

Question x Answer: Media Club Plus Bonus

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Introduction

[["The Boy in Green"](#) by Jack de Quidt begins playing]

Keith: Welcome to Media Club Plus, a podcast about diving into the media that interests us and the stories that excite us. As always, we are brought to you by Friends at the Table. This season, we're watching 2011's *Hunter × Hunter*, based on the manga by Yoshihiro Togashi. And today, we're not covering any episodes at all. We are doing a Q&A, a recap thing, a comment thing, and we're gonna go through a bunch of questions that we got, mostly from the Patreon but then also from the Cohost, [@friends-table](#), and

then also from our email address, friendsatthetable@gmail.com. My name is Keith J. Carberry. You can find me on [Twitter](#) and [Cohost](#) at @KeithJCarberry. You can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton. It is May. May is Follow Run Button On YouTube Or Else Month.

Sylvia: Or else!

Keith: Or else.

Dre: Or else. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: You know, and I can see when people don't subscribe, because it tells you how many people subscribe, and then I'm like, 7.5, 8.5 billion still? Still not?

Sylvia: Oh, here's a question. I've already subscribed, so am I safe?

Keith: You're safe.

Sylvia: Or do I need to make a new account and subscribe?

Keith: No, no. That's safe. One is safe.

Sylvia: Okay, cool.

Keith: I'm not unreasonable!

Sylvia: Okay.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I'm just...

Dre: You're not a fascist.

Keith: No.

Sylvia: Just threatening.

Keith: Just don't let me catch you not subscribe. Or else.

Sylvia: You do not want to see Keith in the streets if you're not subscribed.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Lots of stuff coming up on Run Button. We've put out more videos in April than we did the whole rest of the year combined, so why don't you check out Run Button on YouTube? With me, as always, is Jack de Quidt. Hi, Jack.

Jack: Hi, Keith. I'm Jack. You can find me on Cohost at [@jdq](#), and you can get any of the music featured on the show at notquitereal.bandcamp.com.

Keith: Sylvi Bullet.

Jack: Wait, I don't subscribe to Run Button right now, [someone gasps] and instead of subscribing, I'm currently constructing elaborate defenses.

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Keith: Mm.

Dre: Oh shit.

Keith: I can make it past those. [Sylvia laughs] I train all year for this month. [Sylvia laughs] I hate it, but it's necessary.

Dre: That's fair.

Keith: Yeah. People hearing about Subscribe To Run Button On Youtube Or Else Month, they're just getting started now on their defenses. You would have had to start last May to beat me.

Sylvia: Yeah. [Jack laughs]

Keith: You're fucked!

Sylvia: He's the apex predator.

Keith: Sylvi Bullet!

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Whoa! Hi.

Dre: Keith's Randy Orton?

Sylvia: Shut the fuck up. [Dre laughs] I'm—

[Keith plays an audience laughter sound] [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: This is off the rails already. [Keith laughs] Hi, I'm Sylvia. You can follow me pretty much everywhere at [@SYLVIBULLET](https://twitter.com/SYLVIBULLET), and you can check out the Friends at the Table YouTube, where Keith and I are playing 999 right now, at youtube.com/friendsatthetable. It's also live on Twitch sometimes, twitch.tv/friendsatthetable.

Keith: Mm-hmm. Andrew Lee Swan?

Dre: Ruh-ruh-ruh-ruh. Hey, you can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](https://twitter.com/swandre3000). If you like the energy that has been present so far in this recording, you should go listen to our episodes of *The Slow Knife* on Patreon.

Sylvia: Oh my god, yeah.

Keith: Oh, yeah. *Slow Knife* is great.

Sylvia: That's tangent city. That is, like...

Dre: Uh huh.

Sylvia: The kingdom of yap is powerful.

Keith: What is it actually called?

Sylvia: Oligo, I think we decided on?

Keith: We did, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: It's great.

Sylvia: But, you know.

Keith: I had a blast with *The Slow Knife*. We have one episode left to record, I think.

Sylvia: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: And I'll be sad to see it go.

Dre: Maybe. [laughs]

Keith: But it'll be on the Patreon forevermore.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: We've also got the new merch at friendsatthetable.shop. You should check that out if you haven't seen the new merch. It's all great. Look at the shirt.

Sylvia: There's a cool glass.

Keith: Look at the glass. Look at the candle. We have a candle.

Dre: Oh man.

Keith: Haven't you always wanted another candle?

Sylvia: We have a glass and a candle. We're doing— we're not just you're average run-of-the-mill t-shirt shop.

Dre: And a notebook.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: There is a sick t-shirt, though.

Sylvia: There is a sick t-shirt, though. Like, we do have t-shirts. I'm wearing one of our t-shirts right now.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: They're very soft, and they're of utmost quality.

Dre: Me too!

Keith: Yeah, I wear them all the time. So, there's several reasons why I wanted to do this this week. First of all, it's the last...by the time the next arc ends, we will be past the midway point, and if I had to pick which one would be best to do, like, a series so far discussion on, it's now and not then. It will be too late by then.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I think Dre and Sylvi know what looms around the corner.

Sylvia: [laughs] God, yeah, we... [Keith laughs] Ooh. This time next year is going to be so interesting.

Keith: Yeah, it is. And so, it felt like now would be a good time. The other thing is: our famous backlog. It's gone. We have nothing else.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Uh oh.

Keith: And so, in order to avoid recording an episode about Greed Island and then having to wait two weeks to record a second episode about Greed Island, I decided to do this today so that we can do a bunch of Greed Island closer together, so that we can do Greed Island justice. It deserves that.

Sylvia: It does.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And so we asked for questions, and we got a bunch of questions. But before that, do we want to talk a little bit about how *Hunter × Hunter*'s been going, how the podcast has been going, things that, like, we're excited to talk about today specifically before we get into questions?

Sylvia: Oh, I'm feeling great about all of this. This has been—

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: This has been, like, such a delight to do, and like, I already loved *Hunter × Hunter*, but it's nice to have an excuse to be really annoyingly in depth about it.

Keith: And—

Sylvia: You don't get a lot of opportunities to have these discussions [**Keith:** No.] about the thing you're super focused on, so.

Keith: Yeah. And another thing— I was editing episode 18, and a thing that I noticed was, like, how after a lot of anxiety about the order specifically of that season and talking about it honestly too much, the thing that I came out realizing was that *Hunter × Hunter*'s, like, really good if you have someone feeding you exact episodes to watch, because left to my own devices, both times I watched [**Sylvia:** Oh.] *Hunter × Hunter* all the way through, I was watching five, six, seven episodes at a time.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Gobbled it right up.

Keith: Absolutely devouring it. And being forced to take it a little bit more slowly and also to, like, have the really good episodes to stop on forced on you. The episodes that make you go, "I gotta watch more." We have to stop on those, because we can't watch— we can't do a 15 episode long recording session. It wouldn't— it would go on

for two full days. So, that's been fun. I am now relishing that power that I didn't realize that I had, [laughs quietly] like, dictating exactly which episodes that we watch.

Jack: The more of it that I watch, the more...maybe it's a bell curve, and it actually gets easier with the long view, but right now, the more complicated that tasks seems to be to me, of like, deciding how you are going to break it up, how things were going to work, not just in the sense of we're going to talk about arcs, but here's how you're chunking up episodes within those arcs.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: At this point, it seems extremely complicated, but maybe once you've seen the whole thing, you have a broader view of it, and it's actually not quite as complicated as it seems from in the trenches? I don't know.

Keith: So, this was— maybe the reason why I talked a lot about the episode pacing in this arc was because I hadn't had a hard time of it until now, and I wasn't anticipating having a hard time with it. I am anticipating the Chimera Ant Arc being really difficult, and—

Jack: I was going to ask.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And doing edits on that. That's all— in the background, I have gone back every couple of months and changed things around slightly, and...

Jack: In the same way that the Hunter Exam had a sort of internal structure that helped guide how we were doing it.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know, the Hunter Exam, they play these sort of games. The games are— some of them are a single episode. Some of them are a little run of episodes. Yorknew City doesn't really have quite as transparent a structure. If you look for it, it's there, you

know?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yorknew City is, like, a stealth mission, a massive assault, a series of hostage negotiations, et cetera. Is there something in— 'cause a thing I know about Chimera Ant is that it's unbelievably long. Is there something within Chimera Ant that is guiding—that is a skeleton that you can build upon?

Keith: It almost seems deliberately designed to fuck with this podcast.

Sylvia: Yes, a little bit. [Keith and Jack laugh] Like, the thing about the pacing of Chimera Ant is, like...it is both the thing people criticize a lot about it and the thing I tend to enjoy about it is it gets very weird.

Keith: Yeah. Structurally and content-wise.

Sylvia: Yes, in like, every possible way. And yeah, I don't know. I don't want to— I'm worried about letting something slip.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: It's paced like what if Togashi did Togashi's Trick to the very idea of pacing a show.

Jack: It's fascinating. I'm so curious, especially because, you know, people talk— as Austin has said, last time he was on the show, there are two arcs that people say are the best arcs of *Hunter × Hunter*, and it's Chimera and Yorknew.

Keith: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Jack: And having come out of Yorknew and it being such a sort of singular propulsive little bit of television, I'm curious to see...I'm trying to figure out how to put it. Yorknew was very striking to me because of how much it played with genre, of how it slowed things down in a big way at several moments to do this, like, queasy, clammy, almost noirish sequences.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know, we talked on the show about the way Yorknew changes the tone so spectacularly that whenever you get Gon and Killua in the park having a food fight, [Keith: Yeah.] it's like, come crashing in through the wall like Koolaid Man.

Keith: It changes the main characters. It changes—

Jack: Yep.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah, the genre and main characters change. It becomes, like, 30% about Kurapika and, like, 40% about the villains.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And then, you know, a little bit of—

Jack: Everybody else is left.

Keith: Yeah, everybody else.

Jack: Some of it's about art appraisal.

Sylvia: Yeah. [Dre laughs]

Keith: Including Gon and Killua are the rest, yeah.

Jack: Yeah, and so, with that in mind, you know, having seen one of these gold standard arcs completed, I am...it's a very strange feeling to me, and I'm sure it's a very strange feeling to you in a different way, to have this sort of specter waiting out there. And I don't mean this in the sense of, [Sylvia laughs quietly] like, I don't want to make too much of it. I'm actually being very careful in terms of, like, setting expectations for what's going to happen, but based on the amount that people talk about it and the sheer volume of the thing, it feels like, you know, something moving in the dark next to a submarine off in the distance, you know? [Dre and Keith laugh]

Keith: The other thing is, like, it's funny now talking about Chimera Ant, like, thinking about what is fundamentally a very different kind of season than the Yorknew season. Like, it's not a surprise to me— they're two very great seasons, and it's not a surprise that there's a kind of person that doesn't like the Chimera Ant Arc, and maybe those people— I think there's definitely— even though it's my favorite arc, I think there's definitely more of a case of, like, bouncing off of Chimera Ant, versus like, I don't really see the argument of people who like Chimera Ant Arc being like, "Oh, I don't really like Yorknew City."

Sylvia: Yeah, it's weird to me.

Dre: Yeah, that's weird.

Keith: It seems more like a defensive thing, like, "Those people hate my season, so I have to hate their season." I don't know. That's just, like, a wild guess. [Jack laughs] There's just, like, nothing to hate about Yorknew. My one— one of the most impressive things about it is how tight it is, versus my real wish is that I wish it was longer. I really wish that instead of 15 or whatever episodes in the Yorknew City Arc, we had, like, 25, but.

Jack: Here's what I will say about Yorknew, actually, and I thought it was great, is I'm glad it's over. [Keith laughs] Not in the sense of, like, I disliked— I had a fantastic time with it. But my delight that it is over is the same feeling that one gets finishing a book that you really enjoyed and suddenly realizing, "Ah, I can read something else now." Or, you know, like, I can start thinking of another place and other characters or whatever.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: It's a really oppressive arc, and it tells such a sort of self-contained tight story that, by the time I've gotten out of it, my feeling is not "I wish it were longer," because I think it gets everything done that it wants to get done.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I agree.

Jack: The feeling that I have is, “Oh my god, where are we going next?” And, you know, we can't start talking about this, otherwise we'll just start making the main show in the side show.

Dre: Uh huh. [laughs]

Keith: Sure.

Jack: But I've watched the first episode of the Greed Island arc, and the...

Keith: Oh, that's fun.

Jack: There is something really— we've been so hyper-focused on the Phantom Troupe [Keith: Yeah.] and the problems that the Phantom Troupe are causing that to be told that there is...there are other worlds than these, you know?

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: That there is, like, a...there is...there are other imaginative spaces, other depths to mine, it feels so exciting.

Keith: It's good.

Jack: I mean, the opening title sequence of the Greed Island arc, already there is some wild stuff going on. I got to see, for the first time, what happens when someone goes into Greed Island from the outside. I should've—

Keith: [laughs] And you just saw, like, one second of that, right? It ends, like, right there, doesn't it? Am I wrong?

Jack: Uh, it ends...

Sylvia: God.

Jack: Phinks goes into Greed Island.

Dre: We're doing the thing.

Sylvia: I haven't watched these yet!

Keith: Yes, you have. [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: We've decided we were doing these— well, I have, but not in a— not this calendar year, Keith!

Keith: Yes, fair. That's fair.

Jack: Okay, all right, okay, okay.

Keith: Okay.

Jack: Roll that back.

Chimera Ant [0:14:27]

Jack: Question one that I would like to ask, since we're talking briefly about Chimera Ant. This comes from several people. We got several people asked this, and I can answer this really quickly. The question is: "Do you have a new best guess on Chimera Ants?"

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, I'm dying to know.

Jack: In the past, I have spoken about my sort of loose theory about what I think the Chimera Ant Arc is. If you don't recall, in brief, I think a Chimera Ant is a kind of animal that can mimic a person almost perfectly [**Keith:** Right.] and can— there's, you know, billions of them. They can replicate like ants. They get everywhere. And what the Chimera Ant Arc is is, like, an extremely extended game of, like, spot the intruder.

Keith: Yeah. Has that changed?

Jack: No, not at all.

Keith: Great.

Jack: [laughs quietly] I haven't really thought about it beyond that point. Here's what I will say, though, 'cause I formulated that idea before I knew what Nen was, and now I think the Chimera Ants have something to do with Nen or they can wield Nen in some way, because there's no fucking way a bit of this show is going to be introduced that isn't about Nen. So, I don't know. When we recorded the JoJo episode, Sylvi, and you revealed that the rat has Stands...

Sylvia: Yeah. [Dre and Keith laugh]

Jack: Part of me's like, well, what if animals have Nen?

Keith: Look out next month, by the way, for the second part of the *JoJo's Bizarre Adventure* bonus episodes where we talk about the rats.

Jack: The rats.

Sylvia: Those were such a delight. Those were such a delight.

Keith: Those were great.

Jack: I had such a good time.

Keith: Oh my god, I finished that season, by the way.

Sylvia: What did you think of the ending? Just good, or—?

Keith: Holy fuck.

Sylvia: You liked it?

Keith: Oh my god. It was so good.

Sylvia: Yeah! We got him.

Keith: It was really good.

Sylvia: Ladies and gentlemen, we got him.

Keith: It was so good. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Do you want to watch more JoJo, Keith?

Keith: Like, go into season five?

Sylvia: I think you could even—

Jack: I mean, not for this show. I mean for you.

Sylvia: Right, yeah.

Keith: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, I was thinking— well, I watched it with Isaac, which is why I am already done with it.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And I...part of me is like, maybe I should watch part 3 and then— but I really would like to go forward from here, so I'm sort of, like, in between. It's sort of like, 50%— 70% chance that I watch it, and 30% chance that I don't.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And that's split evenly between watching part 3 and watching part 5.

Sylvia: I think part 5 is very fun, but it does call back to part 3 a little more than part 4 does.

Keith: Okay. So, maybe that's my decision there. I'll watch part 3.

Sylvia: Yeah. At least in my memory it does, you know?

Jack: Oh, the only other thing I know about Chimera Ants is that I've heard a lot of litigation about whether or not they are ants. [Sylvia laughs] That's something that we have talked about.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Not on this show, but we have talked about on Friends at the Table media.

Keith: Right, yes, 'cause you're not sure whether they're ants or not, which is, of course, why would...like, on one hand, why would they be called ants if they're not ants? But on the other hand, [**Jack:** Right.] why would they be ants?

Jack: I mean, I remember before making this show and even before talking about making this show, Chimera Ant came up, I think while you were watching it, Keith, or maybe while Austin was watching it, and the two of you were talking about the Chimera Ant Arc. And you didn't get into specifics, which is amazing in retrospect.

Keith: Yes, very serendipitous.

Jack: But I do remember that there was some discussion of, like, "I don't know if that's an ant," or like, [laughs quietly] or something along those lines. So, I don't know.

Keith: That's so interesting. I have no memory of what this is or what I said, so I can't help. [laughs]

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And I won't, even if I did.

Jack: But that's my answer to that question. No real change. I honestly haven't given it too much thought, in part because I've been thinking about the 13 freaks. Well, uh, how many now? Shit.

Keith: I don't know, a million. 100,000 freaks.

Jack: No, no. How many Phantom Troupe members [**Keith:** 13.] are there now? No.

Keith: Oh, now. Nine?

Jack: Uvo's down. Pakunoda's down.

Keith: Uvo, Pakunoda.

Jack: Chrollo's down.

Keith: Chrollo's down. Hisoka's down.

Dre: Well, Chrollo's not dead.

Keith: Well, but they're not in the Troupe, so nine.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Nine if you count Chrollo and Hisoka.

Sylvia: Chrollo's on injured reserve.

Dre: Yeah. [laughs] They put Chrollo on the IR.

Jack: [laughs] Okay. What's the next question?

Screenshots [0:18:48]

Keith: All right. Jack, this is another one for you: "Having seen what you've seen so far, what scenes would you use for your own devious screenshot game with someone who you would want to watch *Hunter × Hunter*?" That's from Morgan.

Jack: This is such a good question, because if my goal is to watch *Hunter × Hunter* with someone, that is a very slightly different goal than what we had when we constructed the screenshot stream, right?

Sylvia: Yeah. It was to mystify you and bewilder.

Jack: It was to mystify and bewilder me.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And you succeeded. So, if I have the latitude to make a collection of screenshots for someone who I want to see the show with, I'm still thinking about similar sort of criteria. I don't want to give too much stuff away, but I can get kind of fun with it, in a way

that you were less able to. So, I would like to see...just a huge massive number of mafiosos in a cavern at night. [Keith laughs] What's that about? Why are they there? I would show, um...

Keith: Well, it's community.

Jack: It is. It's a community. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: It's a community expression.

Sylvia: Yeah. It's a community center.

Jack: [laughs quietly] I would show the Indoor Fish swimming through the air.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Good one.

Keith: That was actually a contender for my screenshot, was the Indoor Fish.

Jack: Wow. I love those Indoor Fish. I wonder who Chrollo took that power from. And then, let's see, a third one. I want something really colorful. I wonder something really—oh! Everybody queued up ready to cook those huge pigs for the Hunter Exam.

Dre: Oh.

Keith: Oh, sure, 100 people ready to cook a massive pig. Sure.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: That's fun. And I think paints a characteristically broad brush, both in tone and in, like, literally color. Yeah, good set.

Jack: Thank you.

Character Hangouts [0:20:46]

Keith: Dre, do you want to read the next question?

Dre: Yeah, sure. “Which character from *Hunter × Hunter* would you all most like to hang out with?” And that is from iver.

Keith: Now, we’ve talked about this several times, but this is, I think, [**Sylvia:** Uh huh.] an ever-shifting question.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And also, I thought to myself when I read this, I would like to hear this including the main four and then excluding them, if you couldn’t hang out with them. Sylvi, we already know: Chrollo.

Sylvia: [laughs] I can— I’ll answer—

Keith: Maybe for both, but probably Killua, then Chrollo.

Sylvia: I’ll answer without Chrollo. Actually, [cross] I had a different answer for the main four too, by the way.

Keith: [cross] Okay. Okay, great.

Dre: Ooh.

Keith: Sorry. I’m sorry for prejudging you.

Sylvia: Because I was thinking about this, because I prepare— it’s fine. It’s just, I am predictable, [Jack and Keith laugh] but sometimes I like to throw a curveball. I think— so, I realized recently that, aside from the one major misstep, Leorio is basically my best friend Mike, so I think we’d get along great. [Keith laughs]

Jack: It’s good. Yeah.

Keith: You’re saying Mike’s major misstep.

Sylvia: Of course, yeah. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: [laughs quietly] The domestic terrorism. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Mike's Major Misstep: M.M.M.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Just to say: my friend Mike hasn't done domestic terrorism. I don't want him to get banned from any countries.

Jack: It's important to put that into the microphone.

Keith: Most countries do listen to this show.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: You know what? I'm paranoid now. [Jack chuckles] 2024: everyone's listening.

Dre: Yeah. I think I'm with you, Sylvi. I think my answer would also be Leorio.

Sylvia: It's just like, what am I gonna talk to two 12-year-olds about?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Jack?

Jack: [thoughtful sigh] It's Kurapika, because he's sage and calming.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Except for the bit where the dagger pressing into his heart [laughs quietly] impels him to do awful revenge.

Dre: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: But, you know. And we know he can hang. We've seen— remember when, like, Gon and Killua were pillow fighting and Kurapika was trying to sleep, and then he does a little smile, 'cause he's happy his friends are having a good time, you know?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: My second choice is Killua, because it would be a weird experience.

Keith: Yes. It would be weird. And for your non-four?

Jack: My...

Dre: I got one off the rip, easy.

Keith: Okay, great.

Dre: Mr. Zepile.

Keith: Nice.

Jack: Ah!

Sylvia: Oh, that's pretty good.

Jack: You're gonna hang. You're gonna talk about art.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Also, I'm gonna give him \$1000, and he's gonna turn it into \$100,000.

Jack: Yeah. Mine is Nobunaga.

Sylvia: That's a good one.

Jack: He's scary. He's a bit intense. [Sylvia laughs quietly] I would sort of feel like I was, you know, maybe I would feel like I was on the back foot, but at the same time, he values his friends. He has a good time. He can take a joke but grumbly. You know.

Keith: For me? Also Leorio. [Jack laughs] And it was back and forth. It was like, the long— it was not Gon. Sorry, Gon. I love Gon, but I love Gon on a TV show.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: And then I was like, “Maybe Killua?” and it’s like, no, Killua would be mean to me.

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: And then...

Sylvia: This was also my worry.

Keith: [laughs quietly] And then...

Dre: Not if you brought him candy.

Sylvia: I don't think— I think he'd insult my outfit.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: And I think he'd be like, “Why are you bringing me candy?”

Sylvia: “Why are you bringing me candy, you creep?” Yeah. Like, come on. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Nah, you're right, yeah.

Sylvia: If you don't think Killua would be roasting the shit out of you, I...

Dre: Yeah, that's true.

Sylvia: Most people. I just, you know.

Keith: And so then you're left Kurapika Leorio, and I just have more in common with

Leorio.

Jack: He won a cruise in a mall by playing rock paper scissors, I hear.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Which is something that I have also tried to do.

Jack: What's your non-four hang, Keith?

Keith: This was tough. I had a joke answer at first, and it was gonna be the cowboy bartender of the Hunter website. [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: That's a pretty good joke answer, though. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: And then, I was thinking that maybe it was going to be Neon, because I was like, give me a fortune. Give me a real fortune.

Sylvia: Oh, that's a good answer too.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: But I decided on Satotz. That's who I would like to hang out with.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah! That guy's chill as hell.

Keith: Yeah, he's chill. What about Green Green Jellybean Man?

Dre: Oh.

Jack: He's a collaborator. I mean, I suppose so is Satotz, but...

Dre: With the police? What? [laughs]

Sylvia: With the Hunter Association?

Jack: With Netero, yeah. [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: I didn't realize how hardline the anti-Hunter Association stance had become.

Keith: Yeah, sorry, I actually would also hang out with Netero. I mean, that guy seems crazy. Zeno is another one. I would hang out with Zeno, probably the most dangerous.

Dre: Man. My backup answer was Melody. I'm just trying to hang out with nice people.
[laughs]

Keith: Oh yeah, Melody's not a bad one. I feel like...I just, like, want to— Melody with be maybe too calm for me.

Sylvia: Yeah, that was my worry too.

Jack: But you could talk about music.

Keith: True.

Dre: Yeah, she'd, like, cure your heartbeat and say the most beautiful thing anyone's ever said to you about it.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I don't think I could handle that.

Keith: But I'm here for the yuks. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Okay, that's fair.

Jack: Here are some other— here are some low-tier picks who I think would nevertheless be good. Cocco, the announcer from Heavens Arena.

Keith: Sure.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: I briefly thought about the very tired girl from the hallway. [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: I would hang out with her.

Jack: [laughs] Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: I would absolutely hang out with her. We have so much in common.

Jack: That's me right now, yeah. God, it's been such a beautiful spring couple of days here, that, like, everything has turned green. There's this, like, beautiful purple flowering tree at the end of my street, and I have to, like, sit inside and write music all day. I am furious about it. That's an aside about springtime. Another good person to hang with would be the absolutely weird freak who interrupts the mafiosos to tell them about the treasure hunt, the hunt for the Phantom Troupe.

Keith: Okay.

Jack: You remember this person?

Dre: Oh, yeah!

Jack: Like, looks like a Raggedy Ann sort of person.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Oh, yeah. That's not a bad pick.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Dre: The magical shapeshifting monsters that are part of the...the pre-Hunter Exam.

Keith: Oh, you want to hang out with the killer monkeys?

Dre: No!

Sylvia: Kiriko?

Dre: The Kiriko. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Oh, the Kiriko. Sorry, sorry. I was thinking of the other shapeshifters, not from the pre-exam but from the exam.

Dre: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Buhara is probably a great hang.

Sylvia: I'd hang out with that one guy who had the monkey so I could meet his weird monkey.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Jack: Oh.

Dre: I'd probably hang out with Squala too, to hang out with his dogs and then just make Squala be in the other room.

Sylvia: I would not hang out with Squala. Did not go well for him.

Dre: Damn.

Keith: I would hang out with the monkey so I could meet his weird owner. [Sylvia, Dre, and Jack laugh]

Sylvia: Hang out with the monkey so I could give him a pair of shorts.

Jack: Mm.

Fashion [0:27:48]

Keith: Sylvi, are you next for reading?

Sylvia: Uh, I can be.

Keith: Yes, you can.

Sylvia: Okay. This is for all of us. "Please describe your *Hunter × Hunter* universe Nen user persona's fashion sense/drip. Do you go normcore with an eccentric headpiece, businessman Leorio, fancy boy assassin, or perhaps full bondage gear? [laughs] Please

and thank you! SoSo.” Wow.

Jack: I would like to take my inspiration from a great man and a dear friend, Arthur Martinez-Tebbel, and I would like to try and choose an outfit that is really hard to animate. I would like—

Dre: Mm.

Jack: My drip would be confusing.

Keith: Mm.

Jack: I don't know whether or not that would be because it had, like...it would be, like, a bunch of weird shimmery circles, metal circles all sewn into my clothing.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Or maybe the back of my outfit, back of my hat, collar, shirt, pants is painted perfectly to look like the front, including my face, so nobody knows where I'm looking. [Sylvia laughs quietly] I don't know. I want it to be visually confusing, and I want it to be a pain to animate.

Dre: Hmm.

Keith: Hmm. Which isn't usually an affordance that characters have. They don't usually get to pick their own clothes based on how annoying it would be for the animators.

Jack: Well, anybody can make that decision.

Sylvia: It's tied with Jack's Nen power.

Jack: Yeah, it does tie with my Nen power. I irritate the animators.

Keith: Mm. Anything else jump out?

Sylvia: The thing is, sometimes I just already do dress like a Nen user.

Keith: Sure, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: This just kind of comes from skewing gothic at times. I have a big black fake fur coat. [laughs quietly] I feel like that's Phantom Troupey. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Chrollo's...

Sylvia: And like, if I had Hunter credit, I would just be spending it on clothes that I want, 'cause that's most of the— that's the only thing keeping me from not dressing ridiculous all the time, is that I can't afford it.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Is money.

Dre: Yeah, so that probably would mean— following that logic, which I like, I would just have all the tattoos, 'cause that's the only reason I don't have more, is the money.

Jack: Mm. God, Nen tattoos would be sick as hell.

Keith: Oh, yeah. Swimming around. Do Nen tattoos swim around? I don't know.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: I think— so, here's what I like. Here's what I would do. Everyone remember Pockle?

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Keith: I think that Pockle sort of dressed like a level one fantasy character from, like, an RPG.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Is that the bow and arrow guy?

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah.

Dre: Okay.

Sylvia: *Dragon Quest*.

Dre: Mm, mm-hmm.

Keith: Who, like, just barely is able to win a match during the Hunter Exam. Right? Am I right? Pockle wins, I think.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Right, 'cause only Killua loses.

Dre: Womp womp.

Keith: From the last thing. So, I would do that. I would, like— not those exact clothes, but I want to, like, look like I came from, like, a different genre. That's what I want to do.

Jack: Yes.

Keith: I want to have, like, a...

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Like, a bit of armor on, and it's like, what does this person do that's—? Or they go, "Must be a Hunter."

Jack: Okay.

Keith: All right.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: Great.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Surprises [0:31:22]

Keith: And then, next question. “For Jack: As someone new to the series, apart from screenshot exposure, what aspect of *Hunter × Hunter* have you found the most surprising?” And I put a little note here, because— reminding myself that you’re also very new to shonen as a genre, conglomeration of genres, whatever you want to think of it as. And like, to not just be specific to *Hunter × Hunter* but also, like, the genre conventions that you’re learning sort of rapid fire.

Jack: That’s a good question.

Keith: Rapid fire learning of conventions, not rapid fire answer.

Jack: I think I have been surprised by *Hunter × Hunter*’s breadth of interest in kinds of storytelling, in kinds of places to go. I mean, I went into the show knowing nothing about it, you know? Not knowing what it was about. But even in something like *Dragon Ball*, it’s like, you know, go and get the Dragon Balls and fight the bad guys along the way.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: *Hunter × Hunter* doesn’t really have a core goal when it starts. Oh, I suppose “become a Hunter.”

Keith: Find your dad.

Jack: But we’ve sort of dispensed with that by the beginning of the second season, and we are going into a story about art heists. We are going into a story about a weird series of *Saw* games. We are getting trapped in a video game. We’re going to go meet my new best friend who I’m teaching to love’s assassin family for four episodes, and then they’re

going to fall out of the story for a little bit until they come back later. *Hunter × Hunter* is painting with such a broad brush and also such a varied sort of, like, set of art implements, to extend the metaphor. And it has been a real pleasure and a surprise to arrive at the beginning of each new season and go, “Well, what are we doing now? Where are we going this time?” That’s really exciting. As for shonen, it’s been odd, because I think *Hunter × Hunter* is a really strange first shonen to watch, because it is trying to— you know, Togashi is explicitly trying to deconstruct aspects of it. It plays in very different ways.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: But even just watching the bits of *Dragon Ball* that we watched and watching the bits of JoJo that we watched and dovetailing that together in my head with what I know about *Sailor Moon*, which is obviously not shonen but shoujo and shonen anime are sort of, you know, they dovetail together to a certain extent. They are very— *Hunter × Hunter* and *Dragon Ball* are very, very different shows, in very, very striking ways, and I can't tell how much of that is that Togashi is really trying to do something new or really trying to do something strange or whether it is the case that my sample size is too small and shonen regularly branches off into a very different style.

Keith: Mm-hmm. Good answer. Dre, do you need a second for your dog?

Dre: No. It’s all good.

Keith: Okay. [Dre and Keith laugh] It’s fine. I just wanted to make sure that you don't, like, need to corral or un-corral.

Dre: No, no. A stranger rang our doorbell, so the dog was going crazy. [laughs]

Jack: [sympathetic to dog] Oh, terrifying.

Keith: Okay.

Dre: But everything is fine.

Keith: Stranger to you or to the dog?

Dre: Huh?

Keith: Stranger to you or to the dog?

Dre: Uh, both.

Keith: Okay. 'Cause dogs are just, like, “Everyone’s a stranger. I know two people.”

[Jack chuckles]

Jack’s Responses [0:35:09]

Keith: This is for— Jack, you sit out on this one. Oh, no, I just read one, so, Dre. No, Jack, it’s your turn.

Dre: Hmm? Huh? Who? Huh?

Keith: Yeah. I got it. I got it in my head. I got a system.

Jack: “Question for all-but-Jack.”

Dre: Great.

Jack: “What, if anything, about Jack’s response—” I can read this in the first person, I suppose. “What, if anything, about my response or experience with *Hunter × Hunter* was unexpected for y’all?” and then, in brackets, “Did anyone predict Demon World Theory?”

Keith: No.

Sylvia: No. [Keith laughs]

Dre: No.

Sylvia: What?

Jack: And then Sebastian says, “Thanks for making this podcast. It got me to watch a

show I never would have otherwise and that I now really enjoy.” I’m so glad.

Sylvia: Aw. Well, that’s good. Hey, really easy answer: all the fucking shit that you predict.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: It is that, yeah. And it’s funny, because sometimes it’s like, you’re like, you get something really specific, like, 90%.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: But then sometimes it’s like, you get something, like, really big, like, 10%, and even those, like, those, you know, those misses where there’s just one aspect that’s on is still like, oh, I can’t believe they got that. I can’t believe—

Jack: It’s Machi’s hunches.

Keith: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah, it’s very fun to every once in a while...it happened today. I didn’t hear— I missed what Dre saw. I think Dre. Yes.

Sylvia: Yeah, it was Dre.

Keith: I missed what Dre saw, the connection that Dre made to something that you said, but I saw the message in this groupchat of all the times that that’s happened.

Jack: Oh, right. They have a secret chat. I don’t know if we’ve talked about this on the show. They have a chat that is not me, in which they just talk about *Hunter × Hunter* spoilers. [laughs quietly]

Keith: Yeah. It just...it flares up every time you say something prognostic.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, and then I post the Paul Dano face, the Riddler “Does He Know?” meme.

[Dre and Jack laugh]

Keith: Yeah. Which I don't understand.

Sylvia: I just think it's a funny image of— I like— people respond to it when someone says something, like...like when someone guesses at something without realizing it and reply. I've seen it.

Keith: I like Paul Dano.

Sylvia: He's great.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Anyway, it's mostly just for me.

Keith: *Swiss Army Man*? What a film.

Sylvia: He farts a lot.

Keith: He does, which is mostly at the beginning, but yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: No, doesn't Daniel Radcliffe fart a lot?

Sylvia: Oh, right, Daniel Radcliffe farts a lot.

Keith: Yeah, Daniel Radcliffe farts a lot. Yeah.

Sylvia: My bad. I forgot who was the corpse.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: It's funny that you can. [Jack laughs] It's funny that in—

Sylvia: I haven't seen it since it came out, and I didn't really watch it attentively.

Keith: A movie of two people, and one of them is a corpse that farts a lot, and you're

like, “I can't remember which one was the corpse.”

Sylvia: They're— you know.

Keith: [conspiratorially] But that's the point of the movie. [Sylvia laughs] Maybe the one that's a corpse is the one that's really alive.

Jack: Whoa.

Keith: Whoa. Good movie. Really funny. There's a part where the song in the background gets lyrics to, like, soundtrack its lyrics, and the lyrics are, like, specifically describing the things that are happening in a montage. It's one of my favorite things I've ever seen in a movie. It's really funny.

Jack: Were you ever worried that I wasn't going to like *Hunter × Hunter*?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Or was that not really a concern?

Sylvia: Yeah, totally.

Keith: Yeah, I was worried.

Sylvia: It's always a concern.

Keith: Yeah. I don't think there's anything, like, specific to you that made me worry. Like, I didn't think ever, like, “Jack is specifically predisposed to not liking this,” but every once in a while, you—and I have no specifics, but every once in a while you don't like something that I expect you to like.

Jack: Hmm.

Keith: And the same is true with, you know, anybody, you know? A lot of people expect me to like Radiohead, but I don't like Radiohead.

Sylvia: Huh. [Jack laughs]

Dre: That's fine.

Keith: Yeah, right? It's fine. Some people get mad about it. But like, every once in a while, it'll happen, and I was like, "Ooh, I hope that Jack doesn't weirdly dislike this for some, like, specific reason." But it didn't happen, and that's good. Dre?

Jack: And even when—

Keith: Oh, Jack?

Jack: Oh, sorry. Oh, I was just going to say, even when I had the blip in Heavens Arena...

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You knew what was about to happen.

Keith: Yeah. And I saw that blip coming too. I knew that anybody watching that was going to feel the difference between that season and everything that had come before.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Because I felt it when I first watched it. Not everybody has an immediate, like, "Oh, this is, like, slower and kind of weird," but, you know, also I knew that it would pass, and there's a lot of reason why that season is the way that it is, and most of that stuff pays off, so even if you never ever end up liking those episodes, it's 10 episodes out of 146, so who cares?

Jack: Yeah.

Characters' Music Taste [0:40:05]

Keith: Sylvi. No, Dre. Doesn't matter.

Sylvia: I think it's me.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: It's my turn.

Dre: ["I don't know" sound]

Keith: Sylvi decided.

Sylvia: Yeah. I did. "If the main four are on a road trip, what are they playing when they get the aux?" from Lawson. Killua listens to Bladee, I think.

Keith: The movie?

Sylvia: No, the rapper. Sorry, "Blade-ee".

Keith: [laughs quietly] Be really funny if Killua plays the audio from *Blade*.

Sylvia: I'm gonna link the type of shit I think Killua listens to, [**Dre:** Mm.] and it's kind of an insult, but it's whatever. He's 12.

Dre: Yeah, my answer was gonna be Soundcloud rapper is what Killua listens to.

Sylvia: Well, hey, that is what I said.

Dre: Okay, perfect.

Sylvia: I just named one, 'cause I listen to Soundcloud rap. [laughs quietly] [Jack laughs]

Dre: I don't, so. [laughs]

Keith: I totally see this. Yeah, I see this for sure.

Sylvia: Yeah. Gon...what would Aunt Mito listen to? 'Cause that's the music Gon's been exposed to.

Keith: Uh, soft rock.

Sylvia: Shania Twain?

Jack: Polka.

Keith: '80s, '90s, and today.

Dre: Oh, man. I want a fucking Shania Twain *Hunter × Hunter* AMV. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: It's gotta be out there.

Keith: Yeah, Mito definitely listens to Shania Twain and, like, country pop, and yeah.

Jack: And like, "The rest is still unwritten," "This Kiss".

Dre: Yeah! [Keith laughs]

Jack: You know, like...

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Dre: Natasha Bedingfield.

Sylvia: Gon has a very, like, intimate knowledge of all this, like, '90s girly pop stuff.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Absolutely.

Jack: Like, third act of a romcom.

Dre: And then Gon feels like being a little bad boy, and he pulls out Michelle Branch, because that goes harder.

Jack: Whoa.

Sylvia: Does she— swears?

Dre: I think Michelle Branch swears.

Keith: I don't think I know Michelle Branch.

Sylvia: I don't really know her. Wasn't one my mom listened to. [Sylvia and Dre laugh]

Keith: Yeah, I don't know if I've even heard the words "Michelle Branch."

Sylvia: You've definitely heard the words "Michelle Branch."

Dre: You'd probably recognize at least one of the songs, Keith.

Keith: Probably.

Dre: Well, maybe.

Keith: Leorio listens to Led Zeppelin and...

Sylvia: He's a ska guy to me.

Dre: Oh!

Sylvia: Look at how he dresses.

Keith: No, I think it's both.

Dre: Yeah, it's both.

Keith: I think it's like, Led Zeppelin but it's also Streetlight Manifesto.

Sylvia: Oh, I was thinking, like, The Specials.

Keith: The Specials.

Jack: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Like, second wave ska.

Keith: You think second wave ska? No. No way.

Sylvia: I don't know. I just— I think it's because he dresses like the kind of guy who's really—

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I guess the Mighty Mighty Bosstones are more third wave than I think.

Keith: They are, yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: But.

Keith: [imitates ska song] Yeah, that's Leorio.

Jack: Kurapika listens to...

Keith: I see that.

Sylvia: Right?

Keith: [imitates more music]

Jack: Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel. [laughs]

Keith: Who does? Kurapika?

Jack: Kurapika.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: You mean separately. Listens—

Dre: Well, and what Kurapika will play on the aux is very different than what Kurapika plays with his fucking Beats in.

Jack: Mm.

Dre: Because I bet Kurapika listens to some angry sad shit when he puts the headphones on.

Sylvia: Three Days Grace?

Dre: Yeah. [laughs]

Jack: Ah.

Sylvia: Slipknot. Kurapika's the most likely to listen to Slipknot.

Dre: That's true.

Keith: Uh...

Sylvia: And Korn.

Keith: I think that— I think Killua's the most likely to listen to Slipknot, and I think Leorio might be number two.

Sylvia: Hmm. I don't know.

Dre: Hmm.

Keith: I think—

Sylvia: I feel like Killua really likes Tyler the Creator, but maybe it's just 'cause he reminds me of the kids who really liked Tyler the Creator when I went to school. [Dre and Sylvia laugh]

Keith: Yeah, I don't think that Kurapika has a, like, secretly indulging in aggression thing.

Sylvia: That's fair.

Keith: Because he so publicly indulges in aggression.

Dre: That's fair.

Keith: But that's just my— yeah, I think it's really the gentle stuff. And who else? I also think, uh...

Dre: Kurapika just puts on a YouTube video of alpha brain wave sounds to help everyone relax to.

Keith: [laughs] Yeah. I think that's everybody. I don't have any other weird music pulls that I think one of these fools would listen to. Killua's really the fun one. Killua could listen to anything really. I think that he's got the free time for it and also, like, has the luxury of being, you know, both a rich kid and also...not like a latchkey kid, because his mom is his mom, but like, long periods of being unsupervised.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, it's...Killua's not a latchkey kid, because he never left the house. It's just, for him, never leaving the house means he can be 15 miles away from his parents at the same time.

Keith: Yeah, he has a whole— his house is a mountain.

Dre: Yeah.

Hunter Types [0:44:46]

Keith: Dre, the question 8 here?

Dre: Yeah. "Say, for some reason..." I think we could all manage to qualify as Hunters.

Sylvia: I'm on the record of saying that I would qualify to be a Hunter. [Keith laughs] Multiple times.

Dre: "Say, for some reason, you manage to qualify as Hunters, get your card and Nen powers. What is it you would dedicate yourself to hunting?"

Jack: This is from D B.

Keith: Rare comedy. Old weird comedy albums.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: The Bit Hunter.

Keith: The Bit Hunter, yeah. Gourmet Hunter number two.

Dre: I'd be, like, a building Hunter. Like, the process of building. Not like buildings that have been built. But like, different—

Sylvia: A construction Hunter.

Dre: Yeah. But like, you know, like, I'd want to learn woodworking and then how to do concrete and then how to do, like, all that stuff.

Sylvia: Okay.

Dre: And I'd, like, you know, climb to the top of a mountain to learn how to forge a sword from a sage or something.

Sylvia: That's kind of Ging-like, if I'm being honest.

Keith: That is very Ging-like, yeah.

Dre: Aw man.

Keith: Ging does both, though.

Dre: But I also wouldn't have a child and abandon them.

Sylvia: It's also Zepile-ish.

Jack: It's Zepile. That's true.

Keith: Yeah, Zepile too, but Zepile isn't a Nen user or a Hunter.

Dre: Not yet.

Jack: I would be a birdwatching Hunter. I'm not a birdwatcher in real life, other than the

sort of that I like to see them outside of my window. The reason I would like to be a birdwatching Hunter is that Hunters get real specific, so I would do the sort of Fishteen Minutes thing where I would [Dre laughs] see the, like, 58,000 birds that exist. I'd see them all, and then I would start getting into the really fucking weird, weird birds, and you know they exist in the *Hunter × Hunter* world.

Keith: You'd see all the birds that exist, and then the only thing left is birds that don't exist.

Jack: Uh, yes. If God did not exist, the birdwatching Hunters would have to make them. No, it's because I know that out there, there's, like, a Hunter, who's like a "make weird birds" Hunter, [Keith laughs] who is, like, through a combination of genetics and Frankensteining, producing some really extraordinary birds. You know, that's what I'm going to be doing. I've got binoculars. I've got my Nen ability, which is...god, my Nen ability is, like, I can, like, turn into a tree or something? [laughs quietly] I don't know. [Sylvia and Keith laugh]

Dre: Sure.

Sylvia: I love that you weren't like, "Oh, so, I can't, like, slow them down or perceive them slower or anything. No. [Jack laughs] I'm the tree. They sit on me."

Jack: I'll just hang out with them when they arrive, yeah.

Keith: Question nine here. Who's—

Jack: Wait, what are other people's Nen powers?

Dre: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Oh, sorry.

Sylvia: What the fuck?

Keith: I thought we got everybody, but my bad.

Dre: No, no.

Sylvia: No, you were trying to keep me from saying I would be a MILF Hunter, weren't you? [Dre and Jack laugh]

Keith: Yeah, sorry. Sylvi wrote "MILF Hunter" all over the sheet here, so we knew.

Sylvia: No, well, it stands— hold on. You don't— let me explain the acronym. It stands for Monsters In Lands Foreign, so. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Whoa.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Like, that's all.

Jack: There's some Home For Infinite Losers shit going on here. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: I don't know what you could be talking about.

Dre: Now, what sort of powers would you have to help you be a MILF Hunter?

Sylvia: Uh, I'm able to communicate with any cougar. [laughs quietly] [Keith and Dre laugh] The cat! The big cat!

Dre: Yeah, uh huh.

Keith: Yeah. Uh huh.

Jack: Okay. Okay. [Sylvia laughs] Keith?

Keith: Are you asking for my power now or to please move on?

Jack: No, your power. [Sylvia laughs distantly]

Keith: What does a Yuk Hunter need? What does a Bit Hunter need? I think maybe I can absorb, uh, I can absorb where people have laughed in the past. I can absorb those.

Dre: Oh, wow.

Sylvia: That rules.

Keith: Like they are sun and I'm a plant that is, like...what is the word? Begins with an H. When you absorb the sun, and you're a plant.

Sylvia: Do you mean photosynthesis?

Dre: Photosynthesis?

Keith: Photosynthesis. Yeah, there we go.

Sylvia: Hotosynthesis.

Keith: I couldn't remember the word photosynthesis.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Doesn't begin with an H. I was close.

Sylvia: [laughs] It was the second letter.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, I can photosynthesize from laughter.

Dre: Aw.

Sylvia: That's pretty good.

Keith: And it makes me so strong I can kill.

Dre: Wow. Okay.

Keith: Yeah. Kill comedically.

Dre: Yeah, I was about to say. Kill your audience with humor.

Keith: Yeah. With humor.

Dre: My Nen power is I can measure and calculate anything instantly.

Jack: Oh, wow. See, that's gonna get really useful quickly.

Keith: That's really useful. Can I tell you a joke that I misunderstood for years?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: [cross] Do you all know the comedian Eugene Mirman?

Sylvia: [cross] That's really frustrating as a Yuk Hunter.

Keith: I know. I know. [Dre laughs quietly] Do you know the comedian Eugene Mirman?

Jack: Yes. I know of him.

Keith: Has now played Gene on *Bob's Burgers* for years but was a standup— was/is a standup comedian for a very long time.

Sylvia: Okay.

Keith: And I was a fan of his in, like, early high school I think is when I first heard of him. From Lexington, Massachusetts, by the way. And he has an album, and on the album, the very first thing that he says is he walks up to the mic, and he goes, "Get ready. I'm about to start killing!" and I thought that this was a hilarious non sequitur and was Eugene Mirman going, [Jack laughs] "I'm about to murder my audience."

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Keith: And I thought that was so funny, and only in relistening to it recently, like a year or two ago, [Jack and Dre laugh] did I realize that either he just means killing as in killing comedically, like "Get ready, I'm about to be really funny up here," or it was a pun. I don't think so, though. I think really it was just that he meant comedically. Much less funny. I

really thought it's funnier to just tell a room full of people you're gonna kill them all. In that exact tone as well. That was a perfect imitation.

Jack: It's a hell of an opener.

Keith: Yeah. It's a hell of an opener.

Jack: Especially because then he would have just done some comedy, and everyone would have had a nice time.

Keith: Yeah, he did just do some comedy, yeah. Anyway, I spent probably 12, 15 years misunderstanding that joke. [laughs quietly]

Jack: And then one day, you went, "Oh!"

Keith: "Oh! That's less funny." [laughs]

Phantom Troupe [0:51:07]

Keith: Who— this'll be a quick one. I think. "Who are your respective faves among the Phantom Troupe [**Sylvia:** Well.] from what you've watched of the show so far?" and that's from Rowan. Sylvi?

Sylvia: You know.

Keith: Yep. Dre?

Sylvia: It's Phinks.

Keith: It's Phinks, yeah. From the last episode.

Sylvia: Yeah. [brief pause] [quietly] It's Chrollo.

Keith: Yeah, it's Chrollo.

Dre: Ohhh, okay.

Sylvia: I wasn't sure if I was being given the space to say that, or...

Keith: No, no, I think we're just thinking.

Sylvia: There was just a pause. Okay.

Keith: I'll say, for me, I, like, really forgot about how awesome those last couple episodes are for Phinks, who, when he shows up—

Jack: Oh, with the phone stuff and...?

Keith: Yeah, with the phone and then the [Dre: Mm.] getting the Pakunoda memories and kind of, like, having this sort of interesting moment with Gon and Killua at the very end.

Jack: Even him just being the sort of, like...he briefly becomes the villain inside the Phantom Troupe in this arc.

Keith: Yes, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Which is great.

Keith: And that stuff is all really interesting. So like, I had just forgotten about that. I remembered liking Phinks and thinking he was goofy but feeling like he doesn't do much in this set of episodes and then being really pleasantly surprised in the end at how good that— like, Phinks really kind of gets a pretty significant arc kind of out of nowhere that develops so fast. You're like, "Oh, I didn't realize...I didn't even realize that this was in progress. I didn't realize they were doing something with Phinks at all until it started happening." It could be Phinks. It could be Pakunoda. I think that her stuff at the end is, like, really phenomenal.

Dre: Yeah, Pakunoda's great.

Jack: God, RIP. What a way to go out, though.

Keith: I know.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. I think it's— from these episodes, it's Bonolenov. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Dre: Yeah. No, yeah. I was gonna say that.

Jack: Are we going to get some Bonolenov stuff?

Sylvia: We will.

Keith: Okay.

Dre: Oh. Yeah, we will.

Sylvia: There's some. There's a little.

Keith: There's a little.

Dre: There's a little. I think Franklin's probably my favorite.

Keith: I think, honestly, it's Uvogin. I think for real it is.

Sylvia: Really.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: I love Uvogin.

Jack: Why Franklin, for you, Dre?

Dre: Man. [sighs] Franklin just, like, reminds me of the kind of guy that you would, like, work at a job with, and like, two months in, you'd think he's one person, and then, like, you'd go out to a bar with him afterwards, and he would tell you a story, and you're like, "Oh, you're a fucking scary person. I'm glad that we became friends before I learned this about you." [laughs]

Keith: Oh, I was thinking about this from the other way around, where you meet Franklin and your like, "Obviously, this is a terrifying man," and then you go out for a

drink, and he's like, oh, he's also, like, sensitive and intelligent.

Dre: Yeah, no, I think you probably— I think he would lead with the sensitivity and intelligence.

Keith: I can tell you that, in the season, he did not.

Dre: I want to give Franklin a kiss is what I'm realizing right now. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Sylvia: Many such cases.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: Am I— is it just because he was introduced working in a little subteam with Feitan, or are Feitan and Franklin regularly paired together within the story? I'm trying to think if, like, [**Dre:** Hmm.] they regularly work together or it was just that we met them at the same time so we associate them with each other.

Keith: It's funny, because I don't associate them with each other, so.

Dre: Yeah, I don't either.

Sylvia: I think it might be because the big moment at the auction, right?

Keith: That is true.

Sylvia: Like, they come out on stage together, and that's, like, a very, like, iconic scene.

Keith: Yeah, they do come out on stage together.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: So, they do show up together but also with Nobunaga and someone else?

Dre: I was about to say, the thing that I remember from Franklin first showing up is Franklin and Nobunaga, like, fake fighting each other.

Keith: Yeah, that's what I remember.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Keith: And Feitan sort of, like, kind of getting roped into that?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: It was Machi with them then, or was it...?

Jack: Yeah, Machi was with them [**Keith:** Yeah.] and was not happy about it.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Machi is a real contender for me. I think Machi is a real interesting Phantom Troupe member, because she's the first true member we meet, and there's, like, this real excitement of, like, this is the ambassador from the Phantom Troupe. And then when the Phantom Troupe arrive in earnest and it is revealed that she is just a very even-tempered, fairly normal, trusted mid-ranking member of the Phantom Troupe, that was really interesting. You know, the show— the Phantom Troupe would have been shaded in a different way if, for example, Franklin had been the first person we met talking to Hisoka or whatever. But it just being this sort of, like, quietly spoken doctor with semi-prescient hunches about the future. That's really cool. I think Machi's fun. I think that she is...she is untroubling in scenes. Unlike, for example, Phinks, she is not really putting the cat among the pigeons. She's often there to say, "Well, hang on. We haven't thought about this. Let's be calm about that." I think that's an interesting character. I think Phinks is fantastic. Nobunaga is my favorite, personally. I think he's a really fun character, and they do so much work with him, where like, compared to the way some of the others look, his character design is not the most interesting. I feel like I've seen that sort of Rōnin character in a lot of things before.

Keith: Right. He's no Shalnark.

Jack: Shalnark is a real doozy. Shalnark is such a nasty little piece of work.

Sylvia: Yeah. Evil little fucker.

Jack: And so rarely lets the mask slip, or rather, his mask is a cheery evil mask. You know, it's never in any doubt that he's evil. He's just very comfortable about it at all times.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I don't read him as that— I mean, obviously they're all evil murderers, but it's funny, like, [Dre laughs] I don't read anything sinister from his cheery disposition.

Sylvia: It's because his ability is so chilling that when you combine it with that...

Keith: His ability is terrifying, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: But that is the sort of thing, like, the fucking Tarantino thing that all of the Phantom Troupe do, which is like, a bunch of murderers having, like, a fun funny conversation, and then they go murder a million people.

Sylvia: I guess. The thing with Shalnark is that he just sometimes reminds me of the two boys from *Funny Games*.

Keith: I've never seen *Funny Games*, so.

Jack: Oh, he really does.

Dre: Hmm.

Sylvia: But they are very nice polite young men who also do horrible fucking crimes to a family. [laughs quietly]

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: But always have that sort of, like, smiley disposition, for the most part, and that's what Shalnark really reminds me of.

Keith: And they also have a TV remote.

Sylvia: They also have a TV remote. They very famously have a TV remote.

Dre: Hmm.

Sylvia: He has a cell phone.

Keith: Yeah. Same idea, though.

Jack: I love his little cell phone.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: I think his little cell phone was made by the same people who made Gon's beetle phone.

Keith: [laughs] Yeah, it's got, like, a little— it's like a little bat phone thing. It's got, like, weird— it's like— it looks— he looks like he's from *Dragon Quest*, and the phone looks like it's from *Dragon Quest*. Both phones. I think it's telling about the Phantom Troupe that even now, like, it's hard to not just say six of them or whatever.

Jack: I mean—

Keith: Like, they're so good. They're such good characters. It's like, "Who's your favorite?" and it's like, "Well, here are my seven runners up and then my favorite is either these two."

Jack: I think it's also— it's not just that they're good characters. They are also...they come as a package. [laughs quietly]

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know. They don't mean a lot outside of the context that they are in, and so as

soon as we start talking about one favorite member of the Phantom Troupe, we are then, you know, firmly in the Venn diagram of, like, here's why they're interesting.

Keith: The reason why they're a favorite intersects so heavily with the other ones.

Jack: And this is Chrollo's whole deal.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Chrollo's whole deal is like, you build the spider out of the legs and the head. You know, they are one unit working together.

Keith: Speaking of packages. Sylvi.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: What—? [laughs quietly]

Keith: Do you have your matrix?

Sylvia: Oh! [quiet laughter] That was insane.

Keith: I know. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Sylvia: That was a really insane way to do that. [Keith laughs] That was like how I get stopped at the TSA.

Jack: Talking about the shipping. Why did you describe it as a package, Keith? Is it like a shipping matrix, so shipping makes you think of packages?

Keith: [laughs quietly] Yes, that's why.

Sylvia: Okay.

Dre: Hmm.

Sylvia: Well, I'm gonna put it in our chat here.

Keith: Okay.

Jack: I'm so excited. When did you first talk about this or threaten to do it, Sylvi?

Sylvia: I don't remember.

Keith: It's funny, 'cause I had no memory of this, and then I saw four people asking for it.

Sylvia: Yeah. I've said it— like, I think I mentioned before we started recording, that...

Jack: [laughs] This is so funny.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Wow, there's a lot of unrequited arrows towards, uh...

Sylvia: Oh, yeah. This is me showing the— I'm very open about being a fujoshi, but the unrequited stuff is the himejoshi coming out, [quietly] which is the yuri version, for people...

Jack: Okay.

Sylvia: Oh, I went too anime club. Okay, so—

Jack: Here's the— could you talk about this in a very broad sense of, like, what we are looking at first? For people who might not be familiar.

Sylvia: Oh, I forgot to label. Yeah.

Keith: This will be linked, by the way. So, people are gonna be able to see this.

Jack: And then the three colors of lines, and then you can start going into detail.

Sylvia: So, okay. When I started doing this, I was just gonna do, like...because I needed an unrequited color for Hisoka, because that's how I feel.

Jack: Ha!

Dre: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And I realized when I was doing— because I made jokes about this, [**Keith:** Yeah.] because I was like, “Oh, haha.” One of my favorite jokes I've made about the Phantom Troupe was saying that they're a polycule, and everyone hates Hisoka, because he won't do the dishes. [Jack laughs quietly] Like, I just make a lot of stupid jokes like that, [**Keith:** Mm-hmm.] and so mentioning this just seemed natural, and then I was making it, and I was like, “I just think most of these people are friends,” so I added a platonic line. [laughs] And then there's the romantic line, which is red. So, blue is unrequited, which I didn't mention. You can see the image. I'm gonna be mentioning which line goes to which and discussing it, I'm assuming.

Keith: Yes, please.

Sylvia: Are there any of these that stand out to you guys that I should start with? [Jack laughs]

Keith: Yeah, I want to know the three unrequited arrows going to Shizuku.

Sylvia: I just— so, unrequited— this one's, like, soft, but I feel like those are three people who would...because Feitan I remember being, like, weird about her Nen power, but maybe I'm wrong. I feel like these are three that I could see flirting with her and her not picking up on it, you know?

Keith: Sure.

Jack: Yeah, you've written down here, “Too oblivious to notice anything.”

Keith: You don't think Feitan only has eyes for Chrollo? There is an unrequited arrow going from Feitan to Chrollo.

Sylvia: I think that there's a...

Keith: There's room there?

Sylvia: The weird sicko-ness that we've talked about in Shizuku is enough of a draw.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: So, what have you got written down for Feitan's relationship with Chrollo?

Sylvia: Well, he's in love with his boss but in, like, a Mr. Smithers/Alex Horne from *Taskmaster* type of way.

Jack: Yeah. I agree. He is—

Keith: Sorry, Feitan is.

Sylvia: Feitan is, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: That's what the arrow is indicating.

Keith: Yeah. Absolutely.

Jack: He is a small version of Chrollo who has sort of specialized into torture.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Exactly.

Keith: Specialized into impressing Chrollo is another...

Jack: Yes.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I'm gonna talk about the sort of Chrollo/Illumi/Hisoka situation here now.

Jack: Oh, yes, 'cause there's a little guest. Illumi has joined in as a guest.

Sylvia: Yeah, there's a little bonus Illumi here, 'cause I think it's important to understand the way I conceptualize these three, and of course it's the one thing I forgot to label.

Keith: And he was in the room.

Dre: Oh?

Keith: He was in the church with all of them. He was there.

Sylvia: Oh, right, right, right, 'cause he was pretending to be Hisoka.

Keith: Right.

Jack: Oh, right, he was! I forgot about that. That was great.

Sylvia: Yeah. So, Hisoka and Illumi are the worst couple in the world, in my mind. Just...

Keith: That is a romantic line between them.

Jack: That's not unrequited.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, that is a red romantic line between those two.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And I—

Sylvia: And Hisoka wants to do a “Hey, we noticed you from across the bar, and we liked your Nen” thing with Chrollo, who is, like, a...

Keith: We liked your Nen. [Dre laughs] We loved your— we're really into your strong.

Sylvia: Yeah. [Jack laughs] Who's Illumi's work friend, and so it's really weird, and that's how I see that whole thing.

Keith: Uh huh.

Sylvia: There's the sort of— I think the most important thing about this is the “British lads hitting each other with chairs after kissing” quadrant.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Now, this is tough.

Jack: Yeah, this is essential.

Dre: And you're 100% right.

Sylvia: With these four, for sure.

Keith: Well, I would say that you're 90% right, because, so there's four here.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: There's Uvo, Franklin, Nobunaga, and Phinks, and they have—

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: They have a platonic green line that meets in the middle and says, “British lads hitting each other with chairs and kissing.”

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: After kissing.

Keith: I do not find that video to be platonic. [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: It is romantic. You're right.

Keith: It is romantic.

Sylvia: I should have put romantic on this one. This is on me. I hedged.

Dre: It's like, it's red/green. You know, it's red/green.

Sylvia: It's Christmas. It's the Christmas line.

Keith: Some of these, I think it's— I think for—

Sylvia: I have the document of this still open. I can edit this while we go.

Keith: I think that it is green for Phinks.

Sylvia: You know what? Yeah. You're right.

Keith: And it's red for everyone else.

Sylvia: I'm adjusting this.

Keith: And I also— and I'm not so sure about your unrequited line from Uvo to Shalnark.

Sylvia: I just wanted to make a joke about when he kisses him on the cheek after drinking a bunch of Heineken, but...

Keith: I know. He's so flummoxed by this, Shalnark is.

Sylvia: It's true. It might not be unrequited.

Keith: I think that this is fully requited. That's what I believe about that.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: Oh, the flummox is that he is realizing that it is awakening feelings in him that he had been...

Keith: I think he's embarrassed that this is happening in public. That's what I think.

[Jack laughs]

Sylvia: You're right. I really dropped the ball on some of these. I'm sorry.

Keith: Hey, that's okay.

Jack: Well, no, it's a process, Sylvi. This is, you know.

Sylvia: Yeah, no. I'm glad.

Jack: The person writing the first draft is bringing the work. Obviously, Nobunaga and Uvo are married.

Sylvia: Married. Yeah. I just thought that— that one was really self-explanatory.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: I didn't really need to go into it. Nobunaga is a widower.

Keith: Damn.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Nobunaga and Machi I put as best friends, 'cause I liked the mission of them hanging out together and looking like a twink and a butch chilling together.

Keith: Totally.

Jack: They argued a lot on that mission, [cross] but that's also how the Phantom Troupe talks.

Keith: [cross] Yeah, but they were together all the time.

Sylvia: It was in, like, a way that I argue with my friends, though.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: And at the end of the day, they actually had each other's backs.

Jack: It's clear that Nobunaga respects Shizuku's...not Shizuku. Machi's hunches.

Keith: I...this might be a failure on my part to not see it.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Because her Nen power is terrifying.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: But I just, I read Machi as maybe the least evil out of all of these people.

Sylvia: No, that's fair.

Dre: Yeah, I'm with you on that.

Keith: Shizuku's maybe too spacey to be evil, to be that evil? [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: This is the...

Dre: I don't know.

Sylvia: I really ran into a brick wall with Shizuku, I'm gonna be honest.

Keith: Yeah. But the thing that Machi ends up doing, whether it's intentionally or just a byproduct, is like, trying to save Gon and Killua from the Phantom Troupe for most of—like, that is like—

Jack: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: That is her function in this, is like, keep these kids out of here. Just let them go. Don't show them to the boss.

Jack: God. Nobunaga's repeated insistence that he wants to hire Gon and Killua...

Keith: It's so funny!

Jack: Is one of the funniest things, and if you haven't been watching along, one of the

reasons the joke works so well for me is that he makes an initial really strong pitch and sort of gets shut down by everybody in the room and then sort of, like, sulkily goes quiet for, ooh, eight episodes, in which it is not mentioned at all, until it's like he is seized by the spirit again, **[Keith: Yeah.]** and he pitches it again eight episodes later and has exactly the same failure.

Keith: Directly to Chrollo this time.

Jack: Yeah. It's great.

Keith: Yeah. Well, to be fair, the failure is really induced by them initiating a hostage situation.

Jack: Yes, that is true. Yes. The hostage situation does sort of cause some issues there.

Keith: Yeah. 'Cause they're, like, choking out Gon and Killua, about to read them from Pakunoda, and Nobunaga's being like, "Just don't worry. We'll get you into the Troupe. Everything will be fine." **[Jack and Keith laugh]**

Jack: It's so funny. Nobunaga's great.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Chrollo and Pakunoda, you've written down here, "mom and dad"?

Sylvia: Yep. Feel like that just makes sense, doesn't it?

Dre: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. And I do like you've got the spooky corner over here. You've got the friends, **[Sylvia: Yeah.]** the Xbox friends, Feitan, Kortopi, and Bonolenov. They play Xbox together.

Sylvia: Yeah, except Bonolenov and Kortopi are an item. They go antiquing on the weekends.

Keith: Yes, yeah. [Jack chuckles]

Jack: Feitan and Kortopi have short solidarity.

Sylvia: Of course.

Jack: I think during the screenshot stream I referred to them both as small children.

Sylvia: You did. [Keith laughs] Oh! Can I just say, by the way, there is a lot of, like, fanart of Kortopi being this, like, adorable little cherub underneath the hair while I was looking for, like, a good icon to use for this.

Keith: That's bizarre.

Sylvia: And it's bizarre to me, because underneath Kortopi's hair, to me, it's Okuyasu's dad.

Keith: To me, it's an eyeball floating in a void.

Sylvia: From our JoJo episodes. [Dre chuckles]

Jack: Oh, wow, yeah, yeah, yeah. So, we never see Kortopi's face? I don't really consider this a spoiler, but you know.

Keith: Genuinely don't remember.

Sylvia: I don't remember. I never have thought of it.

Dre: I don't think so.

Jack: Wow.

Keith: It might happen in the manga? Yeah, I have no idea.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: No clue.

Jack: Looking at this chart and seeing the Phantom Troupe laid out here, it is notable to me that we know fucking nothing about Bonolenov.

Keith: Yeah, nothing. It's funny. Basically no lines, maybe literally no lines?

Jack: That's deliberate. You don't do that by accident. Why is one member of the Phantom Troupe a mystery? [Keith laughs] But not to the members of the Phantom Troupe.

Keith: Yeah, everyone else has, like, their own little storyline, has relationships that have formed. I don't even remember them saying Bonolenov's name.

Jack: His name is mentioned, I think, twice.

Keith: [laughs quietly] Really funny.

Jack: First in that great scene where the Phantom Troupe all arrive and just happen to use each other's names a lot so we, the viewer, know that. And then later when Chrollo is playing the Professor Layton puzzle of sorting out the groups.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: He points at Bonolenov and says, you know...

Keith: There's definitely a version of this that has Bonolenov with no arrows, and it just says, "He works here." [laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: But they're going antiquing on the weekends. That's very sweet.

Keith: I do like that. I like that they have a little spooky triad going on.

Sylvia: I thought so, yeah. There was a draft of this where I had Shalnark in a corner that just said, "Doesn't know what sex is, or if he does, it's really weird." [Sylvia, Keith,

and Jack laugh] I kind of regret not keeping it, but it's fine. [Dre laughs]

Keith: It's funny.

Jack: That's really funny.

Keith: The episode where Uvo, Franklin, and Shalnark are hanging out is, like, so sexual. It's insane.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: It is, like, the horniest the show has been. Like, and out of nowhere. It's mostly Uvo-centered, but.

Jack: Oh, yeah. Uvo...the camera is horny for Uvo in a major way.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Jack: God. RIP to Uvo. What a cool character. And also, at the same time, because he was constructed purely for this one arc—

Keith: Born to die.

Jack: He was able to be so precisely constructed for that purpose.

Jack: Yeah.

Jack: By which I mean: when you're making a character that's gonna run the whole thing, you need to give them or build into them or allow for certain latitudes, to be like, "I want to do a story about this with this character." You know, Uvogin's loop was so small that Togashi and the team could be so precise about, like, what he represents in the story, how his affect works, how they're going to draw and animate him. It was great. Perfect little single serving character.

Keith: Yeah. I thought Feitan was the single serving. [Jack and Dre chuckle]

Jack: Is that everyone?

Sylvia: I think so. I think we've— did we mention that I put—

Jack: Oh, Pakunoda and Machi are also mom and dad.

Sylvia: Are also mom and dad to me.

Keith: Also mom and dad.

Dre: Sure, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Who is the Phantom Troupe's Kurapika? Is it Machi?

Dre: It's probably Machi.

Jack: Oh, it's Nobu, because of the revenge, but it's—

Keith: It's also a little bit. It's also Franklin.

Sylvia: It's almost like, hmm, this entire group is meant to...

Dre: Hmm.

Keith: And it's also Shalnark.

Sylvia: Hmm.

Dre: Damn.

Keith: 'Cause Shalnark does the powerpoints.

Jack: And it's also Chrollo. Yeah, Shalnark does do the powerpoints.

Keith: Shalnark does the powerpoints. Franklin has the insightful character moments. Nobunaga has the revenge, and Machi has the disaffected demeanor.

Jack: Chrollo has the ability to bring a group of people together for a broader purpose. All right, we're discovering something about the Phantom Troupe. Next question.
[laughs quietly] Oh, this one's so funny. Can I read this?

Keith: Please.

Baise [1:13:02]

Jack: Question 10. "Hi. French listener here. I wanted to talk about Media Club Plus."

Keith: Oh, just a note quick. These two, 10 and 11, these are old asks that I never did. I just didn't see them or I didn't answer them, but I've added them here, and they don't have names, because they had names on the Cohost, but they didn't know they were signing up to be on the podcast, so I didn't put the names.

Jack: Oh, sure. Fair enough. "In the latest episode, Jack mentioned that Baise's name—" Baise is the hypnotize love kiss lady [**Keith:** Right.] who met her end unceremoniously, I think at the hands of Shizuku, who just clonked her over the head lethally with Blinky.

Keith: Yep.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, she got beaned.

Jack: "In the latest episode, Jack mentioned that Baise's name means 'kiss' in French, like the little kiss on the cheek. That's not quite right. The little kiss on the cheek is 'la bise', B-I-S-E. 'Baise', B-A-I-S-E, is a form of the verb 'baiser', which in old French did mean 'kiss', but in modern French, almost exclusively means 'fuck'."

Dre: Hmm!

Jack: "I have no idea whether Togashi was aware of this, but I think it makes for interesting characterization of that character nonetheless."

Keith: I have a little idea. I have a little bit of an idea.

Jack: My guess is that he absolutely knew that.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: [laughs quietly] I love that, um...I feel like I was making a *Hunter × Hunter* character mistake by saying, "It just means a little kiss on the cheek," as Baise swans into the scene, hypnotizing people left and right.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: That's great.

Keith: The nice thing about the assumption that Togashi would know this is that it makes it a really funny pun.

Jack: Yes. Yes.

Keith: Togashi's doing French puns in *Hunter × Hunter*.

Sylvia: I wouldn't put it past him, is the thing.

Keith: No, I totally wouldn't. I mean, you know, writers look up words when they're using them.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: I've never— I would never.

Melody [1:14:52]

Jack: And then the next, which I will just add on here. This is, like Keith said, another anonymous question. Someone says... [laughs quietly] I have to imagine this is a different person.

Keith: It is.

Jack: But because they're together and they're both anonymous, my brain is like, this person who had the great French fact is now also chiming in with this good fact. "Oh, a wild thing I wanted to say re: the most recent episode of Media Club Plus is that Melody's theme, 'A Field in Spring'..." [brief pause] I wanted to see if Keith would have it.

Keith: Oh, yeah, I redid all these, so I don't have it, I don't think.

Jack: No, no, no, it's fine. "Instantly reminds me of the opening of Stravinsky's ballet *The Rite of Spring*, which famously caused a riot when it debuted in 1913." That's so interesting. I haven't had a chance to listen to the opening of *The Rite of Spring* prior to this recording.

Keith: I have. It's pretty close. It really is close.

Jack: Oh, wow!

Sylvia: I'm gonna look that up.

Jack: So, this is great, because [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] it's a pun again, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Togashi is calling it "A Field in Spring", and Stravinsky's piece is *The Rite of Spring*. And then, again, you know, Melody's whole thing is about this sort of, like, calming transformative power of music that, at the root of it, comes from this, like, a song the Devil wrote that transforms you into a monster.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So, that's another really nice...

Sylvia: I will, not to be a pedant, push the brakes a little on giving Togashi credit for that, 'cause I don't know how much he had to do with the naming for the soundtrack,

'cause “Field in Spring” isn't the name of the piece in...

Keith: In English too, yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Oh, yes, you're absolutely right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: I couldn't remember whether or not Melody calls it “A Field in Spring” at any point.

Keith: No, no.

Sylvia: No.

Jack: What does Melody call the song?

Sylvia: It's just, like, the...

Jack: The Devil's...

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: The Sonata?

Sylvia: Dance. [laughs quietly]

Keith: These, I believe, are two different songs.

Jack: They are two different things, yes. The flute part is not actually— it's confusing, right? Because we know that Melody's friend who obliterated herself played the part on the flute, and Melody's theme is played on the flute, so at first I was like, “Oh, wow, that's— we're hearing it,” but no, Melody's [Keith: Yeah.] theme is the “Field in Spring”, which is the power she uses to calm Kurapika? Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Good song. It is close. I tried to read about the riot that supposedly took place. It seems like maybe, I don't know, overstated or reported on much later that it

was a riot, but it definitely was a raucous occasion that seems to have been mostly inspired by the dance. People were not happy about the dance that went along to *Rite in Spring*.

Jack: They thought it was too sexy? No, they thought it was— it was avant garde, and they did not care for it.

Keith: Yeah, it was avant garde. They were stomping around and stuff, yeah. “This is supposed to be beautiful!”

Sylvia: Stomping is beautiful. I think stomping can be beautiful.

Keith: Not in 1913. But anyway, that’s just— you know, I looked into it for five minutes, and that’s the best I can do on the riot, the *Rite of Spring* riot.

Magic Systems [1:17:55]

Keith: Let’s see. Who wants to read number 12 here?

Sylvia: Uh, I can do it.

Dre: I can. Ah, shit.

Sylvia: Okay, no, Dre, you go ahead. I scooped you last time. Please.

Dre: [clears throat] “Hey, Friends.”

Keith: [interrupting] I’ll read it.

Dre: “I appreciated and was compelled—” god damn it. [Keith, Dre, and Sylvia laugh]

Sylvia: You are a Yuk Hunter.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah! [Jack laughs] “I appreciated and was compelled by Austin’s argument, many episodes back, that Nen is a generative storytelling tool. I think Jack’s gut reaction

during those early episodes jives with my own instincts and generally with Friends at the Table's output too: more wonder, less definition. It's got me wondering something, though. Does the way Togashi and company leverage Nen in *Hunter × Hunter* soften your heart for any other media with rigid or exhaustively defined magic systems? Or is what Togashi has done really kind of special? Do you think you'd ever approach magic this way in something you made yourself? Thanks for everything, Brandon."

Jack: Thank you, Brandon. I think the first thing I want to say—and this isn't quite an answer to your question—is that I don't know that I agree necessarily that Friends at the Table's output is explicitly rooted in, like, pushing against this style of storytelling, in part because the way we structure Friends at the Table and the tools we use to play are about finding, you know, **[Keith: Mm.]** frameworks or methods for definition to enable us to tell stories better.

I think that, you know, what we come back to a lot is that we are not really interested in answering questions unless they are at the forefront of our minds or they are immediately relevant to the story as we are telling it. You know, we say "play to find out what happens," instead of figuring out something, you know, rigid off the bat. And I think also a sort of sentiment against that kind of structural rigidity that you might be detecting also comes from our desire to depict worlds that represent a variety of perspectives or a variety of styles or a variety of decisions about how action is taken. But I mean, if I look at Friends at the Table, I think about the Stels. You know, Austin talked about this on the podcast as well. The Stels give us a really nice structure. I look at the Cantons in Sangfielle. I think that we, in general, do tend to put in place these systems of structure.

Where I pushed against it in the show is more about personal taste, I think. I think that I have a tendency to sort of want to go splashing around in the periphery of these things before I start to move in and nail them down or figure out what they are, and I think early on in a show where it felt like there was such limitless potential for sort of what...you know, there's a magician out here who can turn people's arms into butterflies, you know? What the hell is going on here? That when I felt the framework

start to fall into place, I felt a little bit like when I have to go and grab Virginia to put her into her carrier to go to the vet, [Sylvia laughs quietly] and, you know, you sort of look around and go, “What? Fuck. This?”

And, you know, it’s not my favorite way of working through conversations about magic or working through conversations about kinds of people that there are or the kinds of ways of thinking that there are in the world, so I don’t know that it softened my heart to it to an extent, but I do think that Togashi is doing it really well, and as we have gone into Nen frenzy—that I have on good authority is only going to get more—I can see why those structures were put in place. Does that answer the question?

Keith: I think so.

Jack: I sort of feel like I...

Keith: Something else about Friends at the Table that I thought of while you were talking, Jack, is that one of the luxuries that we have is being able to build our part of the story on top of someone who’s written a book about all the rules [Jack laughs] that we don’t talk about a lot, but we spend a lot of time thinking about and reading through on our own time, and I mean, compared to, say, a novel or a television show, the rigidness of a tabletop game’s magic system is pretty intense. And I think it shows, like, when something’s working, how buried it can be without being seen. You know, it’s...you’re really able to hide a lot of rigidity underneath, like, narrative and plot and stuff [**Jack:** Yeah.] and character work and dialogue and, you know, whatever. I do, though— I do have this sort of thing where when I hear people— this happens a lot with fantasy mostly, for obvious reasons, but there is a kind of way that people read fantasy novels or things of that nature where the seriousness and exactness of the magic system or whatever is kind of the, like, biggest metric by which people judge it, and I really don’t understand that either.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: For as much as I appreciate, in *Hunter × Hunter*, having the scaffolding, when we do Friends at the Table, having all those books that have all of the rules exactly laid out.

You know, it's not...that stuff is never why I like the books that we— the games that we play.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: It's the stuff that we're able to do with it. Like, it's not the rulebook that makes the game fun. It's the way that the rulebook manifests in the show. And the same way, it's not the facts about Nen that make it fun. It's what they're able to do with the Nen in the show, I think which speaks to your point, Jack, of like, the stylistic difference of, like, well, they did have to tell me the rules, but I wish that they— or maybe a first instinct, I don't know how you feel now, is I wish that they had papered over some of the— like, it was a literal lesson in *Hunter × Hunter*. You don't get more literal, like, rules book in a television show than welcome to Mr. Wing's Nen class. [Sylvia laughs] Which, in a way, I appreciate the straightforwardness of it, and I think it lets it— it lets you go extremely far really fast with Nen, when you do it that way, and I think that that's what it does in *Hunter × Hunter*.

Jack: Yeah. I think my dissatisfaction with overexplaining, or rather with too rigid or too— it's not just the rigidity. It's the sort of intensity of a system in a story, is that it leads to two things that I find distasteful as a reader or as the person on the other side of the story, and I don't mean distasteful like a moral judgment. I mean distasteful like they are things that don't sit right with me when I am, you know, experiencing a story. The first is that I feel like if your system is too intense, is too multifaceted, is too, you know, multi-roomed—you know, you can go and explore over there; you can go and explore over here—it invites people too quickly to overexplain things.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And I think that if you overexplain stuff in a story, you're three quarters of the way to turning me off it. You know, you see Stephen King get really worked up about [Dre: Mm.] “Listen, I'm gonna tell you exactly how this works,” and it's like, come on, a third of that would have been lovely.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: That's the first thing it does, and the second—

Keith: Or does the opposite thing of...

Jack: [laughs quietly] Yes, nothing.

Keith: Tells you nothing and then bends the rules that didn't exist, and you're like, "How does this work? What is this?"

Jack: Which is also kind of irritating.

Keith: Yes.

Jack: The other thing that I feel like these systems tend to do is they invite pedantry, and I can't stand that in a story. I cannot stand it when the narrator or other fans of the thing are saying, "Oh, no, but actually that means that you can't do that, because actually, [Sylvia laughs quietly] actually, your fourth level power means that your third level power— you can't actually do that."

Keith: Okay. I do—

Jack: And—

Keith: After you're done, Jack, I do want to speak for the pedants.

Jack: I can't fucking stand it. And despite Togashi's Nen lessons at the beginning, he hasn't really fallen into either of those traps. He can't really overexplain something, because A, he hasn't actually really told us anything about what Nen is, only how it works. It's sort of a property in the world. And B, there is so much out there that he couldn't begin to be pedantic about, you know, because some weirdo would show up and be like, "Yeah, I'm now Zeno, and I'm gonna launch a Nen dragon at Chrollo," and I feel like in that way he's sort of sidestepping the two problems that I have so often with these kinds of, like, very involved structures.

Keith: Which is also, it makes a ton of sense. It's something that's really hard to see from in front of the whiteboard when you're learning about the six Pokémon types.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. To see the fact that, later down the road, you know, there's gonna be Indoor Fish?

Keith: Right. Yeah, it's hard to see that, but even more concretely, it's hard to see how, you know, he's starting something that might end up being a pitfall, but because where he stops, what he doesn't say, the limits on how we know Nen works, it doesn't create as much room for those pitfalls.

Jack: You're gonna speak for the pedants?

Keith: I want to speak for the pedants.

Jack: Let's hear your argument here.

Keith: There is something...something I really don't like about a loosey goosey thing is...when I think about stuff like this, I always think about— maybe this is not entirely— no, it's entirely fair. I think about *Riverdale*.

Sylvia: [laughs quietly] Oh, yeah. Whatever you're gonna say is fair.

Jack: Mm, mm-hmm.

Keith: There's just like, god, there's something about a show that gets it's, like, you know, gets its joy from "We can make anybody do anything. Any magic can work any way." When the way you get yourself into a problem, the way to write your way out of it is to make something work [**Jack:** Yes.] in a way that something else made me think it couldn't work that way. Sometimes you can sort of puzzle box it out, and it's like, "Oh, you made me think it worked some other way so that now you could do this," but sometimes it's the exact opposite thing, where it's like, "No, you fucking told me that this worked this way. Why now is it this?" and I think that that's a totally common reaction and fair reaction to, like, when someone is kind of holding back on how things work or has decided, like, "No, the powers are cool. I'm going to, like, write cool stuff happen."

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Keith: And then you get into, like, a *Naruto* thing where— and *Naruto*'s not the biggest perpetrator of this, but where it's just like, the power are so self-contained, and they're always changing, and then, like, things are working in ways where it's like, "Does that work that way? It sort of feels like it wouldn't work that way, based on other stuff." An example of this is, [laughs quietly] like, and I'm in the middle on this. This is a weird example, because I kind— or maybe it's the perfect example, because I kind of like this and kind of hate it. There's a part in *Naruto* where they reveal that— *Naruto*'s main thing is making shadow clones of himself that go and act on their own. They punch, and then when you do too much damage to them, they poof into a cloud of smoke. There's a point when they reveal [laughs quietly] that when he makes a shadow clone and they poof away, he then— we've talked about this before, actually. He then absorbs their entire experience back into himself and then uses that to, like, rapidly level up a new move that he's struggling to master. And I kind of love this, 'cause it's so goofy, but then the other thing is like, wait, this whole time he's been, like, absorbing hundreds of realities from these different—? [Jack laughs] And like, that's not disorienting? It's not even worth commenting on?

Jack: Yes, but I mean—

Keith: So, it introduces stuff like that, and I want to respect the pedant's way.

Jack: I think that we are describing two extremely irritating poles, and there is a space that we enjoy storytelling in the middle.

Keith: Right.

Jack: I mean, this is what— you know, people have said, "Don't you feel like the dice are getting in the way of telling stories?" and it's like, no, the dice are the— you know, [laughs quietly] I'm very happy to have these strictures in place. Or not these strictures, these processes in place that can guide and can shape and can inform and can restrict the kinds of stories that we're telling, and I feel much the same way about these sort of systems. Where it gets irritating to me is when you have to deal with, like, grappling rules, you know?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I see, all the time, TikTok— TikTok is constantly feeding me, like, tabletop discourse.

Sylvia: Oh no.

Dre: Ugh.

Jack: I block everybody.

Keith: And it's like, how does it know? How does it know that this is relevant to my life? Because I don't engage with them.

Sylvia: Do you have the Friends at the Table account on your phone at all?

Keith: I do, but it predates that.

Sylvia: Okay.

Keith: But the thing that I see all the time. It's just like every couple weeks there's, like, a new crop of people arguing, like, "Should a GM be, like, lying about dice in order to, like, not have consequences happen to players?" and it's like, I just hear that, and I'm like, I understand the impulse. I understand the impulse. I do get why people feel this way, but I'm like, so don't understand following through on that feeling. It's like such a...

Dre: Mm.

Keith: I don't know. It just reminded me of, like, this sort of swishy, like, well, the thing that happens...we want the thing that happens to be—

Jack: They can just sort of be...it can just sort of be anything.

Keith: Yeah, it can just sort of be anything. Yeah.

Jack: Brandon asks, "Do you think you'd ever approach magic this way in something you made yourself?" I think it'd be a really fun technical exercise.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I think I would probably do it really small.

Sylvia: Did we not? Have we not? I feel like we did in PALISADE. Maybe this is because you're the faction game, but like...

Jack: Oh, this is absolutely what you did in PALISADE, yes.

Sylvia: We did kind of do a little bit of this with the...

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Because *Armour Astir* does this, so like, the system was already there. We just had to, like, make it fit our setting, and I do think that flavored a lot of stuff.

Jack: Absolutely. Even just the narration of, like, the way that it affects the senses, the way that it informs the sort of, like, what are they called? Approaches, yeah?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, I was thinking— I took this as more like if you had to make an *Armour Astir*.

Sylvia: Oh.

Jack: I would like to do a story—

Sylvia: I would never do that. I would never make a game. [Jack laughs quietly]

Dre: Nah.

Jack: [cross] I'd like to make a story about—

Dre: [cross] I can't keep up with the rules of the games we play. I don't think I could make a ruleset. [laughs]

Jack: I think you'd surprise yourself. Yeah, do... Sylvi and Dre, Keith and I talked a lot in this one. Do either of you have anything you'd like to add here before we move on?

Sylvia: Uh...the conversation is, I feel, pretty satisfied with honestly.

Dre: Yeah. [Sylvia and Dre laugh]

Sylvia: I don't know. Like, I don't think I have anything really smart to add here.

Keith: Do you have anything dumb to add?

Jack: Great.

Sylvia: Um...uh, the...

Dre: I could add a dumb thing.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: I usually do, but I'm struggling apparently.

Dre: Yeah. I mean, you know, sometimes you talk a lot, and it's interesting, and sometimes you talk a lot, and it boring, you know?

Jack: Yeah. That's true.

Keith: This is a veiled comment.

Sylvia: Yeah, wait, was...? [Keith laughs] Was that the dumb thing?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I think that was smart, Dre.

Dre: Aw, thanks.

Sylvia: Here's my dumb thing. Did you guys know that Scooby-Doo from the *Scooby-Doo* franchise is technically part interdimensional alien?

Jack: Whoa.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: No, I didn't know that.

Dre: I believe it.

Sylvia: Well, you do now.

Jack: Is that true?

Sylvia: Yeah, he's...I believe they, in one of the continuities, they made—

Dre: Is that why he can talk?

Sylvia: Yeah. So— sorry, let me just— I'm gonna read this from the...

Jack: Mm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: This is from the *Scooby-Doo* Fandom wiki, and I'm sorry for— [laughs quietly] you said if I had something dumb to add, I would, and here we are.

Jack: No, please.

Sylvia: “The Anunnaki are a race of creatures living in another dimension. [Dre laughs] Every few thousand years, during an event called Nibiru, the barrier between their world and Earth grow weak, allowing the Anunnaki to visit Earth.” Some of them are good. Some of them are evil. “It is revealed that the animals which can talk are descendants of the Anunnaki. Scooby Doo is one of them.”

Keith: Wow. Unbelievable.

Jack: That's wild!

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I just thought that he was a dog from Massachusetts.

Sylvia: Nope. I'm pretty sure, if you dug into this stuff, it is probably deeply offensive, and I'm sorry.

Keith: Sure.

Sylvia: But I just think it's really funny that the *Scooby-Doo! Mystery Incorporated* team was like, "What if we— what if the dog is half alien god? [Jack laughs] What if the dog is half alien god?" [Keith laughs]

Keith: They did do this a little bit with the *Scooby-Doo* movie with the *Scream* guy, Matthew Lillard.

Sylvia: Yeah. I think he's in this one too.

Keith: There were real monsters in that one. But they were just like, "Yeah, magic is real. The show about how magic is fake and all the villains are scams? No, now it's real. These are real."

Jack: I think they did that in a recent Nancy Drew thing. Yeah, I don't like it.

Keith: I like when detective stuff has, like, spooky magicky stuff in it.

Jack: Oh, me too. Absolutely. But much like—

Keith: But you've gotta do it well, and it's hard to take a property about how it's fake and then be like, "Actually, it's been real. In every Nancy Drew thing, it could have been magic the whole time."

Jack: But the joke about Nancy Drew, right, is that it's always, like, a gas leak, [Sylvia laughs] or it's always, like, someone dressing up as...

Keith: That's funny. That's really funny. I have no experience with Nancy Drew.

Sylvia: That is a really funny thing to say.

Jack: [sighs] Nancy Drew is fucking great.

Nen Moves [1:37:15]

Keith: “Jack: From another first time *Hunter × Hunter* watcher, do you think Gon will ever get a named Nen move of his own? If so, what do you think he will call it? Same questions for Leorio,” from Conner.

Sylvia: Oh.

Jack: Now, I would have answered this question differently had I not seen the first episode of the Greed Island arc, which, without spoilers, involves Killua trying to engage Gon in a sort of brainstorming session about what it would be like to have a special power.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: That is not resolved at the time of recording, but I can say that I think Gon is going to get a named power. I think it's going to be really stupid, is my guess. [laughs quietly] I think it's going to be called, like...Gon's Punch or something. [Sylvia, Keith, and Dre laugh] Or something. Or something like that. You know. I've already seen the avenue that Leorio—that Leorio. That Killua is going down, and I've sort of been teased the avenue that Gon is going down. If you haven't seen the show, Gon develops a very interesting technique for sharpening his Nen abilities, which is the most Gon thing I've maybe ever seen. Same question for Leorio. Will Leorio ever get a named Nen move? No. Leorio's gonna bebop around the periphery of this story, occasionally arriving. I don't think... [Sylvia laughs] I don't think we're going to focus on Leorio long enough to see him learn and deploy a Nen move.

Keith: This is funny, because I think that this question has been asked before, or I just got an overwhelming sense of déjà vu of you saying almost that exact same thing, of like, Leorio will not learn Nen. He'll just show up sometimes.

Jack: I think that something like that was asked, and that was the answer, and I've been semi-vindicated. Leorio has learned about a third of Nen, at this point, I think?

Keith: Yeah. And we have not seen him applying himself since.

Jack: No. No.

Kurapika [1:39:10]

Keith: Sylvi, do you want to read the next one?

Sylvia: Yeah. That is number 15?

Keith: 14— yeah, 15, yeah, sorry.

Sylvia: “Question: Any chance—” I probably didn't need to read the word question here. “Any chance you can give your thoughts on a specific bit at the end of the Kurapika and Uvo fight? I feel like I was missing a look into the scene where he’s inflicting cold and steady almost analytical violence, scientifically figuring out what attacks worked on Uvo, and then his outburst of disgust about how the violence makes him feel. I think there’s a lot about Kurapika’s rage and commitment to doing violence contrasted with the burying of his emotions that really bubbles to the surface in that moment, and I'd love to hear what you all think.” From Suedeuxnim.

Jack: I think I have a pretty quick answer to this, which is that what this makes me think of is two things that I've sort of spoken a bit about on this recording. The first is that the Phantom Troupe is a mirror. The Phantom Troupe is a way of working through ideas that our characters— that our main characters, our good protagonists are working through. And I don't just mean this in the sense of a foil; you know, the traditional have a character and then have a foil to that character to let them explore this stuff. I mean a mirror in that what they are exploring is very often the same core set of ideas. You know, we've gone over in the past about how something that is really stuck in Gon's craw is the idea that villains could feel camaraderie and loss and love for each other, despite existing in a world where, you know, they inflict such harm on others. And I think that the other thing that it makes me think of is when I talked about Uvo as a specific construct for his death. [laughs quietly] He has been built top to bottom to be, like, a perfect use case for this sequence.

Keith: Mm-hmm. It's funny how Gon sort of and Killua try to, like, really actualize that thing, try to keep Kurapika away from that contradiction that he sees in the Phantom Troupe by, like, saving Chrollo and Pakunoda.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, definitely. And it works, to a certain extent, right?

Keith: Specifically saying, "We don't want him to be a murderer."

Jack: It's offering a kind of an alternative, and that's something that really strikes Pakunoda to the core, [**Keith:** Yeah.] and, you know, powers her through that arc. And, you know, Phinks has gotten that knowledge now. Actually, a bunch of them did, but Phinks was kind of the one we saw really turn. So, I think to your question, Suedeuxnim, about Kurapika's precision then bubbling up into a kind of violent disgust is the consequence of placing a character who bites half of a person's face off, drinks beer, pisses out leeches, [**Keith** laughs] swears revenge, throws a pebble at the moon, is just this, like, orgiastic hedonistic force of violence, and setting him against Kurapika's, you know, cold precision, and then challenging that precision.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know, making Kurapika realize that even in the depth of that precision, there is some sort of disgust or burning violence or revenge.

Keith: He really has that Gon moment on his own but, like, in the middle of actualizing the contradiction, is like, you know, upset about it. Like, I wish—

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: He wishes he didn't have to do revenge, which is fair, I guess.

Dre: Hmm.

Jack: And we don't really see the sort of analysis that Kurapika works being displayed by Uvo in the same way that we see the kind of blood red violent hedonism of Uvo being displayed yeah Kurapika.

Keith: Right.

Jack: Where we do actually kind of get it is in watching the Phantom Troupe maneuvering afterwards.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know? I think a lot about the scene where Chrollo sort of plays a riddle game with Hisoka to try and figure out what the chain user's powers are, and there is this real sort of, like, cold analysis of the situation, but we don't really get to see Uvo exploring that, because he's a beautiful creature bred for death. [Sylvia chuckles]

Keith: Yeah. I love the Phantom Troupe.

Jack: I love the Phantom Troupe. They're so great.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: They're so great. [laughs quietly] You might think— you might think that we're out of the Phantom Troupe arc, but the Phantom Troupe do at least one extremely funny thing at the beginning of the Greed Island Arc that is great.

Keith: [laughs quietly] It's funny that, like, the...that Gon is able to, like, speak the plot of the whole— the theme of the Phantom Troupe thing, which is like, this contradiction of, you know, they're protagonist-coded, we watch them, we think with them, we identify with them, but they're also bloodthirsty murderers. Who knows what horrible crimes they've committed? Because they don't show us, because we're watching them, like, be the main characters instead of watching them be the villains. And Gon just, like, says out loud, like, "This is crazy. Like, how do you do that?" and still, even though he just says it right out loud multiple times, like, "Why are you like this?" it's still so much fun to think about. Why are they like that? I don't know.

Jack: Why are they like that? We'll find out one day, or we won't.

Keith: Chrollo doesn't like talking about it, so we don't know. [laughs]

Jack: Next question?

Keith: Yes. From Sylvi? Not from Sylvi.

Sylvia: I just read this one.

Keith: You just read this one.

Sylvia: I just read one.

Keith: So then it's me.

Sylvia: Not this one, but I just read the last one.

Keith: Sorry. I don't— I can't keep track of things in my brain, so.

Sylvia: Hey, no worries. You were the one who said you had a system though, so.
[laughs quietly]

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: No, I have a system, and it's to forget every time who read. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Dre: Ahhh.

Sylvia: Fair enough.

Keith: And then, just in case any listeners forget, me forgetting, I'm forgetting along with you, and then we all learn together who's supposed to go next, and it's me.

Side Story Ideas [1:45:24]

Keith: “Hey, y'all. Really loving Media Club Plus. It's very fun listening to someone experiencing the show for the first time, and the focus on the music is especially an angle I haven't ever really engaged with. Something I always am kind of fascinated by with stories I love is the supplementary material that gets made for them. I always find it

endlessly interesting to see people explore nooks in a world they didn't create. So, I ask: if you were given free reign to tell a *Hunter × Hunter* story, in any medium or format of your choosing, what would you be interested in exploring? Give me your pitches. My pick would be Leorio med school miniseries or a Zushi movie.”

Jack: Oh.

Keith: Also, and I hear this a lot, the only thing that I can say is I have no—I cannot look that far into the future to see what we will all want to do or be doing. “You should definitely read the post-anime manga when you hit the end of the anime.” I will read it regardless of if we do it for Media Club Plus.

Jack: Oh, yeah, I'm gonna read it.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: There's no fucking way I'm not.

Keith: No, yeah.

Jack: Yeah. I want to know what happens.

Keith: I have been putting it off specifically for the show and not wanting to know for the show.

Sylvia: Same.

Keith: So. Does anybody have—

Jack: I have a quick and easy answer for this.

Keith: Great.

Jack: I would like to tell a story that sets out by being a sort of cozy slice of life story [Keith: Mm-hmm.] in a little village that all the Hunters have to pass through to get to the Hunter Exam, or the, like, Hunter candidates.

Dre: Ooh.

Jack: Like the quiz, remember?

Keith: Sure.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: I was literally thinking that.

Jack: The guy holding the bell?

Keith: The guy with the late horn?

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: God.

Jack: Except what starts out as, like, a really, like, capital-C cozy, capital-W wholesome slice of life story with the baker and the, you know, running down to the waterfront, just turns into, like, a Coen Brothers-ass nightmare as the Hunter Organization, you know, just, like, does what the Hunter Organization does to this village.

Keith: So this is, like, the story is like when the Olympics comes to town.

Jack: Oh, yes. [laughter] It's absolutely when the Olympics comes to town.

Keith: Like, everyone's excited. We're going to take part. We're helping the new crop of Hunters. Oops, they've destroyed the city.

Jack: It's just a disaster.

Dre: Yeah, our infrastructure is completely fucked now.

Jack: But it's not just that, because something about the Hunters is that they are, like, deeply compelling to people as well.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So it's not just that they've destroyed the city, it's like two thirds of the city have really gotten it into their heads that they have to get the treasure under the water mill, [Keith laughs] and there's like a demon under the water mill. Like, all the kids are now playing at being Hunters.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know, the barn catches fire. It's great.

Keith: That's great. I have, like, the most boring answer of all time that is— it is practical to my life. What I want is do *Sand Land* but *Hunter × Hunter*.

Sylvia: Oh!

Jack: Oh my god.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I'm playing *Sand Land*. I just want, like, a really long, really good video game with *Hunter × Hunter*.

Jack: Please, god.

Dre: Hmm.

Jack: I'm sorry, Dre, and maybe Sylvi, I'm not sure. I don't like fighting games. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: I think you should mostly be apologizing to me, I think?

Keith: Yeah, I think.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Dre, do you play fighting games?

Dre: I have a very on-and-off relationship with fighting games. Like, when I play them, I will play them, like, super heavy. But I just, I can never get past the initial, like, glass skill ceiling that I have, so.

Sylvia: Yeah, man. I'm on dustloops and shit. I'm in the fighting game mines.

Dre: Oh, you're cracked?

Sylvia: Yeah, I'm a little cracked. I'm a little twisted.

Keith: The thing I don't like about fighting games is I don't like any game that I have to, like, read about a meta in order to be good.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Eh.

Keith: Or like, read about— like, I just want to be natural. I want the natural league where nobody knows anything.

Sylvia: See, I don't care about metas when I play stuff.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: I just go for what feels good to me.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: And that usually bites me in the ass, but sometimes it doesn't. I am going to play *Hunter × Hunter: Nen × Impact* quite a bit, even if it's bad.

Keith: Oh, I'm gonna play it, for sure.

Dre: Yeah, for sure.

Sylvia: We should play it together.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Y'all warned me recently that, like, footage is out and it's full of spoilers.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: I cannot imagine what that— 'cause if it's just people I haven't met, sure. But like..

Keith: That's definitely a big part of it.

Jack: I'm so curious.

Keith: I mean, look.

Dre: I haven't watched that new trailer yet. I don't know what's in it that's spoilery.

Keith: Characters throw powers in fighting games, you know? You know what I mean?

Dre: Ah, okay.

Keith: I haven't seen the footage, but that's what I'm imagining.

Jack: Oh, sure.

Keith: Is like, okay, this is a character that you're gonna meet in 35 episodes and also their Nen power.

Jack: I wonder how they're going to implement Chrollo's power.

Keith: Mm.

Sylvia: I do know that, like, an upcoming villain was just, like, straight up announced, so.

Jack: There are more villains?

Sylvia: Shockingly enough, arcs have antagonists.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Who was the antagonist— it was the Phantom Troupe. No, the real antagonist for

the—

Sylvia: I would say the Phantom Troupe were the antagonists.

Jack: It's the Phantom Troupe plus, like, the mafia community.

Sylvia: Yeah. I mean, it changes depending on the perspective, right?

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: The antagonist was the mystery [Sylvia laughs] of who's doing what from either side.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: The friends we met along the way.

Keith: Yeah. The questions we answered along the way was the antagonist of...

Sylvia: Mm.

Jack: But yeah, look, I'm under no...I'm under no misapprehensions of how an open world game is extremely expensive, time consuming, and requires a lot of skill.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: However. [laughs quietly] Can we have one?

Sylvia: Can we have one, please?

Keith: Can we have one, please?

Dre: Can we have one? [laughs quietly]

Keith: And can it be just, like, half a letter grade better than *Sand Land* is?

Sylvia: Oh.

Dre: Oh.

Keith: *Sand Land* is, like, totally decent, but I really would like it to be awesome.

Dre: Is it like C+ decent or B- decent?

Keith: Um, it is definitely bridging those two.

Dre: Okay. Gotcha.

Keith: And I'm not sure exactly which one yet. Love the vehicles. Love upgrading my vehicles. You know, there's a little bit of a...you know in a game when you're moving around and you're jumping, and you're like, "Wow, it feels really good to, like, move around and jump."

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: *Sand Land* doesn't have that.

Dre: Aw.

Jack: And they have really figured out in video games how to adapt Toriyama's style to 3D now. It looks great.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: It looks really good. It is beautiful. A lot of the characters are great. The story is fairly simple. The game is pretty fun. There's a little bit more combat in the vehicle than I expected and definitely less combat outside the vehicle than I expected, but the vehicle combat is the better combat, so.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Tons of vehicle stuff. That stuff's really good.

Sylvia: Yeah, I mean, my memory of the manga is that it revolved around the little tank they were in, like, a lot.

Keith: Also, I love Beelzebub and did not expect to.

Sylvia: He's great.

Keith: He is great. I love him.

Sylvia: Oh my god. I adore him. Have you never read *Sand Land*?

Keith: No. I had never even heard of *Sand Land* until...

Sylvia: Oh, Keith, you should read *Sand Land*. It's, like, a one volume thing. It's really good.

Keith: Okay. Yeah, I heard of *Sand Land* when the trailer for *Sand Land* dropped in, like, last summer.

Sylvia: Yeah, I read it when I was 12 years old, 'cause it was in my school library.

Dre: Oh, wow. That's awesome.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, make...

Jack: Sylvi and Dre, what are your...?

Sylvia: Oh, god.

Dre: I know what mine is. I want the cookbook made by Buhara and Menchi.

Sylvia: Oh!

Jack: Oh, great.

Sylvia: That's good.

Keith: Yeah, that's really good.

Jack: First, catch 100 pigs. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Well, yeah, sure.

Keith: Next, fail to cook 100 pigs. [Jack and Keith laugh]

Jack: Remember when she nearly flunked everybody out of the Hunter Exam?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: That was great. I adore her.

Jack: Ugh, really, really good.

Sylvia: I would—

Keith: Did not get mentioned during the “who would you hang out with.” Almost mentioned her. Almost mentioned...

Sylvia: Oh, same.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I think my one would be, like...if it's any medium, could I just, like, make people's outfits real?

Keith: Sure.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: There are just certain articles of clothing where I'm like, “Oh, I want that.”

Keith: This is normal now to wear.

Sylvia: I want to be able to wear what Killua is wearing in real life right now, yeah.

Keith: Which one?

Jack: You want the shirt that says “ABC CBA”?

Sylvia: Yeah, the, like, raincoat? I'd love that in my size.

Keith: Yeah, the “All Bastard Cops, Cops Bastard All” raincoat?

Sylvia: Cops Bastard All? Yeah.

Jack: Cops Bastard All. [laughs quietly] [Keith laughs] Now more than ever.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Or his weird backpack with all the strands on it.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: It’s great.

Keith: Yeah, the backpack with strands is great.

Jack: Okay.

Dre: The strand game backpack.

Characters’ Advice [1:54:09]

Jack: Dee¹ asks, “Of all the people you’ve met so far, whose advice/guidance would you trust the most/the least if offered?”

Dre: Hmm.

Keith: Kurapika slash Kurapika, depending on the situation.

Sylvia: That is a good point.

Jack: Kurapika slash Hisoka.

Keith: Oh, yeah, sure.

Dre: Yeah, I was gonna say Neon and then Hisoka for trust the least.

¹ Spelling unknown.

Keith: Hisoka has given good advice in the show already.

Jack: He has, but you'd...

Dre: Yeah, but he might also Bungee Surprise a contract that I sign and then it turns out I owe him, like, \$10,000.

Keith: Sure. I was thinking of, like, the literal capacity to give good advice and not factoring in the, like, “can I trust this person? are they—”

Dre: Who he is as a person? [Dre and Keith laugh]

Keith: Yeah, I forgot. I was thinking, like, no, he can give good advice. He’s just a horrible liar and a villain.

Dre: And I feel like, in defense of Kurapika, Kurapika knows that the stuff he’s doing is bad, and he tells, like, Gon all the time, like, “Hey, don’t be like me, bro.”

Keith: Yeah, that’s fair.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Like, “Don’t do this,” [laughs quietly] and then Gon’s like, “But I wanna. I really wanna.” [Jack laughs]

Keith: I think probably 85%.

Sylvia: The ship captain from the very beginning of the show, I think, would probably have good advice.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Sure, yeah. Mito, bad advice. I think Mito has bad advice for people.

Sylvia: Oh, probably. Just stay obsessed with your cousin your entire fucking life.

Dre: Aw.

Keith: [laughs] You weirdo.

Sylvia: You freak. [laughs]

Dre: Man. [Jack chuckles]

Jack: Next question.

Sylvia: Wing is, like, an easy answer. That's like going chalk, I feel like, but I would like

[**Dre:** Yeah.] to learn Nen from either Wing or what's-his-fuck who teaches Kurapika.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, Mizuken.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah.

Dre: Yeah. Oh man, Mizuken is the fucking...ugh. He's the tough love teacher.

Jack: He is. We get some information about some Mizuken teaching methods that we did not see, in the next episode. They are scary.

Sylvia: Oh.

Keith: Kurapika is also the tough love student.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: That's true.

Jack: Yeah, that's true.

Keith: "Teach me how to do chains! Do it now!"

Jack: [laughs] "You can just go out and buy chains." "No!"

Keith: "It's impossible." "Do it anyway!" Let's see. I think, um...oh, Neon. Great advice.

Dre: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, well, yeah. That goes without saying, but that's not really her. That's the demons.

Keith: Sure, the demons.

Jack: It is.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: It's the demons, yeah.

Dre: Sure. That's fine. As long as she's the one carrying them, I'll listen.

Jack: Chrollo for the same reason. Chrollo is a very good leader, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: That might be good. Some good leadership advice.

Dre: That's true. He is.

Keith: Yeah. Remember when he's like, "You should do everything I say, but unless it's to save my life, and then just let me die."

Jack: Yes. [Keith laughs] That was some classic Chrollo Lucifer leadership.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: God. He's perfect.

Exam Training [1:57:09]

Keith: Dre, do you want to read the next one?

Dre: Yeah. "As someone catching up, I just wanted to note the detail that I caught as the exam arc ended, that the entire penultimate island badge scenario was a trial built to

prepare future Hunters to be able to hold onto their license. I wonder what other skills the exam was built to ensure a new Hunter would have starting out.” That is from polterzeitgeist.

Sylvia: Did that work?

Jack: That’s great.

Sylvia: That didn’t really work out great for Gon. I don’t think he really absorbed that lesson.

Keith: Yeah, they didn’t say, [**Jack:** No.] “Don’t sell your badge,” on Zevil Island.

Dre: He knew where it was.

Keith: Yeah. They actually said, “You can totally sell your badge,” a little bit after that, [laughs quietly] is I think what they say, and he listened.

Jack: He sure did.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: That’s a great note.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And it is interesting that, like, the Hunter Exam doesn’t really know what kind of Hunter you’re going to be—and in fact, they offer a variety of sort of different kinds of Hunters—but they do know that they’re about to award you a Hunter License, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And so they’re teaching so that they can give you that.

Keith: A get out of kill free card.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yes.

Keith: So, I think the first one's obvious. It's extreme endurance. Do you have the raw endurance to be a Hunter? Can you walk 100 miles in a row?

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Number two, when I was thinking about this, was really fun, which was like, let's pick a kind of Hunter that people will look down on and then show them that they can learn something relevant to them from that.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Right.

Keith: And they all failed. [laughs]

Sylvia: That is kind of the vibe. Yeah, that is— they did fail.

Keith: They all failed.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: 'Cause that's the hardest thing in real actual life, is taking stuff you've prejudged to be not worth your time and then showing, "Oh, actually, there's value all over the place."

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Anything else? Any other notes? I don't think there's any lesson in the last thing besides Hunters are cruel.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Netero teaches you that Hunters are cruel. They play fucked up games with your head. Although, also, that's what—

Sylvia: Play fucked up games, win fucked up prizes.

Keith: [laughs] I guess that's also what fucking Trick Tower does too.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Hunters will torture you, so do your best.

Sylvia: Enjoy. This is the life you've chosen.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Good luck. If you've made it this far.

Keith: Oh, cooperating, obviously, with other Hunters. That's the— oh, but only— not every group had that. Only their group had that, so I don't know.

Jack: Yeah, I wonder what the other ones were.

Keith: Yeah. We'll never know. That's a good bit of side media, writing other Hunters' from the Hunter Exam, writing their path through Trick Tower.

Sylvia: [laughs quietly] Not to make my second *Taskmaster* reference of the night, but they were just doing shit like “get all the toilet roll into this thing from a certain distance away.” [Keith and Jack laugh]

Keith: Well, you've been watching a lot of *Taskmaster*, so.

Sylvia: I got very depressed and watched a lot of that show, yeah.

Keith: Yeah. It's great.

Sylvia: Also chain bastard's in it. Really good.

Jack: I feel like “I got very depressed and watched a lot of *Taskmaster*” is like, that is a

classic British— you know, the rare commonality with British people.

Sylvia: I mean, you know.

Keith: That's why it's one of the biggest shows on the island. A lot of depressed people.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Uh, yeah. Yeah. It's true.

Sylvia: I also just, like, know a lot of European comedians 'cause of my family over there.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: So it's a lot easier to get into, 'cause it's like, oh yeah, my dad used to show me Dara Ó Briain clips. Sure.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I recognize this person. Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I have a similar thing just from, like, being into comedy.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Every season I'm like, "Oh yeah, I know those two. Those two I know."

Sylvia: Yeah. Anyway, somewhere Pockle is just, like, moving a bunch of flour to find some grapes [Keith laughs] and, like, having a miserable time. That's the type of shit I'm picturing for Trick Tower.

Keith: Big, strong recommendation from me for *Taskmaster New Zealand* seasons two and four, by the way.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: Oh, good.

Keith: It's a really good time. Season four, I think, is up there with some of the best seasons.

Sylvia: Wow.

Keith: The dynamic between their Alex and their Greg is, like, totally different and very, um...

Jack: They didn't just carbon copy it? That's so interesting.

Keith: No. Their Alex is, like, pretty similar. His name is Paul. His name is Paul Williams.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And Jeremy Wells is their Greg, and he's, like, very stern and austere and, like, statuesque. It changes a lot. The casts are really good also. They stole— stole. I don't know who makes the tasks every week. I know Alex does a lot of them for the British show, but I don't know if he's using New Zealand as, like, a testbed for tasks, but... [Sylvia laughs] But a lot of tasks that were on New Zealand first then ended up in the UK, so part of me is like, [Sylvia: Oh.] "Ooh, the New Zealand writers are making some really good tasks, and then they're taking those for the UK one when they work well."

Sylvia: That's fucked up.

Jack: The British do that.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, no, that is a very British thing to do.

Keith: They're colonizing New Zealand again, comedically. [Sylvia and Keith laugh]

Movies [2:02:34]

Jack: Next question.

Keith: Where—? I lost my place. Okay, there we go.

Jack: Question. Albedo asks, “Skipping the movie?”

Keith: Yes. No.

Sylvia: Yeah, probably.

Keith: Kind of.

Sylvia: Eh...

Keith: People asked us a lot, so the reason why we haven't engaged with any of the movies is because they came out after the 2011 series finished [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] and contain spoilers for it.

Sylvia: That was the main thing, right?

Keith: Yes, right.

Sylvia: Which is just like...

Keith: Characters are in it that wouldn't be, and you know, it just—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: It also doesn't feel right to me. I just have this kind of brain, where I'm like, watch it in the order it came out. Don't watch it in the order—

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Don't watch it in in-universe chronological order. Watch it in the order of real life.

Jack: Right. Yeah.

Dre: Not the first time you go through, yeah.

Keith: Yes.

Jack: We might watch it at the end. I don't know. I'm not gonna promise that. It might be an interesting experience for me, to see the ways in which they have folded these things together.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know, characters showing up earlier. But that's not something I'm interested in doing until we're done.

Keith: Right, yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: I'm definitely interested in watching them for the show. We'll get there when we get there and see how it goes, but yeah, I have nothing against them. It just is something that makes more sense to look at after we're finished.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. I'm also really curious about— this is actually an argument for watching it not— watching it at the end. It's an argument for watching it at the end.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I want to know what *Hunter × Hunter* feels like in an unbroken, like, hour and a half.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Rather than being structured for, like, 23 minute episodes. I don't know what that's going to be like.

Keith: And I'm really curious about Kurapika's story, so I do want to know what's in

there.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, there's new Kurapika stuff?

Keith: Yeah, one of them is, like, fully, you know, Kurapika prequel.

Sylvia: Something funny earlier is that an earlier question said “Zushi movie,” and I know Zushi’s in one of the movies.

Keith: Oh, that’s funny.

Dre: Oh.

Jack: Whoa.

Sylvia: That’s, like, one of the only things I know, because I got spoiled on that when we were doing Heavens Arena, and I thought I could just look at a wiki page, 'cause I've seen the show before. [laughs]

Jack: But you couldn't. [laughs]

Sylvia: Eh, it’s like, it’s a non-canon spoiler, so I'll take it.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Okay. Nice and easy.

Keith: Yeah.

Zoldyck Family [2:04:54]

Keith: “You said in the Media Club Plus episode that Illumi might be the biggest freak of the Zoldyck family. What’s your collective Zoldyck freak ranking from most to least normal?”

Sylvia: Oh.

Keith: “Particularly for Jack, considering the Zoldycks at this point in the story. Thanks so much for an awesome podcast. I look forward to every episode.” That’s from Rowan. Thank you, Rowan. I think this is— for me, this is easy. I’ve just got it.

Sylvia: I feel like I’ve got an order too.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, same.

Keith: I would love it if we all have the same order.

Jack: Okay, I’m just gonna say the order.

Dre: Are we going starting from...?

Sylvia: From most or to least?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Starting with least, going to most.

Sylvia: Okay.

Dre: Okay.

Jack: Least freak or least normal?

Keith: Least freak.

Dre: Okay.

Jack: Okay. Um...

Keith: Zeno.

Jack: Least freak: Killua.

Keith: Oh, sorry. I was, in my mind, excluding Killua. But yes, Killua’s the least freak.

Jack: Then it's Kalluto, for me. Don't know much about him. He went on that mission with Illumi, but he's just a little kid.

Keith: Just a little kid. Creepily stands with his mom, and...

Jack: Yeah, but also seems to show signs of, like, being curious about things outside her orbit or control.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Then Zeno, then Milluki, then...Silva, then...um...Kal—

Sylvia: Kikyo?

Jack: What's the mother called? Kikyo.

Keith: Kikyo.

Jack: And then Illumi is the most freaky.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Jack, we are the exact same, just swap Silva and Milluki.

Jack: Oh, wow. Okay.

Dre: I think Milluki is more of a freak because of his fucking gooner cavern that he has in his bedroom. [Sylvia and Keith laugh loudly]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: But I mean, compared to *Hunter × Hunter* freaks, that's fairly normal, right?
[Sylvia laughs]

Keith: Well, he makes mosquito bombs.

Jack: He does. [laughs] He does.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He's got a very good plan.

Sylvia: Sorry, you accidentally implied that gooning is very normalized in the *Hunter* × *Hunter* world just now. [Dre, Keith, and Jack laugh]

Jack: You know what I meant.

Sylvia: And if you don't know what that is, don't google it.

Dre: Yeah, don't.

Jack: Or do. I can't— you know, I'm not the boss of you.

Sylvia: No, it's for fans of the Arsenal Football Club, innit?

Jack: Yeah, innit. [laughter]

Keith: Wait, we're talking about Anne Hathaway now?

Jack: Wait, I don't get that.

Sylvia: Oh yeah, no, she's [laughing] famously a gooner.

Keith: She's a famous gooner.

Jack: Oh my god. Okay, look.

Dre: What?

Jack: Keith and Sylvi, what are your favorite— the freaks. Order them.

Keith: Okay. Sylvi, you can go first.

Sylvia: I think Killua is my least of the freaks. You know, it's pretty similar to your order, Jack. I feel like I probably would have Milluki a little lower, just because I think I have met Millukis before, minus the bombing, you know?

Keith: Bombing is an important part.

Jack: Mm, mm-hmm.

Sylvia: The bombing's a huge part, but like, [**Dre:** Yeah.] it's a sliding scale here, right?
[Jack laughs]

Keith: Yeah, sure.

Sylvia: And I think Illumi's always at the top. Kikyo's up there. I also think that...hmm.
Yeah, no, actually, I don't—

Keith: Where are we putting Tommy Pickles?

Sylvia: Tommy Pickles is the freakiest of freaks, 'cause he's a theoretical— [Keith laughs quietly] It's Schrodinger's freak right now, you know?

Keith: Yeah, Schrodinger's freak.

Jack: What is that guy called? Hang on, what are the names of the Zoldycks we're missing? There's Zeno's grandfather, who's, like, 6000 years old?

Sylvia: I think I do know the name.

Keith: I used to know the name, but I just think of him as Tommy Pickles now.

Sylvia: Can I say it if I think I know it? It's not a spoiler?

Jack: Yeah, I don't think it's a spoiler.

Sylvia: I think it's Maha?

Jack: And is there another kid?

Sylvia: Uh...

Dre: Mm... [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: No. How many people are missing? Is it just the one?

Keith: There's definitely people missing.

Jack: Okay.

Dre: Sylvi, you're right. Maha is that person's name.

Sylvia: I thought it was.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Well, there's a lot. There's, like...yeah, I know that there's people that are in the manga, and then there's— but I don't think that that's Tommy Pickles. I think that's someone else.

Sylvia: Oh, okay. I thought that was, like— 'cause I—

Keith: And it's not Maha.

Sylvia: Yeah. Okay. But Maha Zoldyck is a thing, right? That's not just— I didn't just Inception that name?

Keith: Oh, Maha is Tommy Pickles.

Dre: No, yeah, no.

Keith: Yeah, you're right. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: YEAH! [Jack laughs]

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, you nailed it. Maha is Tommy Pickles. Sorry, but there is someone else also that's from the manga who I won't talk about.

Sylvia: Okay. Well, listen, we take those.

Keith: Okay. Here's my— I've been thinking a lot about this. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Keith: I've been thinking a lot about this, and I might be wrong.

Sylvia: I've been thinking a lot about this.

Keith: I'm putting myself out on a ledge here, willing to be wrong. Least freak: Zeno.
Number two: Killua.

Dre: I see it. I see it.

Sylvia: No, you know what? I was really thinking—

Dre: I see it.

Sylvia: Like, I feel like Zeno's kind of normal.

Keith: Zeno's kind of normal.

Sylvia: He just murders people a lot.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: But then I have something later that makes that not make sense, but I'm just gonna roll with it.

Sylvia: Okay.

Keith: Next is Kalluto, then it's Milluki, and then it's Kikyo, and then it's Silva as the most freak, because he's the architect—

Dre: Over Illumi?

Keith: Oh, and then Illumi, sorry. Again, Illumi's the de facto lowest place.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: Silva is one above Illumi, because Silva is the architect of this nightmare, and he deserves the blame.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: No, Zeno's the architect of the nightmare, right?

Keith: But see, that's why it doesn't—

Jack: The Zoldyck family predates...

Keith: But then you watch them in action, and Zeno seems to have a really good work/life balance.

Dre: Yeah. [Keith laughs] It also feels like Zeno...

Sylvia: You're not wrong.

Dre: Zeno, like, does not fucking like Milluki, it seems like.

Keith: Doesn't like Milluki. Doesn't fuck with Illumi's whole deal.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: God, I bet he thinks Hisoka is a real— Hisoka. I bet he thinks Killua is a real brat for, like...

Keith: I'm kind of going out on a limb and being like, Zeno hates his son and the way his son deals with his family.

Jack: Interesting. Despite being his—

Keith: Which is why Killua is everyone's favorite. He's the mom's favorite, because she's a boy mom.

Dre: Mm-hmm. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: He's the dad's favorite, 'cause he's the strongest, and he's Zeno's favorite, because Killua's the most normal.

Dre: Yeah, 100%.

Jack: It's interesting, then, that Zeno and Silva are, like, work partners.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: They are the ones that team up together. I keep thinking about that one Silva conversation we had and how good it was.

Keith: I know.

Jack: Such sharp singular character writing.

Keith: I've never seen Handsome Squidward so sharp. [Keith and Dre laugh]

Dre: Jesus christ.

Side Characters [2:11:30]

Jack: Okay. Mark asks, "Which side characters would you like to see fleshed out more?" That's a good question. Um...

Sylvia: Basho.

Keith: Basho.

Dre: Oh, Basho! Great answer.

Keith: Zushi.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Zushi, also great answer.

Sylvia: Because we got a lot of Melody, but I'd love some more Basho. Zushi would be

great. I'd love, like, a proper canon catch-up with Zushi.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: 'Cause I want to know what Togashi has in mind for Zushi, not necessarily what, like, a movie team had, 'cause I don't know how involved he is in that, right?

Keith: Sure. Yeah, same. I have no idea.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, it's interesting because Zushi is the archetype of, like, patient, studious, not really an adept but working through it martial artist, and his role in Togashi's deconstruction was to be blown past by the other characters as they dangerously, violently, you know, call for power. I would really be interested to see Togashi be asked to write a, like, patient martial arts story, where, like, Zushi was his protagonist. You know, how does he take that archetype apart?

Keith: I want to see what Tonpa's doing the other 340 days of the year.

Sylvia: Oh my god. Yeah, you're right.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Yeah, he's not dead. He's kicking out there somewhere, you know?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: What the fuck is Tonpa like in real life?

Sylvia: He's like you for Run Button— Subscribe to Run Button May Or Else. He's training every day of the year. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Dre: Yeah, every fucking day. Yeah.

Keith: Coming up with new juices to give to people.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Right, god. I bet he's— how often is the Hunter Exam?

Keith: Once a year.

Jack: Yearly? Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: So, I mean, he's probably coming up on— you know, time's been moving. Tonpa's probably getting ready to go again.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: What a funny character.

Keith: Yeah, would love to see some more Tonpa.

Jack: I'd like to see Green Green Jellybean Man.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Who's our ninja friend? What's his name?

Keith: Hanzo. I also thought about Hanzo.

Jack: Hanzo.

Dre: Hanzo, yeah.

Keith: That's why I thought about Tonpa, because I was like, "Maybe Hanzo."

Dre: Slice of life Hanzo anime would also be a fun, like, side thing.

Sylvia: He'd be a great, like, gag manga protagonist.

Dre: Yeah, for sure.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: 'Cause he makes you sick.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: [retches] Gag manga, blech.

Sylvia: Gross.

Keith: Gross manga.

Sylvia: Stop making any more of these noises. [Keith laughs] Yeah.

Dre: Oh, why not? Why not?

Sylvia: 'Cause people have to listen to this and enjoy it, hopefully. Did anybody say Zepile? Because I feel like Zepile could have some, like, fun *Ace Attorney*-ass stuff.

Keith: Oh yeah, I want to see Zepile's *Antiques Roadshow*. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Oh, man.

Sylvia: Oh, Kortopi and Bonolenov are here. [Jack and Keith laugh]

Keith: They're here a lot.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Why are they in every episode? They're not part of the official cast.

Dre: Why does Kortopi gotta touch everything for so long? Eh, whatever. It's probably fine.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: That's really good.

Nen [2:14:17]

Jack: Okay. And then I think our final question. This is a great question.

Keith: This is a great question. There's a couple P.S.s here too.

Jack: It ends on a really great P.S.

Keith: Yeah. I'll read this one, Jack, unless you wanted to?

Jack: No, yeah, go right ahead.

Keith: “Hello, Hunter × Hunters. [Dre laughs quietly] Something that always interested me when hypothesizing about Nen is thinking about the implications of Basho’s Hatsu. He writes a haiku to produce a result, like his punch making something burst into flame, but according to him, the quality of the haiku dictates the strength of the outcome, which is why he gets annoyed that the fire barely burns through the chair. This has always driven me crazy, because that means that Nen and the laws that govern it recognize an extremely subjective element like the quality of poetry.”

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: “Like, does Nen have an artistic taste? I know that Demon World Theory is honestly well built to take on this element, [Sylvia laughs quietly] but it makes me think about what other ways Nen is subjective and what ways Nen has its own perspective. Does it have a sense of justice? Is there a chance of negotiation? I wonder if there are any other Nen abilities that we've seen that have or could imagine having a subjective element included. Thanks for making the podcast. *Hunter × Hunter* is one of my favorite things of all time, and I've been so excited to hear y'all's thoughts on each new story beat.”

Sylvia: Aww.

Keith: This is from Poloma. "P.S. I was really lucky to be able to visit the retrospective exhibit of Togashi's work in Japan recently, and there's a lot of cool info and fun bits of manga art of iconic moments. If you want pictures of the book I have with stuff like a full Nen chart, let me know. It definitely has things that are spoilers, but it's also just really neat." Yes, I would love to see that.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I looked at a lot of that stuff that was online when that happened, and it seemed awesome.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: "P.P.S. Togashi literally just announced that he's starting work on pages again."

Sylvia: Yay.

Keith: "I'm hoping that's a sign of him in good health, so very auspicious." That's great news.

Jack: Yes!

Keith: I hope he's doing well.

Dre: Yeah, that's incredible news.

Jack: That's great news, Togashi. I hope he's feeling good.

Keith: I also hope that it means that he's doing well and not just that he's decided to work anyway.

Dre: I know. Yeah.

Sylvia: Same. I...please take it slow, man.

Keith: He's taken the time. We know that he knows how to take the time.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: So, let's hope that it's good.

Dre: Pour one out again for Akira Toriyama.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Also, happy recent birthday to Togashi.

Keith: Oh.

Dre: Oh.

Sylvia: He has the same birthday as my mom.

Keith: Happy birthday, Togashi. Wow, that's great. [Sylvia laughs quietly]

Dre: Wow!

Jack: How old is Togashi? He's in his...

Sylvia: He's 58.

Dre: 58.

Jack: Late 50s?

Keith: Yeah. Oh, yeah, late 50s, yeah.

Jack: Good work, Togashi.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Stay healthy, bro.

Jack: Okay, so.

Keith: This is a great question. My gut instinct right away about, like, what have we seen that's subjective. I think that Kurapika's anxiety about whether his own Nen dagger would pierce his heart when making the law about only using it on Nen.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I think that that is subjective.

Sylvia: I was gonna say that too.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: That's, like, the prime example that comes to mind that we've seen already.

Keith: Yeah. 'Cause it really could go either way, and about, like, how Nen works, like, why is Nen subjective, what's governing it. To me, it could be that Kurapika's anxiety about it is what makes it potentially true.

Dre: Yeah. I would also say— like, that was my kind of theory to explain this for Basho, is that that is— the quality of it has more to say about, like, what Basho thinks of his own work and then that, you know, enables him to better, you know, pull more of his aura out, because he's like, "Oh yeah, this is sick."

Keith: And that's an interesting point, Dre, because what it means is that it's able to reflect your real feelings to you, which is something that, you know, [**Jack:** Yeah.] is not always easily accessible, your real feelings about something.

Jack: Although it could be...it could also be compromised, right?

Keith: Right.

Jack: It could be your subjective or confused or angry or weird feelings about, like, I feel this— you know, I think— I'm deliberately not answering this question by talking about

Demon World Theory, because I think that Poloma is right. Demon World Theory is, like, a methodology for thinking about this.

Keith: Yeah, the demon reads your poem and then says, you know, “check.”

Jack: Yeah, there's, like, a realm of aesthetics in the Demon World. We've gone over this. But like, on the terms that the show presents it, Nen is sort of—and correct me if I'm wrong here—sort of like soul energy, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And so, I think that it is subject to a lot of the other conversations and questions and, you know, ponderings that people historically have had about the soul, vis-à-vis how it relates to yourself, how accessible your soul is to others or whether it is a sort of, like, purely internal sort of solipsistic thing, how the soul relates to art, you know, whether or not art-making is drawing from some sort of, like, objective truth of your soul, and I think that that is probably the method by which I would try and account for these things in the language of the show, right? Where it is that Nen has access to either the truth about what you are actually feeling. That's, you know, Keith and Dre saying this is a thing that's inaccessible to people sometimes. Or it is sort of like a flailing connection to how you believe you are feeling about a certain thing.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know, you see the Nen working in that way.

Keith: Which is also the Kurapika thing about the anxiety over the Nen dagger.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. You know, insofar as historical and philosophical and artistic writing and thinking about the soul has always been moving in these sort of magical or semi-magical realms, I think that, you know, Nen and the soul sort of move just as easily in thinking about those questions.

Keith: I think art is either good or bad and the ground [Sylvia laughs] underneath your feet can tell whether something sucks or is awesome.

Sylvia: The Earth can feel it when you draw a shitty drawing.

Keith: The Earth can feel it. Yeah. And I think just the Earth decides. The soul of the Earth goes, “Bad. Bad poem.”

Jack: No fire for you. [Keith laughs] Just a small amount of flame.

Keith: Slightly toasted wood. Any other thoughts about this or any other questions that we missed? We didn't miss any, but...

Sylvia: My only thought about that last one is that I think it's something that's gonna come back up again, probably.

Keith: Sure.

Sylvia: Like, I feel like just with the fact that we are— I don't think it's a spoiler to say there will be a breadth of Nen abilities throughout the rest of this show, [Jack laughs] and I'm sure that this will apply to at least one of them.

Keith: Yeah. The other thing, you know, that that reminded me of, 'cause I'm just, like, tallying through Nen stuff that we haven't seen yet in my head and then going like, in a way, this is kind of how a lot of Nen works, and like, you know, in some way, you're gathering energy from inside your body and, like, putting it out of you. In another sense, like, if I think about, like, the Force from *Star Wars*, you know, Yoda's thing from the movies is like, it is your inability to manifest this that is the issue. It's not about, you know, like, muscles in your arms or you can't do this. You can do it. You just have to then go and do it. And Nen works a little bit like this too sometimes, where it's like— or it appears to, anyway. Like, are you leveling up a meter? Are you gaining experience? Are you getting stronger? Are you— is there more energy in your body than there used to be? Like, or are you just better at thinking through this process? And that has some parallels with, like, writing a poem and feeling that it was good and then using that poem [Jack: Right.] to burn a chair properly. I don't know. This is, you know, this is the fun

kind of squishy part of this stuff, where it's like...

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, for sure.

Keith: We will never get real answers about these, and that's fine, but it is fun to think about.

Outro [2:22:45]

Jack: And that's all our questions for now.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know, you are welcome to send questions to us on Cohost at [@friends-table](#) or to our email at friendsatthetable@gmail.com. We probably won't do another sort of questions episode for a bit. We got some *Hunter × Hunter* to watch.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: But, you know, we're there, and we'll do this again.

Keith: I'm so excited to watch Greed Island. It's been too long since I watched *Hunter × Hunter*.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: I'm so excited.

Keith: Did you like the first episode that you saw?

Jack: Yeah, I did. Although... We can't talk about this. [Keith laughs]

Dre: No. No.

Sylvia: We can't! I want to be part of it!

Jack: We can't. We can't. We can't talk about this. We can't talk about this. I'll just say—I'll say—I'll say two things I've seen in the title sequence, and then we can't comment on it. We have to move on. I've seen people pulling item cards out of a big book, and I've seen a horse with a...trumpet for a nose? Moving on.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Great. Anything else before we go? I think that's everything for me.

Jack: This show's such a delight to make, and we're able to make it thanks to your support at friendsatthetable.cash. I mean, I realize that when I say it like that, it sounds like a plug, and if you have been thinking about supporting us on Friends at the Table to get a bunch of extremely cool bonuses. If you like us talking and you're unfamiliar with Friends at the Table, you can check out the Clapcast, which is sort of—it's not really behind the scenes. It's how we talk when we're hanging out and warming up before recording anything. You might also want to check out Friends at the Table. We have a season called Bluff City that you can jump into with no sort of prior experience, and it rules. It is about a strange mirror of Atlantic City in New Jersey. It's about casinos and heists and people trying to get by.

There is also Media Club Plus specific bonuses. You can listen to two little arcs. First we watched *Dragon Ball*. We watched the Tien Shinhan at the World Martial Arts Tournament arc of *Dragon Ball*. It was a huge amount of fun. And then we watched... [Jack and Sylvia laugh quietly] We watched one sort of cogent section of JoJo, [Sylvia laughs] in which we saw an episode about the...what are they called? The...

Sylvia: The Nijimura Brothers?

Keith: The Nijimura Brothers, yeah.

Jack: The Nijimura Brothers. And then we also saw an episode about— was it just the

three Nijimura Brothers in that first chunk?

Keith: Yeah, three Nijimura Brothers episodes in that.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Then we saw an episode called “Let’s Go Eat Italian Food”.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: That’s in the second slot. It’s one of the strangest episodes of television I’ve ever seen.

Dre: Sure is.

Jack: For reasons that I won’t go into, because you’ll have to find out for yourself. And then we watched a really scary double bill about a serial killer.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yep.

Jack: Called...what was that called, Sylvi? It was “He Just Wants a Quiet Life” or something.

Sylvia: “Yoshikage Kira Just Wants to Live a Quiet Life” or “Just Wants to Live Quietly”. It’s one of the two.

Keith: Could be both.

Jack: It was great.

Sylvia: Yeah, I think it’s translated differently depending on the localization is why I’m not sure about it.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: [cross] The reason I mention—

Keith: [cross] But I liked these episodes so much that I watched the whole season, and the ending is so good. You know, I gotta say, like, the first half of the season is, like, really really great, you know, kind of mostly episode-of-the-week [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] shonen anime stuff that all was awesome, and then the second half is like, what if *Death Note* was good? [Jack laughs]

Dre: Wow.

Sylvia: Wow. We need to— hold on.

Dre: All right, this has been Media Club Plus, everybody! [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: *Death Note* is a foundational text.

Keith: Some buildings have bad foundations.

Sylvia: That's fine, [Jack laughs] but those boys got handcuffed together, and that's part of my heritage.

Jack: But thank you for supporting us in order to make this show possible. It is a delight every time I get to sit down and watch *Hunter × Hunter* for my job.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I'm having a great time doing this. I can't believe we are nearly halfway through [**Keith:** Yeah.] in both directions.

Dre: Wow.

Jack: It feels like we have both done way more and way less than that.

Sylvia: It's weird, right?

Jack: I sort of can't figure out which it is. Yeah.

Keith: It feels like we haven't watched that much *Hunter × Hunter*, but it's also hard to think of not doing the show.

Jack: What arcs have we done? We've done the exam. We've done the little interlude with the Zoldycks.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: We've done Heavens Arena.

Keith: Yep.

Jack: We've done...

Dre: Yorknew.

Jack: Yorknew City. That's it.

Keith: Yeah. That's it.

Jack: Yeah, wow, and we're about to embark on Greed Island.

[["The Boy in Green"](#) begins playing]

Jack: They are not being coy about what this next season is. They know where we're going.

Keith: Yeah. Unless you're being Togashi's Tricked.

[song plays out]