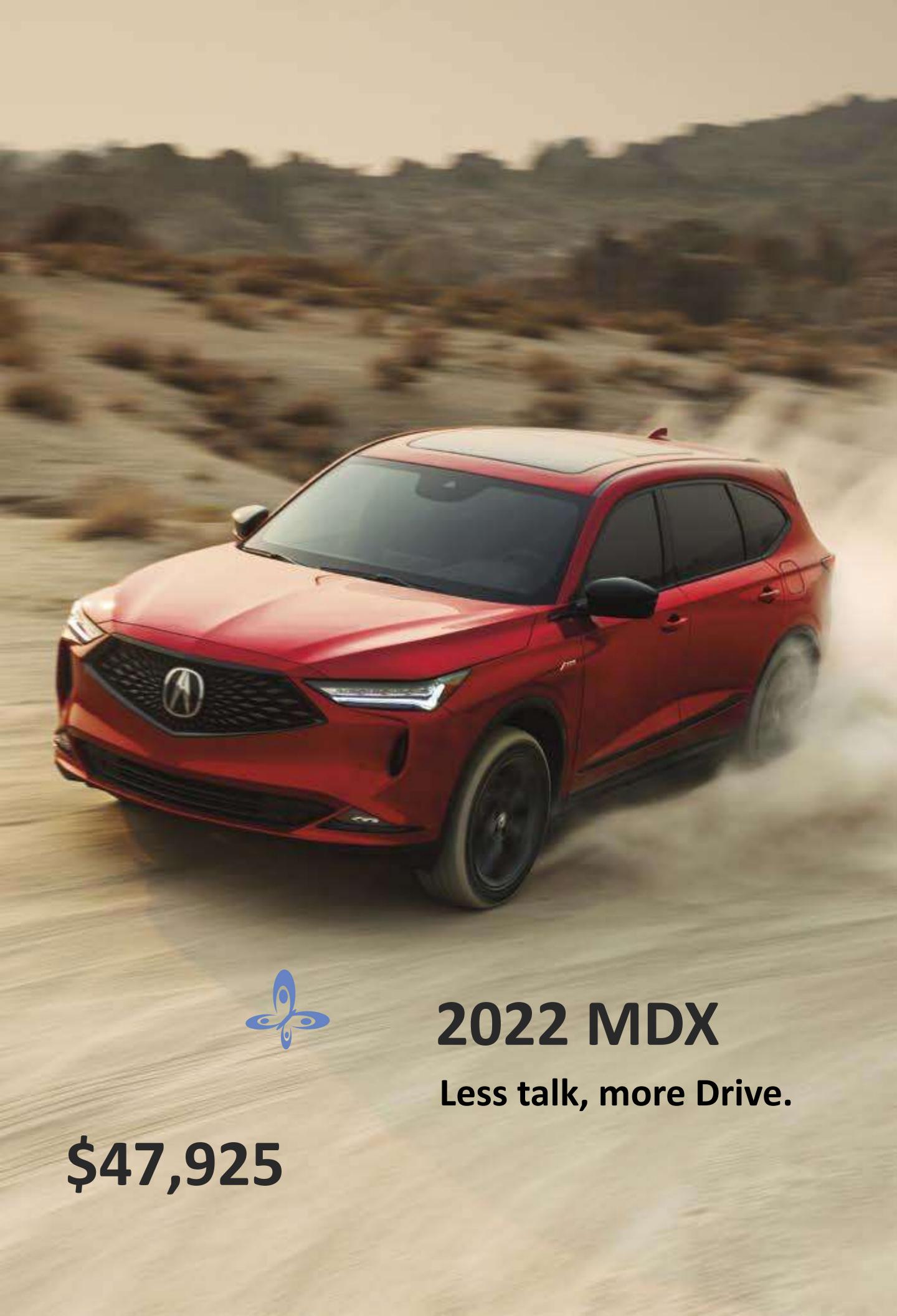




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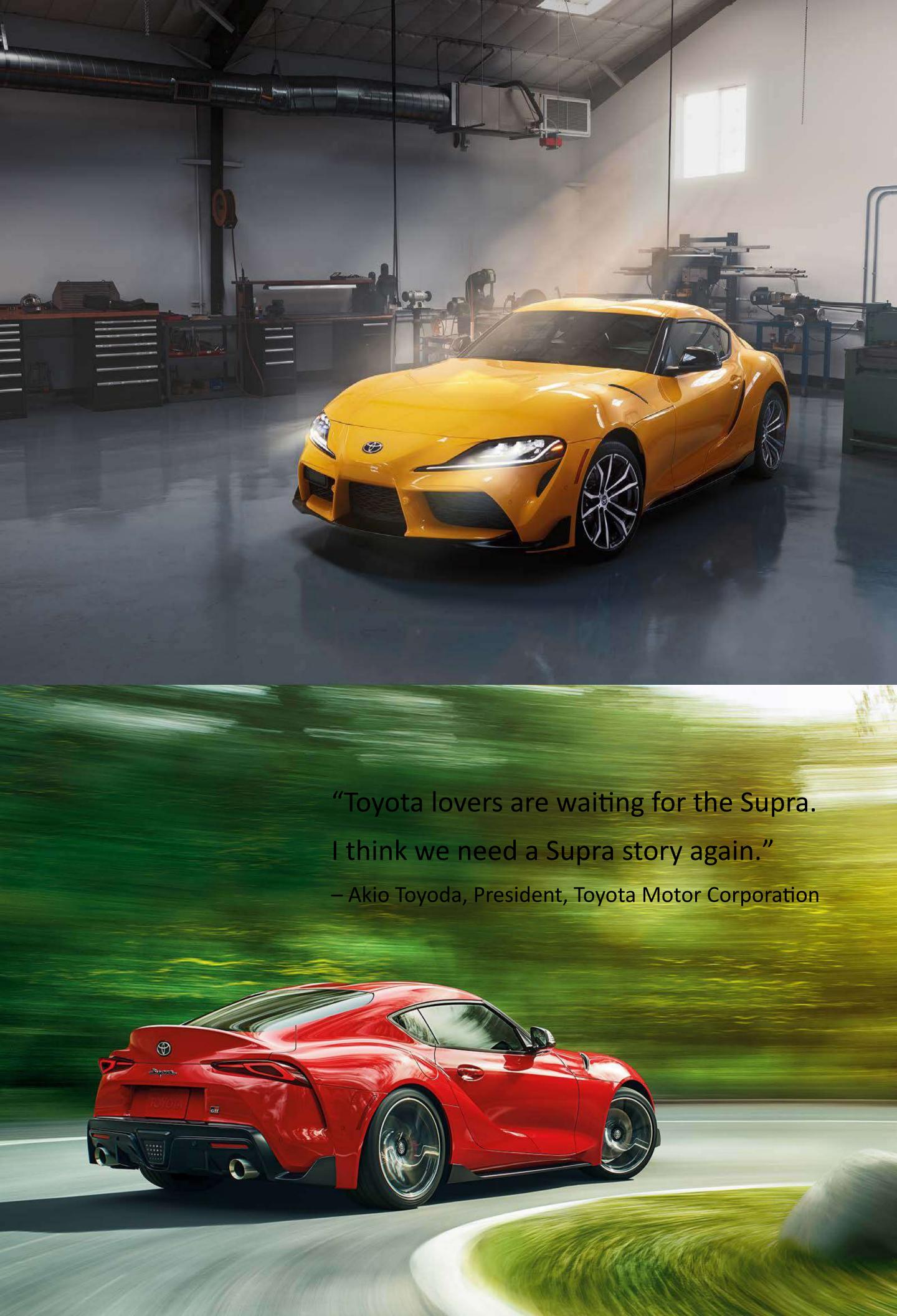
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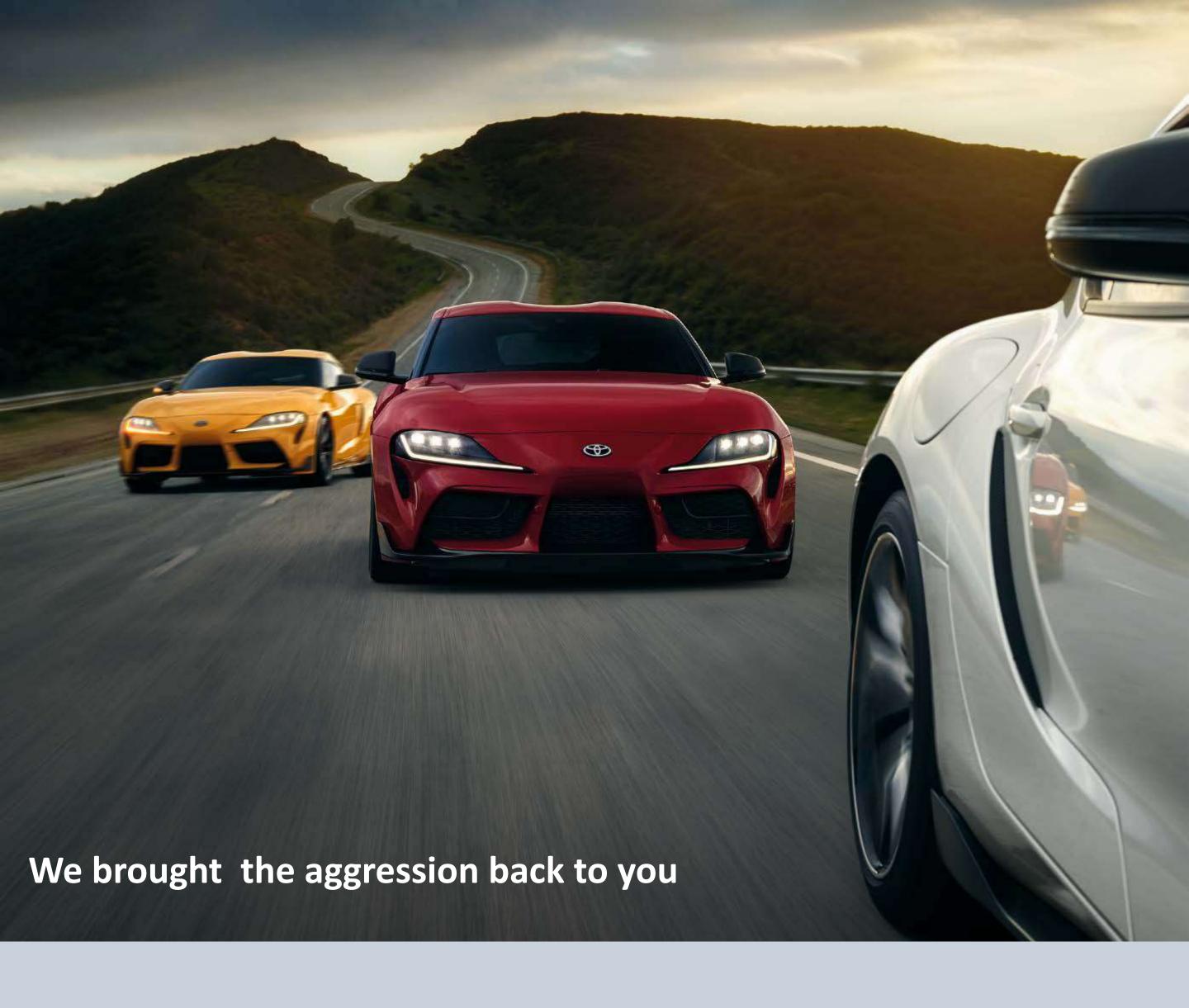


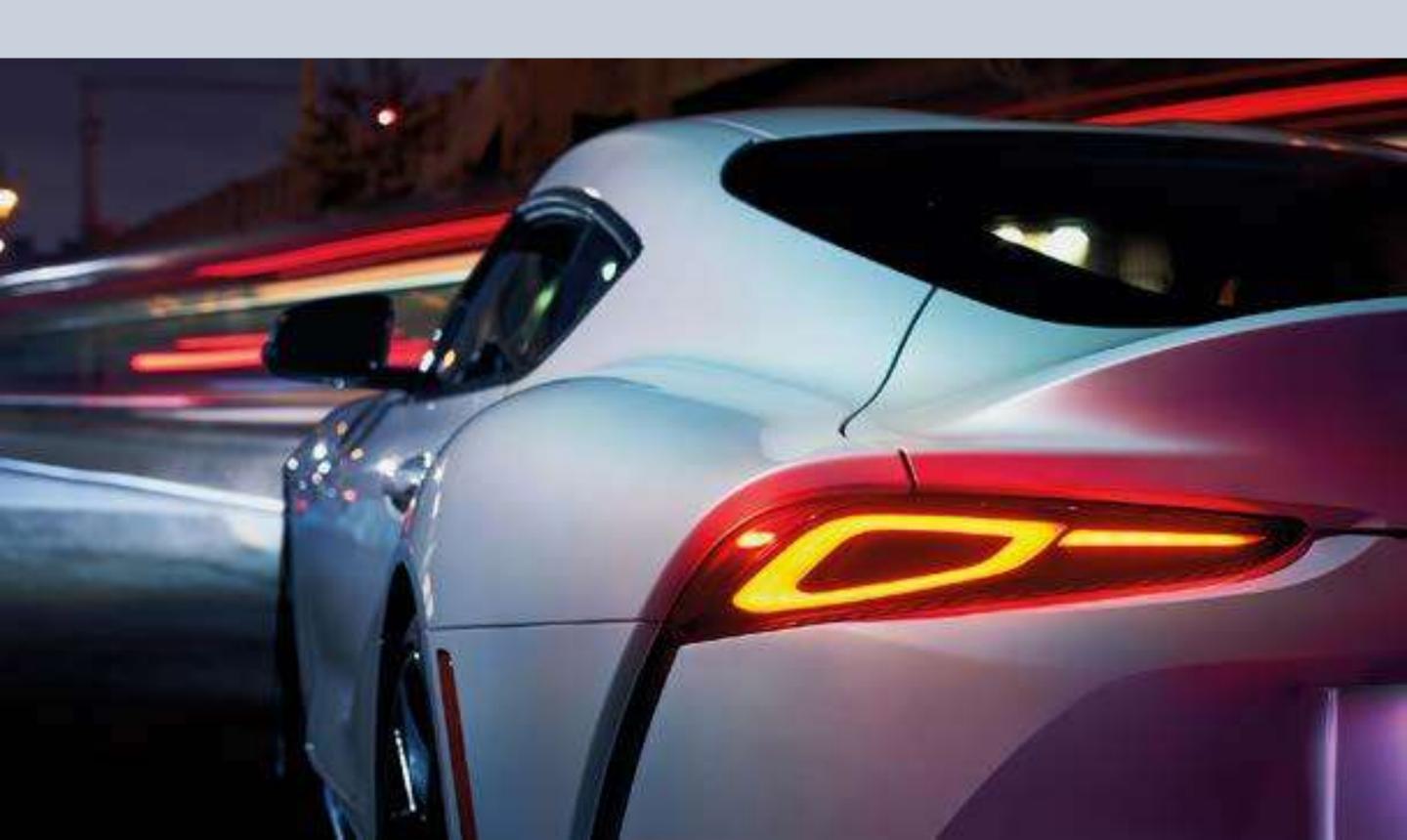














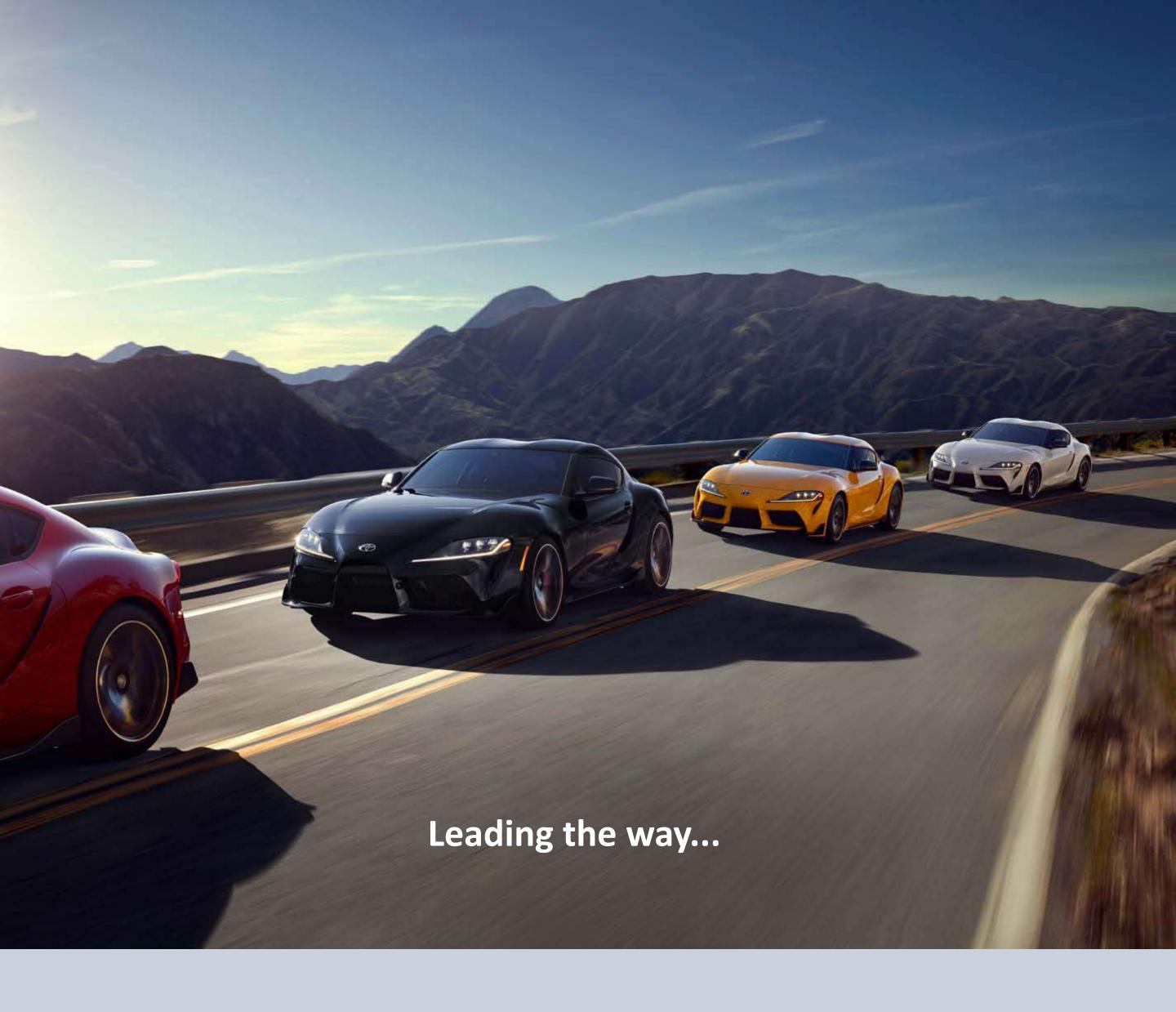


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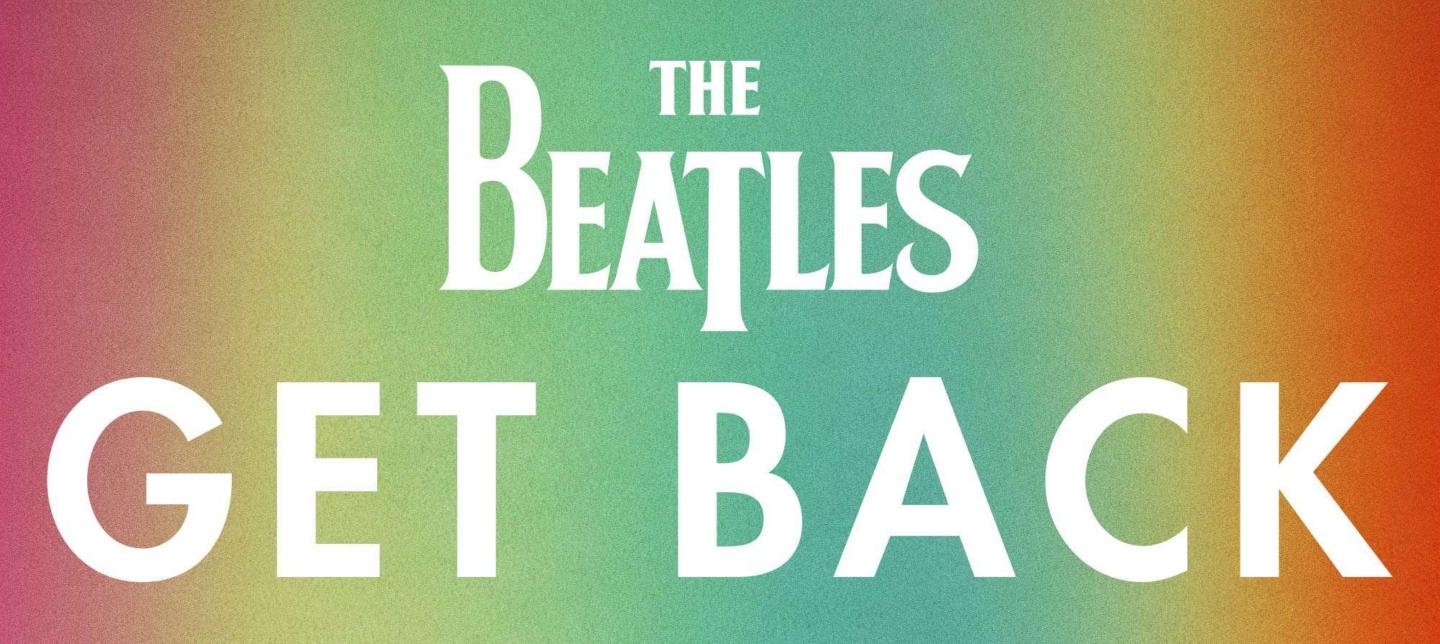
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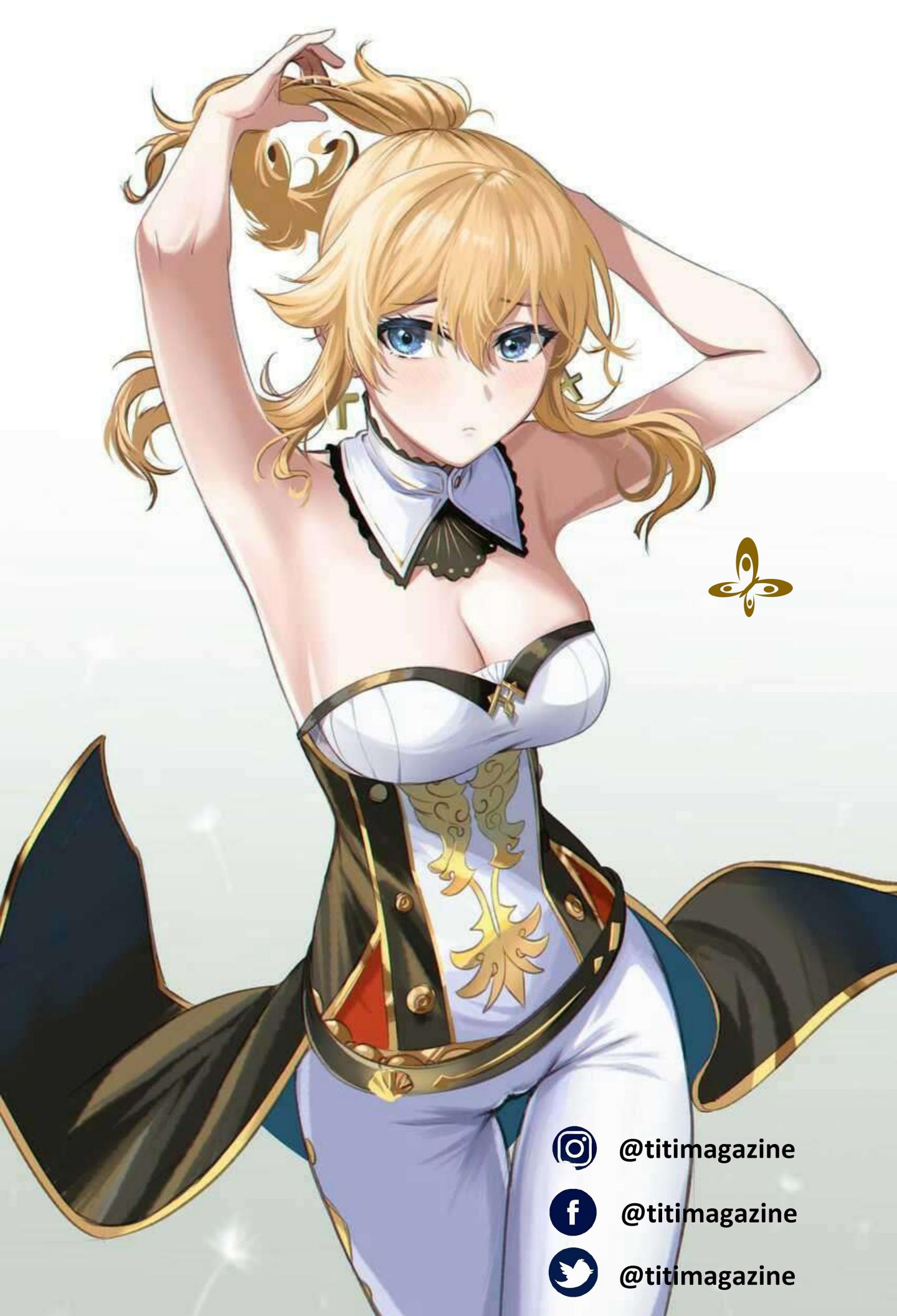






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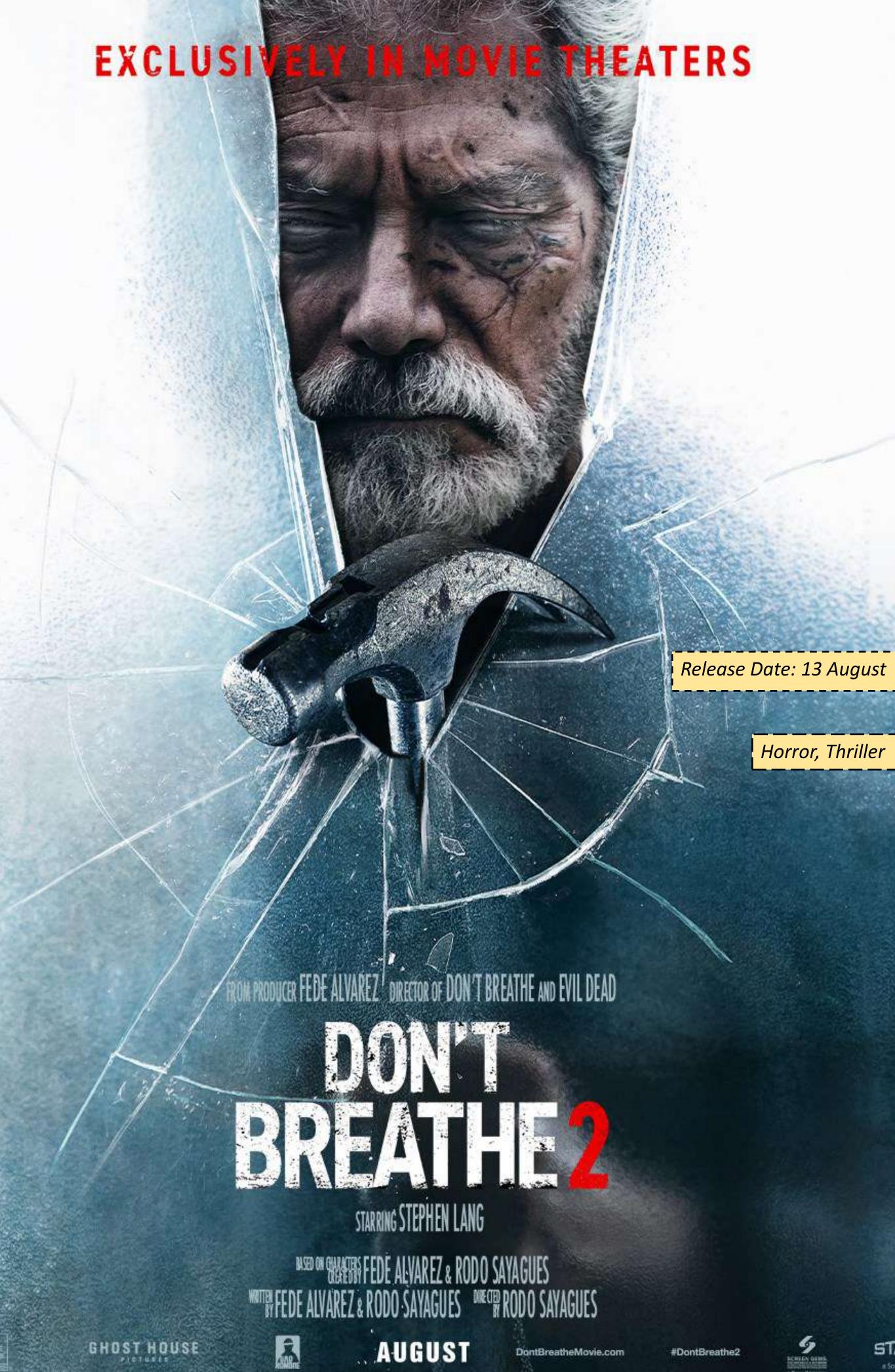
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