

Demon World Theory - Hunter x Hunter ep. 44-47: Media Club

Plus S01E15

Transcriber: robotchangeling

Introduction	1
Summary [0:06:57]	8
Episode 44 [0:10:38]	13
[0:30:00]	36
[0:45:00]	56
Episode 45 [1:03:56]	73
[1:15:04]	87
[1:30:06]	107
[1:45:01]	122
Episode 46 [1:59:52]	142
[2:14:57]	159
Episode 47 [2:32:50]	179
[2:45:07]	193
[3:00:10]	207

Introduction

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

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 [Cohost](#) at @KeithJCarberry. You can find the let's plays that I do at youtube.com/runbutton. With me, as always, is Jack de Quidt.

[song ends]

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

Keith: Andrew Lee Swan.

Dre: Hey. You can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](#).

Keith: And Sylvi Bullet.

Sylvia: You can find me most places at [@SYLVIBULLET](#). It's Sylvi without the E, not spelled like the French way. I never say that. I should say that more. Also, you can follow the show on TikTok at [@friends_table](#), check out the YouTube at [friendsatthetable](#), and [twitch.tv/friendsatthetable](#). We've been streaming a lot more lately.

Keith: And if you want to support the show, you can go to [friendsatthetable.cash](#). You can check out the Friends at the Table podcast if you haven't listened to that before. And, third time returning guest, Austin Walker. Hi, Austin.

Austin: Hello. [@Austin_Walker](#) on Twitter, [@austin](#) on Cohost. While we're recording this, while we're recording this, literally while, [**Keith:** Yeah.] the COUNTER/Weight prequel arc is airing on Twitch.

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Austin: And is going into the feeds also.

Keith: Yeah, main feed.

Austin: The main feed. Which there's a chance you're listening to this and didn't know we were going to do a COUNTER/Weight prequel.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And so, maybe you were an old fan and you fell off the main show, but you heard we were doing a *Hunter × Hunter* show, and you were like, "I'll listen to that. That's fun," and you're like, "Oh my god, wow, COUNTER/Weight. I love those little freaks, and let me listen to that." So. That's going to be in the main feed.

Keith: That was a blast.

Austin: It was.

Keith: We've, like, done...we've never done, like, a return, [**Austin:** Mm-mm.] like a flashback content thing before, and I had a blast.

Austin: Me too.

Keith: You know, I don't know if there was something we were worried about, but I wasn't worried about it afterwards.

Austin: Uh, no.

Keith: I thought it turned out great.

Austin: I wasn't. I was confident we would all find those rhythms again, [**Keith:** Yeah.] and I think we did. I think we did a good job.

Keith: We watched four big episodes today. These were great, I think. This was a really hard season to, like, pace the episodes out, because you have this just massive block of huge important episodes right in, like, the end of the first third of the season, and like, sort of scheduling things around that was really difficult. There was a while where the second two episodes that we watched were going to be two all on their own.

Austin: Mm.

Keith: And I decided that we shouldn't do that. But yeah, I had a ton of fun watching these. We're officially in chain bastard city for these episodes. [Austin chuckles]

Sylvia: Fuck yeah, we are!

Keith: Austin, you maybe don't know, but Kurapika's theme for this season is called "Chain Bastard" in the official soundtrack.

Austin: Ah.

Keith: It is just called that. It's really great.

Austin: Good.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: That's fantastic.

Keith: It's one of those—

Sylvia: Keith, can we get a little “Chain Bastard”?

[clip of “Chain Bastard” begins]

Sylvia: Thank you.

Austin: Oh, yeah, “Chain Bastard”. I understand.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah. Oh, I also—

Austin: Yeah.

[music ends]

Keith: I got buttons for a lot of the sounds now.

Austin: Good.

Keith: ‘Cause the soundtrack—

Austin: Do you have a button for the end song that we could, like, deploy whenever

[**Keith:** Uh...] someone says something dramatic that we want to hold on for...? [laughs quietly]

Jack: Oh, with the [imitates theme]

Keith: No. No, no, the, like—

Austin: No, no, no, no.

Keith: The end credits song. No, I don't have that.

Austin: The end credits, yeah.

Keith: I've mostly been, like, songs that crop up that are new or that haven't come up in a while. Like when Leorio showed up for the first time in the last set of episodes, we had a lot of this one.

[clip of "I Ain't Yer Grandpa!" begins]

Austin: Right, sure.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Sure, sure, sure.

Keith: And this one.

[clip of "Dr. Warm-Hearted Miser" begins]

Austin: Yeah. I forgot about this one. This is a banger.

Sylvia: Every single one of these songs affects my walk cycle in a different way. [Keith laughs]

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: You put your hands in your pockets. You slouch down real low.

Sylvia: Yeah, mm-hmm.

Keith: Your legs get twice as long as your torso.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But I just need— have you considered ending the episodes by saying

something about, like, the future of the show and whether or not [Jack chuckles] you'll succeed at your dreams, and then play "Hunting For Your Dreams", the *Hunter × Hunter* ED2?

Keith: It is so good. "Hunting For Your Dreams" is amazing. I can't believe that they came up with an ending theme that is almost as good as the killer opening theme. I'll have to put that on here.

Sylvia: Almost as good, 'cause it's better.

Keith: [laughs quietly] Do you think the closing's better than the opening? That's fair.

Sylvia: I'm a huge, like, "Hunting For Your Dream" fan.

Keith: That's fair. Yeah.

Sylvia: It's, I think, my favorite song in the [cross] show.

Dre: [cross] It's pretty good.

Keith: [cross] World. Oh, show.

Sylvia: Not in the world. [Keith laughs quietly] I— whuh. My favorite song in the world is probably not from an anime.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Just to be fully honest.

Keith: It could have been.

Sylvia: It could have been, but I was not built like that.

Keith: If there was one of us here where it was true?

Sylvia: You're saying it's most likely to be me?

Keith: I think it's maybe most likely to be you.

Dre Really?

Austin: Mm...yeah.

Keith: I think so. Maybe—

Sylvia: Oh.

Keith: I don't know. It's not— I mean—

Austin: I don't think any of us are particularly likely, is the thing.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: No, no.

Jack: What if I reveal it's me?

Keith: That would be fun.

Austin: I would actually believe that most.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Really? My favorite song.

Austin: Because you can kind of wrap back around to where it's all just music, isn't it?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: It's all just music. I mean, this is— and this music is incredible. There were several points during this show, during this chunk of episodes, where I was like, the music is too good for this show. [laughs quietly]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: See? Yeah. Uh huh.

Jack: And I love this show.

Keith: And, to be fair, we have been getting a lot of messages from people being like, “By the way, did you know that a lot of the, like, biggest numbers are, like, ripoffs of old classical pieces?” Which I’m like, I guess that sort of makes sense. I haven’t listened to confirm.

Austin: I’d believe that.

Keith: Something from *Romeo and Juliet* is, like, actually...like, a production of *Romeo and Juliet* [**Sylvia:** Oh.] is actually one of the Phantom Troupe songs.

Jack: Yeah. It’s “Entrance of the Knights”, I believe.

Sylvia: Yeah, I was gonna say.

Keith: That’s the only one I remember off the top of my head, but there was, like, one or two others that people have sent messages about.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: And I haven’t done the work of putting it together so that I can read it out and put it on the show, except for this. This is the casual version, so I guess expect an update to that.

Sylvia: I don’t want to be too flippant, but being like, “Hey, did you know that this song is based off this other song?” is very much just being like, “Hey, have you heard of music?”

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: The concept of songwriting? [Jack chuckles]

Keith: And, well, especially once you get into the century range of talking about music.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Summary [0:06:57]

Keith: But anyway, back to the recap. We're in chain bastard city. [Sylvia laughs quietly] After watching Uvogin demolish a small army and taking on the Shadow Beasts, Kurapika decides, "Don't worry, I've got this. Let's capture him," and it works basically for a while. We follow the Nostrade bodyguards and their tail of spiders after an extremely, extremely quick dispatching of the Shadow Beasts, and get some detective work scenes that most roving murder gangs would be incapable of. [Jack chuckles] Kurapika finally makes good on his promise to meet up with Hisoka, who promises a mutually beneficial information exchange, which Kurapika agrees to. Unfortunately, while he's away, the Troupe shows up to bail Uvogin out of jail, and after a brief plot shift and vibe shift to Gon, Killua, and Leorio's side of things in order to connect the two disparate plots, we're back watching Uvo's hunt for the chain user, setting up the final episode that we're watching today, a showdown between Kurapika and Uvogin. These episodes don't stop. I mean, I guess they briefly stop [Sylvia laughs] to go check in on Leorio.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: [laughs quietly] Who explains—

Austin: Uh, I will say they stop so that we can get what at first blush looks like blackface Gon and Killua—

Jack: Yeah!

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: In the Hunterpedia, which I know what's actually happening there now. It's not blackface.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: I would love to know the deal with that.

Dre: What is happening there? I would like to know.

Keith: Oh. So, I missed the Hunterpedia, but I remember this from other times that I've seen this.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I forgot it was now, though. What's going on?

Austin: I think it was these episodes and not— so, I had to watch a bunch of catch-up episodes, and I'm pretty sure it was this set.

Jack: It is these. I have a note.

Sylvia: It was, yeah.

Austin: Okay, good. There's two of them in a row, and with no comment. Gon and Killua just show up in the Hunterpedia brown instead of, like, pale?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Instead of white?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You're like, what is happening?

Keith: Killua, the palest person of all time.

Austin: The palest person who's ever been. Yeah, exactly.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Like, you know, Gon's on a island. Gon has some tan already. My understanding, from reading on the internet—which, you know, don't trust the internet, but—is that this is, like, a not-that-uncommon gag in certain Japanese, like, anime and cultural things for media that comes out in the first couple of weeks of September,

'cause all of the kids are going to school sunburned from being out all summer in the—

Keith: Oh.

Dre: Oh.

Sylvia: Oh!

Keith: That's so weird! [laughs]

Austin: It's very weird.

Dre: That's so weird.

Jack: Does this explain the tadpole?

Keith: Worm?

Austin: The tadpole.

Jack: No. In all of these Hunterpedias, and I realize we're jumping right to the end of an episode here—

Sylvia: It's fine.

Keith: Okay.

Dre: It's fine.

Jack: But it's just good to get this sorted at the top. There is a small tadpole swimming in a tank to the right of Gon and Killua in the Hunterpedia.

Keith: Oh! Yeah.

Jack: It has, I believe, not been there previously.

Austin: Oh, yeah. That feels like, new school year, now we got a class pet. And in fact, they're in a classroom.

Jack: They're always in a classroom, right?

Austin: No, they're not, because episode— because I was just looking at the one before the one I was on. On one of these, they're— maybe it is a classroom still, but it's not, like, schoolwork on the board. It's, like, love letters.

Jack: Oh, it is, yeah.

Austin: It's like, "We love *Hunter × Hunter*!"

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: It's crayon drawings and things.

Austin: It's crayon drawings, versus the whiteboard, you know?

Keith: Right.

Jack: Yeah. Huh.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And now they've got a little tadpole.

Austin: And now they've got a little tadpole.

Keith: And now they've got a little tadpole. That's cute.

Jack: Well, I'm glad that—

Dre: They've got a little tadpole.

Austin: My favorite folk song. [singing] And now they've got a little tadpole.

Jack: [singing] And now they've got a little tadpole! Now they've got a little tadpole.

Austin: [singing] Little tadpole.

Jack: [singing] One day he is going to be a frog! [stops singing] All right, let's go. [Sylvia

and Austin laugh]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: That was beautiful.

Jack: Thank you, thank you.

Episode 44 [0:10:38]

Jack: So, I will say: very excited to see the Shadow Beasts arrive. We begin...
[laughter]

Keith: And depart.

Jack: Where we left off last episodes. [laughs]

Austin: [laughs] Yeah! Grand opening, grand closing.

Sylvia: I was literally about to say that!

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: One night only.

Jack: For Shadow Beasts.

Dre: How many episodes did we spend, like, hyping up the Shadow Beasts just to have them just destroyed?

Keith: Oh my god.

Jack: Well, we hyped them up only for one episode, but we were really excited about them, and it's so funny. [Sylvia laughs] Let's not beat around the bush here. Not only do the Shadow Beasts that we saw get introduced last time—Rabid Dog, Leech, Porcupine, and Worm—all get killed by Uvo—

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: in some of the goriest death scenes we've seen so far.

Sylvia: It fucking rules.

Jack: They were fantastic.

Austin: Yep.

Keith: They live just long enough to explain what each of their powers are.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Fail to use them effectively and then die.

Jack: And then in—

Sylvia: Just like me. [Jack laughs quietly]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: A real moment of restraint from Togashi, because I think he realizes that it is a funnier joke than what he usually loves to do, which is exhaustively explain a bunch of freaks' powers.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: The entire rest of the Shadow Beasts [**Keith:** Yeah.] get killed primarily off screen, with the exception of one person.

Keith: No new names and, like, one new— one line.

Austin: Well...as I said before we started recording, I was going to add some new names [**Keith:** Okay.] to the “to discuss this episode” list of names.

Sylvia: Oh.

Austin: Which you've explained this, presumably. You've explained that you've added this big list of names, to listeners in the previous episode?

Keith: I think it's come up on, like—

Sylvia: I'm pretty sure.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Okay. You have a list of, like, 20 names of people or 12 names or something of characters who've come up this arc. Well, guess what? The *Hunter × Hunter* wiki has guesses [Dre: Uh huh?] at the other names of the Shadow Beasts. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Sylvia: I love it.

Austin: Because none of them get introduced.

Keith: Great.

Austin: And they are: Fish??

Keith: [laughs] I love the question mark. Double question marks.

Austin: Double question marks. Hedgehog?? Which is weird, because we already got Porcupine.

Keith: We already have Porcupine.

Dre: Mm-hmm. [Jack laughs quietly]

Austin: Mule?? And I don't think Mule is right at all. I think Mule is way off.

Dre: Is that what the kids are doing?

Keith: I don't think Hedgehog is right either.

Dre: Isn't that what the looksmaxxing kids are doing? They're muling?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. They're muling. Frog?? and Bat?? I think Bat might be right.

Keith: Bat is right.

Sylvia: Bat's correct.

Keith: You see bat wings.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, that's probably right.

Keith: You see the wings.

Austin: You see the wings.

Sylvia: I think Frog is also correct, just based on the hands, you know?

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Like, I get that one.

Austin: Those are big frog hands.

Keith: It has kind of a froggy look.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Sure.

Austin: It is kind of a froggy look. It is kind of a froggy look.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: These Shadow Beasts are destroyed with a real— well, the first four are destroyed [**Austin:** Yeah.] with a real kind of verve, and I think I'd like to start there, as we go from—

Keith: You want to— oh, sorry, the first four. Right, yes, gotcha.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Something really interesting happens here, where it is as though Togashi and the animating, the anime team are painting with a very broad brush. They're operating on a kind of macro scale, when we see Uvo massacring, you know, 150 mobsters.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Where we have a few scary moments. You know, we see him throwing a pebble at a sniper on a hill, but usually, he's just wailing on them in, like, a mid shot.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And there is something overwhelming about that scale of death, but it is as though in, you know, zooming the camera in to what is set up to be a really intimate, you know, sort of like four-on-one fight between these Shadow Beasts and Uvo, Uvo gets the upper hand immediately, and then the fight essentially turns into, like, a slasher movie.

Dre: Mm-hmm.,

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: This very intimate series of kills, as Uvo dispatches the Shadow Beasts one by one.

Keith: It's funny, because we— so, what just came out on the Patreon, for anyone listening to this that's looking for more Media Club Plus, you can go to the Patreon, you can go to the Patreon now and find, at the time of recording, two bonus episodes, both covering *Dragon Ball*, that we recorded about a month and a half ago. The second episode just dropped, and we got to watch, like, a five episode long fight, where Goku fights the same guy for five episodes, and it is impossible not to be drawing contrast to

how Togashi does things, where like, fights can last an episode, but fights can also last half a scene or a quarter of a scene or one second or one move.

Austin: I'm gonna drop a relevant tweet I saw yesterday. This says, "Fuck it. Here's the entire Goku versus Frieza fight." It is 173 minutes. [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: Jesus Christ!

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, man.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: It's just episode after episode after episode of—

Austin: Which also, for Jack who doesn't know this already, a key part of that fight takes place over five minutes of their lives.

Keith: Of real time. Right, of their time.

Austin: But takes, like, four episodes of the show. [Austin and Keith laugh]

Jack: Oh my god.

Sylvia: That's ridiculous.

Jack: That's almost like someone making a podcast about *Hunter × Hunter* where it takes [Austin chuckles] us longer to talk through an episode than it does to watch it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Right. Yes. They're working on an even more ridiculous time scale than we do in *Dragon Ball Z*. [Sylvia laughs quietly]

Jack: There is—

Austin: There is something...

Sylvia: You know.

Austin: Right, which is like, part of the reason that the Uvugin stuff before can only hit so hard is it's painting in really broad brush strokes, and if he's not under any threat, he actually doesn't look that dangerous, you know?

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah. Because it's like, you know, me playing chess against toddlers. I can't play chess, but I'm gonna beat the toddlers, because they don't know how chess works. That is Uvo.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And we're not gonna learn anything about your acumen at chess.

Jack: No. Not at all. No, I'm just moving the pieces around. [Sylvia laughs] And there is a moment towards the start of this fight where we get some genuine threat, who are real nasty pieces of work.

Dre: They are awful.

Sylvia: They are such nasty little freaks.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: They are creepy.

Austin: Who's everyone's favorite of this first set?

Sylvia: Porcupine.

Austin: What's Porcupine's ability? Describe—

Sylvia: Porcupine's ability is that he—

Austin: And what's Porcupine look like?

Sylvia: One, Porcupine is a little bald man, looks completely hairless.

Keith: Porcupine looks like Krillin.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: He does look like Krillin!

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Like if Krillin aged poorly.

Dre: He looks like Krillin had a real rough go of things, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. [quiet laughter]

Keith: A Krillin that would get shot down by Android 18.

Sylvia: Yeah. Oh, definitely.

Austin: Krillin who goes to the mafia instead of becoming a cop.

Sylvia: Mafia baby!

Austin: Mafia baby.

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Keith: This is the true mafia baby.

Dre: It all comes back.

Austin: True mafia baby.

Sylvia: And Porcupine's ability is: surprise, I do have hair, and I can shoot it out of my body, and it's very sharp, and also I can control it at will.

Jack: Great.

Keith: So he can stab but also make it bouncy.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Make it, like, dense and block things.

Austin: Sorry, I just saw 1999 Porcupine.

Jack: Oh, yeah?

Sylvia: Please.

Dre: Oh.

Austin: I think he has a little— you know who he's got a little bit in him is Charlie Brown.

[Keith laughs]

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Porcupine had hoes.

Austin: Porcupine had hoes.

Dre: Yeah, Porcupine had hoes.

Keith: He has Charlie Brown hair.

Austin: He does have Charlie Brown ho— hair. [chuckles] And Charlie Brown hoes.

Dre: I like his little shirt.

Keith: And he looks like Charlie Brown, the world's most depressed nine-year-old. This looks like the adult that Charlie Brown would grow up into.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: Does this make Rabid Dog Snoopy? [Keith and Jack laugh]

Dre: [imitates Peanuts theme song]

[Austin and Dre laugh]

Jack: Porcupine has a really great mannerism where he ends all his sentences with a little confirmation for himself.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Yup. Yup.

Jack: You know, he says things like, “I can manipulate my body hair, you see?” or “I can manipulate my body hair, yup, yup.”

Austin: Yup.

Sylvia: The voice actor does a really nice cute, like, hum thing.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Like a little, like, “mm-hmm” after everything.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And I think translating it to “yup” is a really good affectation. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: There's a really good punchline to this, where as he realizes that his goose has been cooked and he is about to die, he's like, “My hair will protect me from this. Yup, yup, yup.”

Austin: Aw.

Jack: And then he just gets got completely. My favorite of the Shadow Beasts is Leech, who is a Junji Ito character.

Dre: Ah.

Austin: [sighs] It's so gross. It's so gross!

Keith: Leech is gross.

Sylvia: It's so grody.

Dre: It's probably the grossest thing we have seen yet in this show.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. He's— and he is shot like a Junji Ito character as well, that way that Ito will, you know, fill frames with people's faces. There's this overwhelming sort of weight of flesh and eyes and horror.

Austin: Uh, weighted people do not do well in these episodes, let me tell you. If you wanted a show that doesn't treat, uh, bodily roundness as grotesque, you got the wrong show.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: In any way. Not a single larger character in this show has been treated well.

Austin: I guess Melody is sort of round? But...

Keith: Yeah, Melody. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: But even Melody is like, [**Austin:** Yes.] Melody's body has been shattered as a result of a pact with the Devil.

Dre: Yeah, she's a result of maiming from the Devil.

Austin: Yes, exactly. Yeah.

Jack: But yeah, Leech bites you and injects a bunch of leeches into you through his saliva.

Austin: Ugh.

Sylvia: Ugh. [chuckles]

Jack: Which will hatch inside you.

Keith: Yes, and surely kill you from the pain.

Jack: Yep. Surely. This sort of—

Austin: Unless you drink a lot of beer.

Jack: Unless you drink a lot of beer and pee all the time.

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: I kept waiting for the leeches to be, like, a problem for Uvo, but [**Sylvia:** No.] it is a very funny joke that the problem for Uvo is the chain bastard, not, you know.

Keith: Right, Uvo has one problem. [Austin chuckles]

Jack: Then we have— oh, Dre, who is your favorite? Have they been mentioned already?

Dre: Uh, it's porcupine man.

Jack: Yeah. Porcupine's great.

Austin: Yeah, it's hard to beat Porcupine.

Keith: Leech is too much of a freak. I don't—

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I don't love the horrible slug tongue. I don't like to see it. I think—

Austin: Well, and it's gross because it—

Jack: I thought Leech was great.

Austin: The way it works is his power really only works if Rabid Dog can get to you first.

Keith: Right.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Because Rabid Dog is just run fast bite hard.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: They're friends, and I think that he's communicated that to Rabid Dog, Austin, and Rabid Dog has said like, "Look, buddy. You know, it means a lot that you'd say that, but I can't do what I do without you, you know?"

Austin: Right, right.

Jack: "I have to bite them, but I couldn't—" I think they know that they're tight.

Sylvia: That's beautiful.

Keith: I think I'm gonna have to go Porcupine.

Jack: Porcupine is great.

Dre: So—

Austin: No one here for Worm? No one's out here talking about Worm?

Dre: I do like Worm's little tummy.

Keith: I like Worm...

Sylvia: No, I don't like Worm.

Keith: I like that Worm is dedicated to his job.

Austin: Mm.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: He's first on the scene.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: He's last to go out, and he's, you know, he's warning his friends, like, "Hey, send the rest of the Shadow Beasts." It didn't help, but.

Sylvia: I'm sorry for what I'm gonna say, but Worm, to me, when I look at Worm, my brain goes: Mr. Hankey from *South Park*.

Austin: Oh, I see.

Dre: No, I can see that.

Sylvia: It's mostly the head shape, but it's unfortunate.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: And it really drags the character down. Which is their ability, I guess.

Keith: This is not a comparison I have. I don't— I've never—

Sylvia: It's just a little poo.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I can see it.

Dre: I have a question. What exactly is Leech's, like, Nen power? Because he said he, like, breeds the leeches, so it's not like these are Nen leeches. They're real leeches.

Austin: No, but—

Sylvia: Maybe it's the tongue thing?

Dre: Yeah, is it like...

Keith: Having a body that can store leeches in it?

Dre: Yeah, is it like he's—

Sylvia: That's probably it.

Austin: It's the tongue, right?

Dre: He used Nen to create his weird tongue organ thing?

Austin: Oh, I hate this.

Keith: Yeah, maybe the tongue changes, 'cause he doesn't look like he has that tongue in his face the whole time.

Dre: That's true.

Sylvia: Of all the things I expected us to, like, linger on, this wasn't one of them. [Jack laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Well, we don't have to. It's nasty.

Austin: I do appreciate it in the sense that's like, yeah, Nen is gross. Nen can get gross.

Keith: Nen is gross. It's weird.

Austin: We don't all get, like, cool chain bastard powers.

Keith: Right.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: It's so cut and dry when you're looking at the chart, but then you get in [**Austin:**

Right.] the real world, and there's Worm and Leech.

Jack: This is what Austin came on to say last time, right?

Keith: Yes.

Austin: It is!

Keith: Yes, this is why Austin's on this one this time too.

Austin: Well, and that's the thing, is like, all these motherfuckers, you'd look at them and be like, "Well, they gotta be Specialists." No. Like, none of them are Specialists, actually.

Dre: No.

Austin: They're all just doing a different type of Manipulation or Enhancer.

Keith: I wonder if we'll meet a Specialist today.

Dre: We do.

Austin: I wonder if we'll meet a Specialist today. Who could say?

Jack: So—

Keith: I knew, Dre! I was lying!

Dre: Okay. Well, I don't know. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: It's okay.

Jack: Let's just, you know, move through these with the kind of efficacy and speed that Uvogin does.

Keith: I will call out a name.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And someone can tell me the exact way that that person dies.

Jack: Okay.

Sylvia: Okay.

Dre: Okay.

Keith: Okay.

Jack: And it's worth saying this is within about seven minutes of— this is within a total period of about seven minutes.

Keith: Right, they show up.

Sylvia: If that.

Keith: The deaths happen within about two minutes, even. Worm.

Jack: Exploded with a nuclear bomb.

Dre: [cross] Yeah, Uvogin punches—

Austin: [cross] That's not true, 'cause doesn't Worm survive that to the very end?

Jack: That's true.

Dre: Well, but then he dies.

Jack: That's what kills him in the end.

Keith: I think— he survives it, I think, long enough for the scene to end and to call the buddies and then, I assume, dies of his injuries.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Definitely dies. His face was permanently smushed.

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Oh yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You're right. The nuclear bomb punch would have probably— which is the most DBZ we've gotten yet.

Jack: Oh yeah, it really is.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Absolutely.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, I mean, I compare— last time we recorded—

Austin: It's called the Big Bang Impact, right?

Sylvia: Yes.

Austin: Which is just a—

Sylvia: I mentioned that Uvo looked like a Saiyan, last time we recorded.

Austin: Yes. Yes.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: And like, I think they go even further in that direction.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: It is fun though, because then we get to see that punch, and it is like— it is almost— it is like a less impressive version of what Tien does in that fight [**Austin:** Mm.] with Goku where he destroys the ring.

Jack: Yeah. It's Tien Shinhan destroying the ring, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: At this point in my notes, and I'm just— [laughs quietly] I'm rereading through my notes for the first time. Before I knew how this scene was going to go down, I wrote down, "Not the best start by the Shadow Beasts." [all laugh]

Keith: I also— we sort of papered over this, but I like that at the very beginning Shalnark says, "They're here," which is great, because it's kind of unclear why the spiders sort of stop their escape in the balloon, and it seems like, based off of sort of Chrollo's suppositions of how things must have gone down, they are trying to lure out who they can only assume are the powerful Nen users working for the mafia that must have figured them out, and that totally is what happens. They do show up, and they're like, "All right, time to play cards."

Sylvia: Didn't they know that someone— didn't someone fitting Owl's description, like, didn't they know that that person robbed the place?

Keith: Oh, they did know about Owl.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: They know about Owl. Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, so, to me, it was they're trying to bait the Shadow Beasts out so they can find out where the treasure got to.

Keith: Oh, yeah, they were definitely trying to bait Owl out. I just had forgotten that they— I forgot they knew specifically about Owl. I don't know if they knew about the Shadow Beasts as a whole, but they definitely knew about Owl.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: 'Cause, yeah, that happened in the last set of episodes. Yeah, the other thing to say about this is that Uvo's like, "I've got this." Everyone else is playing Go Fish, and

like, sort of not watching and vaguely commenting on what's happening. It's very funny.

Sylvia: It's really good.

Austin: The vibes of these motherfuckers.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Shalnark's absolutely happy-go-lucky.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I love Shalnark.

Jack: I am becoming increasingly afraid of Shalnark. [Austin and Sylvia laugh]

Keith: Oh yeah, Shalnark is terrifying. There's a lot to say about Shalnark in these episodes.

Jack: Shalnark is the one who I described when I first saw him as, like, a little *Dragon Quest* boy.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: I would also like to extend that to he is a background character in a *Dungeon Meshi* episode.

Austin: Yes.

Dre: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: You know, he's an early— he's in a party. He gets killed by a basilisk or something.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Except when we talk about Shalnark's affect as being frightening, almost every time he appears, he has just had this placid friendly sort of, like—

Dre: Well, he's just— yeah, he's chilling.

Jack: Yep, here we go. I'm hanging out.

Keith: He has one of my favorite lines later on in another episode. He's talking to Uvo, who's like, is claiming to not like money, and if he wants something he takes it, and Shalnark is just like, "Wow, that's awesome. You're the model thief!" and it just, like, feels...it sounds totally genuine, but there is something there. I'm like, is he— I can't tell if this is real or not.

Austin: You can hear it in Keith's impression just now of Shalnark. I watched these episodes with Janine Hawkins from Friends at the Table, and she heard Shalnark talking and was like, "That's a Goku. He sounds like a Goku."

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: "Wow, you're the model thief!"

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: You know? Like, he's just out here to have a good time. He's impressed by people's acumen, whether that acumen is in cards or in arm wrestling or blowing a nuclear hole into the ground with your punches.

Keith: But it's hard to say if there's a deep hidden cynicism [**Austin:** Right.] because of how genuine he seems.

Jack: Well, there's a frank amorality.

Austin: Right.

Dre: Right.

Keith: Right, because he also is in a roving gang of murderers. [laughs]

Sylvia: Well, like, this kind of becomes the thing, is like... [sighs] I guess ideology but, like, the ruleset as well that the Phantom Troupe operate on skewing their worldview.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Like...I don't know. I feel like that's a big thing with when [laughs] later on with Nobunaga, the like...

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: You can't raise your voice at other members and stuff.

Keith: Yeah, you're not allowed to snap at another Troupe member.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Well, like, and I think part of the thing it's worth maybe saying here is, like, part of maybe— we don't have their full worldview at this point, right?

Keith: No.

Sylvia: No. Yeah.

Austin: Here's what we know, is they killed a bunch of mafia people. At this point, we haven't seen them kill...

Sylvia: And that they did a genocide.

Austin: Oh, did they do a gen— oh, right, the Kurta Clan.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: They killed everyone in the Kurta.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, I guess that one's pretty...that one's pretty bad.

Sylvia: That is, like, very important to remember.

Dre: That seems pretty bad.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's a pretty bad one.

Keith: We get these flashes of, you know, total sort of, like, emotionless killing.

Austin: Right. Which is the heart of Kurapika's question about them, in a way.

Keith: Right. Yes.

Austin: Is like, how do you do this without feeling anything about it?

Keith: Right. Like, why do you do this? What is— like, do you remember innocent people that you've killed? You know.

Austin: Yes.

Keith: And stuff like that, which we'll get to later. And we get— we see them killing people for no reason in an episode later. There's just, like, a guy that they just kill him to steal his beer.

Austin: Uh huh. They do do that.

Keith: And treat him, like, very disrespectfully, but there's also this, like, knowing where they have, like, a...they say out loud, like, "Oh, it's a shame that that person was there," or like, "Oh, that person was unlucky that they got the worst of—" You know, Feitan has this line about the guy that he tortures, "He had the worst luck of anyone today."

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Like, they can put themselves in the shoes of their victims enough to know: wow, it really sucks to have to come across us, huh? And they treat each other with such, like, a familial care.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah. They're on the inside, you know?

Keith: It's so bizarre. [laughs quietly]

Austin: We then do know enough to say what I was gonna say and then walked myself back from, which was like, [**Keith:** Okay.] when you are this nihilistic, like, everything becomes a place where pleasure could happen, [**Keith:** Yeah.] where you could get joy from killing, 'cause none of it fucking matters anyway, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And at that point, like, take care of your own and, you know, get off on killing hundreds of mafiosos and stealing that guy's beer, you know?

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

[0:30:00]

Jack: This is where I like it when they are translated as bandits instead of thieves.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: And that shows up a few times in the subtitles in the translation that we have,

which really does get across that feeling of, like, a band. They are this destructive roving band who are making sure things are good inside. You know, they hang out. They look out for each other. But yes, there is that destructive nihilism that allows them to just sort of be like, "Well, you know, this is just the way the world is. We are stronger than you."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Another important thing, as we're talking about the morality and all of this around the Phantom Troupe is we know at least some of them are also Pro Hunters.

Sylvia: Yep.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, we do. We sure do.

Austin: We do know that.

Dre: Hunter organization seemingly doesn't have a problem with that, so...

Austin: They got through the test.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: What are you gonna do?

Sylvia: I mean, Hisoka, right?

Keith: Right, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Well, and I assume Shalnark, 'cause Shalnark's on the Hunter website.

Keith: Shalnark has access to the Hunter website, yeah, and is telling Uvo, like, "Hey, you should really become a Pro Hunter. It's really convenient." [Austin laughs] And, you know, these are the kind of people that the hardest things about the Hunter Exam would

be having to be bored for five days.

Jack: Yep.

Dre: Right.

Keith: Like, they're just— that's the position that they're sort of in. If we remember the game that we were just playing: Leech.

Jack: Uh...

Sylvia: Oh!

Austin: Is your favorite?

Keith: No.

Sylvia: Oh, no, Leech...

Dre: Oh, no.

Austin: Oh, the other game. The other game.

Sylvia: My favorite way to go. Leech gets their head bitten in half by Uvo.

Keith: Right. Uvo has—

Austin: Because...

Keith: Yeah. Go ahead.

Austin: Uvo has been poisoned.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: By Rabid Dog, the neurotoxin that's paralyzed him.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Right, but didn't get the face. Only got the neck down.

Sylvia: From the neck down, yeah.

Keith: Only got the neck down, yeah.

Dre: I feel like it was, like, intentional, because they were like, "Well, we want to be able to, like, hear you scream or whatever while we kill you."

Keith: Yeah, he says he likes to keep them able to, like, feel pain and fear.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: And then Shalnark is like, "I'm impressed that his teeth were able to cut through Uvo's skin. I guess he likes to torture people, you know? Keeps them..." Just, you know, Go Fish. [Austin laughs quietly]

Sylvia: My first note for this entire set of episodes is, "The Phantom Troupe are horrible little freaks, but they're my horrible little freaks."

Austin: Mm.

Dre: Yeah. [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: That is truly how I feel about all of this shit. Like, they are so just, like, cartoonishly charming to me for some—

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Like, just, you know, my sensibilities and such.

Dre: They're also, like, weirdly deuteragonist-coded, I feel like.

Keith: Yes, they totally are, yeah.

Austin: Oh yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, absolutely.

Keith: If they stopped the murder, they'd be likable, mostly.

Dre: Probably.

Austin: I think that they're likable—

Dre: And hey, even if they just only murdered the bad people.

Austin: I think that they happen to be likable already, and that's scary.

Dre: That's part of the problem.

Keith: Sure.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: That is— I'm with Austin on this one.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: That is my big read on them.

Keith: Well, I'm transmitting them into a more real place.

Austin: Right, sure.

Keith: Not likable on the screen, but likable in a way that I would like someone.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Right, right.

Sylvia: I guess the thing with the Phantom Troupe is that they kind of represent— they

have the same worldview as the Hunter Association.

Keith: Yeah, sure.

Sylvia: When it really comes down to it, which is that, like, if you're powerful enough, you can get away with this stuff. [Austin laughs] If you can pass the Hunter Exam, you can't get tried for murder, and like, you get all these benefits and shit like that.

Jack: Ride a bus— you have a special bus pass.

Sylvia: Yeah, like, literally, it's like, they're like, well, they're just skipping the paperwork.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah, they are, in a way that is more literal than, I think, often this gets used, they are two sides of the same coin.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yes, very much so.

Keith: They really are kind of the shadow of the other.

Jack: It is also much easier to join them, in theory. The process is much less complicated.

Keith: Oh yeah, it's way clearer, yeah. Although they seem to be hard to find.

Austin: Well, except that you have to kill one of them.

Keith: Right.

Dre: [cross] Well, unless the other one previously died.

Jack: [cross] Oh, but have you see the Hunter Exam, Austin?

Austin: Yeah, I did see the Hunter Exam. You never had to fight Uvogin.

Jack: Yeah, that is true.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And—

Dre: Well, only because Uvogin wasn't there.

Austin: Right, but if Uvogin was there and he killed you, he wouldn't get to become a Hunter, so there are, like, slightly different rails on the edges.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: There can only be, what, 13 spiders?

Jack: Yep.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yes.

Jack: Uh, 12 plus Chrollo.

Austin: Right. So, but there are hundreds, thousands of Hunters? So I think it's easier to become a Hunter, by nature of you don't have to kill one of the 13 baddest people alive. [Jack laughs]

Keith: But it's less circuitous.

Sylvia: Pockle couldn't become a Phantom Thief, you know?

Austin: This is what I mean.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: We've seen other Hunters. They wouldn't fucking make the cut.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Like, the fact that...

Dre: Oh, sure.

Sylvia: Like, I feel like, more than anything—

Austin: We've seen one Hunter who can, and we're gonna talk about him today. [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: It's my boy, the chain bastard.

Keith: Well, we've got...you know, the Shadow Beasts that we've met, these are also all people that would have breezed through the Hunter Exam, [**Dre:** Yeah.] are probably themselves pro Hunters. You know, if they're not, they could pass it with their eyes closed.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And still the gulf between them and the Phantom Troupe is, like, massive.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Right.

Keith: It's an ocean.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: Which is the third organization here to think about, in terms of worldbuilding stuff, is like, where's the mafia, the many mafia— the 10 mafia families fit into this?

Sylvia: The mafia community?

Austin: The mafia community! Every time.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: The mafia community is so funny.

Sylvia: Or just the community.

Austin: Sylvi. Sylvi. Sylvi, every time that they say, “the community,” I think about AJ Styles.

Sylvia: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Austin: Uh huh. We are linked up.

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Yeah. Yeah. No, I'm so glad.

Austin: Don't worry about it, non-wrestling fans.

Sylvia: I haven't made that reference on the show, I don't think, but...

Austin: Okay, good.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: It's very— the mafia community.

Sylvia: The mob community?

Austin: [laughs] The mafia community is the funniest thing in the world. The fact that they, like...and to fit into this, into the world that already exists, it's like, them existing does change what it means to be a Hunter, in a way?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Because you start throwing around numbers for money that it doesn't matter that you have a Hunter's License. Gon and Killua and Leorio are still fucking broke. They can't go to [Keith: Right.] the mafia auction and buy a copy of Greed Island with the money they have. It doesn't matter that you can go to school for free.

Sylvia: They are millionaires.

Keith: It does cut both ways.

Austin: They are millionaires, but they're not billionaires.

Sylvia: No, that's true. That is true.

Keith: It does cut both ways, because, you know, all that money and all that exclusivity and even the knowledge of Nen at the higher levels of the mafia, [Austin: Yes.] it can't get you 10 Shadow Beasts that can fight one Phantom Troupe member. [Austin laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: No.

Keith: And let me tell you: those guys are out there. People that can fight the Phantom Troupe, they're out there.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: But the mafia doesn't have access to them, or it doesn't have, uh...it doesn't have retainer on them.

Austin: That's right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: They've briefly contracted Kurapika without knowing that Kurapika can do this necessarily.

Keith: Right. This is a mistake.

Sylvia: [laughs] Without knowing that they have the chain bastard in their midst.

Dre: And actually Kurapika is more competent than anyone else in the entire mafia.
[laughs]

Sylvia: Absolutely.

Austin: And you couldn't keep Kurapika on retainer, like you're saying. Kurapika's vision is bigger than this.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And also, we'll get into it.

Keith: Right, he's there 'cause he's undercover.

Austin: Right. And also, Kurapika might not actually— I don't know that Kurapika could beat a Shadow Beast. I know that Kurapika [**Sylvia:** No.] can beat Phantom Troupe members, and we'll get there.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: It's like Pokémon types.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: If Kurapika's goal from the beginning [**Austin:** Yes.] was to beat the Shadow Beasts, then Kurapika could beat the Shadow Beasts, for sure.

Austin: Correct. Yes.

Keith: But there's some really funny Kurapika lines in the absolutely climax of these episodes that we will get to that, like, hit very weird and I think are on purpose? Hey, what happens to Rabid Dog?

Jack: Uh, skull. [Sylvia laughs] Shot in the head with a piece of Leech's skull.

Keith: Skull.

Sylvia: It's so cool.

Jack: Uvo spits Leech's skull at him so hard— no, not shot in the head. Shot through the chest?

Keith: Through the hand into the head.

Sylvia: Through the hand and the head.

Austin: And then...yeah.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And he doesn't just spit it. He has to, like, hock it up first.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: There's an eight second long, like, vacuum noise as he gets the breath ready for this.

Sylvia: I was gonna bring up the vacuum noise. I'm glad you also noticed.

Austin: Ugh.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. And then—

Sylvia: Togashi's crazy. [Dre laughs quietly]

Keith: There's one person left. Happens to be pretty good at blocking punches and other sorts of things. How does the Porcupine die?

Sylvia: Awh.

Jack: Gets screamed at so hard his brain explodes.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Gets screamed at so hard!

Austin: It's so sad.

Keith: It's really sad.

Sylvia: It's fucking sick too.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Sorry, Sylvi, which kind of sick?

Dre: Both?

Sylvia: Cool.

Keith: Okay, yeah, that's what I thought you meant. [Austin laughs]

Sylvia: It is one of the coolest things that has happened on this show. Like, RIP to Porcupine. Rest in Porcupine, [Austin and Jack laugh] but also, you went out in the best way possible.

Keith: Oof.

Jack: Oh man. And that's—

Keith: The look of it is so bad.

Sylvia: It's horrible to think about, and that's why I love it so much.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: That's the end of that.

Austin: It is, and is this— it's during this fight that Kurapika realizes who he's up against, who's here, right? Because at the beginning of this fight, Uvogin has his shirt on.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And so he hasn't seen the back of Uvogin.

Sylvia: [chuckles] Hasn't seen his lower back tattoo.

Austin: Hmm.

Keith: Rabid Dog slices the shirt in a way that reveals his lower back tattoo.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: What number is he?

Sylvia: Uvogin's in on the trend. Those are in again, you know?

Austin: They are in again.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: You're right, 100%. Do you think that it was Uvogin's decision to get it all the way down there, or do you think that was something Chrollo made him do?

Sylvia: Either/or. I don't know.

Keith: There is—

Sylvia: I feel like it's one of those, like, I can tell what— he knew what Chrollo would like.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Keith: I'll tell you.

Sylvia: Don't ask me about the shipping matrix I have for the Phantom Troupe. It's very complex. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Keith: Episode 46 is extremely gay about Uvo.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Oh yeah.

Keith: It is, like...

Austin: You don't even have to get there. Look at the—

Keith: It is obsessed with watching him drink these beers in his little shirt.

Austin: Totally.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Look at the thumbnail for episode 45, which is Uvogin...

Keith: I know. I have— yes.

Austin: Strapped up.

Keith: I made a note of it in the last episode. There is, like...there is this moment where it is like, Uvo is drunk, and Uvo, when he is drunk, is in love with Shalnark.

Austin: Yes. 1000%.

Dre: Well, he gives him a big old sloppy kiss on the cheek.

Keith: He does.

Austin: Yep.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: He does.

Austin: Mm-hmm. It's great. He's number 11.

Keith: Yeah, he's number 11.

Austin: From what I'm seeing.

Keith: Yeah. That's low.

Sylvia: That could be high, though. We don't know what order things go in, you know? We also don't know if—

Dre: Yeah, and we don't know if the order actually, like, represents anything.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Right, yeah. Well, I guess it doesn't—

Austin: You get the number of the person you killed, right?

Keith: It doesn't represent anything, 'cause you— yeah, it's the one-in-one-out of, like, as long as you beat a particular person, that's the number you take, I guess.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: 'Cause Hisoka says that he killed number four.

Austin: Everybody is like...all the Phantom Troupe members are like, "Wow, that was close. Phew, you almost got my ears there, buddy, but we're okay." And then, seconds later...

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Uvogin lifted into the darkness.

Jack: Yeah, because...

Keith: Yeah, Kurapika sees all this stuff.

Dre: Yoink.

Keith: Jack, you were gonna say?

Jack: So, the way this happens is, you know, we get this cavalcade of gore as Uvagin dispatches the Shadow Beasts, and then Kurapika throws the binoculars to Dalzollene and says, “Welp, gonna go capture him.” And at first, we get a little business here as Melody, you know, hears [**Austin:** Oh, right.] the melody of Kurapika’s heartbeat and then says something to the effect of, “He’s gone blind with rage and fury.” Again coming back to all this eye imagery. You know, obviously we have a lot of eye imagery with Kurapika and seeing, but we have eye imagery with almost everybody in the show. Think about these real closeups on Hisoka’s eyes, Illumi’s eyes, Killua’s eyes when he is doing shadow step.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: I think that, you know, this goes beyond just the genre conventions of, like, an extreme closeup on these characters and tying these moments of real heightened emotion and drama to people’s eyes I think is just so built into, like, Kurapika’s backstory.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: It’s a really good way of carrying that stuff. So, Melody plays the flute, and plays [clip of “A Field in Spring” begins] at first what I had thought— oh, yeah, here we go. Thank you.

Austin: There it is.

[music ends]

Jack: I had thought that this was the movement from the Devil’s symphony, the flute

movement, because that is what had played earlier as she was talking about this. So, for a bit, I was like, “What is Melody’s plan here?” [Austin chuckles] as everybody is transported to just this remarkable pastel flower meadow. Everybody, Dalzollene, Squala, the others are all standing in this field of flowers.

Sylvia: Is there a song that can do this for you guys?

Jack: Oh...

Dre: Oh...

Sylvia: I wrote down “Peg” by Steely Dan. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Jesus.

Keith: Yeah, it is “Peg” by Steely Dan. [Austin laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: For me, it’s, um...it’s “Peg” by Steely Dan. [Keith laughs quietly]

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Oh, I see.

Jack: Do I know “Peg”? I don’t think I know “Peg”.

Keith: “Peg” is great.

Sylvia: [singing] “Peg, come back to me.” It’s good. It’s a good time.

Keith: Yeah, it’s on *Aja*.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: I don’t like *Aja* at all.

Sylvia: Oh.

Jack: Or rather, I got three songs into *Aja*, and he was singing about a brown cow, and I couldn't be doing with that.

Keith: That's the first one. That's the first song.

Jack: It wasn't a good start. [Austin laughs]

Sylvia: No, the first song is...

Jack: Let me check my notes where I've gotten...where I've written...

Sylvia: *Aja* starts in "Deacon Blues", to me personally.

Jack: Yeah?

Keith: Yeah, so, I like "Black Cow". I don't like "Aja" off of *Aja*.

Sylvia: No, it's a bad song.

Keith: But "Deacon Blues" is, oh my god, one of the best songs of all time.

Jack: "Deacon Blues" is great.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: You know what? "Deacon Blues" is actually the song Melody would play to get me to the meadow.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: She'd be playing the sax bit.

Jack: Okay. So.

Sylvia: Yeah. [laughs quietly]

Jack: Melody says—

Keith: You know, Kurapika's a little bit of a "Deacon Blues". [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: I want to— no, but the problem is that Kurapika does not hear the thing that they say when you lose or the song that they play when you lose or the name that they give you when you lose. I can't remember the [Sylvia: Yeah.] “Deacon Blues” chorus, but it's about losing.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Like many Steely Dan choruses.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [Austin chuckles]

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Moving on, we get about 40 seconds of Melody playing the flute. Really nice, the show just sitting back into this music, kind of, like, letting the viewer sit with it as Kurapika sits with it.

Keith: We hear “A Field in Spring” almost as long as we see the living Shadow Beasts.

Jack: Yep. Truly.

Dre: Jesus.

Jack: Yeah, this is “A Field in Spring”. Melody says this is the perfect composition for relaxing, and it works. Everybody calms down.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Including Kurapika, who then says, “Thank you. I'm very calm. Now I'm going to go and capture Uvo.” [laughs quietly]

Keith: Yes, you've fixed my heart. Now I can go do this calmly instead of excitedly.

Austin: Yeah. Which may have been a lifesaving maneuver.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Jack: Oh, absolutely.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Melody— they treat Melody like the things that she says are true, and they're very careful, like, when she's not sure, [**Austin:** Mm.] that she says that she's not sure, and feels like...the way that she describes something is basically trustworthy.

Austin: Yeah.

[0:45:00]

Jack: I think Melody's great.

Keith: And she said that he would die, so I believe her.

Sylvia: I adore her.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And there is something here. These episodes are going to— and I imagine that Kurapika's arc, as we continue, is going to get real in detail about the sort of mechanics and affect of revenge and how stories of revenge tend to kind of be put together, and there is something really interesting about taking this moment to inflect Kurapika's action differently, post "A Field in Spring". You know, the blind with rage and fury and then, you know, what does it mean when we send our hero into the moment of their revenge having, like, calmed them?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: After having heard the perfect composition for relaxing. And I think that we will see more of how that plays out as we get more of Kurapika's confrontation with Uvo, but I thought it was really interesting that the show seems to be interested in threading this needle between showing Kurapika as this figure of just burning passion for revenge and

retribution and then taking these moments to ask him to tone it down a little for his own safety or for the mechanics of the show.

Keith: They're paying back a little bit from Trick Tower, when Kurapika— no, where Killua realizes that Kurapika's never killed anyone, and they sort of ask him, like, "Hey, if you've never killed anybody, like, how are you gonna go and kill everyone in the Phantom Troupe? Like, are you gonna be able to do that?" and he thinks on it, and he's like, "Yeah, I can do it."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Kurapika's great. Now, you described Uvo getting pulled into the sky by chains, but there's a tiny beat beforehand which I think makes it even funnier, which is the Phantom Troupe explains how the leeches work.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah.

Jack: And they say, look. We get a sort of [**Keith:** Yeah.] powerpoint presentation from Shalnark about ammonia.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But the line—

Keith: Shalnark is their Kurapika.

Austin: Oh, you're right.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: Oh.

Jack: The line that really made me laugh is I think it's Shalnark who says, "Until this time tomorrow, it's absolutely critical that you drink beer constantly," and then Uvo says, "Hurry and get this poison out of me," and then is yanked into the sky like Solid Snake's Fulton has taken it. [all laugh]

Austin: He does get Fultoned, yeah.

Dre: Yeah, he got claw machined.

Austin: He did.

Jack: And this is wonderful, because this was the first moment in this group of episodes, even since chain bastard was introduced, that I have underestimated my good friend Kurapika.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I had thought— I knew Kurapika was conscientious and was skilled and was motivated by revenge. I had not really put together what those skills would do in the hands of someone who has learned Nen successfully. You know, Gon is talented. I sort of thought that Kurapika was going to be operating on a kind of Gon and Killua level, but this is Kurapika we're talking about, and he reveals, over these episodes, that he might be the most powerful character in the crew so far.

Austin: That's interesting. So, you don't think Gon or Killua could do this.

Jack: No.

Austin: Interesting.

Jack: No. I don't think that they could. I think that they might in future, but Kurapika does some extraordinary stuff.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So, the chains appear around—

Austin: They have different aims, importantly, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, that is very true.

Austin: Which again is the thing, right? Which is why he's succeeding here.

Keith: And I just want to be clear: because of Kurapika's Conjuror Nen, Gon and Killua could not make chains to yank Uvagin up into the air, but we mean couldn't do this following their own path of...

Austin: Right.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Couldn't have kidnapped one of the members of the Phantom Troupe [**Keith:** Right.] in such a successful way, and then what follows, which is this kind of one-on-one confrontation down the road.

Jack: Yeah. Pulled into the sky. Machi shoots. They think that this is more Shadow Beasts kidnapping Uvo. Machi shoots one of her little daggers— uh, "daggers." Needles. A needle is like a little dagger for sewing. [Austin, Keith, and Jack laugh]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Out of her finger to trace them, and we get a little cut to the Phantom Troupe, where Chrollo, receiving a phone call, is like, "Huh. Someone wielding the power of chains." This is interesting. I don't know how to interpret this little moment from Chrollo. The read that I get from it is this is Chrollo realizing, even if the others haven't realized it yet, that they're probably not dealing with a Shadow Beast.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I think Chrollo knows the limits of the Shadow Beasts and is like, this is someone new.

Austin: I think what he knows is that the Shadow Beasts are all beasts, and there's no chain animal.

Jack: There is no chain animal.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: If it was a Shadow Beast, it would be, like, a spiderweb.

Dre: That's true.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Or some sort of long eely fingers.

Sylvia: I mean, this—

Jack: Yeah, long eely fingers. [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: Kurapika could be Frog, and that could be the tongue, the like ribbit ribbit. [Keith laughs]

Austin: it would be a tongue if it was a Shadow Beast.

Dre: Ugh.

Sylvia: Yeah, I guess you're right.

Austin: Because it would lean into the grotesqueness of animal stuff to stay on point.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Also, over these episodes, they've really started referring to the members of the Phantom Troupe as the Spiders. We'd heard them kind of called that a few times before, [**Dre:** Mm.] but that is now how they are described as the group.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah, it's funny. It's something that didn't occur to me until I was calling them the Spiders in, like, an earlier episode, and Jack, you were like...I don't remember what you said, but you noted that I was calling them that, even though they had not really been

called that yet.

Jack: It is much better than what I have been calling them through all my notes up until this point, which is “the members of the Phantom Troupe.” [Austin chuckles]

Dre: Potato po-tah-to.

Keith: Yeah, I've always called them either the Spiders or the Troupe.

Jack: Yeah. This move that Kurapika is using is called Chain Jail: The Restraining Middle Finger. [Sylvia laughs] A power to capture and restrain the Phantom Troupe.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: He will use it for no other purpose, and here is where we get our first sort of hint at a new Nen mechanic.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: [sarcastic] And I'm sure this is going to be the last of the Nen mechanics that are going to be introduced across this show.

Dre: Probably.

Austin: Oh, yeah, for sure.

Keith: I've got the exact quote, if we want to read it. It is pretty important.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: So, he's in the back of the car. Uvo's in the back of the car being driven by the Nostrade bodyguards and is, like, struggling against these chains that he's pretty confident that he should just be able to flex off, and that is a confidence that will pay off in a little bit, but he can't do it, and he thinks to himself, “He's put enough Nen into these chains to keep a Master Enhancer in check.” And then Kurapika explains, “This power can only be used on the Spiders, a power to capture and restrain the Phantom Troupe. I've sworn to use this ability for no other purpose. I've applied the condition that should I

use this technique on one who is not a Spider, I will die on the spot. A self-imposed restriction and a covenant with myself, the proof of my resolve. The risk is high, but the stronger my resolve, the stronger my Nen.”

Austin: I want to shout out Twitter user and Cohost user @coolranchzaku, [Sylvia chuckles] who was playtesting a game called Realis for me while I was watching *Hunter × Hunter*.

Dre: Hmm.

Austin: And Wes, my friend @coolranchzaku, was like, “Oh my god, Austin. You are making a *Hunter × Hunter* game. You just didn't realize it.” [Dre laughs]

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Wow.

Austin: And everyone else will understand that once they get to hear us play Realis, which we're in the middle of recording.

Keith: That's exciting.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: That's really cool. And we get a closeup of Kurapika's heart.

Austin: We sure do.

Jack: And there is a chain around Kurapika's heart, and as we get further into Kurapika's revenge, the literalization of the, you know, narrative techniques of revenge stories [Keith: Mm-hmm.] is remarkable here. The way that Togashi has codified the way we talk about revenge in stories into the way Nen works. You know, this is a character with literal chains around their heart, with a literal dagger pressing against their heart that will only be removed by their own death or by exercising that dagger pressing into their heart to destroy others.

Keith: Exercising is a good word for it.

Austin: Specifically to do something that isn't this revenge mission, right? If Kurapika tried to do this to anyone else in the car, the dagger would stab his heart, right?

Jack: Yep. Yeah. Oh, yes.

Austin: Which is— it's a literalization of the revenge story in the sense that revenge stories are constantly about people who have gone through hell and then who draw on that power or who draw on that trauma and convert it into a sort of will that allows them to do the unthinkable and get their revenge, right? And yep, that's just true in this world.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And these stories are also always about the knife edge [**Austin:** Yes.] that the revenger walks on about, you know, the ridiculous “dig two graves” sort of thing, where it's like, [**Austin:** Yeah.] so often stories about revenge are about the violent downfall of the person doing the revenge. You know, walking down that road will lead to catharsis and retribution but could just as easily lead to, you know, self-destruction.

Dre: Sure. I mean, Kurapika's, like, Nen teacher basically says as much, right?

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: When he's like, “There are people in this world who need to be chained to Hell,” he very smugly says, “Well, I think you'll be the one who's chained.”

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah. But it is just— Togashi is so good at making these things literal. You know, physicalizing them in the world and having his characters—

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know, we literally have a character with a chained heart here. It's great.

Keith: Jack, you have— this is a side issue, but you have a sort of pet theory about Nen. Do you want to catch Austin up on your little theory? [feigned mocking] On your little theory. [Keith and Sylvia laugh]

Jack: On my little Nen theory. Okay, this is my pet theory about Nen, Austin.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: There is another world populated by spirits and demons. What humans call Nen is merely the result of tapping into covenants with that other spirit world. So, for example—

Austin: Jack, you told me this theory while we were walking in the woods in Michigan.

Jack: Oh, I've already— [Jack and Keith laugh]

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. We were walking through the haunted woods, and it sort of came to you. You snapped out of a reverie. This was before you tried to break apart a tree, and you were like—

Dre: Whoa.

Jack: Using my Nen.

Dre: Yeah, I was about to say.

Austin: Using your Nen. [Austin and Dre laugh] And you told me this, and I thought, “Huh, that’s interesting.”

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Anyway, I just thought it was interesting, because who is enforcing Nen conditions?

Austin: Right.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: What is the power that judges the truth of what Kurapika is doing? Like, how can you stretch this and break it? Does that power come from the self? I don't know.

Austin: If Kurapika breaks the rule, one of the *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* judges is gonna show up and give you a red card. [Dre and Jack laugh]

Jack: Okay, two questions here. Wait, what do you mean? What is a *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* judge? [Austin laughs]

Dre: Wow.

Sylvia: Oh, man.

Jack: So, *Final Fantasy Tactics* is a little game where you...

Keith: "Little game."

Jack: My little theory.

Dre: Where you overthrow the Catholic church.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: But you bop around in a sort of...

Austin: That's *Final Fantasy Tactics*, importantly. *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* is a different game.

Keith: You reinstate the Catholic church.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But you bop around in these little isometric dioramas.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Sending your guys to fight other guys. It's turn based. And there are apparently, like, line judges who show up?

Austin: So, it takes place in Ivalice, where—

Jack: Oh, I know about Ivalice.

Austin: Which is the *Final Fantasy XII* setting also. And here's— this is an image of a *Final Fantasy XII* set of judges. They're these guys in big weird armor, [**Keith:** Ooh.] and they're the same ones who show up in *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance*, and I'm gonna count on Sylvi here to correct me if I say anything wrong.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Because I know you got my back. [Sylvia laughs] In both *Final Fantasy Tactics* and in *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance*— sorry, in *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance* and in *Final Fantasy Tactics A2*, there are rules that get put into place in every battle.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And those rules are things like— or they're laws I guess is what they are. Those laws are things like don't use fire skills, don't attack anyone lower level than you, no healing. Can you think of some other ones?

Sylvia: No targeting multiple enemies is one that I got recently.

Austin: That's a big one. That's a fucking big one.

Jack: Oh, this is lovely.

Dre: That sucks.

Austin: It's brutal. It's so good.

Sylvia: It's really fun.

Austin: Because you go into— so much of *Final Fantasy Tactics* is actually a strategy game as a series, because it's about building characters more than it's about applying them to a tactical situation. It's more like, have I built this character strong enough to succeed in various situations? And then the addition of the law system means that, uh

oh, my strategy is going to break down, because I have built a character who can attack multiple times per turn, and there's a law that's like, "no attacking multiple times per turn."

Jack: [laughs] Well, this is also Hitman's excellent Freelancer mode, right?

Austin: Yes, yes.

Jack: Where it's like...

Austin: Except what if when you— yeah, give me an example of that restriction.

Jack: Oh. Never put your pistol away for longer than five seconds.

Austin: Right. So then, what if you didn't do that, and instead of it being like, "Aw, you messed up. Start over," a big dude in armor showed up and held up a red card [Jack laughs] and zapped you off the map and into jail.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Where you have to then [laughs] go pay bail to get them out or wait until enough turns, enough, like, battles have passed.

Jack: Wait. So it's not like I'm being told off. It's like my character is being told off? So it might be like—

Austin: It's diegetic.

Jack: Strong Eric gets sent to jail [**Austin:** Yeah.] midway through the fight, and I can't play with Strong Eric for the rest of the fight, 'cause he's having to, like, pay bail on the other side of the map?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Uh huh.

Sylvia: No, like, literally you have to wait til you get out of the fight, go to the prison on

the map, and pay bail.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: But that's only in Advance.

Keith: Strong Eric is strong. That's why I brought him. [Austin laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: That's so funny.

Sylvia: But in A2, it's a different penalty, which is interesting.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Which is if a character dies in battle, you cannot revive them for the rest of that battle. Like, you can't bring anyone back to life if the judge is mad at you.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: [cross] Why is this diegetic?

Austin: [cross] You also don't get a bonus.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: You also don't get a bonus, because in A2, you can say, "I'm willing to go into this law, if you give me bonus XP," for instance.

Jack: Huh.

Austin: And if you break the law, you don't get the bonus XP, right?

Sylvia: Yep.

Austin: What's your question?

Jack: Why are there judges?

Austin: Because they enforce the laws in Ivalice.

Jack: No, I mean, but aren't we killing each other to death and stuff?

Keith: Right, that's fine.

Sylvia: No.

Austin: Because the judges prevent that.

Keith: Oh.

Sylvia: Yeah, the judges prevent people from dying, and that's why in FFTA, **[Jack:** Oh.] if you go to a place that doesn't have a judge, like a lawless place

Austin: Yeah, a Jagd.

Sylvia: If someone dies there— yeah, a Ja— yeah, yeah! I forgot that name.

Austin: I think it's "yagged", maybe? It's J-A-G-D.

Sylvia: Yeah. Permadeath happens there, if I'm remembering right.

Jack: Oh, that's so cool.

Keith: Oh, that's great.

Austin: Yeah, that's correct.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Okay. To get—

Keith: I have something really quick.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Just because I have my thing of screenshots from the episode here open, and I'm seeing my older screenshots from putting together the *Dragon Ball* episode that went up the other day, and I'm seeing something that Dre shared, which was how Mercenary Tao kills General Blue in *Dragon Ball*, and it reminded me of Uvo, so I'm sharing it. He pokes him in the temple with his tongue and kills him!

Sylvia: Whoa!

Dre: Mm-hmm. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: Wow.

Austin: Damn. That's Uvogin-coded.

Keith: That's Uvo shit.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, that's real Uvo-coded.

Austin: [chuckles] That's Uvo shit.

Jack: [chuckles] That's Uvo shit.

Austin: Uvo shit is really good. We should keep that one.

Jack: Uvo shit is when you show up and you're unbelievably destructive and impressive and then die. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: I was thinking, like, Flo Milli shit, like it's his tag at the beginning of a song. [Jack laughs]

Austin: "That's Flo Milli shit." Yeah. [cross] That's Uvo shit!

Sylvia: [cross] That's Uvo shit! Yeah.

Jack: Okay.

Austin: Uvo shit is when you drink a case of Heineken by yourself. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: And then piss out a load of leeches.

Austin: Uh huh.

Dre: Mm-hmm. Before you go fight someone out in the Grand Canyon.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Oh my god. [Sylvia sighs] So—

Keith: So, that episode's over.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Actually, real—

Austin: Is it? Yes, it is.

Jack: Really quickly, before we move on.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I want to get back briefly to who is arbitrating these conflicts, before we got onto the judges.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Jack: Because I think it would be very Togashi to go in two different directions here. Direction one is this: Kurapika is. The self.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know, one has a sense of truth and power in oneself, and it is part of that truth and power that is used to create your aura. You know?

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Jack: The Togashi that says that everybody has this latent sort of power for magical self-actualization is the same Togashi who would say you could make a contract with your heart, and it is yourself that holds you to that contract. It is also Togashi to say: it's the Devil. [Austin laughs] It's, uh...it's the Devil or something, or like a spirit or something.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I think it's the same little— I mean, I know what I think, which is that Nen is an expression of the demon world. [quiet laughter] But it's the same little freak that Miss Neon uses to tell fortunes, or not the same one.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: You know. That—

Austin: Well, I mean, this is the thing, right? Is that, if you're right, they're two different worlds in a real way.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Because if there is a little demon world— and also you're right that that would be the type of twist it would have to be. It couldn't be that Nen exists and also there are just some Nen spirits or something. It would have to all be a construct of another layer of bureaucracy and specialization and numeric accounting. Like, there would have to be eight different devil types to account for the six types of Nen. You know what I mean? It would have to be something like that.

Jack: Eight? Austin, I picture the spirit world that Nen is attached to [Austin: Mm-hmm.] [Keith laughs] as Hieronymus Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights*.

Keith: Funny.

Austin: See, whereas I picture it as the beginning of the movie *Brazil*.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: You know?

Jack: Oh, Hieronymus Bosch. RIP to Hieronymus Bosch. He would have loved *Brazil*. [Austin and Jack laugh] But I think every Nen type is reflected in *Garden of Earthly Delights*. I think you could check it out there. But yes, Kurapika has this conflict with himself. Uh, conflict. He does have a conflict with himself. He has a contract with himself. As we move into 45, in the Hunterpedia of 44, Worm pops out of the ground to frighten Gon and Killua.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: It's true.

Episode 45 [1:03:56]

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. We see new Shadow Beasts. We see— well, I guess not new. We've seen the first Shadow Beast that we see. Owl pops out of nowhere to land on the Phantom Troupe's car and try to stuff them all into a little bag.

Sylvia: This rules.

Dre: Yeah, Owl's great.

Sylvia: I love both Owl's mannerisms and the power itself.

Keith: Yeah, his weird little face.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, so, what is going on here?

Keith: There we go. There he is.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: He's the cutest Shadow Beast.

Jack: What is going on here?

Keith: Are you asking?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: You're asking, like, what the power is? What are you asking?

Jack: Oh, I'm just asking— I'm being a member of a podcast, and I'm saying: someone else describe what is happening.

Keith: Oh, okay.

Sylvia: Oh! Okay.

Dre: Oh, Yes And.

Austin: Yes And. Owl is arriving to deal with these fools by putting them in a little bag.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: He does a little—

Austin: He drops a tarp.

Dre: Sorry, what's it called? What's the name of his fun little bag?

Sylvia: Oh, do you have—

Keith: It's called Fun Fun Cloth.

Austin: Fun Fun Cloth.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Convenient Magic Kerchief.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Fun Fun Cloth.

Austin: Fun Fun Men.

Dre: This man hung out with Hisoka as a kid.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. [Keith laughs] He, like, got this from, like, a carnival, and he's like, "Oh, I love Fun Fun Cloth."

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah, he drops, like, a big tarp on the car, and a really funny trick happens, which is that, like, the people in the car, the Phantom Troupe members in the car basically notice very quickly that something is wrong, and without us really clocking what's happening, are out of the car.

Keith: Right.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: But not all of them.

Keith: Right.

Dre: Nope.

Jack: Poor Nobunaga, who—

Keith: It's such a good time for a gag.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Great deflationary maneuver.

Keith: Nobunaga's in an unlucky position in the car.

Austin: Mm-hmm. And like, to be fair, Owl lands on the car, and then what we see is a close up, like, anime cut in of four of the five people in the car, like, dodging out of the way, and then one of Nobunaga looking dizzy [Dre laughs] like he got punched in the face in *Mike Tyson's Punch-Out!!*

Sylvia: It's so good.

Austin: And then the cloth expands to grow across the whole car, ties it up in a little bag, and then begins to shrink, as the car, like, spins out of control until it just bounces on the ground like you put a Hot Wheel in a bag.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And—

Keith: And you hear a little voice in the bag.

Austin: [quietly] You heard the little voice.

Jack: Yeah, the bag shakes around. Nobunaga is mad. There is a bit of me that, as soon as this happened, I was like, my mind filled with the possibilities of what if the bag changes hands and Kurapika is somehow holding a bag [Dre: Oh.] containing a car and four members of the Phantom Troupe.

Austin: Oh.

Jack: And while that might have been more fun to think about, I think what ends up happening with this bag is way funnier and scarier.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: As more of the Phantom Troupe— oh my god. More of the Shadow Beasts show up, and we cut away from the Phantom Troupe standing in the road as the Shadow Beasts arrive.

Austin: I just want to apologize to Nobunaga, because I made it seem as if Nobunaga wasn't skilled enough to escape.

Dre: No, he was in the middle seat. He couldn't get out.

Austin: He was in the middle seat.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: He was in the middle seat. That's not on him.

Keith: They show a little picture of it.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: Again, they do— Feitan gives a very brief powerpoint presentation.

Austin: [laughing] Yes.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And also, like, again, this is another instance of the Phantom Troupe just being charming dorks.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Like, this is so goofy.

Keith: Yeah, they basically— this is all just a gag to, like, have them get in a sort of cute little fight.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Because isn't it Shizuku who's like, "That bag of yours is really cool."

Keith: [laughs quietly] Yeah.

Austin: “You just put people in the bag. That's the perfect accessory for theft.”

Jack: [laughs] Yeah. That is the perfect accessory for theft. You do see the wheels turning in the Phantom Troupe's brain of, like, this is how they stole— they stole. This is how they got all the stuff out of there, and also, wouldn't it be good if we could do this?

Austin: I think if— I love the Phantom Troupe so much.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I think if you just swapped Chrollo out for, say, Leorio, [cross] they'd be fine.

Dre: [cross] Well, you've lost Sylvi.

Austin: It would be— or Sylvi. It would be fine.

Sylvia: Wha—

Keith: Where would Chrollo go?

Dre: No, I'm saying you lost Sylvi by getting rid of Chrollo.

Sylvia: Yeah, you— don't get rid of Chrollo.

Austin: Oh, no, Chrollo's with Sylvi. Chrollo went with Sylvi. [Jack laughs]

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: Oh!

Dre: Oh, okay. All right.

Sylvia: Yeah, okay, wait, I like this.

Austin: And then the Phantom Troupe just— what I'm saying is, like, they would just get

up to hijinks if they had a slightly different direction in life.

Jack: This is—

Sylvia: I could fix him too, so.

Austin: I can fix all of them.

Jack: This is remarkable.

Dre: Man.

Jack: Because this is the first time you have been on an episode, Austin, post the introduction of the Phantom Troupe, right?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: So you didn't hear my dawning realization that these are weird hyper-competent but still just kind of, like, lovable murder goofballs, because...

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: You've got to put yourself in the perspective of never having seen this show before. They are given the world's largest and most frightening buildup.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, I remember it.

Jack: And then—

Austin: I only just watched this show, like, a year ago, so it's still pretty fresh.

Jack: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: The runway on the Phantom Troupe is longer than anything else that happens in the show.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Yeah. It's the beginning of Kurapika's storyline, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. Episode two.

Jack: You get to the end of the runway, and it's just a bunch of people hanging out in a living room playing PlayStation, and they occasionally just obliterate somebody.

Keith: Right. [Dre laughs]

Austin: Yeah, and one of them has a big vacuum cleaner with a cartoon tongue [Dre: Mm-hmm.] that she uses to suck up, you know, 400 dead corpses. [laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: They are so odd, and they are the only...you know. Gon and Killua and Leorio and Kurapika deserve the Phantom Troupe as opponents. They are like souls in their weirdness. But it is interesting that you said "get rid of Chrollo, and they'd be normal," Austin, because we haven't gotten a lot of Chrollo so far, but what that implies to me is that Chrollo is a bad dude on a level beyond these guys.

Austin: No, I'm basing that just on this stuff. Chrollo is like, "We're gonna go kill everybody in this room and take all of the loot."

Keith: Right.

Austin: Whereas Leorio would be like, "I have a good idea, guys!"

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: "Let's all get slurpees!" [Jack laughs]

Keith: No, I think Leorio—

Austin: “Let’s go rob the 7-Eleven of the slurpee machine!”

Keith: I think that Leorio—

Dre: What sort of rinky-dink organization would, like, elect Leorio to a leadership position?

Austin: Yeah, I don’t know. You’re right.

Sylvia: I don’t know how many of them would fuck with Leorio, you know?

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Like, I don’t think Uvo would.

Keith: They do sort of revere Chrollo in a way that I don’t think you could get them to...

Austin: No, of course they wouldn’t.

Jack: They revere Chrollo in such a funny way. We’ve had one scene.

Austin: I think that in the right circumstance Leorio could woo people over with his, like, regular joe charm.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: I agree, and I think that Leorio would very quickly embrace sort of corralling these goofballs [cross] into stealing the money from a casino.

Austin: [cross] This is it.

Dre: Yeah. [Austin laughs]

Keith: Like a heist, instead of [Austin: Yes, yes.] killing a casino full of people and walking out with bags of money.

Dre: That’s true.

Austin: This is the thing, and I think that they would peer pressure him into still being a criminal, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: [laughs] He would still— he'd be like, "I don't know, guys. We shouldn't kill everybody. What if we just spend the time we use killing stealing more stuff?" [Jack laughs] And you're right, Uvogin probably leaves, but like, that's okay.

Keith: Well, we all know what Leorio's theme song title is: "All I Want is MONEY!"

Jack: Oh.

[clip of "All I Need is MONEY!" begins]

Austin: See?

Jack: And he's got another one that's called, like, "nasty nasty miser man" or something?

[music ends]

Keith: Yeah, "Dr. Warm-Hearted Miser"?

Jack: Yeah. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: That's his other theme song.

Austin: I'm telling you, they're compatible.

Dre: I love that *Guilty Gear* character.

Keith: That song— both of those songs are the songs of a guy who would steal a trillion jenny from a casino.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: It would make Leorio more like Lupin III and less like Leorio.

Sylvia: He would be Danny Ocean.

Austin: He'd be Danny Ocean.

Keith: Who he looks like. He looks like Lupin III.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: He's already a Lupin III type.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I mean, Nobunaga would fit right in, then. He'd just be, um...

Austin: I'm telling you.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, I can't remember the name off the top of my head.

Austin: Jigen.

Sylvia: Jigen.

Austin: No, Jigen's the other one. Jigen's the other one.

Keith: The other one, the other one.

Sylvia: No, Jigen's not the Samurai, yeah.

Austin: What's the Samurai's name?

Sylvia: I don't know.

Austin: Oh, this is brutal. I can see his hair. I can see his— it's Fujiko, it's Lupin, it's Jigen.

Sylvia: It's Goemon.

Austin: Goemon! Of course.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Another classic historical thief.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Magical historical thief.

Keith: Who on the Phantom Troupe would be Jigen, then? Phinks?

Austin: I don't know. Which one's—

Sylvia: Who's gay on the Phantom Troupe? [Austin laughs quietly]

Dre: All.

Sylvia: A lot of them.

Austin: Oh, I always forget about Phinks.

Dre: A lot of them, yeah.

Sylvia: Phinks has Jigen vibes a little bit, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Anyway.

Sylvia: We will talk about Phinks later.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Oh, we will talk about Phinks later.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Tiny brief cutaway to Dalzollene's car. This is a really lovely moment, just of, like, situating the people in this chase, in this various sort of three part chase, really nicely. Someone in the car, I can't remember who, says, "For a split second, I thought I saw someone landing on their car," and I think Melody replies, "It was probably another of the Shadow Beasts." And there's something so nonchalant about the way that this chase has started to go off the rails, [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] and the characters are just like, "Oh, a Shadow Beast has landed on their car. Okay."

Keith: Right.

Jack: Really, really cool.

Keith: It's fundamentally a farce, because...

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: The whole Nobunaga— or not Nobunaga. The whole Nostrade family thing for being there is they think that the Phantom Troupe has stolen all of the stuff from the vault for the entire auction, which was their plan, but the Shadow Beasts had it all along, so they're chasing— they're all chasing— the Nostrade family is chasing—

Austin: Yeah, this is a Coen Brothers. This is a, you know.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, like you said, it's a farce, right? Because there is, like, a fundamental miscommunication of information here [**Keith:** Yeah.] or a misunderstanding that has led to many bodies, [**Keith:** Mm.] a lot of wasted gasoline 'cause they're driving out into the wilderness.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: People who don't need— because truly, if they had just stayed in their rooms protecting Neon and never raised a word, nothing happens, right? Or what ends up happening is Owl— you know, the Shadow Beasts get killed by the Phantom Troupe,

and everyone moves on with their lives.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: You know?

Keith: But the Shadow Beasts already know that all of the auction stuff is safe, [**Austin:** Yeah.] so they're only out for, I guess, the payback of you killed, you know, 300, 400 guys, which is fair.

Dre: Well, I mean, they're on retainer to the mob.

Austin: They're on retainer. This is...

Dre: So the mob is probably ordering them to go do it.

Keith: Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah. And, you know, 364 days of the year, Porcupine just gets to kick it. [Jack and Keith laugh] And then on this one day, you get called in [**Dre:** Mm.] 'cause someone robbed and killed a bunch of mobsters.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: And you're like, "All right, cracking my knuckles. It's to to go show people what's what."

Keith: It probably is a cushy job until the Phantom Troupe shows up.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Until your brain gets exploded by a man's voice. [Austin laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I need the Porcupine prequel manga.

Sylvia: [laughs quietly] The, like, daily life 4-koma comic?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: It's a lot of using your own squishy butt hair as, like, a bean bag chair.

Austin: Oh.

Dre: Mm. That doesn't sound so bad.

Jack: So, we cut back to—

Dre: Chairs are expensive.

Jack: [laughs quietly] We cut back to the Phantom Troupe, and all the Shadow Beasts are dead, except Owl. They're all dead. They are killed off screen.

Keith: It cannot be overemphasized. They get nothing.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: No name. No introduction. No powers.

Austin: Mm-mm.

Keith: The supposed Frog gets, like, a couple of lines, where he underestimates the Phantom Troupe for some reason.

[1:15:04]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And then they're dead. You like—

Austin: The supposed Frog. [Austin and Jack laugh quietly]

Keith: They're not even worth the screen time.

Austin: Yeah. The scene where they descend is one of the funniest shots, I think, in anime, because look at them. They don't— come on now.

Keith: They don't have it.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Come on now. [Jack laughs] They don't stand a chance.

Keith: You can tell right away they don't have it.

Austin: Frog has little glow fingers. The one who is maybe Hedgehog just has needles sticking out of his body in weird directions, but not in like a...

Sylvia: He's Porcupine's Luigi.

Austin: He's Porcupine's Luigi. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Mm.

Austin: What is the one on the furthest left? Like, I don't even know.

Sylvia: Guy.

Keith: Oh, where did the— I lost the table of the...

Sylvia: He's the Beast Guy.

Austin: Oh, I closed— yeah, I closed that page. This is calling him "Mule??" question mark? That's not Mule. That's...

Jack: Mule?

Keith: It's Guy.

Austin: That's a guy.

Keith: Guy powered.

Dre: That's a guy, yeah.

Austin: Yeah. It's great. It's great. I love it, because it's also Togashi kind of poking fun

at his own designs here.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: There's a little, like, [**Keith:** Yeah.] I'm gonna turn this up to 11 and, like, do a gag of my own biases in design.

Jack: Yeah, well, it's that plus— and I kind of didn't notice this until they're all dead. This is, like, a classic Togashi joke, or rather, Togashi loves—and we talked about this in the last episode—to introduce a new subset of freaks, [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] often in silhouette, and then work through the freaks one by one. So he's doing a real bait and switch here with these freaks.

Keith: Oh, they work through the freaks. [Austin laughs]

Jack: They sure did.

Dre: They sure did.

Jack: But if you look at these characters compared to some real pristine Togashi freaks, their designs aren't very good. He's drawn these quickly, because he knows they're going to, you know.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Compare these to the Phantom Troupe members, each of whom is so distinctive and so well put together, because he knows that they are going to show up, you know, constantly.

Austin: Yeah, you're right. None of these are a mummy wearing boxing gloves.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Or a tiny person with hair and one huge eye. [Keith laughs]

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Or pervert clown or, uh...trying to think of another very distinctive look.

Keith: Inverted christ figure.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Yeah, fucked up inverted christ figure.

Austin: Oh, I haven't heard this last episode yet, but just promise me you talked about Jesus Christ.

Keith: Yeah, a lot.

Sylvia: Of course we did.

Jack: Oh, we talked about Jesus Christ.

Austin: That's all. Thank you.

Sylvia: I got you.

Austin: I'll be— I'm excited to hear the episode when it comes out.

Jack: Uh—

Austin: I just think it's really important! I just think it's— I just think it's important, every episode, that we think about that Jesus Christ existed in this world.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And the Devil, and Judas, and yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Interesting.

Sylvia: His ability, Yummy Tasty Wine Surprise. [all laugh]

Keith: Right, what do you think Jesus Christ's Nen power was? Or alignment.

Sylvia: Piscine Multiplication! [Jack laughs]

Keith: I guess he's a Conjurer, right? He's gotta be a...

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, Conjurer.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Conjurer but, like, dips into some other stuff, right?

Keith: Right.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Oh! Okay. Specialist.

Austin: Specialist.

Dre: Yeah, he's probably a Specialist.

Austin: But like, it might be literally Kurapika's power that we're getting...

Sylvia: My contract to forgive the sins of mankind can only be achieved if I die on the cross. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Dre: Jesus Christ. [laughs]

Austin: I always.

Jack: What does he say? "It is..." What does Jesus say as he dies? "It is over"? It is..

Austin: "It is done."

Keith: It's over. He says, "It's over, buddy."

Jack: It is done? It is finished?

Sylvia: He says, “It’s joever.”

Dre: He says, “It’s joever,” actually, is what he says.

Austin: He says, “It’s joever.” It’s so joever. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Jack: But that’s what he says, is the little dagger.

Keith: Well, that’s another anime where Jesus Chris is canonic— not only canonically exists but is a character? Am I right about that?

Dre: Is that JoJo’s?

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, JoJo, yeah, yeah, no.

Austin: Oh, yeah, for sure.

Sylvia: Jesus Christ is a major part of JoJo.

Keith: He shows up in *JoJo’s Bizarre Adventure*.

Dre: Is Jesus a JoJo?

Sylvia: Part seven.

Keith: Yes.

Sylvia: No, um, well...

Keith: Yes.

Sylvia: Yes, actually.

Keith: ‘Cause his name is Joshua.

Dre: He's not a Joestar, but...

Sylvia: Yes, actually, you're correct. It is Jo— yeah, you're— Keith is 100% correct here. Jesus is implied to be a JoJo. My bad.

Dre: Oh my god.

Sylvia: They have to collect his skeleton.

Dre: Oh, okay.

Austin: And y'all have talked about this arc in relation to JoJo's, right?

Keith: I don't— Sylvi's the only one here who knows anything about JoJo, is the thing.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: This is the thing. I'm...we can talk later.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I think I have the episodes of JoJo [**Keith:** Okay.] I want to show you guys, so.

Keith: All right, that's a bonus.

Dre: Okay.

Keith: That'll be a bonus.

Sylvia: Yeah, absolutely.

Austin: Because in the way that a lot of *Hunter × Hunter* is in conversation with various other, you know, anime and manga genres and there's often a sort of, like, exploration of it, there's a lot of JoJo's in this, I would say.

Sylvia: Yeah, we've definitely touched on Araki having a very— like, I've mentioned that Araki has had, like, a huge influence on a lot of this stuff.

Austin: Yeah, okay. That makes sense.

Sylvia: Because, like, JoJo...I think last time we brought it up, I timed it out that JoJo was in part...like, Stands had been introduced by the time *Hunter × Hunter* was rolling around.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: Yeah, I watched—

Sylvia: Is I think the thing that we has established.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: I watched the first two season of JoJo's, and—

Sylvia: [laughs] So you don't know shit. [Jack laughs]

Keith: So I don't know anything about any of the relevant stuff, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Jack, you also mentioned that you'd watched, like, a couple episodes, I think, when we did the *Dragon Ball* bonus.

Jack: I think I've watched the first season, sort of the gothic...

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: You know, like, a...

Sylvia: Yeah, sure.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: That man has a mask.

Austin: It's Stardust Crusaders where Stands pop up, right? Is that right?

Sylvia: Part three onward is when Stands are introduced.

Austin: That's what I thought.

Jack: Yeah, I haven't seen Stands. I saw a man who, uh, he really entertainingly did something with a frog. I can't remember what it was.

Austin: Hmm.

Dre: Hmm.

Jack: He had a ridiculous hat.

Sylvia: Oh!

Jack: He was called, like, a baron.

Sylvia: Oh! He was doing— he was demonstrating the Ripple, also known as Hamon, which is, you know, a breathing technique.

Austin: Right.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: But also, when he punches the frog, it doesn't damage— it doesn't hurt the frog, but the energy goes through the frog. It passes through it onto the rock that the frog is sitting on, and it explodes the rock.

Dre: Yeah, is that Baron Zeppeli?

Jack: It is Baron Zeppeli.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Baron, uh, William Zeppeli, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Okay.

Sylvia: *Hunter × Hunter.*

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Here's where we get our little view of "Troupe members don't snap at each other," as the Phantom Troupe both preps to torture Owl to learn where the things are and deals with their own bickering as Nobunaga and the car are let out of the bag. [Dre laughs]

Keith: It's such a good line, because Feitan delivers, like, has such a specific kind of delivery and is, like, so relaxed about everything in a way that is scary usually, but the sort of chiding, like, "Troupe members aren't supposed to snap at one another," is like, it's so funny that they have taken an opportunity to tease Nobunaga only to be like, "You're not allowed to get mad at us."

Austin: Mm-hmm. [Dre laughs]

Keith: It's against the rules. Which also means that, at some point, this wasn't a rule. Someone was snapping too much, and they had to have a meeting.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And they had to make a rule: Troupe members don't snap. [Jack laughs] We're nice to each other.

Jack: Then they torture Owl to death.

Dre: Yeah. Uh huh.

Sylvia: I really like that the show has yet to show us Feitan's power in any way.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: That's true, yeah.

Austin: Or have we seen— we saw— well, we didn't see power.

Sylvia: We saw Feitan use the assassination technique that Killua does [**Austin:** Yes.] where his hand becomes like a blade.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: But we haven't seen the actual Nen technique other than a little glow. It really reminds me of the... [sarcastic] Hey, guys. I'm gonna reference a *Simpsons* bit. I don't know if this has ever been done on the internet. [Jack laughs quietly]

Dre: Uh huh?

Sylvia: But there's the one thing of Homer— there's like a gang war on their lawn, and there's like a little guy just standing there.

Austin: Mm.

Sylvia: And Marge is like, "Let's go inside," and Homer's— I have a link. I'm gonna just explain it for the audience.

Keith: Oh, you came prepared for this.

Sylvia: I did. This is the first thing I thought of when I watched the scene, [Dre laughs] 'cause this was my emotions, because Homer wants to stay to see what the little guy's gonna do, but he goes inside and goes, "[disappointed] Aww," and that's how I feel about seeing Feitan's hand glow. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Because I want to see what he does to those guys!

Dre: Sure.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: It's not going to be good.

Keith: Yeah, they definitely are like, we're keeping Feitan in the back pocket.

Sylvia: Yeah. Like, Shizuku, we can assume, bonked with Blinky, you know?

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: But.

Austin: But who knows what Feitan does? Or Nobunaga, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: But the flip side of this, we don't know—

Dre: Or Chrollo.

Keith: We don't know what most of them do, yeah, but it is...

Sylvia: No, exactly.

Austin: No, no, no, but we mean, like, this is a specific scene with a specific subset of them that exist, and so you're getting the tease of, like, "Ooh, here we go. We're gonna learn what the rest of this small group of the Phantom Troupe does."

Keith: No.

Austin: No, you don't.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: No, we don't.

Keith: And they've teased Feitan multiple times [**Austin:** Yes.] as a torturer and people being like, "Ugh, anyone that comes in contact with Feitan, that's bad luck." And they keep doing that and then still not showing what Feitan does.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And it could turn out that his torturing has nothing to do with his powers.

Austin: Right. Right.

Keith: He might just be a really enthusiastic torturer.

Austin: Right.

Jack: The impression I get is that, below Chrollo, the Phantom Troupe is a kind of flat structure, but within that flat structure, Feitan is the boss. The read I get is that Feitan is Chrollo's second in command.

Austin: Mm.

Dre: Yeah. Yeah, I get that sense too.

Keith: Yeah, there's definitely some vibes of that.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: I think Feitan's great. Really really nasty nasty nasty guy.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: We talked about this a bit in the last episode, Austin, but very often with Feitan, I look at him and I see Killua going down another path.

Austin: Oh, that's fun. Yeah.

Jack: And I think that that is highlighted a lot in the way that they shoot Feitan killing

people.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Which is that he— they show that he's short.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Like Killua.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [Austin chuckles]

Jack: Yeah, like Killua is, yeah.

Keith: Is the next thing we're at the Nostrade hideout?

Dre: I think so, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, we're at Uvogin tied down on a stretcher.

Dre: Not tied down, buddy.

Keith: Not tied down?

Austin: Well, he's, like, coiled down.

Dre: Yeah, it's like...

Keith: I thought it was like wires, like piano wire.

Sylvia: Hey, can we talk about how the camera really enjoys Uvogin?

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Did we mention that yet?

Austin: This is what I'm talking about. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, we mentioned it briefly, and then I gave us our first picture of Uvo with the

chains, and then now there's Uvo laid out on the table. There's a lot of that in this episode. There's a lot of Uvo doing different things.

Dre: Different things. [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: The way that they've got him chained up to this place that they're holding him is so fucking cheesecakey.

Austin: Yeah, that's what— yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: It gets the thumbnail to this episode. It is literally—

Sylvia: Yeah. Okay, yeah, we did bring it up.

Austin: Netflix is like, "Oh yeah, this is the one you're looking for. This is the one."

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: "The one you were looking for is the one with him tied up in the back of the car? Yeah, yeah, yeah, there it is."

Sylvia: Like, I'm kind of shocked— I guess, I mean, at the end of these episodes, I guess I'm less shocked that there's not a big Uvogin, like, fan community.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: But, uh, there's an audience that I know that would love this guy.

Austin: Oh yeah.

Dre: Sure.

Sylvia: And haven't seemed to really been engaging with him.

Keith: I'm surprised to hear that.

Sylvia: Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I just haven't been looking, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: There's just not enough, do you know what I mean?

Keith: Mm.

Austin: Like, we get these four episodes or eight episodes or whatever, but like...

Keith: Because I know people are such freaks about the Phantom Troupe.

Dre: [sarcastic] And, you know, notoriously anime fans definitely never, like, attach onto one character, even if they only show up for, like, an episode or two.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: That's a thing that never happens in anime fandom.

Austin: Okay, there's some Uvogin out here. There's some Uvogin.

Sylvia: Okay, good. Good.

Austin: Yeah. People are...

Sylvia: All is right.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Are people freaks about the Phantom Troupe? Is that a big thing about *Hunter × Hunter*? Like, a lot of the—

Keith: We've got one of them right here.

Sylvia: Hi, nice to meet you, Jack. [Jack laughs] I'm Sylvia. We've been doing a podcast together for almost a decade.

Jack: Hi, Sylvi.

Dre: Have you seen how hot these weirdos are, Jack?

Jack: I mean, I—

Austin: Look at this great Uvogin and Nobunaga.

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Jack: That's really, really good.

Austin: Look at them. That's great.

Jack: Really good. That's great. I suppose my question is this, right? Like, I am watching this show in such a vacuum [**Keith:** Yeah.] that it is very difficult to— I can make inferences about what an audience is going to be interested in or what are going to be the topics of conversation in an audience, but it is interesting to hear Austin say something like, "You know people are freaks about the Phantom Troupe," and it's like, is that what a lot of the fan discussion and fan production around *Hunter × Hunter* is?

Sylvia: Um...

Jack: Is combinatrix with the Phantom Troupe, is, you know...

Austin: No, most of the fan production and fan debate that I see is whether this is the best arc or if a later arc, if Chimera Ant is the best arc.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Right.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: That's mostly what I see, is people who love certain characters saying that people who like the other characters don't understand what makes the show good.

Jack: [laughs] Okay, cool.

Keith: I've never seen that.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: But of course that exists for all things, so I'm not surprised.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: I do think that is the split for the most part, though.

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: Is like...

Austin: Are you a Kurapika, or are you a Gon and Killua person?

Keith: It's crazy. You can have both.

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: They're in— they're all in the show.

Austin: I am with you. Yes.

Sylvia: I agree.

Austin: They're all in the show. But if you care about— let's just talk about the show as it exists right now.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: If you're not a Gon and Killua person, then that last arc kind of sucked. Heavens Arena, like— you know, and now you're like, "Oh my god, my boy is back."

Kurapika is back.” And the show does not have infinite time to spend on their subset of main characters, you know? So.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: As a Gon and Killua person...

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Heavens Arena is the worst arc in the whole series, [**Austin:** Totally.] by a wide margin.

Austin: Totally.

Keith: So, it's not—

Austin: I agree.

Keith: You know.

Sylvia: This is what creates the Kurapika people.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: You go from the bad arc or the, like, underwhelming arc to this, and it's like, [cross] [imitates “Chain Bastard”] all the time.

Austin: [cross] Well, and then, the other arc that we— that many of us— [Austin and Jack laugh]

Dre: Can you do that again real quick? How does it go?

Sylvia: [imitates “Chain Bastard”]

Dre: Okay.

Austin: That's it, yeah.

Sylvia: We don't need the button anymore.

[clip of "Chain Bastard" begins]

Jack: You were in the right key! Sylvi!

[music cuts off]

Keith: Oh, sorry, we don't need the button.

Sylvia: Yeah. [Jack laughs] Jack, I was trying to learn this on my guitar before we started recording. [Jack and Keith laugh] Just by ear.

Austin: But like, the other thing about this arc is, uh...I'm just gonna check really quick. It seems like it is 20 episodes.

Keith: Yeah. It's too short.

Austin: A tight in and out. Like, over here to season five of *Hunter × Hunter*.

Jack: Oh, let's check out.

Austin: It is...I can't do this math in my head instantly.

Keith: It's fine, and, you know, I would—

Austin: 60 episodes.

Keith: It can be a surprise for Jack anyway.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Oh, I'm excited. But no, that's—

Austin: We should revisit this after you're done that arc.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Because I am a: that other arc is the best this show ever gets.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But I really love this one.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: I love Kurapika. I love all this. It's great.

Jack: This is great. It is also worth saying that, like, you know, you can probably infer this, listener, from the way we've been talking about this arc as we've gone, but the whole genre palette of this show has changed as we've moved into the Yorknew City and the Phantom Troupe Arc.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: If Heavens Arena was a breezy blue and white tournament arc, this is often shot at night. We have this big wide shots of canyons, motorcades. We've got people shooting guns. We've got death and destruction. This is, like, a very dark, visually dark arc.

[1:30:06]

Keith: And they're about to rub our faces in it, because they're about to cut back to what Gon and Killua have been up to, and it's just, like, the same—

Jack: It's fucking funny.

Keith: It just goes back 20 episodes to, like, what was going on in Heavens Arena. They're just, like, having fun trying to **[Austin: Mm-hmm.]** get money doing arm wrestling, and they have to— like, Kurapika's plot crashes through the window of the Gon and Killua plot. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Yeah. It's really, really good.

Keith: And it's like, these are together now! These are tied together now!

Jack: In this headquarters where they have Uvo tied down, Kurapika is reminiscing on the people in the mafia who have died recently, the sort of sub revenge plot that he is working on, as we hear Melody's flute music play, and I think it is really notable that we haven't gotten any names or faces of dead Kurta Clan members so far.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And this is the revenge that is underpinning Kurapika's plotline, but we don't know anything about Kurapika's family or Kurapika's kin. We haven't seen images of them at any point. You know, when we hear about the violence of the Kurta Clan, we often go back to this image in silhouette. You know, death and destruction, violence in silhouette against fire. But I do think it's notable to see Kurapika, you know, specifically reminiscing, going through these faces of people that the mafia have killed and noticing that there is this absence in specificity about the deaths in the Kurta Clan.

Keith: Especially because, at the beginning of this arc, Kurapika is, like, very dedicated to, like, "Fuck these people. I'm just here to scam my way closer to the people who stole my family's eyes. These are all people who work for those people, which means they're bad."

Jack: Yeah. Yep.

Dre: I mean, he still is that. Like...

Keith: He still is that, but he's also mad that they have been murdered by the Phantom Troupe, who is the...

Jack: It's kind of a senseless murder.

Keith: It's the bigger fish.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Yeah, and I think this is a genuine sorrow that he's feeling. I don't know. Do you

have any thoughts that you're able to talk through as to why we might not have seen the Kurta Clan with any specificity?

Sylvia: [sighs] I don't know. Like, there's... [brief pause] Did I cut out?

Jack: No, no.

Keith: No, you're here.

Austin: No, you're here.

Sylvia: Okay.

Austin: We're letting you cook.

Sylvia: My background noise changed very suddenly.

Austin: Ah.

Jack: Oh, weird.

Sylvia: And I was like, "Oh fuck, did my shit stop?" Okay. It's interesting, 'cause Togashi—I can't figure out, like, why Togashi tends to neglect the Kurta Clan, like, by putting...I don't think they're directly on screen for at least the rest of this arc even.

Austin: I think...I think...hmm. I'm not sure.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I don't quite remember. I know that they're in a movie I haven't watched.

Keith: Yeah. They are.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: A non-canon, question mark, movie I've never watched?

Keith: Correct. Non-canon, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Both the movies are non-canon, yeah.

Austin: That's what I thought. Yeah. But I do think that there is also—

Keith: And those movies were released after the 2011 series was finished.

Austin: Right. I see. Yeah. Was the manga that they're— 'cause they're based on or at least a little bit adapting a Kurapika backstory side manga, right?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Sylvia: There's— if we're comfortable talking about the manga, there is some more Kurta stuff in the manga, is my understanding.

Austin: Okay.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: But like, that is so far in the future.

Austin: There is a two-parter called “Kurapika's Memories” that I have not read that comes out in 2012, [**Sylvia:** Mm.] at the end of 2012.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: And I think that— I guess that's my question, is like, was that out by the time— I don't know. This is a 2011 anime, and I don't— I think— I mean, I guess we're 40-something episodes in. This anime may have been on when that manga came out, [**Keith:** Yeah.] but I don't think it gets directly adapted, like, into the show directly, if I'm remembering right.

Keith: I think it is sort of more evidence of, Jack, what you were saying, that it does take 20 years of the manga— or not 20 years. It takes, like, 15 years of the manga to get to Kurapika's Memories.

Jack: Yeah. Is there— I'm, you know, trying to do a generous reading. Is the show saying something about the way that a quest for revenge can, you know, [cross] pare itself down to the objective?

Austin: [cross] I don't think so. I think you can make that read, but I also think if you're gonna make that read, you have to make that read against the other thing about manga, which is that it is produced at a breakneck pace.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Yes.

Austin: And breakneck may be more literal than we often use the phrase.

Jack: Right.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, especially in Togashi's case.

Austin: Especially in Togashi's case.

Sylvia: It has literally, like, done irreparable— maybe not irreparable, but it's done major harm to that man.

Austin: Yes.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Like, he's been open about the health issues that he's been dealing with because of the schedule that manga release, like, imposed on him.

Austin: Mm-hmm. So yeah, so I would say that I don't know. I can't say enough about it one way or the other. Again, Togashi does eventually make this flashback, you know, one shot basically about Kurapika, but who could say why it took that long. I would be cautious about jumping to it meaning a particular thing.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah.

Austin: We can, of course, produce a read on that, but we're also not getting...we don't get a ton of background on Leorio's. You know, we know why Leorio is here, but we don't know anyone in Leorio's family's name either.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Sure.

Austin: You know, Killua's the one, right?

Keith: Yeah, he's the one.

Jack: That's true. I think there is a difference between Leorio's backstory, at least in this arc. This arc is about the revenge.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: And if we had an arc about Leorio learning to be a doctor or something, I might make the same kind of, like, "Hey, why aren't we talking about that?" but like...

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Right, but what if it was filmed with three dozen characters in the hospital and it was, like, a send-up of, like, hospital romcom stuff. [Dre chuckles]

Jack: Holy shit.

Keith: Sounds great.

Austin: Right? And then you'd be like, "Well, no, we can't— how am I supposed to fit that in? I've already introduced 28 other characters in which [Keith: Right.] Leorio is in residency," you know? [Austin and Jack laugh]

Jack: And 10 of them have just been killed off screen.

Austin: Totally. And maybe— and again, you might be right. I'm not closing the possibility on this that, like, that Togashi is like, "Yeah, Kurapika is so forward-focused that we're not gonna ever go back to saying the thing or showing what he came from."

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: It might be a choice.

Keith: We also know that it has been five years, which is, like, a long time.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I don't think it— it puts them outside of the scope of the story in a way where they would show up naturally. You would have to find the time to go back and put them in.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Which someone might do or might not do.

Austin: Yeah. I would— the other half of this that I think is maybe— if I had to make a pitch, a high level pitch on this, why are we not seeing it? It would probably have less to do with there is a— I am saying something thematically about the relationship between revenge and memory inside of Kurapika, and this is getting, like, again, maybe production-focused or genre-focused, but it's because we need to believe in the revenge story before you later undercut it.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: And by saying that he doesn't understand something about what happened to the Kurta Clan, right? Or that there is something about what happened there that Kurapika doesn't fully understand. You know what I mean?

Keith: Mm.

Austin: I would so much— I would believe that there is a late— *Hunter × Hunter* isn't over yet, right?

Dre: That's true.

Austin: And so I would totally believe that, in a chapter yet unwritten, someone says to Kurapika, "You have it all wrong," right?

Jack: Mm. Mm-hmm.

Austin: And I'm— this is complete fan theory bullshit, right? And I'm not up to date on reading *Hunter × Hunter*, so.

Jack: Keep the curtains closed on the thing so that you can open them later.

Austin: Yes. Yeah, you keep the curtains closed. You're not that far in. Let me get the story of revenge before I commit to paper exactly for the reader what totally really truly happened back then, you know?

Jack: Yep. Okay, we have a tiny frightening hint of Shalnark's Nen power, as we see him using a fucked up little phone [Sylvia laughs] and a blowdart.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: To kill a mafioso and intercept his conversation, question mark? Not terribly clear what's going on here. It's scary. Hisoka meets Kurapika [cross] in the perfect place to meet Hisoka.

Sylvia: [cross] In a fucked up carnival.

Keith: I'm glad— this is one of those— I'm glad you said it's not clear what's going on here before I talked about what's going on, because [Dre: Same.] I know what's going— I forgot that it wasn't clear what's going on.

Dre: Yeah. [Austin chuckles]

Jack: Oh, with Shalnark's Nen power?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: We get, like, four or five beautiful establishing shots of this decayed fairground, all these great shots of broken rides.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Like you said, Austin, this show is moving at such a pace, especially in this arc, that having this moment of, like, four or five just static background shots of this ruined fairground feels like a really nice unsettling breath.

Keith: What a great choice Hisoka made to hang out here. [Austin and Dre laugh] This is a very Hisoka place.

Jack: Because we know Hisoka— well, it's not really, 'cause Hisoka likes hanging out in his apartment.

Sylvia: Hmm.

Jack: He likes taking a shower. I think he's being like, this is—

Keith: But he likes performing most of all.

Jack: He does like performing.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: He loves the aesthetic. Like, come on.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: He's trying to be the Joker here, in a way, but like, not— I don't— not in a legitimate way. Not in a— the Joker—

Keith: Right, he's—

Austin: Batman's The Joker likes to hang out in old rusty carnivals for real. Hisoka is playing the Joker, 'cause he thinks it's funny.

Keith: Right.

Jack: Yes.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: And he is right.

Keith: And doesn't mind that you know that he's doing it because he thinks it's funny, also.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: We get just a lovely image here of Hisoka in a wide shot crouched on a carousel horse.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: It is so good, and in this wide shot where they draw Hisoka at, like, lower detail, you just see the, like, pink flame of his hair and then almost like this skull mask of his face. It's drawn really low detail. It looks great. Hisoka fills Kurapika in about some Phantom Troupe backstory.

Keith: Yep.

Jack: Members can be replaced at a moment's notice. You get in by defeating someone. The boss fills the vacancy if someone dies. They're mostly known for thievery and murder, but they dabble in philanthropy.

Keith: Such a fun detail.

Sylvia: I love that.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: It's such a good detail.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Which we don't have any context for that, at this point, right?

Keith: No, we don't.

Jack: No, but I can sort of— I have a guess at what they're talking about, right? Which is that they're talking about a real sort of organized crime looking out for people [**Austin:** Mm.] in very specific circumstances in very specific places.

Dre: I can't remember. Have we been given the name of...the place?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: No. Have we?

Jack: Well, I don't know about the place you're talking about. We know the Phantom Troupe are from a place called Meteor City?

Dre: Yes, that is the place I'm talking about.

Austin: Oh, yes, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: [cross] I can't remember what else we know about Meteor City.

Austin: [cross] We don't know anything about it yet, though, right? We don't know anything about—

Jack: Uh, we know a bit about Meteor City, actually.

Austin: Oh.

Jack: We know that it is, like, a site of an ecological disaster or some sort of, like—

Austin: Mm.

Keith: They call it the world's dumping ground [**Jack:** Yes.] and a place that's been erased from the map.

Austin: Okay.

Keith: It is a place where you're allowed to dump anything. There's no, like, laws against not dumping things there.

Sylvia: Including people.

Jack: Canary is from there. Canary's from there.

Austin: This is Canary. Right, that's the thing.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Right.

Austin: We got Meteor City from Canary. Right.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay.

Keith: Canary's from there. The Phantom Troupe are from there.

Austin: Yep.

Keith: And it was the birthplace of this mafia.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Hmm.

Jack: Yeah. Interesting. Hisoka replaced a number four a couple of years ago. This is our first confirmation that Hisoka is post Kurta massacre.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Which I sort of antici— no, Kurapika doesn't actually know who was there, which is interesting. So, it is interesting to have Hisoka confirmed as, you know.

Keith: Mm-hmm, yeah.

Jack: Wasn't involved.

Austin: You believe him?

Jack: Do I believe Hisoka when he says he replaced four a couple of years ago. Uh, yes—

Austin: No, no. Do you believe that he was not part of the Kurta Clan massacre?

Jack: He would've had to have been part of the Kurta Clan massacre outside of the Phantom Troupe.

Austin: Because he only joined— so you believe him when he says, “I joined them after that”?

Jack: Yes, I do.

Austin: Okay.

Jack: Kurta Clan was five years ago, and the Phantom Troupe are still talking about Hisoka like he's a very new member.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Mm, sure. Sure.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: That makes sense.

Jack: Also, I think part of where Hisoka is really scary is that sometimes he is very upfront with you.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. For sure.

Dre: And we've also— we know about Kurapika, that Kurapika is both within his Nen and just his non-Nen abilities, is very good at figuring out who's lying.

Jack: Yes.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. For sure. He may be.

Jack: Not as good as Melody.

Keith: No.

Jack: That's why they're friends.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Hisoka reveals his pervert plan [Keith laughs quietly] vis-à-vis the Phantom Troupe.

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Now, it's exactly what we all thought it was going to be. [Austin laughs]

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Jack: He wants to kill Chrollo in a kind of sex way.

Keith: You clocked this right away.

Jack: Oh, is that what I said?

Keith: Right away, you were like, “He wants to fight Chrollo,” yeah. This is—

Jack: Because he is titillated and impressed by his power?

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah, I think that we set you up to have to say why you thought that Hisoka would be messing around with the Phantom Troupe, and you were like, “Clearly he’s interested in Chrollo.”

Jack: Yeah, and not in a good way.

Sylvia: Eh.

Jack: Not in a generative way.

Dre: Ehh, you know.

Sylvia: They just have a very toxic situationship.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He—

Dre: And who amongst us?

Sylvia: Yeah, exactly. [Dre laughs]

Keith: The very funny bit right before Hisoka leaves. He gets the message from

Kurapika or something, and he's like, "Oh, I forgot, I gotta go meet someone," and Chrollo's like, "Up to some mischief, Hisoka?" and Hisoka's like, "[mischievously] Mm, of course," and then just leaves.

Sylvia: They're flirting.

Dre: Yeah. Uh huh. [Austin chuckles]

Sylvia: Like, that is flirtation.

Jack: I mean, is Chrollo flirting with—

Keith: And also, Chrollo's not a fucking idiot. Like, he was able to—

Sylvia: I don't know.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Chrollo knows.

Keith: He was able to guess the whole situation with the fortune teller, like, based on just kind of the assumption that no one in the Phantom Troupe would be a traitor.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Which is wrong, because Hisoka's a traitor.

[1:45:01]

Sylvia: But he is right about the fortune teller too, so it's like...

Keith: But he was right about the fort— he basically [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] invented the fortune teller theory out of nothing.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: So, you know. He knows Hisoka's deal, I'm sure.

Jack: I'm still curious about what Chrollo offers the Phantom Troupe. He's their leader, and they talk about him with such a spectacular reverence. It is so funny. I can't remember where it came up, but there was a bit where they were, like, all— they were like, "Yeah, Chrollo, you're the best!" Oh, it was as he was gonna stand up and give a speech. They all, you know, hype him up. But, you know, we see the Phantom Troupe out here, and they are frightening and capable and powerful.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And Chrollo just sits in the church reading.

Austin: He loves books.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: He loves books.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Look, you can't pull the wool over my eyes, Austin. He's got some horrible Nen book power, I bet, [**Austin:** Mm.] but I don't know what it is. [Sylvia laughs] Or he just kills you with a knife. I don't know. [Keith, Jack, and Austin laugh]

Dre: Hey, why not both?

Sylvia: That'd be pretty cool.

Austin: Yeah, why not both.

Jack: Why not both?

Keith: The book turns into a knife.

Jack: Yeah, the book turns into a knife.

Dre: Knife book.

Austin: Mm.

Sylvia: So you guys *have* been reading my fanfiction. [Keith and Austin laugh]

Jack: Oh. But it's tricky to kill Chrollo. [Sylvia laughs quietly] He is with at least two others at all times. When a job ends, he vanishes instantly and without a trace. He goes to the demon realm where Nen is arbitrated. [Austin laughs]

Dre: Mm.

Jack: That's where he— he doesn't live there. He's not— or rather, he lives there. He's not from there.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: He has just figured out how to do that. You know, what greater power could a thief have than, like, visualizing, being able to visualize the metaphysics of the world.

Austin: Mm.

Keith: The book is a *Myst* linking book, and he can go into the book. [Dre and Jack laugh]

Austin: That's a *Hunter × Hunter* power. That's a Nen power, for sure.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: That is a Nen power, for sure.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, mm-hmm.

Jack: No, the book is actually— what he's got written in the book. The book binds him to—

Austin: Oh, sure, uh huh.

Jack: So, the thing about the demon world, the spirit world, is that it is so compelling, and if you go there, the reality of that world begins to eat into the reality of your world. So, Chrollo is always seen reading to, like, bind himself to our reality, to remind himself of the metaphysical truth of our world.

Keith: Mm.

Austin: Mm.

Sylvia: I love Demon World Theory.

Austin: It's great.

Jack: [laughs quietly] DWT.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: I believe it but for real life.

Sylvia: Oh.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Oh, oh, us.

Sylvia: No, that's what I'm saying. This is my worldview now.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I believe in the Demon World Theory of the world.

Jack: Yeah, it's kind of a— it's a deliberate misreading of Gnosticism.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: It's fucked up Gnosticism.

Keith: Well, it just explains so many things. [Austin laughs]

Jack: Yes.

Austin: It all kind of just clicks together once you believe in Demon World Theory.

Keith: It kind of all just clicks together.

Austin: It all just makes sense.

Keith: If you read the literature on World Demon Theory.

Jack: Demon World Theory, not World Demon Theory.

Dre: Yeah, come on, Keith.

Austin: No, no, no. We've changed it to World Demon Theory.

Jack: Oh, World Demon Theory. [laughs quietly]

Austin: You've invented it, but we're taking it big time.

Jack: Whoa! But anyway, that's why Chrollo vanishes immediately, and he wants Kurapika's help. Their goals align, as we see the Phantom Troupe begin to—

Austin: Sorry.

Jack: Hmm?

Austin: You're saying Hisoka and Kurapika's goals align, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, what did I say?

Austin: Yeah. I thought you said Chrollo there, but maybe I just misheard, 'cause I was thinking about Chrollo.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Okay, that's on me.

Sylvia: It happens to me all the time, Austin.

Austin: Yeah, sorry.

Keith: Hisoka does claim to know seven of the powers of the Phantom Troupe, which is funny, 'cause it's a little low.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: So...

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: There's four— no, sorry, there's not four. There's, uh...

Sylvia: 13 total.

Keith: There's 13 total, and he's one.

Sylvia: And 12— yeah.

Keith: So there's five question marks still?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: How do you think the Phantom Troupe describe Hisoka to their friends? Are they like, "We got a new guy."

Dre: "This motherfucker."

Jack: "He's a really creepy clown."

Keith: "I work with this guy."

Austin: Wait, I think they are their friends.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: They're all— they don't have friends outside of each other. What are you talking about?

Jack: Outside of work.

Sylvia: This is their social circle, yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's a social club, not a job, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Right, right, right.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Keith: Well, when you're passionate about your work. [Austin laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Anyway, it's just funny, like, we're like, "When are we gonna see Feitan's power? What do they do?" Like, Hisoka hasn't even seen all of these people's... [Austin and Keith laugh]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: The Phantom Troupe—

Keith: He's still waiting.

Jack: They regularly—

Sylvia: Yeah, but I'm better than Hisoka, and I want to see them all.

Dre: That's true. Fair.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah, but the Phantom Troupe regularly breaks into groups. We know this. We saw—in their first introduction, the Phantom Troupe was split into two teams, you know? It took us a while before we cut to Feitan and Nobunaga and Machi and Franklin walking by the side of the road.

Keith: I think they said it's been two years since they had all met up. That's something they say.

Dre: That sounds right.

Jack: Wow.

Austin: So some of them might be meeting Hisoka for the first time.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. [Jack laughs quietly]

Austin: Who's this clown freak?

Jack: They get pulled to one side, and they're like, "Oh, listen. This is Hisoka. He sucks."

Dre: "Who's this clown?" literal.

Jack: Who's this clown? [Austin laughs] Don't let him be with the boss, [**Austin:** Yeah.] unless you're there.

Keith: And there's something that happens during this meeting that I think causes Kurapika to sort of accept without accepting.

Jack: What is this? I don't remember.

Dre: Oh, yeah, that's when Kurapika gets the phone call.

Keith: Yeah, what happened?

Dre: Uh, Uvogin broke out.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Well, Uvogin was busted out by the arrival of the Phantom Troupe wearing their *Reservoir Dogs* cosplay.

Sylvia: I love it. [Dre laughs]

Keith: It's so funny. They show up. They got slicked back hair. They just get let right in, and then—

Austin: Uh huh.

Sylvia: Nobunaga has a fake beard.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: When they walk into the room, Uvogin just goes, like, "You clean up nice," and then, uh, Dolzene or whatever the fuck his name is.

Sylvia: [laughs quietly] Dolezal.

Keith: Immediately goes like, "Oh, I'm fucking dead. I'm dead."

Austin: Hand through his body from Phinks.

Keith: And then he's dead.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, he—

Sylvia: And Phinks puts his hat on.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: His big snake hat.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Like he's a *Mega Man* villain.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: I'm underestimating—

Keith: This is his first time wearing the hat, so it's not like he takes off his suit and he puts on the hat we all know. [Austin laughs]

Sylvia: No.

Austin: It's so funny! [Keith and Dre laugh]

Sylvia: It's fantastic.

Jack: Underestimating—

Sylvia: Jack, what did you think?

Jack: Yeah. Underestimating Togashi.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Underestimating the way Togashi moves. I wrote down here—

Keith: It's so easy to underestimate him.

Jack: And you would think that I would be— well, actually, I have a moment later where I just fully gave over to Togashi's, [Sylvia laughs] you know, we'll figure that out later. But yeah, my note here says, "The Troupe take off their disguises and kill Dalzollene. Someone in a fancy helmet here is new, I think." So, I was so overwhelmed by Togashi, I invented a 14th Phantom Troupe member. [Austin laughs]

Keith: Yeah. You could not mentally connect the snake hat man to [cross] Phinks who is the racecar driver.

Jack: [cross] With the racing driver. Yes.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Does this change what you might guess Phinks's powers are?

Jack: No. I can't do this. I cannot do this. I can't make it work. [Austin laughs] To me, this is like trying to see the old lady or the young lady in that drawing that is, you know, both of them.

Keith: Oh, the duck or the rabbit? You gotta see...

Jack: Or the duck or the rabbit.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And when your brain sees one, you have to work really hard to see the other.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Something about my brain is now broken with Phinks, [Austin laughs quietly] where because I see him as the racecar driver, [laughs] I have no idea why he is this—

Keith: What would you have said his power was when you just thought he was the racecar driver?

Jack: Fucking racecar driving, Keith! [Jack and Sylvia laugh]

Dre: He go fast.

Austin: You thought he was a racecar driver because he's wearing, like, a racecar driver outfit?

Jack: Yes!

Keith: Yeah, he's got like a tracksuit, yeah.

Austin: He has on, like, the—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: So now he's a racecar driver from fucking Thebes in 800 b.c.? [Keith and Dre laugh]

Austin: Oh, that's fun, like a chariot driver.

Dre: Yeah, he's a chariot racecar driver.

Sylvia: Oh.

Jack: Oh, what is this— 'cause his hat is very much sort of, like, ancient Egypt, or rather, adventure story caricature of ancient Egypt.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: A man with a snake on his hat.

Keith: And what's his name?

Jack: Phinks.

Sylvia: Interesting.

Keith: Interesting.

Austin: Hmm. Interesting.

Jack: Phinks.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: With a P-H, like pharaoh.

Keith: Mm? [Austin laughs] Okay.

Sylvia: Yeah? You're getting so close.

Dre: Yeah, that's what we're getting at.

Austin: You got it. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: Phinks. 'Cause he phinks really hard about what he's gonna do.

Austin: Yep. [laughs]

Keith: He's always phinking about Egypt.

Austin: He's always phinking about...

Dre: Oh, so he's British. Okay. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah. [Dre laughs] God, Phantom Troupe but if they were British. No, terrible. Wouldn't work.

Sylvia: That's a Guy Ritchie movie. [Austin chuckles]

Jack: It is a Guy Ritchie movie. Why do you say, "What's his name? Phinks," as though that's supposed to give me anything?

Austin: Wait, have you not— I thought you were doing a bit!

Sylvia: Have you really not clicked it?

Keith: No, this is— I can tell that this wasn't a bit.

Dre: Oh.

Keith: It's fine.

Austin: Jack. Jack. Jack. I want you to do a little trick here.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: I want you to take the final letter of his name and put it at the beginning and then say his name.

Jack: [gasps] S-Phinks. [all laugh]

Keith: Now, that's a bit.

Austin: That's a bit. That's...

Jack: Wait, why is he dressed like a racing driver?

Austin: Well, you can't always be in the uniform.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, he wasn't at work yet.

Austin: Sometimes Bruce Wayne's just in a suit.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: You clock in.

Sylvia: True.

Keith: Then you put your uniform on.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But why is he— why here, Togashi? When Togashi wants to do a weirdo, he just, he can't stop himself. He just does the weirdo 110%. Have you seen Hisoka? So now he's decided to get all coy about it with this racing driver who is also— [laugh quietly]

Keith: I think it's less coy.

Dre: It's the Phantom Troupe.

Keith: I think it's just a new aspect on him being a weirdo.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, I think it makes him more of a weirdo—

Keith: He's like a weird—

Sylvia: —that he picks and chooses when to do it, you know?

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Yeah. Sometimes I'm in my— I gotta— [accent] I'm home, I gotta take off my tracksuit and put on my fucking snake hat. [Sylvia laughs]

Austin: Maybe Phinks is from Jersey.

Sylvia: [accent] I gotta go fucking Tutankhamen mode. [laughter]

Jack: And now say something he'd say when he's doing his racing.

Sylvia: [accent] Vroom!

Keith: [accent] Vroom vroom!

Austin: Yeah, that's the one. That's the quote.

Keith: [accent] Can't wait to get home, put on my snake hat. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: Shizuku—

Dre: [accent] Ey, I'm racing here.

Jack: I'm racin' here. Shizuku and Blinky suck the poison out of Uvo, who just breaks his bonds immediately, which is great. You know.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Kurapika— as we learn later, Kurapika has not worked this through by accident. This has all been— not the escape, but capturing Uvo relied on several things that Kurapika had worked out, so it's not like, oh, Uvo could just break his bonds whenever. But freed from the impositions of Kurapika and the others, he is able to just escape straightaway.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: And Kurapika now has a personal nemesis, as Uvo breaks through a wall and swears vengeance.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Can I—

Keith: We now know for sure that the person who's saying "chain bastard" is Uvogin.
[Austin and Jack chuckles]

Jack: Yes, yes.

Sylvia: He gave him the nickname. So, I know, like, we are going long, and this is probably gonna continue that way.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: But there's some stuff that—

Dre: We're, like, halfway through. [laughs]

Sylvia: Listen, we can speed up soon.

Keith: It'll speed up. It'll speed up.

Austin: Yeah. It will.

Sylvia: I just wanted to bring— we can have this conversation more so on a later episode, because I think it becomes a bit more explicit, but Uvo has some real shonen protagonist, like, tendencies with some of his stuff.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: The big one being, to me, both his reaction when he gets out of the restraints, the big, like, angry yell, and the like, “Oh, I gotta go get that guy,” is like, played in the same way that a shonen protagonist being fired up after being defeated by their rival would be.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And also, in a more funny way, the “I got taken here at, like, 8:00 p.m. or whatever. I can tell it's past midnight by my stomach, by how hungry I am.”

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: That was a really good bit.

Austin: 'Cause my tummy hungry. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, he, like, pinpoints when he last ate, and he compares it to how he's

feeling, and I'm like, that is something Goku could do.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Goku'd do that, for sure.

Dre: Sure.

Sylvia: And Uvo just in general, with some of both the abilities he has and, like, some of his just traits in general, really makes it feel like if a shonen protagonist went bad or went wrong. Like, what would happen when they grew up all the way and still had—

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Like, their power was exponent— or like, their power fit the age that they had grown to [**Jack:** Yeah.] with the same rate of development from when they were, like, a little kid with a tail, just to stick with the Goku analogy, you know?

Keith: There's a great bit from that scene, where Dalzollene tries to stab Uvo with a sword, [**Sylvia:** Yes.] and the sword just breaks in half and goes flying into the wall.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: But Kurapika's able to punch and bruise and bloody his face.

Sylvia: I was gonna say.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I think that's, like, really— a really crucial hint for some stuff Kurapika's able to do later.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: Are we at, uh...

Jack: We've talked a little bit about the Hunterpedia here. Here we have [**Sylvia laughs**]

brown Gon and Killua, I guess suntanned Gon and Killua.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And they're talking about Dalzollene, who takes care [Dre: RIP.] of Miss Neon, even though it is a drag, and then Gon turns to Killua and says, "Taking care of you is a real drag, 'cause you're also a spoiled kid."

Sylvia: I love them.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I love them. I love them. We talked a little bit in the last episode about the kiss, and I...when I said that the Hunterpedia is sort of, like, moving in this weird storybook feel where characters are allowed to express their emotions in this much larger-than-life, you know, single joke, single punchline. It's the funny pages of *Hunter × Hunter*.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I worried that I was coming off too strongly as like, "But isn't it so important to talk about platonic friendships," you know, in the face of that, and I want to be clear that that's not really what I was saying. I was saying more specifically that, freed from the confines of having to think about a *Hunter × Hunter* episode, Gon and Killua, in these Hunterpedias, are able to say things like, "I love you," and kiss you, [Sylvia: Mm-hmm.] give you a big smooch, and blush.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Or are able to say things like, "Taking care of you, a spoiled kid, is a real drag," and then they fight each other.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Or, you know, Worm pops up, and they get scared. It's like a different way that Gon and Killua are able to exist in the show, and I think it works really well for it.

Austin: [cross] And they exist that way for the reader—

Jack: [cross] But also, why are they in blackface?

Austin: Also, why are they in blackface? They do— a thing that's so fun about this is, like, this is not the text of the narrative, but it is the text of the show, and we get the Gon and Killua who can say "I love you," and it's real that they said "I love you," 'cause we saw it.

Jack: Yep. Yep.

Austin: It doesn't have to have been in Yorknew City where they said it. They said it in this semi-fictional— I mean, it is not— it is out of the realm of the fiction, but the truth of the characters is still there, [**Jack:** Yeah.] and I love to use all the parts of a show to tell a story and to do characterization, you know?

Jack: It's because they are separate from the demon world in the Hunterpedia.

Austin: Right, right, right.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: They're not worried about that.

Keith: It's the one refuse.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Refuge.

Keith: Refu—

Dre: Yeah. Okay.

Keith: No. No, refuse.

Dre: Wait, so the Hunterpedia—

Keith: It's because it's been destroyed by the demon world. They've abandoned it.

Austin: Mm.

Dre: Are you saying the Hunterpedia is Heaven, Jack?

Jack: No. No, it's completely separate from that [**Dre:** Okay.] whole sort of metaphysics.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Interesting.

Episode 46 [1:59:52]

Jack: Okay. 46. You know it's a bad sign when the episode opens over the Phantom Troupe's music.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: [laughs] Yeah.

[clip of "Requiem Aranea" begins]

Jack: Yeah, exactly. This is how we open. This has gone off the rails for Neon's gang. I mean, it's gone off the rails for everybody, [**Austin:** Ah.] but the Phantom Troupe have really sort of clawed it back.

[music ends]

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: This has gone off the rails in a major way. They're goal was: take Miss Neon to the auction. She can bid on a mummy. You know?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: At every turn, though, they have had opportunities to force her to not do this and have basically said, like, “No, she’ll be a real pain in the ass unless we let her do—” Like, they confront her with the idea that multiple of her bodyguards have been murdered and that the auction has been canceled, and all she has to offer is like, “But I want the mummy hand!”

Dre: “But want it!”

Keith: “Bleh!”

Austin: Yeah. There’s a real, like, you spend some of these episodes being like, “Ooh, this mob boss,” who in the English dub is voiced by Beau Billingslea, Jet Black’s voice actor.

Sylvia: Oh, shit.

Austin: You’re like, “Damn, she’s being manipulated and used by her evil mafia dad,” and then she talks for five seconds, and you’re like, “Oh, she is a ruin of a human being.”

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: She’s a terrible person.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Who I have no sympathy for. I have a little sympathy for, but still, miserable.

Keith: Well, part of the being manipulated by her evil mob boss dad is like, [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] indulging in her every whim.

Austin: Right.

Keith: That surely can't— you don't come out of the womb wanting eyeballs.

Austin: [laughs] No. No.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Well, you, uh— no, you don't. There is a bit when you're in the womb when you want eyeballs.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And then...

Dre: When you don't have them yet.

Keith: [laughs] Right, yes, when you don't have—

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: You're like, "Can't wait for my eyes to come in."

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: We get a little bit of, uh...you know, as Kurapika's gang sort of addresses the fact that Dalzollene is dead.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: They have a little vote as to who they think should be the boss. Kurapika suggests Squala. No.

Keith: No.

Jack: That would be a real mistake.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: So, we get *Hunter × Hunter's*—

Austin: Okay, but maybe that's just to keep Squala out of harm's way.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Maybe it's like, "Listen, Squala, you've been here the longest, and your power sucks, so you sit in a room and let these—"

Jack: Your power: dogs.

Austin: Your power: there are dogs. You know?

Dre: Oh. No, I totally read that as Kurapika being like, "Oh, I'm playing into the mafia power structure, so that I can, like—"

Austin: Right. No, I think that you're right.

Dre: That people don't suspect me.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I think you're...

Dre: But that is a much funnier interpretation.

Austin: I'm just being mean to Squala, whose power is not great.

Dre: Oh, no, it's terrible. He's useless.

Keith: He's useless.

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And he's a coward.

Dre: Yeah, no.

Keith: He seems like a nice guy. [Austin laughs] He just shouldn't be here.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: It's like, as soon as they're like, "We should elect a new leader," it is so obvious that it has to be Kurapika.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: Not just because of, like, the plot [**Keith:** Yeah.] and who Kurapika is in *Hunter × Hunter*, but like, Kurapika's the only competent person in the mafia!

Sylvia: I don't know, what about that other guy who never says anything and literally just nods?

Austin: [laughing] What about the guy who—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, who is that guy?

Austin: Who shows up in the middle of this arc out of nowhere and is just here suddenly! [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Oh, sorry, do you mean the guy—

Austin: Like he won a contest.

Keith: You mean Linssen?

Austin: Linssen, who seems like he won a contest to be in *Hunter × Hunter*.

Keith: They never say his name.

Jack: Yeah, he won rock paper scissors in the mall.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: They never say his name while he's on screen. [Austin and Jack laugh] They just, one time, say like, "Hey, you and Linssen go," and you're like, "Oh, Linssen must be the one guy here whose name we don't know."

Austin: It's so funny.

Jack: I have been writing down people's names every time, and every single time Linssen shows up, I make the conscious decision, "Eh, this guys' not important. I don't need to— we don't need to get this guy's name down."

Sylvia: That's his Nen power. He's using In.

Austin: Oh.

Keith: Oh.

Jack: He's using In.

Sylvia: So you don't notice him.

Jack: Yeah. We get a tiny bit more of the Kurapika-Hisoka scene, actually, to begin this episode, and a note I took here is, you know, is the role that Hisoka is going to fill in Kurapika's revenge plot the kind of counter to Melody? You know, is Kurapika— oh my god. Is Hisoka going to be there to empower and, you know, encourage Kurapika's worst most violent impulses towards revenge? I don't know, but that seems like a kind of Hisoka thing to do.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Sure does.

Austin: It's really funny that Hisoka gets to be in every arc of this show.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: So far. You know?

Jack: We talked about this—

Austin: We've had Kurapika arcs. We've had Gon arcs. They were all Hisoka arcs, baby.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: The showrunners and Togashi know that, despite being the worst person in the world, Hisoka is a great engine for plot.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Hisoka really is the C-3PO and R2-D2 of *Hunter × Hunter*.

Jack: But—

Sylvia: Yeah, gay and hard to understand. That's C-3PO and R2-D2. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Sure, yeah.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Yeah, I remember, you know, in the Hunter Exam, I couldn't tell whether Hisoka was going to be, like, an ongoing presence in the show or whether he was a Hunter Exam freak, but no, he is the bad clown.

Sylvia: Imagine this show but with Tonpa and Hisoka switched, where Tonpa's doing all this shit. [Jack laughs] He's in the Phantom Troupe.

Keith: Are you saying imagine a world where Hisoka gives people diarrhea juice? [quiet laughter]

Sylvia: No, I was gonna say where Hisoka's only in the one arc, [Keith: Right.] and

then Tonpa's in every other arc we've seen.

Austin: Yeah. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Neon's dad, Light Nostrade, is coming to New York to try and get Neon out, and he orders Kurapika, as the interim leader, to protect Neon. I had a real, like, "that's my boy, Kurapika" moment when he introduced himself to Light on the phone.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He said, "My name is Kurapika. I am the interim leader," and I was like, "Oh shit, yeah, Light doesn't know who this guy is."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Light is just like, "Oh, there's an extremely competent mafia— uh, freelance mafia member in Neon's city right now."

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, they have this whole, like, you know, couple minutes where they all realize that no one knows how to get in contact with Light, which is why we get into the little bit that we have with Neon being, like, way more interested in not getting the mummy hand and the jellied infant skulls.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, god. Then we have this little scene that we discussed earlier, where Shalnark is on the Hunter website, the terrible point-and-click '90s website with the bar.

Austin: Great.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And, you know, soft pitches becoming a Hunter to Uvo, who is not feeling.

Keith: This is...

Sylvia: While Uvo's chugging Heinekens.

Keith: This is where—

Jack: Yeah. [laughs quietly]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I have nine screenshots from this scene. [Austin laughs] This is where I wrote that the Troupe reminds me of vampires.

Austin: Oh, for sure.

Keith: They, like, exist so far above the concerns of mortals.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Like, we're watching Uvo drinking the beer. Here, I've got that. And then he just, like, carelessly tosses it behind over the dead body of the guy that they killed to steal his beer.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: For no reason. They could have just let this guy, like, be scared in the corner.

Austin: Yeah. Even— do we know the long-eared one's name? I do, but I don't know if it's been said out loud.

Jack: Oh, yeah, it's Franklin.

Austin: Franklin.

Keith: Franklin, yeah.

Austin: Franklin shows up with the, like, here's 100 extra cans of Heineken to drink. Even that has the sort of, like, in a vampire story, this type of vampire story that you're

talking about, Keith, where it's like, "I got this from the human world," right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Like, "Yeah, I guess they drink these," you know? Here's a bunch of them. Drop. As if the use case for the object is an unknown thing, in a weird way. Like, we're just a— we move in different rhythms.

Jack: Right.

Keith: And it's so unreal. Like, look at how small it is in their hand. They have this—

Austin: Totally. Yeah.

Sylvia: I love it.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: It's tiny. It's, like, not a real object to them.

Sylvia: Genuinely I had such a belly laugh when they handed— when Franklin handed the beer to Uvo. It was—

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's, like, such a good sight gag. I don't know.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: I love that there are two big guys in the Phantom Troupe like this. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Two people who have the same, like...if they were MMO, like, characters, they'd have the same rig, you know what I mean?

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: Like, it's just good to have two big guys. You don't need just the one. You need two. They gotta have big guy talk sometime.

Keith: Uh, take a quick five?

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Sure.

Keith: All right, great.

Jack: Sounds great.

[cut]

Keith: Okay, we were at the two big guys. We like the two big guys.

Sylvia: Love the two big guys.

Austin: I love the two big guys.

Keith: They feel like vampires. They have the sort of, like, obvious villain protagonist energy that vampires have in stuff that vampires show up in. But I also— I love the image of, like, the two of them next to Shalnark, who is, like, normal guy in a suit.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And is there, like, they are two massive monsters. Franklin is literally a

Frankenstein gag.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Right.

Keith: And Uvo is, like, the same size, big, giant. He's a Saiyan. He's Nappa with hair. But yeah, the rest of this scene is the now famous, on this episode, kissing scene. Gives him a big sloppy kiss.

Sylvia: He gives him a big smooch on the cheek, yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Plus a lot of doxxing. You know, real large scale old fashioned doxxing.

Keith: Yeah, this is—

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: The Hunter website does kind of seem to be Kiwifarms, to some degree. [Austin laughs]

Jack: Mm. 'Cause they are trying to find out— they essentially figure out that it's the Nostrade family, and then they use the Hunter website to figure out which Nostrade family members are in town and where they're staying. I am so curious about why the Hunter website has this information.

Austin: Well, maybe it's not Kiwifarms. Maybe it's, like, the NSA.

Sylvia: It is more like NSA for hire.

Austin: Right?

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Is what it is actually, yeah.

Austin: Maybe they get this information about where the world's mafia members are so they can sell it to the world governments.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And you know who's probably selling it is Hunters—

Austin: Hunters, yeah.

Keith: Or people who know Hunters that are inside the mafia being like, "Hey, I'm not in any danger. I'll freely sell— I'll tell you where the Nostrades are."

Sylvia: Squala sold all this is the secret of it all. [Keith laughs]

Austin: God.

Sylvia: Or Dalzollene did before he died.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: But this is Shalnark's, like, second scene in a row, like, doing real detective work.

Sylvia: A little tech savvy.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Shalnark was how they got the location of the hideout, and now they're, like, looking up Nostrade connections, and then they cut back. This is more evidence that Shalnark is the Phantom Troupe's Kurapika. Kurapika is, at the same time that Shalnark is doing this, being like, "We've got security vulnerabilities."

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: They could look up at any time that this hotel room is connected to the Nostrade family.

Jack: It's great.

Austin: And then, like, deploys a plan, which is like, "All right, we have to move Neon, but we shouldn't, like, check out of her room, and also, we should not use aliases, because that could trip someone up in like— or like, that could give away that we're trying to hide something."

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: "Just book some additional rooms. You two aren't connected to the Nostrade family, so you should book it in your—" and it's like, in some ways, this is why Kurapika— this is why Kurapika and the Phantom Troupe fit together so neatly. Like, Kurapika had to be Kurapika. Like, if there wasn't a Kurapika, the Phantom Troupe would have invented one, right? [Keith and Jack laugh]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Which is literally what happened, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Is like, the only one who could go against them is someone who has very similar capacities towards—

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Like, Kurapika's also sort of doing a heist here, right? Except that his heist is a kidnapping and murder.

Jack: Mm-hmm. [Dre chuckles]

Austin: And his hope is to do it to every member of the Phantom Troupe, and so, he has to end up using some of their methodology, in terms of being very explicit around plans. I mean, like, Uvogin is not that necessarily, but the way that they planned to do this heist, clear out the bodies, get everything in the vault, and leave, is the sort of, like, okay, this is a much bloodier *Oceans 11* situation, and so you need—

Jack: Austin, I have the thing for you.

Austin: Yeah, what's up?

Jack: This is Jason Bourne.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh. Yes.

Jack: This is Bourne versus the other Treadstone agents.

Austin: The Treadstones, yeah, uh huh.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: The professor in the field. You know, this whole, like, we need to move to a different hotel room, but you need different aliases.

Austin: Yes, 100%.

Jack: That is Jason Bourne planning, as is the, you know, I fit together with my nemeses, because we are ultimately doing the same thing. It's just in what direction is the dagger pointed right now.

Austin: Yep. Well, it's towards Kurapika's heart. [laughs quietly] We know this.

Keith: It's towards Kurapika's heart.

Jack: Right, it's towards Kurapika's heart.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Keith: But who knows? Maybe there's a second secret dagger we don't know about.

Austin: [laughs quietly] Perhaps. Who could—

Jack: And then Uvo—

Austin: Has anyone checked— oh, we skipped this point earlier, briefly. Is it Gyo that

lets you see hidden stuff, lets you see In?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Is that what it is?

Keith: Yes.

Austin: One of my favorite things in this episode—

Keith: I've got it. Yeah, I've had this written.

Austin: This already happened. This was actually the last episode.

Keith: Oh, okay, okay, okay. No, nevermind.

Austin: This is in the car, which is they notice the thread while driving away.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: 'Cause if you know about Gyo and In and all this stuff, I would be in Gyo mode once every 10 minutes forever.

Dre: Yeah, just all the time.

Austin: All the time.

Keith: Well, they explain why you can't do that, though.

Austin: It's draining or whatever?

Keith: And then they reexplain why you actually can do it.

Austin: Yeah, okay. [laughs quietly]

Keith: It's because you're focusing your Gyo into your eyes.

Austin: Right, right, right.

Keith: So you can see things better. Then you're fully vulnerable to Nen attacks.

Austin: Totally. Totally, totally. But I just mean in my daily life.

Keith: Oh, sure.

Austin: When I'm walking around.

Sylvia: Just ping in now and then.

Austin: I would just ping detective vision every once in a while [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] to make sure that I didn't [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] have someone's sneaky Bungee Gum or the Nen thread stuff that's, like, following me, whatever. I would just have to be checking it all the time, and I said that to myself, and then two seconds later, I think Melody maybe, someone in the car when they're driving away with Uvogin, is like, "Wait a second. Let me just check to make sure we're not being followed. Oh, we are."

Keith: I think it's Kurapika, yeah.

Sylvia: Well, they—

Austin: Toss this thing out the car. [Jack chuckles]

Dre: I'm pretty sure it's Kurapika, yeah.

Austin: It is Kurapika.

Sylvia: They see that there's a car behind them, and then Kurapika says—

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: Uses Gyo to see the needle, I think.

Austin: Thank god.

Keith: And then back to Kurapika being a boy genius. Machi is like, "That happened faster than I thought it would."

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah, Kurapika's sort of like what if Robin was Batman. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Yes. Yeah. And Shalnark is what if Robin was a murderer?

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: What if Robin was the Joker. Wait, no, that's the Red Hood.

Austin: That's the Red Hood. Uh huh.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So, it is at this point that some stuff started slotting into place. Actually, so, Uvo stands up and goes to go and kill Kurapika, and we get a music cue playing here that is, uh...does not bode well for Uvo. You know in the way that you can, uh, you know, set music to images and you can get a sense, of somebody leaving a building, "this is not gonna go well for you"?

Keith: Mm-hmm.

[2:14:57]

Jack: As Uvo stood up, I wrote down, "Hey, is Uvo going to die? [Sylvia laughs] Are we going to get a new Phantom Troupe member?" and then I started to develop a second theory. [Austin laugh quietly] We have heard a lot about the systems by which [cross] not just new Phantom Troupe members are introduced...

Sylvia: [cross] Oh my god.

Austin: How's it work?

Keith: Oh my god.

Austin: How's it work? Yeah.

Jack: Well, one of the things that we know is that you become a member of the Phantom Troupe if you kill the— or rather, in order to take a Phantom Troupe member's seat, you have to kill the person there. And, at the same time, if a Phantom Troupe member is killed, you know, outside of that, the boss fills the seat himself.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Another thing we know about the Phantom Troupe, based on how Hisoka has been talked about, is that the Phantom Troupe holds a lot of stock by members vouching for other members. You know, we had people sort of sneering about Hisoka and other people being like, "The boss vouches for him," or "Machi vouches for him," [Austin: Mm.] or something like that.

Keith: Talk about using the whole part of something. [Jack laughs quietly] All of this shit— and Jack, I'm sorry that I'm saying this, but it's not really a spoiler. We will get to all this. Togashi uses all of this shit so perfectly.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: All of this stuff gets redeployed, and it's amazing.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: It's so good.

Jack: The economy of his structure work, or...?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Oh my god, yes, yeah.

Sylvia: Just in general, like, it's one of the things that has led to the creation of this show, I think, is the way that Togashi does this, is like...

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: It leads to some really just, like, interesting work.

Jack: So—

Austin: Right, because, you know, the argument I made about Nen being like an investment that pays off because you've introduced a lexicon of abilities. This is the same thing.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: With how does the Phantom Troupe work.

Keith: The Phantom Troupe—

Austin: And how it intersects with the other things you already know about the world but you don't know that you know about the world yet.

Keith: It's one of the things that makes the Yorknew City Arc and the Chimera Ant Arc stand out not just in this show but among anime in general, is like, how the characters in the show feel like they're thinking about all of these rules themselves. Like, the Phantom Troupe remembers that they recommend people to be Phantom Troupe members. Like, they have those thoughts and then talk about them, and, you know, the same thing happens with the Chimera Ant Arc. Like, stuff that gets brought up is stuff that characters are thinking about and bringing back up when it's relevant.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And it creates a really, really interesting quilt of characters kind of enmeshed all

into one big thing.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: So, my theory is that Kurapika is going to be, uh...what is, what number is, um...

Sylvia: 11.

Keith: 11.

Jack: Yeah. My theory is that Kurapika is 11. [Sylvia laughs] Either as a result of killing Uvo, or—

Sylvia: He's a year younger than Gon. [Jack and Austin laugh]

Jack: Or by being vouched for into the Phantom Troupe by Hisoka, because this dovetails so nicely with the, like wolf in sheep's clothing [Austin: Right.] hazy alliance thing that Hisoka and Kurapika are developing.

Austin: And Kurapika's already trying to do the wolf in sheep's clothing thing for the mafia.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Right.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: And what better and more standard, frankly, hallmark of a revenge plot is having to go deep undercover in the group that you despise.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know. I don't know if that's going to happen. It seems like the obvious move. However, in the past, I make predictions like this, and Togashi does three quarters of them and then swerves at the last minute [Keith: Sure.] into the weirdest direction.

Keith: Well, you know, sometimes your GPS tells you that the fastest way to go is down this side road, but it doesn't know that that side road is under construction. People have already closed down that road.

Jack: Yes. Yes. That is true. Or the road is a cliff. We get confirmation of how the Phantom Troupe were tipped off. We've known it all along. Chrollo worked it out. This is the consequence of Miss Neon's fortune telling ability.

Keith: Oh, you're talking about Lovely Ghostwriter.

Jack: Lovely Ghostwriter! Of course. One of the demons.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: The second demon that we have visual confirmation of.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Who's the first, at this point?

Jack: Um, the...

Keith: The purple-haired woman who runs the Hunter shop that Kurapika goes to.

Austin: Oh, right. Sure, sure, sure.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yep, mm-hmm.

Jack: She says, do you have, uh...can you see this?

Keith: Do you have it?

Austin: Do you have it?

Jack: Do you— [laughs quietly]

Dre: Do you have it?

Keith: Do you have it?

Jack: Kurapika, do you have it?

Austin: And he didn't have it, did he, folks?

Jack: [laughing] And he did not.

Dre: And he came back, and he had it.

Keith: Brought to you by Friends at the Table, by the way.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: All right, well, time for a genre change.

Keith: Yeah, yeah. Sorry, I've got a button for genre change.

Austin: Yeah, do we have the [imitates]?

[clip of "Dr. Warm-Hearted Miser" begins]

Austin: Oh, you're going this way. Yeah, sure, okay.

Jack: Nasty nasty miser man.

Sylvia: Oh, there goes my walk cycle again.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

[music ends]

Keith: Which one were you thinking it was gonna be?

Austin: The Gon theme, the adventure theme, [**Keith:** Oh!] the call to adventure.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Okay. Yeah, yeah, I don't have that one.

Austin: Which is not really what this vibe is. This is more smooth Leorio has a plan.

Keith: Yeah, “Dr. Warm-Hearted Miser”?

Jack: Well, Leorio has a plan, but it is currently—

Austin: It works!

Keith: It works.

Jack: It gets there, but I did some maths.

Austin: Oh, it's bad. [laughs]

Jack: At this point.

Dre: It's not great, yeah.

Jack: At this point, Leorio's plan has managed [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] to raise them 0.09% of what they need. [laughs quietly]

Austin: Okay. But that's not the whole plan.

Keith: Which is about the same math that Killua had.

Jack: Yes.

Keith: Right, because you've forgotten to take into account the Mole or the Fish.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: The Mole or the Fish, or...

Dre: Mm.

Austin: And let me tell you something: how do we know that there's not a third step to this plan? You just have to trust that Leorio has a plan.

Dre: I mean, I do.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Leorio knows what the numbers are.

Austin: That's right.

Jack: Apparently.

Austin: Does Leorio know what Nen is? No.

Keith: Sort of.

Dre: Kind of.

Sylvia: Sorta. [Jack chuckles]

Austin: Mm...Leorio could not see it. Leorio does not have it.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Leorio does not have it, and yet, at the same time.

Austin: And yet.

Jack: Maybe more than anybody else, [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] Leorio has it. Leorio has the "Do you have it?" poster in his room.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Leorio's plan is basically make enough noise that the mafia suckers you into a massive underground arm wrestling ring, in which people will bet millions and millions and millions of jenny, and it works.

Keith: Well, except...except.

Dre: Until.

Keith: The road is closed.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Now, this is when I just sort of gave up. [laughs quietly] I sort of said to Togashi: look, you have not so firmly unsettled my freak radar, or rather, my ability to determine what characters are important or not. Because a sort of...all the lights in this underground arm wrestling ring come on, and we are introduced to rag doll Hisoka? It's sort of like a...

Dre: Oh, sorry, do you mean Conditional Auction Announcer?

Jack: This is the problem!

Austin: Oh, mine just said Punk.

Jack: Mine also just said Punk. The subtitles called this "Punk". This is a character who has sort of, like, ragged discolored patches of skin around his eyes.

Keith: They're fuzzy. It's fur.

Jack: He looks like he's sort of been sewn together.

Sylvia: I love it.

Jack: This is the announcer, and yeah, looks like a weird Hisoka, Hot Topic Hisoka.

Austin: Yeah. Definitely. Abs for miles.

Jack: Abs for miles.

Dre: We have left off the fact that all this man is wearing is a sports bra and a thong.

Keith: Yes.

Austin: That's correct.

Keith: Right.

Dre: And a bowtie.

Austin: And he's cut. And a bowtie.

Jack: You're telling me this is not an important— this is just a— Togashi just had an idea for a guy and drew him quickly?

Austin: Yeah, just a guy.

Jack: Or are we gonna see this guy again?

Keith: Yeah, this guy is actually in two scenes.

Dre: Oh my god. This guy looks even more amazing in the manga.

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Austin: I need to see. Please show us this guys.

Sylvia: Wow.

Keith: Is that four candles tattooed on his arm? What?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Wow, this fucking rules.

Sylvia: I'd party with this guy.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, this guy fucking rules.

Jack: Looks amazing.

Austin: And the lightning bolts above the head.

Keith: It looks like he has denim sewn into his eyes, around his eyes.

Austin: Well, that's the Raggedy Andy thing, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Is like, this is...

Keith: Well, in the anime, it looks like it's fur, and like, maybe it's glued there.

Austin: Right.

Keith: That looks like it's, like, stitched into the guy.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I see what you're saying.

Dre: Yeah. You're right, Keith.

Austin: Conditional Auction Announcer. Conditional Auctions...

Jack: Oh, we talked a bit about this.

Keith: Oh, we went over— yes, Jack.

Dre: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Okay, thank you.

Jack: It doesn't mean shit. It's...

Austin: It's just a bet. It's a bet? The thing you're talking about is a bet.

Jack: It's gambling, yes.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: What's really funny is that in the last episode I had just thought that this was something that Leorio had made up.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: But the punchline that the mafia is also really **[Dre: Yeah.]** invested in conditional... [laughs quietly]

Keith: [laughs] It's something that Togashi made up.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Togashi made this one up.

Dre: This isn't even a bet. This is like a, hey, we're hiring for a job.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: It's so— you can see, though, you can see, like, a pebble getting into the machine, where it's just like, Togashi, the guy who, like, goes in and sets everything up so that later when they get knocked down or expanded on, you're like, "Oh, that's that thing from before." Except this time, the thing that was set up was conditional auctions, which aren't a thing, so like, oh, we had to learn about conditional auctions before so that it would make sense now, but then, **[Austin: Yeah.]** as, I think, Killua points out, this is just a bounty hunt.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yes. Because what happens here—

Keith: It's conditional.

Austin: Sorry, I need to link—

Keith: It's a conditional hide and seek auction.

Austin: I need to link something just to the non-Jack portion of this podcast really quick.
[Jack chuckles]

Dre: Sure, sure, sure.

Austin: That I had completely forgotten about until just now. [Sylvia laughs] This is from episode 93. So maybe there's, like, a throughline of a type of people in this world.

Sylvia: I mean...

Keith: Wow.

Austin: That we didn't know about.

Sylvia: Yeah, this is where— this is the type of people I am. [Jack laughs quietly]

Austin: It's another goth character, for Jack. That's all I'll say.

Keith: Who's wearing— I'm just gonna say this. Wearing golf tees.

Jack: Oh, interesting.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Mm.

Austin: Yeah. This character's great. I won't say more.

Sylvia: Yeah. I love it.

Jack: So, the Phantom Troupe are having this thing called a conditional hide and seek auction, which is a high bounty hide and seek game.

Keith: This is the most made up thing.

Jack: Being handed out by Conditional Auction Announcer's sort of Bob's Beauties,

[Austin laughs] who are these ladies with paint sort of slashed over their eyes. They look very cool.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: In, like, purple dresses, purple long dresses. I have no idea what the deal is here. Is this— I guess this is the compere of the...you know, the way I see it, this sort of mafia club runs all night, and first, there's some cabaret, you know.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Then there's some burlesque, then the people come on and they do arm wrestling or whatever, and between all these things, Conditional Auction Announcer comes on and does his little thing. But yeah.

Austin: No, see, I think that's wrong. I think Conditional Auction Announcer has interrupted...like, I don't think Conditional Auction Announcer is part of this particular establishment.

Keith: Oh, yeah. This is a person who was upstairs, [**Austin:** Right.] and, like, has run downstairs with news from the mafia.

Austin: Right.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Like, hey, we're not doing any of our scheduled events. We are all looking for these guys.

Austin: This is like when you're hanging around the Iceberg Lounge, which is the Penguin's club in Batman. I believe it's called that.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And no one around you is, like, a Penguin person or anything. But then, suddenly, someone shows up [Jack laughs] who is, like, dressed like a bird in a weird

way. You're like, "Wha—? Huh? What's going on?" and then that person is like, "We gotta get the Bat."

Jack: We gotta go kill the Bat. [Keith laughs]

Austin: And you're like, "I guess we gotta go get the Bat."

Dre: I guess we gotta get the Bat, yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Danny Devito said.

Austin: Danny Devito said.

Jack: This is both Togashi and everybody in this universe, once again, is obsessed with games. I say this every time it comes up.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Everybody in this universe loves—

Keith: Jack's gonna lose their mind in a...

Austin: Mm-hmm. [Austin and Jack laugh]

Jack: What, more than Greed Island? More than literally being sucked into a game?

[others are conspicuously silent]

Jack: Okay. [Sylvia laughs] Yeah, so, this is a mafia move to hunt down the Phantom Troupe. Two billion jenny per Troupe member captured. There is no time. We are now just firmly in the realm of my quest log in an Elder Scrolls game has gotten too big.

[Austin chuckles] We have to ensure Miss Neon doesn't die. We have to kill the Phantom Troupe members. We have to find the eyes. We have to raise a lot of money

to get Greed Island so we can figure out where Ging is, and we're gonna do that by either arm wrestling or capturing a ton of members of the Phantom Troupe.

Keith: It's funny to see it as, like, a bulky quest log that is getting too full, because the other way to see it is, like, really efficiently tying a thread between these two things that are going on.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Like, we haven't really seen Gon and Killua in, you know, eight episodes or something, and like, they've been off doing this weird shit. And then, all of a sudden, we get, like, eight minutes of them, and then this weirdo comes in and says, "Everybody. Everybody has to figure out this stuff with Kurapika that we've all been focused on."
[Austin, Jack, and Keith laugh]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Quick! And there's money in it! Mm...

Keith: And both things are true. These are, I think, both real.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: 'Cause there are a lot of plates spinning.

Jack: And now basically the entire city is hunting the Phantom Troupe. We get this great wide shot of people, you know, looking around and exchanging wanted posters, and this is good, because we have Killua saying, "They're not gonna be able to do it. This is the Phantom Troupe. You know, everybody here is dead," and also, you know, on the side of the show where we are with the Phantom Troupe, where we like them and want the best for them, we get that great feeling of our heroes are lost in a city that is hunting for them, which is an exciting, you know, sort of standby. How are they going to get out of this one?

Austin: Well, and we get the other part about being the Phantom Troupe fan, which is

Killua's like, "If they stole from the mafia, they have a screw loose," because for Killua, it's the mafia. That mafia will get you.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Right. The mafia also thinks this.

Austin: Right, exactly. Even Kill, who is from a family of killers so much stronger than the Shadow Beasts, as far as we can tell.

Keith: Right.

Austin: Like, my gut instinct is that the Zoldyck family...

Keith: The Zoldycks are so Phantom Troupe adjacent.

Austin: Correct. Yes.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: In terms of power level and stuff.

Jack: Oh, to the point where I thought Illumi was going to be a member of the Phantom Troupe for a long time.

Austin: Sure, of course. Right, of course.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: So, so, like, the fact that Killua's like, "Oh, you must be crazy to steal from the mafia!" Like, oh man, the mafia has pulled one over on the world.

Jack: [laughs] Yes.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: The greatest trick the Devil ever played right now, like...

Keith: And that's the thing. It's hard to overcome that Nen is secret.

Austin: Right.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Like, even this huge mega-powerful organization doesn't have Nen like that.

Austin: Right. It has some Nen users, but it totally has “the guy you met at the bar who has Nen” energy. [Jack laughs quietly]

Keith: Well, do you remember what Light Nostrade says to Kurapika about Dalzollene?

Austin: No.

Keith: They say, like— he's like, “Are you sure Dalzollene is dead? He was a Nen user. He could withstand 10 bullets.” [Austin and Jack laugh]

Austin: Yeah. Right. Ohh.

Jack: He gets stabbed.

Dre: Oh yeah, and then Kurapika says, like, “Yeah, that other guy withstood a bazooka, so...”

Keith: Yeah, he caught a bazooka rocket in his hands, and that was the least impressive thing that he did.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Like, you could have said, yeah, he bit a Shadow Beast's head off. He 1v4ed Shadow Beasts and got them each in one hit.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah. It wasn't anything.

Keith: Actually, he got—

Jack: While paralyzed.

Keith: He got four of them in three hits, because the last one was a shout, not a hit.

[Austin laughs]

Jack: Yeah. Gon calls Kurapika to be like, “Oh, Kurapika’s hunting the Phantom Troupe.”

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Who doesn’t pick up, as Uvo approaches him.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: And we get, like, two “crowd goes wild” lines as they trade off.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Uvo says, “Where do you want to die? I will let you choose.” Crowd goes, “Whoo! Uvo! Uvo!” and then Kurapika says, “Let’s go somewhere remote. I don’t want your screams to bother anyone.” and all the other people in the other side of the arena, “Kurapika! Kurapika!”

Keith: I love this line.

Sylvia: [imitates “Chain Bastard”]

[laughter]

[clip of “Chain Bastard” begins]

Sylvia: Yeah!

Austin: Oh, there it is.

[music ends]

Keith: It's such a good line. It's a really fun kind of twist of their, like, the expected thing. It is the roving murder band who's like, "I'll honor any request," and then it's Kurapika, the nice guy, the powerpoint guy, [**Austin:** Yeah.] who says, "I'll have you screaming at the top of your lungs."

Austin: Yep.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Mm-hmm. And it's fun!

Keith: And it's fun.

Sylvia: Do we get to the fight?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. It's time.

Jack: Oh, wait, Hunterpedia.

Dre: Yeah, let's do it.

Jack: Squala is dating Miss Neon's maid.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. [laughs]

Keith: Yeah, this is his last job, by the way. This is the last job they need in order to, like, buy a house or something.

Sylvia: Well, yeah.

Austin: Well, remember...when he's introduced, he's on the phone with her.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: He is, yeah.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Dre: He's like, "Babe, don't worry about it. I just gotta do this one last thing."

Austin: "I have the dogs."

Sylvia: He's getting ready to go home and be a family man, you know?

Austin: Yeah, well like, and it's so clear that his hope for this whole job was: they're not gonna get past my dogs, and we got the, like, the little blowup guys. They're not gonna get past the blowup guys and the dogs. None of these guys are gonna get hired.

Dre: It's the mafia. Who'd go after the mafia?

Austin: And, right, even if they do get past them, even if we do end up hiring these idiots, whatever. It's the mob auction. no one attacks the mob auction. Everyone from the mob is there.

Keith: Yeah, it is...

Sylvia: Bum bum bum...

Keith: No, I'll talk about that later. Nevermind.

Episode 47 [2:32:50]

Keith: This episode starts with Uvo pissing on screen.

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: Pissing eggs.

Austin: Well, that's not true.

Dre: Pissing what?

Austin: No, no, no.

Dre: Hey, pissing what?

Keith: Pissing eggs. Pissing out leech eggs.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: This episode starts with a blood-red moon in the sky.

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Jack: Yes, we have a shot of the moon

Keith: Sure, we have the blood-red moon, yeah.

Austin: Yes. Then, Uvogin is pissing.

Keith: Then pissing, yeah.

Austin: On the side of the road.

Jack: Yeah. Red moon, red eyes. You know.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Can't lose.

Jack: Togashi doesn't need to be— [laughs] Togashi doesn't need to be subtle about this. It's Kurapika versus Uvo. We know what we're here for.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Is this the first time we've seen Kurapika's earring, or is this just the first time it has been highlighted by the show?

Austin: Oh. I had the same back and forth. It's definitely the first time it's been highlighted enough to really notice it.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But he's wearing it nonstop [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] both in these scenes and in some flashbacks that happen in this episode.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: I'd have to go back and see if it shows up in the episodes that we get the flashback.

Jack: Like the Hunter Exam or something.

Austin: Yeah, or even in the stuff with his master who teaches him Nen before.

Jack: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Because that's— it shows up in that flashback, but I don't think it showed up in the first version of that scene before we get the full version.

Keith: I think it did. It's just he's so calm normally [**Austin:** Yeah.] that his hair is always, like, covering the side of his face.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: But in this, he's, like, shouting, and it's anime, and his hair's going crazy, and he's jumping around, and...

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: He has a gold and ruby earring on his left ear that appears sometimes, and as the fight begins, Kurapika throws off his robes, and I realized this as we actually saw the flashback as well. We've had three Kurapika outfits.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: So, we have his, like, his first look that we [**Keith:** Right.] see him wearing during the Hunter Exam and...

Keith: The most pajamas of the set.

Jack: Mm-hmm. And then we have his second look that he's worn through most of this arc, this blue and... 'cause usually he wears red and blue, and in this arc, he's worn, like, blue and gold.

Sylvia: I...

Jack: Hmm?

Sylvia: Does he wear red earlier? I could have sworn he always had the blue.

Austin: It's orange. It's orange.

Jack: Orange.

Sylvia: Oh, okay.

Austin: It's orange. It's, like, a— it's a blue top with, like, an orange line through it in the first one.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: But here, he throws off his robes, revealing a mint and white outfit underneath.

Keith: Yes, he dramatically— he throws off his robes to dramatically reveal his new pajamas.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Yes, his new pajamas, and I—

Sylvia: Comfymaxxing.

Jack: I've written down, "We've seen him in white robes before, right?" I was just thinking of the white shirt and pants he wears under his main outfit.

Austin: Correct.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yes, that is correct. Yes.

Jack: That, like, when he sleeps or something. We've seen— we definitely saw him during the Hunter Exam just wearing those two at some point.

Keith: Yeah, he took it off during a fight as well.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: I think he maybe took it off during the Majtani fight.

Sylvia: Good Kurapika costumes in this arc, I think.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Like Hisoka, Kurapika's costume is, like, showy but also simple in such a way that I didn't necessarily notice it changing until I had, like, gone, "Oh, wait."

Keith: I also barely noticed it changing from— it changed from red to gold?

Austin: Yeah, I put them both in the chat just now.

Jack: And different pattern too, yeah.

Austin: It's different, right? He has the white under, like, garment on.

Sylvia: Right.

Austin: But then, in the first arc, he has a long blue sleeveless, like, tunic robe.

Keith: Right. Yeah.

Austin: That, you know, was closed up on the neck and then goes all the way down his body, long and kind of narrow.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Whereas, in this arc, he has this kind of, like, blue shawl, blue and gold shawl that stops at about the waist, and then he has, like, the blue and gold pants.

Jack: Like a skirt?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Or is it pants?

Austin: It might be a skirt.

Keith: It's a skirt. It's a skirt.

Austin: It might be a skirt. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I just don't have the full shot here.

Jack: "Is this some kind of vendetta?" says Uvo. Yep.

Austin: Mm-hmm. Yeah, buddy.

Keith: Also immediately impressed. He says, "Who are you? You're no ordinary Nen user," which is very funny [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] to say, like, Phantom Troupe saying to someone who has known Nen for six months.

Austin: Yeah. Oh, wait, you know what? I'm looking at it.

Sylvia: I mean, listen.

Austin: [chuckles] I'm looking at it. While he's learning Nen, he has the blue and orange on, so he got this new outfit after learning Nen.

Sylvia: Oh, it's his Turtle School uniform like Goku has.

Austin: Right, exactly.

Keith: Oh.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: I wonder if he conjured it. I wonder if it's a conjured outfit.

Jack: Hmm.

Dre: Oh.

Sylvia: That'd be kind of sick, but wouldn't he—

Keith: That's a fun way to train your Conjuring ability.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. This is like, he's always— I'm always—

Keith: This is like when Goku and Gohan need to [Austin: Yes.] learn to be Super Saiyan permanently.

Austin: Yep.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Exactly. He's like, "Well, I don't have to use it as a power, but having it conjured all the time will just be a constant—" It's like walking around while constantly, [Keith: Right.] you know, flexing your absolute or whatever.

Keith: Which is what Uvo does.

Austin: [laughs] Yeah.

Sylvia: Uvo is constantly flexing and also does not remember the Kurta Clan off the top of his head.

Keith: No, no.

Austin: Nope.

Jack: No.

Sylvia: Kurapika has to remind him.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: There's, like, a big throughline—

Keith: He still doesn't remember.

Sylvia: Yeah, no. Like, he straight up— when he even says that he does remember, and he's like, “Oh, some of them were good fighters.”

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I don't even really, like, believe him. I think he might just be saying that to get under Kurapika's skin.

Jack: Hmm.

Sylvia: But...

Austin: Maybe. I kind of believe it. I believe that he remembers once he sees the eyes.

Keith: He sees the eyes, and then he goes, [cross] “Oh, yeah, the eyes. Yeah.”

Sylvia: [cross] That's fair.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Because at first he hears the scarlet eyes, and he goes, “Is that some sort of

treasure?”

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And at first, I thought he is post the massacre, but as it became clearer and— it became clearer and scarier that he was there. He doesn't remember it.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. We kill all sorts of people, man.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And the Phantom Troupe—

Austin: It was a Wednesday or a Tuesday or whatever.

Jack: Yeah. Not only do they kill all sorts of people, but they also face a lot of people wanting revenge.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: This is something that happens to the Troupe a lot. They're like, “We kill a bunch of people, then people come looking for revenge, and then we kill them.”

Keith: He says, “Fools like you are the reason I never get sick of killing.”

Austin: It's fun. It's fun to fight a guy like you.

Keith: His hobby is denying people their revenge.

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh.

Jack: And there's, uh...this opening conversation, and this kind of continues after the

fight as well. It is so interesting watching Kurapika reaching for some sort of justification or vindication—

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yep.

Jack: —or handhold in his revenge and just finding an abyss in Uvo.

Keith: Yeah. And it is, like, sick in a way, where it's like, it doesn't— it is hard to square that they feel that way with how they present on screen.

Austin: Right.

Keith: It's hard to see that—

Austin: Well, this is— mm. But this is the thing that makes me go, “Is there something about...” and again, and I'm revealing that this is not covered in the anime in some ways. I've always been like, “What really happened with the Kurta Clan?” because we get...we're going to learn in a moment that Kurapika has made a decision about coming after Uvugin here, because he wants to know, “Can I kill any member of the Phantom Troupe?”

Keith: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Uvugin is very clearly the most physically strong one, and he's an Enhancer, a master level Enhancer. If my chains can hold him, they can hold any of them, right? Because of, you know, we'll maybe— I'll just say it now. The way the chains partially work is that they put— they enforce Zetsu on you, forcing you to not be able to use your Enhancer or your Nen abilities, so you have to break out with your bare strength when

they wrap you up the right way. And because of that, if Uvogin can't break out, well, guess what? Uvogin is, like, naturally strong before Nen.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: And so, if they work— if Enhancer Nen doesn't work, and the rest of it doesn't work. And so there's a play that Kurapika is making. I'm gonna go after that guy first, so that I can know if I can go after the others successfully. But there's something else here that Kurapika hasn't thought about, which is that Uvogin is the most likely to not remember anything about the fucking Kurta Clan [**Keith:** Yeah.] and is the most likely to not care about the revenge story, to not be able to fill in any of the details about why the Phantom Troupe is the Phantom Troupe.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: He doesn't care about any of that stuff. If his first person that he went after was maybe Chrollo or maybe Shalnark, we might— the whole exchange might be different, because that might be someone who could talk to Kurapika about what happened there.

Keith: Right.

Dre: Mm.

Austin: And by making it Uvogin, the most monstrous and violent and, you know, outright clearly, like, is not here to inform Kurapika, is here to try to kill him, we get a really nice— it comes across the plate so smoothly that you get to [**Jack:** Mm-hmm.] root for Kurapika for all of this, and you as the reader or the viewer never stop to go like, “Is there something—?” This character can't give Kurapika anything here, and so my secret hope is— not hope. My secret curiosity has always been: will we one day get the confrontation that reveals something about what is happening, what happened there then?

Sylvia: You gotta read the manga, Austin.

Austin: I know. I will.

Sylvia: This whole bit is just be might like, “Oh shit, we gotta read the manga.”

Austin: Okay. I'll get there. Okay.

Keith: Yeah, I also— it's funny, 'cause I've always—

Dre: Hey, manga's good.

Austin: I believe it.

Keith: I've always felt that where the Phantom Troupe stuff goes will end up revealing, like, a lot of Meteor City stuff. Like, what is it about [Austin: Right.] Meteor City that's doing this to people?

Austin: Yes.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yep.

Keith: Like, turning these people into people that do this.

Sylvia: Yeah. This is, like, a major thing of what's happening currently, is my understanding.

Austin: Cool.

Jack: Okay. Here we go. It's time for a fight, and we go into— and it has been so much fun watching this after watching *Dragon Ball*. We get some shonen-ass shonen animation here.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: As Kurapika jumps up and deploys his chain. Uvogin roars. The chains are infused with an unreal amount of Nen, but even in this beautiful just really dynamic

active shonen fight choreography, Togashi is playing his favorite trick, because we are in Uvo's head here, not Kurapika's.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Mm-hmm. It's so good.

Jack: As Uvo is really struggling to harm Kurapika in any way and identify what kind of Nen user Kurapika is. And I will say: I did not see this coming.

Keith: This is great. This is such a great turn.

Sylvia: There was a fun bit, I think it was last time we recorded or maybe before that, where you were like, "Well, have we seen any Specialists before?" [Austin chuckles] and I had to be like, "Well, kinda."

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: 'Cause, you know, we've seen Kurapika.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Kurapika is playing fancy Nen games, in a very similar way that we saw Hisoka playing them, with making his chains invisible.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Or rather, it's actually the inverse. Kurapika consciously makes his chains visible. They are, by default, [**Keith:** Right.] moving silently and invisibly, which allows him to pin them to you in the same way that the— is it Bungee Gum? Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, it is.

Keith: He lets you see them.

Austin: Which has the properties of...bungee and gum?

Jack: Oh, right, right, right.

Dre: Bungee and— yeah, rubber and gum. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Rubber. Fuck. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: He lets you see them so that you think that seeing them is a necessary part of them existing, when it isn't.

Austin: Yes. Yes.

Jack: And then we get some various business going on.

Austin: Because he has touched him and put the chains around him invisibly [**Keith:** Yeah.] and then reveals it.

Sylvia: It is so identical to how Hisoka reveals Bungee Gum.

Austin: It's 100%. Right.

Sylvia: It rules.

Austin: Which is the other great thing about the Hisoka-Kurapika alignment, is suddenly you go, oh, there's a little formal alignment by the way the way that they fight, [**Jack:** Yep.] and now they're also working together?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: A dark path you walk, Kurapika. [Jack laughs]

Keith: I love this part. This is such hubris, though, from Kurapika. Like, when you really consider what's being said here, it's outrageous that Kurapika says this. In a row, almost, he says, "I'm impressed. I didn't think you knew how to use In," and then later when he clocks the chains, he goes, "So you can use Gyo. These chains were fortified with a Conjuror's Nen, [**Sylvia:** Agh.] meaning I can use it in order to render them invisible." And it's like, guy, you have known Nen for six months. [Austin laughs] This is a Phantom Troupe guy! What are you talking about [cross] "I didn't know you could use

In”?

Sylvia: [cross] You know what? No, listen.

[2:45:07]

Austin: You are villain monologuing.

Dre: Kurapika’s the smartest motherfucker in the universe. [Austin sighs]

Sylvia: If I’m going up on Daigo in *Street Fighter* and I know I’ve got him, I’m gonna talk shit.

Austin: [laughs] But that’s how you lose most of the time. The thing is—

Sylvia: Listen. Sometimes you’ve got it, though.

Austin: Uvogin is not Daigo. This is a thing that we’ve learned. [laughs]

Sylvia: No, he’s not.

Dre: I don’t know, man.

Jack: We get the Nen wheel as Uvo is trying to place Kurapika on it, and I wrote down, “Uvo’s Nen presentation. Well, time to have a clarification from the powerpoint master,” as Kurapika...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Kurapika reveals that—and this is just hilarious—first, he is a Specialist, which, you know, is—

Keith: When?

Jack: Well, not just— hmm. He’s a Specialist kind of all the time, but when his eyes turn scarlet, [laughs quietly] he is able to use 100% of all Nen types.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And what is that called?

Sylvia: [cross] Emperor Time.

Jack: [cross] That is called...

[clip of "Chain Bastard" begins]

Keith: Emperor Time!

Jack: Emperor Time.

Austin: Emperor Time.

[music ends]

Jack: Hell yeah.

Sylvia: Thank you. [Austin laughs]

Jack: When this was revealed, I had the reaction of the kid in the candy store being told that they can have one of every candy. I was just like, "This is perfect. 100% of every type of Nen. He's gonna do amazing things." [Keith and Jack laugh]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Janine Hawkins said, "Oh, that's bullshit." [laughter] So. "That's OP."

Sylvia: That's the point!

Dre: But does Janine know that Kurapika's our favorite boy?

Keith: Well...

Sylvia: Well...

Austin: Uh, no, 'cause Janine has seen this arc, right?

Dre: Okay.

Austin: Right? I started watching this with Janine [**Dre:** All right.] at the beginning of this set of— like, the whole eight set of episodes, the start of whatever season this is, you know, this whole Yorknew City Arc.

Sylvia: The Phantom Troupe season.

Austin: The Phantom Troupe season, basically, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly.

Dre: The Yorknew City Arc.

Austin: Yes, exactly.

Jack: Emperor Time.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But the thing is he...it's not OP, because Kurapika is bound to...

Austin: Right. This is what I said.

Jack: This new thing, which we've touched on earlier in the episode, and I don't think we need to go over it again in detail.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Nen contracts.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Where you— and these are spoken about by Mizuken, Kurapika's teacher, like they're a real thing, which they clearly are, but...

Sylvia: They clearly are.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: It does not surprise me that Wing did not teach this to Gon and Killua.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Because this is dark Nen. This is dangerous. You can swear a contract and set conditions. A conditional auction, if you will.

Austin: Right.

Keith: You're saying Gon and Killua aren't responsible enough to handle Nen contracts?

Jack: No. No. No. [Austin chuckles] They are not remotely responsible, and in fact, Keith, that is going to be demonstrated when they start making unwise Nen contracts left and right. [Keith laughs quietly]

Dre: Oh. It's probably fine.

Jack: We're gonna get into real trouble there. I can foresee it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: The demon world is close to the surface, in these moments.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: You make a contract. You say, you know, "I'm only going to use these powers in these certain conditions." The fucking judge from *Final Fantasy Tactics Advance*.

Austin: Yeah. When I have Scarlet Eyes, I always can use 100% of all. [Jack laughs] This works. Plus three sentence.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Absolutely. Countered by, uh...

Austin: Uh huh. [Jack and Keith laugh]

Jack: My sentence: When a dagger pierces my heart, [Austin laughs] I expire instantly.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: Yeah. So, here's where I wrote, "Who are you making contracts with?" We've covered that. This is interesting. This is an interesting example of— and, I mean, this is kind of exactly what you're talking about, Austin. I think all of us are very interested right now in the narrative stakes and the sort of mechanical stakes of speaking truth into a world.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Of saying something and, in saying it, making it real. And this is exactly what Kurapika is doing here. You know, saying, "I will only use these chains for these purpose—" Oh my god, I completely botched that sentence. "I will only use these chains for these purposes. I will only unlock these Nen powers when I am in this heightened, you know, state, and let there be consequences if that is the case." And as if to demonstrate this— well, first he tortures Uvo. He chains him up. Uvo gives Kurapika very little trouble during this fight, concerningly little trouble, and he tortures him. He punches him so hard that the impression you get is that he is sort of, like, distorting his flesh, breaking his bones, and then chains his heart with a stake of retribution [**Sylvia:** So cool.] and sets a contract on Uvo's heart. This is interesting. You can put contracts on other people. That's a—

Austin: It's not clear if this is the same sort of Nen contract.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Or if this is a particular power.

Keith: So, it is a self contract that involves someone else.

Austin: You're right. Yes.

Keith: You're saying— I'm saying, like, I have a power.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: This power will stop before your heart. If you don't tell me something that's true, like, my thing will go in.

Austin: Yeah, you're right. It's not putting— it's not a contract on Uvogin. It's a contract on himself, on Kurapika, which is: I will kill you if you don't tell me the truth, and that's on me. Like, you can't— I can't prevent myself from doing it, 'cause I've made that contract, right? Which makes it a good bargaining chip, to anybody but Uvogin, maybe.

Keith: Right.

Jack: This weirdly reminds me a lot of Basho's Nen abilities [**Austin:** Yeah.] in the way that Basho is able to make statements about the world and then see them, you know, unfurled. It's a lot less kind of fun and funky [laughs quietly] when Kurapika does it.

Keith: It is less funky than the haiku, yeah, for sure.

Austin: Yeah. A deeply underutilized power, by the way.

Keith: Yes. Agreed.

Jack: Who, Basho's? Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Basho's, yeah. If Basho had Kurapika's brain, he might be the strongest Nen user alive.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. [laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Well, you do have to— they set up the weakness of it by when he says, like, "This chair will burn," and it does, and he's like, "It didn't even burn all the way."

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Like, it just, like, was on fire.

Austin: Yeah. [cross] You gotta use better words.

Jack: [cross] Okay, here we go.

Keith: Sorry, Jack, what'd you say?

Jack: "Useless friend Squala." That's five syllables.

Austin: Yeah, mm-hmm.

Jack: "Has new Nen ability."

Keith: Okay.

Jack: That's seven. "That is not dog-based." [Sylvia and Keith laugh]

Austin: Yeah, okay. Sure.

Jack: Just writes that in.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: You're giving people new powers.

Austin: And as we know from this show, it doesn't really have to be a haiku. It just needs to be five/seven/five.

Keith: Right.

Austin: [cross] It doesn't actually have to abide by—

Keith: [cross] It doesn't have follow the other— yes. Right.

Austin: No.

Jack: No. Develop an idea; reflect it...

Keith: It has to be a haiku in the way that they taught me what a haiku was in second grade.

Jack: Yes, yes, exactly. [Dre laughs]

Austin: It has to be a haiku the way the game *Ghost of Tsushima* handles haiku.

Jack: [laughs] Yes.

Austin: A poetry form that wasn't invented yet at the time that game takes place.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely. But it's Japanese, isn't it, Austin? You gotta just whack it into that game.

Sylvia: God.

Austin: Put it right in there, dude. No big deal.

Keith: Slot it.

Jack: Okay. So, it comes down to the question [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] that Kurapika asks Uvo, which is essentially, "Where is the rest of the Phantom Troupe?" right?

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Tell me this, or you will die. And surprising nobody...Uvo has been begging for death for a while, less out of "I'm in so much pain," but in terms of, like, I am going to—I'm not going to give you anything.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You might as well kill me. So, in response—I think in my subtitles, he says, "Go to hell, you son of a bitch."

Sylvia: He says, like, "Die, bastard," or something in mine.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, that's what mine says too.

Austin: Also, to be clear, Kurapika is not offering life to him. He's saying, "I'll let you live a little bit longer."

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. That's true. Which doesn't mean anything to Uvo.

Austin: And the thing I want to actually note visually about this sequence: Jack, you talked before about much of this being from Uvogin's perspective, and we get a lot of the chain is pointed at the camera. We are literally in Uvogin's perspective with the chain coming towards us a lot, [**Keith:** Mm-hmm.] and then the moment of death— and we do sometimes get it from Kurapika's perspective too, but like, especially early on, when it's revealed that it's been hidden and it's revealed, we get the shot looking up at Kurapika on the mountain with the chain coming from him to the camera's perspective. We get him again down on the ground.

Keith: We then get—

Austin: And at the very end—

Keith: Oh, go ahead.

Austin: At the very end, when Uvogin says, "Go to hell, you son of a bitch," we follow the chain back to Kurapika. Like, the camera pulls back alongside the line of the chain and pulls us back behind and below Kurapika, looking at Uvogin as he dies.

Jack: It's wonderful, and really nice framing.

Keith: And then we get the camera's in the hole that Uvogin is being buried in, as Kurapika dumps dirt onto it.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: You're totally right.

Jack: There is...Togashi is so confident in his voice that someone could have set up this arc and said, "In order to make Kurapika's quest for vengeance sell to an audience, we need to ensure that the Phantom Troupe is otherworldly and abhorrent and terrifying," and Togashi, in kind of like a masterstroke, has gone, "No, I'm gonna go the other way. I'm gonna make you sit with the Phantom Troupe for such a long time that when Kurapika arrives as the chain bastard, he is now suddenly this nightmarishly powerful driven impossible figure. It's coming at it the other way than I feel like a lot of people would do, and it works so well.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Just to gesture back towards the *Dragon Ball* that we watched recently where, you know, fights take five episodes and enemies become friends with one speech, as long as it gets some time to percolate. That expectation that, like, a fight in a shonen is going to take minimum one episode is so powerful. I remember when Uvagin died and I was watching it the first time, I was like, "That's it? That's it? [Jack laughs] That's all that we get of Uvagin? They just set him up as a character that could be in, like, 30 more episodes."

Austin: [chuckles] Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, it rules.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And then, no, they just kill him, and then they bury him, and then they bury you with him.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I want to just shout something out really quick, because we say the word Togashi a lot on this show.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: But Togashi is not, like, on the anime, right?

Keith: No, not at all.

Austin: Like, obviously it's an adaptation, but it is— but Madhouse, which is the studio that does this, does a great job and has made a billion other incredible things like *Vampire Hunter D* and *Trigun*, and the director of this, Hiroshi Kōjina, comes up through doing animation on things like *Vampire Hunter D* [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] and *City Hunter* and a bunch of other stuff, has directed a number of other series. And like, there are a lot of creative decisions, in terms of—

Keith: *Death Note*? *Death Note*, I think.

Sylvia: No, that was the composer who worked on *Death Note*.

Austin: That's the composer.

Keith: Oh, was it?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, the composer.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, I don't...I think I would know if it was...

Sylvia: I would double check, but I'm pretty sure.

Keith: Madhouse created and helped produce many shows, including—

Austin: Sorry, Madhouse, yes, but not this director.

Sylvia: Yes.

Austin: Sorry.

Keith: Oh, the—

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Okay, okay, okay, okay.

Austin: Yes, yes, yes. Madhouse was, like, you know, one of the big breakout '80s— I mean, they were around before that, but when you think about the anime that blew up in the early— the late '90s, early 2000s, in North America, things like *Vampire Hunter D* and *Ninja Scroll* and *Trigun*.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: A lot of that was Madhouse stuff, and then, yes, they also made *Death Note*.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: They also made *Paprika*.

Keith: I thought this list was a Madhouse list, not a that particular director list.

Austin: The thing that you're reading is.

Sylvia: I feel like we've talked about Kōjima before, [**Austin:** Okay.] because I remember mentioning that he is advising on the *Sand Land* movie that's coming out.

Austin: He is. He is. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Or has come out?

Austin: I think that's out, and then the game is coming out later this year.

Sylvia: Yes.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: So, like, still active, still working. But worth giving a shoutout to.

Dre: Is that the Toriyama?

Austin: It is. It is, yeah.

Dre: Okay.

Austin: But yeah, just wanted to shout that out.

Sylvia: Yeah, no.

Austin: Shout it out.

Sylvia: Very talented animation team and really, like, interesting adaptive, like, moves that they make to get, like, in addition to doing the—

Austin: Yeah, I guess, again, I have not read the manga.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: So I'm really curious if the affect of Togashi's manga is played with in any way, because I know from what I've seen of the '99 anime, there's some, like, tonal and visual style differences between all these, and not just that the little jellybean man is flesh tone. [Keith laughs quietly]

Sylvia: I need to go and, like, do more, like, comparison reading of the stuff that we're watching.

Keith: Yeah. Ali will be on an episode or two, and she has been reading the manga, [Sylvia: Yeah.] and we'll talk to her about it. And then, I'll say that the closest that I get is, like, looking up stuff as I'm going.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Like, hey, what does this look like?

Dre: Mm.

Keith: And it is— it feels, except for parts that are, like, oh, we have specifically adapted this moment. Like, a lot of the Canary stuff, they've backfilled a lot of things from Canary as a character to get you more stuff that wasn't written when the '99 stuff came out.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Sorry.

Sylvia: No, go ahead. No, go ahead, go ahead. I can get back to it later.

Keith: So, yeah. The beats feel fairly faithful, and there's a lot of, like, shot to shot stuff.

Austin: Right. Right.

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: But of course, yeah, it's a show.

Sylvia: They do a lot with—

Keith: There's a lot of drawings per show. [Austin chuckles]

Sylvia: Yeah. They do a lot with themes that Togashi uses a lot, like visual metaphors that he really likes. We've mentioned eyes are a big thing that comes back.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Sylvia: And like, that's a big thing that he likes to use. That was, yeah.

Keith: There is something about TV as a medium that makes it really good at, like, bringing you into a perspective [**Austin:** Mm-hmm.] that also works in books, but I don't know how well or how easy it is to do in manga or a comic. Like, I've never...

Austin: I'm a bad manga reader, in the way that, like, I don't read images in manga as

well as I do in anime.

Keith: I can't read— I cannot follow it in the same way, so I don't.

Austin: I can— yeah, I can follow, but it doesn't— it rarely— not never.

Dre: It's tough.

Austin: You know, I'm watching *Dungeon Meshi* right now, and I just finished reading that recently, and the current episode of *Dungeon Meshi* is incredible. Great adaptation of an early chapter, the living armor chapter.

[3:00:10]

Sylvia: Oh, yeah.

Austin: And there are some visual things that the animator on it I believe worked on— sorry, the storyboarder on this particular episode worked on, like, Eizouken and Dynazenon.

Jack: Hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: And some other stuff.

Sylvia: I believe that— oh, no, wait, no, I'm wrong about the director. Go ahead. [laughs quietly]

Austin: But there are some choices in it that completely transform how the characters look briefly, and there's a little flashback sequence that is in the manga, but there is colorwork done. And then the whole thing— I believe all of the *Dungeon Meshi* music is by— yeah, it is. Or not all of it, but some of it is by Mitsuda, the composer of many JRPG soundtracks, like the *Chrono Trigger* soundtrack.

Sylvia: Oh, that Mitsuda.

Austin: And *Chrono Cross* and *Xenogears*. And like, oh, yeah, this is a different work because of those things.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And when it hits, it hits, you know?

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Anyway.

Jack: And now we're basically done. You know, one Phantom Troupe member down. Shoutout to my boy Kurapika. It's a dangerous path that you're walking.

Austin: 12 to go.

Jack: 12 to go.

Keith: Yep.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: We cut back to the group of remaining Phantom Troupe members.

Jack: It's a screenshot. This is the screenshot.

Dre: Wait, there's only really 11 to go.

Austin: Right. Well...

Sylvia: Well.

Dre: She doesn't have to kill Hisoka.

Keith: Well...

Dre: Or he doesn't have to kill Hisoka.

Austin: Yeah, but...

Sylvia: But he should. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Austin: He should, and also, if...

Keith: If Hisoka—

Austin: If they find out that Hisoka isn't a Phantom Troupe member, then they'll have to replace him, right?

Keith: Right.

Dre: Mm. True. Fair.

Austin: By recruiting someone cool.

Keith: Yeah. They're all now, like, pretty sure that Uvopin's been killed, because the fight wasn't instant, so that's...

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: That is not like Uvo. If he's not back by dawn.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: "We'll switch plans," says Chrollo.

Keith: Extremely eerie closeup on Chrollo's face. "There will be a change in plans."

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's so good.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: I'm so curious about, like...

Sylvia: A great spot to leave.

Jack: What is the Phantom Troupe's current plan? They have the treasure, right? Oh, no, they still have to get it.

Keith: Well, they have the way to get the treasure.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Right.

Jack: When I first saw this screenshot, because this is the shot of the Phantom Troupe talking to Chrollo.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: I think my thought was: "These are our heroes," gesturing at the Troupe.

Sylvia: Uh huh.

Jack: "And they're talking to a bad guy, who they have agreed to parlay with."

Keith: Yeah. You did say that.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yes, you did say that.

Austin: You did say that.

Jack: Yeah. No. Not right. [laughs quietly]

Keith: No, not right.

Austin: Well...no. No. Not right.

Sylvia: It's a staff meeting. [Austin and Dre laugh]

Jack: It is a staff meeting, because their muscle hasn't showed up.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Is it just—

Keith: I always consider them as basically childhood best friends.

Jack: The Phantom Troupe members?

Keith: Yeah. Well, the ones who are from that era, anyway.

Dre: Sure, yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: They're from the same town.

Austin: I want to call attention to one small detail that we moved past. Jack, did you notice what happened after Kurapika's eyes turned back to being the regular color, the black color?

Jack: No.

Keith: Oh, he says something.

Austin: He says something, and he stumbles and grunts.

Jack: What happens? What does he say?

Austin: He goes, "That probably took me longer than it should have," and stumbles and, like, is winded, despite seeming like there was no— like he was in complete control. You know, Uvogin never got a hit in on him, really.

Keith: No. He broke his arm, but then he healed it using Holy Chain: Healing Thumb.

Austin: We skipped this. This is— [laughs] right, yes. What was that, one more time?

Keith: Holy Chain: Healing Thumb?

Austin: Right, which is a...what is that even? Manipulator power? Something like that?

Keith: Uh, it's maybe a Manipulator power, yeah.

Austin: 'Cause he just— this is him at 100%.

Sylvia: Could also be Enhancer.

Austin: Maybe Enhancer. Yeah, yeah, yeah, it could be. But he's using the chain, so I don't know. Anyway.

Jack: Probably took me too long. Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, I just wanted to note he seems tired. He seems, uh, winded from this.

Keith: My sub says, "I spent too much time in that state," is what he says.

Austin: Oh.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Yeah, so.

Jack: Oh, wow.

Austin: That's a little more direct.

Dre: That's interesting.

Austin: Well, that's a little more direct than what I was hinting at.

Keith: It's a little more direct, but it's there.

Austin: Uh huh.

Keith: So, I'm saying it. Not a spoiler.

Austin: Yep.

Keith: It's in there.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: It's in there.

Jack: Interesting.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: There are consequences to Nen contracts beyond which have been revealed to us.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Condition and condition.

Jack: Condition and condition.

Dre: So, this is a thing they actually do kind of allude to more in the manga. I just have it pulled up right now, because I wanted to look, because I was unsure whether Emperor Time, if that was, like, a specific Nen power. Like, that was— Kurapika had made the contract to, like, **[Austin:** Uh huh.] “I get Emperor Time when my eyes are scarlet,” or if that was just, like, Kurapika’s eyes are scarlet, and so...

Austin: Right. Right, I see what you're saying.

Keith: I think it's that. I think it's that.

Dre: I think it's that too, mainly because of the thing where— and they have this in the anime too, but when they do the flashback to Kurapika and his teacher, whose name I don't remember and I don't have the doc open.

Jack: Mizuken.

Dre: Mizuken, thank you. Mizuken says something along the lines of, like, “Hey, when your eyes turn color, your aura feels different. Let's do the water thing again.”

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that part does show up. Yeah.

Dre: Which, to me, implies that it is naturally thing. But like, in this panel where Mizuken is talking to Kurapika about, like, almost the nature of Nen. He's talking about how, you know, Nen connects with our emotions and that, quote, "It's thanks to that that we're sometimes able to overcome the 100% limit, [**Austin:** Mm.] but it's never fine."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Mm.

Keith: Mm.

Dre: "Because overcoming the strength we have creates a lack somewhere else, it can become a weak point, sometimes even fatal."

Austin: Mm.

Jack: It creates a lack somewhere else, and I know where. [laughs quietly]

Keith: And hey, you know, maybe we're...

Austin: Is it the demon world?

Jack: [laughing] It is the demon world, Austin.

Keith: Maybe we're seeing echoes of Kastro in that.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Oh, yeah. For sure.

Keith: And maybe we'll learn more about the sort of weaknesses that going above your limits can impose on a person.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Now, is this just the way the shot was done, or does Chrollo have multiple pupils?

Austin: What shot? Let's see.

Sylvia: What shot do you mean?

Keith: Uh, this screenshot that I shared.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: The final shot, as we zoom straight in on his face.

Keith: It does look like his, uh...the pupil of his eye is, like, leaking into the iris.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Austin: That's fun.

Keith: That's very fun.

Austin: I don't know.

Sylvia: Yeah. I don't know.

Jack: It could just be the shadow.

Sylvia: I think that's more what it is, [laughs quietly] if I'm being real.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: I think that Chrollo is kind of a freak, and they wanted to emphasize that.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: By showing him in a freakish manner.

Keith: Because he's been so relaxed to this point.

Sylvia: His big beautiful eyes.

Austin: Yeah. You could fall into them.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I am.

Jack: Chrollo has had two minutes of dialogue in the entire show so far.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Hunterpedia is Uvo, who crashes through the screen, to Gon and Killua's shock. A running gag that I love, and again speaks to Hunterpedia as being a different kind of real—just as real, but a different kind of real than the show itself—is how often characters will be killed in the show and then introduced in the Hunterpedia.

Keith: "Hi, it was me."

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. "This is Baise!" who, you know, we just saw Baise get absolutely destroyed by a vacuum cleaner.

Austin: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: "She kisses people!" et cetera.

Austin: She sure does.

Jack: She sure does. That is Baise's power.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: But I think that's...that's all I have to say about this stuff. Does anybody else have other stuff they want to make sure they hit?

Sylvia: I think we've got everything [**Keith:** Yeah.] important that I wanted to say.

Keith: I think that's everyone. This has been an extremely long one.

Sylvia: But a real banger, you know?

Keith: A banger, yeah.

Austin: So good.

Keith: This one deserved to be long.

Sylvia: Oh, absolutely.

Jack: Thank you for coming on, Austin.

Keith: Yeah, thank you again.

Sylvia: Yes.

Dre: Yeah.

Austin: Of course. This is— again, so, this is why I picked— this is why I wanted to do the previous one, right? Which is this is the payoff, which is actually the big thing I wanted to say, right? That like, hey, you know what a Specialist is. Three episodes ago, you thought, “Have we met a Specialist?” You understand that, like, other— this goes with what Keith was saying too before, about what makes *Hunter × Hunter* so good, is characters know the rules too, and they— but they're still— that doesn't mean that they understand the rules perfectly, right?

Keith: Right.

Austin: And so you have Chrollo and Uvogin being like, “Hmm, sounds like a Conjurer or a Manipulator.”

Keith: There's a great—

Austin: Right?

Keith: It's great when they cut back to Chrollo echoing the same thing. "Either Conjuror or Manipulator. We don't know."

Austin: We don't know. And on top of that, the...fundamentally, it's just like, you were given a cool— you were given maybe an overwhelming amount of information, delivered maybe drily, but now that we're deep enough in that you've internalized it, the writer can start playing with it in surprising and fun ways and begin revealing new, you know, folds of knowledge, new variations on what's there. And now that it's being deployed by a character that you care a lot about, in a way that's delivered directly, without it needing to be— without the core stuff needing to be set up, it also can hit in an emotional sense. And like, I think that you're— that we can all wish that Heavens Arena was, like, better, but I think that you do get something by kind of quarantining the place where you get the core Nen explanation—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Austin: —in a sort of dry, formulaic tournament arc, you know?

Sylvia: Gotta eat your vegetables before dessert, you know?

Austin: That's what I'm saying.

Keith: I said this in the first episode where we talked about Heavens Arena. It is, for me, the arc that improves more than any other arc upon seeing it again.

Austin: Right. Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: I know it's— we've been going long. Jack, in one sentence, so that we can get out of here, how are you feeling about Nen here in Yorknew City, halfway through this arc?

Jack: Pro, comma, uh, we said the words “freaks and weirdies” a lot in the last couple of episodes, and if you are listening and saying, “I wish they’d stop saying that. You’re overusing that as a joke.” If you are not watching the show along with us, you do not realize how deep we are in freaks and weirdies territory. [Austin and Keith laugh]

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh.

Jack: I cannot apologize. It would be like if we were making a show about botany and you were complaining about us talking about tall trees.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: We are surrounded by freaks and weirdies, and it must continue.

Austin: Yes.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: I respect you using your sentence to mostly talk about something else.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: No, no, no, because the freaks and weirdies, that’s Nen.

Austin: That’s Nen.

Keith: That’s Nen. That’s Nen, baby.

Sylvia: That is Nen. That is, genuinely, straight up.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: That’s Nen. That’s one of the six types.

Keith: Nen will turn your tongue into a reverse straw to deposit leeches.

Austin: It will. [Dre groans]

Sylvia: We have to— you know what, nevermind.

Jack: Nen will let you make a devil contract with your own heart. [Keith laughs]

Austin: God. It sure will.

Keith: This has been Media Club Plus. You can find the bonus episodes of this show at friendsatthetable.cash. You can subscribe to the RSS. They're also just there to listen to. You can catch us on Twitch and YouTube at twitch.tv/friendsatthetable and youtube.com/friendsatthetable. A lot of good stuff going there. By the time this is out, we will have recorded our second, I think? It's on the schedule. Uh...fuck. What is the name of that game with the— the scary game that's funny?

Austin: *Lethal Company*.

Keith: *Lethal Company*! We did one.

Austin: Yeah.

Keith: That's on the YouTube, that first episode. That was great. You should go watch that if you haven't seen it. I edited together three different perspectives to do a fun little *Lethal Company* movie.

Jack: It was great.

Austin: It's so funny.

Keith: I think it came out really good.

Austin: Keith, thank you so much for doing that.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: It was a blast. Anything else to plug at the end here?

Austin: I just want to say: look at how good the outline is on Uvogin's face [**Keith:** Yeah.] during the sequence where he's getting tortured.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: They do such good work. That's all.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: The linework, yeah.

Keith: Look at that. Oh my god.

Austin: It's incredible.

Keith: Yeah.

[["The Boy in Green"](#) begins]

Austin: This thick black line that's not anywhere else in this sequence.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Anyway.

Keith: Yeah, that's it. Bye.

Jack: Oh, no, wait, Keith.

[music cuts abruptly]

Sylvia: Thanks for listening.

Jack: No, wait, Keith, Keith. Keith, wait.

Keith: No? No, it's not it.

Jack: What are we watching next?

Keith: Oh, next we're watching episodes 48, 49, and 50, and the titles of those episodes...are... [Sylvia laughs quietly] And I'm going slow for effect.

Sylvia: Yeah, of course. You're not looking anything up.

Austin: While you're going slow, I want to say: when he says, "It enforces Zetsu," this is what I mean by it was worth it.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Because we all know what that means [**Keith:** Right.] with three words.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And we couldn't have known that otherwise. Anyway.

Keith: "Very × Sharp × Eye".

Sylvia: These are the titles.

Keith: Oh, fun great new character in the next episode. "Very × Sharp × Eye".

Sylvia: Oh, yes, that's true.

Keith: "Pursuit × And × Analysis" and "Ally × And × Sword".

Jack: Excellent.

Dre: Hmm.

Jack: And now we can go.

Keith: Great set of episodes. Oh my god. It's insane that the next set is still great.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: [laughs] All right.

Sylvia: Good arc!

Keith: Yeah, good arc. Very good arc.

Jack: Good arc!

Sylvia: And goodnight, everybody.

Keith: Good arc and goodnight.

Austin: Good arc and goodnight. [laughter]

Sylvia: Stupid!