

The Stupidest Man In The World - Hunter x Hunter ep. 10-12:

Media Club Plus S01E04

Transcriber: robotchangeling

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Introduction

[[“The Boy in Green”](#) by Jack de Quidt plays]

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. My name is Keith Carberry. You can find me on [Twitter](#) and on [Cohost](#) at @KeithJCarberry. You can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton. You can find Friends at the Table in your podcast app of choice. You can find the Friends at the Table Patreon, which is the Patreon that makes this show possible, at friendsatthetable.cash. Sylvi Bullet?

Sylvia: Oh, hi. I'm Sylvia. You can find me everywhere at @sylvibullet, and you can check out the show's TikTok at [@friends_table](#).

Keith: Jack de Quidt?

Jack: Hi, you can find me on Twitter at— no! I'm not doing that anymore!

Dre: Oh. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: You can find me on Cohost at [@jdq](#), and you can buy all the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#). I would also like to shout out our incredible cover art by Annie Johnston-Glick. You can find her website at [anniejg.com](#) or you can find her on Twitter at [@dancynrew](#), like teen detective Nancy Drew but the letters are swapped.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: That's funny. Why are you talking about that today? Why are you talking about that on episode four, today?

Jack: Because the process of making a podcast means that we don't exactly know who is going to be doing things for the podcast until we are some distance into it, and we are having a lot of very exciting conversations with Annie.

Keith: Yeah. I'm also not really using Twitter very much. I'm looking at it, but I haven't posted. I've been posting a lot on Cohost. It's very fun, so you should follow us there and the show there at [@friends-table](#). Almost all the stuff that you would expect to find on the Friends at the Table Twitter has been coming out on the Friends at the Table Cohost, kind of. I'll get better about it. And Andrew Lee Swan.

Dre: Hey. You can find me on our Twitch channel most Monday evenings at [twitch.tv/friendsatthetable](#).

Summary [0:02:36]

Keith: How are you all feeling about this set of episodes?

Sylvia: These episodes fuck so hard.

Dre: Yeah, they're pretty all right.

Keith: Yeah. These are pretty all right episodes.

Sylvia: These episodes rule.

Keith: Jack?

Jack: Yeah, this is great. I mean, we have three episodes that...it speaks to the quality of the show, and I am so interested to see how this kind of structural idea is developed, that we are still in this fucking fight in this tower, and yet each episode introduces some new fun wrinkle to the fight. A less interesting show would have just been like: fight someone hand to hand, and it's a new person each episode, and we're gonna be here for five episodes.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: But the fact that every time—

Keith: And Togashi has done that before, and it's thrilling! Oh my god, is it good!

Jack: Oh, is it still thrilling? [laughs]

Keith: It's thrilling, yes. [laughs]

Jack: The fact that we...every time we come back, we are viewing this problem from a different angle. It's great. And we get several problems sort of per episode in this chunk, and they are each overcome in really fun ways.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, I like these episodes a lot.

Keith: There's a lot of stuff that happens in these episodes. Like, the stuff per minute is pretty high.

Dre: It's dense.

Keith: These are dense. But we start off with Leorio sort of continuing to be the main victim of Trick Tower, [Sylvia laughs] by, at every turn, refusing to keep his cool and exploding at every little thing.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: In the last episode or in the last set of episodes that we watched, Kurapika absolutely destroys the blue freak, Majtani, and in this episode, Leorio's new opponent, who is a gambling weirdo who reveals herself to be a girl, and that doesn't cause any problems at all.

Dre: No.

Keith: She says they can't proceed until it's— until the deathmatch is decided. Eagle-eared view— mm, eagle-eared viewers will have noticed that actually Majtani did give up. He literally says, **[Dre: Yeah!]** like, "I surrender. I give up," or something, but they're literally doing everything they can to stall for time. They're tricking. They're lying. That's part of the thing, I guess. Whatever. Anyway, Kurapika refuses to kill an unconscious person, so they spend hours waiting until Leorio sort of— sort of heroically forces the issue with a couple really well placed bets, and it seems like it's going so great, and then he absolutely throws it all away in a couple of massive blunders and revealing himself to be kind of a creep and kind of a weirdo and the worst guy in the room **[Sylvia laughs]** and everyone's mad. Everyone except Gon, who didn't really understand what was happening. **[Jack laughs]** Oh, yeah, did I say that the thing they were gambling with was the hours that they have to complete Trick Tower?

Jack: You did not.

Keith: Because that's what they were doing. Leorio loses them 50 hours, 50 out of their 72 hours.

Sylvia: And in turn, the prisoners receive 50 hours off their sentence.

Keith: 50 years.

Sylvia: 50 years, sorry.

Dre: 50 years. For every hour, it's one year for them.

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: So, he loses them 50 hours plus the time it took to play the game and then minus—I'm being very fair here to Leorio—minus whatever time that he saved by forcing the issue at the very beginning.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: About Majtani's unconsciousness, yes.

Keith: Right, yeah, because they really did wait for hours and hours for some sort of change, and there was nothing. Oh, he was faking it, of course.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Next up in the tournament—because it's now two to two, and this is their last chance—is Killua. Great last chance, I think, but Leorio vocally and repeatedly doubts him. Killua's up against an extremely vascular sad-looking serial killer slash mass murderer. He looks like a poet to me. [Keith and Jack laugh quietly]

Dre: Yeah, no.

Keith: He looks like a—

Dre: That is very true. [laughs]

Keith: Yeah, he looks like such— he has the most sensitive kind of empathetic face I've ever seen in a cartoon, but he has killed 150 people. I'll give someone else a chance to describe what happens in this one later, but with 60 hours remaining, they have to go into a small apartment to chill for about 50 hours.

Jack: They win. We'll talk about how later, but—

Dre: Right, yeah.

Keith: Yes, they win.

Jack: Killua wins.

Keith: Right. They have to— they spend 50 hours being sort of weirdly domestic and having a good time in this little apartment.

Dre: Well...

Keith: Oh, well, obviously—

Dre: Some people have a good time.

Keith: I think everyone's having a good time as long as they're okay with fulfilling their role, where obviously Kurapika and Leorio are Gon and Killua's mom and dad.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: And Tonpa's their weird weird uncle that everyone hates. But they have nine hours left to pass the final— or pass the rest of the tower. They spend almost all that in a very quick montage where they hit the final task, a three pass or they all fail sort of scenario. It's more complicated than that, but we'll get into it. They make a really big deal of this and get into a big fight, and we'll talk about that when we hit it, I think.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, but we come to the conclusion where...and we'll talk about how, as we get there, all of our team have escaped the Trick Tower and reached the bottom.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. With seconds on the clock, I should say.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Like, I think they really had, like, 12 seconds left or something. And after Trick Tower, 24 remain. 25 made it down, and one of them died down there.

Dre: Literally died as he, like, walked out of the exit.

Keith: Yeah. Does anybody remember what the Blowjob Brothers say?

Sylvia: They said, uh: better to quit and survive than win and— er, succeed and die? Or something like that?

Keith: Yeah, they're just like—

Sylvia: I don't know the exact words.

Keith: Yeah, they say something like, "Better to quit and try again next year than pass and die."

Dre: You know what? I think I agree with them.

Keith: I think I agree, from the brothers who are multiple time losers at this point, but they seem like they're happy in life.

Jack: They're alive.

Keith: They have a good sibling relationship.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Shoutout to the brothers three.

Keith: And they're alive.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: No sympathy for the dead.

Jack: No sympathy for the dead is shown by anybody in this show, and I think this is a great place to start.

Keith: Yeah.

Episode 10 [0:09:18]

Jack: Because Kurapika will not kill an unconscious person. Kurapika is much where we left him at the end of the last series. He's slouched against the wall, having dealt with this, you know, stressful and traumatic encounter with a fake Phantom Troupe member.

Keith: [crosstalk] Oh, yeah.

Dre: [crosstalk] Mm-hmm.

Keith: I didn't put it together that he was still sitting from having sort of collapsed after the fake Phantom fight.

Jack: Yeah. And Leorio comes over and says, "Go in there and just, uh...just, uh, kill him! Just kill him."

Keith: Just kill him.

Jack: Just, uh, break his neck or something. And Kurapika says—

Dre: Yeah. Quit being a big baby.

Jack: Yeah. And Kurapika says, "I'm not going to do that." And Kurapika, as usual, seems to have their head screwed onto their shoulders right. Their reason for not doing this does seem to be: I'm done, I'm exhausted, and I don't want to go and kill an unconscious person.

Keith: Right.

Jack: And not only does Leorio disagree with this, he shows no reaction whatsoever to the thought that killing an unconscious person is bad, and neither does Killua, who says, "Yeah, I'll kill him. Just, uh, yeah, I'll go in there and kill him, no problem."

Keith: There's a moment where Gon is sort of gently complaining when Killua offers to kill Majtani that is very sad and also very sympathetic. He's just like, [sad voice] "Killua,

don't kill him." [laughs]

Dre: "Aw, come on, man!"

Jack: But it is notable that we have two out of our four sort of protagonists are really...they completely no-sell the thought of executing an unconscious person.

Keith: Yeah. So, just to be— I should say: I don't think that you should kill an unconscious person. But let's do a minute of devil's advocate here. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Jack: Okay. Yeah, absolutely. Wait, Keith, let me...I'm just grabbing my little egg timer.

Keith: Okay.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Oh, great. I'm glad that you have only a minute here. Great.

Jack: You ready, Keith?

Keith: Yep.

Jack: Your time begins.

Keith: So, this— the blue freak Majtani specifically said, "Let's do a deathmatch."

Dre: That's true.

Keith: And then had absolutely zero to back it up with.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: But I would not put it past this guy killing any one of these people if he actually could. He is pretending to be passed out, and he is a piece of shit. None of them know that. They all think he's genuinely passed out. But, you know, a deathmatch is a deathmatch. Don't agree to a deathmatch then.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: No one this whole time ever argues—

Dre: Not just agree to but propose it.

Keith: Oh, did Kurapika propose it?

Dre: No!

Keith: Right.

Dre: Majtani did.

Keith: Oh, no, I'm saying Kurapika should not have agreed to a deathmatch if, like, this is the— like, Kurapika's, you know, playing 4D chess over here.

Dre: Yeah. Sure.

Keith: You know, if you're not prepared for this scenario, which is, I think, kind of— if you run it a couple times in your head, this is kind of an obvious scenario for—

[timer beeps]

Jack: Sorry, time's up, Keith.

Keith: Okay.

Dre: Oh, okay.

Keith: I'll finish my sentence here. This sort of an obvious scenario for this kind of setup of the trying to waste time thing, and it's something I think they clearly learned from the mistake of the first guy who allowed Tonpa to surrender.

Jack: Yes.

Keith: So, like, I think that they have— I think the prisoners sort of learned this was a tactic, and so for Kurapika to have not learned that this was a tactic, to agree to, without

argument, a deathmatch, and then to not follow through on it...

Jack: Mm.

Keith: You know. I can see why— in the middle of Squid Games, I can see why **[Dre:** Sure.] this would be very frustrating for Leorio, who's already been sort of needled by Trick Tower over and over again.

Jack: Yes. Yes. It also reveals something interesting, which is that it seems that Kurapika has not killed a person before.

Keith: Hmm. But his life's plan has a lot to do with killing a lot of people.

Dre: That's true.

Jack: Which is fascinating and I think is a fulcrum that these kinds of, like, righteous revenge stories often move around, right?

Keith: Right.

Jack: Where like, the...I don't think it's an unusual sort of facet of this kind of plotline, and I think the reason that we see this often is because it works well.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know, you have a character who has turned the whole focus of their life towards violent revenge on people who killed people they love, and part of that step is they have to come to terms with the fact that they are going to have to enact similar violent acts.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: And I think the place you put a character to make that interesting is either: doing violent acts is nothing to them, **[Keith:** Yeah.] so how are they different from their opponent? Or they have not acted violently, and they have to come to terms with this.

Keith: And I think that we absolutely should be keeping that tension with us with Kurapika, this sort of thing of like, “I don't like the violence, but I'm setting myself up for a life of it,” because I think it's no big shock that this will come back up.

Jack: So, they propose a vote, and the vote—

Keith: [laughs] This is so funny. Oh, this is so—

Dre: God.

Keith: And then Tonpa—

Dre: No, there's no “they”.

Keith: Right.

Dre: There's no “*they* propose a vote.”

Keith: Right.

Dre: Leorio screams, [mocking] “Well, fine, we're gonna do majority rules!” [Jack laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: This is so great. And he tries to use his little watch, and what happens?

Keith: Doesn't work.

Dre: Uh, nothing.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Doesn't work.

Jack: Why does nothing work? 'Cause this is—

Dre: Because only the prison warden can say when it's majority rules.

Jack: Yeah. At which point, Leorio says, “Well, okay. Fine, we'll vote with the weird

bracelets that God gave us, our human hands. [Keith and Dre laugh] Time for a vote.”
And the vote goes—

Keith: We’ve got democracy built right into these bodies!

Jack: [laughs quietly] The vote goes exactly as you would expect, [**Dre:** Sure.] which is it is a four-one “don’t make Kurapika kill this guy,” [**Keith:** Well—] with Leorio being the “kill.”

Keith: I think that you’re right, but there is a slight twist on the four-one, because really what it feels like is one person votes and no one else engages at all.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: They just ignore that the vote is happening.

Jack: Oh, yes, it’s great. What happens is Leorio says, “Raise your hand if you think, basically, Kurapika should go and kill that unconscious guy,” [laughs quietly] and then raises his hand, and nothing happens.

Keith: There’s a real lack of, like, moving even one step ahead, of, like, what happens when you force by vote Kurapika to execute someone? [laughs]

Jack: Yes. Yes. But I do think that this is— so, these episodes really do show...I want to talk a little bit about this vote, because something kind of incredible happens. Tonpa, again, reveals himself to be a super interesting character.

Keith: Oh, the Tonpa stuff is phenomenal.

Jack: But at the end of the—

Keith: Just, like, full exposition, sort of psychoanalysis.

Jack: Yeah. At the end of the last episode, you said to me, the three of you said, “Leorio’s up next. How do you think this is going to go?” [laugh quietly]

Dre: Huh?

Jack: And I said, “I think he’s gonna win, but he’s not gonna have a good time. [Sylvia laughs] I think it’s gonna be a real trial for Leorio.”

Keith: Do you remember the really funny joke that I made after you said that?

Jack: I don't. What did you say, Keith? [laughs quietly]

Keith: I said something that would only make sense if you had remembered exactly what happened, which is, “Or it could be the opposite, where he loses but has a very good time.”

Jack: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Hmm. [Keith laughs] Hmm.

Jack: We’ll talk about that as it happens, but I would like to say that these three episodes [laughs quietly] reveal Leorio not just to be a stupid man [Sylvia laughs quietly] but maybe the most stupid man.

Dre: Yep. Uh huh.

Sylvia: There’s...yeah.

Jack: The extent to which Leorio fucks up in these episodes is so monumentally entertaining.

Keith: It’s monumental. It’s monumental and monumentally entertaining.

Jack: And we kind of begin to enter this zone here, as he proposes a vote and then loses it and makes himself look like the goose. [Sylvia laughs quietly] And then Tonpa turns around, and we get a little, uh, the perspective—

Keith: Yeah, we—

Sylvia: This Hunter Exam got me honkin’ like a goose. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: We drift over to Tonpa's perspective, as he—

Keith: Yeah, we jump back into Tonpa's head.

Jack: He offers a fucking treatise on democracy.

Keith: A treatise on democracy and a psychoanalysis of group dynamics.

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: Yeah. Does someone want to break down kind of what happens here?

Sylvia: Yeah, Tonpa—

Jack: Because I do think that what this ends up doing is, like, governing Tonpa's thoughts for the rest of this arc.

Keith: And governing the relationship— 'cause we've seen— this is the first time that Tonpa sort of makes it explicit, but just to set this up, is like, Tonpa is the villain. Everyone now knows that he's the villain, but he has like— he early on identified Leorio as the weak member of the group, the one who cannot, like, rally someone around their ideas even when they're reasonable ideas and who is willing to make himself the villain when they already have a villain. Tonpa's actually the villain here.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: So, Sylvi, yeah, go ahead.

Sylvia: I was just gonna say Tonpa has this whole, like, internal monologue about how the true curse of the path of majority rule is that— basically talks about voter alienation, to put it like... [Sylvia and Dre laugh] to sort of get to the root of it, where it's like, you keep finding yourself in the minority, you're gonna feel like everyone's against you, and he made the classic mistake of asking for a show of hands, so it's a visible vote instead

of an anonymous one, so we all know— he knows that nobody had his back, and that's what leads to the group, like— that's in theory what would lead to the group fracturing, you know?

Jack: Yeah. It's wonderful, and it is such a good demonstration of— and I point it out every time this happens, but this show's readiness to stop treating our protagonists like point of view characters. You know, the four—Kurapika, Leorio, Gon, and Killua—remain our visible protagonists, but the show is so ready to **[Dre: Mm-hmm.]** cut hard away from their interiority to somebody else's.

Keith: Yeah. That is a big part of the show and will continue to be.

Jack: And, in fact, in what felt like a really wonderful moment and maybe is— the shock of it is lost, I imagine, if you have seen this arc already, but something happens after this which I was not expecting at all, which is after all this time in the fucking test chambers of our characters, we suddenly cut hard to Hisoka, which is incredible.

Sylvia: Oh! I love this scene!

Keith: Yeah, this is great.

Dre: Uh huh. Uh huh!

Jack: This is a wild moment, because I had been lulled into a false sense of security of, like, oh, well, you know, we're with our team now, for the time being.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And so, just to move in a cut, not even a— there is no big deal made of this cut. It happens midway through the vote. You know, the tension of "is Majtani— Majtani needs to be killed," is dispensed with for a moment, as Hisoka enters a room to meet who I imagine to be the examiner he wounded last time.

Keith: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Because we have a scarred fellow in this circular room who basically says, “I’ve been waiting for this chance for revenge for these wounds you gave me,” and Hisoka and this guy fight. This guy wounds Hisoka, which is interesting. This is the first time we have seen him wounded. He gets, like, a bloody slash on his shoulder that he remains through the rest of these episodes. We see him with this wound on his shoulder. But after a short period of time, Hisoka cuts this man’s head off with his own weapon after catching his, uh— I wrote it down. What does he say? Infinite Quad-Wielding weapon.

Keith: Yep. Thank you.

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: He eventually catches these swords and decapitates this man.

Dre: Oh, he doesn’t just catch the sword. He stops the sword by letting two of them, like, actually hit him, and he’s just like, “Oh yeah, this is fine. I was really annoyed that you were—”

Jack: Is that so? Wow!

Sylvia: No—

Dre: Yeah, that’s where the— that’s where the slash in his shoulder came from, I thought, is—

Sylvia: He gets caught when he dodges them, but when he catches them, it looks like he’s getting stabbed, but he’s not.

Jack: That’s how I read that scene. We see him in silhouette.

Dre: Now I gotta— now I gotta go pull this up. Hold on.

Sylvia: I could be wrong.

Dre: Make sure I’m not crazy. Keep going.

Jack: Mm. Yeah, we see two blades— we’re in silhouette, much like how we saw Killua

kill that guy with his vampire hands. We see two blades kind of strike him in the middle, and we think, “Oh my god, he’s been hit,” and then it is revealed that he has his hands in front of his chest, his abdomen, and has caught the two blades. I believe.

Keith: Uh, does anyone remember what the former examiner says when Hisoka catches the blades after about, hmm, 15 seconds of dodging them?

Jack: No.

Keith: The examiner goes like, in his own head, he goes, “Ah, it took me six months to learn how to catch those blades!”

Jack: Oh, yeah. [laughs] Yes.

Dre: Oh, okay, you're right. I see why I thought he got hit by them. I thought he got hit by them intentionally and then just was like, “I’m such a badass, this doesn’t bother me.” But it’s because of the shot of his shadow, it makes it look like he got hit by the blades.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Jack: It’s great. It’s a great scene, and it’s just this little fight that comes out of nowhere. Lovely little production design detail in here. This room has, like, a—

[0:23:04]

Keith: Oh, I have a good screenshot here. Hold on.

Jack: A circular staircase running up the inside of it, and each stair has a red wax candle on it, and when the fight begins, the candles all light, which is really cool.

Dre: Mm-hmm. I love 16-bit JRPG moments.

Jack: It really does have...oh, and Hisoka says, “I appreciate your futile efforts.” What a cool character. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: What an awful smile too. Another—

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: I will— another kill, another Hisoka kill. Put it in the thing of—

Dre: I did. It's already in there.

Keith: Someone attacking Hisoka and then Hisoka sort of mercilessly killing them.

Dre: He started it.

Keith: No murders yet, by my count.

Sylvia: We did mention that this is the— sorry, we mentioned that this was, like, a revenge thing for this guy, right?

Jack: Yes.

Keith: Yes. Yes.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Because I do love the— I love that someone hated Hisoka so much they were like, “That motherfucker almost killed me last year. I'm coming back unofficially, and I'm getting that guy.”

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. And here we have Hisoka as sort of the archetype of—and I think this has been developed through conversations with Satotz earlier—the archetype of the nightmare pupil, you know? The relationship between the examiners and the candidates is sort of this thing of, like, “We have the skills and the power, and we are assessing our trainees' power or our pupils' power,” and Hisoka is the entity who looks that dead in the eye and says, “I am going to turn this towards malice and violence and turn that against you.” The evil chaotic pupil that kills the master, which is consistent with what Satotz said last time of, like, hey, sometimes the Hunter Exam just produces, like, nightmare people.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Hey, where's Hisoka's team?

Keith: Uh, there is no team.

Dre: There is no team.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: No one else had a team.

Dre: Yeah, I think the majority rules are the only people who have to do this as a team.

Jack: Okay. That's good to know. I didn't know if Hisoka had gone...

Keith: Yeah, everyone got their own trick path, so there's like 20 other people out there doing their own Trick Tower.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, it's majority rules. It's papercraft; someone has to do a papercraft one.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: It's someone is basically playing Dynasty Warriors; they have to kill 50,000 people. And then the other one is just they're cooking the pigs again from the previous trial.

Keith: I want to, before we get back to the main crew, I want to rewind real quick and then jump forward real quick for two little details that I don't want to miss. Number one is going back to before we cut to Hisoka. One of my favorite soundtrack bits, I think it's the first time that it plays. I called it mystery music, but it's these, like, midi horns that are kind of, like, playful and mysterious that's playing, like, while everyone is talking out the "should we murder Majtani?" thing.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I don't know if anybody else picked up on it, but it's great.

Jack: I think I wrote down...uh, what did I write down? Yes, I wrote down, "This goofy jazz music as Killua suggests he will go out and kill this unconscious person." [Jack and Dre laugh]

Keith: Yep, yep, yep. That's what I call the mystery music. It's really great. It's one of my favorite bits of soundtrack in the whole thing.

Jack: What do you think the music supervisor told the composer to write? [Keith sighs]

Sylvia: Mystery music. [Jack laughs]

Keith: Uh, dungeon investigation but kind of happy. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Mm.

Dre: That's, yeah. No, that's pretty good, Keith.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And then the second thing from here is: during the arguing, Leorio goes into a corner and starts doing a goblin voice. [Keith and Sylvia laugh] He starts talking like a little goblin.

Jack: Oh my god.

Dre: Grr, grrrrr.

Keith: Like, crouched into the corner. Yeah, it's so funny. It's hilarious.

Jack: I think Kurapika or maybe Gon looks at him doing this and says, "He's sulking," which I thought was just so good. [laughs]

Keith: [laughs] Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. He's sulking.

Jack: Ah, he's sulking.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, Leorio's so funny.

Dre: Gon understands what it means for an adult to sulk.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Yeah.

Keith: [laughs] Yeah. Jumping forward after this Hisoka fight, I'm pretty sure this is where he finishes the Trick Tower. He's first, obviously. But we get a name. I think, for the first time, we get a name.

Sylvia: Oh, yes, we do. We get a lot of names in this episode, actually.

Jack: We do get a name.

Keith: We do get a lot of names.

Dre: Oh.

Sylvia: Because each person who finishes the exam gets announced.

Keith: Yes. So, we got the...we got the pinhead's name for the first time.

Jack: Rattly pin man!

Keith: Rattly— does anyone remember his name?

Jack: And his name is Gittarackur.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Great name for this guy.

Keith: Great name.

Dre: That is a good name.

Sylvia: [laughs] There's a couple good moments of him.

Jack: Yeah, he has a really funny moment later that I would love to talk about.

Keith: Oh, am I maybe wrong that that's where this happens?

Jack: No, that happens a bit later.

Dre: That happens later.

Keith: It does happen later. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: That happens in the [unclear] episode.

Keith: It happens at the end of the next episode, actually.

Sylvia: We get a lot of cuts back to the people who have finished the exam waiting as the timer ticks down.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, so I just got confused where that happens in my thing.

Jack: Tiny nice moment that I love. There are two really funny moments in these little commercial bumpers, which we talked about a while ago. If you've forgotten, they show a word in the script, the Hunter script, the language of this world, and then as we come back in from commercials, they show the katakana translation of it, and Hisoka appears for the first time in one of these. Previously, it's just been kind of members of the main crew and maybe Tonpa, and I think we are seeing Hisoka's name written down [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] and then, as we come back in from the credits, he smirks, spins around, and throws a playing card at the screen—

Keith: Ooh, fun.

Jack: Which cracks the screen between us and Hisoka.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Really good.

Jack: And there's always been this nice sort of...these little moments of being— these little meta moments where we get to see the character act out a little. You know, Killua will glance over at the word and be like, “Huh, that’s what it means,” when it comes back. And so for Hisoka to be so dangerous that he has the capacity to break the screen [**Keith:** Yeah.] between him and the viewer. It’s like, you made the mistake of letting Hisoka onto the commercial screen, and he is going to take a violent act against the person watching, just is more of this, like, oh, Hisoka is a maniac out here.

Dre: Bad man.

Jack: Yep. Trying to kill the viewer.

Sylvia: Evil clown.

Jack: “So,” says this Hunter. Er, sorry, this prisoner. “Why don’t we make a bet?” Who actually proposes this initial bet? Is it this gambler, or is it Leorio begins his ridiculous campaign?

Keith: Leorio...so, they have basically said— the prisoners have said, “We have to wait.” Everything starts getting suspicious that maybe— actually, no one suggests that maybe Majtani’s faking it. They all suggest maybe he’s already dead—

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yes.

Keith: And they’re lying that he’s alive and just unconscious.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: So, Leorio jumps in—

Jack: Because of course these prisoners—

Sylvia: He's been unconscious for so long, it's like, **[Jack: Yeah.]** well, he'd be dead if **[Keith: Yeah.]** he was actually unconscious for this long.

Keith: Right. And so it's Leorio who's like, "I am going to sort of break this stalemate by just starting the betting. Like, I know that that's where this is headed. I'm just gonna start doing it," and it works. Like, he is able to sort of start the match around this sort of undecided match.

Jack: Yeah. I don't know if we made it explicit, but this prisoner is introduced as a... **[laughs quietly]** Her name is Leroute, and she is in the jail for 112 years for trafficking endangered species and engaging in illegal gambling.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: So, yeah, we know from the start that this next thing is gonna be about betting.

Keith: Also, I love just a small detail about what the show is willing to— that the show is, like, willing to present the information that it wants you to know however it can. Every other person got a little splash screen that said their name and what they were in for and how long, but Leroute had the— doesn't get that, because the exam proctor says it, like, in a scene that he's just in.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And so they don't have to show it, and it's just like, yeah, well, the other stuff wasn't in— there wasn't a scene where we could say it, so we just showed you. So I like that they're just willing to give you the information, but they'll clean it up if it works better in another way.

Jack: Yeah. Yep. Yeah, this show's— so far, this show's, like, trump card has always been the way it controls information, for me.

Keith: Right.

Jack: How it tells you things and when it tells you things has just been the thing that

keeps me going. So, the first bet is: is this guy alive? I don't remember how this— who bets what, but we establish that this guy is alive.

Keith: Leorio makes a safe bet by betting correctly that he's alive, even though he believes that he's dead. So, he basically puts, like, a feeler out that he's like, minimizing his losses by betting that he is alive, because if they find out that he is alive, then they can just finish the fight.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Yeah. *Halo 3* style.

Jack: Make a note of this. This will be Leorio's last successful bet, and in fact—

Keith: Ooh, there is one more successful bet.

Sylvia: No, there's one more.

Dre: There's one more.

Jack: Oh, that's true. I will say this is Leorio's last clever bet.

Keith: You don't think that the, uh, stand him up at the edge is clever?

Dre: No, I think the next one is clever too. Yeah. I think that's clever.

Jack: Oh, that one is clever. Yes, that is— I think of that less as betting and more threatening to kill a guy.

Keith: Right.

Jack: 'Cause what happens then?

Dre: Eh, potato potahto.

Keith: So, Leorio's like, "Okay, this guy is clearly faking it." We find out in a few minutes that he knows because he's a doctor. He looked at his eyes. His eyes were the eyes of

a conscious person, not someone who's been fed a drug to keep them unconscious, not someone who's actually unconscious, not someone who's dead. These are the eyes of a living person. Probably his pupils dilated or something, when he looked— he, like, looked at Leorio.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Mm.

Keith: So Leorio stands him up, knowing full well that he's faking, and says, "I'm gonna drop him, and if he's really unconscious, he'll fall to his death, and if he's—" or, sorry, if he's...yeah, if he's really unconscious, he'll fall to his death, and if he's alive, he'll stop himself from falling to his death. And so he does that; he lets go. Oh, there is a thing. There's a thing here. She changes her bet. She switches from he's doing it— 'cause Leorio's original bet was "I bet that he's faking it," and in the middle of this, she says, "Actually, I'm betting that he's faking it."

Dre: Yeah, that's...

Keith: And I never understood why—

Jack: I don't think you can do that.

Dre: The rules here are not very well defined.

Keith: Why is she allowed to do that? So, she—

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: She's evil.

Keith: Right, but he didn't even complain. He didn't say, "Wait, but I'm—"

Dre: Yeah, no.

Keith: "I already know that you're right, so I don't want to lose this."

Dre: Yeah. There's a lot of, uh...I feel like this is where the rules of this are, like, stretched the most and are kind of, like, the least believable.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. Am I getting confused? Did he actually lose this bet?

Jack: No.

Sylvia: No.

Dre: Yeah. No, he did.

Sylvia: Did he?

Keith: Yeah, 'cause she changes.

Dre: Because she bet that he was actually alive.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, she—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Or that he was conscious, yeah.

Sylvia: Right, and then the way he's like, "I'm fine with that," is because...

Dre: He's like, "At least we'll know, and we can, like, [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] get the win, and we can just keep it moving."

Jack: Majtani reveals himself to be alive, just before he's dropped off the side in the world's slowest and silliest fall.

Keith: [laughs] It is really funny. Yeah.

Jack: Majtani nearly falls off this—

Sylvia: He's a Looney Tune.

Dre: He is.

Jack: Really, it's like a Looney Tunes moment.

Dre: He is 100% a Looney Tune.

Jack: And the scene goes on for so long of him falling. You know, like, it's 20 seconds of this guy teetering on the edge. [laughs quietly] It's really funny, and eventually, Majtani says, "I'm actually fine," and yeah, Leorio has this great line, "I'm pre-med. [laughs quietly] I know that he's..." which, god. I don't want Leorio to be my doctor.

Keith: I do. He's a really good doctor, according to the, uh, Kirikos.

Dre: We have unfortunately established in the lore that Leorio is actually a good doctor.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, but I don't want to talk about him.

Keith: He just has bad bedside manner.

Jack: [laughs] He has terrible—

Dre: Boy, does he. Hey, Keith!

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Why do you think Leorio has bad bedside manner?

Keith: Okay, so, next episode. We're in episode 11, unless there's any lingering things for episode 10.

Jack: Uh, I would like to say one thing in episode 10. So, I believed that the betting was now over, that by engaging here, Leorio has sort of used his turn. So I thought Killua was up next, and I wrote down, "Why are we still wagering? Game's over, but now it's Killua's turn." Hit the enter button a couple of times. "This is going to be an absolute mess, unless they keep going with Leorio." Now, Leorio remains, and it is an absolute mess, because...

Sylvia: Oh my goodness.

Jack: We move into episode 11. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Episode 11 [0:36:16]

Keith: Okay. So, the first thing that happens [Jack groans, Sylvia laughs] is that Leroute, who has been wearing a big cloak, takes it off. And I swear to god—

Sylvia: Oh, the sound effect.

Keith: An instrument in the soundtrack goes, “Wooow.”

Dre: “Wooow!”

Sylvia: No, that’s a— that is a person’s voice, I think, going “Wow!”

Keith: Well, it is a person’s voice, but it’s like, it is a non-diegetic voice. This voice does not belong to someone in the cast of the show. This is like—

Sylvia: That’s true, though maybe it was Majtani in the background.

Keith: Maybe, but they—

Dre: Maybe.

Keith: I think they all knew each other.

Sylvia: I know. This just might be, like, a thing. They might just be friends.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, Leroute—

Keith: But it is— it feels like a gag, where all of a sudden this girl is actually a pretty girl.
[laughs]

Jack: Yes.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yes.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: We have an anime pretty girl here. She has incredible hair. She has, like—

Sylvia: Oh, her design's really cute.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Massive hair.

Jack: Yeah, she looks great. We are now two for two— two women have appeared in the show. That's not true. More than two women have appeared, but two sort of main women have appeared in the show, and they both have really cool designs, between...

Keith: Three speaking roles, I believe, if you include Mito.

Jack: Yes, we have Aunt Mito. Then we have Menchi, who has the great, like, pale blue hair and the sheer top.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, I love Menchi's design.

Keith: And the janties.

Sylvia: We didn't really get into it, but I love Menchi.

Jack: And the what, Keith?

Keith: The janties?

Jack: Oh, she does have janties. Yes. [quiet laughter] And then we have Leroute, who has sort of got, like, a shock of pink hair, magenta, like, bright pink hair.

Sylvia: It's so good.

Jack: Split into, like, two ponytails on the side of her head. This pink is—

Sylvia: Very fluffy pigtails.

Jack: Yeah, very, very fluffy. Unlike anything we have seen in the color palette in this arc, just like this shock of pink. Um, yeah. [sighs] Okay. Here we go. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: So, Leorio immediately is bright red, is stammering, is just an absolute buffoon.

Sylvia: Listen. [Jack laughs]

Keith: Is this the— the bet happens, like, right after this, right?

Sylvia: Yes.

Jack: Yes.

Sylvia: This is...this is...this is the moment. [laughs quietly]

Keith: Okay.

Jack: Bet one.

Keith: Bet one.

Jack: Leroute says, "Let's make a wager." This is sort of her first move.

Keith: Right.

Jack: "Let's make a wager on whether I am a man or a woman." And—

Sylvia: I...

Jack: Sylvi?

Sylvia: I just...this whole scene had me dying, but like, you know, not because it's actually that funny. [laughs]

Jack: No. No.

Sylvia: But because of my whole situation. [laughs]

Jack: Right. You were like, “Here we go.”

Keith: The look on...the look on Killua and Kurapika’s faces is so disappointed.

Jack: Because they know.

Keith: Because they know.

Sylvia: Immediately.

Jack: Right off the bat.

Keith: Gon doesn't know.

Jack: Well, because then Leroute says something else which really seals Leorio’s fate. Leroute says, “Let’s make a wager on whether I’m a man or a woman,” comma, “I will let you examine me thoroughly.” And at this point—

Sylvia: He does— like, he asks, “Well, if I say you're a man, how will I be able to—”

Jack: How will I know?

Sylvia: Yeah, and is like, “Well, I'll let you examine everywhere,” and there’s a real, like, closeup of the lower half of her face, and she’s being very coy about it, and he’s all— he’s full— he’s horned up.

Jack: At this point, Leorio is just fucking done. This is the—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: This is the end of Leorio. And, on so many levels, this scene is gross. This is just— [laughs] This is a gross scene.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: It is also delivered in...there is a shot here as Leorio is like, “Yeah, absolutely, I’ll go for this,” as he ascends to heaven, dressed as an angel? [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: I really need to take a moment [Dre sighs] to just talk about his internal monologue while he’s trying to figure this out.

Jack: How does this go?

Keith: And you have several internal monologues to talk about? Is that true?

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: So, I checked— so, well, the Crunchyroll version of the subtitles [Dre groans] does in fact use a slur that I’m allowed to say [Dre laughs] but not going to on the podcast.

Jack: Oh my god, does it? Holy shit.

Sylvia: I just need to put it out there that if I did, it would be fine.

Keith: Yeah, it does, yeah.

Dre: It does.

Sylvia: In the Netflix subtitles, it says “transsexual,” and in the dub, they say “crossdresser.”

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: But Leorio’s like, “Well, there’s no way she’s trans. She looks— she’s all female,” or whatever, but oh man.

Jack: [laughs] God.

Dre: [sarcastic] Yeah, dawg, Leorio can always tell.

Sylvia: Leorio can always tell. He’s, uh...little known fact: Leorio’s English. [laughs]

quietly]

Jack: Yeah, a British terf.

Sylvia: But there's— there is a moment where— led to me writing down in my notes, "Transphobic Leorio? Chaser Leorio? Dialectics." [Jack laughs] Because there's also a moment where he's like, "Oh, but maybe I want to be wrong!" and I'm just there like, "Leorio."

Keith: Does he say that?

Sylvia: He does in one of the— the dub version, I believe he did, and then I think [Keith: Wow.] in another subtitle, he's like, "Maybe it's okay if I'm wrong." This is why I check the different translations.

Keith: Mm.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Well, this is—

Sylvia: Because now we can understand that Leorio was localized to be a chaser and not originally one. [Sylvia and Dre laugh]

Jack: Yeah, this is fascinating, right? Because it's like, the scene was written one way. The scene was written one way in the manga, and then it was written one way in the adaptation.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: And then we get to see three different localization teams look at this scene and go, "What the fuck do we do with this?" and come to three different conclusions, which is kind of a horrible gift but a very interesting gift, in terms of thinking about how you would localize this.

Dre: [crosstalk] It's something.

Keith: Uh, that's interesting. Did you check the manga as well, Sylvi?

Jack: [crosstalk] No, I have not checked the— I have not checked the manga, but yeah.

Sylvia: I did not check the manga, no.

Keith: Okay. Now I'm extremely curious what it says in the manga.

Sylvia: Eh, I can...

Jack: The premise of: this man is so horned up and is so stupid—

Keith: He's so stupid.

Dre: So stupid.

Jack: That he is going to tank this for everyone.

Keith: On purpose.

Jack: Don't get me wrong: what is going on here is not, quote, unquote, "good television."

Sylvia: I mean... [Dre laughs]

Keith: Well, it might be—

Jack: But you are watching the world's stupidest man fuck it up, [laughter] and in that way, it is exceptionally entertaining.

Sylvia: I mean, I just— like, I can't— you know? Let them who have not pissed off their friends for a pink-haired baddie cast the first stone, and I can't, so.

Dre: Sylvi! Sylvi!

Sylvia: What? No! I'm j— [laughs]

Jack: Leorio, as we've established—

Sylvia: I love saying things on this show that get people to yell my name. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Sylvi! He— mm, okay.

Sylvia: No, it's bad. It's bad. I'm not condoning—

Keith: It's bad.

Sylvia: I'm joking. It is...

Keith: And this is a...this is a famous Togashi pattern. This is, like...the groping is a thing that happens in *Yu Yu Hakusho* several times [someone sighs] and specifically the transphobic groping is something that happens in a famous scene in *Yu Yu Hakusho*.

Dre: The part that takes it— like, it's already bad. The part that takes it beyond the pale is he sniffs his hand!

Keith: He does sniff his hand.

Jack: Yeah. We are—

Sylvia: That's funny. [laughs quietly]

Jack: We are fully in this space here of, like...we are going for the most eyeballs popping out of Leorio's head, his jaw is dropping.

Keith: Right.

Jack: You can see his heart beating in the thing.

Keith: Yeah, he's the cartoon wolf. He's howling.

Jack: None of this makes this sit together well in conversations of, like, sexual assault, especially around transgender people. None of this is, uh, good writing.

Sylvia: It's heinous.

Dre: It's all bad.

Jack: But we do get to see Leorio, the world's stupidest man. He has tried his whole life to become a Hunter, [Keith laughs] so that he can help people. He has met Kurapika, a man he knows is trying to avenge the deaths of his family. He has met Killua, a mysterious child who's involved in violent things beyond his nature.

Sylvia: Well, he doesn't know that yet.

Jack: No, he doesn't. And he's met Gon, a brave and lovely boy. He has run 80 miles in a tunnel in the dark. He has watched people fall into violent spike traps and be eaten by—

Dre: He fought a giant brontosaurus thing!

Keith: And if he doesn't know how lucky he is to be with these people, he's even dumber than I think he is.

Jack: And then, he is given the opportunity to [laughing incredulously] assault a woman in a fight, and he runs straight into it. Jesus christ, Leorio. Well, Leroute has figured him out thoroughly, because this goes exactly as you expect, and Leorio loses.

Keith: Well, in an embarrassing— loses this bet. There's still one more bet, which is like, [Dre: Mm-hmm.] it is really rubbing salt in the wound here. It just makes him seem like the biggest dumbest idiot of all time, which is that he gets thoroughly trounced in a game of rock paper scissors.

Dre: Oh, also, before they even do that, Gon says, "Hey, you should have her bet whether you're a teenager or not."

Sylvia: Oh, that bit's so good.

Keith: Yeah, and he just throws away that idea, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: He throws it away, and it would've worked.

Dre: And it would've worked.

Keith: And Gon gives him two pieces of advice that would have saved him, and he discards both pieces.

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: The second one was— so, they're psychoanalyzing his rock paper scissors. They play two rounds of rock paper scissors. It takes seven minutes. [laughs]

Jack: Yeah, we get a little powerpoint presentation from Kurapika about how rock paper scissors works.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Every time Kurapika gives a little powerpoint presentation, it's great.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: We also have a line in here that is such sharp funny character writing that I think...my heart sunk when I saw how this episode was beginning, and I still do not feel good about it, but the way this show is, in the middle of these deeply gross conversations about bodies and interacting with bodies, will throw in a line like this is just like, yeah, this show is doing something. Leorio won a vacation as a result of playing rock paper scissors in a mall. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, he's bragging about his rock paper scissors skills.

Sylvia: The dub has a really good line where he says he won a "gourmet vacation," which I don't...

Dre: Yes.

Sylvia: What's— mm-hmm?

Dre: Its taste?

Jack: Something about the fact that Leorio played rock paper scissors to win a vacation, comma, in a mall [laughter] tells us so much about this stupid idiot.

Dre: Oh, yeah. It is everything you need to know about Leorio just distilled.

Keith: It is, 'cause it's sort of the thing where he's a regular guy but also he lives an insane life, like, all wrapped up into one bizarre sentence, where it's like, [Dre: Uh huh.] oh, I've been to a mall, and I can imagine there being a rock paper scissors competition. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Sure.

Keith: But the idea of, like, being the guy who is at the mall when they're doing a rock paper scissors competition, and then you win and go on a— I assume, an all expense paid vacation off of that? Like, that is the sort of, like, regular guy who is just not regular enough to be slightly carried in the Hunter Exam.

Jack: It's great.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Meanwhile, everybody is very open about the fact that Leorio is very stupid.

Keith: Right. They're—

Jack: They have just seen Leorio get rings run around him by Leroute.

Keith: It's sort of a carousel of everyone explaining why he's about to lose, to Gon.

Jack: And then Gon's mind is blown by the fact that Kurapika and Killua, um...we go into the whole psychology of rock paper scissors. It is basically meaningless, because Leroute has a complete psychological hold over Leorio. But Gon is seemingly hearing for the first time that rock paper scissors is not just a game of luck, and it blows his tiny mind. [laughs]

Keith: Yeah. So, they've basically figured out the game that Leroute's playing, and then Gon's like, "Oh, well, we should tell him that if he doesn't vote— if he votes anything but scissors, he'll lose." And so Gon, like, shouts out, like, "Hey, Leorio, vote scissors if you want to win," and then he's like, "Ah, I'm gonna vote rock instead!" and then he immediately loses, [Dre: Uh huh.] because he didn't listen to his friend who has good ideas and is better than him.

Jack: Fucking idiot.

Sylvia: Damn. Owned.

Jack: At which point, they lose the time gamble, and this was a surprise to me. I thought that they were going to overcome this somehow. So, they make a massive time gamble. They bet— they end up—

Sylvia: I love that they lose 50 hours.

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: Yeah, the bet eventually comes down to 50 hours, and this is just all Leorio's fault.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And this will kind of become important as we continue to talk, but I cannot overstate how much this stupid man has fucked it up for everybody. They lose the time gamble. Time to move onto the next round.

Dre: I think there is an interesting thing there where Leorio walks back, and basically Tonpa says, "Wow, you really fucked that up for everybody," and Leorio, like, at first reacts like he's gonna tell him to go fuck himself like he has been the whole time, and then he, for once in his whole fucking life, takes a beat and says, "Yeah, I guess you're right. I did."

Jack: Yeah, it's really interesting.

Keith: And Tonpa will not let him forget that moment. That was a—

Jack: He will not.

Keith: That was a mistake, actually. [laughs] Like, as—

Jack: Yep.

Keith: It makes him a better person, but in the game of trying to not be sort of bullied and, you know, psychologically tormented by Tonpa—

Dre: Ostracized. [laughs]

Keith: It was actually an error, because that is— Tonpa seizes on that and sort of chews on that fat for the next, [**Dre:** Yeah.] you know, 59 hours of the Trick Tower.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Okay. Evil music.

Jack: Here comes the poet.

Keith: Evil piano music. Here comes the poet.

Jack: Oh, this piano music is so great. God. So, this piano music is like a sort of a rolling mobile notes played deep in the left hand, the bass notes of the piano, and they are recording a live piano or they have a really good digital piano, and you can hear the overtones ringing off this piano. You know, you have these bass notes that are ringing like bells. They're whatever the opposite of flat is. Really good sinister music. I think this is the first time we've heard this cue, [**Keith:** Yeah.] because I specifically wrote it down.

Keith: Yeah, it is, yeah.

Jack: Yes. So, we are introduced to this man. His name is, uh...

Keith: Can I say it?

Jack: Jo— yeah, go for it.

Keith: It's funny, because the '99 and the 2011 dubs spell his name differently, which I think is funny. Johnness the Dissector, who is serving a 100—

Jack: Oh my god, what a great name.

Keith: Sorry, 100. 968 year sentence for mass murder.

Jack: Yes. He is the most notorious— he's described as a monster, and we cut to the examiner, the sort of the mohawk guy with the...eating graham crackers.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And he says— he basically says, "I don't— this fight sucks. I don't want this child to have to—" This is Killua's turn. "I don't want this—"

Keith: Yeah, the horrible prison warden is feeling slightly guilty about making a child go up against Johnness the—

Jack: But he says, "Look, if you die in the Hunter Exams, you die."

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Sorry to this small child. This is just them's the breaks.

Keith: Yeah. Oh, the difference here, by the way, in the spelling. In the dub that I had, it's spelled John, J-O-H-N-N-E-S-S, Johnness. In the '99, it's spelled Jones.

Jack: Oh, interesting.

Keith: J-O-N-E-S. Yeah.

Jack: Johnness is a—

Keith: Just a localization thing, I think probably to make it more clear what it actually is

pronounced like.

Jack: Yeah. I like it. I'll the Johnness spelling.

Keith: So, the first thing that happens, the shackles come off this guy's arm, and you see: oh, this guy is huge. His arms are huge. He's extremely vascular, [laughs] way more than any other character that we've seen so far. The prisoners are now scared. They're, like, scared of this guy. He stands up, and it is a phenomenal shot of him standing. Like, he goes from looking like a combination of, like, a really buff but really sad poet and, like, maybe a shepherd? Like, maybe he lives in the... [Dre and Keith laugh]

Jack: Oh, yes, he does have kind of— or sort of a viking.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. [laughs]

Jack: Like a viking shepherd.

Keith: Yeah. And then he stands up, and it's just like the— it's just distorted enough to make him look, like, evil.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Like, same face. Same sad eyes. Same, like, face, but he's just, like, huge and towering over the camera as he walks forward. Everybody's terrified of him.

Dre: Well...

Keith: Majtani is, like—

Dre: Well, one person isn't.

Keith: "Wait, actually, am I not terrified of him?" You can see that he's afraid at first, and then he's like, "Hold on. Maybe this guy's a pushover." He gets ground into the wall. He gets pushed into the wall. And then, does anybody want to talk about what else he does

to the wall as he walks towards the ring?

Sylvia: He reaches his hand into the wall and just sort of, like, pulls out a— like, while he's walking, he just lets it drag through and rip the brick out.

Keith: Right. As he's slowly walking, his arm is still but just, you know, brick and dirt and debris shooting out. It almost looks like he's scooping— like the wall is fake and it's made of, like, mud, and he's scooping it out.

Jack: Yes, at which point we get a little sort of cutaway, as we learn that this man is the most notorious killer in a place called Zaban City or Zaban City. I don't know how you pronounce that. Have we seen this place before?

Sylvia: I believe—

Jack: Is this where the buses were?

Sylvia: Yes, Zaban City was where the buses were going to, right?

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Oh, they were going to Zaban City.

Keith: They were going to, yeah, the fake buses.

Sylvia: Or they were listed to be going to. I think the steakhouse that they end up going to, to start the exam, is also in Zaban City, but I could be wrong about that particular detail. I know that the buses were listed as going to Zaban City, 'cause that was where [Jack: Okay.] they were told the first phase of the exam would be.

[0:55:13]

Jack: Any time this show gives me the merest crumb of information [Dre laughs] about the world outside of the Hunter Exam, I seize upon it like someone starving on a desert island. But as far as I know, there's a man who killed 146 people at random in Zaban City with his bare hands. He has an extremely strong grip. Leorio is so afraid of— Leorio

knows who he is, and he is so afraid of him that he suggests that they drop out of the Hunter Exam right now.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: That they just quit.

Keith: And he already doesn't think that Killua can do it, for some reason, even before they introduce who the opponent is going to be. He's like, "Ah, we got this dumb random kid is our last bet? Just quit. Who cares."

Jack: He's also feeling sour about how he fucked everything up for everybody, I think.
[laughs quietly]

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: God. Okay.

Keith: But Killua just walks up over to the stage with his hands in his pockets, extremely slowly, totally nonchalant.

Jack: Now, the way this has been framed, I thought I had a pretty good idea of what was about to happen.

Sylvia: Oh.

Jack: Because we know that Killua is an assassin.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And is exceptionally strong [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] and violent, [laughs quietly] prone to violence. He was going to kill Netero if he didn't leave, and then he just killed two guys. I was not worried about Killua losing here. I thought that we were about to enter a big fight, and that is not what happens.

Sylvia: It's so fucking perfect.

Keith: Do you want to explain what does happen?

Jack: Sure. Out comes Johnness and basically says, "We don't need to set terms for this fight, because I am going to tear you apart with my bare hands," and as he is saying this, midway through a line, we go into Killua-is-doing-magic vision that we last saw when he did that weird, um, assassin's step.

Sylvia: The shadow step.

Jack: Yeah, around Netero. And we see him completely calmly walking. We don't even see what he's walking towards. We just get this, like, shot of his upper body in motion, walking calmly, and then we get a shot of Johnness's eyes widening, and then he sort of trails off, as we cut to Killua now on the other side of the arena, holding Johnness's heart in a bag.

Keith: With a wicked grin on his face. [laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: With an evil grin on his face.

Keith: [sarcastic] And the bag is still?

Dre: [crosstalk] The heart's still beating.

Keith: The bag's not moving at all?

Sylvia: It's...ohh.

Keith: Jack?

Jack: Uh, the bag is beating. [Keith laughs quietly] The heart is beating as Johnness is still alive. He turns around and says, "Give that back."

Keith: Yeah, he says—

Dre: “That’s mine.”

Sylvia: “Mine.”

Dre: “Give it back.”

Keith: He very weakly, “That’s mine.”

Sylvia: “I’m so cold.”

Keith: So sad and dead.

Jack: And then we see his heart beat slower and slower, and then he dies.

Keith: It’s almost supernatural, like, the way— because there’s no real way for him to know that the heart— like, to me, the series of events does not lead to Johnness looking back at the heart in a bag and recognizing it, but he seems to know. Like, he seems to feel that his heart is gone.

Dre: He does have a hole in his chest.

Keith: But he doesn’t know that he’s got a hole in his chest. Maybe he can feel that hole, but it’s such a—

Sylvia: He says he feels very cold, so like...

Keith: It’s such a bizarre thing that, you know, you’ve definitely never felt what it feels like to have your heart ripped out of your chest before.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: And it’s kind of a hard thing to guess might have happened to you, in a good— but it’s, like, weird and creepy in a good way that he recognizes it.

Jack: Yeah, it’s so good.

Keith: Like, it just is so bizarre.

Jack: Dead silence.

Keith: And then just the way that he goes, “That’s mine.” Like, that’s such a weird way— it’s such a weird response!

Sylvia: It’s so good! I love it.

Keith: It’s so good.

Sylvia: It’s such a, like, shell-shocked reply to everything.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Like, I think it really nails—

Keith: It’s perfect.

Sylvia: Like, we’ve talked about Killua having a dreamlike quality in a lot of things that he does, and I think that this also is that, but it shifts it from being dreamlike to being a nightmare.

Keith: In the ‘99 series, the heart is—

Sylvia: Oh, wait, ding ding ding!

Keith: Oh.

Sylvia: Sylvi’s Manga Minute, ‘cause I think you’re about to spoil what I was about to bring up.

Keith: Oh, okay. That’s fine. Yeah.

Sylvia: In the manga, he does— it’s not in a bag.

Keith: Oh, he looks even sadder in the manga.

Sylvia: Yeah, no. This is why I wanted to bring it up, ‘cause the manga’s great for multiple reasons.

Dre: Oh my god!

Sylvia: One, Johness looks really pathetic while he's reaching for his heart that is just rendered in full detail. We get a closeup drawing of it by Togashi in Killua's hands.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: We get Killua's glare, really—

Keith: Less wicked of a glare.

Sylvia: Yeah, I don't know.

Keith: It's more like a real smile.

Sylvia: There's— I find this one more menacing, if I'm being real.

Jack: This one's great.

Sylvia: Yeah, I—

Keith: He looks— actually, he looks kind of like Hisoka here.

Jack: He does.

Sylvia: Yes.

Jack: That's very interesting.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: That is why I like it so much. That is one of the reasons why I like it so much, and instead of— what Killua does in the 2011 anime when Johness falls over dead is he puts the bag back in his hands.

Jack: Oh, it's so good!

Sylvia: Which is great.

Keith: It's amazing. It's actually, I think— so, when I watched the manga and the way that it— er, sorry, when I watched the '99 anime and it plays out like it does in the manga where it's the actual, the anatomical heart beating in his hands, and then he sort of crushes it.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: After letting it beat for a few minutes or a few seconds. I was like, "Oh, that's crazy," but then I rewatched the 2011 series, and I was like, "Actually, it's even crazier that he puts the bag—" he just, like, sort of gently crouches down and places the bag slowly into John's dead hand.

Sylvia: It's way more serial killery.

Keith: It's crazy. [Keith and Dre laugh]

Sylvia: It's so much more cruel.

Keith: It's so nuts.

Sylvia: It rules! Like, I saw people—

Keith: He said, "give it back"!

Sylvia: Yeah. I saw— I was looking up to see if it was different in the '99 version and finding out that it was basically just the manga scene again.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: And people being like, "Aw, they made Killua such a baby boy, such a nice boy in the 2011 one," and I'm like, I don't know what you guys are talking about.

Keith: Yeah. [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: This guy is twisted.

Jack: They sell this moment so well. Also, I...I mean, this is— the fact that this is the

back half of the episode where we began with the bullshit with Leroute is really spectacular.

Dre: [laughs] Yeah.

Jack: We are still in the same 23 episodes of animated television.

Keith: 23 minutes, yeah.

Sylvia: The same episode!

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: The effort that the show expends to shift from Leroute to, like, “Hey, everyone, it’s time to be terrified of this serial killer monster,” is so monumental. I mean, it’s really like, I don’t know, two or three minutes of, like, sinister texture that the show sort of gives off in order to change tone and get you ready for what is essentially not a fight. [laughs]

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: It’s so good.

Jack: And then they put this beautiful coda on the fight. Some things happen in sequence that are just brilliant to kind of get us out of this. Dead silence after Killua has killed this guy, and we cut suddenly to the little scoreboard that is showing the win.

Keith: Ba-doop.

Jack: And yeah, it just, ba-doop! increases from two to three, you know, meaning that our team has made it through. They’ve beat the best of five. We get this great reverb on the little beep of it going. Killua then invites the other prisoners to come out and die. He basically says—

Sylvia: Specifically Bendot. Ben-dot? The first guy.

Jack: Yeah, our first guy.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: To which Bendot says, “Absolutely not.”

Keith: Yeah, he’s like, “Hey, you didn’t get a turn. Do you want to come out and play with me?” and he’s like, “No.” [Dre laughs]

Jack: Yes. He says, “Do you want to come out and play with me?” It’s wonderful. Killua is fucking great. Then we cut back to our group. Leorio says, “What is he?” and Gon is like, “Oh, I know the answer to that.”

Keith: Very chipper.

Dre: [casually] “Oh yeah, you guys didn’t know! Oh, yeah.”

Keith: Yeah, yeah, he’s from an elite family of assassins. I forgot to tell you. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Uh, yeah, he’s from a family of assassins. And then Killua just trips back across the bridge and says, “I’m back,” [laughs] which is so good.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: His delivery is...

Dre: And Leorio, like, almost jumps into the pit, he’s so scared of Killua. [laughs]

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, and then he sort of, like, timidly goes like, “Ahaha, nice work! [laughs nervously]”

Jack: Yeah. And then we cut away. We cut out of the scene. That is the end of that scene. It was wonderful. I had a lovely time. At this point, rattly pin man comes through, and yes, he’s introduced as Gittarackur, rattly pin man. And then, in comes person number three. It’s Hanzo. He comes out and goes, “Yes! I came fir— ah, fuck.”

Keith: Yeah. [Dre laughs]

Jack: And that is, again—

Keith: Yeah, he does a Zoolander. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Yeah. Still just so funny. The way that they are playing Hanzo as, like, the ninja who is both really good and is also constantly the most excessive [Keith: Yeah.] in his reactions to stuff is so funny.

Keith: He's a very serious, very competent ninja and also kind of a dopey jock.

Jack: Yes.

Dre: Yeah. That's a good way to put it.

Jack: At which point—

Sylvia: He's the meme of the guy celebrating too much at the Olympics getting the medal except he's in third place. That's Hanzo's deal. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Oh, he really is, except he is—

Dre: Man, that is just him, huh?

Keith: I haven't seen that. I don't know what that is. That's really funny. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: Oh, it's really funny.

Sylvia: I'll find it.

Jack: It's like, he celebrates, he sprays the champagne, he kisses the woman putting the medal on him, and then we pan out to reveal he's standing on the third place.

Keith: Good. Hey, there's a lot of— people have a lot of trouble coming in third place. I think it's great that...

Dre: No, absolutely.

Keith: I think it's great that he's so happy about it.

Jack: At which point, our team enters the little break room. They get given a little...it's very weird. The production design on this show is great. You know, we've been in these sort of, like, stone chambers all the way, and we are now let into what I would describe as an office breakroom. [laughs]

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: It's got a little mini fridge. It's got couches. It's got, like, a pot plant. It's got...

Sylvia: Basically a college dorm in a lot of ways.

Keith: Yeah, it looks like a dorm.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: It looks like a college dorm. No bed. They just sleep in bags on the floor.

Jack: And they are told, "You are going to be here for 50 minutes."

Keith: 50 hours.

Jack: Sorry. [laughs quietly] 50 minutes. I was reading the quote that I wrote, because we get an absolutely incredible quote from Killua. Killua shows off his vampire hands to everyone and says, "I manipulated my body to make it a bit easier."

Keith: Right.

Jack: What the fuck is Killua's deal?

Keith: Killua said— or, uh, Kurapika asks him what that technique was, and he's like, "Oh, it wasn't a technique. I just ripped it out. I just ripped his heart out." Yeah, not a technique.

Dre: “And my dad could have done it way cooler!”

Jack: Yeah, he says—

Keith: My dad’s even better at it. [Dre laughs]

Jack: The scariest line.

Sylvia: “He’d do it without spilling a drop of blood.”

Dre: I don’t think that’s possible, Killua.

Sylvia: You know what? I’m not gonna question this kid. His dad— you’re right, man. Your dad can totally do that. Stay away from my heart.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, and he does the vampire hand thing that we talked about at the airship thing. He can just turn his nails very pointy and sharp.

Jack: He becomes vascular too.

Keith: He does become vascular, yeah.

Dre: That’s true, yeah.

Keith: Why can he do this? Why is it not a technique? I don’t know. I don’t know why that’s not a technique.

Jack: I don’t know...yeah. He says— I love this line. The actor playing Killua in the Japanese version, the sub, is so good.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: They manage to deliver the line, “Even though he’s a serial killer—” talking about Johness the Dissector. “Even though he’s a serial killer, he’s an amateur. I used to be a professional.”

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Just fucking wonderful. This kid is 12, and he says—

Keith: But he says it like he's talking about his Pokémon cards.

Dre: Uh huh.

Sylvia: It's great.

Jack: "My dad is a lot more skilled." But at this point, I wrote down, "Gon and Killua's dads, huh?" You know, we have Ging, who, as far as we know, abandons a child, that is, like, one of the greatest Hunters of all time. And we have Killua's dad, who we know nothing about, [**Keith:** Yeah.] who is a serial killer.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And then, right off this line, as they go into this room, Gon and Killua get straight back to playing. They say, "Let's see if there's anything here to play with. Can we just have a fun time during these 50 hours?" It is—

Dre: Pillow fight!

Jack: It is brutally sad.

Keith: Two pillow fights.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, "Even though he's a serial killer, he's an—"

Keith: Sorry, Jack, what did you say?

Jack: It's brutally sad. "Even though he's a serial killer, he's an amateur. I used to be a professional."

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: "Let's see if there's anything in here we can play with over the next 50 hours."

This poor fucking kid.

Keith: Yeah. Right to the TV, looking under the TV for a video game console. I noticed that right away. They don't say that he's looking for a video game console, but you can tell.

Dre: Oh, he's looking for video games. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, he's looking for video games, and then they, like, don't find any video games, so the next shot is that they're reading books together. [laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: The way this show is able to...I'll put it this way. One of my favorite shots in this episode is that shot that comes straight from that manga that we described Killua looking a lot like Hisoka. So, after he has pulled the heart out, he turns and looks at the camera, at the other prisoners, and says, "Does anybody want to come and play with me? Who wants to come and play with me?" and then we have him saying, "Is there anything— uh, let's see if there's anything to play with in this room," and a much less good show would have played that second line sinisterly.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: It would have been like, "Ooh, look how sick and twisted it is that, you know, we know that he thinks of play as murder, so now it's like, ooh, it's all sinister. Is he gonna do some evil stuff in this room?" But the fact that the show is like: this is a kid. This is a 12-year-old child, and he wants to play. He's bored. He's stressed. He is hanging out with another kid his own age, and they're looking for something to play with. The way it is able to pull that nuance out from both those lines is great, and it results in you getting to this episode, going, "Jesus christ. This is fucking sad. This poor kid."

Keith: Well, Jack, what they're demonstrating is that, at such a young age, he has achieved a healthy work-life balance. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Keith: He knows that murder is for murder time. You know, usually. He's a kid. He messes up sometimes, kills two people on an airship. But, you know, he knows how to have fun. He also, you know, talks about— he talks about being an assassin in the past tense too, which is kind of funny, considering, but. Yeah, I'm trying to leave that behind, just play some video games.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: With my new friend. Pillow fight twice, have two pillow fights with my friend. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Before we move onto episode 12, the last episode, which is on some level a much simpler episode and I think is...

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Is great. I loved episode 12, and we can talk about that then.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I want to talk a little bit about Killua murdering, because when he killed people— I have to imagine that this show is, on some level, about Killua murdering. I feel like that's kind of gonna be one of the core topics. But when we talked about killing the guys on the airship, Sylvi, you said, "I don't want to talk about this too much, because there are going to be better times to talk about the kind of things that this scene talks about." Is there anything that you want to talk about here, now that we've seen him remove a guy's heart, or do you [**Sylvia:** Um...] want to save that for a future Killua Murder Hour?

Sylvia: I think...I think the thing I was gesturing at there was more to do with Killua's family situation and stuff like that?

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: I think that, like, talking about Killua's relationship with murder and the way that Killua interacts with the world will, like, come with time when we learn more about his

upbringing, 'cause right— like, we know enough about it to be like, “Oh, he had to stab his mom to get away from them, and he also, like, is being raised as the heir apparent to this, like, assassin dynasty,” but yeah, I don't know. I think that's what I meant at the time.

Jack: Right. Totally.

Keith: What I want to add to that is— and I'm trying to do this as sort of neutrally as possible, 'cause I don't actually want to talk about it.

Jack: Okay.

Keith: But I do want to— there's— when you said that, you know, Killua murdering, his murders are going to be, like, a core part of the show...by the time it will be...by the time we reach the best part to talk about that, we will have missed actually when we should have.

Jack: Mm.

Keith: So I want to say, now, you know, [**Sylvia:** Okay.] to just like think about when that is actually present in the show and when it's not, and we'll...when it occurs to you to bring it back up, we'll talk about it again. There's not— it's weird, 'cause there's not much more else I can say about that.

Jack: Yeah. Okay. That sounds great.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Some great Killua animation. This is the first time I think we've seen him run with his hands in his pockets?

Jack: [laughs] I don't remember that. I missed that.

Jack: [laughs] He's at a run.

Episode 12 [1:13:09]

Jack: But as we move into episode 12, I would like to talk really briefly about the title sequence. I only wrote this down in episode 12, because this was the first time I was starting to notice the details in the— so, one of the things that happens in the title sequence is we get to see all the characters fighting. Gon sort of saves Leorio from a fight by hooking him with his fishing rod and throwing him over a treeline. We see, like, a tiny Leorio in the distance. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: It's great.

Jack: But there's a— Gon and Killua and maybe Kurapika are fighting some guys, and there's a really great moment of Killua nonchalantly kicking a guy in the head behind his back. Killua is, like, facing away from a guy [Keith laughs quietly] and lets loose a kick and kicks a guy in the head. It's just great Killua stuff. But as episode 12 begins, the 50 hours are starting to count down, and everybody is— Killua is teaching Gon how to skateboard. Kurapika is reading. Leorio and Tonpa are irritating each other.

Keith: Leorio briefly tries to also be reading and fails.

Jack: Tonpa, in demonstration that he is the most irritating man in the world, [laughs quietly] is taking this time to clip his toenails.

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: And then is also taking his time to pretend to be sleeping and then putting his disgusting feet in Leorio's face while Leorio's actually trying to sleep.

Dre: I have an important question.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: How bad does this room smell after these five people have been in it for 50 hours?

Sylvia: Oh, we're— is this the part where I yell your name really loud?

Dre: Maybe! Do it! [Jack chuckles]

Sylvia: We don't need to talk about how crazy it stink in there.

Keith: How crazy you think it stink in there? Let's get into it. Let's get nasty.

Dre: These are the same clothes that they ran a marathon in and then ran through a swamp in and then hunted giant pigs and cooked them over, like, open fires and did skydiving for eggs and then did deathmatches in.

Sylvia: Oh, so they don't even notice anymore.

Keith: It's stink city.

Jack: Uh, it's stink city.

Dre: Gotta be bad!

Jack: Population: five. It has got to be terrible.

Keith: Maybe it's really well ventilated in there.

Dre: I—

Jack: Maybe Hunters don't sweat.

Dre: No.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: They be sweaty. I feel like we have seen fight scenes where people have been sweaty.

Jack: That's true. That could have been abstracted stress sweat

Dre: Okay, fair.

Jack: I don't know shit about Hunters, so I'm just out here saying maybe Hunters don't

sweat.

Keith: I'm ringing the bell. Jack got it. That is what a Hunter is. A Hunter is someone who doesn't sweat.

Dre: Okay. All right.

Jack: Wow! [laughs]

Sylvia: All right, end of show.

Keith: Add it to the list, yeah.

Sylvia: Join us next time, and we'll be starting our *Sailor Moon* watchthrough.

Keith: Oh yeah, that was the secret— that was a secret term of the show is that

[**Sylvia:** Yeah.] it ends if Jack can ever tell us what a Hunter actually is. [Jack and Keith laugh]

Jack: Meanwhile, down in the room, more and more people are coming out. I'll read these names out. We have Pokkle, a Hunter candidate who is a little archer. We have Goz—

Keith: And is immediately annoyed that someone else came out right after him.

Jack: Yes, [laughs] and says— extremely petty. I think Hunters are just generally petty, unless you're Kurapika.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Says, "My number is lower than yours, so I have won." Goz is the guy who comes out at the same time. He is a tall mustached fellow with a green vest and a big polearm, and then Sommy is a Hunter candidate who has a man-faced monkey, [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] who we saw earlier. A little—

Sylvia: And a dick and balls.

Keith: Yeah, and we see the monkey's dick and balls.

Jack: Oh, really?

Keith: Yep.

Sylvia: The monkey— you see that monkey's Crazy Frog style dick.

Keith: Yep.

Dre: Oh.

Jack: Really?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Huh.

Keith: No one else noticed the very obvious— or I guess half of us did.

Dre: No, I didn't notice.

Keith: Half of us noticed the dick; half of us didn't. Yep.

Jack: But these cowards wouldn't show us the heart in Kurapika's hand— oh my god, in Kurapika's hand? Could you imagine? In Killua's hand.

Keith: Hmm. Can I imagine that?

Sylvia: It really says something about our society, huh?

Dre: Damn.

Jack: God! People will more readily— that's not true. Americans will more readily show someone getting brutally murdered onscreen than a penis and balls.

Dre: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

Keith: Than a dick and balls, yeah.

Jack: It's like that great joke in, uh...what's the fucking film? *Seven Psychopaths*, where they say, "You can't show animals getting killed onscreen in Hollywood," beat, "only women." [Keith chuckles] That's the same with the heart and the monkey's dick and balls.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: A little tray—

Keith: Why would you pass up an opportunity to give your monkey a little pair of pants?

Sylvia: That's so true. *Ape Escape* did it.

Keith: Yeah. *Ape Escape* did it.

Jack: Is *Ape Escape* the one with the— no, that's *Super Monkey Ball*. Do they live in the balls in *Super Monkey Ball*?

Keith: No. They just like them.

Jack: Are they trapped in them?

Sylvia: No, they like it.

Keith: They just like it in there.

Jack: Oh.

Keith: It's like cars.

Jack: Okay.

Keith: It's like if an alien played a video game based on people and was like, "Do they live in the cars? Can they leave the cars? Do they like it?" Yeah, they just like it. They just like it in there.

Jack: No. They do not like it. [laughs quietly]

Keith: I like it. I like it in there.

Jack: I fucking hate being in a car. Uh, a big tray comes out of the wall. A huge tray comes out of the wall with food on for all these people.

Keith: Yeah, they get biscuits and sandwiches and tea.

Jack: This show's production design is always so much fun. The fact that we're in this huge circular sort of, like, dungeon, and they roll out, like, a cafeteria tray. It's really good.

Keith: We get— it's weirdly— I think it's like the only still image in this montage. Everything else I think is a clip of stuff, but the, like, you know, everyone trying to eat lunch except Gon and Killua who are kind of playing with their food. [laughs quietly]

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Is, like, a still image, you know, in this series of...

Jack: It's a tableau, yeah. It's really nice. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, in this series of video clips of, you know, what they're doing with their time, with their 50 hours.

Jack: We cut to the commercials, and the little script in the commercials says, "bored!" which I thought was really funny.

Keith: [laughs] Gon teaches Killua how to use the fishing pole.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Keith: As promised, they trade— Gon used the skateboard, almost took off Tonpa's head.

Sylvia: It's so cute. I love the [Dre: Mm-hmm.] shenanigans that these two get up to. It's, like, the way this show balances having them do, like...I don't know. Killua, it's not borderline, Gon it is borderline monstrous things at times, or at least in terms of just,

like, capabilities. Like, that kid shouldn't have been able to headbutt that old man so hard.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Anyway, they balance that with them just being 12-year-olds, which is great. I think they— it's really, like, well done on the part of *Hunter × Hunter*.

Keith: Leorio is a fish. They turn Leorio metaphorically into a fish.

Jack: Yep.

Keith: By catching him.

Jack: They do— they catch him. It is so funny to me that I thought—how naive I was—for one little moment, “Oh, Killua won't be able to use the fishing pole, and it'll be a nice moment of showing that Gon is strong and capable,” but nope, Killua can use the fishing pole instantly.

Keith: Instantly can use it to catch a big fish.

Jack: The big fish is a lecherous idiot. [Keith laughs]

Keith: Leorio gets all mad and then Killua goes like, “We weren't gonna grill you.” [laughs]

Jack: And that makes him madder.

Keith: Yeah, it does.

Jack: I do think that...to your point, Sylvi, the way the show gets away with making these kids weird monsters and then also shows that they're kids is...I feel like you could get really in your own head about how to balance that or how to depict it, and you could weaken both sides of it by being like, “I need to find a compromise point in the middle so that they don't seem too monstrous [**Keith:** Yeah.] or they don't seem too much like 12-year-olds.” But it seems like what the show is doing is it is just treating both aspects

as equally true about these characters and committing to it. Saying—

Keith: Right, it just does it. It just shows it. It doesn't have to— it doesn't explain it, it just does it.

Jack: Yeah. “Well, well, but how can they deal with—? There must be a real incongruity there! That must be really a weird tension.” Yes! That feels like it is in the show.

Keith: Yeah. Right.

Jack: We are going to explore this tension. That is the thing. Works really well. Then they get released, and we get an extremely funny two second montage of some trials that they go through.

Keith: It's so funny. Representing eight hours?

Jack: What are the trials?

Keith: There's a weird thing with minecarts. There's, like, a tile game, like a floor tile thing where they have to, like, **[Dre: Mm-hmm.]** not step on the wrong tiles.

Jack: They get chased by an *Indiana Jones* rolling boulder.

Keith: Right, they get chased by a boulder, and that might be it, and there you go, that's eight hours worth of time. Eight, nine hours, something like that.

Jack: We will spend so long—

Keith: And then, final test.

Jack: Well, we'll just spend so long in the prisoner trial. It's like a— the show's constant joke about when am I showing you information is being like, “I'm just gonna show you three trials that would have been really entertaining in two seconds.”

Keith: Nothing worth being on TV happens in those nine hours.

Jack: Yeah. **[Dre laughs]** The final trial is this: you have to vote to pass through a door.

Either you can go through a very difficult path that will take at least 40 hours to complete, and all five members will be able to pass; or you can go through an easier trial, a very easy trial, but only three people can go through. The two people remaining behind have to handcuff themselves to the wall of this room that is filled with weapons, and the implication here is that this is just a *Saw* trap. This is just kill each other until— or—

Dre: Or you got here fast enough that you don't have to kill each other.

Jack: Yes, or you got here fast enough that you don't have to kill each other, but there are weapons on the walls to start fighting.

Keith: Importantly, even if they had flawlessly made it through that first— or the tournament thing, I think it still would have been, like, you know, they only had 10 hours of wiggle room. Like, they would have gotten there [**Dre:** Sure.] with, like, 55 hours, and minimum 45 is what they say for the longer path, so it's sort of like, okay, minimum 45. They still might not even make it.

Jack: Mm-hmm. Yeah, absolutely. I would like a brief sidebar here, since we've been talking about *Squid Game* and *Saw*. I know Keith hasn't seen this movie. Dre, have you seen *Saw*?

Dre: No.

Jack: Sylvi?

Sylvia: I gotcha. Oh! Jack, have I seen *Saw*? Come on.

Jack: Well, Sylvi, I have a question for you.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: How would Gon overcome the core problem in *Saw*? Because I have an answer.

Sylvia: Oh. In the original *Saw*.

Jack: In the original *Saw*.

Sylvia: So, he's chained to a bathroom radiator with a handsaw.

Jack: Yes.

Sylvia: Yeah, I'm gonna need to hear...

Keith: Break the chains. Just rip the chains off.

Sylvia: This is— well, yeah, [Jack chuckles] that's kind of what I would say, honestly. What's your solution, though, Jack? You clearly have given this a bit more thought.

Jack: Well, my solution here is—and I am about to spoil the first *Saw* movie, but I will be done in a second—he would point at the body in the middle of the room and go, “Oh, that guy's alive.”

Sylvia: True.

Jack: And then— [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: Yes, you're right. Absolutely.

Keith: Oh, he could, yeah, hear him breathing or smell him or something, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: He'd just be like, “Oh, that guy's alive. Kill him, Killua,” and then Killua would kill him, and then they would get out of the room. [Dre laughs]

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: The core twist of *Saw* would offer no problems to Gon whatsoever, because... [sighs] this is such a good moment. We suddenly cut to the end of the trial. We cut instantly to— oh, they begin fighting.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: And I want to—

Dre: Tonpa pulls out an ax and goes at Leorio and...

Keith: Yeah. It is Leorio's idea that he will— he is ready to fight, but Tonpa still sort of gets the first swing in.

Jack: Yeah. These are well-communicated stakes that pull together all these sort of themes and concerns from this arc. This is just nice writing, this kind of final trial is...

Keith: Yeah. I linked Gon's very sad little face saying, [sadly] "Come on, let's do it together."

Jack: "Guys. Guys! We can—"

Keith: "Guys."

Jack: "We'll be fine! We can do the difficult path!" Gon, who doesn't understand time. [Keith laughs] His music is playing in his head but now in the minor key. They start fighting. The fighting is really lovely. There is so much movement and dynamism in this fight despite fairly limited animation. There are really good choices in camera movement. We have the camera kind of ducking and weaving instead of being still. The music is coming together. Everything is working really well to make this fight feel big and mobile, even if the actual amount of movement going on is not great, presumably because they have spent a lot of time animating fights in the early part of this arc. Anything we want to talk about before we make this really startling cut to three minutes left in the trial?

Sylvia: I'm good.

Jack: Okay.

Keith: I think it's—

Sylvia: Oh, wait, wait!

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: Hold on. I remembered another segment I had, which is...

Jack: Bing bing bing!

Sylvia: What He Watchin'? Where we talk about what he—Leorio—is watchin', because we get this scene of Leorio, while everyone's sleeping, watching something on the TV with his earbuds in, and I just want to know what you guys think Leorio was watching.

Jack: Yeah, I shared this screenshot earlier, and I said, "Me watching *Hunter × Hunter*," and posted Leorio.

Dre: Uh...

Sylvia: Which, I don't think he's watching *Hunter × Hunter*. That would be kind of weird.

Dre: No. He's watching the weather channel.

Jack: [laughs] Wow.

Keith: Everyone else is sleeping? He's watching something nasty.

Sylvia: Oh.

Jack: I think he's watching us make this show.

Dre: Yeah, I don't— I think if he was watching something nasty, he'd look all horned up.

Jack: This is why he looks kind of sour and studious, because he hears about how we keep calling him the stupidest man in the world.

Keith: Which is why he tried and failed to read that book. Self improvement.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Meanwhile, Kurapika reads— I think, in the 50 hours, they imply that he's read something like 15 books.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Oh my god. And you could so easily make Kurapika irritating. It could be like, “Oh, he’s holier-than-thou. He takes this time to—” Kurapika could be the irritating part of the “girls go to college to get more knowledge; boys go to Jupiter to get more stupider.” But instead, you’re like: good for you, Kurapika.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Nice one.

Keith: Yeah, nice one.

Jack: Leorio goes to Jupiter to get more stupider.

Keith: He doesn’t need even to go. He shows up, and they’re like, “What are you doing here?”

Jack: [laughs quietly] Sylvi, what do you think he’s watching?

Keith: “You’re already more talented—” Leorio going to Jupiter is like Killua stepping up to fight Johnness.

Jack: He is too— he’s more skilled at being stupid.

Keith: Yeah, he’s gonna no-sell Jupiter on their stupider. [Dre laughs]

Jack: What do they do on Jupiter to help you get stupider? I’ve always wondered.

Sylvia: Uh, trepanning, mostly.

Jack: Oh. [laughs]

Sylvia: Trepanation is huge on Jupiter.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, I see. Wow, that’s—

Keith: And bonking. Still do a wicked nasty bonk on ya.

Sylvia: Yeah. That's for cheaper.

Dre: Pretty sure that's what Gundam F91 is about, is about what they do on Jupiter to get stupider. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Mm. Okay, I see. Sylvi, did you have something in mind?

Sylvia: I think Leorio is watching *Naruto*, by the way. That's my answer.

Dre: Ooh, good answer.

Jack: Wow. Does he like it?

Sylvia: I think so? But I think he's one of those guys who's like, "Oh, Rock Lee should have done more."

Keith: Oh, he's a Rock Lee guy.

Sylvia: He seems like it to me, but I don't know.

Keith: Well, he is—

Sylvia: Maybe I'm wrong.

Keith: He is a Rock Lee guy. He's the guy that can't do anything, so he has to compensate. [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: So, yeah. That's why I think he either—

Keith: He's also kind of a pervert.

Sylvia: He'd either be a Rock Lee guy, or he'd hate Rock Lee for those reasons, you know?

Dre: Sure. He'd be, like, projecting?

Sylvia: It's one of the two, but I'm leaning more towards...

Keith: For representing himself?

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: How tall is Leorio?

Keith: I think he's, like, 6 feet. I think he's 6 feet even.

Sylvia: I have Leorio's canonical height.

Jack: Holy shit, Sylvi!

Dre: Oh shit.

Jack: We have to know.

Sylvia: And by that I mean I googled "*Hunter × Hunter* character height" and they gave me a list of them.

[1:30:04]

Jack: Oh my god! This is brilliant!

Keith: Oh, I see. I see this.

Sylvia: So, here's...

Jack: I was looking around for a tape measure.

Sylvia: Can I—

Dre: Hold on, hold on, hold on. We need to guess first.

Sylvia: Well, no, I— okay. You guys can guess, and I can also give you an additional

question.

Dre: Okay.

Sylvia: Which is “who do you think is taller between two characters” question.

Keith: Okay.

Jack: I am fairly tall, and as such, I would like to thank Sylvi for repeatedly blundering into the not understanding what is an average height.

Sylvia: This was years ago! You guys gotta let me live this one down! Come on! [laughs quietly]

Jack: Well, I also make this mistake constantly, Sylvi. [Sylvia laughs] Here’s the thing I’m saying. So, I don’t know that I can— I think I am taller than Leorio.

Dre: Wait, Jack, how tall are you?

Jack: I am between 6 and 6’1”.

Dre: Wow!

Sylvia: Uh, you are not taller than Leorio.

Dre: Whoa, really?

Jack: Are you taller than Leorio?

Sylvia: I am the exact same height as Leorio.

Dre: I was gonna guess Leorio’s like 5’10”, and then Kurapika’s like 5’8”, and then Gon and Killua are like 5’6”.

Sylvia: We have not met the canonical 5’10” character on this list yet. [Dre laughs]

Keith: Oh, I think I know the canonical 5’10” character.

Jack: Uh, so Leorio is 6'3"? 6'4"?

Sylvia: Leorio is 6'3", yes.

Jack: Wow.

Sylvia: And my question now is: is Hisoka taller or shorter?

Dre: Ooh.

Jack: I was wondering about this. I think that...now, mm...Hisoka is...shorter, just. Hisoka is between 6'1", 6'2".

Sylvia: Jack, you nailed it.

Dre: Wow.

Jack: After saying that I couldn't do this.

Sylvia: Hisoka is 6'2".

Jack: Wow! Hisoka is taller than me, and he would kill me with playing cards.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, no, absolutely.

Jack: Gon is 4 foot...5?

Dre: No, I'm gonna say he's, like, 5'4".

Keith: He's 4'10".

Sylvia: Gon?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Gon is 5'1".

Keith: 5'1"?

Dre: Okay.

Jack: Is this good radio? Listener.

Keith: Yes.

Dre: Yes.

Sylvia: I mean, you know.

Jack: Let us... [laughs quietly]

Dre: Don't question it.

Keith: The people who are listening to this want to hear this.

Sylvia: Also, uh, Keith, I'm not gonna tell you about who that spoiler— about what that character—

Dre: I know who it is.

Sylvia: —who's a spoiler's height is. However: super wrong. You're super wrong.

Keith: Really?

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: Well, it's the vibe. It's not really the real height.

Dre: No, no, no, no, no. I forget his name, but I'm gonna guess who it is.

Sylvia: Okay. While we're there, do you guys want to know Netero's height?

Keith: Yes.

Jack: Oh, yeah. Netero is the tallest. Netero is... [Sylvia laughs] Netero is 6...fuck it. 6'6". [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: I think that Netero is short. I think Netero is short.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I think Netero's 5'5".

Dre: I'm gonna say he's, like, 5'8".

Sylvia: You've all overshoot.

Dre: Wow.

Keith: Wow.

Sylvia: Isaac Netero, exam leader, is 5 foot 3. We stan a short king.

Keith: Wow.

Dre: Wow.

Jack: Wow, we stan a short king!

Keith: Holy shit.

Sylvia: He is 1 inch taller than Killua, according to this.

Keith: I would like—

Dre: Sylvi, can you...

Sylvia: Which I don't think lines up.

Keith: I don't think lines up.

Dre: I don't think that lines up either.

Keith: I gotta know who you meant is the 5'10" character.

Sylvia: It's a spoiler, so I'll put it—

Dre: Can you check my guess, Sylvi?

Sylvia: Um, I don't think that guy's even listed.

Dre: What? That's fucked up. That guy's great.

Keith: Uh, it's gonna be—

Sylvia: Listen, I'm looking at a, like, aggregated article here, you know?

Keith: My spoiled character, I cannot believe their height. Oh my god.

Sylvia: [laughs quietly] Right? Okay. We gotta move on.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I'll bring this back when—

Dre: Sure, sure, sure, sure, sure.

Sylvia: You know what? When these characters show up, I'll give you their height, Jack.

Keith: Yeah, we'll do height— we're on height watch.

Dre: Height watch.

Sylvia: And I've put the 5'10" in the spoilers.

Jack: Height watch.

Keith: Oh!

Dre: Oh! Okay.

Keith: I don't know. I don't—

Sylvia: I'm fine with it.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I mean, the height is fine. Like, I'm not...but I don't think that they feel 5'10" in the 5'10" way.

Sylvia: Well, this is...*Hunter × Hunter* once again making us challenge our preconceived notions of height and...

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

Sylvia: You know?

Jack: If I met any *Hunter × Hunter* character in the world, I would be afraid for my life, except Gon.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Well, no, Kurapika's nice.

Keith: What about Leorio?

Sylvia: Kurapika—

Dre: I would not be afraid around Leorio.

Sylvia: You don't have a spider tattoo, so you're gonna be fine with Kurapika.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: I would be afraid around Leorio, but we got into the reasons why about that earlier this episode.

Jack: [chuckles] Part one of this episode. [Dre and Keith laugh]

Keith: Okay. Leorio could, with one punch, knock all of our heads off.

Dre: Oh, sure. He's ripped as fuck.

Keith: But I just don't think that— I just don't think that he would.

Dre: I would also just say, “You smell like a stinky poo poo face,” and then he would just scream and fall over.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, yeah. Yes. I could—

Keith: He would challenge you to a fight to the death.

Jack: Yes. I am not the most erudite in an argument, but I could run rings around Leorio. [Dre laughs] We’re near the end of this episode, but I do want to jump back just a tiny bit to one of my favorite cute Kurapika moments. Oh, Jack’s favorite character update: after his actions, Killua is currently my favorite character.

Sylvia: Let’s go!

Jack: But there was a very cute Kurapika moment. They are all irritating each other and being unable to sleep, except Kurapika, who is lying with his eyes shut, but he is clearly not asleep, and he is laughing. He’s, like, chuckling silently to himself with his eyes shut.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Which I thought was a very cute Kurapika moment. Hisoka hears that there are only three minutes left, and he is sitting patiently, and then as he hears the door open, he cracks a tiny smile, the implication being that he has been curious and invested [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] in whether Gon’s team has made it through. We know that he has an investment in at least Leorio and Gon. He said that they passed, and so it’s— the impression I got was Hisoka wants to know how this has turned out, and so do I. At this point, I have no idea what is going to happen. What I have written down is, “The way they are going to do this is either they choose the extremely difficult one that takes 40 hours and somehow do it quickly, or they pick the easy one and get everyone through except Tonpa. There is no way,” I think to myself, [Dre chuckles] “only three people will make it through here.”

Sylvia: So, I have been watching this—

Keith: What if they fucking put his arms in one and his legs in the other and then took the four of them... [Sylvia and Keith laugh] And Tonpa's just hanging by his arms and legs?

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Dre: Oh, that'd be great.

Sylvia: So, I've been watching this with my girlfriend, who's never seen *Hunter × Hunter* before, and she called the solution for this, like, the second they started fighting about it.

Jack: Oh, that's amazing.

Dre: Wow.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: She's Gon.

Sylvia: She also got the, like, "Well, why don't they just throw Majtani off the edge?" thing, like, the week before we watched those episodes, [Dre laughs] and I was like, "Babe, I can't say anything about this."

Jack: [laughs] Although, we do actually get an answer to that. That would fail the trial. If Leorio throws— if Leorio throws Majtani to his death, that will disqualify them, I believe.

Keith: Why?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: We say earlier.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Jack: I don't know why. It's against the rules, but we do get it explained. Leorio works this out by being like, "I'm still gonna make the bluff," but the implication is that if he just kills Majtani, they will be disqualified.

Dre: Yeah, I think they explicitly say that.

Sylvia: It would be because he'd be interfering with [Dre: Mm-hmm.] Kurapika's match, and...

Jack: Kurapika's trial, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Would be killing the competitor in a deathmatch.

Keith: Oh, because I remember why he says that...there's a part where he says, like, "Oh, if I knock him over and he was..." Ah, I can't remember. There's a part where he's like, "I'm willing to take the risk of losing the last match," but I don't think it was about that. It was about something else, so maybe that just comes up twice.

Jack: But the door opens, and out of the door comes Killua, Gon, and Kurapika, and at this point, I thought, "Oh, this is really interesting. Leorio has failed the Hunter Exam, and we are going to proceed with Leorio being a main character but being essentially out of the running for being a Hunter," and I was like, "oh, that's really interesting," and then, down the corridor comes Tonpa and Leorio.

Keith: Yeah. It would be a fun twist to have someone who fails it sort of there the whole time.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, I mean, there's nothing that would mean that they couldn't be a character.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, hold on a second. How come you— what's the difference between someone who just says they're a Hunter and someone who actually is a Hunter? Couldn't I just lie about being a Hunter? We know that there are false Hunters, but...why do I need to do all this bullshit?

Keith: Um, maybe you don't. Maybe you could just lie. It seems like if you could— I'll say this. If you could just lie, you'd think that Hisoka would just lie and wouldn't bother with going through with it.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: You would think.

Keith: That would be my explanation if I didn't know what the truth was.

Jack: Hisoka's a weird freak. Yes, yes.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Very curious.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: But we did learn what Gon has done. Sylvi, do you want to tell everybody what your girlfriend figured out? [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah. So, in this room where there's the chains and stuff, we have— I believe someone says straight up, "It's like the examiners thought of every possible weapon you could have and put it in this room," and Tonpa, he starts...he just starts a fight. He's like, "I'm gonna make it through. I'm not waiting for us to vote. Let's fucking fight," and we get these two quick shots of one of the axeheads digging into the ground and then one of them hitting the corner of the doorway.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And both of the times, it breaks the— it sort of digs into the concrete, and we get this shot of Gon thinking, and then it cuts away, and what we find out— it cuts away to the stuff we talked about earlier, where it seems like three of them lost. And what we—

Keith: Yeah, they do something that *Hunter × Hunter* does really well, which is show

you someone noticing something. Like, unspoken.

Sylvia: Yeah, and then waiting to give you how they used that information that they noticed.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: And what they do is they voted to take the long way and then, using the weapons that were left in the voting room, smashed through the wall and took the short way.

Keith: Which was a slide that hurts your butt.

Jack: It's so funny.

Sylvia: It's so fucking good.

Jack: This is the most...what's this little kid's surname? Freecss?

Keith: Freecss.

Sylvia: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: This is the most Gon Freecss solution on the planet. This is Gon's Mistake, sort of. He— just hack through the wall and go the easier way.

Sylvia: He's—

Jack: I wrote down, "Gon uses his head, and he uses it as a battering ram." [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: Gon is one of those kids who, if he played Professor Layton, he'd do really bad, except for the puzzles that are, like, trick questions.

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: Yeah, he's very good at lateral thinking and quick thinking.

Sylvia: He's a lateral thinker! I said it last time.

Keith: Lateral thinker. We get another—

Sylvia: [sarcastic] Put him in a gifted class. [Dre and Jack laugh]

Keith: Another quick shot of, like, Kurapika— I love that Kurapika is sort of always mentally giving Gon credit and sort of quietly being impressed by Gon, which they do a great job of showing you how smart Kurapika is and then showing you being impressed— or showing you Kurapika being impressed, like, “Oh, wow, I can't believe Gon thought of that. I didn't think of that, and I'm the smart guy.”

Jack: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Although, he says, “Even under such pressure, you came up with this decision,” to Gon, and I don't know if Gon feels pressure. [laughs briefly] I don't think Gon thought— I think Gon was just like, “Tumty tumty tum, you know, I'm gonna solve this problem.”

Keith: I think he's feeling pressure. Look at his face in that last screenshot that I— I mean, the one before the most recent one that I posted, where he's so—

Dre: Yeah, I don't think— he wasn't happy.

Keith: Look how sad he is. To me, that's pressure. He's trying to figure out how to keep his friends from fighting, even if one of those people is Tonpa.

Jack: He does have big “this sign can't stop me. I can't read” energy.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: Yeah. But he sort of, like, downplays his ability, because the thing that he responds to Kurapika with is like, [laughs quietly] “Well, it took me an hour to think of that.”

Jack: Uh, no, it took us an hour to cut through the wall, right?

Keith: Oh, maybe that's true.

Jack: Still very funny, the idea of like, "Well, we did have to hack away at this thing, and it took us a while."

Sylvia: Yeah. They are— it isn't like, "oh, the wall was super weak, [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] this was like a planned thing." It's like, no.

Keith: Yeah, they really had to work at it.

Sylvia: They just noticed that these were strong enough to do that.

Keith: These are characters that could break through a wall that was easy to break through if it was easy to break through.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yes, absolutely. At which point, the narrator shows back up. I switched over to listen to the dub narrator, and you're right. He's great.

Keith: Yeah, he's great.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: He's really, really cool.

Keith: He's really good.

Jack: He's not cool enough for me to want to switch over completely—

Keith: No.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: But I do like him a lot.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Once again, shoutout to the dub of *Hunter × Hunter* 2011.

Keith: There's a lot of really great parts to that dub.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: I'm not a dub— I don't think the dub versus sub argument carries much weight at all [**Keith:** No.] other than when the dub is very bad. So, hey, if you're watching the dub: it's a good one. Don't feel weird about it.

Jack: Yeah. I watch a dub of *Sailor Moon* and like it a lot. I think I just kind of got stuck with the sub here after that scene earlier in episode one, when I was like, "You know what? I'm gonna watch the sub, I've decided."

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And I'm happy with that.

Keith: Unfortunately, for me, the sub Gon is, like, so phenomenal that it's hard—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: —for me to have the dub Gon.

Sylvia: That's my Gon.

Keith: But plenty of other characters I think are just as good and are interesting, sometimes in the same way, sometimes in their own way. I really like a dub when dubs are good, and I'm not a weirdo who thinks that that's super rare or crazy or whatever.
[Sylvia chuckles]

Jack: Yeah. No, I think that's probably the good way to do it. But the narrator comes back, and he says, "Gon has yet to face his toughest duel in the upcoming phases." Phases? We've got more to do?

Keith: Phases.

Sylvia: Well.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Tonpa answered, uh...

Final Thoughts [1:45:38]

Sylvia: Yeah. I mean, the Hunter Exam begins now. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Keith: Yeah, the real Hunter Exam does begin now, unfortunately. Tonpa did say that usually the exams are five or six phases.

Jack: And we've seen three? No. Three.

Keith: This is phase three, yeah.

Jack: Yeah, the end of phase three. Wow! Yeah, it is very funny to think back to Kurapika in the tunnel saying, "We don't know how long we're going to be running for," and kind of blowing out that thinking to the whole Hunter Exam, of like, [**Keith:** Right.] they don't actually— they know roughly how many trials there are, but as usual, Kurapika was really onto something when he was like, "We gotta think about our energy here."

Keith: Yeah, it's funny, like, I can't imagine anymore—I used to be able to imagine it, because it used to be my life—not knowing when the Hunter Exam ends? Like, if I— because, of the four of us, Jack hasn't seen it and could go like, this could be two more episodes. This could be eight more episodes. This could be 15 more episodes.

Dre: This could be the whole series.

Jack: It could be the whole series. [laughs]

Keith: Maybe you never stop taking the Hunter Exam.

Jack: I mean, maybe. Maybe! Maybe you don't!

Keith: Maybe you don't.

Jack: Would you take the Hunter Exam, Keith?

Keith: Maybe the chimera ants are the end of— are the last trial of the Hunter Exam.

Jack: [laughs] And as we all know, a chimera ant is...oh, I have a theory about what the chimera ants are, and I... [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: Do you want to say it?

Jack: I think it's wrong.

Sylvia: Do you wanna?

Jack: Yeah, I will say it. I'll say it, but I want to—

Sylvia: And, hey—

Keith: No one say! Hey!

Dre: No one say anything.

Sylvia: No one say anything in either direction.

Keith: No one say anything, or you'll be dealing with me.

Jack: Yeah, I've spoken about this off mic, and it's worth saying it on mic, [Sylvia laughs] in terms of, like, where our heads are at with this. I don't want to talk too much about the chimera ant arc, because people will start talking to me about it, and even in the guise of a fun coy spoiler, [**Keith:** Yeah.] I want to just hit it in the show when it happens. Here is what I think of in my head when I think of a chimera ant. A chimera ant

is a bug that can transform to look like a person, and it can transform to look like someone you know, and what the chimera ant arc is is it is basically playing *Battlestar Galactica* Cylons with a cast of characters we have come to love, as we begin to realize people have been replaced by or are switched out for or are being betrayed by chimera ants disguised as the main cast of *Hunter × Hunter*.

Keith: What a massive guess. That's a huge guess.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, that is a...and that is my only comment on your guess.

Keith: Yeah. It's my only comment. That is a big guess.

Jack: Okay. And that's all I'll say. Moving on from the chimera ant arc. We'll get there.

Sylvia: Listeners, don't say a dang thing.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah! Absolutely.

Keith: Zilch.

Jack: Well, we said this before when— when did we threaten to curse listeners?

Dre: Oh, I don't know.

Sylvia: Might've been the first episode.

Keith: In the first episode, yeah. I don't remember what they had to do—

Jack: No, on *Friends at the Table*, not on *Hunter × Hunter*. We have threatened to hex you if you spoil something for someone.

Sylvia: Oh.

Keith: Oh, I was not on the thing where that happened.

Sylvia: We've threatened to hex people a lot, Jack. [Jack laughs]

Keith: But we appropriated that early on in *Hunter × Hunter*, so.

Jack: Yeah. We've threatened to hex you before, and we will, and you won't like it.

Dre: Oh, we'll do it.

Jack: You will spend the rest of your life suffering misfortune [**Keith:** Yeah.] and wondering if that is the curse.

Keith: And if you're thinking, "Well, I was just considering spoiling something. I wasn't actually gonna do it," I've already hexed you. Yeah, that's right.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: The last bad thing that happened to you? That was me. I did that.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And if it was really, really, really bad: sorry. [Jack laughs quietly]

Dre: Yeah. That's what you get.

Keith: I don't control it. That's why it's dangerous.

Sylvia: You just cast it.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I just cast it.

Dre: Yeah. Uh, I'll block you on BlueSky. Take that. [Jack laughs]

Keith: [sarcastic horror] No! Dre, don't! Don't say that! [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: I'll rip— I'll do something a little less bad and rip your heart out Killua-style.

[Keith laughs]

Jack: Yeah, here's my question. Would you...

Dre: Mm-hmm?

Jack: ...do the Hunter Exam?

Keith: No. I would die.

Sylvia: Oh!

Dre: No!

Jack: I would not.

Sylvia: Absolutely! Come on!

Keith: I couldn't even find it. [Jack laughs]

Dre: I would walk 10 feet down that tunnel and say, "Nah. I'm good."

Jack: You would, Sylvi?

Sylvia: If I grew up in a world where I know that Hunters were a thing, I would be training for this shit my entire life! Are you kidding? [Jack laughs]

Dre: Okay, that's fair.

Keith: Is this the— this is the, like, *Star Wars* universe Jedi question of, like, wanting to be a Jedi, where I'm like, I get the impulse, but I also don't want to die, so.

Sylvia: Except cooler. Well, RIP to you, but I'm different.

Keith: Yeah, I guess. [Jack laughs]

Dre: It's true. Built different.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Where would you drop out of the—

Dre: I hope you don't get Leorio in your exam group. [Jack laughs quietly]

Sylvia: Me neither.

Jack: Where would you drop out of the Hunter Exam, Sylvi?

Sylvia: Wait, what was that?

Jack: Where would you drop out of the Hunter Exam?

Sylvia: Oh. Mm...let me think.

Keith: Or are you passing?

Sylvia: I mean, I'm passing.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Good for you.

Sylvia: I'm flipping my hair while I'm saying this.

Jack: Mm, mm-hmm. [Sylvia laughs] I'll give you the, uh...one of my sure, sure, sure, I think I saw, like, a little— something that was described as, like, a Hunter— or maybe I misattributed it as a Hunter mark. Killua had something that was, like, a little bracelet or a necklace or something. I think that's what they give you when you become a Hunter.

Sylvia: Ooh.

Keith: Ooh.

Dre: Interesting.

Jack: Uh...they might just give you, like, a fucking— what if you get to the end of the Hunter Exam and they give you a gun? [Keith and Sylvia laugh]

Keith: God. I'm laughing, because that's what they do. They give you a gun. Big gun.

Dre: Yeah, how'd you nail it?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: That's why the protagonist is called Gun.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Gun.

Dre: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Gun and Killua, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Gun Freak. He's called Gun Freak.

Jack: [laughs] Gun Freak. I think that might be us for this week. [Sylvia laughs] Is there anything else that we want to talk about?

Keith: I like this last screenshot where Leorio— I posted this shot of Leorio praising Gon for having saved everybody and gotten them all past and Killua sort of looking over like, "Huh? What's this? What is this positive, uh...what is this affirmation?"

Sylvia: [sighs] It's so cute.

Keith: "I don't understand."

Dre: Aw.

Jack: I get the impression that—

Keith: He just looks very confused by positive reinforcement.

Dre: [sighs] Buddy.

Jack: Gon has received positive affirmations in his life. He knows what this is like.

Keith: He knows what this is like.

Jack: I think Gon—

Keith: You can see him—

Jack: Aunt Mito— I get the impression that...

Keith: You can see him putting his head forward to receive it. I know what this is. This is a pat on the head. I'm a precocious child. I understand being pat on the head because I did a good job. Killua's like, "What is this? What's happening here?"

Jack: It's the *Arrested Development* joke when Michael gets hugged and goes, "What are you doing with your arms?"

Keith: [laughs] It's so good. God, I love that show. Oh my god. Oh, it's so funny.

Jack: "What are you doing? What's happening?"

Keith: What's happening?

Jack: But yeah, we will see you next time. What are we watching next time, Keith?

Keith: Oh, so that is a great question. It might be time to edit in what we're watching, because we have edited this down. I've already adjusted— if you're hearing this, I've already adjusted the last episode where I said this episode we were watching four episodes. That's no longer true. We changed things around for scheduling reasons. So, last episode was three. This episode was three. Next episode is either going to be two or three, and I don't know.

Dre: Oh.

Keith: And so I'm not gonna tell you, and so I'll tell you later and I'll edit it into this.

[cut]

Keith: Hi, it's Keith from the future here. I do know what we're watching next week. It's three episodes: episode 14, "Hit × The × Target"; episode 15, "Explosion × Of × Deception"; and episode 16, "Defeat × And × Disgrace".

[cut]

Jack: That sounds great.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: This was really fun. These were good episodes.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: These were really good episodes.

Dre: It's a good show.

Keith: The next four or five episodes? Phenomenal. Phenomenal.

Sylvia: Yeah, no, we're...

Keith: We're deep into shonen in the next—

Sylvia: I think I am just gonna say I really enjoy the rest of the Hunter Exam.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I cannot imagine what the next trial will be. It feels great to be watching a show where I might be able to predict some of the small moves but have no idea where we're going.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Is the next trial a violent trial or a thinking trial?

Keith: Do you want to know?

Jack: Yeah, just tell me. Violent or thinking?

Keith: Violent. Well—

Jack: Yes!

Dre: Kind of both.

Sylvia: Well...

Keith: But everything— it's both. It is both, but it is, at its core, violent.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Great. Okay. Cool.

Keith: It's *Hunter × Hunter*, so they do a lot of thinking during the violence. [laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, we get a little cutaway, and Kurapika breaks down, uh...you think Kurapika's good at explaining things, or you think Kurapika's good at just thinking them?

Keith: I think he's great at explaining things.

Dre: Yeah, I...

Keith: I think that Kurapika would be a really great teacher.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Sometimes his eyes go red.

Keith: But instead, he chooses a different path.

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: [laughs] Yes. You would think...this is, like, a germ of an interesting idea, but I'm putting it at the end of the episode, so I'm not gonna talk much about it. You could swap Leorio and Kurapika's goals, and it might make more sense. Leorio could—

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Eh.

Jack: Leorio is flighty and angry and could be pursuing revenge, and Kurapika is...has a strong interior voice, is thoughtful, is careful, [**Keith:** Yeah.] and would be a great doctor.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: But if you did that, then they'd both be straight. [Jack laughs quietly]

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: True.

Dre: That's true.

Jack: This is where the queerness lives in the character.

Keith: [laughs] Yeah, you just turn them into two normal-seeming guys.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Yeah, at that point, you've made some normal people.

Keith: Yeah. Is that it? That's everything? Anything else for today?

Dre: I think that's it.

Sylvia: Uh, I think so.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: Remember, if you want to keep us going, supporting the show...

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: [Friendsatthetable.cash](https://friendsatthetable.cash).

Keith: Yeah, there's no way of predicting what the Patreon looks like when this is out, if it has helped put money into the Patreon, if nothing has happened, if just slowly over time things are different because it's, you know, by the time this is out, it's gonna be, absolute minimum, like three months from now. But as of right now, we've slowly dipped under our \$30,000 goal for the show, which we are of course still doing, but we would love to be above that and more. The labor hours that go into making this show are fairly high. You know, three hours per episode, basically, of recording. Two to three, I guess, today. We were short on purpose today. Plus having to watch the whole show for all four of us. That's a lot of work.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Plus editing it, putting it up. So if you appreciate that, you like the show, go to friendsatthetable.cash. If you like Friends at the Table but you're not signed up on friendsatthetable.cash, go to friendsatthetable.cash.

Dre: Do that too, yeah.

Keith: Another great way to support the show is by going to Apple Podcasts or iTunes and rating and reviewing the show, giving us a nice five stars. That's a huge help.

Sylvia: And if you don't listen to Friends at the Table, maybe check out friendsatthetable.net.

Dre: Yeah, you should.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Distinct possibility that some of you are just here for *Hunter × Hunter*, [**Keith:** Yeah.] but we also do an actual play podcast that I like to think is pretty cool.

Keith: Yeah, I think it's really good. I think—

Jack: We make the best actual play podcast in the business.

Keith: Yeah, I think that's true.

Dre: That's fair.

Keith: I don't think— it might not be fair to say, but I think it is true to say.

Dre: No. Both.

Sylvia: I mean, listen, if you're making something and you don't think you're doing the best at it, you should...keep going until you do think you're doing the best at it.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: That's a very Gon attitude.

Keith: Yeah. That is.

Jack: That's a very Gon attitude.

Sylvia: Yeah, I'm...listen.

Dre: You're the Gon of podcasting.

Sylvia: I'm a bit of a Freecss myself.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I think it— you know, I think it says something about our taste, that we like this show so much, [Dre laughs] that that attitude would bleed into the actual play that we make.

Jack: Yes.

Dre: I really thought you were gonna say it says something about our taste that we like

Sylvi so much. [laughs]

Sylvia: I mean, it also does.

Keith: It also does.

Dre: But yeah, there's that too, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: That it's good taste. Everybody loves me.

Jack: While we're here, quickly...of course, Kurapika's approach to that would be: [pleasantly] Look, everybody makes shows at different levels and at different times. I'm sure that there are people out there that are doing things better than we do them. You know, there are people out there who are great, and we're doing better things than other people. [Sylvia laughs] It's a vibrant community.

Dre: Spider.

Keith: And that's why Kurapika could never have bashed the hole in the wall to win the tournament.

Dre: That's true.

Jack: Yes, absolutely. Leorio goes, "I don't know what a podcast is."

Keith: I don't know what a podcast is. All I know is doctors—

Dre: Oh, no. Leorio knows exact— Leorio says, "I don't know what a podcast is, but I do love Joe Rogan's radio show." [Keith and Jack laugh]

Jack: Leorio.

Sylvia: Leorio says he doesn't know what a podcast is but is still in my DMs for some reason.

Jack: Fucking idiot Leorio. God. Just, what a wild episode. Episode one— part one: Leorio. Part two: Killua kills a guy. Welp.

Keith: [crosstalk] Part three: everyone lives in a little apartment.

Sylvia: [crosstalk] Part three: Gon saves his friends. [laughs]

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. I will also say: you should go to Apple Podcasts, and you should rate this show five stars.

Keith: Yes.

Sylvia: Yes!

Jack: They give you five little stars that you can select, and if you don't fill them all up all the way, you're wasting the opportunity to see—

Keith: [crosstalk] We get punished.

Dre: [crosstalk] I'll die. I'll die.

Jack: Well, no, don't say that.

Dre: Nope.

Jack: No, no, no.

Keith: Oh, no, I'll kill Dre.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: [laughs] No!

Sylvia: No, listen, if we don't have a perfect five store— five score review.

Dre: Five stores.

Sylvia: Five star, five score, whatever. Listen, it's been a long podcast. I'm just saying:

we don't get five stars? I'm Killua ripping out Dre's heart.

Keith: Yep.

Sylvia: So.

Dre: That's true.

Jack: Sorry, Dre.

Dre: No, it's fine.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Think before you leave that four stars, okay?

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Don't be a hater.

Keith: Well, I'll make sure that we put it in your dead little hand after we take it. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: I'll give it back, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, we'll give it back.

Dre: Okay. Just make sure that my share of the Patreon goes to my now-widowed wife, please.

Jack: Oh. Jesus.

Keith: Eh, maybe. [quiet laughter]

Jack: I hope Dre doesn't die. [all laugh]

Sylvia: Yeah. I'm not actually gonna kill you, Dre. I'm sorry.

Keith: [sarcastic] Oh, yeah. Oh, way to make us feel bad for threatening to kill you, Dre.
Oh, sorry! [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: [sarcastic] Fine. I guess we'll just murder me instead.

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

Jack: God.

Keith: And who should we give your share to?

Sylvia: So please leave a five star review, because now it's my life on the line.

Keith: Okay. Yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, my share? Uh, just—

Dre: We'll use it to buy very nice microphones.

Sylvia: Just dig my grave up every month and put the cash in there.

Dre: Oh, sick.

Keith: Oh, very cool.

Sylvia: Yeah, I don't want...

Keith: It'll appreciate.

Sylvia: Yeah, exactly. Gold standard.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Cleopatra style. I dig it.

Sylvia: That's right.

Keith: Okay, that's the real end. Bye.

[song plays out]