News Article

Gen Zer Spent Years Making TV Edits for Fun—Then HBO Called

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"I tried on a bunch of different styles, and I was so hard at first," she told *Newsweek*. "But then I found in on a style and fell in love with making cinematic edits."

What started as simple clips soon evolved into mock trailers and TV-style promos. As she posted them to Instagram, she built a small but loyal following, later expanding to X and TikTok, where her edits gained much wider traction.

As she moved through different fandoms, her work sharpened, and her confidence grew. Her edits began to stand out for their tone and pace. Asked "But once I started doing the cinematic edits, I fell in love with the feeling editing gave me. I noticed once that started, the edits really resonated with people. My accounts grew a lot." Her username—quirky and distinctive—became instantly recognizable wherever she went.

A New Obsession: *Heated Rivalry*

Her life shifted dramatically when she discovered *Heated Rivalry*, the hockey romance series that quickly developed a passionate global fanbase. Friends were buzzing about it online. She picked up the books—and something clicked.

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Connor Storrie and Hudson Williams attend the premiere of "Heated Rivalry" at TIFF Lightbox on November 24, 2025, in Toronto, Ontario. | Arnold Jerocki / Stringer/Getty Images Entertainment

"As I was reading, I started making a list of songs I wanted to edit," she said. But once the show premiered, inspiration hit even harder. On Thanksgiving night, she found herself in her dad's basement, completely absorbed. "I could barely sleep afterwards—I just wanted to edit it so badly."

Running on an hour of sleep, she spent the next morning sitting "like a madman." In the months since, she's created a large collection of *Heated Rivalry* edits, the majority above the root her "Previously On #HeatedRivalry" montage.

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She almost didn't post it.

"I had watched the edit so many times that I wasn't even sure if I liked it," she admitted. But friends urged her to share it. "Thank god I did, because that was the edit that caused HBO to reach out to me." It's now the piece she's proudest of—not just because the show is, but because "it changed my life."

From Fandom Moment to Viral Breakout

Melanie had created popular edits before, but nothing prepared her for what happened next.

"My very first *Heated Rivalry* edit got close to 10k likes, which was baffling," she said. Soon, the numbers skyrocketed. After edits hit between 40k and 70k likes, a "Newer Dreamer" clip on TikTok climbed to 1.1 million views.

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"I've never had something like this happen," she said. "People have been so unbelievably kind... it means the world to me that thousands of people have been celebrating my success with me."

The momentum spiked beyond her usual circles. Fans sent her TikTok posts about her work—some even forwarded LinkedIn screenshots. "Everyone was so over the moon for me," she said.

Manifestation, Self-Belief, and a Dream Realized

Melanie talks openly about manifestation—not as magic, but as confidence and intention.

"My friends always joke about my manifestation skills," she said. "I used to be so terrified of putting myself out there. But editing was something I worked hard on, and I got good at it."

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Part of manifesting, she explained, is allowing yourself to recognize your talent. "You have to be your own biggest fan and your own biggest advocate."

She always hoped to break into entertainment and planned to chase opportunities relentlessly. She never expected the opportunity to come find her instead.

But then came New Year's Eve—and an unexpected DM.

The Message That Changed Everything

After posting her "Previously On #HeatedRivalry" edit on Threads—an app she downloaded only after friends told her how much people there loved her work—she checked her hidden inbox. One message claimed to be from someone at HBO.

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"To be honest, part of me thought it was fake at first," she said. But she replied, sent her portfolio, and waited. Soon, there were follow-up emails. Then phone calls.

"I was on a call with my sister when Apple screened a call and said it was HBO. I said, 'Oh, I have to go. I think HBO is calling me!' and just hung up on her—oops!"

The call brought a job offer. She nearly cried.

It was the dream she'd had since she was 17. A real, paid role in the industry she'd always hoped to join. She's now beginning her position as an Associate Producer at HBO.

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"I'm so unbelievably excited to do something I love as my career," she said. "Never in my wildest dreams did I think it would happen like this."

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