

Gingsaw - Hunter x Hunter ep. 37+38: Media Club Plus

S01E12

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Introduction

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

Keith: Welcome to Media Club Plus, a podcast about diving into the media that interests us and the stories that excite us. As always, we are brought to you by Friends at the Table. This season, we're watching 2011's *Hunter × Hunter*, based on the manga by Yoshihiro Togashi. My name is Keith J. Carberry. You can find me on [x.com](#) and [cohost.org](#) at @KeithJCarberry. You can find the let's plays that I do at [youtube.com/runbutton](#), where we've, by now, well finished a let's play of *Sonic Superstars*, a very mediocre game, but we played all the other Sonic games, literally, so why not play this one too? Who knows what we're doing now? We've got an upcoming let's play of *Digimon: Next Order*, the sort of spiritual sequel to *Digimon World*.

Sylvia: Ohh.

Keith: I'm very excited to get to that. We have not started it.

Sylvia: I was wondering if you were gonna jump into World 2 afterwards, or if you we're gonna do that.

Keith: Well, the thing about World— the next couple World games—

Sylvia: It's a different type of game. They're both different.

Keith: Yeah, they're very dungeon crawley.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Much, much different. Next Order I think is what it's called is like—

Sylvia: It's the same as the first one, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, it's very similar to the original *Digimon World*, which I love and hate. You know, I'm very conflicted. But it is interesting and weird and fun and makes a great let's play, I think.

Sylvia: Yeah, it does. Have we ever talked about how I've also— I've played all of those games, [laughs quietly] and that's why I—

Keith: No, you've never mentioned this to me.

Sylvia: [laughs] I should bring that up sometime.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, we'll talk about *Digimon World*. Uh, let's see. You could also go to friendsatthetable dot— oh, nope. Well, yes. You can go to friendsatthetable.cash to support this show. This show is brought to you by Friends at the Table, an actual play podcast that's really good. You should check it out. The last two sci-fi seasons have been really good. That's what we're doing now. You should listen to PARTIZAN and then PALISADE. You can go to twitch.tv/friendsatthetable to watch us stream games. If you like this podcast, twitch.tv/friendsatthetable is like this but we're playing a game.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: With me, as always, is Jack de Quidt.

Jack: Hi, I'm Jack de Quidt. You can find me on Cohost at [@jdq](#). You can get any of the music featured on this show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#). Two hours ago, I went to a CVS and received two vaccinations as part of an immigration medical exam.

Sylvia: Right.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I don't know what the consequence of these vaccinations is gonna be, vis-à-vis my comfort and clearheadedness as we make Media Club Plus.

Keith: I think it'll make you very powerful today.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: I was the bravest little soldier.

Keith: Yeah. That's good. That's good. Some people are not very brave, but you're very brave.

Jack: [laughs quietly] Thank you.

Keith: Um, is that it for you? Is that all that you have to say? [Dre laughs]

Jack: That's all that I have to say. Yeah, I think so.

Keith: All right. Andrew Lee Swan? [Sylvia laughs quietly]

Dre: Uh, hey. It's me. You can find me on Twitter at [@swandre3000](#).

Keith: And Sylvi Bullet.

Sylvia: Hi, I'm Sylvia. You can find me everywhere at [@SYLVIBULLET](#). You can follow the TikTok of this show and Friends at the Table at [@friends_table](#) on TikTok. Did we

mention the Twitch?

Keith: I did mention the Twitch, yeah.

Sylvia: Cool.

Keith: And that stuff also goes—

Sylvia: We have a lot of links.

Keith: Where does that go, Sylvi, after it goes on the Twitch?

Sylvia: It also goes to our YouTube, which is, uh...

Keith: Same thing as Twitch.

Sylvia: YouTube is [friendsatthetable](#), no underscore.

Keith: Correct, yeah.

Sylvia: Cool. I felt— that really brought me back to being, like, pop quizzed in school, for some reason.

Keith: [laughs] I ask a lot of questions on this show, I learned.

Sylvia: I like it. It's good.

Keith: I didn't know that I did that, but I've been editing them, and—

Sylvia: You're a good host!

Keith: Thank you. I've been trying, which is— I don't want to say new, but it's def— [Sylvia and Jack laugh] but I definitely want to come across as a good host, which is not something that's been on my mind.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Despite having been podcasting since 2008. [Dre laughs]

Sylvia: Jesus!

Keith: Part of— I know. It's insane. [Sylvia laughs] Part of the Run Button style has never been being good at hosting a podcast, even though Run Button is really good.

Jack: Keith, were you—

Keith: It is the best video game podcast that exists, and I'm serious about that.

Jack: Were you hosting a podcast during a George W. Bush presidency?

Sylvia: Mm...

Keith: We were— I've been doing— we started our first— me and Kyle, my cousin who I do Run Button with, started our show, uh, Complex Rockets after Obama was elected but before his inauguration.

Jack: Wow!

Sylvia: Wow!

Dre: Wow.

Keith: Yeah. Yep. So yes, yeah. [Sylvia laughs] I was podcasting during a lame duck George W. Bush.

Jack: [laughs] Okay.

Keith: Which is super weird.

Summary [0:05:04]

Jack: But today, we're here to talk about *Hunter × Hunter*, and in fact, we're here to talk about just two bits of *Hunter × Hunter*. It's a light one today.

Keith: It is.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Although, I had so many quotes. This is a very quote heavy...

Sylvia: These are good episodes.

Keith: These are good episodes!

Jack: These are good episodes!

Sylvia: It's two of them, but they're juicy.

Keith: Oh, they're juicy. This reminds me of some of the early Hunter Exam episodes, where there wasn't a ton of action happening but there was so much talking, and all the talking is gold.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: It's so good. [Jack chuckles]

Sylvia: It's that image of the guy writing and the pen is on fire.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Is Togashi when he was writing these. [Dre and Keith laugh]

Keith: Yeah, we are on the heels of some of the most exciting action that we've seen in the show so far, and these are, like, two big feelings and lore dump episodes that are some of the best of that that we've seen so far, at least for me.

Sylvia: Yeah, I agree. I think we're hitting a really good stretch. Like, I think we're in the middle of a good stretch, honestly. I think it started a little while ago.

Keith: Sylvi, I know that you love everything that's upcoming.

Sylvia: Yeah.

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

Sylvia: It's so good!

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Keith— for context, Keith restructured some of our— it won't matter to you, 'cause you don't know.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: But the episode order we'll be watching, like what chunks we'll be doing.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: And so, he watched a little bit of a lot of— of, like, what? You said, like, 15 episodes coming up?

Keith: I watched, like, five minutes of between 12 and 15 episodes [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] to, like, make sure everything flowed right.

Sylvia: I'm so excited.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I'm so excited.

Keith: But these episodes, we are vocalizing and codifying a lot of stuff. This is very heavy Gon and Killua relationship stuff. We're getting a lot of Aunt Mito feelings.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: A lot of Ging Freecss backstory [Sylvia laughs] and some, I think, fun Nen stuff that we were— we spent a little bit of last time, especially Austin in the last episode, talking about, like, what kinds of weird Nen things might be coming.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: We've already hit a weird cool Nen thing, I think, so I'm excited to dig into that.

Any thoughts on the beginning of episode 37? To remind everyone, we—

Jack: Do we want to do a real quick recap?

Keith: That was the recap!

Jack: Oh, shit!

Keith: It's a short recap.

Jack: Okay, yeah.

Keith: Yeah. It was—

Sylvia: Yeah, to be fair, it's like...I guess we...they go to the island for a couple days.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: And then they leave, after getting some info from Killua's brother, [**Keith:** Yeah.] if we want to be a little more specific.

Jack: And the coolest—

Dre: And listening to a cassette tape.

Sylvia: And listening to a cassette tape.

Jack: Yeah, the coolest piece of mail.

Keith: And listening to a cassette tape. Yeah. Uh, yeah, I had a— I had, like, some longer stuff for the recap, and I was just like, we're just gonna talk about everything we talk about, so let's get— let's just skip—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Let's just bare-bones this recap this week.

Dre: Yeah, let's just do it.

Jack: Okay.

Sylvia: I respect it.

Jack: Do we have a new title sequence, or am I misremembering? I think we have a new song, with the lyrics, “You just try again, you just go away”?

Sylvia: Oh, I think the—

Keith: So, there’s—

Sylvia: The lyrics changed, but it’s always this melody.

Keith: There’s two versions of the same song that they jump back and forth between, and I don’t know if we’ve seen this one before, but we’ll get both again as the time goes on. Do we have a new title sequence? I don’t know. Some people count this as part of the next arc, but a lot of the official sources count this as the end of the Hunter— or, sorry, of the Heavens Arena arc, which is how I have it structured in...

Jack: Well, this is maybe worth bringing up, because this has happened before, right?

Keith: Yes.

Jack: The last major arc also [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] ended with this little interlude sequence, and I am curious about— I would like to talk through this structurally, right? Because both of those [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] came at the end of two really big, very intense sort of action arcs. The first was the Hunter Exam, which was lethal for many many humans.

Dre: It’s true.

Jack: And the other was the Heavens Arena, which felt like it was lethal. And they bridge to a sort of usually a smaller arc, right? Was the first one...what was the first little interlude? Was it the Zoldyck family?

Keith: It was the Zoldyck family, yeah.

Sylvia: Yes.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: As we move into Heavens Arena. And this is this little tiny Whale Island visit, this little Gon goes home visit, as we're presumably on our way to Yorknew City and the auction, although I don't really know if that's where we're gonna go next. That's where it feels.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And I think it is notable that these two interlude scenes are both family-focused and are both about zooming [**Dre:** Mm.] into the home lives of our two protagonists.

Keith: Yeah.

Episode 37 [0:09:40]

Sylvia: That was, like, the first note I had about this episode was that, like, we never got to see Gon's actual, like, home life with Mito in the first episode. All of their stuff was based around Gon's, like, challenge to be able to do the Hunter Exam, right?

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: The, like, catching the Lord of the Swamp thing.

Jack: Right.

Sylvia: And so it was all colored by that, and so, in these episodes, when we get there and see, like, how she reacts when she sees Gon and Killua and is like, "You need to—go to the bath right now. You need to wash your dirty clothes. Oh, I wish you told me we were having friends— you were having— we were having company over, so I could get ready for it."

Keith: This stuff is great.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It's so good.

Keith: It's not super often that there's, like, relatable stuff happening in *Hunter × Hunter*.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: But like, this feeling of going to your friend's house, and it's very different than you're used to.

Dre: Oh yeah.

Keith: And just sort of, like, watching your friend interact with his mom, [**Jack:** Yeah.] and it's like, "Is this how they do things here?"

Dre: God.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Is like...ending with the very funny scene where Killua starts eating, and everyone's about to say grace.

Dre: Yes!

Keith: And I'm like, I've literally— I know this.

Dre: Yes! Uh huh.

Keith: I know that feeling.

Dre: I've lived that.

Keith: Of like, oh, this is a family that says grace. That's so weird.

Sylvia: Hey, they say grace, by the way? [Dre laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Well, they say grace in a—

Keith: Well, they give thanks is what they say.

Sylvia: Yes. I know, but still.

Jack: It's like a silent giving thanks.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Which is, you know, it is interesting. We don't really know...I imagine that in a show this big, we are going to come back to this, and it will be notable if we don't. We haven't spent a lot of time in, like, faith and spirituality, outside of Nen.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But like, there is this moment where the family kind of sits quietly to give thanks, and Killua just, [laughs quietly] is like, looking around. Mito also scolds Killua at one point.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I don't remember when, but it's that thing of, like, oh, it is clear that Mito is the boss of this family, and, in entering the family—

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Jack: Killua has to sort of stick by her rules. But they're these very gentle sort of loving rules, unlike, for example, the nightmare home life that Gon was introduced to [**Keith:** Right.] when they went to the Zoldyck mansion.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: They're the rules of a normal family where the parental figure cares about your wellbeing instead of cares about your ability to kill.

Sylvia: It's huge.

Jack: Yes.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It's like, it is— it's such a good way to just, like, have that be in the show without— I mean, Killua does, at one point, say, "I wish I had a mom like Aunt Mito."

Keith: I know. It's very cute. [Jack sighs]

Sylvia: It's very cute, but it's a great way of, like, setting that up without being super in your face about it.

Keith: Yeah, they really do do a great job of, like, teeing up the Aunt Mito stuff that comes at the end of this episode and some in the next episode too.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: And Killua— this is Killua getting to see a family, obviously to get to see a, quote, unquote, "functional" family, unlike his, but also having to listen to parents or listen to guardians in a way that he doesn't really listen to his parents. You know, we have known that Killua's reaction to being told not to do things by his mom is he attacked her and fled.

Keith: Yeah, stab her. [laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And, like, there are these moments where, like, Mito is like, "All right, now you have to go and have a bath," or whatever, and you get these, like, looks from Killua of like, "I guess this is— I guess this is how it works."

Dre: I guess this is what we do.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And in much the same way as we're seeing, you know, Gon acting as a vector for Killua to experience the joy of being a 12-year-old, I wonder if Mito is also a vector for Killua to experience, like, being a 12-year-old and having a parent who cares about you.

Keith: It is really interesting how Gon, you know, is, like, ostensibly the main character, but we are very much, like, seeing this world through Killua's eyes, not in the way that we've been inside of characters in other ways. This is, like, sort of the original thing that *Hunter × Hunter* shows us it's good at, like back on the boat with Kurapika, where it's so good at [Dre: Mm-hmm.] framing the show as the observations of a particular character without necessarily telling you that that's what's happening. Like, this is all Killua noticing all of this stuff and how weird and different it is and, like, we feel like we're visitors in Gon's house, even though it's, like, presumably the main character going back home. It doesn't feel familiar, and...like, it feels familiar, because I've been to houses like that.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: It feels— but it doesn't feel like “ah, we're home with Gon, our main character and our friend.” Like, it feels more like Killua is who we're meant to be seeing this through, which is very interesting.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: We've talked about it a few times about how this show is good at kind of switching perspective through the way that it, like, presents things and not just necessarily narrative focus.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: And I think here is a really good example of it, of like, these episodes, a lot of it is just through Killua's perspective. Like, particularly all the family stuff, but like, we get [Dre: Mm-hmm.] the phone call with Milluki later. Like, there's a— I don't know. I think it's just another, like, example of how the show's able to move in and out of who the POV character, quote, unquote, is [Dre: Yeah.] very seamlessly, and I like it. It's a good

thing about the show. This is just a comment that's a thumbs up, basically. [Keith and Dre laugh]

Jack: So, uh...

Dre: I mean— oh, go ahead, Jack.

Jack: Oh, no, no, you go ahead.

Dre: I mean, I was gonna say, I think the scene after dinner is Gon and Killua, like, going outside to, like, have the run of the island, right?

Jack: Yeah. It's wonderful.

Dre: [sighs] That scene where Gon and Killua are, like, sitting under the big starry night sky by the big lake where Gon caught the fish at the very beginning of *Hunter × Hunter*, [Keith: Mm-hmm.] and, like, Gon is talking about, like, "Oh, I know exactly what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna go to Yorknew City. I'm gonna figure out my dad." And then Killua, like, the most vulnerable we have ever seen Killua be, [Keith: Mm-hmm.] looks at Gon and says, like...I forget exactly what he says, but I think he says, like, "I admire that about you," and it's even implied that he's basically saying, like, "I'm jealous that you have this."

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: I am jealous that you have this thing that drives you and that you care about so much, [Keith: Right.] because I don't have anything like that in my life.

Jack: It's just, it's so good. Yeah, I would love to talk about this scene. I want to go back just one tiny step, because I feel like it inflects this scene in a really fun way.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: As they're eating dinner... [sighs] a cue that we've heard before starts playing, which is these sort of overlapping bell chimes and these little rumbling drums, which is often used to, like, discovering something or...not like a climactic discovery, but this

music builds out into this, like, cello. It's quite sedate. It's quite melancholy. It's kind of like a beautiful—

Keith: Oh. Oh, I actually know exactly what this is, thanks to a new website that I found.

Jack: Oh, yeah. You want to shout this out?

Keith: This song is called “My Father’s Back”, and it’s called— it’s sort of like a cello and piano nocturne. Like, it’s...

Jack: It’s lovely.

Keith: Very sad and slow. It’s very beautiful.

Jack: And we get these shots of Gon and Killua out exploring the island, and I think most of these are static shots. We get some motion, but, you know, we are seeing Gon exploring Whale Island and Killua following him, and this is our first kind of real look at Gon’s day-to-day life on Whale Island. And in the same way that, Keith, you were talking earlier about having been in that house where people say grace [**Keith:** Mm-hmm.] and going, like, “Oh, I relate to that experience,” I feel like the experience of seeing your friend in the place that they feel most comfortable [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] and going, “Oh, that’s why they’re like that.”

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Or like, “Oh, this is why Gon is like this,” or, you know. It must have been a really interesting moment for Killua and I think helps get him to this place in the next scene, where, yes, like you said, Dre, Killua is suddenly very open and says—

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: I wrote down the line: “I was just thinking I admire you. There’s nothing I want to do.”

Dre: And I just— go ahead.

Jack: “You have your thing. I don't have anything.”

Dre: And I just realized, too, we have seen— the show has invited us to see what it is like for Killua to feel compared against Gon.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: And every time previous to this, Killua has bristled at it, and this is the first time where I feel like Killua, one, admits that he in some way is, quote, unquote, “lesser than Gon,” but also, like, doesn't bristle at it, doesn't, like...

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Doesn't respond with, like, “That's not true!”

Jack: Yeah, it's clear that it's, like—

Dre: But instead is like, “Yeah, it is, and that's really special about you.”

Jack: Yeah, it's clear that it's a moment of pain for him.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, sure.

Dre: Oh, absolutely.

Jack: There is some discomfort there, but yes, I think it bristling. There's a real sense of...this conversation is very still, in comparison to the way that we've seen a lot of conversations or a lot of action in the show, and it might just feel this way after Heavens Arena, but there is something about these two people by a campfire under the stars. It is generative of a particular kind of conversation that I think produces in Killua a readiness to say these things and not bristle about it, to go, “You know what, actually?” because I think he's been shown something that he knows he doesn't have, not just in terms of Gon's sort of, like, spectacular drive but also the relationships that he has with Mito and with the island and with sort of, like, Gon situating himself in the island. I think Killua is ready to say, “I admire this about you, and I wish I had something like this.”

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Just to bring it back to the thing you said about stillness, I think it is actually worth mentioning that this is the first time they've sat and had a conversation like this without being in the middle of something like the Hunter Exam or Heavens Arena.

Dre: Sure.

Sylvia: They've always been, like, [**Keith:** Mm-hmm.] on the road for something, and I think that, like, this being a moment to pause is what, like— I mean, you basically said, like, is what lets Killua kind of be vulnerable about this.

Jack: It's lovely character writing too, because we know Togashi likes and is capable of telescoping the perspective into a character and letting them get real deep in their feelings, often very expositively deep in their feelings. [Dre chuckles]

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: We've seen this with Kurapika and Leorio— we've seen this a lot with Leorio.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: You know, the view will telescope in, and we'll go into this really very intense description of how a character is feeling, and...but this feels like a conversation. You know, these two people are not outputting expository emotion at each other. This scene is very sparse and very gently written. I think it's a very lovely scene.

Keith: It also, like, you know, I just linked a couple shots. The drawing of the characters is so good, the line where [**Dre:** Ah.] Killua says, "I was thinking you're sort of admirable," and is faced away, like head down and like shoulders up, like, he looks like admitting it is like a defeat almost.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And then you see Gon next to him just kind of surprised, kind of interested, but also, like, open and engaged with the sort of side-on perspective of the camera instead of, like, Killua sort of facing away. They do such a good job in this scene and in a couple other scenes, like, drawing their— like, putting them in really interesting positions that do such a good job of showing what's going on.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And it helps that, like, Killua's so...he retreats from this sort of thing. Like, Dre, you brought up that every other time he's compared to Gon he sort of bristles at it, and this time he sort of doesn't, except, like, he is kind of...he's, like, turtling. He's, like, pulling into a shell.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: But Gon is, like, sort of definition of kind of heart on your sleeve kind of live wire emotionally character, is like...I mean, this is the thing that you can do in, you know, when you're the author, right? You can just like, oh, I have a character that wants to retreat, and I have a character whose, like, magic power is pulling people out.

Jack: Put them in the scene. Point them at each other.

Keith: Yeah. [laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. I want to— for the listener, earlier when Keith was talking about positions, I mean, obviously you're talking about the sort of emotional and narrative structure positions, but I think in this particular thing, you are referring to the way the characters are placed in the frame.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: The, like, the physical blocking of these characters, the choreography of these scenes. And yeah, the...if during the fight with Hisoka, we saw the show's animation

team really zero in on making a fight really compelling, there is so much animation work being done on these characters faces and expressions.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: None of these are throwaway lines. And then, Gon responds to Killua kind of opening up a little by opening up a little himself. Gon says, you know, how Whale Island is an outpost island, where fisherman who have been away at sea for a long time come and get stuff and resupply, maybe rest a little. And he knew a girl here for a while who was his own age, but not for long, presumably because everybody was sort of moving on, and Gon says that Killua is kind of his first friend. And Killua is sort of withdrawn and embarrassed by this. You know, Killua—

Sylvia: It's so cute!

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: [cross] He bristles, but he bristles in a really sweet way.

Keith: [cross] Yeah, he says, "Don't you feel embarrassed saying stuff like that?"

Jack: And Gon is like, "Of course not." [laughs] Just, you know. No real, uh...Gon does not feel any shame about saying this. It's great. But he's sort of met Killua's bet by [Keith: Yeah.] saying, "This is the first time I've been in a relationship like this."

Keith: I love that line, because it sort of illustrates something that sort of, like, is kind of right under the surface of their friendship, which is like, they're— and it ties in really well with that they are each other's first friend.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: For Gon, that is, like, a surprise. Like, he makes friends so easily, everywhere he goes. People are immediately taken by him and, you know, his friendliness and his, you know, cleverness and his, you know, just general personality. And even though [Dre:

But I—] some of those things are true about Killua also, like, you can tell— and they show us in the story that he doesn't have— he hasn't had friends, but the thing that's right underneath the sort of surface is, like, for Gon, talking about this sort of stuff is, like, easy and natural. It's, like, easy and natural for him to be telling someone, like, "Hey, we get along great. Let's, like, hang out together and be best friends." [Dre laughs] And there's something about— like, Killua is, like, ashamed of this or, like, is ashamed of or scared of or made nervous by this, the prospect that for Gon is, like, almost nothing. Like, it is not...

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Doesn't seem like a big deal for him to say, to declare friendship.

Dre: I don't know if that's true, though, because I think— like, Keith, you're talking about how everyone finds, you know— I think a lot of people would say that Gon is their friend. I don't know if Gon would say all of those people are his friend, and I think that's, like, a...

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: In the way that he would say that about Killua, [**Keith:** Uh...] and I think that is a big distinction.

Keith: I just think it's two different levels of friend.

Dre: No, I agree.

Keith: Yeah, I—

Dre: But I think, like, when Gon says, like, "Killua, you're my first friend," I think, like, that is his first friend. It is not the first person he's *friendly* with.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Gon kind of strikes me as the kid who is, like, didn't have— because, I'm, like, this is literal. He didn't have a lot of kids around; ended up being very friendly with, like,

the adults in their community [**Keith:** Mm-hmm.] but never really felt like they had, like, a peer, and is kind of what he's getting at.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And I think that the fact that, like, he's able to just be a kid with Killua and not have to, like, think about what, like, the adults are thinking about him when he's, like, trying to have fun is probably part of this, right?

Keith: Yeah, no, I agree. I think I'm just— I'm just using “friend” to mean two different things in the same...

Sylvia: Okay.

Keith: Yeah, like, it is the fact that he is capable of making quick connections with people who feel like that, like, they...Gon's potential for making friends is demonstrated to be very high, and so it's kind of a surprise when they reveal, hey, he hasn't had a friend. He hasn't considered himself to have a friend before, because like, we saw him with Leorio and Kurapika.

Sylvia: Yeah. Damn.

Keith: And we saw him making friends with the—

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: We saw him making friends with the—

Sylvia: I didn't think about the order there.

Keith: Right, yeah.

Sylvia: Leorio and Kurapika blown the fuck out.

Keith: We saw him making friends with the Kiriko and—

Sylvia: Though they are his mom and dad, so.

Keith: Yes, they are his mom and dad.

Dre: Yeah, yeah.

Keith: And, uh...Leorio's the mom. [Jack laughs quietly] The, uh...

Sylvia: I think they take turns. [Keith laughs quietly]

Dre: Yeah. [Sylvia laughs quietly]

Keith: It's just a sort of, like, oh, the ease of being able to enter into this sort of, like, promise of friendship is one-sided. Like, Killua is willing and uncomfortable to be Gon's friend in the same way. Like, this is something that Gon feels is easy and Killua does not.

Dre: I also wonder if...like, because I'm sure Gon has been complimented by people a lot for, like, his physical attributes and his quickness and his intelligence and, like, all of this stuff, and I wonder if Killua's also the first person to say that, like, "Man, your ability to, like, have a goal and a dream and to fight for it is, like, so admirable."

Sylvia: That's actually worth bringing up, because, like, a lot of people tend to, like, out of worry for Gon, not encourage that?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: In a lot of ways. Like, genuinely. Like, I mean, Kurapika and Leorio I think also both did it. I'm not just talking about Mito here.

Keith: Though that is the first thing in the show, is Mito...

Sylvia: Yeah, no, very much.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Just trying to discourage him.

Sylvia: Yeah, I just, because we're talking about this—

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Like, relationship sort of nexus here, I didn't want to, like, make it seem like that's the only example I'm thinking of. Yeah, I don't know. I think that's actually, like, a major key to this, Dre, is like, **[Dre: Mm.]** Killua being, like...supporting Gon's ambition.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: That's the word I was looking for. Yeah.

Dre: Yeah. And I think, also, Killua, like, Killua is also a nightmare child in the way that Gon is. [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: Oh yeah.

Dre: And so, like, Killua never has the moment of, like, "Oh my gosh, you can— that's insane that you can do all that!" and Killua instead is just like, "Oh yeah, of course you can do that. I can do that. That's no big deal. [Jack laughs] Let me figure out what's actually cool and special about you."

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. And Gon, you know, takes us on board and says, "All right, look. Here's the deal. I'll go look for my dad. You come with, and you can look for something you want to do, while we do that." [Dre laughs]

[0:30:05]

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Which is so sweet. You know, I think coming from anybody else, it might feel like, you know, he was just kind of moving on. But Gon—

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I do feel like Gon is like, "Well, look. We like each other. I know what I want to do.

You stick by me, and I'll stick by you, and we'll figure something out along the way.”
[laughs]

Sylvia: It's fun hanging out with you.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: It's fun hanging out with you! Which is what, uh...

Sylvia: Gon says to Killua. Right?

Jack: Gon says, “I think it's fun to be with you,” which is just so sweet. It's great.

Sylvia: Oh, I think my sub was different.

Jack: It's lovely.

Sylvia: It's good either way.

Keith: Mine also says, “I think it's fun to be with you,” yeah.

Sylvia: It's good either way. It's so cute.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: They're so, like...ugh.

Jack: And now the conversation turns to parents, because...

Dre: Mm.

Keith: This— I just want to say one more thing about the “I think it's fun to be with you,” and you can see it in the picture here. Like, you can see it in Gon's face. Like, this is not, like, an offhanded thing. This is like a declarative— this is like a reassurance and a declarative statement. Like, I am telling you this. I'm not just saying it.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Which I think is very interesting.

Jack: Yeah. So, Killua asks Gon about his mom, and Gon says, “Oh, I don’t really know about my mom,” because it transpires that at first Mito told Gon that both his parents had died in a traffic accident, because she didn’t want Gon to know the truth about his dad or she thought that he would go off to be a Hunter, which is exactly what happened.

Dre: Yeah. [laughs]

Jack: She was exactly right. And so, since Gon has learned that his dad is alive, he has sort of figured— and the way he expresses this is almost as though he’s sort of taking a mental position rather than necessarily believing it to be true. He just sort of goes, “Well, I figure my mom was the one who must have died in the accident,” and something about the actor’s delivery and the way this line is phrased really does make me feel like I don’t know whether or not Gon actually believes that. It’s just sort of the story that he tells. The story that he was told first was that both his parents died in a traffic accident, and then when he learned that his dad was actually still alive and had kind of abandoned him, he just sort of moved the decimal place one over, right?

Keith: Yeah. [Dre laughs quietly]

Jack: He was like, “Well, so, I guess—”

Keith: Surely the story’s at least half true.

Jack: “I guess my mom must have died.” And this kind of cuts to I think one of the central emotional sort of ideas in this pair of episodes is that he doesn’t really think of his mom at all, or he [Dre: Mm-hmm.] claims not to really think of his mom at all, because, as he says it, Mito is his mom.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He says there's— he doesn't ask Mito about his mom. He says, "There's nothing for me to ask, and I don't need to." And on some level, this is, you know, this is very sweet to Mito, to be like, you know, "She takes care of me like a mother. I love her dearly. I don't really think of my own mother," but there's something odd about the way this is situated alongside your relationship with Ging.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Ging is such a— it's a candle in the sun moment, I feel. Like, Ging is such a powerful force for imagining and, like, as a way of imagining himself and as a way of imagining his relationship with adults and as a way of imagining himself as an adult that he doesn't need to or consider paying much attention to his mom, because Ging just swallows up all that energy and light.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Which is interesting. And in the next episode, something happens that makes me doubt whether or not I believe Gon when he says this, but as it stands right now, I think that this is a...

Keith: When he says that he doesn't care to learn about his mom?

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah. I think there's some— I think there's sadness there.

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Keith: Like, I read it as, like, that it's something that he decided out of love and respect for Mito, without maybe even...I mean, almost definitely without asking her about, like, is this something that— is it important to you that I don't know about my mom? I guess, you know, like, it definitely seems like, to me, something that is at least friction for him.

Jack: It suddenly opens up a vacuum in the show, because, you know, I wrote down in my notes, "Wait, we don't know who Gon's mum is at all."

Keith: No.

Dre: No.

Jack: And I had not even thought of that up to this point, for, you know, a couple of reasons. The first is that these kids are just going through, like, a delight nightmare constantly. You know, they're out there running through tunnels and fighting beasts. You know, I wasn't thinking about that.

Keith: Mm, stuff that someone without a mom would do.

Jack: [laughs] But the other thing is it's like, Ging is the focus.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: The absence of Ging is the focus, so that it was very—

Keith: And Mito is there.

Jack: Yes. But I don't think that that is a...I think the show is deliberately problematizing that. The show is very aware that this is an odd situation.

Keith: Yeah, for sure.

Dre: Sure, yeah.

Jack: And Mito overhears this. She is delivering them some food.

Keith: It's really sad. I mean, it's like, obviously, you know, she's happy about this. Like, this is, I think, a touching moment, but it is like, I don't know, sort of watching...watching this made me sad. [laughs] I don't know why.

Dre: Yeah, for sure.

Sylvia: No, there's, like, a melancholy, like, atmosphere.

Keith: Yeah, it's very melancholy. This is a sad episode, for sure.

Dre: Mm?

Keith: Like, almost everything that happens in this episode is sad. Like, this sort of, like, touching moment between Gon and Killua is kind of sad. Killua himself is kind of sad.

Jack: Ha.

Sylvia: Oh yeah.

Keith: Like, Gon thinking about his parents is sad. Gon returning home is— I think, you know, it's rare to find some fiction where returning home isn't a little bit sad. Like, there's— even just, like, the everything's just where I left it. The woods are still here. This spot [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] is still here. You know, the cliff is still, like— even all that is kind of sad to me.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Is this— I feel like this is the episode where I just keep disagreeing with you, Keith.
[laughs]

Keith: That's fair. That's okay. [Sylvia and Jack laugh]

Dre: I definitely think— I feel this episode is definitely melancholy, but I guess, like, it's hard for me to classify it as sad, because I see Killua as the one who is so, like, legitimately and obviously traumatized and is still— and has, like, found a person with whom he can be safe with, and it's hard for me to, like, view that as sad.

Keith: Um, I don't know. I think that the— maybe the thing that I'm—

Dre: Like, it's sad it happened, for sure.

Keith: Maybe the thing I'm, uh...well, there's a few things. Some things are not for the show yet. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Mm.

Keith: But the...what I will say is, like, what it feels like to me is Killua wanting to feel safe with Gon and still not, is what I get out of it.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: Hmm.

Keith: Is, like, being close and closer than he's been but still not.

Dre: Yeah. And I guess, for me, you know, just seeing that he has even the capacity to be close [**Keith:** Yeah.] is really important.

Keith: Yeah. I mean, I think, yeah, I think it's like— and I don't think it's, like, purely sad. I think it's just all also sad.

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Keith: You know what I mean?

Dre: I mean, even, like, the parts where, like, like you said, Mito...it is like, all of the stuff with Gon and Mito is both, like, touching in which it's like, "Oh wow, [**Keith:** Yeah.] it's so great that Gon had this kind of figure," but then it's also like, "Oh man, it is so fucked up that that's who had to play this role for Gon."

Keith: Yeah. And it's also— yeah, like, it's also, you know, that he's gonna leave again tears her up.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: Like, she's so sad that he has chosen this life.

Dre: Yes and no, and I, you know, this is the thing that I said is, like, my big question that was inspired by this episode is that, like, yes, she is sad that Gon has chosen this life, and she doesn't want him to leave, but it also is a very different kind of sadness than she felt when Ging left.

Keith: Yeah. Well, she also was, [**Jack:** Yes.] you know, a kid basically.

Dre: Yeah, but like, she understands why Gon is leaving, and even though it makes her sad, she is, like, happy for him and can respect that. At least that's how I read it. Whereas, when Ging left, and I guess this is starting to bounce into episode 38 stuff, but it's like, you didn't tell me. You didn't tell me why you had to leave. You didn't explain anything. You just left.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: And so then I had to fill in that void myself.

Jack: Yeah. Should we begin to move towards the Ging Freeccs hour?

Dre: Sure. Sure.

Keith: Yeah. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: Just before we do, and I think that this speaks to your point as well here, Dre, and I think might bridge the gap between where Dre and Keith are on this. I've spoken in the past about how I think that Gon's relationship with Killua, with Hisoka as a sort of opposing pole, a sort of opposing ideological and emotional pole, is the thing that is underwriting a lot of the drama in this show.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know, the question is, is it's like, put Hisoka and Gon on either side of Killua and then see which way the characters move. Essentially— no, make a triangle of those characters and then see how close the points get to each other.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: But I think that, you know, in coming back to Whale Island, we have skirted real close to the things that cause these two characters, Gon and Killua, a lot of pain.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Whether that is the absence of Ging or whether that is Killua's reluctance and

prickliness about opening himself up to somebody else. I think part of the reason that these episodes felt so melancholy and so emotive for me was of the characters' proximity to these emotions, to these kind of central points of pain in each of these characters, and it did make me think, "Oh god, if we're in episode 37, and the show is deliberately pulling these emotional heartstrings, and it's working for me, we got a lot—" [laughs quietly] you know, there's a lot more big feelings that are gonna happen in this show, I bet.

Keith: No comment. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Jack: Mm, okay. When they return, Mito gives Gon a box and says this box, which looks a little like if a shipping container was exactly 15 centimeters tall on every side... [Keith and Dre laugh]

Keith: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: And says, "Your dad gave me this to give to you when you become a Hunter," and we're immediately off to the races, [**Keith:** Yeah.] in terms of some *Hunter × Hunter* [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] mystery excitement. After spending the first episode having a lot of really deep emotive conversations, Togashi was like, "Ah, wait, shit! I have to make a puzzle box!"

Keith: Yeah. Literally. [Keith and Dre laugh] A literal puzzle box.

Sylvia: Togashi watched *Hellraiser* and was like, "Mm, the Lament Configuration."

Dre: Jesus.

Jack: This absolutely has big Lament Configuration vibes, except instead opening it and being pulled to the sex demon dimension, uh...

Sylvia: You're pulled to the deadbeat dad dimension.

Keith: Right.

Jack: [laughs] You're pulled to the deadbeat dad dimension! Oof.

Keith: By the way, what— that box that's been sitting in a cupboard for 10 years, or just safe and sound?

Dre: Uh, no. She's trying to throw it away, like, every day, and Grandma fishes it out.
[Keith laughs quietly]

Jack: It's great. So—

Sylvia: I love the grandma, by the way.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Oh, Grandma rules.

Jack: I believe this is Mito's mother.

Dre: Um...

Keith: This is actually Mito and Ging's grandmother.

Dre: Right, so it's Gon's great-grandmother.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: This lady's old!

Keith: She's old.

Sylvia: Yeah, this is why, most of the time, her scenes, she's just sitting off at the table sort of smiling and looking into the distance.

Keith: Yeah. Drinking some tea.

Jack: She's fucking great.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: We can sort of— we can touch on this point again. I was listening to one of our earlier episodes, and Austin was talking about the way that this show bounces between different sort of anime genres, and we are now so firmly in a slice of life anime in these episodes.

Sylvia: These two episodes, absolutely, yeah.

Jack: Right down to the lovely grandmother. Great-grandmother is here.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And yes, the grandmother has been throwing this box away. Mito has been trying to get rid of it. Although, the grandmother sort of intimates: if you really wanted to get rid of this box, Mito, you would have done by now. You were just—

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You were sort of taking an action with this box. You were just trying to get it out of here, knowing that I would always bring it back. Uh, and...

Keith: Convenient.

Sylvia: Actually, about that, Mito's reaction where she gets— she gets both very, like, annoyed and, like, standoffish but in a way that reminds me of Gon a little bit. [laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: I don't know how else to put it other than, like, oh, the faces she makes when she gets embarrassed by this stuff and, like...

Jack: Mito's great.

Sylvia: The way— yeah. Like, the way that they just have her moving and talking, I'm

like, oh yeah, this is kind of where the kid gets it from.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. And then she says something wonderful. She says, “Do you want me to tell you everything I know about Ging?” and the show’s animators just sell Gon’s reaction to this, to just, like, the world is opening up for him. And this is kind of weird, being Gon wanted to become a Hunter to go looking for his dad, [**Keith:** Mm-hmm.] and now he has returned home, and he’s a Hunter, and all his dreams are coming true. This is, you know, the premise for him of what being a Hunter would let him do. It would be like if Leorio said, “I want to become a Hunter to get really, really rich,” and he went home from the Hunter Exam, and someone gave him 480 million dollars.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And a fucking license to be a doctor for free.

Jack: Yeah, just [snaps fingers] instantly. So, Mito and Ging are similar in age, but Ging is older by maybe four or five years?

[0:45:12]

Keith: There’s...there’s a line that is...not to bring the sadness back up immediately, but one of the first things that she says is so sad to me, the, uh...where am I? Okay.

Sylvia: Was it about always looking at Ging’s back? Is that what you're thinking of?

Keith: Yeah, “I felt like I was always looking at his back.”

Dre: Oh, yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And I think that is worth thinking about with the song title you mentioned earlier,

[Keith: Yeah.] being, what is it, “My Father’s Back” or something?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Uh, yeah, “My Father’s Back”, yeah. It’s Gon.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Ahh.

Keith: It’s Gon being Mito but, like, in the present, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: But yes, it very much sort of, like, little sibling older sibling vibes, although they're not siblings? They are...

Keith: Cousins.

Jack: Cousins, yes. But it’s very much the vibe of, like, the older sibling going off and exploring and the little sibling idolizing them and sort of following them.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Because that’s what happens. Ging would go out and explore Whale Island, and Mito would go off running after him wherever he went, and, uh...Ging wasn't very good at taking care of Mito when she was young.

Dre: No.

Sylvia: No.

Jack: They would go out into the woods together, and often the implication is that Ging sort of didn't really pay any attention to Mito following him. He was sort of, like, off doing his own thing.

Dre: Oh, I don't think that’s the implication. I think that is explicit. [laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: It wasn't like they were—

Keith: Sorry, Jack, say that again? What is...?

Jack: Oh, it wasn't like they were going out into the woods together. It was like, Ging goes out into the woods. Mito follows him.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Ging knows this but pays almost no attention to her whatsoever, and in fact, she—

Keith: Yeah, she was always trying to get him to play with her, but he was like, “No.”

Sylvia: Fucking guy.

Jack: She would often go missing when they explored together.

Keith: This is so sad.

Jack: Ging would just come home, and everyone would be like, “Where is Mito?” and they would have to send out, like, island-wide search parties to find her.

Keith: Oh, I maybe— I misunderstood this or read it differently or I don't know how. The thing that I thought was that she was running away, like, irrespective of them going out and exploring.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: She was just, like, running away on her own and hiding, and it really— it felt like, uh, the implication to me anyway was this is, like, a ploy to get [**Jack:** Yes.] Ging to pay attention to her.

Sylvia: Absolutely.

Dre: Mm.

Sylvia: Well, 'cause don't they mention that Ging was always the one who found her?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: And was the only one who could?

Keith: Yeah, the grandma. Grandma Freecss was like, [Sylvia laughs] you know, the people in the town started thinking that you were playing pranks on us, because he was always the one to find you.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: "It was almost like you didn't want to be found," she says.

Keith: It's so sad.

Jack: Which is, like, so sad. This—

Keith: Why was she running away? [laughs quietly] Why was she doing this?

Jack: Because she idolizes Ging. She wants to be close to this person that is—

Dre: Yeah, and it was the only way that he would pay attention to her.

Sylvia: This fucking guy.

Keith: This fucking guy.

Jack: And this is amazing, because certainly a bunch of stuff snaps into place kind of immediately, not just in the sense of...mm, I'm gonna talk about these two things separately rather than just saying one thing and then immediately moving onto another. [Sylvia laughs] A lot of stuff snaps in place with Mito, you know? We now get to feel a lot

of understanding for the way Mito feels about first Ging abandoning her completely and then Gon setting off. You know, what initially seems to be, like, just a sort of regular sad “your father abandoned you and now you're leaving to follow him, so it's sort of a chain of disappearance” is now layered with this real deep sort of spiderweb of loss.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And desire, for Mito, right? Also the desire to be seen and recognized by someone you look up to. And then a lot of stuff snaps into place with Gon, in the sense of generational trauma and in the sense of the way people's feeling about their family naturally get passed down from parents to kid. And so we sort of get this sense of, like, obviously Gon wants to find his dad because he's his dad. He's Ging Freecss or whatever. But at the same time, Gon has been raised by this woman who had this relationship defined by absence with the person that she looked up to the most. There's just a real domino train of sad uncomfortable feeling about abandonment in this family, and at the end of the domino train is Ging Freecss.

Sylvia: [sighs] Sure is!

Dre: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

Jack: So...oh, also, Mito's parents died in a traffic accident.

Sylvia: Yes. That, I think, is actually worth...

Keith: Right after Ging left, yeah.

Sylvia: Worth mentioning too, like, that she gave Gon what happened to her as the, like, reason that his parents weren't around. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Yeah. So, Gon leaves, age 12.

Keith: You know, I love Mito. I think she's great. I think that they play her as a mom really well. I think that her [Dre: Mm-hmm.] relationship with Gon's really cute. [laughs] The lying and sort of, like, hiding away information and the deception to keep Gon from

being a Hunter. I understand not wanting...like, look. I've seen the Hunter Exam up close.

Jack: Ha!

Keith: I get it. I get it.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: But wow, it's so bad. There's so many— this doesn't even include the manga canon of her...part of the lie that she tells that Ging dies in a traffic accident is then she's like, "Okay, okay. He didn't die in a traffic accident. He abandoned you," and like, this is kind of thrown in Gon's face, and then it's revealed he didn't abandon Gon.

Sylvia: Mm? [laughs quietly]

Keith: Like, she basically forced him to go to court to get custody of him and then, like, kicked Ging off the island.

Sylvia: Oh.

Dre: Oh. That's interesting.

Sylvia: I forgot about that.

Keith: Yeah. There's also— there's a bunch of other— or there's one other big manga canon thing that they removed, they cut from the— I learned why they cut this from the 2011 anime, and it's kind of a shame. I think it's a pretty big mistake, but I don't really know how much to say about it. That also colors some of this early stuff, but that probably won't be relevant until later. I just think it makes a better beginning to the series.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. We can come back to that.

Dre: Well, and I think, like, if you want to talk about intergenerational, like, trauma

transmission, there is not a bigger, like, neon sign saying, “Hey, this is what happened!” than Mito telling Gon, “Hey, what happened to my parents actually happened to your parents.”

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Oh. [Dre laughs] Yeah, like a direct transposition, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Like, lifting one and putting it onto the other. And then, so yeah, Gon leaves— oh my god.

Dre: Well, and I think—

Jack: Ging leaves—

Dre: Oh, go ahead.

Jack: Oh, go on. Well, Ging leaves—

Dre: The only thing I was gonna add is that I think, too, this is also— like, this episode to me is also the illustration of Mito going from “My trauma and my unresolved stuff about Ging makes me want to hold on so tightly to Gon and never let him go...”

Keith: Yeah, totally.

Dre: To, “Okay, Gon is different than Ging, and I can let him go, and I believe that he’ll come back.”

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And he has come back.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: It helps that he did come back.

Dre: And he's written her the whole time.

Jack: Well, and he's come back, and he has brought her somebody. This is another interesting mirror, right?

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Ging came back, and he brought— uh, let's just talk through the order of this. Ging leaves, age 12. Mito's parents die in a traffic accident. Ging's dad goes on a fishing trip and disappears. Just a real—

Sylvia: I'm just gonna say, real quick: I don't believe that guy's dead. I think the Freecss family—

Keith: You don't think the brother, you don't think Ging's brother's dead?

Jack: Ging's, uh...

Keith: Father, sorry.

Jack: Father.

Keith: Father, yeah. Father.

Sylvia: No.

Dre: Hmm.

Sylvia: I think he— I think this is where Ging got the idea from. [Sylvia, Dre, and Keith laugh] I think this is a “going out to get cigarettes” situation.

Dre: Oh, man.

Sylvia: I will not be proved otherwise.

Dre: Yeah, somebody's dad just got on a big boat and left the island and disappeared?

Sylvia: Yeah, we don't know what happened.

Dre: Weird!

Sylvia: He just disappeared. Uh huh.

Jack: 10 years later—

Sylvia: This man's off in Yorknew City getting lit.

Jack: [laughs] He's in Yorknew City. He's invented some kind of new cool way of hanging out without your kids.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Ging returns 10 years later.

Sylvia: He's running Kevin's Arena. [Keith and Jack laugh]

Keith: He's Kevin. Kevin Freecss.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, Kevin Freecss.

Dre: That's who popped into the announcer room that one time. That's actually...

Jack: Whoa! [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: I'm glad to already know the episode title for episode 11. I almost never know until [Jack and Sylvia laugh] after I've exported an episode and being like, "Fuck! I need a title for an episode! I forgot to think about it even once!"

Jack: Here comes Ging. He's got baby Gon. All he says about Gon's mother is that they— no, that's not right. In my notes, I wrote, "celebrated." [Keith laughs] I meant to write— [laughs quietly] I meant to write separated.

Keith: Sorry. We're celebrated.

Jack: [laughs] Sorry, your mother and I, we celebrated. [Keith laughs] This is also when

Ging left Gon the box. So, he gives the child.

Dre: Mm.

Jack: He gives the Lament Configuration, [Sylvia laughs] and then he leaves. [laughs]
It's just the worst!

Dre: Deuces.

Jack: And Gon is being asked in this moment to understand Mito's position, and he does, insofar as a 12-year-old being faced with this massive weight of generational trauma kind of can. Gon explicitly says, like, "That must have been really sad," right? There is this moment of connection between Gon and Mito here, I think.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah, for sure.

Jack: Now, does Gon learn the right lesson from this? No, because he's just been given...the Lament Configuration. [laughs quietly]

Dre: Sure, and he's 12.

Keith: Well, let me ask: what's the right lesson?

Jack: I don't know. Well...

Sylvia: Fuck dads.

Jack: Well, but not fuck dads, because he's suddenly like, "Ging. Ging. That's right. I'm gonna call him by his first name."

Keith: That's also really sad.

Sylvia: That part really stood out to me.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: There's a couple of things going on here. The most generous reading that I can give to Gon is that he is recognizing that his father has his own personhood, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: He is acknowledging his father as someone other than Dad. You know, this is Ging Freecss. Now, this is kind of undone a little by the fact that Ging's whole deal is his outsized mythology in the eyes of his son.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So it's less like "my father is his own person" and more, "oh right, that statue on the pedestal has a name!"

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Graven in marble underneath it.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: And it says Ging.

Keith: Hey, worth considering that he doesn't have an outsized personality.

Jack: Not as far as we know. Well, hmm. I don't know much about Ging. I will say, at this moment—

Keith: We know some pretty impressive stuff is really all we know. You know.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: He's in history books. He's influenced Hunters that have not known his name.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: And then the stuff from the next episode where we see some kind of weird stuff going on. This is all pretty impressive.

Jack: I don't want to get ahead of myself.

Keith: No, no.

Jack: But something happened in 38 that gave me a big emotion. Um, time to try and open the box. Gon is like, "Oh, my Hunter card will open the box, right?" Killua says—
[Dre laughs]

Sylvia: That part's so funny!

Dre: Yeah, you just use tap to pay, bro.

Sylvia: Killua— the hint Killua gives him.

Keith: Oh, it's so good.

Sylvia: It's so funny, because, like, what Killua says is, "What do we have now that we didn't before the Hunter Exam?"

Jack: My Hunter card.

Sylvia: And Gon's like, "Right, the card! Duh!"

Keith: Before we— oh, no, no, no, no, no. This is still 37. This is the very end of 37.

Sylvia: I think so.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah, I think this is the very end. He's like, "No, you moron. The superpowers we developed." [Dre laughs]

Jack: Oh! Oh, the superpowers we developed, right.

Sylvia: Right. Sorry, that's not, like, visible to me, so I forget it exists, because object permanence doesn't happen to the Freecss.

Jack: This is very funny, because we've seen—

Keith: Yeah, we've just spent six months dedicating our lives to the study of Nen. [Jack laughs quietly] I went one day without doing it, and I forgot.

Jack: [laughs] He also forgot about his Hunter card, the first time he got it.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Just, what a guy. He's great.

Sylvia: Did we mention Aunt Mito trying to break the card, by the way?

Keith: Yeah. [laughs]

Dre: Oh god, no we didn't. That was great.

Keith: It's really funny.

Sylvia: That was a really good bit.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Again, another bit of...

Dre: Does it, and then is like, "Man, this thing's a piece of shit, huh?" [laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: That's also another moment of her feeling a lot like Gon to me.

Dre: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Where it's, like, kind of mischievous and very just, like, forthright about what she's thinking, in a way that he can be.

Keith: Yeah, it's just sort of, like, impulse going right to your hand and bending it, just bypassing the brain. [laughs]

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: The only thing missing is, like, her sticking her tongue out the way Gon does when he does goofy stuff. [laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah, exactly.

Jack: When I was a kid, you know, whenever we were, like, staying over at someone's house, like, as a family or whatever, my mum would invariably end up, like, breaking the curtain rod or something. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Damn!

Jack: Or like, you know, bending a whatever. And when she was asked why, she was like, "Well, I just wanted to see what happened if I bent it that way," or "I wanted to see what happened if I, you know, did that."

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Jack: To the point where my dad called this "test to destruction." I was just testing it, and it broke. And I feel like Mito is a real test to destruction moment here, being like, "Well, what if the card just bends? I wanted to see what happened if I bent it." Gon is like, "Give me that back." [Dre laughs quietly] So, they use their Nen powers. Gon uses his Nen power, and the box explodes into a lot of little tiny pieces of steel that had formed the outside of the box.

Keith: This is so good.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Within a similar script written on this steel to the one written on Mr. Wing's

promise thread, with the implication—

Keith: The steel with all the etchings looks extremely cool.

Jack: It looks so cool.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: The implication being that you can, like— and I think this is the first time we've sort of seen this in action, or rather, we saw it with the promise thread, but this is sort of being explained.

Dre: Right.

Jack: You can write Nen onto something, like a spell. You can sort of— this is how I read it. You can, like, engrave a Nen charge onto something. Very interesting.

Keith: Imbue.

Jack: There's a box in the box, and this box is very toyetic. We talked about sort of toyetic, uh, aesthetics when we described Gittarackur early. You know, something made to look like a toy, carry the characteristics of a toy, be sold as a toy. And this is this very distinctive looking plastic. Uh, it's probably not plastic. It's probably ceramic or something.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Shiny box. It's purple. It's red. It's got a slot on one side. It's got a cross-shaped keyhole. It's very distinctive. It looks almost like what if a pokéball was square and purple.

Keith: It does look sort of [Dre: Yeah.] like a square pokéball, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: It reminded me of the Polly Pocket boxes.

Jack: Oh my god. Yes. One of my most treasured possessions is a gift that Janine gave Kat and me once, and it is a Polly Pocket from the original Janine Hawkins childhood. This is an original Hawkins Polly Pocket.

Dre: Oh, hell yeah.

Sylvia: Wow!

Jack: It's very cool. I love it. It's a little bedroom. I loved Polly Pockets when I was a kid. I could never have any of them, but now I'm an adult. But yes, this whole thing is very much like a Polly Pocket.

Keith: Uh, Jack, you put in the Discord a picture of this device and said, "Hunters stop making everything a game challenge," parentheses, [Sylvia laughs] "they will never stop." And I said, "LMAO, just wait," which is...

Jack: Yes, because...

Sylvia: [scoffs] Five minutes.

Keith: Yeah. Well, it's the next episode.

Jack: Yes. We are right back into Hunters and the way Hunters think about the world is a game. You're either playing the Squid Game or you're playing, like, a *I Love Bees* style ARG.

Keith: I can't wait for these sorts of statements to be fulfilled fully.

Jack: [laughs] Wait, they're gonna get fulfilled more? Maybe. I don't know.

Sylvia: Yeah. There's, uh...did we— I guess we didn't talk about when they open the box yet. I'll save my joke.

Jack: No, no.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: I'll save my joke.

Jack: Inside the box is a cassette tape. Lovely. Love it when you open a box, given to me by my dad when I was a baby, and there's a cassette tape inside. This, to me, is storytelling. There is also a ring, which Gon and Killua immediately notice has Nen engraving on the inside, so I think, wisely, they say, "Don't put that on. Think about this." And there is what looks like an SD card, like a memory card. It looked— as Gon points out, it's a little bigger than a usual memory card, and I didn't put together what this was, and I won't say what it is until we get into the next episode, because the reveal of what it is is wonderful.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: These things are nestled in this box like a little presentation box. [laughs] It's so funny.

Sylvia: It's great.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's like—

Keith: Ging has excellent attention to detail.

Jack: And absolutely—

Sylvia: He's Jigsaw.

Jack: He is Jigsaw.

Dre: Yes!

Keith: Gingsaw?

Dre: He is Jigsaw.

Sylvia: I literally, in my notes, wrote Gingsaw. [Keith and Dre laugh] Like, straight up.

Hello, son. Would you like to play a game?

Dre: Yes, uh huh.

Sylvia: Keep listening if you would.

Jack: A Gingsaw is—

Keith: That is almost verbatim.

Sylvia: Except I prefer John Kramer more.

Jack: Yeah. A Gingsaw is actually a tool used to cut a puzzle that enables you to abandon both your son and your cousin. [Keith and Sylvia laugh]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So, they make a copy of the tape, and they put it in this little boombox. It's very cute. I think, in order to frame this scene better but also because Gon and Killua are both just weirdos, they plug the cassette player into an outlet on the wall of the room and then drag the cassette player right into the middle of the room on a rug to listen to it.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So there's this—

Keith: Well, Killua has this excellent idea of, like, we've gotta make a double of this tape, just in case something weird happens.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: Because he's a smart little boy.

Jack: He is a smart little boy. The tape starts playing, and for the first time, we hear Ging speak. He says— and not very excitedly, in a tone of sort of, one might say, resigned. In a resigned tone?

Keith: I feel like it was slightly taunting.

Jack: It is kind of taunt—

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: This fucking guy.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: [voice] You've spent your whole life wondering what your father is like. Would you like to play a game? [Sylvia laughs] He says, "Hey, Gon. I have a question for you. Do you want to see me?"

Keith: [begins imitating music]

Jack: Drums come in. [Jack and Dre laugh]

Keith: It's so good!

Jack: The narrator says, "It was the first time Gon had heard his father's voice." Cut to credits. Wahoo! *Hunter × Hunter's* great! That was lovely. What a great episode.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Just whipped. That's the end of 37.

Sylvia: Yeah. This is, like, not extremely important, but I was looking at the voice actor, the Japanese voice actor for Ging, Rikiya Koyama, the Behind The Voice Actors credits page that he's got, and he is in the Japanese dub of *Fallout: New Vegas*. [Keith laughs]

Jack: Oh, whoa!

Sylvia: Among, like, a bunch of other credits.

Dre: Whoa.

Jack: Who's he play?

Sylvia: But that was very funny scrolling through and seeing, like, a *Fallout* character. He's Craig Boone in *Fallout: New Vegas* in the Japanese dub.

Dre: Oh, that's the sniper guy, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, that's the sniper companion.

Dre: That lives in the dinosaur.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: He is also my favorite *Yakuza* character, Saejima but that's beside the point.

Dre: Ooh!

Sylvia: Good performance.

Keith: Saejima's your favorite, huh? That's interesting.

Sylvia: I love Saejima. I love Saejima so much.

Jack: I have to look—

Sylvia: I'm a big 4 and 5 head, though. And that's not me talking about my skull. That's me talking about [**Jack:** Ha!] *Yakuza 4* and *Yakuza 5*. [laughs quietly]

Jack: His first name is Taiga. Oh, god. This guy looks fucking great.

Sylvia: He's great.

Keith: 4 and 5 are great.

Sylvia: Oh, fantastic video games.

Keith: Yeah, really good.

Episode 38 [1:05:10]

Sylvia: Another thing that I really want to make sure we talk about before getting into this episode [**Keith:** Yeah.] is how we once again have kaiju.

Keith: Yep, I wrote it down. Yep.

Jack: Yes! [Sylvia laughs] I wrote this down too!

Keith: This was the next thing [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] I was gonna say. This is what I almost said—

Sylvia: Yeah, same.

Keith: When we talked about the cassette. I was like, “Before we talk about the cassette,” and then I remembered, “Wait, we’re still in 37.” But yeah, we’ve got it back.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: The intro begins. The narrator says, “Kaiju! Shinju!” and we get to see the fucked up creatures. Oh, felt so good.

Sylvia: I stood up and cheered.

Jack: Oh, it was lovely, like getting back into the— none of the— enough of this Nen shit. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And the thing is, I’m very happy to see the Nen and the magic Nen writing on the box, you know. There’s some cool—

Sylvia: You want Nen in practice, not in theory.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely.

Sylvia: You don’t want it explained to you again.

Dre: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: What's the name of that, um...

Keith: Is it...?

Jack: I'm looking something up.

Keith: Okay.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: Yeah, there's a— [Jack and Sylvia laugh] There's a collection of essays that I have not read—I only know the title—by Susan Sontag called *Against Interpretation*. That's how I feel about Nen. [Sylvia laughs] I am against interpretation of Nen. I just want to see Nen happen. So, seeing this title sequence: yes. Lovely. At this point, I made a little prediction. I said, "There's going to be another elaborate game on this tape, isn't there?" and there sort of is. In fact, what is on this tape is...

Keith: It's fascinating.

Jack: If you thought we were in the Ging Freecss Hour, we have moved into part two of the Ging Freecss Hour. I've had enough of this fucking guy. [Dre laughs]

Keith: Oh, there's...

Sylvia: Oh brother, this guy stinks: the episode.

Dre: Yeah, uh huh.

Sylvia: Does anybody have, like, the specifics of what he says? Because I don't have it word-for-word written down, but [**Jack:** Yes.] I feel like the way he says things is gonna be important.

Keith: I have one part of it. I have one part of it, but I don't have the whole thing.

Jack: So, the first thing he says is, "Do you want to see me?" and then he says, "Stop

the tape now, if you don't want me to continue,” essentially. He gives Gon an out. And when Gon doesn't stop the tape, he says, “I don't want to see you. I don't know how I could face you. I am not a decent guy. Hunters are selfish creatures. We are willing to sacrifice anyone and anything to get what we want,” and then he says basically, “so come and fine me, but I will always be the guy I am,” and then we will talk about what is shown on screen during that in a second.

Dre: Mm.

Keith: Ringing the bell, by the way. That is a— [Sylvia laughs] that is a “this is what Hunters are” statement if I've ever heard one.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Hunters are selfish creatures.

Dre: Ging continuing the trend of, like, everyone just projecting their own bullshit onto what a Hunter should be.

Jack: [laughs] Yes, totally. Well, it's like, Gon lives in a kind of fantasy of Hunters. You know, perhaps one way to read this is that, like, Gon's fantasy of Hunters is indistinct. He wants to find out what the big deal is about cigarettes, right? [Sylvia laughs] He's just like, “Well, Hunters have got to be good, because my dad was a Hunter, and he was great, and he's gotta be the best, so Hunters have got to be this sort of, like, pristine entity.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And I wonder if Ging—

Dre: I mean, that's how Kurapika thinks about Hunters too, it's worth pointing out.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah.

Keith: I do— I do want to say, personally, I feel like there's...there is less...I read less deification of Ging from Gon. I think it's, like, a more sort of neutral curiosity. It's a

powerful curiosity.

Dre: Oh, sure.

Keith: But I think that there's, like...and I think that the reason why I'm even bringing it up is because of how odd it is that he sort of is simultaneously, like, he's like, at certain points, impressed by his father. He's, like, deeply curious about his father and his motivations and Hunters in general, but it is, like, weirdly, like, value neutral or weirdly, like, nonjudgmental.

Jack: It's odd.

Keith: It's very odd.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And there is something deeply unpleasant happening here in the way that Ging—the show is making very clear that there is a kind of remorselessness to what Ging is saying. When he is saying, “I don't know how I could face you. I don't want to see you. I am not a decent guy,” this reads to me about as far away from an apology or a reckoning as it could.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: He is sort of saying—

Keith: It's very selfish, yeah.

Jack: He's saying, “Well, look. It would give me bad feelings if I saw you, [Dre: Mm-hmm.] and I'm not gonna change, and that's just the way that it is.” It really is the dirtbag saying, “Well, look. I'm just a cruel person. I just say cruel things.”

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: “And you're just gonna have to deal with that if you want to get to know me,” and

it's, you know, a complete rejection of the capacity or desire to change [**Dre:** Yeah.] in any way. And this being the first thing that Gon ever hears his father say is great. This is good television.

Keith: There's going to be a time where we're going to have to talk a lot about Ging, and I'm saying now that there's going to be a way to hear what I have to say about Ging that's like, "He's defending this guy?" I'm telling you now: I'm not. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: [laughs] You're preheating the oven for us.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I'm not defending him. He sucks. He sucks shit. But also, *Hunter × Hunter's* a very weird world with a bunch of very weird people in it, and the things that is going on in this show is bizarre, and I cannot wait to talk about it, but I'm telling you now, if you're hearing what I'm gonna say then and saying, "He's defending this guy?" I'm not. This is your warning to not think that.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: Turn off the tape, if you are going to... [laughs quietly] But yeah, we've sort of— I feel like we have talked on the show before, in the abstract, and obviously you know Ging's deal. I didn't, and I probably still don't. We've talked on the show in the past about how Ging is probably not the greatest guy because of how he abandoned Mito and Gon.

Keith: Yeah. And he says, "I'm a bad person." My dub, he says specifically, "I'm a bad person," is what he says.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: But I mean sort of prior to this point.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: And I had sort of thought that that was an external reading that we were making. Uh, I imagined that the show was gonna kind of grapple with, like, is this guy a good guy or not. I was not expecting the opening salvo from the show to be explicitly, “Hey, Ging might be awful.”

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: However, as Ging speaks, we get just this beautiful shot as the camera sort of zooms rapidly out away from Whale Island, up through the clouds, far far far far far away.

Keith: Oh, yeah.

Jack: And this cut—it’s not a cut; it’s a zoom and then a pan—takes so long and is being played against the tape, that I was like, “Oh shit, we’re going to see Ging for the first time.” You know, like, in the moment. We’ve seen him appear in flashbacks a couple of times, but I was like, this is going to be our arrival, our meeting with Ging. And it is so interesting and clever that after having told us, having showed us the cold reality that Ging is not a particularly nice guy, that there is a kind of flat unpleasant uncaring thing at the heart of this mythos, what the camera zooms in on is so startling and exciting...

Keith: Oh, it’s so good.

Jack: That you immediately challenge what you have just been told. You know?

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You have just been told: this guy’s not a great guy. And you think in the moment, “Okay, right, fine. Let’s pump the brakes a little on Gon’s curiosity and excitement about this. He is someone who has abandoned his child, and he’s not prepared to deal with it,” and then they show you him doing the coolest thing I’ve ever seen. [Dre laughs] There is a red—

Keith: It’s so funny! It’s like a joke. It’s like a really hilarious joke while also being extremely awesome and very cool, and I want to see more of it.

Jack: It gave me, like, a bolt of adrenaline, in terms of how weird this image is. We see this red, massive red island with what seems to be a huge tall volcano or a tree, like the trunk of a tree growing out, and a sandstorm, and we zoom in close on Ging, who is—he's got a short beard. He's wearing an animal pelt kind of, like, jacket, as he says, "I'll always be the guy I am." And then he calls out. He says, "Bo!" and I don't know if he's making—uh, he's naming a creature or if he's giving a command, because he is riding the head of an enormous genuinely unsettling-looking creature.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: If the Nogging Lugging Turtle and the Frog-In-Waiting were a kind of Dr. Suess caricature, there is—you know, this was a turtle that ate people, but it grew strawberries on its back. There was something kind of cartoonish about this creature. The creature that we see Ging riding is like a...it's huge, firstly. Ging is sort of tiny on the top of it. It is like a melted frog. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: It is sort of like a melted frog!

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: If you've ever seen the movie *Shin Godzilla*, something that I really loved about *Shin Godzilla* was that Godzilla goes through these kinds of different sort of metamorphoses over the course of the movie, and one of the earlier metamorphoses in *Shin Godzilla*, he's this very odd-looking frightening lizard with a horrible staring eye. I'm gonna put a picture of it in the Media Club Plus chat. And there was something about the creature [**Dre:** Ah!] that Ging rode that conjures this sense of, like, this is a very unpleasant-looking—this is a sinister creature. And then the camera pans out further, [**Keith:** Oh, yeah.] to reveal that that creature is sitting on the head of another massive creature.

Keith: [laughs] He's on a giant monster that's riding an even gianter monster.

Dre: Almost like—yeah, like, 10, 20 times the size of this other monster.

Jack: This thing is vast.

Keith: It's exponential. For however small Ging is compared to the monster that he's on, that monster is small compared to the monster it's on.

Dre: Yeah, totally.

Jack: And then we cut to a wide shot to reveal that this is a dragon.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Ging is riding—

Keith: A melted frog.

Jack: A monster that is riding a sort of melted dragon. Sylvi has put the panel from the manga in here.

Sylvia: Yeah, I found the manga panel.

Jack: The way this— well, you found a— [laughs quietly] okay.

Sylvia: It's a very low-res version.

Jack: This resolution is four by six pixels.

Sylvia: Yeah, I didn't realize it was so low-res when I linked it.

Jack: This thing is...the scale, it's just so good. And situating it at the end of this scene, right, where we were being asked to come to terms with Ging as a kind of squalid [**Dre:** Yeah.] unpleasant absent father, and then to show him [laughs] doing the coolest thing you've ever seen.

Dre: Well, yeah, it's like, the irresistible gravity that is Ging.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah. Yeah, totally.

Keith: I want to say this is a good spot to say the slight difference in the sub between our bits on the tape, Jack. Mine says, uh, you know, he goes to the thing, like, “I don't want to see you. I don't know how I could face you,” and then he says, “After all, I chose my own desires over my parental duty. I'm a bad person.”

Jack: Ohh.

Keith: And that's when it cuts to him flying on the frog on the dragon through a tornado [Jack laughs] in a hurricane and then landing on a weird, like, Martian looking planet.

Jack: Sylvi has posted a screenshot from the *Hunter × Hunter* Reddit.

Sylvia: It's so funny.

Jack: It shows— it's from the '91 anime, but the—

Sylvia: '99.

Jack: '91. [laughs]

Sylvia: [laughs] It was before the manga.

Jack: Wow. The terrifying— the pre-manga adaptation that they made is very cool. No, this shows Ging sitting on top of the creature sitting on top of the other creature, and the subject says, “What are these creatures Ging is sitting on? Does this help in power scaling him?” [Keith laughs]

Dre: Jesus Christ.

Keith: That's so funny.

Sylvia: I saw this, and I— like, because I think the most recent episode [**Keith:** Yeah.] that came out at the time of recording involved us explaining what power scaling was.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah, the episode that just came out two days ago, we explained to Jack what

power scaling is. That's episode six.

Dre: [sighs] Man, the *Hunter × Hunter* Reddit.

Jack: Will we ever see these creatures again?

Keith: And no, it doesn't. [Jack laughs]

Dre: No. No.

Keith: Sorry, go ahead, Dre?

Dre: I was just gonna say the *Hunter × Hunter* Reddit is a place.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: I think after last episode I linked a screencap from a *Hunter × Hunter* Reddit thread of where someone was arguing, "Who's Gon's better father figure: Hisoka or Leorio?"

Keith: Oh my god.

Jack: Oh my god.

Keith: It's Leorio! Easy!

Jack: It's Leorio.

Dre: Easy.

Keith: Easy!

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Although, by the way, if you hang out on the *Hunter × Hunter* Reddit, you should post about this show there, and maybe they'll like this show and listen to it.

Jack: Who is Gon's better *Hunter × Hunter*— wait, father figure? Is it Hisoka, or is it the Noggin Lugging Turtle? [Keith laughs]

Dre: Ooh. Great question.

Keith: It's the turtle!

Dre: It's the turtle.

Jack: It's the turtle! Will we ever see these creatures again?

Sylvia: Oh, I'm back, okay.

Keith: Okay. You good, Sylvi?

Jack: Is this a—

Keith: Is your recording good?

Sylvia: Yeah, I've...

Dre: All right, good.

Sylvia: My recording's fine. Discord has just been [**Dre:** Ah.] deciding to stop giving me audio.

Keith: Oh.

Sylvia: Apologies.

Keith: That's okay. Uh, Jack, what were you saying?

Jack: I can't tell if we will ever see these creatures again ever, or if this is Ging's horse. [Keith laughs] He's got a stack of...

Keith: He has a stack of horses.

Jack: He— what is the circumstance that has led to this? Okay. I'm gonna figure it out.

Keith: It's his desire.

Jack: The circumstance that has led to this is— [laughs quietly] Well, I mean, sure. He

wants to ride a creature that rides another creature. The second thing, the melted dragon, has a symbiotic relationship with the melted frog. That's the only possible reason. You know? If you want to ride the dragon, which he does for some reason, [**Dre:** Oh, sure.] you have to ride the frog, and then the frog rides the dragon. He saw the— wait, hang on. I'm gonna make a funny— I'm gonna make a funny tweet. [Sylvia laughs] I'm gonna make a funny tweet in our Discord. Okay, you have to imagine that you're seeing it on Twitter.

Keith: I'll scroll up so that I can scroll down to simulate the experience. Okay, scrolling down. Scrolling down. Ging's car. [laughs] It's a image of, uh... [Dre laughs] These look like a series of iron statues. It is a chicken riding a cat riding a coyote riding a donkey.

Jack: [laughs] It's the Animals of Bremen statue in Bremen, but yes, that was my tweet. Anyway.

Keith: That's funny.

[1:20:23]

Jack: The tower of creatures flies off. Ging says, "I'm sure I'll be off horsing around somewhere." [Jack and Keith laugh] Great. Okay. "If you still want to see me, find me, but like I said, I don't want to see you. If I see you coming, I'll bolt. Catch me if you can!" And Gon smiles at this challenge. Gon is like, "Hmm, okay."

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Hmm, my dad hates me.

Keith: There is this, like, kernel at the center of this. Like, if Ging didn't want Gon to find him, he simply would not lead a wild goose chase to try to get Gon to look for him.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Yes, this is me— this is when I say the line that David Fincher always puts in his stupid movies where he's like, "Of course, serial killers want to be caught."

Keith: Right.

Jack: So, you know.

Dre: Yeah. Well, yeah, I mean, I think it is, like—

Keith: Hey, Ging was acquitted of those crimes. [Jack laughs]

Dre: Yeah. I think Ging, a part of Ging probably does want to, like, apologize to Gon, maybe. Maybe. Maybe. But again, he—

Keith: Apolo— no, no, no, no. Go ahead, sorry.

Dre: Or... [sighs] Not even really apologize, but just be like, whatever the fuck the closest thing you get to an apology from the sociopath Ging Freecss would be. But yeah, it goes back to the thing you said, Jack. It's like the, "Well, [sighs] I feel bad, and it'll make me— I'll feel really bad if I see you, so like, I guess I'll let you find me, but it's gonna be really hard, because I don't want to feel bad."

Keith: I think that there's an honesty to that, to like...

Dre: Oh, sure.

Keith: To the guilt that he feels, but the other half of this, and I don't— it's hard to know what to say sometimes. It's hard to know what— you know, the like, the knowledge of the rest of the show. It's hard to go, like, what thoughts am I having based on what I've seen, and what am I— it's impossible to, like, really separate it. So I always try to be careful and err on the side of, like, not saying too much, but I don't think it would be out of line to put out there, like, this is a challenge for Gon. This is, like, Ging saying, "Come do this. I dare you to try to do this very difficult thing."

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: In a way that we've seen people, on a really wide scale of benevolent to malicious, [Dre: Mm-hmm.] treat Gon this way.

Dre: God.

Keith: Treat him as something to, like, you know, to build and grow. This is the whole Hisoka thing [Jack sighs] in, like, a really dark and evil way.

Dre: Yeah. Sure. Yeah, no.

Keith: But it's also like Wing, is also like this, [Dre: Yeah.] in a way that isn't dark or evil. And—

Dre: The thought that just came to me is that I wonder if Ging is like, “I want Gon to have to go through all this trouble to find me, because then, by the time he does, he'll understand, and he won't be mad at me, [Keith: God.] and I won't have to reckon with what I did.”

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Ugh! I wish that the thing that they cut from the first fucking episode was still there! [Sylvia laughs] Sylvi and Dre, you both know what I'm talking about, right?

Sylvia: I know what you're talking about, yes.

Keith: Okay.

Dre: Maybe?

Jack: Is this something that is gonna become relevant later, and that's the reason we're not talking about it?

Sylvia: Yes.

Keith: There's a character that you meet that we are going to meet.

Dre: Oh, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Keith: That in the '99 anime and in the manga, you meet in chapter one, but they cut from [Jack: Interesting.] the 2011 anime for kind of— it's not petty reasons. It was

basically like, uh, they weren't sure that the anime was gonna be successful, so they just really wanted to get straight into it, and so they cut this bit of story.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: That's an impulse that I understand, but...

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: This character in the '99 series shows up in episode one, like you said; in the manga, in chapter one; and in our version, will show up in episode 75.

Keith: And the show's weaker for it.

Jack: Wow.

Sylvia: I agree.

Keith: It is the show's, like, biggest blunder.

Dre: Yeah, I could see that.

Keith: And you know what? Fuck it. I'm not gonna say what it is, but I am going to tell you— I'm gonna talk around it a bit. We— we meet a character that teaches Gon what a Hunter is, and that character also happens to know Ging, and...

Jack: Interesting.

Keith: And it gives a lot of context to, like, what this sort of cat and mouse game is about.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Yeah. Interesting.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I'm looking forward to talking about that in episode 75.

Keith: Yeah. [laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah. It's weird. It's such a weird decision.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's obviously something we won't be able to talk about fully until then, but it is definitely—

Keith: Well, yeah.

Sylvia: I agree. It is the most, like...

Dre: Man, 'cause that...

Sylvia: It is the biggest, like, formal blunder they make with this. [Dre sighs]

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: And I under, like— I can understand from the production side, but...

Dre: That also paints Gon in such a different light.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Yes.

Dre: And, like, Gon's dri— wow. Huh.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: It's bizarre. It's bizarre, yeah. I think that Togashi has come out and been like, "They shouldn't have done that." [Dre and Keith laugh]

Sylvia: King.

Keith: And, uh, the...anyway. I don't think that the show's broken because of this,

obviously.

Sylvia: No.

Dre: No, no, no, no, no.

Keith: I still really like it. Like, I didn't know that this was— like, we're gonna get to a— we're gonna— there's gonna be— I think that anyone whose only experience with *Hunter × Hunter* will have thoughts about, like, why is this such a— why is this thing that's happening such a big deal here? And the answer is that every other version of *Hunter × Hunter* sets this up, you know, way way better and more cleanly.

Dre: Right.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And it is weird. Like, this is— we're kind of feeling the first real repercussions of not knowing about this stuff, and it, like...I think it sells Ging short here to...you know, and it's very fun to do this anyway, to be like, "Ging is a dick. End of story." Because he's not just a dick. He's a real fucking weirdo.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: And I'm excited that the show still gets into some of that eventually, but, uh, you know, it is bizarre that we're missing a bit of that context.

Jack: Ging says, "Okay, there's one more thing. I want to tell you about your mother."

Dre: Ugh.

Jack: "And I'm gonna offer you another out. If you want to know, [Dre sighs] keep listening." And Gon turns off the tape. It's so good!

Keith: It's so good.

Sylvia: It's well done.

Jack: It's just good character writing. And Killua kind of looks at him, like, "Are you sure? You sure about this?" and Gon says, "I do have a mom: Mito." But it's okay, because they'll be able to come back to this tape, right?

Keith: I have really bad news, Jack. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: What happens?

Dre: Nen tape! Nen tape! Nen tape! [Jack laughs quietly]

Keith: The song "Auras" starts playing, which is a song that I think was introduced in the Heaven's Gate— or, Heaven's Gate. Heavens Arena season. [Sylvia laughs] Which is like that very haunting thing. Whenever they're talking about Nen, some weird Nen stuff is happening, there's that, like, [imitating music] OoOoOoo.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, the, like, choral thing almost.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: And it's super, super eerie. It's a very eerie choral song.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: And the cassette player starts glowing with Nen, and all of a sudden, the tape starts rewinding on its own, and Gon and Killua start freaking out. They're like, "What is happening? The tape is rewinding on its own!" It gets to the beginning. They're trying to stop it. The record button presses in on its own. The tape is deleting itself using Nen. and they're punching the thing. They're throwing it against the wall. They're trying to press stop, but they can't. This thing just erases both tapes in there. Killua's smart little idea of trying to—

Jack: Immediately comes to nothing.

Keith: Yeah. It's like, he's seen enough TV to know, like, [Jack laughs] this tape will self-destruct in five, four...

Dre: Right.

Keith: But does not know Nen enough to be like, "Well, obviously Nen will just erase this tape on its own [Jack laughs] and also break the cassette player."

Jack: In a kind of dark little joke, the cassette has recorded them—

Keith: Frantically.

Dre: Uh huh.

Jack: Realizing it is erasing itself.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: It's great.

Keith: It's so good. And this is, like...you know, it's something that— [clears throat] Excuse me. Something in my throat. This is sort of like what we were talking about with Austin last time we recorded. Like, there is going to be stuff that happens with Nen, and you're gonna look at the Nen chart that they spend so long explaining to you, and you're gonna be like, "This is one of those?" and it's like, where on this chart was imbuing a cassette tape with Nen that causes it to overwrite itself from any distance, through, you know, ten years later?

Sylvia: Manipulator.

Jack: And you have a question about this, right, Dre?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Um, what do you think is Ging's— what type of Nen user do you think Ging is? And

I'm—

Jack: Remind me of them again?

Dre: [sighs] Let me—

Keith: Enhancer.

Dre: Let me pull open the Hunterpedia. [laughs]

Keith: Enhancer, Transmuter.

Sylvia: We've got another doc, remember?

Keith: Conjurer, Specialist, Manipulator, and Emitter.

Jack: I need to figure out a mnemonic for this.

Dre: Sure sounds like a Manipulator, am I right?

Jack: Ugh.

Sylvia: Genuinely, though, [Dre laughs] like, this would fall under that. Like, I'm not saying that as a joke.

Keith: Controlling inanimate objects? Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: I think so, right?

Keith: But argumentative and logical. Is that how Ging has seemed so far?

Sylvia: Well, hold on.

Dre: He would say he's logical.

Sylvia: Just because it doesn't fit Hisoka's fucking personality test bullshit doesn't mean I'm wrong.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Hey, we had that whole— “It fits. It’s a perfect match.” We had that whole scene.

Sylvia: We did.

Jack: “He’s right.”

Sylvia: We did. [Keith laughs]

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Fair enough.

Keith: That scene’s so funny.

Jack: Also...

Dre: And like, kind of, like, follow-up question to this too is also: so, now that we've been introduced to this Nen script, right? Is this a thing? It seems like, seemingly, that is a thing that anyone with Nen can do with enough skill?

Keith: Right.

Dre: And so, is this cassette tape— like, is there Nen writing...

Sylvia: That’s a good point.

Dre: On the, like, on the tape itself? Or are we supposed to take this as, like, no, this is representative of Ging’s, like, Nen skill?

Keith: Or...

Sylvia: I think—

Keith: You know, Gon’s got friends with different skills. Maybe Ging has friends with different skills [**Dre:** True, yeah.] and this is something that he commissioned from a stranger or got someone that he knows to do.

Sylvia: Another thing too is it's hard to figure out what type of Nen user someone is just from, like, this small thing, because as we were told, like, you can use Nen techniques from a different, like, class of Nen user.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Dre: Sure, yeah.

Sylvia: And it just, like, some of it— it's a compatibility thing, but you can still learn to use it.

Jack: I'm just thinking about Ging going to some Nen freak and being like, "I need you to make up a fucked up tape that will erase itself with this message on," and the Nen user's like, "For your son?" and he's like, "For my son. [Keith laughs] My abandoned son."

Keith: This is a, uh...this is a common...this is a Tuesday special. It's on the board written in chalk.

Jack: Yeah, son fucked up Nen tape.

Keith: [laughs quietly] Yeah, Nen tape to trick son.

Dre: Hmm.

Jack: A lot of this is being intercut with Mito cooking dinner and sort of working in the house below as all this stuff is going on, and this had an effect on me. I was like, I am worried something is going to happen to Mito, and I still might— I think I probably still believe that, but I thought something was going to happen in this episode. There is something ominous about watching this Nen tape erase itself as we cut to Mito just hanging out downstairs, you know?

Dre: Mm.

Keith: I liked it. I thought— I sort of read it as, like, this sort of contrast of, like, she's, like, living her daily life, you know, happy that Gon's home, doing her chores, and

they're, like, upstairs on a mission. They're, like, doing [Dre: Yeah.] adventure stuff in Gon's bedroom.

Dre: Yeah. Well, the specter of Ging is haunting the house upstairs.

Jack: It kind of does feel like that. There's a real ghostliness to this, right?

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: So, Gon says, "Why would he do this?" and Killua is like, "Well, I'm about to make some really wild claims about audio." [Jack and Dre laugh] Killua is like, "Well, this is part of the test. You know, he knew that we could extract some clues," and obviously there is a kind of, um...there is a field of information intelligence that can extract information from audio.

Dre: Sure.

Jack: However, Killua claims that you can basically learn everything about a person from hearing them on a tape: their height, what they look like. [laughs]

Dre: What diseases they have.

Keith: What their mental state.

Sylvia: Gender.

Jack: The works. Does he say that? Does he include gender as well?

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, he does, yeah.

Sylvia: He did in my subtitles, yeah.

Jack: Oh my god.

Keith: It's, uh...they know just about as much about cassette tapes as they know about bee allergies.

Jack: Yes. [laughs]

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Which is to say they are very confident, [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] and they have, I would say, a fifth of the information that I would consider a passing grade? But Killua is much more interested in this memory card, which he says...

Keith: He does make one good point about the tape, which is that a Nen user might be able to extract a lot of stuff, because it's magic.

Jack: Uh, sure.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, Killua.

Dre: Killua would have to use Pro Tools, but a Nen user can just...

Jack: [laughs] Just, yeah, tell you anything you wanted to know.

[1:35:00]

Jack: This memory card is not a memory card for a camera or a synthesizer [Sylvia laughs] or a computer. It is a memory card for a games console, called...

Dre: What's that game console called?

Sylvia: What is the name of that games console?

Jack: It is called a JoyStation! Killua— Gon has never played a video game. Of course he hasn't. Gon goes out there and punches fish, is his... [quiet laughter]

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: You know?

Dre: Killua says, "You never played any video games? That's pretty weird." [laughs]

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's great.

Keith: To Gon, Super Smash Brothers is the Hunter Exam. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Yes, yes. So called because of how much smash you do.

Keith: How much smashing you do.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: [cross] And the brothers that you have to fight.

Dre: [cross] That's him watching Killua beat up the Blowjob Brothers, yeah.

Keith: Yeah, the Blowjob Brothers.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah. [Dre laughs]

Keith: Yeah, you beat up the Blowjob Brothers. Super Smash Brothers. [Sylvia laughs]

Jack: So, Killua just heads off to the video game store, to the toy store to buy a JoyStation. I love that Whale Island has a toy shop that you can buy a PlayStation in.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: I had sort of pictured Whale Island as, like, a tiny parochial fishing town, but Killua just heads off to buy the JoyStation.

Keith: It's a small—

Jack: There's a really good vibe here— mm?

Keith: Oh, just there's a small moment where, like, Killua heads out of the house on his own, and Mito's like, "Where are you going?" and he's like, "The toy store." [Keith and Dre laugh]

Jack: I really like this moment. This moment feels like being on vacation with your friends, and your friends going out to do something while you, like, keep house back home.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: It was a really good feeling of, like, “Oh, bye, Killua!”

Keith: There’s also, like, a, you know, the switch that flips when you're at a friend’s house and you just, like, kind of become comfortable there, and it’s like, **[Dre:** Mm-hmm.] you've sort of made the transition from...

Jack: Yeah, totally.

Keith: You know, not like not being a guest in the home, but sort of like, oh, I have to ask to use— to, like, get a glass of water, versus like, opening the fridge and, you know, pouring yourself a glass of orange juice.

Jack: Yeah. It’s cute. He comes back. This is not a game. It is a save data memory card, and we are, like, right back into the explicit metaphorization of Hunters and Hunting as, like, game and toylike. They are making this metaphor as clear as they can. Step one of the “find me, Gon” treasure trail that Ging has left is save data on a PlayStation 2, and it gets even wilder, because they figure out that this save data is for a game called... [laughs quietly] called Greed Island.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Which they look up and find that this game doesn't exist on the main market. We're already now fully in the, like, urban legends about games territory. You know, the, like, [Sylvia laughs] the Ben Drowned or whatever.

Sylvia: I was gonna say, Gon Drowned?

Jack: [laughs quietly] Gon Drowned. We have moved firmly into this, like, the mystery of

games that were only a few of them were made or whatever, because we learn that this game...does someone else want to read out the name of this game? Because it's amazing. The full title?

Keith: Oh, yes, I have it. It's called Greed Island: A Hunting Game for Hunters.

Jack: [laughs] It's great.

Sylvia: Jesus.

Jack: And it costs an immense amount of money. It costs, uh—

Dre: It's only 5.8 million.

Jack: It's only 5.8 million, as Gon says instantly. [laughs quietly]

Keith: It is 5— yeah, and Killua makes fun of him. It's actually 5.8 billion jenny, which is basically yen, which makes it, what 58 million dollars?

Sylvia: Yeah. Like, not— it's not an exact conversion, but usually with that case, you just change the billion to a million, and then you've got the US dollars conversion in a lot of ways.

Jack: It is so expensive.

Sylvia: Yes.

Jack: Gon not being able to read, like, a large number [**Dre:** Uh huh.] is something that I relate to.

Dre: Yeah, same.

Jack: You gotta put commas in there. It is interesting that this is, you know, only 100 of these were made, and it cost a huge amount of money, so the expectation is that Hunters are generally just immensely rich. There is, like, a direct correlation between wealth and whether or not you are a Hunter.

Dre: Hey, Leorio told us.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Like, in the 50 billion—

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Sorry, the 50 richest people in the world, half of them are Hunters?

Keith: Well, this is the sort of—

Jack: It's really interesting.

Keith: This is the sort of funny thing, Dre, about what you, um...we've already talked about it a little bit, but also, what you have here in the doc about, you know, people sort of generalizing their own opinions about what a Hunter is out to every Hunter, but then the flip side of that is that it's always kind of true. Like, it isn't—

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: No one is right, because they're kind of all right.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Well.

Keith: They kind of do catch criminals and stop poachers, and they kind of do [**Dre:** Yeah.] do it for the money, and they kind of are selfish, and they kind of— like, every— everything you've heard—

Dre: And they kind of are evil.

Keith: [laughs] Yeah, they kind of are good. They kind of are evil. Yeah, it's very funny, like, you know, I guess it's sort of like, yeah, the Hunters are such a diverse group that it

is diverse in the way that any group of, you know, thousands, question mark? of people are diverse, but the Hunters are so, um...

Dre: Weird.

Keith: Like, they're such forces in the world that it's, like, it sort of magnifies that out in a bizarre way. Anyway.

Jack: Yeah. Turn over any card in the major arcana, and you go, "Ah, that's a Hunter."

Keith: That's a Hunter. Yes. Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Then there's a lot of business that happens that we don't really need to go into. Business with computers, business with games consoles, business with online auctions. They try and request it and immediately get a bunch of counterfeit offers, because this game is so rare.

Sylvia: It is very funny watching them deal with all that, though.

Jack: It's great.

Keith: It is great. There's two things I want to bring up. The first thing is that when, um...when Killua is sort of talking about having someone that he can get information on the game from, and he calls Gotoh.

Jack: Oh. Oh, yeah, do we want to move onto this scene? I was just thinking about the bit where they get the counterfeit stuff, but yeah, [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] the back half of this episode's super interesting.

Keith: Oh, okay. I thought we— I think I just mis-ordered these in my mind, but yeah, if not anything to say about that other stuff, that's...

Dre: Uh, just that Killua is very serious about cybersecurity and using a VPN.

Keith: Yeah, I have written—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: I said Killua has great OPSEC. [Dre laughs] The cassette thing, the not using the home computer. I think there was a third thing. Oh, and the memory card was the other thing, I think.

Sylvia: The thing is, it's really funny, and then it's also— there's a, like, you take a second to think, and it's like—

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Oh, it's because his family has done this to murder people.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah. Yeah. [laughs quietly]

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Oh, and the phone call where he's like, [**Sylvia:** Yes.] "You gotta make sure this is a secure line." [laughs]

Sylvia: "Cause otherwise bad guys will come here to Whale Island."

Keith: Yeah. [laughs]

Sylvia: And I'm like, do you mean your dad? Do you mean your dad and brother?

Keith: Yeah, your bad guys.

Dre: Yeah, probably. He probably means Illumi.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Genuinely, probably. Like, I'm...

Jack: Well, so.

Dre: I bet he doesn't want Illumi to know where Gon lives.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, 'cause Illumi has said, "I'm gonna kill him." Uh, "Who do we know who's into gaming and the internet?" says Killua, and then he calls someone who he doesn't want to call. First he calls Gotoh, [**Keith:** Yeah.] the head butler from the Zoldycks' estate. Did you have something about Gotoh, Keith?

Keith: I did. So, when he talks to Gotoh [Dre laughs] and then asks about his brother, Gon is just sort of listening, and they provide for the viewer's benefit, and this is just a great little piece of *Hunter × Hunter* being, like, really good at giving the viewer information and, like, not really being picky about how it does that. We talked a little bit about this during the Trick Tower tournament with the prisoners where they, like, when they needed to, they would just put everyone's name and information on the screen as text, but when they could fit it in through dialog, they did it that way instead. With this, they just, like, have Gon being like, "Oh, Gotoh," and then he just thinks of the guy, a picture of Gotoh's face.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: And then, like, Gon talks about his brother, and then he pictures Gittarackur taking out a pin and then turning into Illumi, and it's like—

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Really good.

Keith: This is great for someone who doesn't remember who these characters are.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Like, very useful, you know, viewer-conscious information giving.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And then there's the call with Milluki, who he's actually talking about.

Sylvia: And he does call him Piggy at one point.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: He does call him Piggy, and he does have a little... [Dre sighs in frustration]

Sylvia: And Gon pictures a pig in a hoodie. We should talk about the way that, like, the show does not handle fat bodies well at all.

Dre: No.

Keith: It's gross.

Dre: Mm-mm.

Sylvia: It's really gross. It really sucks.

Keith: Well, the first thing that we learn is that [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] anime exists in *Hunter × Hunter*.

Dre: Sure.

Sylvia: Not only does anime exist, but *Yu Yu Hakusho* does. [laughs quietly]

Dre: Yeah, what else exists, Keith?

Keith: Uh, chips?

Dre: Uh, what else exists, Keith?

Keith: What am I missing?

Dre: Fucking RealDolls exist in *Hunter × Hunter*! [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, no, okay! We're here! Okay. Yeah. So, Milluki's in the Goon Cave [Dre laughs] when he gets this call.

Keith: Is that what...?

Sylvia: And...

Keith: I didn't think any of those were RealDolls.

Sylvia: No, there's one of them that—

Dre: Yeah, they are, bro.

Sylvia: Hold on. I don't think the one who's standing up. I don't think— I believe it's— I looked up, because I remembered something, someone mentioning...

Dre: Killua does call them the figurines, but come on.

Sylvia: Well...so, one of them is a *Yu Yu Hakusho* character, I think, and I don't think that's the...the one that he's been doing terrible things to.

Dre: Sure. That's good.

Sylvia: The one next to it, though.

Dre: That's, like, sitting?

Sylvia: Look at how that's posed.

Keith: Okay, that's...I see...

Sylvia: I don't know.

Keith: I see where you're getting it from.

Sylvia: The other one looks like it's a static thing that's always there.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Uh huh.

Sylvia: And then the blue-haired one, I'm like, I don't want to know. I don't want to know what he does to that. I bet it's—

Dre: Also what it's wearing, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Oh, it's, like, titties out, for anyone not watching.

Dre: It's everything out.

Keith: Yeah, yeah, it is.

Dre: It is the stringiest of string bikinis.

Sylvia: Yeah. They are very much doing the, um...

Dre: Look at this fat nerd living in the basement with his anime figures—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: They lean into this.

Dre: Eating food in the most disgusting way.

Sylvia: Look at, like, every, uh...every neet stereotype that they can kind of come up with.

Jack: And they just put their foot on the pedal of that as hard as possible, and throughout this entire scene, we keep coming back to this, like, tight closeup on Milluki's hand going into a, like, bag of chips and, like, putting them into his mouth.

Dre: Shoving them in.

Jack: The show is so, uh...

Keith: Lurid.

Jack: Lurid, right? It is...

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: It is painting Milluki in such a specifically unflattering light as it relates to his fatness and as it relates to, you know, ugly stereotypes of fatness and excess and fatness and deviance. There is no moment in this scene that the show...this is the least interesting depiction— you know, when we first saw Millumi, he was torturing— Millumi?

Keith: Milluki.

Sylvia: Milluki.

Jack: Milluki. When we first saw Milluki, he was torturing Killua in the dungeon, and that was just an incredible introduction to this character who we know is just deeply mean and vindictive and violent, and then for him to be reintroduced here in what could have been a really fun scene, and there's a nice moment later that I want to talk about, but of like, oh, he is calling in a favor from his brother who we last saw torturing him? That's an interesting scene, and so much of my goodwill towards it is just squandered so fast by the way that they choose to depict Milluki here.

Keith: You were right, Sylvi. There is a Kurama figure in the background here.

Sylvia: Okay, cool.

Keith: Shoutout to Kurama. Love Kurama.

Sylvia: Free her from the cave. [quiet laughter]

Jack: So, something fun does happen in this conversation, which is it is two people who hate each other very much talking about something that they both have an interest in in this moment, and the way that Killua is able to sort of genuinely draw Milluki into this conversation is really fun. That sensation of, like, we don't like each other, but he is genuinely drawn into this conversation. He is interested to hear that Killua is interested

in Greed Island, especially because Killua makes him a deal. He says that Killua has made a copy of this memory card. Killua, learning from his past success in making a previous copy, [Dre laughs] says, “Well, I’ll give you another copy of the card, and you are skilled enough that you might just be able to reverse engineer the game from its save data,” which you can’t do, but this is *Hunter × Hunter*. And in return, Milluki will offer him two leads on where he might be able to find a copy of the game. And Killua says very seriously, when sort of questioned on this, “I never lie, not when I’m making deals.” Do we believe this? [Keith sighs]

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Eh.

Dre: Enough.

Keith: He’s not lying here.

Sylvia: He’s not lying.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: I would believe that Killua would, like, disguise the truth or, like, obfuscate things, but I think he’s telling the truth when he says that he doesn’t lie when he’s making deals.

Jack: It’s interesting, right? Because we know that Killua is someone who will absolutely do whatever it takes to get what he needs. It seems to have come from Zoldyck family training, right?

Dre: Sure.

Jack: Of like, get the target no matter how, and it is notable that there is maybe a kind of truce of some kind being drawn up between these two assassins, who each know that they would be able to outwit the other but would get caught in it, kind of going, like, “All right, look. We don’t want to prisoner’s dilemma ourselves into a bad situation here.

You get me the card; I'll get you the leads." Because we have two leads.

Dre: Yeah, and I...to build on that, I think, like, Killua's the type of person who probably only makes a deal when he thinks he has to?

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: That's worth...

Dre: And so, if he's at a point where he's like, "You have enough leverage on me that I need to make a deal, then I shouldn't fuck around."

Jack: Yeah. I want to be real here.

Keith: There is this, like, sort of— while he's sort of underhandedly manipulating Milluki into agreeing to do this, he adopts this, like, very funny tone that we last saw during the torture, of kind of, like, condescending full-of-shit kind of flattery. [Dre laughs] It's a little bit like you said, but he just, like, the tone of voice is like, [mocking] "Oh, Milluki, but you're so smart! Can't you— you can't do this?" It is really funny.

Jack: I think part of why it works so well for me is I don't think Milluki buys it. This— he buys it on some level. He feels himself getting baited into this. But to me, this feels like—

Keith: Well, the last time Killua did that to him, he fucking thrashed him with a whip.

Jack: Yeah.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: This is like— this is fully, like, abusive assassin family pantomime here. Everybody has fallen into this kind of, like, kayfabe moment of, like, we have to adopt these characters in these moments when we're talking to each other to stop ourselves from just murdering each other. It's great. I love the Zoldyck family. It was so funny— it is so *Hunter × Hunter* to be like, we have this terrifying first encounter with the Zoldycks, and the second time we meet them is that Killua has a question about a video game

called Greed Island: A Hunting Game for Hunters, so he telephones his brother.

Keith: [laughs] Another funny note about this: his, like, the way that his eyes are drawn is changes. Like, the whites of his eyes and his pupils, like, totally change shape and color when he goes into condescending voice. It's really funny.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: Very cartoon, good cartoon stuff.

Jack: Back onto looking at the eyes of characters in this show again, huh?

Dre: Especially Zoldycks.

Jack: Especially Zoldycks. Here are the two leads. The first is a website only accessible to Hunters: WWW dot hunters dot com. [Jack and Sylvia laugh] I don't know what it is.

Keith: Hunters Only dot com.

Jack: The password is hunting. But Milluki is not gonna give Killua this address until Killua gives him the card. Okay, fine. The second is that there is a rumor that someone is going to auction off dozens of copies of Greed Island at the Yorknew Auction, where Gon and Killua were already going to meet Kurapika and Leorio. So Gon says, "I guess it must have been my destiny all along," to go to the Yorknew Auction.

Sylvia: It's good. I like that it's, like, another way to get them to want to go there, besides just wanting to see their pals again.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah. Definitely. Milluki, meanwhile, back in the cave, learns that the game is worth a huge amount of money and kind of menacingly says, "I'll put an end to this legend myself," and it's not terribly clear what he means there, at least to me. But we'll see.

Sylvia: He's gonna speedrun it.

Jack: Everybody has a big dea— [sighs] oh my god. Everybody has a big meal, because Mito is saying, you know, you might not be able to sit down and have a big meal for a while. They all eat.

Sylvia: Like a Thanksgiving meal. [laughs quietly]

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: There's, like, a full-on turkey there.

Jack: It looks great.

Sylvia: Oh, I was jealous.

Jack: Oh yeah. And then, the next morning, they get on a big boat, and they leave. This is presented as an absolute, like, setting off on adventure again moment. This time, it has a lot more sort of bombast than when we saw Gon [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] running away down the hill after having done the pinkie promise with Mito. There's a real sort of, like, call to adventure thing happening here.

Keith: Yeah, they have a full bon voyage moment.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: They have a full, what, FBVM?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: A classic FBVM.

Jack: Full bon voyage. Mito's waving. She's got a little tear in her eye, but she looks resolved and proud of Gon, and Gon promises he will find Ging and then return. And I think that this is, yeah, do you want to kind of come back to what you were talking about

earlier, Dre, in terms of the way these different departures are kind of presented?

Dre: Yeah. Again, I think it's just that, like, Mito has made peace within herself, at least as far as, like, the stuff with Ging when it comes to Gon, right? Like, I think she's probably still not very happy with Ging and probably very hurt by how all that went down but I think has, like, come to realize that Gon is a different person, and I can't hold what Ging did to me against Gon [**Jack:** Mm.] and what I want him to do. I have to let him be his own person.

Jack: Hmm. And this is, you know, this kind of imagery is often deployed in service of that feeling, right? I feel like, across fiction, the like, person with a tear in their eye waving off someone leaving in a FBVM [someone snorts] is, like, really associated with a sort of giving over of autonomy or trust [**Dre:** Mm-hmm.] to a person going on an adventure, right?

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: And that's the end of the episode.

Final Thoughts [1:55:12]

Keith: Good eps.

Jack: Really good eps.

Dre: Great episodes.

Jack: That was some great *Hunter × Hunter* there.

Keith: The thing that is, like, so good about *Hunter × Hunter*, and this, I think, comes through in, you know, Togashi's other big manga, *Yu Yu Hakusho*, is like...and the split is different. Like, *Yu Yu Hakusho* is more about action. It's more of a battle shonen than *Hunter × Hunter* is, but you can see Togashi trying to, like, burst out of the seams and,

like, kind of wasn't able to do that—and by able I mean allowed—until that show had become a success and become a successful anime and is maybe given more leeway and more sort of, uh, creative control over *Hunter × Hunter* and the direction that it goes in. But you can see this in both shows where, like, the characters are so good and are bouncing off each other in such interesting ways, and when they get a chance to, you know, break from the fighting and kind of dig into, like, what each other are about, they really shine.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: And sometimes it feels like the other stuff— like, I would never— you know, I would never accuse Togashi of not being interested in the action parts of *Hunter × Hunter*, and I think that he has a real love for Nen and the way that it works. It seems like he really enjoys not just the action aspects of it but the sort of puzzle aspects of coming up with powers and stuff, but it does feel like the thing that really makes those shows shine is, like, learning— characters learning stuff about each other and, like, revealing things about themselves.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Which is common in shonen. Like, that— but it's usually so tied to the fighting.

Dre: Yeah, sure.

Keith: Like, the fighting is the way that we reveal each other to— or reveal ourselves to each other or find out more about somebody and, like, the way that we create boundaries or erase boundaries. Like, that is, like, to me, you know, a hallmark of the genre, and *Hunter × Hunter* is so good about, like, taking those moments and removing them from the action and just being like, we're just having a conversation by the cliffside [Jack: Right.] at night, telling each other that we're best friends.

Jack: Building that, building a structure that allows scenes like that to work.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And then, at the same time, yes. You know, not just the battle, right? Sitting that alongside this mystery of this box that opens up. It's just great. Is there anything else we want to make sure we hit this episode? I think I've got everything.

Sylvia: Yeah, I feel like we covered most— I got my “fuck Ging Freecss” stuff all out, so I'm solid.

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

Jack: Fuck that guy.

Keith: Fuck that guy.

Dre: Yeah, fuck that guy.

Jack: He's got a good horse, though.

Keith: He has a really good, tall horse.

Dre: He does.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: His horse has a cool horse too.

Jack: [laughs quietly] His horse has a really cool horse, and that horse's horse is the world.

Sylvia: Whoa.

Keith: Wow.

Jack: Do we think that the world of *Hunter × Hunter* is round or flat?

Keith: I know the answer to this.

Jack: Oh my god.

Dre: Yeah, me too. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: I don't.

Keith: Uh, I'll send you a map.

Dre: Mm...

Sylvia: I think I've seen the map. I guess I just don't know if it's...

Jack: You'll send me a map, or you'll send Sylvi a map?

Sylvia: I don't think we can send you the map.

Dre: Don't sent Jack a map.

Keith: Yeah, no, no, no, no.

Sylvia: No.

Keith: Jack cannot see the map. It's very important to not see the map.

Jack: Oh, it's one of those stories.

Sylvia: Yeah. You'll see the map eventually.

Keith: And for anyone out there who's watching along and you care about spoilers, [Sylvia laughs] it's very important that you do not see the map.

Sylvia: Uh...yeah, there's multiple things, actually.

Keith: Yeah. [laughs]

Sylvia: That I'm thinking of it, this would spoil, now that I think about it. This shit rules.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: I love making this thing.

Jack: I'm such a huge maps fan. Maps in games, maps in books, maps in shows. My favorite thing to do is open a book—

Keith: The song “Maps”.

Jack: The song.

Sylvia: They don't love you like I love you.

Jack: Is “Maps” the one that goes— oh, that song's really good.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, I like that song a lot.

Dre: Great song.

Jack: My favorite thing is to open a book and see a map in the front page and look at it for five minutes and be like, “Ah, I'm gonna internalize all this information,” and then turn to page one and just forget it just completely. [Jack and Dre laugh]

Sylvia: Oh, yeah.

Jack: Just, no utility whatsoever.

Keith: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah, what are we watching next time?

Keith: The next thing that we're recording is going to be, uh, I think two bonus episodes where we watch some original *Dragon Ball* from season seven.

Jack: Exciting.

Keith: I'm very excited to watch those.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Those will be—

Sylvia: I mean, they'll probably— people listening to this probably already know about that, considering our release schedule.

Keith: Sure. they'll definitely already know about it, but it's worth saying again that if you go to the Friends at the Table Patreon and sign up, you'll be able to hear those, and who knows? Maybe by the time this is out, probably some other bonus episodes, maybe.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: We might be cooking a little bit. I think we might be cooking here.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: I think that we might be cooking.

Sylvia: Yeah. So, stay tuned, and enjoy.

Keith: So, next time, we are going to be watching “Wish x And x Promise!”, episode 39; episode 40, “Nen x Users x Unite?”; [**Jack:** Ha!] and episode 41, “Gathering x Of x Heroes”.

Jack: Wow.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Ah. Oh, we got some— ugh.

Dre: Uh huh.

Sylvia: We got some heat coming.

Dre: Uh huh.

Keith: We have some *heat* coming.

Sylvia: I know it's, like, been— I've barely concealed it, but coming up might be my favorite arc?

Dre: Yeah, it's probably my second favorite.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: If it's your favorite arc, Sylvi, I think I can feel them on the horizon. [Sylvia laughs] I think they might be approaching.

Sylvia: We know that they are.

Jack: There are a number of them. They're freaks. They're all freaks.

Keith: Not the next set of episodes, although there's some really amazing stuff in there too, but the two or three or four or five sets of episodes following the next set of episodes? Unbelievable.

Sylvia: Oh, I straight— yeah, no. I straight up think, like, after we get through the, like, next...

Keith: We've got a little setup to do, but that's it.

Sylvia: There's a little bit of setup, and then it's just, like, 15 episodes of bangers.

Dre: Yeah. It's all gas, no brakes.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Oh. Hey, but do you know what we're gonna see in the next set of episodes?

Sylvia: Oh, yeah!

Keith: Jack, do you have any guesses?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Ape dodgeball. [Sylvia laughs]

Keith: No, but the other two screenshots!

Jack: Whoa! [laughs]

Sylvia: Yeah. We're almost done with the screenshots.

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Wow! Exciting. Exciting.

Sylvia: Very exciting.

Jack: God, imagine if all the screenshots had been from the first episode, and you just absolutely pranked me. [Dre and Keith laugh]

Sylvia: That would have been really funny.

Dre: Man.

Jack: I get to the end of episode one, and I'm back where I started.

Keith: Absolutely breakneck episode. [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: I wish that ape dodgeball, ape volleyball was in the first episode.

Jack: Ape volleyball. Okay. Well, thank you so much for listening. This is— ooh! Ooh! Ooh!

Keith: Ooh.

Jack: I'm gonna read a five star review!

Sylvia: Yeah!

Keith: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dre: Oh, fuck yeah!

Keith: Yeah, so—

Jack: We do not—

Sylvia: We need to remember to do that more.

Jack: You do— you explain why we're doing this, and I will look up a good one.

Keith: Who's "you"? Is me "you"?

Jack: You, the three of you. [laughs quietly]

Keith: Okay. So.

Dre: Uh, the SEO.

Keith: That's it. SEO.

Sylvia: I mean, yeah, to put it as bluntly as possible. It helps people find the show.

Keith: It helps people find the show. One of the most important things about a podcast is that it has people to listen to it.

Sylvia: Yeah. [Dre laughs]

Keith: There's—

Sylvia: We don't want to be a tree in a forest, you know?

Keith: Right.

Dre: Sure.

Keith: We want to be a forest.

Sylvia: Damn.

Keith: We want to be one of those forests that has, like, it's all, like, the one tree underground, you know? You know what I'm talking about?

Jack: Yes.

Dre: Yes, yeah.

Sylvia: Kind of, yeah.

Keith: There's, like, the kind of trees that are just, like, oh, every single outgrowth of tree is from the same root system—

Dre: Sure, yeah.

Keith: So it technically all counts as one tree. That's what I want.

Dre: We want this podcast to be a rhizome.

Keith: Yeah, we want to rhizome this. And, you know, we don't do any— we don't advertise or anything, so the only way people ever hear about this or about Friends at the Table or about Run Button is, you know, when people tell other people about it, and one of the sort of...the most active ways to do that without actually going and telling a friend about it is to go on Apple Podcasts and leave a five star review. Ratings are great. Reviews are really great.

Sylvia: Yeah, and write some words.

Keith: I don't even care if it's a good review. Like, well written. It doesn't have to be well written. It just has to be there.

Sylvia: Yeah, no. Just any— you could just write, “Hey, cool show.”

Keith: I think there is, like, a 30 character minimum, but besides that.

Sylvia: You could write, “Hey, really cool show. Love the show.”

Keith: Really, really, really cool show. Love the show.

Dre: Yeah.

Sylvia: [cross] See how many “really”s you can fit.

Dre: [cross] You could write, “Fuck Ging Freecss” and then copy past it, and that’ll be great.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: This is a five star review from patrickmurder.

Sylvia: Good name.

Keith: Oh no.

Dre: Murder.

Jack: Who says, “Worth it even if you're not a Friends at the Table fan.”

Keith: Wow.

Jack: “I’ve been a Friends at the Table fan for a long time now, so jumping in here was an easy decision. However, I didn’t expect to get as deep into *Hunter × Hunter* as a result, nor did I expect to look forward to these episodes as much as I do the main feed. The media literacy is so high across this crew, and that makes watching along [Sylvia laughs] even more fun.”

Dre: Aww.

Jack: “If you like good discussion and anime, you’ve found your podcast. Excited to see what show they pick next.” Thank you, patrickmurder.

Keith: Yeah.

Sylvia: That is very sweet.

Jack: Thank you for taking some time out from your murdering.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I'd like to give a quick shoutout to BalsamicThomas. [Keith laughs quietly]

Dre: Great.

Jack: Also a good username. [Sylvia laughs]

Dre: Killer names in these reviews here.

Keith: Really good names, yeah.

Sylvia: Hey. You guys gotta just leave reviews so we can see your usernames. [Dre laughs]

Jack: Who says, "What is a Hunter?" question mark. "Listen to find out!(!)" exclamation mark, brackets, question mark?

Dre: Mm-hmm. [laughs]

Keith: Not yet! [Jack laughs]

Sylvia: You know, we're trying.

Keith: We're trying. We are desperately trying to get to the bottom of this.

Sylvia: People will have some sort of answer by the end of this. We won't be able to, you know...it's fine.

Keith: I am glad, like— I don't think— at least, the question of "What is a Hunter?" is something that didn't occur to me until the prospect of doing this show, like, really started to reveal itself. It's something that we introduced to you, Jack, as a concept in that screenshot stream, and it has been—to me, anyway—a really, really fruitful mine.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: [laughs] Yes, it sure has.

Keith: [laughs] And it's, like, isn't something that was on my mind when I was watching

the show initially, and it's something that I barely considered, you know, the second time I watched it, like, oh, it's very funny that, like, no one really knows what a Hunter is for, like, a really really big chunk of this show. And I'm glad that we got to introduce it so early, because it's been a ton of fun, you know, teasing that out.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Jack: JWeemsical. JWeemsical, or Jweem-sical, says, "Rating five stars to keep them from euthanizing Sylvi and Dre," I have to imagine because we might have threatened Sylvi or Dre.

Sylvia: I did threaten. Yeah, I threatened...

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Oh. I don't remember that.

Sylvia: Listen. I'm in the Saw trap. I've got one of those shotgun collars on, and if anyone ever leaves a review that's under four stars, my head gets blown off.

Jack: Oh no!

Dre: Oh.

Jack: Oh no. [laughs quietly]

Sylvia: So...

Dre: That's intense.

Keith: Oh no! No one tell Sylvi about the one three-star review that we have.

Sylvia: [imitates gunshot] [quiet laughter]

Dre: Oh.

Jack: Oh, too late.

Keith: We do have an average of five stars, but we do have one three-star review.
[Sylvia laughs]

Jack: JWeemsical says—

Sylvia: [laughs] Wait.

Jack: “A Hunter is, according to this podcast. Um. Wait. Hold on, I have it here somewhere.” [Dre, Keith, and Sylvia laugh]

Jack: Oh god. Sylvi’s Discord has gone.

Dre: Oh god, no!

Keith: Oh no.

Jack: Jigsaw!

Dre: They blew up the collar! They blew up Sylvi’s collar! [laughs]

Keith: [laughs] Oh no.

Jack: Jigsaw got to her.

Sylvia: Hey.

Jack: Hey, Sylvi.

Keith: Got by Gingsaw. [Sylvia and Dre laugh]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Keith: Anyway, so, of course, if you go and leave a review on Apple Podcasts, that’s a big help. If you tell a friend, make a friend listen to the show with you.

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Keith: If you have a *Hunter × Hunter*-loving friend or a friend who you know would love

Hunter × Hunter, because who wouldn't, honestly?

Dre: Yeah, and...

Sylvia: Yeah.

Dre: Let me say this too. I am watching the show with my partner. She has seen one anime ever before. Well, she's watched *Sailor Moon* when she was a kid, but like, really this is— she's watched some episodes of *Laid-Back Camp* with me. This is the first ever, like, shonen anime that she has ever watched, and really, like, one of the biggest, like, animes she has ever— the first big anime she's ever watched. And this show is so good at getting people to, like, understand the language of, like, anime and shonen. Like, the moment in episode 37 when they pull out the box. As soon as my wife saw it, she goes, "Oh, they're gonna have to use Nen to open that," [Keith and Jack laugh] and I'm like, yeah, you fucking— yeah!

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Yeah, you fucking get it! Let's go! [laughs]

Jack: She just figured it out.

Keith: That's great. That's really great.

Jack: I introduced someone to this show, thinking that they would be vaguely interested in it, and they have now read, I believe, all of *Hunter × Hunter*. [Dre, Keith, and Sylvia laugh]

Keith: Blazed through it. I mean, it was [**Sylvia:** Yeah.] really a matter of weeks.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: Yeah.

Dre: Uh huh. I did, uh...

Sylvia: I have a few friends who were like, "I'm gonna watch and listen along at the

same time.”

Dre: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: [cross] And now they are in the Chimera Ant Arc.

Dre: [cross] And now they're, like, 30 episodes ahead. Yeah. [quiet laughter]

Keith: Yeah. Yeah, a lot of—

Jack: It's a good show.

Keith: A lot of people that I've seen, like, talking online about the show have mentioned trying to keep show pace and then accidentally watching the whole thing. And hey, you know when a great time to start watching *Hunter × Hunter* is? Right after you finish watching *Hunter × Hunter*.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: So, hey, start it again. Watch— now is your chance to watch at show pace, after you've just blazed through it.

Jack: Again. [laughs]

Keith: And, you know, I mentioned this earlier, but hey, if you're, like, in an anime forum or if you're on the *Hunter × Hunter* subreddit or something, go post about this show. People there might like this show. That would be great for us.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Is your uncle Yoshihiro Togashi?

Keith: Tell him.

Dre: Yeah.

Jack: Pass on our kind wishes.

Sylvia: That would be so cool and also very stressful.

Dre: Yeah, if he is, tell him that he does cool things.

Sylvia: Don't tell him I said "goon cave." [Keith laughs]

Dre: No, tell him. Tell him. He knows.

Sylvia: Don't! Aw!

Dre: He knows. He knows!

Keith: He knows.

Dre: He knows what he did.

Keith: He drew it.

Dre: Yeah. [Jack laughs quietly]

Sylvia: [resigned] Yeah, that's true.

Keith: One of the bonus episodes I really want to do is some *Yu Yu Hakusho*, so I'm very looking forward to potentially doing that.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: Tell him that.

Jack: Yeah. Tell him that.

Keith: Tell him that.

Jack: All right. Good night, everybody.

Sylvia: And tell him that's our show for this week.

Jack: That's our show for this week.

Keith: That's our show for this week. [["The Boy in Green"](#) begins playing] Is it funny? Is it really funny that we consistently talk about *Hunter × Hunter* for about double the runtime of the episodes we've watched?

Jack: Deeply funny.

Dre: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

Sylvia: That is the nature of this type of podcast.

Jack: We know what we drew. [Keith laughs]

Sylvia: We know what we're doing.

Dre: Yeah.

Keith: This one is like—

Sylvia: I mean, at least the thing we're talking about is good, you know?

Keith: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Keith: This is almost quadruple the length.

[song plays out]