Bells and Whistles

by TwilaStar

Summary

The elite World Star Zoldyck family are alumni at Musica Academy, an exclusive private singing school for only the best of the best. The Zoldycks are highly praised for their superior music skills and technique, but their youngest son won’t sing. Sophomore year starts and a wildcard, Gon Freecs, is thrown into the mix. Killua tries to steer clear but it’s difficult when this guy is turning the whole school’s foundation on it’s head.

[Winter Showcase Arc Complete!]

Notes

Hello HuntexHunter fandom! With this story, I make my debut in this fanfiction fandom world! This is my first story for my new children, one of many, and I hope you all like it!

But honestly, what am I doing, and what did I get myself into? I'm doing two of the things I hate/am horrible at: Career switches and musicfic... But AUs are fun, so I'll try my hardest. I generally want this fanfic to be kid friendly, at most rated T, with warnings of more mature
stuff at the beginning of chapters (I hope I remember to do that). There are real world themes explored (as best as I can) in this story such as: Financial trouble, Anxiety/stress, Self-confidence, Just to name a few.

Through the story, I'll be using songs from real singers and I'll put the names and specific song version I used for the story at the bottom before authors note (To let you know if I used a cover song for the story/chapter in stead of the song from the original song artist). And because I'm not an actual songwriter, and it'd be difficult for you all to know what song it is if I made it up, there will be some songs that I say the characters made originally but it's actually not!

Anyway, I also recommend actually looking up the songs I put. This is all for the fun, and to get the full experience of my story, it'd help to look up the songs the characters are singing! If that's too much for you, there are a couple songs I will put astridges (***) by, that means it's probably be best to look up this specific song, the least, if nothing else. I'll specify why I would want you to look it up in the actual section and by the astridge.

I want to thank my editor for all her help and putting up with all my whining that my story isn't really good, which she promptly helped me with: Canzie (Her tumblr is canzie-gum and whats-wrong-aniki)
Bells and Whistles

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Musica Academy

For the musical elite, anyone serious about being a World Star or Idol, a diploma from this school is the ticket to fame. Anyone who graduates from the school are almost guaranteed a fantastic career in the entertainment industry. People from the surrounding regions flock to enter the prestigious school.

Great Talent, great wealth, reputation, or connections are the only way in, some applying for years and never even getting chance to audition.

There is no age limit of students or of school year standings, ranked only by talent and completion of required criteria of every year. This school is the crème de la crème of the crème de la crème, creating what everyone truly calls World Stars.

Chapter 1: Bells and Whistles

Gon ducked his head of dark spiky hair out of the passenger side car door and reared his head back to take in the full view of his new private school. He smiled broadly and felt the familiar quickening beating of his heart from excitement. he knew it well, he felt it often just before a performance. A brief honk abruptly brought him out of his reverie. He whipped his head back around to see Mito, who looked slightly annoyed but he could see in her eyes that she was just as happy as he was about this new change.

"Gon, you have to close the car door when you get out, I thought I raised you well!" She said with false exasperation and a hand to her head. The fifteen year old held back a snicker as he closed the door then rounded the car from the front.

"I'm going to miss you too Mito-san!" He cried out, pulling open her door and clambered in for a hug. The older red head yelled out as she tried to hold herself up from the assault, the car shaking around and the horn being honked a couple times in the exchange. Those walking past looked over suspiciously.

"Really, Gon, you almost wrinkled my shirt! I have to go straight to work after this!" Mito giggled as she was finally able to untangle herself from Gon and the steering wheel and got him standing up straight outside the car from the front.

"I'm going to miss you too Mito-san!" He cried out, pulling open her door and clambered in for a hug. The older red head yelled out as she tried to hold herself up from the assault, the car shaking around and the horn being honked a couple times in the exchange. Those walking past looked over suspiciously.

"Really, Gon, you almost wrinkled my shirt! I have to go straight to work after this!" Mito giggled as she was finally able to untangle herself from Gon and the steering wheel and got him standing up straight outside the car again.

"Sorry!" He chuckled, closing his eyes and rubbing the back of his neck, while his tongue stuck out in a false apologetic manner. Mito smiled up at him affectionately while he wasn't looking. He was going to do great, and he was going to go places. She just knew it.

"Ok, well, remember," Gon opened his eyes as she addressed him, looking at her with attention. "I only came to drop you off for the first day of school. After today, I'll be waking up earlier than you to go to work at 5 and won't be coming back until around 6. You can take the car or walk to school after this because a coworker offered to carpool with me, but Gon!" At this she poked Gon in the chest menacingly and he held back a surprised gasp. "If you scratch or crash the car, or get pulled
over… I might disown you…!” Gon blinked, feeling a sweatdrop going down a side of his face before he started laughing nervously.

"Haha, very funny Mito, I understand though." the japanese fifteen year old waved off her concern, waving his hand flippanently. She gave him a deep look that held promise.

"I wonder if you really do…” She hummed and Gon blinked again but then she was back to smiling and she closed the door so she could only speak to him through the open window.

"Ok, I'll be back later, if you get hungry I left you 20 dollars and there's leftovers you can heat up. Bye, love you, become a great star!” She cheered loudly and anyone else still out in the courtyard of the school looked over at the loud voice of encouragement. Gon laughed lightly in embarrassment.

"Thank you! See you later!” He chuckled out while waving. She finally turned forward and drove off. Gon watched the back of the car shrink as she drove off farther then finally looked up at the music academy and again couldn't stop the wide smile from the excitement. A new chapter was starting and Gon was determined to be the cause of every sharp and flat.

"Whoo!” He cheered out in a high pitch and ran for the front entrance, again drawing attention of those around, either in annoyance or interest. As Gon made his way forward, he could have sworn he'd seen something silver on the roof reflecting sun into his eyes, catching his attention. When he looked up, he didn’t see anything, so he ignored it, continuing his onslaught forward.

Silver tuffs of hair shimmied backwards to lean back against an industrial fan on the roof of the school. He thought about what he just saw in lazy interest. "I haven't seen him before, must be new… whatever," He muttered, the music in his headphones letting soft beats spill out into the air. "Won't make a difference…” And he let his head loll to the music.

As he entered, Gon looked left and right, taking in all of what was now his new school. The walls were a pristine white, which was hidden behind cobalt blue lockers with lime green accent on the combination locks and edges of each locker. Various types of students stood at the entrance at the school, some with instruments on their backs, other with crazy hats and make-up, holding up pieces of paper to show their other equally crazy looking friends, some looked too tired to do anything but sip at their coffees clutched in their hands while barely registering they were in the presence of others.

Gon's lips quirked up in a small smile that may have been concern. "Are these what music artists are like?” He asked himself. Just then he heard squealing from his right. He turned his head and saw the hallway transitions out into a breezeway that leads out to the next building. Just off the breezeway he could see a group of people were gathered on the courtyard grass, looking toward something he couldn't see from where he was. Curious, he began making his way over.

He poked his head around the corner and realized with a start he didn't even know who they were crowding like that! Was it someone who had already debuted but still went to school? Was it someone he knew and was inspired by? He turned back to the group of girls and poked one on the shoulder. She swiftly turned
her head, almost looking like she was insulted that anyone would interfere with her attempts to get closer to whoever was in the middle. Gon instinctively held his hands up in a pacifying manner and let a couple of nervous chuckles out to indicate his benevolence.

_Geez, these girls are crazy, I've got to be more careful…_ He thought to himself, although he didn't really see how he could have approached anymore amicably. But he'll still take it upon himself to improve, because that's who Gon was.

"What do you want?!" She bit out, trying not to completely ignore him instead of giving her full efforts into trying to get closer to her source of affection.

"Er, I just wanted to know who that was in there, you know, I can't see from here…" Gon commented, trailing off at the end. Her eyes lit up at that and she finally took him in as though waking up from a dream.

"Oh, goodness, you're new aren't you? Oh my, it's Illumi-sama! He's amazing! He has an amazing voice that could make flowers bloom~, He's a great hip hop dancer and to top it all he's dark, tall and handsome" He screeched, her voice reaching pitches only dogs could hear. Unfortunately for Gon, he could hear that high. But that didn't mean it still didn't hurt. He put one pinky in his ear as he turned it left and right, trying to get the ringing to stop. He only picked up about half of that, his name was Illumi, he's tall and apparently gorgeous.

"Ahaha, thanks… for telling me!" Gon let out in a friendly chuckle as he started to turn and leave. Now that he knew his name, he knew it wasn't someone he knew or an idol he wanted to meet. Was it even someone who debuted already? The girl blinked as she read that his tone inflected he was going to leave.

"EH?! Aren't you going to try and meet him? It's ILLUMI!" She shouted as Gon started backing away.

"Er, no… I just wanted to know who was in there…" Gon admitted sheepishly.

"AH?! THAT'S FINE! When you meet him, you'll know! When you meet him YOU'LL LOVE HIM LIKE I LOVE HIM!" She squealed after him, getting herself hyped again and immediately turned back to the group to squeal out in hopes of attracting the attention of Illumi in the center. It almost looked like she was never talking to him in the first place with how quickly she returned to what she was doing before. Gon could only continue backing up, disturbed by the fanatic. Sure, he's seen his fans scream after him before, after he's finished a show, but he believes they were just trying to convey how much they liked his song and performance, not to convey their unrequited crazy love. He never seen it in it's raw form head on before. He gave a small shiver and turned to continue down the hall, he decided to go down the opposite hall away from the breezeway to continue exploring. He was halfway down the hall, absorbing the school's decors and classroom numbers when he remembered what he was looking for.

"AH! I should have asked her where the front office is!" He cried out frustrated, fisting his hair. Pass-byers again gave him weird look, but of course, Gon being Gon, he didn't care. He looked up and made eye contact with a small boy with thick eyebrows, white T-shirt and black jeans. The boy immediately seemed distraught to have caught the attention of the weird teen in the hall and he turned his head to look anywhere else, pretending to whistle away like he was never looking. Gon smiled and approached anyway.

"Hi! I'm Gon." the boy finally acknowledged him again with a small veer of his head in Gon's direction. He let out a sigh and stood up straighter as he faced him. _If I'm going to be branded with a weird boy, might as well be nice about it._
"Hi. I'm Zushi." He said holding out his hand for the taller one to shake. Zushi's height only came up to Gon's chest, below his shoulder. Gon couldn't help but give an affectionate smile at him as he took his hand to shake. Smaller people were just so cute - they were like children but living adult lives. He knew it was condescending to think of short people like that, but he wouldn't tell them, so as long as he kept it to himself, no one should be offended, right?

Zushi was slightly caught off by the smile Gon offered. It's normal for people to smile at those they are meeting for the first time, but the way Gon smiled and his eyes shone, it as like they were never strangers, just two friends meeting back up after a long summer of not seeing each other. Zushi smiled back more friendly instead of just politely, Gon's air around him infectiously radiating off in a positive way.

"Hi Zushi. I'm new here. I'm 15 years old and I'm entering as a sophomore." Gon provided as way to start the conversation.

"Huh?! You're entering as a sophomore?" Zushi cried out incredulously. It probably would have been rude to act so overdramatic at that information if he was stranger, but Gon didn't feel like a stranger to him and Zushi wanted nothing more than to quickly get to know him and actually be a friend.

"Yea! I know this school doesn't really have age restrictions on grade levels as long as you meet the requirements and know the information of the grade level before… So I was pretty happy I didn't have to start at being a freshman again!" Gon gave a small chuckled, rubbing at the back of his head happily.

"Wow, so you must have some experience." Zushi commented.

"Yea. My old school district was pretty small, so big city entertainment was hard to come by for the students. So I started performing for them, but I guess I was already pretty engaging in class…! Er, I believe I was voted class clown." He let out a good laugh and Zushi joined in, believing it, and picturing something he might have done in class based on his personality now. Maybe ask a dumb question during a tense test and made everyone laugh while also easing the tension. Zushi opened his eyes from laughter before Gon and looked on at this kid who had such a friendly atmosphere it made him want to rest in it and stay a while.

Gon finally let his laughter die down to continue his conversation with his new friend.

"Anyway, how old are you? You don't look older than me, but you're in a high school!" Gon asked, letting his hands gesture around as he spoke. Zushi let a faint blush of embarrassment cross over his face.

"Yea… I'm only sort of a student here… My adoptive dad is a teacher here so I got in through him. Some people are mad about that, they had to either pay a ridiculous amount of money to train at this prestigious institution or audition to showcase their talents resulting from years of hard and arduous work… while I just 'slide on in' through 'connections'." Zushi said, forming slight annoyed air quotations with his fingers. "I'm 11, nearly 12, and I've been here since last year but I'm still a freshman. My dad wants me to keep training until my basics are down pact."

Throughout the whole time Zushi was talking, his eyes never really met Gon's again, roaming about as he recalled, so he never noticed how Gon's eyes had drifted up in serious thought. When he finished telling his woes, he drew his eyes back up and just barely caught the tail of Gon looking up as he had dragged his eyes back down almost simultaneously.

"But… I didn't do either of those?" Gon stated. Zushi blinked.
"EH?!" Gon shook his head as he was certain.

"I never auditioned and I never paid anymore. I believe I'm here on a scholarship."

"Full ride?!" Zushi realized he was being loud, and from personal experience he got for not having to do much to have entered the school, he slapped his hands over his mouth and looked to his right where there were only a few passing students looking on suspiciously. He let out an internal sigh of relief as he let his hands fall away from his face. Hopefully they only got a vague idea of what they were talking about and nothing discriminating.

"Then what did you do?!" Zushi asked in more of a hushed voice. Gon blinked.

"Well, it was after my concert and someone came up to me backstage and said I should apply for here. It'll be a school of nothing but performing and singing, which I loved to do, so I knew I'd be happy to go, plus he said I'd be training to become a better singer and performer and had a chance of become a World Star." At this Gon's eyes shone with excitement. "That sounded so exciting and great… a World Star! I definitely wanted that! To at least try. And If I failed, I would have had lots of fun and gained lots of experience along the way!" He smiled happily, dismissing his intense look he harbored at the mention of World Star. "So I sent an application and 2 weeks later a letter came in the mail saying I was accepted, had a full ride scholarship and entering as a sophomore and to get my schedule when-" His jaw dropped and realization entered his eyes as though it gripped at his heart. Zushi tensed at the intense emotion his friend was experiencing, feeling fear as though it was happening to himself. Before he could ask anything, Gon began to speak again.

"My schedule! I still need to find the office! That' what I wanted to ask you!" Zushi blinked, the rigid leaving his body, followed by slack jawed hanging in disbelief. He straightened back up and put a hand to his head and a relieved smile on his face.

"Oh, geez, you really gave me a start. But yes, we should probably get you your schedule as soon as possible, most students get their schedule in the mail before coming to school, so you'll want to know what classes you've got and maybe locate your first few ones before classes start." Zushi explained, moving his hands to his hips.

"Ok, we've got about 5 minutes before class, the office is right down here, so if we hurry we can find your first period before the rush of students. Follow me." Zushi waved his hand over his shoulder as he turned to continue down the hall. Gon smiled happily at the new friend he made and jogged to be able to walk next to the smaller boy.

"By the way…" Gon started as they walked and Zushi noticed his pause so he looked up to his left to see Gon's face. Gon was still looking straight ahead but there was a determined intensity to his eyes. "I won't let anyone give you any problems for wanting to be in school with your dad." He finally looked down at Zushi, the intensity hitting Zushi full on and he suddenly felt vulnerable under the gaze Gon gave him. "They'll have to deal with me first."

It was too much. Zushi looked away, returning his focus on leading the way down the hall. It took a moment, but a surge of happiness hit him and the smile so wide was on his face before he could even control it.

"Yea."

He's only just met Gon,... but he wondered if this was what it was like to have an older brother…

-o0o0o0o0-
They entered the office where a rather exasperated looking secretary was seated, looking off down one of the branches of the main office where multiple doors could be seen lining either side of the hall. She didn't seem to notice the two students enter and they observed her offput mood and where she was staring. Gon leaned forward a bit to look down the hall where she was glaring and it looked like she was glaring at the double doors at the very end of the hall.

"Hey!" She yelped out, having been brought out of her reverie by the student slightly in her personal space. It startled Gon and he abruptly scrambled back to stand in line with Zushi, who had straightened up taller, disciplined, and the fear of authority was evident on his face.

"Er, sorry, sorry!" Gon apologized with a lopsided smile. The woman caught herself as she remembered where she was and that these were students.

"It's fine, I'm sorry too, I kinda dazed off there…" She said, pushing her glasses further up the bridge of her nose with her middle finger before giving her attention fully back to the kids. "Ahem, welcome to Musica Academy, can I help you?"

"Oh, yea, this guy needs his schedule." Zushi answered good naturedly, relaxing after the secretary had.

"You need a schedule? You should have already had one…" She said, but began fiddling with her computer anyway. "What's your name?"

"Gon! Gon Freecss." Gon supplied. The woman brushed one of the various stray strands of hair out of her face and attempted to join it with the rest of her gathered hair in it's messy bun. "Oh, hum… Yes, I see. Well, ok, I'll print it out for you and the printer is in the room where you'll also need to take your picture for your school ID. That room down there. Just pass two doors then turn left." She provided, even lifting a finger to point it out from her seat.

"Ahh?! I need to take a picture?! I had no idea! I'm not presentable! I would've worn my church clothes!" Gon freaked, looking down at his clothes, which was a plenty presentable black t-shirt with a dark green lightweight jacket and jeans. He snapped his head to his smaller companion.

"Zushi! How's my hair?!"

"Horrible! It's sticking out everywhere!" Zushi cried out with mock concern.

"You have to be more specific! It's pretty spiky!" Gon cried, taking it seriously. Gon began to pick at his hair, trying to make sure they were all straight. Zushi barely contained his sniffled giggles when he launched back into his serious face.

"Here, let me help you!" He exclaimed, going on his tiptoes to reach.

"Thanks!" Gon expressed and leaned down to allow him better access. Zushi proceeded to purposely stick his hair out in odd angles, well, odder than they already were. Gon's hands would wander away from parts of his hair he fixed and Zushi followed after him, messing up that same area, then Gon would go back to the section to fix it.

"ZUSHI! You're making it worse!" Gon finally deducted, and swatted away his hands. At finally being caught, Zushi let out bellowing laughter as Gon finally was able to fix his hair in totality, a miffed expression on his face.

The secretary was watching on with a blank unbelieving expression at what transpired. As Gon finally finished fixing his hair and Zushi's laughter died down, the snort was first caught in her throat, causing her cheeks to puff out. Then the force of the laughter ricocheted out and bounced off the
walls as pure amusement poked her insides, meriting the roaring laugh. Zushi at having been reminded of the cause of her laughter, joined back in with her and Gon finally cracked a smile then laughed along with the two.

"O-oh, goodness, I'm sorry, t-that was really unprofessional of me…! I shouldn't be laughing at students' expenses!" She giggled out, trying and failing to regain her composure. Gon just gave her a wider smile and leaned on the desk to speak to her more comfortably.

"It's fine! Besides, you looked way too grumpy for the day just starting, so I'm happy we were able to return a beautiful smile to your face."

The young secretary blushed at the genuity in his voice and comment and waved her hand around in a dismissive motion.

"Ah~! No, no no, there was nothing wrong, I would have been fine, I'm sorry I had to cause such concerns, but thank you… anyway." She trailed off, her sentence losing vigor as she spoke until she could only humbly play with her nails.

"Mh! Ok, I'm off to get my ID and schedule, right? Ok, thank you." Gon waved himself as he started down the office hallway. "C'mon Zushi." Gon commented over his shoulder.

"Right." Zushi followed dutifully. The secretary stared at his back as he found the door he needed to turn into and she could only wonder who this was… she's never seen anyone with such presence before, it was raw and not even completely refined, but once it was, this kid would blow the whole world away with his impact. Feeling warm emotions wash over her that could have left goosebumps, Cheadle was suddenly very excited for the day this boy came out professionally with his music and albums. She'd buy every single one.

Her mood plummeted again when the double doors at the very end of the hall opened and the Academy chairman came out, flanked on either side with two strict looking administrators.

"Oy~ Cheadle, what's going on out here?" He called out as he made his way down the hall. "I've never heard you laugh so loud that it reached me in the conference hall! I just had to put it on pause to see." Cheadle grumbled, not really up to the chairman's antics after that morning and the workload he poured on her that he seemed to have specifically saved up to dump on her for the 1st day of school. She had just opened her mouth to speak when Gon was bounding out the office door with his arms outstretched seemingly pleased with the picture that was taken. Just as the chairman was passing that 3rd door on the left.

"My ID, I'm a real, for real-!" Gon had been shouting out when he bumped into the most important person in the whole school.

"Ah-! Hey!" The administrators shouted out. "Who's this unruly child?!

Zushi, still inside the room, looked at who Gon bumped into and realization dawned on his face. He held out his hands as if to contain the situation that happened.

"Ah! Chairman! I'm so sorry, he wasn't- we were just-!

"Hey! Netero! Hi, long time no see!"

Gon, who was bumped stumbling nearly to the ground, had just gotten his bearings back and turned around only to yell that out, effectively freezing the scene for a brief moment like a video buffering. At processing what was just said, the administrators were the first to react, Netero having just started to recover himself.
"Hey, show some respect, you could have hurt the chairman!"

"How dare you call him like that!"

"G-Gon!" Zushi cried out, fearful for both their careers here at the Academy. "That's- that's-!"
Everyone was cut off once again by a deep bellowing, absolutely amused laughter. A confused Gon, looking around at everyone as they bombarded him with yells, finally seemed to have become relieved at the man's laughter, a smile on his face.

"Hey, Gon, it's been a while." Netero smiled, raising an open palm in greeting. Everyone witnessing, including Cheadle, was confused like those stumbling into an inside joke.

"W-wait! Chairman, are you hurt?" One of the administrators said at his arms.

"What? Do I look hurt? Am I really considered that old that a simple bump will injure me now?" He snapped, irate.

"B-but, he had no respect for-"

"Ya, suspension for an attempt on your-"

"What?! You two sound ridiculous, it was an accident and I'll forgive it as one. After all, this is an old friend."

"HUHH?!" Every let out, including Cheadle from her seat, while Gon just sheepishly rubbed at the back of his neck.

"I'm not that old of a friend. We met this past summer!" Gon chuckled.

"Yes, but it has been a while. How have you been, Gon, settling in ok?" Netero asked, stroking his long ashen beard.

"Yep! I just got my ID picture taken, what do you think?" Gon asked, presenting the face of the plate to the man where a little square of Gon smiling earnestly could be seen. Netero blinked at the photo.

"Hmm... nice, very... 'public school'. Y'know, most academy students take their ID photo as though it were a headshot for a music company interview, but your way is nice too." Gon took a beat to process this then pulled the small plate to his chest.

"AH!? Oh no, I totally could've posed and smiled way better if I took it like that." Gon muttered.
Netero gave a chuckle along with Zushi when a chiming noise came over the speakers in a melodic tune.

"Huh? What's that?" Gon asked, unaware of a half panicked Zushi beside him trying to pull out his phone and check the time.

"Oh, man, we're gonna be late!" Zushi cried. He bowed to Netero politely, "Thank you for letting us go with a warning, sorry for bothering you again!" He let his head up and grabbed Gon's forearm and slipped his schedule out of his hand, starting to drag him away. "We don't even know where your first period is!"

"Ah, right! Bye Netero!" Gon called back at him with affection.

"Right! Drop by anytime, young man, I'll be here... bored... probably in a meeting..." Netero began muttering to himself as Gon got farther away and out of earshot.
"S-sir, you met him this summer…?" Cheadle asked, slightly confused, but realization slowly dawned on her. "You told him to apply didn't you? And accepted him without an audition, didn't you? Why? It'll only make the others angry at the unfair treatment."

"Oh, who cares what the other's think? You know, they're half the reason I did it. These students are all high and mighty and think they are above all else and think all they have to have to succeed in life is an exceptional talent. Well, that kid's got talent if I've ever seen it. Maybe he could teach these kids a thing or two on how to sing from the heart, not the larynx." Netero laughed at his own joke. "Their music will sure sound better."

Cheadle sweat dropped.

"Don't let them hear you talking like that…" She muttered helplessly.

Zushi ran into a classroom with Gon on his heels and the younger boy let out a huge sigh of relief. "Thank goodness we're not late!" Gon let his eyes wander over the classroom to see the dynamics of the class in general.

The door was on the left wall, closest to the front of the classroom, where the whiteboard is. The right of the room was windows from the front to the back wall. The teacher's desk was situated by that wall of windows, closest to the front of the room. On the left wall, next to where the door was, there was a smaller chalk board with the music staff marked out with tape, the board itself weathered from chalk written and erased. There were 3 rows of desks toward the front and in the back of the room stood a sizable area where there's small couches and love seats and bean bag chairs, book cases filled with books and instruments Gon recognized a few of, like a kazoo and metronome. Some of the people in the class were looking over at them and giving them glares, others odd looks for running in and the rest were just indifferently glazed over as they carelessly waited for class to start.

Gon looked down at his schedule to figure out which class he was in again. Music Theory 200? Gon read, and looked at who would be the teacher. A 'Mr. Wing?'

"Hey, Zushi, what's this class about? Do you know the teacher? Is he nice?" Gon asked, putting the schedule in front of the winded boy.

"Huh?" Zushi panted, and looked down at Gon's schedule. "Oh, right! This is Music theory, and it says 200 hundred because it's for second years. This is probably the only class I'll have with you because the other classes I have are in 100s. I was able to enter this class because I showed advance knowledge of the basics, and the teacher is, well, that's my adopted dad!" Zushi admitted.

"Wow! Really?" Gon exclaimed. "To think I'd meet your dad this quick!"

"Yea, I think he'll like you." Zushi mused, sliding a hand through his hair as he finally caught his breath. "Well, where do you want to sit?"

Gon gave another survey of the room, and figured being in the front will give him the best experience for this once in a lifetime privileged opportunity to study at such a prestigious place.

"Let's sit right here." He said, sitting in the front row, almost center. Zushi smiled at his contagious eagerness and sat next to him. Soon after the late bell rang, the teacher came in and Gon's mouth fell slightly open at how someone so professional could look so… unprofessional. He seemed to have let the wind do his hair for him and his shirt was untucked on one side. Not to mention the tall lean man came into class late, causing the students waiting to break out in idle whispers. Gon was barely able to ponder further on this before he noticed the class instantly quieted down and the teacher began
"Hello class, I'm Mr. Wing, welcome to Music Theory. In this class we'll be expanding your understandings of the basics as you have learned it last year in Music Theory 100. Since it is the first day today and you're probably a little rusty from this summer." At this the class gave scattered chuckles. Gon leaned over and whispered to Zushi.

"What's so funny?"

"Well, the school prides themselves on working on their careers even when not in school. No one would really be rusty on their basics."

"Oh."

"As I was saying, to take it easy for the first class, we'll just do review of Music Theory 100. I'll pass out these worksheets, and you guys can work in groups to get them done for the first half of the class, it'll be turned in for a grade so do take this seriously. I'll let you all know when your time is up."

Gon nodded seriously. "Great! Zushi!" Gon called and Zushi nodded already knowing what he was going to ask. The scooted their desks to face each other then Gon looked over at the teacher who already started moving around the room to pass out worksheets to everyone before facing Zushi again. The rest of the class had also began their own idle talking of what they did during the summer.

"So that's your dad?" Gon asked, and Zushi seemed to blush a little.

"Yea. He seems a bit messy, and I try to fix him up before we leave every day, but he seems to fuss with his clothes out of nerves or something. I don't know how he does it. But don't worry, he's really good at teaching the basics in music, even advance things! Just ask him anything and he'll know it!" Zushi said, his voice morphing into one of pride at the end. Gon smiled warmly at his friend.

"I'm happy you like your new dad! Do you know what happened to your other parents?" Gon asked, before putting a hand up to his mouth, realizing his insensitively.. "Oh, er, unless you-" Gon tried.

"No, it's fine. I only vaguely remember them, but Wing said they gave me up because they didn't have enough to take care of me. That they only wanted what was best for me and they gave me up so I can have better than what they could give me." Zushi said with slight melancholy, but then he looked up happily. "I should remember that they really do love me."

"That's what I tell him everyday." Wing said, suddenly behind Gon, worksheets in hand. "Are you Zushi's new friend? He normally doesn't share that information with anyone."

"Ah! Hello, yes, we met this morning. I'm Gon." Gon said, doing half a bow from his seat, giving his respects to the black haired teacher.

"Wing! Yea, Gon is really amazing, I wanted you to meet him, I think you'll like him." Zushi said, motioning for Gon to completely face the teacher.

"Really? Well hello Gon, I'm Wing, your teacher, and as you've probably heard, Zushi's dad." Gon gave an open mouth smile, ready to say something when Wing's eyes narrowed almost threateningly at Gon, and his smile fell slightly. "I can't imagine you have something to say about that, right?"

Zushi suppressed an eye roll but he knew better than to try and say something. Zushi knew his dad was just trying to see if Gon was like everyone else at this uppity school who complains and assumes Zushi was only allowed here because his dad works there, and not because of the work they put in.
If only they knew how hard Zushi really did work to be allowed in the school. Zushi knew his dad was testing Gon but he didn't have to worry, Gon wasn't like everyone else. Zushi felt happy next to the welcomed warmth that was Gon. He was planning on sticking around. He just had to wait to see what Gon would say to his father to soothe his doubts.

"Oh! I do have something to say about that!" Gon said, his smile returning with vigor. "I think that's amazing! According to Zushi, because he has you as a dad, he has a fantastic understandings of the basics! I don't even know what's considered the basics because I'm self taught! I can't wait to learn as much from you!" Gon said, throwing his hand out for a handshake with his head slightly lowered as proper for japanese upon meeting respectable characters. Wing blinked then gave an easy smile.

"That's very nice Gon. I'm happy you could have befriended my Zushi, I was worried he was getting lonely." He said, returning the handshake. Gon lifted his head revealing a slight frown.

"Yea…" Gon won't let Zushi be lonely again. He was a nice person, people shouldn't be mean to him just because they're jealous.

Those around them began talking, murmuring among themselves on the new kid.

"Why is he hanging around Zushi?"

"Who is he anyway, I didn't see him last year, did he enter as second year?"

"He's either really good, or a cheater like Zushi, he must know someone upstairs…"

"We'll find out when the singing assignments start coming in…”

"Alright," Wing said, counting off paper, "I'll leave you two to it now. Make sure to get good marks, especially with my Zushi helping you." Wing winked, and Zushi blushed.

"Right." Zushi said, embarrassed, but determined.

"Mh, let's get started!" Gon said, twirling a pen in his hand before setting down on the paper. Class carried on like this, with idle chatter that wasn't disruptive and Gon and Zushi getting to know each other better when the door to the classroom opened. Gon turned his head with most of the class as they quieted down, looking over as well out of curiosity. Porcelain skin and silver locks glided in the room. Gon's breath caught in his throat as he took in the icy gaze that didn't even grant the class an uncaring glance. He watched as the white haired teen moved with a weird grace and fluidity towards Wing, who had stood up from his desk once he came in. He was wearing a mint and blue plaid open front button up shirt over a plain white tee and jeans, and dark silver headphones hung around his neck with a symbol of a screeching cat head on the hull of those large housings. Something about the way he walked seemed familiar to Gon, but it definitely wasn't how most people normally walked, it was distinctive, composed, almost arrogant, as the one thing he could pick out immediately was that he held his chin up higher than most.

This guy was gorgeous though.

"Wow, lucky! I thought we didn't have a class with him!"

"Oh, my friends will be so jealous to know we have a class with a Zoldyck!"

People began to ease back into their conversations, although it seemed to revolve around this new arrival. Gon could pick up bits and pieces of their murmurs while he stared at the white haired teen speak to Wing... Although it looked like Wing was trying to scold him in a one sided conversation.
"...on... ? Gon!" He finally snapped out of his revere to look at Zushi who seemed to have been trying to get his attention for a while.

"Who's that?" Gon asked without skipping a beat, and took that opportunity to look back at the teen, as if he was scared if he looked away too long he'd disappear like a dream he was having.

"Oh, you really don't know? That's Killua, one of the Zoldycks." Zushi said as Gon stared at how the light coming in from the windows lit up his fair skin and made his eyes seem like they were sparkling. But maybe Gon could see a… sadness in there?

"The Zoldycks are alumni of the school and they've sent their children here. They're all musically gifted and classically trained, they're basically celebrities already to the school."

"Celebrities?" He dazed off in thought, remembering the group that morning with those people he thought was crowding a celebrity but was crowding around someone named… Illumi? "Like Illumi…?"

But the thought didn't last, fading out in a fog over his mind as Gon watched Killua nod noncommittally at something Wing said and his fluffy hair bounced with the movement. Gon felt a chuckle climb up his throat at such a cute feature of the boy. He wondered how soft his hair really was if it looked this fluffy from afar.

"Right," Zushi nodded, answering the question Gon already forgot about. "They all have something they specialize in but they have general knowledge of everything. I heard it's because they go through hellish training by their parents, but they don't really say how they train outside of school. Everyone always wants to partner up with any of the Zoldycks because it means a guaranteed A. You know… if they'll work with you." Zushi finished.

"Wow… so he's really talented…!" Gon sighed out, seeing him in a new light. His thoughts turned to his World Star dad and wondered if Killua had the talent to be a World Star like him already at this stage. If he did, Gon definitely wanted to try and learn from him, become friends, and have lots of fun together while they're still in school. He felt like they would be great friends.

"Hold on, Zushi!" Gon cheered out as he jumped out of his seat.

"G-Gon, where are you going?" Zushi asked. He reached for an arm to try and catch Gon to stop him in his tracks, but he whiffed and missed his chance. Gon continued his beeline for Killua. "Gon, no!" He strained out. The others in the class began looking over in curiosity.

"What is he doing?"

"No way… for real?"

"He's heading straight to Killua!"

"He must be new!"

These murmurs built up as Gon got closer, and Wing finally noticed Gon and stopped talking in surprise. He barely had time to open his mouth to question him when Gon reached them and stuck out his hand to Killua.

"Hi! I'm Gon!" Gon said in the quiet of the classroom, as everyone waited in anticipation and curiosity of what Killua would say. Killua was still facing Wing when Gon had stuck his hand out, so first he lazily looked down at the hand before trailing his cat like eyes up to Gon's round wide ones. Gon felt goosebumps wash over his body briefly when his eyes locked on those deep hues, his
stare seemed intense and judgmental. It didn't scare him, it only made him excited.

"What do you want?" He breathed out in a deep silky voice. Behind Gon, he could hear people let out dreamy sighs. Gon couldn't blame them. Just from hearing his voice, Gon could already gather his singing voice must be beautiful.

"Let's be friends!" Gon said, finding his voice again.

-o0o0o0o0-

"Let's be friends!" Killua's eyes widened slightly before a frown formed on his lips. Killua had to admit he was surprised when this kid came up to him. If he remembered correctly (and he does), this is the same kid that was in front of the school this morning, making that giant scene. It was quite amusing to watch, especially rare to see in this dumb school, where it seems none of these people know how to get that stick out their rears.

Killua could pick up that this guy had a pair of vocals on him, his speaking voice reverberated in his chest in a pleasing rumble. He could tell, on stage, this guy could be plenty loud without a mic. Killua thought he might be fun… if only he didn't know this guy won't last a week. Killua saw it in his eyes when he finally met his gaze, he was too honest and wasn't disciplined enough. Killua didn't know who this guy's (Gon's?) examiner was when he auditioned for the school but he didn't know why he let him in when he doesn't seem to meet 3 out of 10 of the minimum requirements of 1st years.

This school was going to chew him up and spit him out soon, so he won't waste his time with him.

"No." He let out then faced Wing once more. Killua vaguely registered that Gon's hands fell down to his side, disheartened. "Ok, so do I need to do this sheet or what?" Wing sighed and shook his head.

"Just please try not to be late to my class anymore. Take this seriously. We'll be starting up some material soon." Killua nodded and turned to head to the back when he almost bumped into that Gon kid.

"W-wha-!" He sputtered out. "You're still here?" He asked. Gon blinked as though realizing that himself. He chuckled, his eyes closing with the action.

"Sorry! I guess I was kinda…" He trailed off. Gon didn't want to admit he was staring.

"Whatever. Move." Killua scoffed, the harsh air coming out in a chiming tone. It made Gon think any noise coming out of him will be musically pleasing to listen to. Even just his voice, Gon wouldn't mind listening to all day. Killua moved past him and headed to the leisure area that was set up in the back, heads rotating to follow his movement and he let himself down on a beanbag in an easy twirl. His charisma and charm attracted Gon, and even though he was being a little mean, it didn't deter Gon. Killua just looked even cooler to him and he couldn't wait until they could be actual friends and maybe sing together.

"Back to work, Gon." Wing mumbled behind him before he sat back down at his desk. Gon blinked as he remembered Zushi and he rushed over.

"Wow, that guy is so cool!" Gon gushed as he plowed back into his seat. "Did you hear his voice? It sounded amazing, do you think his singing is better? Have you heard it since, you know, you were here last year?"

Zushi blinked, and then chuckled easily at his rambling friend.
"Right, I didn't tell you. It seems his brothers are willing to sing with others and you know, participate in class, but not Killua. Since I've been here, I haven't heard Killua sing once unless it was at a Zoldyck sponsored concert. He won't even sing the scales! I hear he's really particular about who he sings with or for." Zushi said. Gon nodded.

"Do you know his standards?" Gon asked and Zushi blinked before looking up in thought.

"Mh… no. He never really sang with anyone so we don't have a feel for the type and the only person he's ever asked to sing with him doesn't go here anymore. Graduated."

"Huh? Who's that?" Gon asked.

"Canary." Zushi nodded.

"Canary! Wow, I love her, I have a bunch of her albums, wait- she went here?! Wow, I really will be on my way to become a World Star from here! So, did they ever sing together?"

"No, she ended up saying no, and he haven't asked anyone else yet."

"Wow…” Gon hummed to himself, looking to the back of the room to see Killua had pulled one of the books off the shelf and began reading, a soft distracted smile gracing his features. Gon was staring again, wondering what he was thinking about when he suddenly turned back to Zushi.

"Ne, let's go do our worksheet with Killua!" Gon said. Zushi blinked out of shock then finally responded with a, "Huh?!" Gon nodded vigorously, excited to talk with the talented boy again. He really wanted to just listen to him talk all day, get him to sing if he could.

"Yea, let's go!" He gushed, trying to get Zushi's hand to bring him over. But Zushi waved his hands around to avoid it getting caught in Gon's grip.

"Gon, I'm not sure if you were listening!" He finally reached out and grabbed Gon's hands himself to still the excited asian. "He is super talented with crazy training from his family. The Zoldycks can ace every class without trying. The teachers know this and don't try to force them to do anything they don't want to. They'll participate as they see fit. If Killua's not doing the worksheet, he doesn't want to and won't." Zushi explained while Gon listened patiently. Gon nodded slowly once all the information was given, then his nodding slowly increased in speed as he seemed to conclude to something.

"Alright, so then let's just ask Killua to help us complete it! He doesn't have to do one himself!" Gon smiled widely and got one hand free to grab both his and Zushi's worksheet before keeping his grip on Zushi's hand and dragging him over to the back.

"G-gon, please-!" He said, his face red from embarrassment as the class looked over at the two idiots trying to befriend the loner. Wing had half risen from his seat, seeming like he wanted to say something, but he did tell them they could work in groups. Killua still hadn't acknowledged them yet since he's used to people not bothering him, or even acknowledging him.

"Killuuaaaa!" Gon sang out, and Killua stiffened at the sound, Gon's deep note again reverberating in his chest cavity in a pleasing way, annoying him. It was rare he found anything aesthetically pleasing as a product of the school. Getting over his shock, he put on a scowl and turned his head to look over his shoulder to see exactly who he knew it'd be making his way over with a smaller kid in tow.

"Oy, kid, I already told you I don't want to be your friend. I know you only want whatever good grades I can get you." He complained. Gon stopped in his tracks, Zushi finally able to right himself
and get his hand back, and Gon looked down at the two worksheets in his hands. He seemed conflicted with something so Killua raised a silver eyebrow at the kid behind him. Zushi just chuckled nervously and shrugged his shoulders, then made a gesture that seemed like he wanted to apologize for Gon and then tried to get his hand. As he reached for Gon's hand, Gon noticed and instead quickly slipped the sheets in Zushi's hands then jumped to sit in a bean bag across from Killua.

"What are you reading about? You looked like you were enjoying yourself." Gon asked, placing a hand on his chin. Killua took a beat to process what happened and what he said when a faint blush settled over his features.

"W-what the heck? You were staring at me, you creep?" He asked, slamming the book closed and placing it on the ground next to him.

"Well… I didn't mean to. I was curious as to what you were doing because you weren't doing the worksheet, and you were smiling and you looked so pretty and I was wond-"

"Wh-what the hell! Why are you saying something so embarrassing-! I'm not pretty!" Killua bit out, his blush deepening. He seemed to catch himself then glared at the teen. "I already told you I won't be friends with you, so stop talking to me!" He cried. Gon pouted and Killua looked back in shock. What was he, 12? This was nothing to pout over, this was high school, this was real life, the real world, he should just- he can't just put on that face- "Stop pouting!" Killua snapped. Gon sucked in his bottom lip in surprise like he didn't know he was pouting.

"Why don't you want to be friends? I don't want to use you for the good grades, but sometimes, it'd be nice to have friends help you when you're struggling with things in school. I think that's the best things about friends, besides just hanging out and having fun." Killua scoffed.

"Ha, if you think you're going to have fun at this school, forget a week, you won't last three days here." Killua smirked. Gon blinked back at him.

"Well… yea, I will have fun, are you not?" Gon seemed genuinely concerned and Killua just had to extensively observe this guy who seemed thick in the head.

"Are you ok?" He asked slowly, carefully bringing his hand to try and check Gon for a fever. Gon laughed and was bringing his head forward to let Killua check, but then Killua seemed to remember where he was and placed his hands back at his side.

"What the heck man, what's with you, you were just going to let me check if you were insane? Where'd you even come from? I don't remember you from last year." Killua snapped, crossing his arms over his chest. Gon pulled his head when Killua retracted, but his eyes roamed up to the roof in thought.

"Well, I guess... If you checked if I was crazy and you saw that I wasn't, you'd feel better, I suppose? Anything to ease your mind!" Gon chuckled good naturedly. "And, yea, this is my first year here! I got in as a second year." Killua snapped.

"No way… really? You must be really good." Killua's mouth began twitching up in a smile. "Let me hear you. Let's see, sing what you sang for the audition." Man, this guy seems really interesting, a real hoot. Killua thought as he waited for whatever was next to come out of his mouth. Gon seemed to think about it.

"Hmm... only if you sing for me too!" He stated, raising a finger. Killua blinked then rolled his eyes, settling back in his beanbag. Of course, this again. He thought, picking up the book at his side.
and opening it. Meanwhile, Gon was freaking out as he could visibly see Killua close off from him again. What did he do wrong? He was enjoying talking with him so much! His eyes seemed to finally get some of that sadness out and his voice danced with amusement and his smile looked best on him, and now he wasn't smiling anymore, and Gon did that? He just wanted to hear him sing, using that beautiful voice. That's what they were at school for right? To sing?

"Haha, hey, Killua, I was kidding?" He said, although it seemed more like a question, and nudged at his knee. Killua curiously looked up at him once more, his cat eyes lazily meeting his eyes, as though it was when Gon first introduced himself. Aw man, progress was completely reset?

"Um, so what are you reading? You looked pretty happy to be reading it." Gon asked, and Killua's eyes left him, making Gon feel like an ignored pet. Killua's eyes went to Zushi's who froze up at the sudden intense gaze on him. Gon gave a quick glance back and seemed to remember he was there.

"Oh! Killua, Zushi, Zushi, Killua!" Gon introduced, waving his hands back and forth. Killua rolled his eyes.

"So, what, you wanna be friends too?" Killua asked and Zushi shifted nervously.

"Er… you're really cool." He admitted and Killua's eyes brightened up again like it was before during his talk with Gon even though an embarrassed blush fell over his cheeks.

"Who are you guys, the embarrassment brigade? Don't you see everyone else?" He swung his finger out at the class, "Don't you see they're all leaving me alone and being normal? Take a hint!" He bit out, waving his hands as though that would drive them away like stray animals. Gon sighed, and was about to say something when Wing stood at the front of the class to bring attention back to him.

"Alright class, I think it's about time to start some lecture, start turning in your worksheets." He addressed, looking over at the leisure area curiously, but then focused his attention on those passing the paper's to him.

"Ah! Oh no, Gon, we didn't even get halfway through, we're going to get a bad grade on our first assignment, we're gonna start the new year off labeled as ne'er do wells, and I'm gonna disappoint my dad!" Zushi freaked, latching onto Gon's arm.

"Oh no! I'm gonna be labeled as a ne'er do well?! But I wanted to try so hard for this opportunity that was so nice! I don't- I don't- I don't-!" Gon sputtered, as the two freaked out and Killua just stared at them, again believing they were crazy.

"OH Shut up and gimme the papers!" Killua growled out, fishing out a pencil from his pocket.

"Huh?" Gon croaked out, looking over dumbly as Zushi quickly passed it over with tears in his eyes. Killua's sharp eyes scanned the questions quickly before jotting down the answers in the space provided, all the while muttering under his breath.

"These idiots, didn't even do their work before coming over and bothering me, these questions are freaking easy and now I have to do two of them in 20 seconds," He glared up with fire in his eyes, directing it at Gon, "Geez, it's only 20 questions, what's wrong with you, do your work next time if you don't want to be labeled as a dipstick the first day of class!" He scolded, and went back to the sheet, continuing his muttering. Gon's mind slowly rebooted and realized what was happening.

"Killua… are you helping us?" He asked. He received an annoyed growl in response. Gon let a small relieved chuckled leave his lips, he was so happy. This meant Killua thought of them as friends in some kind of way, and they won't fail, although he felt kinda bad about cheating to do it though.
A moment later, the papers were shoved into Gon's chest although Killua wasn't looking at him.

"Thank you! So much." Zushi cried, hopping up to pass their papers up. Gon stayed behind and studied the profile of Killua's face as it was turned away in a huff.

"You… helped us. We're friends now!" Gon cheered and Killua met his eyes with an incredulous look.

"What, no we're not! You just looked so pitiful, you two were so panicked you couldn't think straight where if you just looked at the thing, you'd see it was, like, the most easy questions in the universe. You just, just leave me alone." Killua crossed his arms again, a blush on his usually fair skin. I don't even really know why I helped… Killua thought, wondering why he did what he did. Now this guy's got the wrong idea of why he did. Gon wanted to say something else when Wing called from the front, "Gon, come now, class is starting. Leave Killua alone." He said. Killua sighed out, finally feeling like he could be left at peace. Gon pouted and stood.

"Ok, well, I'll meet you after class, and we can talk more then!" Gon stated and went to go sit next to Zushi. Killua's breath caught in his throat in annoyance. Annoying. He thought bitterly. He'll have to avoid him so he can get the message. He eased his wireless headphones onto his head and pulled out his phone to shuffle his music. The deep soothing bass came out and reverberated through his body and Killua couldn't help but notice that it was familiar to a way a certain boy- Killua's finger pushed the next button faster than he could register. Piano came on and he put his phone down. Don't think about it.

Wing began his lesson, talking about famous World Stars and stars that graduated from the school, and began listing their styles and brand and the theory of how they could develop their own style and brand, called Hatsu at their academy. But Gon could barely pay attention, he was too busy thinking about Killua and what happened.

He closed off once Gon asked him to sing, which was unusual to him. If someone is studying to become a World Star in the singing business, shouldn't it be because they love to sing? Gon loves to sing, and he does it as often as he can, often mumbling, humming or straight up singing to himself when idle. Why would Killua not like singing, as Zushi said. There must be a reason. He peaked over his shoulder to see Killua sprawled out on the beanbag, his whole body lax as though he were sleeping or dead.

A good habit for a healthy voice.

Gon turned back forward, eyebrows furrowed. Killua was really confusing, doing things that were obviously to promote good singing, when apparently he doesn't like to sing? Oh well, he'll just have to ask him after class when he meets up with him. What seemed like way too long of a time later, the bell rang to signal class was over.

"We'll talk about assignments Thursday!" Wing announced to the students packing away. Gon stood up, packing away his things as well when Zushi entered his line of sight.

"Well, this was really fun Gon! No one but you would try to talk to Killua but I'm really glad we got to do it. He's actually really cool and his voice is really as pretty as they say..." He chirped, then began playing with the hem of his shirt. "I won't see you in my other classes, but maybe we can meet up for lunch?" He said, peaking up with his head inclined towards Gon. Gon smiled warmly that made Zushi light up knowing what his answer was already.

"Of course! Where can we meet up?" He asked. Zushi's mouth formed an 'o' and he shuffled through
his bookbag side pocket for a pen before writing on Gon's hand a '597'.

"That's my locker number. We can meet there. It's pretty close to the cafeteria, so it's not out of the way. And if you're wondering where your locker is, it's on your schedule." Zushi chuckled, already anticipating the question. Gon smiled warmly again.

"Thanks, Zushi." He looked down at his hand then, with urgency, he glanced at the back of the room.

"Aaah~ Killua's gone! Well, I've got to find my next class. See you at lunch, Zushi!" Gon said, having started running in place at seeing Killua gone. He moved to action with the end of his sentence and jogged out the room, looking left and right.

"Bye!" Zushi called.

Gon tried to give an extra bounce in his step to look over the heads of the teens in the halls to spot the unique silver tuff of hair Gon probably memorized. Not locating it, he started to actually jump up and down for any sign, and after the 5th jump, he stopped, a pout on his features.

He felt kinda bad Killua didn't wait for him, but he supposed it was ok. Killua was still warming up to him. Instead, he looked down at his schedule and found the number for his next class. He walked along the halls, trying to get a feel for the number arrangements of the classrooms. He was able to find his way to a room that was apart of the building which held the school's auditorium. He looked at what class it was again.

Vocal Training 250.

Gon began getting excited again. This was good, he needed to work on his vocals. His voice wasn't bad, but it held a husky element to it that didn't sound as smooth as he's like. Training his voice will definitely refine his voice to sound better.

He opened the door to the room and gave a sweep of the students that were inside. He saw big people, small people, people with weird outfits and others with fashionable outfits. There were desks but they were along the wall, curved slightly to face the board. There was a lane down the middle of the desks leading to the back of the classroom, which were left open and free. The very back had a similar leisure area as Wing's class. And in the back kneeling in front of the bookshelf and playing with the metronome situated there was…

"Killuaaaa!" Gon cried out happily, running over. Killua tensed up, hearing the call over the music in his ears, and he barely had the time to look over his shoulder when Gon collided with his body, knocking them both over in a hug.

"G-Gon! What?!" Killua asked, bewildered. "Get off me!" Killua cried, shoving him off, and Gon rolled off and sat up next to him. Killua sat up and was met by everyone in the class staring at them in awe. Killua… had a friend?!

"What?!" He snapped, daring them to say something. They turned back around, pretending like they didn't see anything. Killua snapped that intense gaze on Gon, and when his eyes hit him, Gon again got that wave of excitement from the eye contact.

"And you! Why did you jump me like that? I have such a thing as personal space y'know. Hugging me out of nowhere is considered rude in some cultures." Killua scolded, brushing at his shirt, before tugging down his headphones and pulling out his phone to pause his music.

"Sorry! When I saw you again I got so excited, I couldn't contain myself!" Gon answered, placing a
sheepish hand behind his neck, his eyes closed in the action, and his tongue shot out apologetically.

Killua rolled his eyes, collecting his legs closer to cross them more comfortably. Gon noted again how the way Killua composed himself was different than how others would when sitting criss crossed on the floor. He seemed more graceful the way he held himself, but he still didn't know what it was.

"I thought I told you to leave me alone?" He asked, an eyebrow arched elegantly. But Gon could see in his eyes, amusement was held there, there was no actual defensiveness... yet.

"I know, but..." Gon had to approach this carefully or he'd close off again. "I wanted to know why you don't like to sing." Well, there's no better way than the straight one anyway. Can't avoid it, and Gon's never been good at beating around the bush to get an answer. And as expected, the deep sea of Killua's eyes turned icy and shallow, revealing nothing. He rolled his eyes, letting his gaze fall on the front of the room.

"Cause I don't wanna. Does there really need to be a reason?" He stated. Gon pouted which Killua saw from his peripheral vision, but he refused to peak at him through the corner of his eyes. He still remembers what happened the last time he saw this kid's pout, he ended up doing his work.

"But, but-" The teacher walked in just then, his long white hair topped with a blue bandit cap ghosting over his eyes. He wore a turtleneck and dress pants, showing off his tall and lean body, and Gon recognized him, distracting him enough from Killua.

"Y-you're Kite!" Gon gasped, giving the man a point just as he closed the door behind him. Kite turned to look at the teen at the back, and the rest of the class followed suit to make him the center of attention. Kite gave a small chuckle.

"That's right, how'd you figure?" He asked with a small smile. Gon looked at everyone looking at him and flushed a little, but he was rather used to people suddenly giving him the floor as he tended to say rather abrupt and weird things, and commonly in silence. Plus, he was a performer! He thrived in the spotlight.

Gon gave a chuckle himself before pointing at him. "I've seen you on the cover of the albums we have back at home. Smooth jazz instrumentals, and they're really good. My aunt Mito-san use to play them for me before I went to sleep." Gon explained. Kite looked impressed while the others in the room began murmuring to themselves.

"No way, Kite-sama's albums are expensive!"

"I doubt he has alot of them!"

"How'd he get the albums...?"

"He probably just wanted to show off that he did his research before coming to Kite's class..." Kite began clapping to get their attention back.

"That's enough everyone." He called out. "That's impressive, Gon, not everyone can get into instrumentals, especially jazz. But know after today, I expect my students to be in their desks at the start of class..." He said pointedly, raising an eyebrow. Gon gave a start and did see everyone else was in chairs, but then again that's how it was in Wing's class too. Oh well, he supposed no one else really goes to the back except Killua, so while he was just trying to hang out with someone outside his league, he should realize he doesn't have the same exemptions as him.

"Right... sorry!" Gon chuckled and turned to where he last saw his silver haired friend. "C'mon
Killua, you can sit next to…” He trialed off once he saw the musically inclined boy was no longer next to him, but in a seat closest to the back. The seat next to him already taken too. He pouted, then realized Killua didn't get in trouble for being in the back either. So even Killua knows not to be in the back of the class before class starts. Gon jumped and pointed an accusing finger at the male, causing Killua to hide his snickering behind his hand.

"Oh! You sneaky-!"

"Whaaaat?" Killua drawled out with a smirk on his face, causing some others in the class to sigh at hearing his silk voice used in a near-singing manner. Gon huffed but then looked around for another seat. He saw a couple free, but there was one near the front, and Gon was determined to be in the front of every class to be the best student in the room. If he stayed in the back with Killua, he's be easily distracted and probably get nothing done. He didn't want to squander this opportunity. He bounded up to the front, the other students watching him move and Gon soaked it up, finishing with slipping in his seat with a flourish, both hands under his chin beaming up at Kite.

Kite regarded him a brief second more, wondering if this guy was going to be a problem but then decided to move on.

"Alright, so welcome to Vocal training. You can consider this 'classroom number one' as we'll be using the auditorium in this building almost as often. We'll meet in here everyday, so don't worry about knowing which day we're suppose to be in the auditorium. In this class, we'll be learning techniques for loosening up the vocal chords before a performance and techniques to practice and train your vocal chords in tip top shape. Now of course before we can begin making voices come out of our mouths, we need to learn proper body stance for singing. Everyone up and next to your desks."

Gon bounded up first, excited to start, and he looked behind him. He saw even Killua was standing. Gon tried to wave, but Killua's eyes breezed over him before seeming to pointedly stare fixedly away to the front of the room.

"Alright. Proper standing singing position," Kite said, shaking out his limbs, some students copying. "You should be relaxed. You should raise your chin slightly, allowing your throat to be straight for maximum airflow. Shoulders back to align your spine, feet apart parallel to your shoulders, and your weight should be distributed on either foot. This is the proper singing position while standing. Everyone try to get it right, I'll tell you once everyone's got it down." He said, sweeping his eyes over the class.

Gon raised his chin and shifted his body to have as Kite did, but as he looked at Kite and looked at the others around him, he began to think everyone was looking familiar. The positions everyone was striking seemed to Gon like he'd seen it before, somewhere on someone… very recently… His eyes widened and he looked back at Killua.

That's right! Gon remembered when Killua first walked in to Wing's class, he looked like he walked differently than everyone else in a much more composed manner. His chin raised slightly making him look arrogant or haughty. His shoulders back and his weight distributed on either foot gave him that fluid graceful movement when he walked. And knowing that, Gon thought back to when they were sitting down on the floor in the back and Killua seemed to have been composing himself strangely again, Gon could bet he had his shoulders back and spine straight again. A proper singing position. Killua's always in it, as though always prepared to start singing at a moment's notice, and it was natural to him, like second nature for him to compose himself like that.

At that moment, Gon's eyes sparkled with admiration, and his heart began to beat faster again out of excitement. Killua was really amazing! He must have worked really hard to get that position into his
essence like that. Gon now thinks Killua lies when he says he doesn't like to sing, and he'll get to the bottom of it.

Killua fought down the irrational curiosity to glance over at Gon. He could feel his sparkling gaze from a mile away, it was glaringly bright and he was wondering what exactly he was staring at him for this time. He had to admit, he liked the attention from this dork, it gave him a warm feeling, and for some reason, it was easy to be playful and sassy with him. Killua knew Gon wouldn't hate him for the snarky comments he makes that are suppose to come out as a joke. But this kid was still intent on Killua singing and he wasn't having it. He didn't need friends. Especially not from this school.

Instead, he busied himself with studying the forms of his "peers" and pointing out their faults in his head. His eyes flitted from one to the next as he mentally noted what each did wrong.

*Your shoulders are too far back, you'll constrict your airflow like that.*

*Your chin isn't high enough, you won't be able to have good voice control like that.*

*Your feet aren't parallel with your shoulders, you'll find yourself trying to keep balance as well as trying to sing, taking away from your quality of singing.*

Killua's eyebrows furrowed as his eyes wandered up the body of that last one he noted, noticing that the rest of this guy's form was crap too. *Shoulders hunched, chin too far back in thought, wasn't relaxed-* Killua's thoughts stopped as his eyes rested on the face. It was Gon. He wasn't gazing at Killua anymore, instead, head up with eyes on the ceiling, seeming to be thinking of something, his mind far from class. Killua's jaw dropped slightly, allowing for a small gap on parted lips.

*Seriously? Who is this guy- who let him in here-?* He thought, incredulous, but his thoughts screeched to a stop as he saw Kite stop in front of the spacing Gon.

"Chin lower." He commanded, obviously having already made his way around the room correcting others because he seemed fed up with the incompetency and was now physically fixing mistakes. He took Gon's chin in his hand and lowered it to the proper height, and Killua felt himself bristle from the unnecessary contact.

*Don't touch him like that!* The hostile thought coming to mind before Killua realized what he was thinking. *I don't care.* He immediately amended and went back to try and pointedly ignore Gon as to keep his sanity. He felt it slowly unraveling since he met the guy. Along with his resolve not to have friends.

As Killua looked away he didn't see the rest of Kite's interaction with Gon.

"Sorry!" Gon chuckled, apologetically then arranged his body so he fell into the position moderately well. Well enough for Kite to nod approvingly.

"Yea… don't daze off anymore." Kite said, giving him a point with a raised hand. Gon nodded. Kite noted Gon did know the position, unlike some others in the class, he just wasn't aware Kite was coming around to see it. Kite peaked at Killua from the corner of his eye. He knew Killua would always be in proper position, even if his mind did wander. Kite would be ecstatic if he could get his class to be like that, so in tune with the proper singing position, it was like second nature. But he knew how much drilling that took, so he would never do that kind of training with his students. He also felt slightly bad for Killua, to have to had lived a childhood that resulted in such discipline. Probably hours on end of staying in that position, and other stuff he couldn't imagine... But, this was
still a professional school, and he won't be pulling any breaks for any student. If he was gifted, Kite'll be expecting him to ace the class.

"Ok, everyone got it down well enough, we'll keep practicing that as the school year goes on. Now we'll go into proper singing position while sitting." Kite clapped, calling for attention.

-W0000000000000000- 

Well into the class, Gon started to note that these classes were longer than in his old school, and a familiar dull feeling in his stomach told him he was getting hungry. But it was only the second class! Was the schedule different here? He'll have to ask Zushi at lunch. He looked down at his hand to make sure the number Zushi penned onto his hand was still there and smiled to see it was. It didn't matter that much if it rubbed off, Gon already memorized it. It was a useful skill to have a musician, so it was one Gon really wanted to improve when growing up. He'd say it was well above average, and it was a skill he was proud of! Gon blinked when he realized he was dazing off in class again while Kite was still teaching so he shook his head a bit and dialed back into what Kite was saying.

"So, before class ends, I want to give out an assignment as a sort of pretest for the rest of the year. But it will also be graded as a project grade."

Gon gulped. He really hoped it only had to do with singing and nothing hard like math. He might get a bad grade on something as huge as a project grade! The class seemed to share his sentiment.

"Aww, really!?!"

"C'mon, Kite-sama, it's the first day a class, why such a huge assignment?"

"Awwww, fu-"

"Hey!" Kite barked out, silencing the class. "Shut it, before I add more to your assignment. You all should listen to it before complaining, it's actually pretty easy, you're welcome." He intoned, a stern hand on his hip. The class didn't dare to say anything more. "Now, I want you all to partner up. By this time next week, I want the two of you to have a song ready, either original or a cover song, to perform. We'll be in the auditorium and I'll be making note of the performance. I just want to hear your guys' voices so I know what exactly I need to focus on for the majority of the class needs work on. So make sure whatever song you choose, each person in the pair has a solo of at least 8 counts, and that the two of you sing together in a duet for at least an 8 count. This assignment will also help you guys get the feel of how it'll be like in the real world when you have to work with other artists in a compilation because your company orders you too. You'll either click, work well enough, or dispute the whole time, all of which are totally legit situations that could happen in your future careers, so get over it.

"What I'll actually be grading is a report each pair will have to do as well. You need to write what you contributed to the project, what you learned from your partner or what they contributed, and then something you both learned anew, either your likes, how to harmonizes, if the techniques you learned today actually helped, the like. Easy, right?" Kite said, looking down at the roster on his desk situated at the front of room. Even before Kite finished explaining the assignment, people began sending hungry glances back at the Zoldyck in the room, which Killua pointedly ignored. They knew if they could pair up with Killua, they would ace any assignment, and with him as a singing partner for the pretest, they could take it easy for the year. so they eagerly awaited for when Kite said to partner up.

"Er..." Kite said after a beat. "It seems there is an odd number of students, so there will be one group of three. Now, everyo-" Kite started, only to stop as a sole porcelain hand raised up into the air,
catching his attention. The students bristles at Kite being interrupted, thus halting their preparations to lunge at the white haired teen. They had hardly noted that the one they all had their sights on was the one that raised his hand.

"Yes, Killua?" Kite said.

"I'm not doing the assignment." He stated simply, allowing his hand to fall back to his side. Kite blinked at him, the rest of the class stilling.

What?

Gon looked back curious as well. What was he doing? Did he really not like singing that much? Kite wasn't having any of that.

"What do you mean you're not doing the assignment? This is a pretest, it's not exactly your choice to make."

"Well, I'm not going to sing up there for everyone, and I'm especially not going to do it with a partner. This isn't a Zoldyck sponsored concert, so I have no obligations to sing." Killua replied back smoothly. Kite's frown deepened and Gon got nervous at the tension increasing in the air. He didn't like where this was going.

"How about this is a school environment, and I'm not going to give you A's just for coming to class and looking pretty." He replied back snarkily. The class's heads turned to the back to see what Killua would reply. He was looking down at his desk in what seemed like thought, however his face didn't betray much emotion.

"Mmmmh…" He hummed. That one sound bouncing around in the cavity of his mouth betrayed the beauty of his voice. That made Gon just want to know how he sounds when he was actually trying to sing. Suddenly Gon wanted Killua to do the assignment just as much as the rest of the class, even if it was just in a solo.

"Well then, it can't be helped… I'll take the failing grade. I'm not doing the assignment. And now you don't have to worry about that odd number anymore." Killua replied coolly, bringing his cat eyes to meet with Kite's in a gaze that seemed to dare him. Kite revealed some teeth in his frown but picked up roster next to him and drew an obvious circle on the paper, what could only be interpreted as a zero for Killua, before placing it back down.

"Fine. Everyone, partner up."

The students let out audible noises of dissatisfaction and began trying to find partner with less vigor than before. However, Gon couldn't focus on that, he was more worried about Killua and his grade. He just accepted a bad grade, and now he'll start the school year marked as a ne'er do well and a delinquent. Gon didn't want that, especially when Killua had just helped Gon in the last class from getting bad grades. As people around him began pairing up with what was obviously their second choice, Gon got up from his seat and moved to the back of the room where Killua sat, reclined with his hands crossed behind his head. He had his eyes closed in rest so he didn't notice the tanned teen make his way over, a determined look on his face. Some people paired up looked over curiously, wondering what he would try to do to the Zoldyck that claimed he wouldn't be participating in the project.

Gon placed his hands firmly on Killua's desk, causing him to jump and open his eyes in surprise before they narrowed in irritation.
"Hey, I thought I said-" He started.

"You can't!" Gon cried, leaning forward, his amber eyes catching the light and making them seem like they were glowing, the intensity catching Killua off guard and causing him to lean back away from Gon. He blinked when he realized he didn't expand on that statement.

"Huh?" He asked dumbly, still in shock.

"You can't take a bad grade! You'll be starting off the school year all wrong." Gon said, his eyes softening so that Killua could see he wasn't really angry, but more concerned than anything. Killua blinked once more, allowing a beat to pass so he could properly process everything. Then he pressed his lips together amused, his eyebrows furrowed from the effort not to laugh. That's what he's thinking about? He's worried about his grades? This guy was too cute, from freaking out in first period for his own grades, then assuming everyone else is as concerned for their grade point average. What kind of honest, simple minded guy was he? He breathed once through his nose to compose himself once more. He had to remind himself he was ignoring Gon..

"You think I'm worried about my grades? I can do more than enough to get them back up." Killua scoffed, crossing his arms and turning towards the window.

"But now Kite will think you're a bad student." Gon cried, his arms on either side of the pale teen in exasperation.

"You think I care about that either? These teachers aren't going to teach me anything I don't already know and they're not gonna be able to help me become a World Star any faster if I suck up to them. If I don't have a reason to sing, I won't." He huffed. Gon's eyes softened even more and Killua shifted in his seat slightly before looking away. Those eyes were too warm and it made Killua feel like he was exposed as Gon freely examined his soul, he couldn't keep contact.

"Do you really hate singing that much?" Gon asked softly and Killua's breath hitched from the question. He wasn't expecting it, but he knew where this was leading to. He scoffed.

"I don't owe you an explanation." He said coldly, still not meeting his eyes. Gon saw the wall again and knew he wouldn't get anything more right now. He sighed and turned around to see most of the class had began to start on their projects already and he now realized he didn't focus on the project first and had to settle for whoever wasn't paired up yet. Well he supposed that wasn't too bad, he loved making friends and the last person needed to be paired would be lonely right now, so he'll happily be their partner. He scanned the room and finally found his future partner.

She was round and plump with dark grey hair that cascaded over her shoulders and a light brown bandanna over her head, tied in the back. She wore large round glasses, a light purple turtleneck sweater and a lime green skirt that flowed all the way down to her ankles, just revealing the front of her black shoes. She sat playing with the cuffs of her sleeves, staring across the room.

Gon smiled warmly and bounded over, not noticing Killua's eyes on his back. Maybe now after this assignment, I can hear this guy sing... maybe get an idea why he got accepted here… Killua thought.

Gon sat next to the girl, seeming to startle her out of her revere.

"Oh!" She gasped out softly, turning her green eyes on the teen who suddenly made himself known.

"Hi, I'm Gon!" He said, sticking out his hand, the girl gingerly taking it while Gon leaned forward to try to follow her line of sight and find what she was looking at. "What were you looking at?" Gon asked. The girl blushed.
"Oh, er nothing… um, My name is Melody." She said, trying to change the topic. Gon looked back at her.

"Really? That's beautiful." Gon said and the girl blushed.

"Oh, no, it's not- I'm not- it's a normal name." Melody said, pushing a strand of hair behind her ear and Gon smiled at her brighter.

"Even if it is, it's a cool name for someone who want to be a musician. I can imagine it now, in the future, people will be like 'Ah, Melody's new melody came out' or something like that! It sounds almost poetic for your name to be Melody and for you to pursue the music industry." Gon complemented, shifting to face her properly. Melody smiled coyly.

"Thank you very much, you're very kind Gon." Melody intoned in a soft voice. "Your name is very unusual. Where does it originate from?" She asked, facing him as well.

"Oh, it's japanese. I was actually born there but I've lived here in America for most of my life." Gon said and Melody let her mouth drop open a smidge.

"Wow, that sounds so intriguing." She said, pushing her glasses up her button nose. "Do you know Japanese?" She asked.

"Well, yes, I didn't have to, but since I was originally from Japan, I wanted to keep up with my heritage, so I asked my aunt Mito to teach me some. Oh, and I also used some online lessons." Gon smiled good naturedly.

"Amazing… I've lived in America my whole life, and I'm pretty sure my family has lived here for generations. I might have England descent in my blood from long ago, but I'm more american than anything." She provided, her eyes closed in thought. She opened her eyes, a faint blush on her nose.

"Oh, I've probably talked too much about myself, you're probably bored already. You probably just want to hurry and finish the project so you don't have to-!"

"What?! Who would say that! We're just getting to know each other and you're so interesting, there's no way you're boring…” Gon said, grabbing her by her shoulders to stop her train of thought. Melody blinked then turned her head to the side, looking back in the direction she was staring at before Gon had joined her.

"Some say…” She admitted, eyes longing. Gon blinked and pressed his cheek to hers as to accurately follow her line of sight. He was just too curious as to what she was looking at and he felt she wouldn't have said herself.

His eyes fell on a another pair of working students, but the one that caught his eyes was this beautiful androgynous blonde student. Gon thought he was almost as beautiful as Killua, with similar cat shaped eyes but deep grey instead of the sharp blue. He was lean and he had a carefree look on his face as he chatted with his partner, exuding elegance and grace just from the way he held himself.

"He hurt you?!" Gon gasped, his cheek still pressed against Melody who was sputtering in shock.

"No-no!" Melody tried to assure, pushing Gon's face off hers. It was completely weird how she could have just met someone and be comfortable with that person touching her as though she's known them her whole life. The friendly way he approached just made her feel as ease. "It's not, he didn't say… well…” She tried, looking back over and Gon followed her trail again. Gon could barely believe someone that pretty could do or say something mean, it almost looks out of character. Gon blinked then looked back at Killua who had his earphones on again, gazing out the window.
Actually, maybe.. Being mean was a trait of pretty people?

"It's nothing like that… That guy there, his name is Kurapika. He's really lovely. He plays string instruments mostly and he has a beautiful voice with a wide range." She said, glancing off longingly, a blush on her features. Gon watched her carefully from the corner of his eye while he also studied the man she described. "I've tried to be friends with him since freshman year, but he seems to keep me at arms lengths. He's no Zoldyck…" She said, gesturing to Killua in the back, bringing Gon's attention back to that interesting teen for moment before focusing on the rest of Melody's sentence, "Which, by the way, I think Kurapika sounds better than any of them, but Kurapika is selective about who he sings with, like the Zoldycks. But lower standards I suppose. Although it seems I don't meet his standards, so I've never been able to sing with him." Gon smiled softly. She had a crush on him.

"If you never had a chance to sing with him, why don't you use this assignment? I'm sure if you ask to trade partners, they wouldn't mind." Gon said. Melody looked down sadly at that.

"I already told you, it seems he doesn't see me as someone worthy to sing with! I asked him to be my partner first and he said no…" Gon gasped at that.

"What? He-" Gon's frown was directed in Kurapika's direction, the troubled expression looking unnatural for someone who was usually so bright, and Melody caught it instantly.

"No! Gon, please, it's ok. I understand why he did. I'll feel fine if I can just support him from the background through his career."

"But… why wouldn't he want to sing with you? Even Kite said we'll all have to work with people we don't know in this industry, so he won't know how amazing you are until he works with you!" Gon half whined. Melody just fussed with her nails uncomfortably instead of answering, but in the silence, Gon was able to think and his face lit with an idea.

"Well, I guess we'll have to show Kurapika how wrong he was in not choosing you as a partner or someone who meets his standard!" Gon declared, standing up with hands on his hips. Melody blinked up at him.

"Huh?" She croaked.

"Yea! We'll both ace this pretest performance, and show him you're totally up to his standards!" He cried, pumping his fist. He brought it back down in slight hesitation. "Er… what are his standards again?" Melody blushed from embarrassment.

"I don't know, please Gon, quiet down, you're attracting attention!" She cried, waving her hand in a placating fashion.

"Oh, Melody, that's one of the first things we gotta work on! As a World Star, you've got to learn to love the attention!" Gon cried out happily, taking one of her hands and fake waltzing around their desks. Students' conversations died down as they were distracted by the two dancing. They're conversations kicked back up again with Gon and Melody being the focus. Killua's attention was caught by the sudden movements and an amused smile lit his face as he watched his friend be goofy in class again, soaking in the attention. He barely caught himself when he realized he referred to Gon as his friend.

I-I don't-! He thought to himself, and then furrowed his hand through his hair in frustration, and pointedly looked out the window.
Kurapika looked over at them as well, noting the new student. He regarded him closely, taking in his energy, and let a small smile grace his features.

*How interesting.* He thought, before turning back to his partner. "Right, so we can meet up Wednesday after school since school will let out early…"

Soon after, the bell rang and Gon wanted to wait for Killua so he could ask him to eat with him. Gon smiled at Melody as he bid her goodbye and she left. They didn't really end up getting a lot of preparing done, as Gon mostly goofed with her to get her to loosen up but he got her number, so they'll get it done eventually! They've got time. Gon then turned around to scan the quickly clearing room for the porcelain boy and he spotted him lugging his bookbag over his shoulder, having just finished packing and zipping it up. Gon was about to call for him when someone beat him to it.

"Killua." Kite said, leaning casually on his desk. Killua's eyes immediately darted to the teacher, no chance of seeing that Gon was waiting for him, and he started making his way towards the teacher. Gon didn't know much about Killua, but he's watched him enough to probably memorize those elegant movements he walks with, and Gon noticed how his composure was just slightly more rigid than before. Was he scared or nervous? Gon's eyebrows furrowed in both nervousness and frustration. That's what Gon was telling him! Why take the bad grade if you didn't want the consequence? But Killua assured him he'd be fine, and watching him stand laxed before Kite, Gon started to think he was imagining the rigid in his movements and decided to believe in Killua.

*He'll be fine.*

Well, he couldn't wait for Killua when Zushi was waiting for him. Gon didn't know how long Kite would keep Killua and he didn't have Zushi's number to text him that he'd be late. Plus, Gon's sure Killua doesn't even know Gon's waiting on him, so he'll have no reason to try to be brief. He decided to leave him be for that day, and started out the door, glancing once over his shoulder to see Killua lazily blink, leaving Gon on a good mood. He trotted out.

*Killua's so cool!* He gushed in his head as he rushed for Zushi's locker.

Killua met Kite's darkened gaze, standing before him. Killua already had a feeling of what this talk would be about, and he wasn't exactly thrilled but it wasn't something he couldn't handle. He hoped.

"So you won't be singing for the pretest?" Kite asked. Killua scoffed. He was starting to hate people asking him to sing.

"No." He answered coolly, effectively masking any feelings of irritation.

"Why? I won't have any way to know how to teach you and improve your vocals through training." Kite pressed. Killua successfully suppressed an eyeroll.

"If you want to hear my vocals, get a recording of my audition tape. Or come to one of the family concerts." Killua said, uncaring and ready to leave already. This was eating up his lunch and alone time.

"And what about duet vocals? How am I supposed to know how well you sing with another, how well you work with them, or how you compensate for your partner's faults?" This time, Killua did roll his eyes.

"That's another thing. I only sing duet or group with my family. You want to hear that? Get a concert ticket. And yea, I don't work well with others." Killua offered. "You can try to focus on that for my training, but I can tell you now, I won't improve." Killua said smoothly, sliding his hands that were
on his bookbag straps into his pockets. Kite gave him a long stare, and Killua had half a mind to cheekily check his wrist that had no watch to show his impatience.

"Why don't you want to sing with anyone else? They might surprise you."

"Yea, surprise me with how bad they really are. Why should I have to try and suffer to sing with someone who doesn't have to pitch or range to keep up with me, who doesn't even know the difference between a G flat and G sharp? I'm here to gain passage to be a World Star, not for others to ride my coattails into the sunset." Killua replied sassily. Kite suddenly understood his reaction in class but his frown only deepened. *Then who would ever be able to sing with you?*

"Can I go now?" He asked, now bringing his arms out his pockets to cross over his chest. Kite sighed.

"Just one more thing. You know I'll have to alert your parents of the failing grade?" Kite asked, and Killua tensed up almost imperceptible. That was what he knew was coming.

"Yea, whatever..." He mumbled, finally removing his piercing gaze from Kite to the ground. Kite frowned at that, picking up the change in the boy's aura, where he was just confidently snarky but was now submissively passive.

"... I don't have to give you a zero."

Killua looked up suspiciously at him, but Kite saw in his eyes, his curiosity was drawn.

"I'm not singing for you now either." Killua stated, trying to guess where he was getting at. Kite held up his hands in surrender.

"I know, you're not going to sing, not now, not ever. At least in my class. So, I have a proposal for the pretest. You help me with grading, show your knowledge of the stuff and I give you a 40. I can't just pass you since you're not doing the actual assignment, but it's better than a zero. It'll help you pull up your grade with other assignments."

Killua's eyes roamed up and about, seeming to be throwing the idea around in his head trying to find anything wrong with it.

"Fine." He finally breathed, his hand going to the one strap hanging off his shoulder and made to move when he paused, seeming to remember something and moved back into his original position.

"You're still gonna tell my parents?" He asked, but it sounded more like a statement. Kite sighed, and Killua noted he'll probably be doing that a lot every time he has to deal with him.

"Yea, I have to... Is that ok?" Killua was caught off guard by the question.

"W-what? What kind of dumb question is that, of course it's ok, even if I said it wasn't you just said you have to!" Killua rambled in a stream, as though every word was glued together. He huffed and realized he lost his composure and Kite looked slightly taken aback. Killua took a calming breath and raked a hand through his hair.

"Sorry. Yea, it's fine, they just don't like it when we fail..." He muttered, readying himself mentally for when his parents find out.

"Ok... I'll be sending the email by Wednesday the latest." Kite said. He normally doesn't tell his students when he sends out the emails, but he felt as though Killua needed the heads up. Killua nodded timidly, making him look like he was really a kid. Kite almost forget, he composed himself
so maturely.

"Get out of here." Kite said amicably and Killua wasted no time in turning sharply for the door. Kite watched him go, hoping he'll be ok.

*I guess the hellish training he went through to get that talented had to come from somewhere...*

Zushi brightened up once he saw Gon rushing his way.

"Gon! Over here!" He cried out, happy to see the older male.

"Hey!" Gon said, slowing down by the dark skinned boy. "Let's go, I'm starving!" Gon cried out, grabbing his hand and heading where the others students were marching towards, never really having completely stopped. Zushi laughed.

"Gon, there's no rush!" Zushi giggled out, and Gon stopped only after he opened the doors to what seemed like the cafeteria. It was huge and spacious, table spread out across the large area, far apart enough that people could walk in between comfortable and someone from the next table wouldn't be able to make out the other table's conversation. In intervals along the walls were food counters offering multiple menus, some of them being popular venues who had a branch right there in the school. There weren't long lines for any of them and the atmosphere was very chill.

"We have an hour for lunch." Explained Zushi. "You can even go off campus for lunch if you wanted to. Some classes require you to sing after lunch, and it's not ideal to sing right after you eat, so the school wanted to slot as much time as possible to allow the food not to be a problem." Gon nodded taking in all the information.

"Oh yea, I wanted to ask." Gon said, pulling out his schedule. "It's only after the second period and it's time for lunch, but look, I have 8 classes listed. Plus the first two was pretty long. What's the schedule like?" Gon asked. Zushi began to move foward, looking at the menus around the cafeteria.

"Oh, you didn't know? We have 8 classes altogether, but we have 4 classes a day. The first 4 classes you have listed there are for Mondays and Thursdays. The next four are for Tuesdays and Fridays. On Wednesday, it's a short day and we have academic classes, going through 8 classes that day on a shorter time slot. Our music classes are about an hour and half long, allowing for plenty of time for singing and teaching." Zushi explained.

"Ah… so there's only 2 more classes left… and I don't have the same classes tomorrow… and Wednesday's actual, literal school stuff?!” Gon exclaimed lastly as he processed everything Zushi said. Zushi laughed.

"I'm guessing you're not too good at academia?" He asked. Gon scratched at his head.

"Ahaha, I guess… it's mostly math though." He admitted.

"Ok, so, take your pick, we can eat from any of these counters." Zushi said, waving his hand around the room. Gon let his eyes sweep across the colorful banners and such before looking to his left at the closest one curiously. He saw the menu had prices listed next to the food item names and Gon got a little nervous.

"H-hey, Zushi, why do they have those prices there? They're not for… students, are they?" Gon asked. Zushi blinked back at Gon.

"Gon… this is a private school… we have to pay for our lunches. Wait, Gon, did you not do any
research for this school? Why- how- what?" Zushi asked, flabbergasted.

"I don't know anything about this school! I was just told to apply and I got the acceptance letter soon after, I don't have any money, Zushi-!" He cried out before Zushi covered his mouth, concern etched across his feature as he scanned around for anyone who heard him. There were some people sending looks his way, and Zushi knew it'd spread now, that Gon barely had to work to get into a school he barely knew a thing about while there were still people obsessing over every aspect of the school while hoping for a chance to get an audition to enter the school.

Gon wasn't worried about that right now, he was freaking out over the fact that lunch was real actual money and by the looks of the menu he spotted, it's nowhere near cheap. He couldn't afford to buy lunch today, let alone every day. Mito was struggling to keep up with the bills herself and Gon's sporadic concerts sometime accrued more costs than it covered. Zushi finally let go of his mouth and Gon let out a look that could have broken babies' hearts.

"I don't have any money…" Gon whined and Zushi finally brought his attention back to his friend instead of everyone who was around them.

"Ah, Gon-" Zushi started, then just had to chuckle at how pathetic Gon looked when there was a simple solution. "I can pay for you today." He said with an earnest smile. Gon's bright smile lit the room again at the statement.

"Really? Are you sure? I don't want to impose…" He said, but his face told Zushi he was ready to order.

"I'm sure, I have plenty. Being a teacher here pays well and Wing gave me my lunch money this morning." Gon smiled.

"Whoo! Thank you! I promise you won't have to do this often, just for today. I'll be bringing my own food from now on. I have organic and natural stuff anyway that are good for the vocal chords I rather eat anyway." Gon said. "But man, I'll have to make my own bentos… I haven't made any of those in a while, I hope I can still do it well enough." He muttered to himself, moving forward to a simple pizza counter.

"Bento?" Zushi asked, following after him. Gon looked down at the boy at his side.

"Oh, right! You guys probably call them lunch boxes right? Well, it's similar, like a japanese lunch box, but it's suppose to be prettier if you make it right. It holds rice, meat, fish, and vegetables in little sections, and it's all balanced and full of love! Mito used to make them for me, but when she got busier she taught me how to make it. But once we got qualified for free lunch back in middle school, I didn't even bother anymore." Gon explained, then ordered 2 pizzas.

"Bentos… wow, so you're japanese?" Zushi asked, looking at Gon in a new light. "Yea, I see it! That's cool. I'm egyptian myself, Wing adopted me when he was visiting the country during his business." Zushi supplied, adding to Gon's order with 2 more slices and drinks for both of them.

"Egyptian?!" Gon gushed, making Zushi jump slightly. "That's so cool! Oh, wow, I totally see it! Wow, Zushi's actually really exotic and cool!" Gon said, then turned his attention back to the counter when they got their pizzas, missing Zushi's flush.

"It's not that cool, I don't know anything about being egyptian, unlike you who seemed to keep your Japanese culture…?" Zushi said, trailing off for confirmation.

"Yea, my aunt followed my dad out here when he became a World Star, but he moved so much, she
didn't want to chase him anymore, so we stayed here. But she made sure we kept our culture in the house.” Gon explained, starting to walk out to the tables.

"Your dad… he's a world star?!" Zushi exclaimed, realizing what that meant. "Why aren't you with him?"

"Yeah…” Gon said wistfully, scanning over the cafeteria, and the serious glint in Gon's eyes told Zushi he didn't want to talk about it. He complied. Gon spotted tables with crowds again and he turned to Zushi.

"Who are those guys?" Gon asked, giving a point. Zushi blinked then chuckled.

"Hard to tell. There are a lot of top tier students around here. It could be Illumi, but he normally ignores everyone as he eats and leaves when he's done. It might be Milluki, Killua's other brother, but not a lot of people hang around him when it's time for lunch. He'll have the whole table filled so that no one else can sit, and it's gross to watch him pig out, but some fans are into that. It could be Hisoka, another upper classman, but he might just be with Illumi too. In all honesty, it could be any upperclassman because they're more experienced, get more school sponsored concerts, thus showing off their talents and gaining more fans, and closer to being World Stars.” Zushi explained. Gon blinked.

"No one would be around Killua?" Gon seemed to remember and searched avidly for the tuft of hair he knew well.

"Er, no, usually Killua doesn't even come in here, sometimes he does for food if he forgot his own or there's a specialty in here, like chocolate or something." Zushi explained. Gon looked over at him.

"Chocolate?" Gon asked.

"Yea, I guess it's no secret Killua loves chocolate. Chocolate anything, hot chocolate, chocolate muffins, brownies, chocolate milk. There was once a chocolate festival in the cafeteria, one of the times Killua came to the cafeteria, and I'm pretty sure he went to every stand and was almost banned from one stand because he tried to eat them out. But he had the money, so…” Zushi shrugged.

"He loves chocolate…” Gon said, almost experimentally, then his nose scrunched up in an amused smile. "That's so cute!" Gon giggled, and felt his chest tighten at the thought. It was too cute.

"Yea, it's almost contradictory. Sugar is no good for singing or for your voice, but it's like if he had to choose between something and chocolate, he'd choose chocolate every time. Given how strict his family is, I don't even know how he got introduced to chocolate." Zushi mused, looking down at his food. Gon's mind lingered on his new discovery about Killua.

I wonder if I should get him some chocolate… how would he react? Would he wear a huge smile? I bet his smile's beautiful, like him… would he be my friend once I got him chocolates? Oh! I should definitely get him chocolates! What kinds does he like? Would it be fine if I got him hershey? Gon finally got out of his head and looked towards Zushi who started talking at that same moment.

"So where do you want to sit?" He asked just as Gon's mouth opened. Gon's mouth closed in thought, forgetting his previous train of thought.

"Well, where do you normally sit?" Gon asked Zushi. He looked down a bit.

"Anywhere, mostly by myself." He answered. Gon's frown appeared at the thought. There's something I've got to change about the school…
"Ok… well, you said Killua doesn't come here, do you know where he goes?" He tried again.

"Um… no. He could go off campus, or anywhere on campus, some people eat under the trees out by the track field, some others sit at the courtyard, some students even go to teacher's rooms if they let them." Zushi said. "He could be anywhere." Gon gave that thought.

"We can eat anywhere huh…" He trailed. He then turned to Zushi with an idea and a bright smile that blinded Zushi with his excitement. "I know just the place!"

Cheadle looked up tiredly. Ugh, maybe the chairman was giving her too much work… She could swear there were students making their way down the hall to the chairman's office. And they looked like those students she met this morning. They must be mirages of pleasanter times, back this morning when her morning was made a little brighter by those students. She took another swig of her coffee to wake herself a little more and get on with her mountainous work. She can do this! She won't let this snowball like last year.

Gon knocked nimbly on the door then peaked his head inside.

"Netero-san?" He asked politely, and he was met with the man in a yoga suit, stretching in what seemed like an impossibly flexible position. Netero looked him in the eye, a sweat drop beading down the side of his face. Gon smiled politely before closing the door. Zushi looked at him curiously and cocked his head to one side.

"What happened?" He asked. Gon chuckled lightly.

"What do you mean? We just got here. We should knock before we go in, right?" He smiled and tilted his head to mimic Zushi. He turned away and knocked on the door while Zushi was confused by Gon's reaction. Gon poked his head in again.

"Netero?" He smiled warmly, feigning ignorance.

"Ah, Gon! What a nice surprise." Neter said from his desk, a casual suit over his frame. He waved him in. "Please come in, come in, what brings you here?" He asked. Gon smiled at the more welcoming sight.

"Well, it's my first day here and I didn't make alot of friends yet, so I didn't want to try and pick a table when we can eat anywhere! I wanted to talk with you some more anyway!" He said, sitting down in one of the chairs angled towards the man's desk.

"Ohoho, how nice. No one interesting ever comes to visit me during the day, only people in suits and administration demanding meetings! How thoughtful of you." He said, motioning his hand towards the other chair to invite Zushi to comfortably take part as well. He happily sat down, enjoying the inviting hospitality from the most powerful man in school.

"So tell me how your day has been. What do you think of the school?"

"Oh! Great!" Gon exclaimed, his smile wide. "The classes I've been in so far have been so fun and helpful, and-!" His heart flipped at the passing thought of the white haired boy he's seen in every class. Where was he? Was he ok? Was he happy? "I met Killua! He's really cool and amazing! He's apparently really good at singing but he hates it for some reason!" Gon stated, then his eyes slowly drifted downward as he thought about the class project.

"And some people refuse to sing with other students… they say they have standards or something… I don't think that's right… I don't understand why someone has to prove themselves to sing with
someone else… Singing is fun and even if the other person is not the best singer, they can definitely lend anyone a good time while singing. It's like a new connection is formed with the other person when you sing together, and why would you wanna limit the people you have a connection with!" Gon said, starting out despondent but slowly getting renewed with vigor. "Netero!" He shouted at last, and the old man who was listening intently jumped at the outburst.

"Ah, yes?!” He asked, sitting up straighter.

"I want to change that!" He said resolutely. Netero blinked at him.

"Huh?"

"I want to change that about the students in this school! I want to make sure they know it's ok to sing with whoever! And I want to find out why Killua doesn't like to sing! Then I wanna make him sing with me! I want everyone to be friends!" He said, like spouting out a new year's resolution, and Zushi thought it sounded as impossible and crazy as one too.

"Hey, hey, Gon, that's not really…!” He started to say, but was cut off by a laughing chairman.

"Ohoho, Gon! Thank you!” He cried out, and wiped a laughter induced tear from his eye. Gon lifted an eyebrow in confusion but never lost the fire in his eyes.

"That's exactly why I brought you to this school with no screening.” He muttered softly. He turned to Zushi like he was an old drinking buddy he needed to tell a crazy story of his other drinking buddy.

"Let me tell you what happened and how I met Gon.” He chuckled out, and Gon seemed to finally come down, sitting further back in his chair and a sheepish hand rubbed at the back of his neck, not really sure what Netero would say about him.

"It was the end of July, about time for August to start, and I wanted to get away from my students who are so sure and confident of their talents and their strict training regime and all cocky. I wanted to get back to the fundamentals, so I see a poster for a local unfunded concert. Undiscovered talent? I wanted to check it out. I get there and it's pretty packed for a no-name.” Netero chuckled, tossing a thumb in Gon's direction. Gon laughed a bit sheepishly but waved his hands in front of him.

"That's too mean. That was a pretty small night compared to what I'm used to…” Gon defended. "I don't think I was so no-named.”

"You weren't signed and you were performing on a public space. Anyway, moving on. This firecracker comes out and starts singing and dancing his heart out, mostly covers, few originals and the crowd was eating it up. They loved his dancing and his energy, and but the thing I noticed the most was how much fun he was having. Goodness, I was a pretty popular 80s World Star, and I think that was the last time I really saw any one World Star enjoy their time on stage. I think that's something that lends to Gon's signature performance style, the presentation.” Netero said, and Zushi listened intently, eating his pizza absentmindedly. He kinda wished he could see a concert of Gon's now.

"I met up with him after the concert, but I almost couldn't get the chance. This kid took the time to sign every one of his fan's autographs that went backstage to see him. Everyone. I had to wait near a half hour later for the crowd to disperse before I could reach him.” Netero continued on in a mellowed tone, and Gon blushed at his tendencies being presented so freely. "I was floored by his kindness, his care and attentiveness. He really enjoyed being a performer!” His tone took on more of a challenging inflection. "That's more than I can say for these kids at this institution. They seem to
forgot why they wanted to be performers, where the want came from. Maybe they were three and couldn't help their explosive singing when a camera was rolling. Or out in public, they tried any way they could to bring people around them smiles with their presentation. But now all this is to them is business, they carry themselves around like they are entitled because they sing a little better than others, or most people enjoy listening to themselves. Well they forgot to enjoy themselves, that others are happy when the performer is happy. They forgot the emotions they can evoke in anyone that listen with just the mere manipulation of their songs. So Gon!" He cheered at the end and Gon straightened himself to attention.

"I want to see you try! I welcome it and I'll endorse you in your endeavors. I'll help anyway I can. Change this school Gon. Make sure you remind everyone what it means to be a World Star. Make everyone remember it's supposed to be fun. Maybe pull a couple of sticks out of people's backsides."

Netero snickers. Gon smiled widely at him and he pumped a fist to his chest.

"Mh! I'll try my best!" Gon cried. Zushi clapped as an audience of one.

"Wow! You're really amazing Gon! I'll try to be like you, you're really amazing!" He said.

"Thanks, Zushi, you know, we could always...!" Gon said, carrying on his conversation as Netero looked on fondly at this bright kid. He would never forget the sight he saw when Gon performed. He was brighter than any stage light that hit him. He didn't have the best voice but he made up for that with his delivery and everyone at the concert ate it up. It gave everyone a sense of happiness, a peace of mind, transported them elsewhere than any problems they might have been dealing with. It was a little slice of paradise enjoying one of his concerts. Netero brought this kid in hoping his brightness could spread and he could finally produce some graduate World Stars he was proud of.

Go on and change the world, Gon. Be the leading light.

Gon bid Zushi goodbye and turned down a hall with lockers reading up into the 700's. The dismissing bell from lunch had rung not too long ago and with the extra time he had before class he decided to find that locker Zushi mentioned he had. He looked down at his schedule and read his locker number again. 726. Gon looked left and right before realizing the even numbers were on his left then he stared at it, counting up the lockers.

"... 20, 22, 24... 726!" He cheered, and began to put in his locker combination listed at the top of his sheet. He opened his locker and saw it was packed with some of the books he'll need for his classes, including the ones for academia. "Ooh, wow, I should've checked my locker sooner. Now I don't have to worry about my books for the school year anymore." He said, then stuck his bookbag in there so he didn't have to carry it around anymore. He didn't really see anyone carrying their bookbags much around school, so he suppose this is what most do. He kept his schedule with him and pulled it out to see where he should head next for...

Harmony 202!

Wow, harmony! Gon's never really tried harmony, he was always a solo act. He's heard it in the music he listened to but it's not like he's recorded music himself and overlapped a harmonizing track, he didn't have a music booth, studio, or home equipment to do it. Plus... he didn't really know how to harmonize. What notes do you hit? Melody was easier, all you had to do was generally hit the same notes the instruments were making. So this class would definitely help him learn how to be a World Star. Oh! And hopefully he could get a chance to work in a music booth and make his own harmonizing track when he's learned how. He was lost in these thoughts as he wandered into the room for Harmony when a strangled gasp took him out of his thoughts.
"Seriously?!" An outraged cry, and Gon turned his head towards the sound. His face lit up once he saw the Zoldyck at a desk in the back, hands planted on the surface from slamming it down.

"Killua!" He cheered and ran over to hug his friend. Killua stepped out from behind his desk but he only stuck his hand out plant it on Gon's head, ceasing his advancements. Gon flailed his arms in a windmill fashion in an effort to get his hands on Killua.

"What the hell man, are you stalking me?" He growled out, and his eyes darted down Gon's person. He whipped his hand out and pulled the schedule out of Gon's front pocket and shifted his weight to let Gon's fly by as he released his hold on his forehead. Gon whined as he got up from the floor, unaware of Killua's aghast expression.

"Oww, that hurt, Killua, I thought you were getting up from your desk to hug me!" He said, standing up and stamping his foot.

"What the actual heck?" He gasped out in shock, his face paling slightly before he pulled out a piece of paper from his own pocket.

"What?" Gon asked curious now. He trotted over to look over Killua's shoulder. It was their schedules side by side.

"We have every class together?!" Killua choked out. Gon's face lit up again.

"Yay! Killu-!" He cheered, going to hug him again, but Killua put Gon's schedule in his face and pushed him back and away from him with it, his face unamused.

"What the hell…" He grumbled, sitting down in his seat again with his hands in his hair. This was going to be a bad year. He felt it.

"Killua, you're so mean! C'mon, do you have to sit in the back of every class?" Gon asked, getting up and taking the schedule off his face. He placed his chin on Killua's desk and looked up at Killua's lowered face, a pout on his face. Killua swallowed a strangled noise before it come out his lips, and pushed Gon's face off his desk.

"Yea, I do. It's less trouble." He grumbled. Gon sat back up as Killua leaned back in his seat, arms crossing over his chest.

"Trouble? Trouble to sing?" Gon asked, tilting his head. Killua snarled at him. Was this guy thick? Or was he never going to stop until he heard something he wanted?

"Yea. The teachers will feel more obliged to call on me to sing or give examples or some other dumb crap." He commented, his shoulders going up and down in a shrug.

"That's not so bad! I mean, unless you don't know how, I don't know how to harmonize, so I would just die if I got called on to give an example-!" Gon rambled, but Killua got over his initial shock and pinched Gon's lips shut. Gon looked at him confused while Killua glared at him.

"... Did you just say I don't know how to harmonize?" He asked with a crooked eyebrow, daring. Gon blinked then pulled his face back to release his lips and they formed into a nervous smile.

"No, no, no, Killua, no!" Gon laughed while Killua looked on with his one eyebrow still up unbelieving. "I was saying, I, me, myself would hate to be called on if I didn't know what I was doing, but since you do, I don't know why you wouldn't-!" He chuckled out while Killua's glare panned him unnervingly, but then the final bell rang and in with it came the teacher.
"Phew, thank goodness." Gon chuckled and sat in the seat next to Killua. Killua's mouth fell open as he looked at Gon in surprise.

"Hey man, what gives? I thought you sit in the front." Killua asked, motioning to the front.

"Well, yea, but remember, I said I understood why you'd sit in the back if it prevented the teacher from calling on you! I just want to learn for now, I can move up to the front later when I can participate better in class!" Gon said, trying to keep his voice down as the teacher introduced herself. Killua huffed and supported his chin on his hand. On the board the teacher had written her name, a Mrs. Richette, and she had her auburn hair were in a tight bun, but her clothes seemed more hippie than anything. Killua rolled her eyes, she seemed like she was having an identity crisis. He doesn't recognize her, so he's surprised the Academy hired her for a school for prospective World Stars. They normally only hire previous or current World Stars as teachers.

"...So, we don't want to stress you students on the first day! We'll take it easy." She said, and Killua felt his eyelid droop in boredom. Just the same routine as every other class. He reached into his pocket to take his phone out. He should be able to put on his headphones and efficiently ignore the rest of the class.

"So today, I was thinking for all you students who are excited about your future years here at the Academy, we could visit the upperclass harmony class and observe it for today! Maybe they might let us participate and you can see what to expect as you climb the grades!" She cheered out in a singsong voice. "Now, I already told the teacher for Harmony 404 that we'd be dropping by, so they'll be expecting us. Let's get going!" Killua frowned. The senior class? That's the grade his eldest brother was in, but it shouldn't be a problem… He was brought out of his thoughts when Gon stood up next to him and gestured his hand for Killua to get up to.

"C'mon, Killua, let's go." He smiled. Killua let his bottom lip jut out in annoyance but got up anyway.

"Go ahead, I already told you to leave me alone." Killua said, bringing his headphones up from his neck and over his ears. He fiddled with his phone, purposely lingering so Gon would go ahead with the rest of the class quickly filtering out.

"E-er… ok, you should hurry though, so that you don't get lost." Gon smiled and ran ahead to catch up with the rest of the class. Killua stuck his tongue out after the sun kissed boy.

"Me? Get lost? Please, I know my way around the school, of course I know where Harmony 404 is…" He mumbled, leaving the class last and closing the door behind him. He lazily trailed after the crowd of students, a good 3 feet away from the slowest one. Gon walked along the group of students, glancing back worriedly every few moments, unable to try to insert himself in conversations when Killua was back there all alone.

"So are you really friends with Killua?" A voice next to him asked and he nearly jumped from shock. He turned his head to see a turquoise haired girl with a round turban on, and middle eastern inspired clothing. He blinked as he stared into her round eyes.

"Wow, you're really pretty!" He cried out and she blinked before she blushed.

"W-what? That's so random!" She huffed, brushing a strand of hair behind her ear embarrassed. Gon chuckled next to her.

"Sorry, but it's true. But I did say it instead of answering your question, sorry." He said. He looked back at Killua again and she did too.
"So? Are you really his friend? He normally refuses any advancements. I think he's convinced anyone trying to be his friend just wants to use him." She said.

"Mhh..." Gon hummed, facing back to look where he was going. "He's doing that right now... but I'm trying to figure out why he hates singing... I think we are friends, but he just has to warm up to me for a little bit more, I think. Oh! And I was also going to get him chocolate! He loves it apparently!" Gon chuckled.

"Yea? You better make sure his brothers don't see you giving him chocolate. He knows he's not suppose to be eating it, and his brothers are constantly police him so that nothing risks his voice. They say out of all 5 of the siblings, he has the most beautiful voice." She said, raising a finger.

"Woah~ He has 4 siblings?" Gon asked. She smirked.

"Yeah. They all come here when they turn 14 but not before they debut the summer before during one of their Zoldyck concerts. They all come here because their parents came here, and it makes them look good as alumni. His two little sisters are still training for when they debut and come to this school. They say Killua's debut concert was the biggest turnout the family ever had." She said, proud she knew so much Gon didn't and was able to enlighten him in unknown knowledge. Gon's eyes shone at the information.

"Wow! Killua's amazing!" He hummed, and turned back to look at him, Killua's charisma dripping off him as he sauntered lazily after the class. His eyes floated unseeing around the hall as he listened to his music before they drifted to meet up with Gon's. His eyes widened and a soft blush fell over his normally pale features out of embarrassment of being watched. But once he remembered Gon's done this before, his eyes narrowed and he shook his head at him questioningly. Gon smiled, his eyes slipping closed in the action and waved back at him. Killua huffed and turned his head away. The girl next to Gon blinked.

"Wow, you really don't get discouraged..." She said, "I'm Ponzu by the way." She lifted her hand to shake Gon's hand.

"I'm Gon." He said, taking it and shaking it.

"There's been alot of talk of you, you know." Ponzu said, pulling Gon closer by the hand and poking him in the chest. "Some good, some bad. But the point is the school is already starting to buzz with the talk of you. That's very rare when most people in this school are only absorbed with themselves and their 'amazing talent'" Ponzu said, and she slyly looked back at Killua from the corner of her eye. She saw he was fixing her with a piercing gaze, as though to figure out her intentions with Gon by staring her down. At least that showed Gon wasn't just spouting nonsense of him getting through to Killua, he seemed concerned with what Gon does.

"Oooh, well, I can't exactly care about what others are saying about me. I can't go around and individually fix everyone's perception of me. It's easier not to worry about it and don't let it deter me from what I really need to do. The only thing I'll really need to care about is what my closest friends think." Gon said, moving away from Ponzu although he didn't seem quite bothered from the limited space Ponzu had created in the first place. Ponzu blinked at him then bursted out laughing.

"Wow, Gon, you're really something else. You might just be an idiot, though." She giggled and Gon's expression turned miffed.

"Hey! I'm not an idiot! I just believe I'd be wasting my time worry about people I don't even know." He said, while Ponzu giggled again. Killua's eye twitched from the back.
Who does that girl think she's flirting with? Killua frowned and diverted his eyes. What do I care…
Gon can go looking into other people's eyes all he wants… His mind flashed back to second period
when Gon had harassed him in the back of class, leaning closer to him to scold him about his grades,
his eyes shining with light from some unknown source. Yea, he can show those eyes off to
whoever… His chest constricted slightly. Idiot.

The class arrived to the classroom, Mrs. Richette entering first to find the teacher.

"Mr. Huey! I-"

"Wow, how rude…" A hollow melodious voice interrupted. As the class entered, Gon could see the
upperclassmen faced the end stage where a tall lean figure with long flowing black hair was
standing. Another look and the entering class could see the actual teacher was in the back, standing
by his auxiliary office door, so that would mean that the person on stage was a… student?!

"Bro?" Killua gasped out as he entered the classroom last, catching the closing door.

"Killu." He said, and although his voice inflection or face didn't change, the class got the impression
he was happy Killua was there. Killua's face fell however as he came into the room, annoyance clear
for anyone who looked. Crap, this was the last thing I wanted. He thought, heading to the back of
the room and sitting against the back wall. Gon looked back and forth from the fluffy white haired
teen to the silky long black haired young man. That's Killua's brother?! Wow, I never would have
guessed… Gon thought, taking a seat toward the back as the rest of the class followed Killua's lead to
keep out the way.

"Oh, haha, did we come in the middle of a test or something?" Mrs. Richette asked addressing the
Harmony 404 teacher, wringing her hands together nervously.

"Oh, no…" He said an easy smile on his features. "I was so happy that Illumi was in my class this
year, I asked him to a lead a lesson." Killua's face of annoyance grew.

Of course he'd say yes, this is the kind of unneeded burden I refuse to straddle myself with. He
thought, crossing his arms.

"Yes, this was a pleasant surprise, no matter how rudely it was presented." Illumi said, still looking
over at Killua's direction, even though said teen refused to look back after the initial shock. "Well
then, let's continue, I was just directing how opposing voices are best for harmonizing, especially
complimentary voices. The harmonizing can be as close as one note apart or a whole new melody to
contrast the main." Illumi explained, a delicate finger in the air. Gon blinked and a wide smile
appeared. Wow! He knew so much, the teacher wanted him to give a lesson to the class! Does Killua
know as much as him? Gon could learn alot from any of the Zoldycks, he supposed, with how
talented they all were.

"When someone sings a note, you should be able to recognize any and all possible harmonizing
courses you can sing in reply, in perfect pitch." Illumi shared, an emotionless wave at his initial class
of upperclassmen, referring to the level of talent they should know at senior level, and Gon paled.
Wow, this school can get pretty advanced if it goes that far. Ponzu noted some of the upperclassman
who shared the class with Illumi bristled a little, like they were being called out.

Do they not know how to do that? She thought to herself.

"Since we have an audience who are here to see some advance harmonization, let's hear some
examples." He intoned, and Killua in the back frowned.
He's up to something… Killua thought, as he suspiciously looked on, his headphones lowered and resting on his cheeks, but the music paused long ago for full alert. Illumi scanned the crowd, some upperclassman looked confident, while others looked nervous to be called on.

"Machi… and Nobunaga." Illumi called, and both faces lit up since their names were remembered by a Zoldyck. Machi strolled up confidently while Nobunaga was one of the students Ponzu noted looked nervous to be called on. She almost believed that was one of the reasons Illumi picked on him, like an eagle zeroing in on his prey. They joined him on the end stage and flanked either side of him, facing the other volunteer.

"Alright. Nobunaga, you pick the note or song. Machi, you match it before scaling up to a harmonizing note." Illumi continued on in the empty melodious tone. Killua's eyebrow twitched upward.

That's strange. If brother wanted to embarrass Nobunaga or pick on his non confidence, he would have told Machi to pick the note for him to follow… Machi obviously knows what she's doing. It's unlike him to do something that gives another person a break or ease off their weakness… What are you up to, Illumi…? Killua's eyes narrowed suspiciously in Illumi's direction although now it seemed he was the one avoiding eye contact.

"Er, right…" Nobunaga said. A glance at everyone watching and he closed his eyes and cleared his throat. He did a quick scale as warm up before choosing a note, holding it in a steady breath. Machi smiled and did her own quick warm up before joining his note. Gon could see her mind work as she thought of which harmonizing note to pick then heard her start to scale up and down Nobunaga's note beautifully, like a fluid dancer on a pole, when she stopped on a note that harmonized on the wavelength Nobunaga was singing, but Gon could hear something was off, like at the cusps of his consciousness, there was clashing of the notes. Both Illumi and Killua grimaced as the note carried out over the class. Killua wanted to cover his ears, his trained and tuned ears hearing how she didn't hit the note straight on more sharply, causing some discordance in the harmonization. Illumi waved his hands in front of the two like a conductor, signalling for them to stop, his hand coming down in a swooping sharp motion. They both stopped together and both upperclassman and lowerclassman class applauded them hesitantly, because they thought they did pretty well, and what Machi did with her voice before stopping on the harmonization note was pretty well, but everyone saw Illumi's one change in facial expression, and it wasn't good. Machi looked over expectedly in Illumi's direction but only saw his neutral mask.

"Good job, you two, another round of applause for them." Illumi instructed, and both classes did with more ease this time with Illumi's prompting. "Sit." He said and they got off stage, Machi seeming more upset as she picked up she didn't impress Illumi.

"Some of you… hopefully, heard that Machi didn't hit that note straight on. In a professional recording, the producer would call for a do-over, and in the music business, every hour in the booth is money and time wasted and those in the business hate wasting both. They don't want to waste their time on those who take 10 takes to get one verse right. Unless they're worth it somehow." He said, saying the last one vaguely, and his eyes vaguely wandered over to Killua and Killua stiffened, almost daring him to lock eyes or say something, but Illumi deterred his eyes last second.

"Anyways, for a second performance, maybe I should call on someone who has aced a Perfect Pitch class so the underclassman can really understand what it means to be in the senior class." Illumi said, his arms folded elegantly over each other. Machi in her seat huffed and crossed her arms and Nobunaga rubbed her shoulder comfortingy. At Illumi's declaration, multiple students began raising their hand to volunteer, and Gon could only think they were the students who did pass this… 'Perfect pitch' class and were confident enough to challenge, and he hoped they wouldn't end up like Machi.
Gon thought she did a good job and didn't like how she was called out for such a minor mistake. Singing should be fun, not exact mechanical science. Illumi did remind Gon of some sort of machine. Like a tuned mechanical wind up doll, insert a coin to sing. He almost snickered out loud but held it in and focus back into class to get out of his thoughts.

Illumi’s eyes roved over the sea of hands before they drifted beyond them and towards the back. Even Gon could perceive the twitch in Illumi's lips that gave his features a subtle smile.

"Killu. Won't you join me?"

Killua locked up, his eyes widening imperceptibly as he looked on at his older brother. The upperclassmen froze and slowly lowered their hands in shock gradually. Illumi just asked for students who aced Perfect Pitch, and they were the older, more experienced students here! But Illumi picked his brother, as though he were better than these students that pulled rank on the brat. More than that, those that shared their grade level with Killua knew he doesn't sing in class, he doesn't even participate. But this is his brother asking him to sing, not another teacher, but there was still a classroom audience in front of him. Would he sing? Everyone in his grade class hoped he would so they can finally hear the boy, but there was such a thick tension and the upperclassmen's hostile thoughts didn't help. A telephone ring could be heard and the Harmony 404 teacher jumped at the sound from the suddenly quiet classroom and scurried into his small office, Mrs. Richette following just to find relief.

Killua narrowed his eyes at Illumi, those sitting in front of Killua scooting out the way from both brothers' heavy glare, and it was amazing how challenging Illumi's empty gaze was when his expression didn't change much from that subtle smile. Soon, the upperclassmen's reservations seemed like a small nuisance as they entered a staring contest, a mental battle waging in both brothers. Killua knew the repercussions of saying no to Illumi, especially in the subject of singing. But he still didn't want to sing for all these people, and he especially didn't want to seem like some sort of submissive toy to his brother, although one peak into their home life and anyone would reach that conclusion. His options were little, including staying quiet forever, but he would stay quiet for as long as he could until he could think of something, or maybe Illumi would back down. He did that sometimes, right? When he got bored? His glare intensified, hopefully sending a totally not desperate message to Illumi to let him be. Killua saw in the recess of his eyes that he only took it as a challenge and was carrying this out. Damn it. He felt cold sweat start to prickle the back of his neck. He'll have to sing, won't he?

Gon looked back and forth between the two siblings, not oblivious to the tension that were warring in front of everyone right now. It was quiet, but the silence had never been so loud to Gon, there might as well have been a shouting match going on. He looked at Illumi who didn't look any different from when he made that seemingly innocent request, Sing with me. But Gon looked back over to Killua and he could clearly see he was getting more and more uncomfortable and that made Gon uncomfortable and angry. Unexplainably so. He looked at everyone, and he could see no one would ever even think about daring to make a move on behalf on Killua, so Gon was about to volunteer to sing for him. He may know nothing about harmonizing, but he'd rather make a fool of himself than leave Killua in the hot seat right now. Hopefully while he's up there making a mess, Killua could excuse himself to the bathroom or something and escape. Just...! He wanted to make sure he was ok. Just before he was able to leap up to his feet and gain Illumi's attention, even though he felt as though if Illumi threw those eyes in his direction, the intensity would cause him pass out (and how could Killua subject himself to that?), the door to the small door opened again and Mrs. Richette poked her head out and swiveled it to the left where Killua was sitting not too far off against the wall.
"Um, Killua?" She said in a small voice, although in the silence, it sounded like a cannon blast. "Phone for you." Almost immediately, the tension shifted, a smirk on Killua's face as he gracefully raised to his feet with ease and Illumi's ghost smile faded, anyone being able to tell his aura said pissed off, but as Killua turned to head into the office, Illumi reigned it in and took control of his emotion, and the setting was back to however normal a music classroom could get after that.

"Too bad. Billy! Get up here." He called. Gon released a breath he didn't know he was holding.

"That was crazy, right?" Ponzu whispered to Gon. "What was that about?"

"I don't know. But Killua definitely didn't want to sing…" He whispered back.

"Yea, but he could have said no, like he does to any other teacher… Maybe because it was his brother?"

"I dunno… but I know I would have volunteered to sing myself if nothing happened. Killua didn't want to sing…" He mumbled again. He did want to know why Killua didn't want to sing, and he wanted to sing with Killua, but if Killua was so uncomfortable with singing, Gon would never force him, not if it meant making him look like he was back in a corner like a vulnerable animal. Gon screwed his eyes shut, the image of a trapped Killua, his back on the wall as he looked back at the intense young man with black eyes burned into his memory. He never wanted to see him that scared again. Anger and a flare of protectiveness course through him briefly before releasing a calming breath. It's alright. Gon looked back at the closed office door. He's alright for now.

-o0o0o0o0-

Killua sighed through his nose as to not sigh through the phone… too audibly.

"You're asking the wrong person…" He replied bored.

"Huh? Isn't this Killua Zoldyck?" A man on the other side said.

"Yea." He replied.

"Than you are the right person! We've heard and seen big things about you! We want you to sing the national anthem for an opening baseball game! This is huge for someone your age!"

"I think you're trying to blow this out of proportion to try and get someone of high caliber to do something for you. That's beneath me. But like I said…" He sighed into the phone this time, and peaked at the two teachers from the corner of his eye carefully. "You're asking the wrong person. I have no say, even if I wanted to do, it if my parents, also acting as my agents, don't say I'm doing it" He weighed his words carefully in his mouth before speaking again. "You'll have to call them if you want me to do it. You'll have your answer and you can tell me the details about what I need to do should they say yes." He said, a slight nod in approval of what he said himself. That'll work.

"Ah… ah, but you know you could just ask them if it's something you want to do…" He whimpered. This joke, Killua thought, his twitching eye hidden as he had his back turned towards the teacher. He already asked my parents and they said no! And now he's trying to get me to say yes so I can go beg them to do it?! How old does he think I am? Does he know how many- urg! He weighed words carefully again.

"Ok… I'll wait for your call on what they say." He said. He heard shifting on the other end and could practically visualize the confusion on the man's face.

"Huh?!" He finally let out.
"Yup… alright. 5 minutes? Great. Bye." He chirped, and hung up, done using the tool. He turned around with a controlled expression schooled on his face and they straightened up at attention.

"Well, what happened? That was from the Major league baseball people! What'd they want?" The Harmony 404 teacher asked. Killua cleared his throat and shrugged a shoulder in the direction of the phone by his hip.

"He wanted me to sing for a baseball game. I told him to ask my parents, they book all my gigs and concerts and make sure I get paid. He said he'll call back in a few once he asks them, with either yes or no. Mind I wait in here? Shouldn't take too long." Killua asked, making sure to feign ignorance even though he knew that the fool wouldn't call back. The teachers looked at each other and shrugged.

"Sure, right? Shouldn't take long. Make yourself comfortable, I'll go check on my class." Mrs. Richette said, addressing the other teacher at the end before slipping out.

"Yup. I'll just be grading papers and answering emails. Don't mind me." 404 said. Killua let out an inaudible sigh of relief his plan worked. Not that he wasn't really expecting it not to, he's a great impulsive liar with a silver tongue that could get him out of most situations. Even if the teachers said no and to go, he'd just pretend as he exited he was called to the front office and promptly skip the rest of class. There's no way he's going back out there. Of course his brother was up to something. He's always up to something. Killua let his back hit the wall and he slid down it, simultaneously slipping on his head phones. He pulled out his phone and played his music, letting his muscles relax with the beats. Now he only had to worry about what Illumi will do for this at home… and that email…

"...screw me…" He muttered, feeling his chest twist in that familiar feeling, a sense of dread gripping his muscles, but the music left his body feeling lax, beating through the headphones, the bass bringing him to peace... so he suppose he'll be fine…

~Oh, it's just me, myself and I

Solo ride until I die

Cause I got me for life

(Got me for life, yeah)

Oh I don't need a hand to hold

Even when the night is cold

I got that fire in my soul...

Gon hopped up from his criss-cross form on the floor in a gleeful bound after the Physical Training assistant teacher dismissed them.

After Killua left the Harmony class and the rest of class listened to beautiful paired singing and some trio harmonizations, the bell rang and everyone filtered out, but Gon waited until Killua came out the back office. Killua came out, almost as cautiously as a kitten in an unpredictable situation and saw Gon, and it may have been his wishful thinking, but he could swear he saw Killua relax as he met his eye. His body became tense again when his gaze moved passed Gon and towards the classroom behind him. Gon noticed it and turned around only to see Illumi was still in the room as well. Gon stepped forward to block Illumi's view from Killua, and when he turned back around to see if Killua relaxed once more, he only saw the tail end of his flannel shirt and white tuffs of his hair as he
slipped out. Gon wasn't mad, he was too relieved he got the chance to escape his brother. He didn't know his situation, but he wasn't dumb enough not to notice he wasn't comfortable around his brother. Gon already knew Killua and him had the next class together so he knew he would be able to check up on him then.

That's when he found his last class for Mondays and Thursdays was Physical Training. Basically P.E. in his old school and it was so they didn't have limp students with only good voices and no strength. Since it was the first day, the assistant teacher said the actual physical training teacher wasn't there yet, caught up in finishing summer stuff, and that it was a free day, they just needed to go over the year's rubric and measure everyone for a uniform.

Gon looked around as other students also got up. Some went to line up to get measured by the teacher while others moved to sit against walls and play with their phones to get measured later. Gon looked to the back of the spacious gym where he last saw Killua and saw him slipping out the back door that led to the running track.

Gon pouted. He probably wasn't going to come back in until the last few minutes to get measured then leave. Oh well, he'll make sure he's ok tomorrow… But for now… There is a free day! This will be boring if he didn't do something. He noticed Kurapika was in this class, sitting off and seeming to practice some instrument with his fingers ghosting the air. Gon looked around and saw Ponzu as well with some other student, red hair and a poop looking wrap on his head, his clothes also seemed middle eastern inspired. Gon looked up in thought. What should he… He lit up with a gasp. He knew what to do!

Gon ran over to Kurapika.

"Hi! I'm Gon!" He said, skidding to a stop in front of the elegant blond. He lifted his eyes up to Gon's form and raised a questioning eyebrow. He seemed friendly enough but sort of condescending, Gon noted. But he could change that… right?

"Mh… Hi, Gon. I already knew your name, I noticed you in our vocal training class. I'm Kurapika." He said in a soft voice that betray his own angelic musical ability. Like Killua! But Killua's sounded more charismatic, and Gon could listen to it all day.

"I know! Melody told me!" Gon said, rocking on his heels. Kurapika brought his head up to look at Gon fully, a questioning look on his face.

"Melody?" Kurapika repeated, like something foreign. "Who's that?" He asked. Gon felt his eyebrows furrow slightly in frustration. There was a girl vouching for his attention, just to be good enough for him to talk to and he doesn't even know her name. He'll deal with that later.

"Aha, anyway…" Gon decided to just ignore the comment for now before he got defensive. "I wanted you to play with me." He said. Kurapika's eyes widened as he regarded Gon with surprise.

"P… play?" He asked dumbly.

"Ya! Yay, ok, come on!" Gon said, taking that hesitation as an yes. He pulled on his arm and yanked him forward along with him.

"W-wah! Hey, I didn't say I would!" Kurapika gasped out as he hopped on one foot to keep from losing his balance after Gon.

"It's fine! It'll be fun! You weren't doing anything anyways!"

"I-I was so! I was practicing my cello piece." He countered, following Gon regardless and flushing
as he noticed people were looking their way.

"It's fine! We'll be playing a game, so it'll be more fun! I just need you to play for now, ok? One game?" He asked, whirling on him and giving him puppy eyes. Kurapika's eyebrow twitched before he looked away.

"E-er… fine, I suppose, just a couple of games…" He was never really going to deny him the games, Gon had caught his interest in class so he wanted to talk with him more anyway. He just wanted to let Gon know he wasn't doing nothing and that it wasn't boring… it was… practice!

"Yay!" Gon cheered before turning back around and continued towards his original destination. Kurapika peaked over his shoulder and looked where he was heading. Kurapika noticed the male as his partner for vocal training, but the female he did not know.

"Ponzu! Play with us!" Gon asked as he approached, interrupting the duo's conversation. They both jumped and increased the space they had between them, flustered. The male looked over and cocked an eyebrow.

"Kurapika? E-er, who's this? Ponzu…?" He asked, floundering. Ponzu blinked, slightly fazed herself then shook her hands rapidly in front of her.

"N-no! It's not what it seems! Er, I mean, this is a friend, his name is Gon, I met him in Harmony! Apparently, he's making leeway on being friends with Killua." She explained, a flush on her cheeks as she gestured to Gon.

"Eh, really?" the guy asked, looking around as though to find and seek Killua's confirmation.

"Ah- wait-wait-wait! We should do this properly!" She chuckled, and stood before taking his hand and bringing him up with her. She pushed him towards Gon. "Introduce yourself."

"Hi, I'm Gon!" He said, releasing Kurapika's hand to offer his greeting to the new male.

"Oh, er, I'm Pokkle." He said, taking the hand and giving it a firm shake. "I'm actually in your vocal training class with Kurapika. I'm his partner for the class project." He introduced. Gon's mouth popped open.

"Ah! I didn't even notice! Nice to meet you!"

"It's ok, you can't remember everyone just because they were in your class once." Pokkle dismissed with a wave of his hand.

"Oh!" Gon said, pulling Kurapika forward and guided him towards Ponzu. "Now you two introduce properly!"

"O-oh…" Kurapika murmured nervously, and Gon couldn't help to think it was very adorable and vulnerable with how he was acting. The way he composed himself seemed to be like he wanted to be seen as an adult and being thrust into the situation he wasn't quite comfortable with, he seemed more his age and quite cute. "I'm Kurapika. I'm Pokkle's partner for the vocal training class, and apparently Gon noticed me from class and demanded I play games with him." He introduced.

"Right, he said something like that as you came over, right? I'm Ponzu, I only met Gon during Harmony, but he's really something amazing! I don't mind playing games with him, he's really fun to be around! It's interesting!" She retracted her hand and twirled on her heel to face Gon. "I'm real interested in knowing what games you had in mind!"
"Games? Isn't that a little childish?" Pokkle asked.

"So?" Gon asked back, shrugging his shoulders. "Even if it's childish, if it's fun and we all enjoy ourselves, what's the problem?" Gon asked. Pokkle flushed as he considered what he was saying.

"I get it…" He admitted.

"Anyway, It's P.E. but it's free day! We shouldn't just lay around all period all bored. We should do what we can! So! The first game I thought to play is a game I learned from a Korean show! It's called Beep-Bo!" He exclaimed. The other three listened intently to the teen that seemed to captivate everyone around him and demand attention.

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Killua checked the time on his phone lazily, his leg swinging over the branch of the low tree he was perched on. He paused the music and leaped down to the ground with graceful movements. He shoved his hands in his pockets and began his stroll back to the gymnasium building across the track field. Now he can finally go home and hide in his room until his parents bother him about vocal training or rehearsal for some concert 3 months away. It's be a bit boring, but as long as he just immersed himself in the music like some sort of meditation, the day should pass soon enough. And then he'd wake up and do it again… fun.

He pushed open the door and was met with a loud roar of laughter and screams. Killua's eyes remained wide in shock as he opened the door completely to let himself in and took in the scene before him. Almost everyone in the gym was lined up on either side of the spacious room holding hands in a line, and their laughter was just dying down. Once they had composed themselves, a student from the line farthest away from Killua yelled out, "Red rover, red rover, send Gon right over!", and the students bursted out in laughter as Gon pretended to swoon from his position in the line closest to Killua.

"Again?!!" He cried out cheerfully. "Alright, this time I'm gonna break it!" He said, and backed up, comically pretending that those holding his hands were a slingshot to release him. He stuck his tongue out in determination and eyed someone, then Kurapika yelled out from the other line, "No, Gon, NO! Not again!" He cried out, trying to keep the laughter out of his voice.

"Don't worry Kurapika! We won't let go!" A student to his left said.

"Gooo!" Gon cried out in a steady high note and bolted towards the clasped hands between them, those closest to the students targeted letting out squeals as Gon got closer. He ran into the bond and it lasted maybe a second before Kurapika and the student's hands were split apart by Gon's run. The gym split into two cries of joy and despair and Gon joyously did a skipping dance back to the line he came from with Kurapika and the student in tow.

"Nooo! Kurapika, come back!"

"Tommy~ You were our rock! We'll lose without you!"

"All we wanted was for Gon to be on our side!" The line said, reaching hands out as though it could change the outcome. The other line received Gon with high fives, back pats and cheers.

"Whoo! We can do this! It's our turn!" Someone yelled out and the lines quieted as they waited for the next person.

"Red rover, red rover…" The girl said, pausing in thought. Before she could finish however, the final dismissing bell rang and the whole gym let out groans of dissatisfaction.
"Awww!"
"Oh no!"
"That sucks, we were winning too!"
"Oh, man, I can't wait until the next free day!"
"If we get one…"
"Bye, Gon! This was great!"
"Yea man, you're so fun! See you!"

The students began gathering their bags from the side of the gym walls where they left it as they began filtering out the building from the front doors.

"Bye! Bye!" Gon waved, still full of energy, 3 students Killua didn't know remained by his side. Killua's mouth had trouble closing. What did he just witness? Well, obviously they were all playing games, but why? Killua never saw them do anything like that, too absorbed with doing something productive in their free time or, in some kids' situation, anything except their business since it gets crammed down their throat enough at home.

Killua was barely able to put one foot in front of the other as he recovered from what he saw, unconsciously heading towards Gon. He did it, didn't he…? What the hell happened? Gon turned to talk to the blond to his right and saw Killua from over his shoulder and he lit up, making Killua freeze in his tracks. How can anyone look at someone else so happily, like he was his whole world. He stopped that line of thought as his face heated up slightly from the idea that Gon thought that of him, him, he didn't even know him. But now, Kurapika turned as he noticed someone else had caught his attention.

"Killuuuaa!" Gon cried out, elated at finally seeing the bright blue eyed boy. And with his cheeks flushed, he looked even cuter than before, making Gon feel even happier at the sight of him. He rushed past Kurapika, and Killua's eyes widened as he barely registered he should avoid this collision, taking a stumbling step backward.

"I-idiot!" He stammered as Gon rushed him before swallowing him up in a huge hug. Kurapika, Ponzu and Pokkle chuckled at the uncomfortable Killua held in Gon's bright arms. He flushed as he noticed the other three laughing at him.

"S-stop, get off, what the hell happened in here?" He asked, planting a firm hand on Gon's cheek and prying him off.

Gon pouted as he was separated. "Oh, Killua, I missed you so much, I wish you were here to play with us! I bet it would have been 10 times as fun!" He whined, grabbing Killua's wrists in a pleading manner.

"Huh?!"

"Gon didn't want to sit around for the free day so he asked us to play games with him." Ponzu said, stepping forward with the other two students.

"It started out just the four of us playing this numbers game called Beep bo, where you say beep bo for the number 3 and any multiple of 3. It was difficult, and, well… attention getting. We soon got a little audience and when Gon changed games to 'one person came,' they asked to join. With all the
laughter and fun we were having, soon more people were coming to join." Pokkle explained after.

"We must have played over 5 games. We played untangle, we played freeze tag," Kurapika tried to list off.

"Freeze tag was my favorite! I want to play it with you, Killua!" Gon said squeezing Killua's wrists for his attention, Gon had never took his eyes off the white haired boy even though Killua's eyes followed those who spoke. Gon didn't know why he couldn't bear looking away from Killua, it was like he wanted to commit Killua's beautiful visage to memory so he didn't miss him so much anymore. When Killua's eyes flickered to Gon's as he spoke, Gon got a wash of goosebumps over his body and he seemed unable to breath back in. He really was beautiful, and he felt his face heat up slightly.

"S-stop looking at me like that!" Killua snapped, and pulled his wrists from Gon. What was wrong with this school? Even if Killua was there, he wouldn't play with Gon, it was a useless endeavor that wouldn't lead to anything but being tired and sweaty.

"I think people would have stayed after to keep playing with Gon, but I know everyone has heavy schedules to keep up with practice and concerts. Including myself. This was fun Gon, I was right to be interested in you, I'll definitely keep my tabs on you." Kurapika sighed out, putting a hand on his chest then let a small bow out. "Goodbye. Maybe we'll have classes together tomorrow." He turned to leave. Killua bristled before he took Gon's wrist this time and pulled him close enough to speak quietly while still being heard.

"Interested? He's interested? What does he mean- what is he talking about?" He asked Gon in a harsh whisper. Gon giggled at the flustered Killua.

"No," he said, waving at Killua. "He told me he noticed me in Vocal Training and wanted to talk to me anyway," Gon explained. And I did too, and now that we're friends, I can call phase one complete! Gon thought to himself. Killua leaned back, giving Gon his space back, although there was still a scrutinizing glint in his eyes.

"Yea, ok…" He said. Pokkle and Ponzu turned away too.

"Yea, we'll be heading out too! Bye Gon!" She said, and Gon turned around to wave bye to them as well.

"Well, this was a great first day," Gon said, turning back to Killua, and Killua blinked, realizing they were the only ones left in the gym except for the shuffling and closing up assistant teacher. Why does he suddenly feel so nervous? "The best part was meeting you."

Oh, that's why. This guy doesn't have a filter. Killer let his bangs fall in his face as a fierce blush fell over his cheeks.

"I said… We're not friends!" He bit out, raising his head when he believed he got his face under control. Gon kept that same smile on his face as though Killua didn't just say something dismissive and hurtful.

"That's fine if you don't think that now. I still think the best part of my day was meeting you." Gin replied without skipping a beat. Killua swallowed a strangled noise then backed up a couple steps, feeling like he was a little too close to Gon and the air between them was a little too warm.

"Idiot. Don't you have somewhere to be?" He bit out in a strained voice. Gon looked up in thought.

"Mhh… no, I don't!" He said smiling.
"Well, I do, so… bye!" He said, a fake pleasant smile on his face and he turned to go.

"Wait, Killua!" The assistant teacher called after him, looking up from a clipboard she had in her hand. Killua turned back around as did Gon. "You never took your measurements. We'll need it as soon as possible to get tailored gym uniforms for everyone by Thursday."

Killua opened his mouth to say something then remembered he did want to get in a little before the end of class to get his measurements taken in time to leave immediately after, but got distracted by the games and Gon.

"Right." He said gruffly, and shoved his hands in his pockets as he turned back to the teacher. Gon moved to follow him, but Killua said without even turning back, "Go home, Gon." Gon pouted, but turned back around. Killua turned around after Gon had turned, a pissed look on his face having expected Gon not listen and follow, but it fell after he saw Gon was leaving. As I asked him to… Killua thought. So why do I feel so disappointed? Did I actually want him to stay? Ridiculous. Or maybe I wanted him to put up more of a fight?

Don't be stupid. No one would really care that much about you when you was being so mean to the only person who looked at you so.. Brightly! He thought. You just allowed him to feed your ego instead of tuning him out like you were taught... Killua turned back around to the teacher and held out his arms at his side like an airplane as she pulled out the measurement tape.

His hand buzzed a little numbly and he wished he had his music in his ears.

Gon wanted to wait for Killua and walked him home, maybe show him his own even, though Killua told him not to, but then he remembered he wanted to surprise Killua with chocolates. He very well couldn't just swing by the chocolate store and ask Killua to 'wait outside, by the way, it has nothing to do with you, even though you're like obsessed with chocolate!'

Gon jogged down the sidewalk towards the plaza in town. He passed a couple stores that he's passed a bunch of times before heading to his old high school when he skidded to a stop in front of the chocolate store, a sweat drop going down his face.

"I don't have any money…" He realized. He started up again and continued jogging down the sidewalk he was heading down, knowing he'd reach his apartment complex soon. The plaza and strip stores began to dwindle away far and few in between, more housing complexes materializing as he ran. Then he began to climb the steps of a beige apartment building. He stopped on the third floor and opened the door labeled 306.

"Mito?" He called experimentally. He knew sometimes she came home early or on break, but he didn't see the car. But he still wanted to make sure. He removed his boots at the small tile flooring in front of the door and slipped on the green slippers to move about the house. He had to find that money Mito-san left for him to buy food so he could use it to buy Killua that chocolate! He could just eat whatever leftovers Mito said she had in the fridge for him to heat up.

He looked on the counter, peaking into the cookie jar, swiping a cookie before closing the lid, checking the Kotatsu table in the middle of the living room, lifting a couple of Mito's magazines to try and find the money. He put his hands on his hips as he gave the room a once over. He wondered if he should check his room too, but would Mito really put it in there? He blinked as he looked at the small bar table by the door, then blushed embarrassed. It was right there pressed slightly underneath a glass flower vase by the door.

"Ahaha, I overlooked that…" He chuckled and moved back to the door, removing his slippers and
sitting down to pull back on his boots. He grabbed the plastic reusable tote bag from under the bar table then swiped the money from under the vase and moved out the door. He quickly made his way down the steps, jumping down the last few, then jogged back to where the chocolatier shop was.

He stopped in front of the store again.

"Ah! I forgot to ask what chocolates Killua likes!" Gon stressed, hands in his hair. He paced in front of the store a few moments then stopped with an idea. "Oh! I still have Zushi's number! I can text him and ask him if he knows!" He said, and whipped out the cell phone, finding Zushi's number on the phone. He punched the question in on the phone then meandered inside to wait for the reply.

The smell of the store was intoxicating, and Gon breathed it in. He didn't like super sweet chocolates so he preferred the dark chocolates, although not too many at a time. Even though he didn't like chocolates, he wondered what he'd do if Killua offered to feed him some, especially since he liked it so much.

He imaged Killua, with his face flushed like when he saw him earlier in the gym and maybe a smudge of chocolate on the corner of his lips from eating so many himself, and holding up a light colored chocolate on the tips of his long elegant fingers, and he'd ask-

He jumped as the phone in his hand vibrated, and he realized he was dazing off, staring off into a chocolate display. He shook his head, determined not to even think about remembering what he was thinking about.

He opened his phone to check the message and focus.

Chocorobots. He's always eating those.

"Choco… robots?" Gon repeated aloud experimentally. He raised his head and swung his head around to scan the store for the chocolates. He found them closer to where the children's chocolates are, although they were on the top shelf. He cocked his head at the strange sweet's wrappings, really shaped as a robot. But then he saw the price.

"Ah…!" He cried out sheepishly. "Ah… I can probably just get him a single one…" He chuckled. At least he knew Killua had such expensive taste. But he supposed when his family was as popular and rich as it was, he could afford how many of these as he wanted. Gon went over to the front counter.

"Is there singles of those chocolate robots up there?" He asked, folding his arms onto the counter. The clerk looked up perkily.

"No! You buy them 5 in a pack, and you get a chance to get a rare robot toy in one!" She said. "Like buying trading cards. You can't just buy a single trading card!"

Gon frowned, and the girl checked out the rugged boy. "You buyin' them for yourself?" She asked, leaning on the counter herself. Gon smiled back, unaware of her flirting.

"No, I'm getting them for a friend." Gon answered. The girl's smile twitched.

"A girl?" She asked. Gon shook his head, a fond smile on his face.

"It's more like someone who wants to pretend he's not my friend right now. But he loves chocolate, so I'm hoping getting his favorite kind will get him to like me better!" He explained.

"Oooh!" She said, twirling her hair. "So, there's no girl in the picture?" She asked.
"What picture?" He asked. She blinked.

"I… ya, you can't buy them single pack." She gave up and turned back around to attend to whatever she was doing before. Gon blinked at the sudden end of the conversation. He rubbed the back of his head.

"Er, thanks… I guess I'll have to buy it later…" He said, turning around. *I'll just ask Mito for more money when she gets home.* He exited the store and counted the money he had with him.

"I'll need a bento for tomorrow… I'll need ingredients. I might as well buy some to prepare my lunch tonight!" Gon jogged deeper into plaza to find the local grocery store.

"I'll definitely get Killua his favorite chocolates!" He cheered out, a skip in his step.

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Killua sighed as he entered his house, his bookbag slung over one shoulder. He walked down the main hallway, the walls luminescent as the lights reflected off the black paint and white marble floors. That measurement thing took longer than he thought, but he also thought that old assistant was taking her time since he was the last one with no one else waiting on her to take their measurements next.

But he was home now. Maybe he could take a snack up to his room, maybe a chocolate pudding, then if his parents asked him to sing, he could use it as an excuse and to wait a while longer. If no one bothered him, he'd stay in his room all day.

Killua peeked up through his eyelashes and saw the music booth room was cracked open. That was never a good sign. His ears piqued, trying to discern if there were any noises coming from the room. When he didn't hear anything, he relaxed, figuring there was nothing to worry about. As he passed the large double doors, he glanced inside to try and determine why the doors were opened, but he was stopped in his tracks before he could slip by.

"Killu! There you are, we've been waiting!" An annoyingly high voice crooned out. Killua's eyes widened before he rolled his eyes. *Right. He stepped back into sight of the room.*

"What's going on immediately after school?" Killua asked, propping the door further open with his foot and leaning against the other doorframe charismatically. He scanned the rest of the room to quickly assess the situation. His mother, wearing sleek uni-lense sunglasses and a women professional suit, stood behind the soundboard while Illumi and his other older brother, Milluki were standing in the sound booth. Milluki was on his phone, looking quite disgruntled and… Killua narrowed his eyes in Illumi's direction, Illumi looked quite smug and pleased with himself.

"Oh, Illumi's such a hard working idol, he suggested himself that you three work on harmonizing today! Oh, he's so sweet, looking out for his younger brother's vocal practice!" The mother said in a voice that could only suggest she could hit the highest of notes while singing.

"Ya! And you kept us waiting, Killu!" Milluki whined, shoving his phone in his back pocket as he pushed himself off the wall. "Let's hurry up so I can go eat."

Killua would've replied with something snarky if he wasn't too busy trying to laser Illumi into flames. The aforementioned refused to meet his eye, but didn't keep the victory out of his glint. He threw his bag down across from his left shoulder to the right wall as he walked into the booth, never removing his eyes from Illumi.

Of course he'd get mother to order him to sing with him. He was so spiteful and petty. Just cause he wouldn't harmonize with him.
As he entered, Illumi picked up Killua's soundbooth headphones and held it out to Killua who snapped it up without trying to seem to be rude. He didn't want to deal with his mother and plus, he knew Illumi would get him back for being rude later as well. Killua removed his own silver headphones and gently placed it to hang on the sheet music stand with care, which Milluki embarrassingly rubbed at the back of his neck at the action, before placing the large plush black headphones over his feathery hair, one speaker pushed back from his ear to hear outside instruction.

"We'll sing the usual warm up, Killua, you're lead." The mother instructed from outside the booth. "Hai…" Killua droned bored, but heard Milluki 'tsk!' next to Illumi.

He used to love harmonizing with his family, it gave him goosebumps when he first started out. They sounded like a powerful orchestra with only 3 people and the harmonizations sounded angelic. If they sounded great on their own, together it was blessings. As he grew older, he was constantly told, mostly by his mother, how he was the greatest of all the siblings, he began getting more leads and melodies instead of backup and harmonies, his brothers, more specifically Milluki, began resenting him for it, and he grew bored. They were forced to sing everyday, and the feeling was lost. It was no longer fun, and no emotions were put forth. Just beautiful, hollow voices. But he supposed it didn't matter to his parents, as long as it was beautiful.

Killua knew he wouldn't ever find the feeling again, not the way the school did it. But he'll sing like he was trained, and he'll perform as he was paid. There was no other life or option. Killua shuffled the papers in front of him and picked out the usual warm-up. Even though he memorized it already, as all their memories were tuned to be better than most, he preferred to look at it as a way to distract himself. It was something to look at as you waited for it to end. The measurements could almost be used as a countdown for when the song ended. That's what Killua looked forward to most now when he sang. When it ended.

"Ready? From the top! One, and two, and…!" The mother sang out, waving her hand like a conductor.

"*Oooo~..." The three voices rang out in perfect harmony.

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**Featured Music:**

*Me, Myself and I G-Eazy, Bebe Rexha

*Beginning vocals of Nsync O Holy Night

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Chapter End Notes

Yay! That was my first chapter! I hope you all liked it!

I have to tell you, I am a girl of good tastes, but also very picky. To be honest... I don't have a lot of songs in my repertoire. I have a few I think are distinctly Killugon and will be inputting them, but I need help! I need more song choices that are probably way better than the songs I have planned.

Please review with any songs you guys think any of the characters listen to or songs you
think describe the characters. I promise, I will listen to every single one of them, and if I think you are so correct, like YES OF COURSE GON SINGS THIS or whatever, you bet your bottom dollar I will find a way to PUT THAT SONG THE HELL IN HERE! It would help that if when you gave me the songs, you provide who you had it in mind for and for when, like (i.e. This is Gon's 'I realize I'm in love with Killua!' song! =33)

On that note, I am working on a youtube list up to have all the songs (the specific songs used in the song, if cover songs or certain versions/remixes) to be available to listen to when it comes up in the chapters. I'll put the youtube list on my tumblr listed below.

Also on that note, I will be updating everyone month. I have certain chapters pre-written (a lot of them) but if I look up a song I like and think it would work better in certain parts I've already written, I'll need time to edit it into there, and also, I will need to reread through the chapters once more to edit before posting and, as this one, THEY ARE LONG, I'll need time. I'm also in college, so I can't give all my time to this (no matter how much I wish this was my full-time job.)

SO! To help my lovely readers and fans out, I'll tell you the arcs I plan on writing out (I really hope I can get all of this out and not stop halfway through) along with the main characters for the arcs so you know which characters you could find songs for. And Also for you all to have hope and an idea how long this story will be:

2nd grade year;
1st semester: Winter Showcase Arc [Gon, Killua]
Winter break/Christmas Arc: Fluff, any/all preexisting characters
2nd semester: Turnt up Illumi Arc [Illumi, Hisoka, Amane]
Summer break Arc: Fluff any/all existing characters

3rd grade year;
All year: Connective Short Story Arc (fluff) [Gon, Killua, Leorio, Kurapika]
2nd semester: Alluka Heights Arcs [Killua, Alluka, Gon]

4th grade year;
1st semester: Engagement Arc [Killua, Gon, Retsu]
2nd semester: World Star Arc/ Graduation Arc [Gon, Killua- er... well, all the characters read up to this point are fair game]

Seriously though! Don't read into any of the titles too seriously! They are Arc names for an idea of what they'll be about, but I think I can guarantee that's not all there is to it, but knowing the gist, go ahead and submit suitable songs.

I also have a tumblr where these things can be submitted, where I'll be posting my own fanart (Cause I'm a dork) and short stories/ behind scenes: (https://wonderlandmonkeypuzzle.tumblr.com/) Or just go ahead and look up my blog 'Doodled Mind- Drool'

I'm sorry this was so long and rambly, but I guess that what first chapters are!
Remember to review, this is my first time trying to post on Ao3, so please tell me any formatting errors you see or if any other hints and tips for a new story writer on Ao3! I hope you all enjoy the ride! It should be a long one.

=UPDATE= (5/3/2017)
I have a new side blog apart from my main blog of Doodled Mind Drool called HunterXAU (@twila-star). It'll be entirely dedicated to HunterxHunter and where I will primarily update information on Bells and Whistles and other AU stuff I have. Follow that blog or just go visit it for more stuff. I'll post stuff like behind the scenes, one shots and fanart of my own story because I'm a dork. Thanks again for reading!
Hey, back like a creep! :)

Awesome, glad we still got people on board. Remember, I'm totally open to hearing song suggestions, I want this to be an experience for everyone reading! On that note, remember you don't have to listen to all the songs posted, but there are a couple songs I will put astridges (***) by, that means it's probably be best to look up this specific song if nothing else. I'll specify why I would want you to look it up in the actual section and by the astridge. The compiled list so you don't have to look it up is on my tumblr, HunterXAU!

Yes, I may have forgotten to warn you... This story can get a bit cringy... it's about singing and to blow it out of proportion!? Why miss the chance! Let's go!

I want to thank my editor for all her help and putting up with all my whining that my story isn't really good, which she promptly helped me with: Canzie (Her tumblr is canzie-gum and whats-wrong-aniki)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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**Musica Academy**

For the musical elite, anyone serious about being a World Star or Idol, a diploma from this school is the ticket to fame. Anyone who graduates from the school are almost guaranteed a fantastic career in the entertainment industry. People from the surrounding regions flock to enter the prestigious school.

Great Talent, great wealth, reputation, or connections are the only way in, some applying for years and never even getting chance to audition.

There is no age limit of students or of school year standings, ranked only by talent and completion of required criteria of every year. This school is the crème de la crème of the crème de la crème, creating what everyone truly calls World Stars.

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**Chapter 2: The Buck stops Here**

Gon walked up the broad walkway that led to the steps of the academy, greeting everyone he walked past. Most people happily greeted him back after hearing interesting and good rumors of him yesterday, and then the others that played with him in gym considered Gon a good friend and greeted him joyously. The bright boy was quite popular even though it was just the second day.

"Or so I've heard…" A pink haired man said, standing by one of the trees that flanked either side of the school's entrance. The long haired blackhead regarded the boy as he skipped up the steps.
"I've heard things myself… reports from my fans… That he's trying to befriend… Killu?" Illumi asked Hisoka, as though the concept of people trying to get close to his adorable little brother was foreign. Hisoka looked over at his musically trained friend with a slick subtle smile before letting his eyes slip closed in mischief.

"I dunno… But I do know that one's pretty interesting. I'll keep my eye on him and see if he really deserves it though…" Hisoka commented. Illumi frowned.

"Killua doesn't need friends distracting him from his goal of being a World Star. He'll be the best of all the Zoldycks and bring great fame to the Zoldyck name. None of us needs friends…" Illumi said, almost in thought. Hisoka gave his friend a deadpan stare.

"What does that make me, Illumi?" Illumi looked over at the muscular man next to him with a appraising look but then just decided to turn away with a swish of his hair, heading into school. Hisoka's face dropped into one of surprise.

"Illumi? Illumi?!" Hisoka cried out, pushing off the tree and following after, annoyed.

Gon walked through the halls on the way to his locker, looking left and right to find that striking hair color he couldn't get out of his mind. Others said morning to him inside as well, and he absent mindedly replied but he was too focused on finding his friend at the moment. He was so lost in his goal he almost didn't acknowledge Zushi calling out 'morning' for Gon's attention.

"Gon!" Zushi cried more forcefully when he didn't give more than a floating greeting and ran to catch up to the speedwalking boy. Gon blinked and whirled around, recognition lighting his face.

"Oh! Zushi! Sorry, Hi!" Gon said as Zushi fell into step with him, and they continued to his locker.

"Man, what were you thinking about for you to be spaced out like that?" Zushi asked, chuckling.

"It wasn't so much that I was thinking, but that… Hey, do you know where I can find Killua?" Gon asked as they reached his locker. He opened it and took off his bag to transfer his camo bento box into the metal cavity.

"No, Gon, I tell you, no one other then you continued to try and befriend Killua after the 2nd or 3rd time they were told to buzz off. No one exactly has tabs on him, so the only time people see him is when he comes for class…" Zushi shrugged. Gon sighed.

"Aw, I was hoping to talk to him before class so I didn't get in trouble for trying to talk with him. Ah, maybe I can get him to sit next to me?" He put a finger to his chin in thought. "Oh, wait, then I wouldn't get anything done…" He muttered under his breath and Zushi chuckled.

"Wow, I don't know what you did after first period Gon, but you seem hell bent on befriending him, and so many people have you on their radar now. I hope everything goes well for you this school year." Zushi sighed, feeling overwhelmed just knowing what Gon planned on for the year. Gon gave him a bright rejuvenating smile.

"Thanks Zushi! I hope you work hard this year too! We don't have any classes together today do we?" He asked. Zushi shook his head no. "Aw… well, you should know, me and Killua have every class together!" Gon gushed. "I'm so excited, it gives me so many chances to get to know Killua's true skills!" Zushi laughed.

"If he sings! I hope you get to see him sing in person one day. But you can always get recordings of his concert in the library. They're old ones from two years ago, but at least they're free because of
that. The Zoldycks don't let anything recent out if they could still make money off it. They have alot of online stuff copyrighted pretty hard too." Zushi said.

"Wow, alright, maybe I'll get around to that..." Gon nodded. He pulled out his schedule and checked where his first period was. "Oooh, Perfect pitch! Illumi was talking about that class yesterday." Gon said, waving the schedule in Zushi's face.

"Illumi? You met Illumi and he was talking to you?" Zushi asked, shoving the paper away from his face. Gon's face darkened slightly.

"Not exactly. We went to the upperclassmen's harmony class for our harmony class and he was there teaching class that day."

Zushi nodded absorbed. "That's something typical to see in classes with Zoldycks. The teachers love having such prodigies to lean on..." He said, but he was more curious why his bright disposition suddenly darkened. He waited for him to continue his anecdote to explain it.

"Well, he wanted people to sing examples of advanced harmonization, so he asked for those who aced this 'perfect pitch' class. He ended up asking Killua to sing..." Gon muttered, his voice getting deeper at the thought of that scared Killua in his memories. "I don't know what Illumi was doing, or if he even knew what he was doing to Killua, but Killua looked so uncomfortable... and Killua couldn't say no... I don't know why, but it seemed like Illumi knew this too, but asked anyways!" Gon clenched his fist, angrily. Zushi thought that Gon could go on ranting forever on how protective he was of Killua, or how scared Killua was, or how inconsiderate Illumi was, so he waved his hand in front Gon to catch his attention.

"Aah, don't worry Gon, you won't have to worry about it, right? Him and Illumi aren't even in the same grade! He's fine!" Zushi said. Gon's eyes finally lightened and gave Zushi a smile, but it seemed sad in nature.

"Thanks Zushi... but that's only during school hours. He lives with his brother... I hope he's ok outside of school..." Gon looked off as though he could see into Killua's home life. Zushi's lips trembled in the effort to say something comforting to his older friend, but nothing came to mind. Thankfully, Gon cheered himself up and faced his younger friend with a smile.

"I'll be going to class now, maybe Killua's already there, waiting for me! Thanks for the talk, see you at lunch!" Gon said, starting to jog off.

"Ah, right! See you at lunch! I'll meet you by my lockers again! You have to tell me what happens in your classes, it's always interesting!" Zushi giggled, trailing off and starting to talk more to himself as Gon got farther. He walked off towards his own class, Gon still on his mind and a smile on his face.

-Gon leaped into the room, lighting up most people's faces with smiles.

"Gon!"

"Hey, Gon!"

"Wassup man!"

Gon waved hi to everyone as he scanned the room. He knew Killua shared every class with him, Killua said so himself, so he knew he'd get to see him eventually. He was either here now or would come later like yesterday. But he saw him, in the back, he was as distinguishable as diamonds among
coals. If Gon was thinking properly, he'd probably realize that was extremely offensive to everyone else (even if most people would concur with that for most Zoldycks) but he also didn't say it aloud, so no one will be the wiser.

Killua was originally looking out the window from his back seat, his hand propping his head up, but when Killua's eyes roamed over to land that heavy gaze on him, Gon thought his heart skipped a beat.

One silver diamond shaped ear-ring winked at Gon from under Killua's feather hair, and he wore a sleeveless gray hoodie, the ever present silver and blue headphones gracing his collarbone and dark blue jeans, with faded colors down his thighs. Gon felt his mouth go dry and felt a heat settle over his cheeks as he made his way towards Killua like a mindless being with no thoughts in his head. And it was true. Gon's mind had went blank when he saw Killua, he had never seen someone look so cool, and star-like, and… gorgeous! Killua looked absolutely gorgeous today. Well, he was gorgeous yesterday too, but Gon didn't expect him to keep up the bar everyday. He truly was a charismatic star who was photo shoot fresh everyday.

Killua had heard Gon come in, how could he not when almost everyone wanted to greet him and get his attention, like he was some star or… a Zoldyck! With all those people in the room, Gon would certainly overlook him. Everyone was so nice to him, and all Killua did was push him away, as it should stay, he doesn't deserve friends, not really. And everyone was just out to use him. Once Gon realizes what Killua could do to advance himself in this academy, he'll use him just the same. That's how it is for everyone in this forsaken school: business and how to use the next person to advance their own careers. It seemed like a criteria for you to get accepted into the school, be self absorbed and self involved. But curiosity and a sadistic sense of self-loathing to see if Gon really did sit elsewhere or give someone else his attention to feed his misery caused him to look up and seek out the kid. He was surprised and not prepared when he saw Gon looking straight at him, passing all the students who wanted his attention, and with that… face!

Killua felt his eyes widen and his cheeks heat up. Gon looked at him like there was no one else in the room, in the world, or he couldn't care less that there was. (That would be a problem with the fact he was also making his way over, who knows what embarrassing thing he'd do with no regards they were in public). His expression too bright, and the morning light catching his eyes made his amber eyes glow. He didn't have that goofy smile on his face, but that slightly parted mouth, like he was a dope who was caught off guard, was no better. In fact, it made Killua super keenly self aware. Why exactly was he looking at him like that? Was there something on his face?

Gon was getting closer, and Killua leaned off his arm, tilting back in his chair, as though an unforeseen force was going before Gon and giving off pressure. He felt his cheeks heat up further as it didn't seem Gon was in the right state of mind, and most of the class was following Gon's movements, and thus the scene. And that face he was making made his chest squeeze in, what was that? Anxiety? (Yea, like he didn't get enough of that from his family), so he did the only thing he knew to do, lash out. He got out of his seat before Gon reached him, giving himself some breathing room from Gon's suffocating aura, and held up a hand.

"What the hell are you looking at, stupid?!!" He cried, cringing internally at how his voice had gone up a couple octaves as it does when he's stressed. Gon blinked, but his outburst seemed to have brought Gon out of his stupor. His smile returned tenfold from what Killua remembered it yesterday, and Gon vaguely gestured to Killua's body, making Killua's face heat up again self consciously.

"You!" Gon replied, like it was obvious. The class broke out in little murmurs and 'aws.' Everyone knew how fashion savvy the Zoldycks come in everyday, some of their wardrobe coming even from professional fashion lines they got to keep after doing a show, but most students gave up
commenting their admiration, for it was either too much to do everyday or they were rescinded their affection. Killua's arm crumpled back up to his body, his bangs falling over his red face, sharply contrasting his porcelain skin. Gon took that opportunity to continue his original task of joining Killua's side. "You look amazing!" Gon continued, eyeing him up and down like he was some mannequin. Killua snapped to and sharply shoved the heel of his hand onto Gon's sternum, causing the air to be forcefully expelled from his lungs, cutting off any more speech.

"Shut up!" Killua ground out quietly, eyeing the rest of the class to see if they were still watching. Most had gotten back to doing whatever as they let Gon be all shiny by himself. "How can you spew such embarrassing things like it's nothing." Killua glared, focusing back on Gon. Gon felt a shiver go down his spine as those crystal eyes burrowed into Gon's.

"What? It's true. You look like a true World Star already! You have piercings and everything…" Gon said, leaning to the right to see the earring in Killua's left ear more clearly. He raised a hand to touch the ear but Killua's quickly slapped it away.

"What? I can also put 6 more earrings in. 8 more if I'm tricky. It's only natural for a World star to have piercings for that pro look." Killua huffed out, crossing his arms and giving Gon the side of his face, watching from the corner of his eye. Gon's mouth slightly fell open and nodded as though learning something for the first time.

"Yea, I should get one soon… They sound like they hurt, and it seems like a lot of work to make sure it doesn't get infected and stuff…” Gon said, rubbing an ear. Killua smirked mischievously.

"They sure do, they take a drill gun, and they pop them in like a cannonball to a ship~!" He snickered and then laughed melodiously as Gon gave out a small whimper, likely imaging it.

"Moah, are you making that up, Killua?!!" Gon whined, giving him a punch in the arm. Killua recoiled, holding his arm as he laughed.

"Well, it's not far off. Haha, I can't even imagine the look on your face when you get one…” Killua let his chuckles die out, but then a contemplative look came over his features and Gon sobered quickly, leaving Killua to say what seemed to come to his mind.

"What even are you? Why are you still being nice to me? After I was so mean to you yesterday? I thought you got the message that I wasn't going to be your friend when I told you to leave me alone yesterday after gym?" Killua asked, meeting his eyes with serious musing. He was met with amber fierce eyes, a resolved smile on Gon's face.

"There's no way I'd stop trying to be your friend Killua! You're so cool and cute-"

"Haaah?!!" Killua interrupted, a blush over the bridge of his nose. Gon waved it off to continue.

"But you seem so sad all the time, and you say you don't like to sing, so there's no way I'd leave you alone when you probably need the most right now is someone else to keep you company. I want to find out why you don't like singing, and then tell you why you're wrong!" Killua listened intently after Gon seemed to speak so sincerely but his face soured when Gon spoke about proving him wrong and blah blah blah.

"You're gonna prove me wrong? You-" Killua started, challenge clearly written on his face, Gon leaning in competitively.

"Class is starting." A sharply dressed man said coming in with a clipboard under his arm. Killua and Gon blinked at each other before looking over at the clock. When did the bells ring? They didn't
even hear it. Killua shrugged and headed towards his seat. Gon looked conflicted as he hesitantly reached out for Killua's back and a whine came forth. Killua's ears perked up and he turned back around with a crooked eyebrow. Taking that as a good sign, Gon gave him a lopsided smile and gestured to the front. Killua's heart flopped around before settling down again at Gon's smile, but he forced himself to focus on what Gon was implying and scoffed away the feeling.

"No." He said, like it was obvious.

"C'mon, I wanted to sit up front, but I also wanted to sit with you." Gon explained, stepping closer to Killua.

"No, I sit back here cause I refuse to participate and I told you, we're not friends, so why would I want to sit next to you. You better hurry, this one's a strict one and you're already not in your seat." Killua said in hushed tones as the teacher set up in front. Gon smiled softly. If Killua really didn't care to be friends with Gon, he wouldn't have given him such a nice warning on the teacher and to get to his seat. He had to remember that there weren't assigned seats, so maybe one day he could get Killua at least a little closer. Gon skipped to the front and sat in a seat closer to the door.

"My name is Knov. This is Perfect Pitch 205. In this class we'll be learning how to properly and precisely hit notes during a transition. When moving from one note to the next, you shouldn't have to hit every other note on the way there unless you've developed your hatsu for that kind of singing. Most people have that kind of trouble when it comes it sharps and flats, so that's what we'll work on first." Knov began writing on the board as he spoke what they'll do for the year as a sort of hand written syllabus.

"A lot of Broadway numbers have sharply changing pitches and notes, something I compose and perform most often, so later in the year we'll sing those as practice. Sometime before or after, depending on how I gauge all of your guy's abilities, we'll be using piano notes and songs that you'll all need to imitate as precisely as the piano itself. Understand that that's often what composes of my tests and exams as well." Knov said against the board as he wrote. Some people grumbled as they copied down what he wrote.

Killua bobbed his head and looked out the window in boredom. What an easy class (as most of his were), his parents had him do this most days for warm up, imitating classical piano pieces with his voice as the instrument and hitting notes straight on was a must especially for harmonization. A pinch off and the chords were in discordance.

"For today, I'll be lecturing on different types of broadway types, musicals, and music."

Gon's head threatened to bob forward in boredom too. This class sounded interesting, but lecture? He thought he left that behind in his last school. But no, he had to pay attention, this was important, and it was something the Zoldycks, or at least Illumi, thought to be important to ace.

Gon looked up at the teacher, his notebook cracked open to write down notes. This Knov guy seemed super strict, so it was kinda funny to try and imagine him in broadway show, like The Whiz or something. He's never gotten into broadway as an interest, although many people commented he should with how loud and animated he was, but he has tried high school plays before that were fun and he should probably at least learn since it's useful for World Stars to be flexible in anything. Gon wrote down some plays Knov advised the class know about to look up later and wondered if Killua was already dying in boredom because he's knowledgeable in all this already.

Gon peaked back and saw Killua had subtly lifted his headphones so that they were still angled downwards but cupped his ears, so he was probably listening to music. Killua sure liked listening to music. He wondered what kind of music Killua liked, and if it helped to be so into music. He blinked
as he realized he was dazing off again and almost missed Knov listing off the plays they were about to listen to soundtracks from.

*Maybe it was better that Killua refused to sit with me. How distracted would I be… especially with how eye catching he is today…* Gon thought, writing down the plays, his tongue slipping out sheepishly. At the last thought, Gon felt like he didn't take in enough of Killua's look and turned to see it again. Knov had turned off the lights so everyone could see the clips better, and the lights from the window practically created a spotlight on Killua, making it look like he could start a ballad solo or something right then and there. Gon should take it picture… it would last longer than his memories. He forced himself to look forward and focus on the songs the colorful broadway characters were singing on screen.

*Focus…*

Gon made his way to the back of the classroom, Killua picking his stuff up into his slack bookbag. He looked up and a vein popped on his head.

"Seriously? I'm not walking to class with you, you shouldn't wait for me!" Killua gruffly said. Gon shook his head, that ever present smile on his face.

"You don't have to walk with me, but I'll walk with you. We're heading to the same class anyways!" Gon shrugged, giving Killua another carefree smile. Killua slumped and really began to think he was dying… This guy was too nice, it almost made Killua think he could smile like him one day. But Heaven knows Killua have tried before to make the most of his situations before and he's only got burned. He won't make the same mistake again. He straightened himself up, gave Gon a side glare and moved past him as Gon followed.

"I should get a restraining order on you." He said casually as he walked out the class, Gon by his elbow.

"You wouldn't do that." Gon piped easily. Killua's eyebrows furrowed.

"What makes you say that?" He grumbled, eyeing everyone parting for him to walk through, a weird glint in their eyes as they noticed Gon by his side.

"Mhh… you're not annoyed yet." Gon chuckled. Killua whipped his head to look at Gon.

"Huh?! In what sense of mind do you think that's true? I'm totally annoyed!" He huffed, but Gon just chuckled, his eyes closed in the action.

"It's your eyes." Gon said, opening his own and pinning Killua's with an intense and appraising gaze. Killua's breath hitched, again feeling revealed under his honest stare, and Gon finally lightened it with a bright smile. "You let alot of your emotions show through your eyes. Like yesterday, I could see when you were shutting me out because I asked you to sing." Gon explained. Killua finally recovered and managed to roll his eyes as he returned to looking ahead, approaching his locker.

"That sounds so weird, it sounds like something only you detect. No one's ever 'read' me through my eyes." Killua said, putting in his locker combination. Not hearing Gon's reply to his snarky remark, he turned around to find Gon looking around as though trying to recognize something. As Killua met his eyes, Gon's eyes lit up.

"Killua! My lockers right here!" He cheered, skipping a couple lockers down and pointing to one. Killua's jaw fell.
"Seriously? This must be some sick joke. How are you so interwoven in my life and you just got here?" Killua asked, switching out the books within his locker. Gon giggled, making his way back over to Killua.

"If this really is a joke, it's a nice one, because I get to be with you all the time!" Gon said, leaning against the locker by Killua with boyish charm. A blush fell over Killua's features before he slammed the locker shut, turning away from Gon.

"Damn, how can you say such embarrassing things with a straight face?! Come on already…" Killua grumbled, slugging his bookbag over his shoulder and marching off down the hall. Gon lit up as Killua had beckoned they go together and trotted after him.

"Yea!"

Illumi stood in the middle of the hall down from where they came from, people moving around him to keep moving. Illumi's black eyes watched as Gon skipped happily around Killua and his eyes narrowed when he saw a glimpse of Killua's face when he turned to Gon, a small smile on his lips.

"So, the rumors are true, huh? Killua doesn't need anyone distracting him…” Illumi said monotonous. He twirled around on his heel and headed down the hall to his own higher classes. He'll have to think of a way to deal with that threat to Killua Zoldyck's fame and focus.

Killua and Gon entered the auditorium and Gon almost tripped over himself trying to take it all in in a circle. The black plush seats sloped upwards from the large mahogany stage with giant red stage curtains like professional stages. There were also second story seats that surrounded the stage's three sides. It was huge.

"This is our school's auditorium?" Gon asked amazed. Killua looked at him from the corner of his eye, biting the inside of his cheek to keep a fond smile growing on his lips. He looked like a little kid getting spoils or toys. These kinds of stages were nothing, and the seats would be twice this much in a Zoldyck concert.

"Yea, it's pretty nice for a school auditorium. But you know you shouldn't get used to such a small stage." Killua said, placing his hands behind his head braggingly. Gon gaped at him, one peak at him and Killua held back his snicks.

"This is small?! That's amazing!" Then his face got a determined look and Killua openly stared at how contagious the feeling was. "I can't wait to play on a World Stage 100 times this size!" He bristled with such excitement, Killua's heart began beating a little faster.

"S-stupid, that's so weird... " He grumbled and shoved Gon slightly before sharply veering left and sitting in one of the very back rows of the auditorium. Gon spazzed out a moment but followed suit.

"Killua, this is too far! Would we even hear the teacher from this far?" He asked, a slight whine in his voice. Killua rolled his eyes.

"Of course. If they're getting World Star's to teach us, it's like a minimum requirement for their voice to be able to reach this far. In fact, what class is this, Physical Singing? That might be one of the things we work on in this class." Killua explained. Gon pouted and Killua noted with an annoyed huff.

"If you're so worried, go further up! Geez…” He muttered. Killua wondered if Gon would really move. He thought back to yesterday how Gon had left Killua to go himself without much of a second prompting and suddenly it seemed like it wasn't unlikely Gon would decide Killua's holding
him back and drop him altogether. Bringing himself out of his thoughts, his sad clear blue eyes roamed over to Gon to see what he'd decide. His eyes widened seeing Gon settled back in his chair seething.

"Geez, Killua's so impossible sometimes. There should be some kind of compromise…” He grumbled. Killua's eyes glistened.

_He stayed._

Killua scoffed out a court laugh.

"Maybe if we were friends, but seeing as you're still trying to win my favor, I don't have to do a thing for you." He chuckled, poking a teasing finger into his cheek. He quickly withdrew while laughing when Gon turned his head, playfully trying to bite him. This time when the minute and late bell rang, it was clearly heard by everyone as it echoed impossibly loud in the chamber. The teacher made himself known as his footsteps clicked on the steps of the stage and he appeared from around the curtain, coming from backstage.

He had long silvery white hair and a draping scarf covering most of his clothes.

"Welcome everyone, to Physical Singing! I am your teacher for the year, Kastro." He made a huge dipping bow and the students applauded, some fans giving squealing welcomes. Gon noted Killua was right about hearing the teacher, it was as though he was not three rows away from the front.

"Most World Stars do dance routines before or during singing. It is unbecoming to breath heavily into the mike just because your health or lungs isn't the best. So in this class we'll be doing a lot of physical things while singing or talking." Kastro boomed. "Plenty of monologues and theatrics, dance routines and numbers! I am very excited for this year, especially seeing as…" Kastro pointed off impossibly accurately, even with all the stage lights, off to the back where Killua was sitting with Gon. "... We have a Zoldyck in our midst! Let's hope you'll be participating, yes?" Kastro asked, clapping his hand. Killua playfully stuck out his tongue to mock disgust towards Gon, and Gon covered his mouth to prevent from laughing to loudly in the echo sensitive room.

"We'll see!" Killua replied, lowering his voice into his chest cavity to create a more resounding boom to carry his voice to the front as efficiently as Kastro sent it to the back. Gon thought Killua was really amazing, he was right next to him, but he didn't have to raise his voice to an annoyingly loud volume that might have hurt his ears. Would Gon learn how to do that in this school? In this class?

Kastro gave a small bow in his direction than readjusted so he could address the whole class scattered in the different seats in the auditorium.

"Now, I'd like to get a grasp on everyone's ability, so of course we'll be doing pre-test today! Not everyone will be able to finish today, so just make sure to sign up for the spot you want to perform! I'm very excited to hear this year's abilities! Now, obviously, everyone's routine will be freestyle and ad libbed, you all can work in groups or alone, but I want everyone moving during the whole number! I'll have my little assistant fairy down here in the front for you to give your song choice so when you perform you have your instrumentals." Kastro informed. Gon lit up but when he turned to Killua, he was already looking at Gon waiting for him to turn to him.

"No." Killua stated and Gon's face fell.

"Awww, come on, whyyy?" Gon whined as students got up and began signing up their songs and order of performance.
"I already told you I don't sing." Killua huffed, and crossed his arms. Gon's eyebrows furrowed downward on his forehead.

"Why, Killua! Why?!" Gon cried, grabbing Killua's arms theatrically. Killua pried him off and then flicked his forehead.

"Geez! Because-because, Because Gon! If the people listening are the only ones benefitting from my singing, why should I sing? They get a free show and they can't reciprocate it to me in exchange because I know I won't like their singing!" Killua exclaimed, and Gon blinked at him. Killua retracted back into himself and his seat and folded his arms again. "Aren't you going to sign up? You won't get to sign up for a spot you want if you don't hurry…" Killua muttered. Gon stood, slightly still dazed, then cupped his jaw as he turned deep into thought, walking down the aisle to the front.

Gon finally figured out why Killua didn't like singing… But that was a bigger problem outside of Killua. Gon couldn't just teach everyone how to be a great singer for Killua… how could Gon help Killua like singing more…? Gon made it to the front and looked down at the sheet. Not as many people signed up as Gon thought, and one scan around, it looked like most people were still trying to figure out what song they wanted to sing. The first couple of slots to go first were already taken, and Gon would have liked to go first, but it can't be helped. He should actually be thanking Killua for telling him to go up faster before he got a real bad spot. Gon pouted as he placed his song number and name to go around 4th. Killua helped him so much, and now he didn't know exactly how to help him with his problem. For Gon, singing was so much fun, but apparently it's not fun enough for Killua, that he needs to know he gets something in exchange for his voice. Maybe he sang too many concerts? Too used to having people pay to hear and praise his voice? Gon sighed as he made his way back to Killua who looked back at him with thinly veiled curiosity.

I'll finally be able to hear him sing! Killua thought as he sat up a bit straighter in his seat, Gon sitting next to him, still in deep thought. Killua waited a beat before nudging his shoulder with his own a bit. Gon looked over.

"Well…? What'd you put? What are you gonna sing?" He asked, his voice getting tight with excitement. Gon smiled lightly. Killua obviously still held some delight for singing. Maybe Gon just had to remind him… He'll have to think about this more in depth after school and make up plans to help Killua through it. For now he should just enjoy the performances before his own.

"Secret~!" Gon sang out, wagging a finger in Killua's face. Killua groaned and sank into his seat dramatically.

"That's laaaaame." He groaned, annoyed. "What place you get?" He mumbled under his breath.

"I signed up for forth. I would have wanted first, but the first three were already taken." Gon said. Killua nodded numbly.

"This is gonna be a boring class…” He muttered. Suddenly Kastro was next to Killua and they jumped, Killua scooting up next to Gon in surprise.

"I take it you won't be signing up to sing, Killua?" He asked, casually arranging his grading rubric on his clipboard. Killua and Gon exchanged looks before looking back at Kastro.

"N-no…?" He said testingly. Gon knew why he seemed so cautious. He already received a zero in Kite's class, could he afford another one? Kastro looked over with a warm smile.

"That's understandable. I know the skills of everyone of the Zoldycks, and especially their performance training is top notch. You won't learn much from this class, huh?"
Killua shook his head numbly, and Kastro nodded at the confirmation.

"Alright, want to help me grade these kids? Make fun of how they can't go 30 seconds into a song without huffing into the mike?" Killua scoffed out a couple chuckles.

"Yea…!" He said, holding out his hands, and Kastro gave him another clipboard with a grading rubric on it. Gon watched Killua's face as he scanned the paper, his tongue tip between his teeth in a half smile, concentrating. Gon was happy… he hoped he could make Killua happy too, keep him this precious.

"They'll need to be able to sing loud enough for us to hear them from back here, everytime we can't make out their words or they fade out from huffing, it's half a point off. It's a scale of 20 points." Kastro explained briefly, pointing at Killua's sheet to show where things go. Killua nodded, seemingly thrilled to have power in his hand.

"Yea, ok." He turned to Gon. "Hey, don't expect me to go easy on you. In fact, I'm gonna be twice as hard, for making me wait to hear you sing. You better be good, man." Killua said, scanning the paper again. Gon chuckled.

"I think you'll be surprised." Gon said, pointing at the paper. "You might as well put full points right now!"

Killua pulled it away, a smirk on his features. "We'll see." He began writing little notes in the margin to busy himself. A few minutes later, Kastro stood from his seat in the back next to the boys to address the whole auditorium.

"Alright, we'll get started. If you signed up on the sheet and there's no one signed up above you, you'll be moved up to go next. We'll now start with… wait a sec, the first three are singing the same song…? Oh! You guys are gonna be a group?" Kastro asked, looking back up. Three boys in front stood up.

"That's right. When we Amori brothers perform together, no one's better than us!" The leader said in the middle. They jogged up the stage as the assistant fiddled with her phone to bring up their music.

"Ha, unless literally anyone else performs…" Killua snickered. Kastro held a finger to his lip to signal him to be quiet, but a smile was threatening to spill. Killua used the clipboard to cover his mouth and smile. They entered center stage and positioned themselves in a triangular fashion.

"Ooh, ooh, ooh, yeah, yeah, yeah" They began, moving out to the front of the stage in a swishing movement. "I'm telling the world, here and now... That I'm gonna love you and love you, I take this vow (yeah)" The leader sang out while the other two brothers sang out the harmonizing vocals. They shimmered side to side, snapping in time. "You captured my heart, so long ago... Still there are some critical things, that you should know (yeah yeah yeah)" The brothers began to sing harmonization with the leader as they went into chorus, sliding across stage to switch positions.

"What is this?" Killua muttered annoyed. "They're not moving at all! I've seen people with asthma move more than these guys." Kastro barely held back a barking laugh but waved a placating hand in front of Killua.

"Wait, maybe it gets better."

"Do I give all I am... To be now and forever your man? Do I take you to be? Without question, the woman for me?" They sang, stepping in sync and domino motions. They spun around to switch position again. "Do I promise you? I do, Do I promise you? I do, I do!"
"They're not doing anything! I'm giving all of them F's!" Killua huffed, starting to cross X's on the papers. "This is not the assignment!"

Kastro sighed, and looked down at his own notes. "Yea, I can't grade them if they don't do what they're told… I can only assume they don't have the abilities which is why they're staying safe and doing what they know will sound good."

"I can only assume they're doing it to keep their fans…" Killua said, leaning over to Kastro and pointing to the groupies at the front of the stage, swaying with their words like it was a concert.

"This love has been worth…! The waiting for, This love doesn't matter to me If it's not yours!" The big one sang.

"As we become one… Through and through… I dedicate all of my life To loving you (yeah yeah yeah)!" The youngest sang before they all launched back into the climactic chorus again, and the girls squealed. The boys once again did the minimal movements.

"Do I give all I am To be now and forever your man? Do I take you to be? Without question, the woman for me. Do I promise you? I do! Do I promise you? I do, I do!"

"But they are pretty good…!" Gon said, admiring the potential World Stars as they performed. This was all impressive to Gon, it seemed like everyone in this whole school was better than him. He clenched his fist, he won't lose to them! He's a little behind from not being here for a year, but he'll show them that he could keep up with these people.

"To have and to hold, Our passions unfold, I promise a life you won't regret! For better or worse, No one can reverse the way that I've felt… Since we met, And you ain't seen nothing yet!"

"I'll marry you, Imori!" A girl cried out, causing a new wave of squeals. The other students started to become annoyed with the boys little movements and the girls fanning out over the boys.

"Do I give all I am… To be now and forever your man? Do I take you to be? Without question, the woman for me…? Do I swear all my life? We'll be happy as husband and wife?" They sang as the leader also ad libbed vocalizations and words. As the song winded down, they began to shift back into their beginning shuffling.

"Do I promise you? Do I promise you? Do I promise you? I do…!? Do I promise you? I do, I do (I, I do)." They 'Oooh'd out in vocalization before they spun back into their triangular formation and bowed to end their performance.

The class gave polite applause while their groupies gave screaming praise. The brothers tipped their hats towards the teacher as they moved off stage. Kastro politely bowed his head back but Killua pulled at his face to mock them. Killua chuckled while nudging Kastro for a laugh but he was looking down for the next person.

"Oh wait… If they were the first three, that means…" Gon thought aloud.

"You're next." Kastro confirmed, pointing at the schedule. Killua looked over at Gon mischievously.

"You better not do what they did! You'll fail just like them!" Killua said, rapping his pen on the board that had a bunch of giant red X's. He flipped his page to a new rubric as Kastro laughed at how many there actually were.

"No, I move alot more during my performances. It's more fun that way! Plus, it's one of my favorite songs! There's no way I'd be able to stay still through it. Just watch me work, Killua!" Gon bragged,
stretching his arms up above him. Killua leaned back haughtily, the pen tip on his lips.

"Ok, I'll see." Killua said. Gon jogged up to the front and began to walk up to center stage. The students welcomed him warmly.

"Hey, it's Gon!"

"Whoo! Go Gon!"

"Yea, man, Whoo! I can't wait for this one!" Gon smiled warmly to everyone, but it felt a bit tight on his lips. The only thing he was really nervous about was having his voice carry to the back of the auditorium to Killua. And impressing him. He hoped he liked his performance, it was a song he could always dance to freestyled and it was great and fun every time.

Gon looked up at the lights and he felt his heart thumping with that familiar great excitement and he suddenly felt lighter than air, ready to give his best.

"Alright, go ahead!" Gon said with a wink. The girl played the upbeat music and with it, Gon started tapping his foot. The music revved and people already began to clap. Gon's head snapped up and he began to bellow out the words.

"I got bills I gotta pay! So I'ma gonn' work work work every day! I got mouths I gotta feed So I'ma gonn' make sure everybody eats! I got bills!"

"All these bills pile up my desk They looking like a mount!" Gon threw his hands out to mime a mountain. "All the little kids run around I can hear their stomach growl, (grr!)" Gon first cupped a hand to his ear then leaned over like some sort of wolf. He started making his way to stage right in another peppy step. "There's a full moon out, And my girl just keep on howlin', (Oooh- ooh!)" Gon howled out comically. "Said she gonna leave me if I don't come home with 50 thousand! (50 thousand?)" Gon theatrically put a hand to his chin questioningly and exasperated. He placed fisted hands in his hair for the next verse and moved as though stress pacing.

"Aw damn, aw damn, aw damn, aw damn..." He turned around to go the other way, "Oh man, oh man, oh man, oh man..." He then started stomping like a tantrum child, "Aw damn, oh man, aw damn, oh man!"

Some students who really like Gon and his brand started to stand up and dance along to his song, while the others just stayed in their seats and clapped along, bright smiles on their face. Everyone watching was completely swept up into Gon's pacing and brightness. Killua's foot was tapping, a smile unknowingly on his face. Gon wasn't even that good of a singer, but his delivery plenty made up for that. Gon began to rhythmically wave his arms and bounce around the stage in his dancing, filling the whole stage with his presence.

"I got bills I gotta pay, So I'm gonn' work, work, work every day! I got mouths I gotta feed, So I'm gonn' make sure everybody eats! I got bills!" Gon began to dance around largely on stage, mimicking the actions theatrically and almost comically as he sang out with energy.

"Woke up and I bumped my head
Stumped my toes on the edge of the bed
Opened the fridge and the food all gone
Neighbor's damn dog done pooped on my lawn
Hopped in the car and the car won't start

It's too damn hot but I still gotta walk

Behind the old lady in the grocery line

Praying that my card won't get declined" By now, most of the students were up on their feet to enjoy this performance, even Killua was sitting up further in his seat. Killua couldn't believe it, Gon was actually really good. Killua could hear with his trained ears that Gon wasn't the best, but he was hitting every note in perfect pitch and that rustic voice gave great character to his performance, it was charming to listen to, sucking Killua further in.

"Aw damn, Aw damn, Aw damn, Aw damn, Oh man, oh man, oh man, God damn, oh man, god damn, oh man...!" Gon moved to begin a series of b-boy moves, fancy footwork and peppy steps. "I got bills I gotta pay So I'm gonn' work, work, work every day! I got mouths I gotta feed So I'm gonn' make sure everybody eats! I got...

In the interluding music, Gon showed off his solo style dances. At this point, Killua was just impressed that Gon didn't sound as winded as he would have imagined someone would if they moved as much as Gon did. The only thing Killua could gather after all this was that Gon had a set of lungs on him. It was impressive. As the music quieted down to a calmer beat, Gon bent down over one knee. Killua scooted up closer in his seat, concerned he had moved too much, concealing how tired he actually was and was now keeling over in exhaustion. He was prepared to move in a moment's notice, but then Gon began singing again, gesturing to his shoes.

"And my shoes, my shoes… I said my shoes…!" The audience began laughing at the exaggerated distressed face Gon was making as he sang. "...Ain't got no soul~!" He sang out, raising up as he prolonged the note. The audience laughed as he continued his performance joyfully, still as loud and clear with no indication of breathing heavily yet.

"I got bills I gotta pay

So I'm gonn' work, work, work every day

I got mouths I gotta feed

So I'm gonn' make sure everybody eats..." The music dropped off and Gon froze with the music before getting reanimated, shouting with the rest of the crowd: "I got bills!" Then everyone was on their feet dancing along with Gon as he led it. Killua blinked and then realized he was standing up with the rest of them. He looked over to see Kastro smiling smugly at him.

"I take it you pass him?" Killua blushed and sat back pointedly.

"Shuddap..." He grumbled. He had no idea he was so swept up with Gon he had stood up when the music came back after the drop. This was dangerous if he was thinking of Gon as a friend… What should he do…?

"I gotta pay

So I'm gonn' work, work, work every day

I got mouths I gotta feed

So I'm gonn' make sure everybody eats
"Mama got bills! Yo' daddy got bills! Yo' sister got bills! Yo' auntie got bills! I got bills. Yo' Uncle got bills! Everybody got bills! Everybody got bills!" As the song ended, Gon made a loud whimpering exhausted noise as he dramatically spun down to the floor in a fake pass out. Everyone who wasn't already standing jumped up out of their seats and gave a roaring applause, delirious in Gon's infectious performance. Killua let out a laugh at the standing ovation Gon got. Kastro finished casting the grades.

"He's very impressive with great potential. I'd say he has great physique to sing while moving. There won't be much I could teach him either, like you. I'd just have him work on it some more so that it's not even detected that he's tired… see that?" Kastro said, leaning over to Killua to point out Gon as he stood up, his chest heaving. "It wasn't heard during the performance, but during a concert with multiple songs he has to sing, his endurance isn't very large. He'll need to work more on his endurance for top notch performance level." Killua nodded, watching Gon make his way over still catching his breath.

"Yea…" He mumbled.

"You gonna make any marks for Gon?" Kastro asked, pointing at Killua's empty paper. He flusteredly flipped the page before Gon could make his way over.

"Shut up, you got your own grades, you can't honestly say you'll use mine…" Killua grounded out so the ever nearing Gon didn't hear.

"I wonder…" Kastro said, looking away mischievously and Gon sat down next to Killua.

"Killua! Did you see that? Did you hear me? Did I do good?!" Gon asked, gripping Killua's arm. Killua pushed Gon's face away then wiped Gon's sweat back onto Gon's hoodie.

"Whatcha asking me for? All those people you passed by on the way here told you how good you are." Killua said, crossing his arms over his chest. Gon shrugged as he looked on at Killua.

"I want to know what you thought of me." He admitted, and Killua glanced at him from the corner of his eye. "At least how you scored me since you said you'd be doing it harshly? Did you take off a lot of marks?"

Killua gave him a cat-like smile.

"Secret~!" He snickered and Gon's mouth dropped. "No, Killua, that's not fair, turning that back on me! You're too mean." He moaned.

"Shush, watch the next round." Killua said, pushing one finger onto his cheek and guiding his head forward. Killua dazed out, and barely registered Kastro taking the clipboard back from him as he noticed Killua was no longer taking tabs on the others.

Ok, so if I think of Gon as my friend… what does that mean? I don't have to sing for him… I don't have to do crap for him…

And once he figures that out, when he finds out you won't do a thing to help him in the industry… He'll drop you like everyone else. Don't get close…

That's true… Killua thought blankly, not even bothering to look over at Gon, as if to gauge that from Gon's face. But what if it's not like that?
And if it is? What will you do then?

Yea… So now what? The bell rang and Killua stood, Gon following his lead.

"It's time for lunch! Yay, I get to eat lunch with Killua! What do you usually eat, Killua?!" Gon exclaimed, scooting out into the aisle.

"Lunch with me? I'm not eating with you." Killua said, a tightening in his chest threatened to cut off his speech but he kept his face neutral. He focused on his meditation training and forced the overwhelming feeling down to concentrate on the task at hand. Brushing Gon off. Just in time too, Gon did that pout thing.

"Why not? We're finally friends!" Gon asked. Killua huffed, bowing over in annoyance.

"Like I said, you're the only one who said we're friends, so that was all in your head. I never said I was your friend!" Killua explained, then hoisted his cat branded earphones up onto his ears. "I'm eating by myself." He muttered and pulled out his phone to blast his music and drown out anything else Gon might say. Gon reached out to stop Killua from leaving and indeed give him all the reasons why they actually were friends when something else stopped him.

"Oi! Gon!" Gon whirled around and Killua turned around as well against his better judgement. He backed up against the doorframe so others could move past him and not seem so obvious he was curious what someone wanted with Gon. Gon blinked then beamed at the three teens in front of him.

"Wow! It's the… er… Yamori brothers!" Gon shouted trying to remember what they introduced themselves as. They bristled in annoyance.

"Amori!" The front one shouted. Crossing arms. "So, you think you're so great huh?" He asked. "With your giant following you gain in a day, and your huge performance you made to show us up? Who do you think you are? Huh? We've been here for a couple years, and I don't think you're honoring your seniors properly!" He shouted, poking a finger in Gon's chest.

"Wah?! I'm not?!" Gon freaked, looking up at them with honest eyes. It was a very important thing for the japanese to treat their elders and seniors with the utmost respect, and Gon always tried his best to follow it. He failed? What should he do?!

Killua's eyes narrowed in the three idiots' direction. 'Who did he think he was?' 'Treat elders with respect?' Killua knew these dorks, they were second years when Killua was still a first year himself. They're obviously not so great, and could use a couple more years at the academy, but it seems they're picking on this rookie to prevent their social standings and fan base from getting any lower. How pathetic and underhanded. He rejoiced inwardly that he gave all of them zeros. His eyes roamed over to Gon to see him genuinely freaking out, like some idiot who hurt someone's feelings. *Gon, don't fall for it.* Killua thought, now narrowing his eyes at him as though to convey his thoughts through psychic means.

The boys involved didn't realize Gon's fanbase had also lingered behind to video what was going on and give Gon their support.

"Don't let them talk to you like that…!"

"Gon's great, they're just jealous…!" They murmured to themselves as they watched on and texted their friends and other fans of Gon what was going down.

"I didn't know I wasn't respecting you! What should I do?" Gon asked earnestly. The brothers were taken aback by Gon's gullibility, but they wouldn't let this chance pass.
"No! We won't take this. You gotta leave the school." The oldest said, crossing his arms. "Only if your out of our sights will we consider forgiving you."

The small crowd around them exploded into dissent and criticism of the boys.

"No way!"

"That's dumb!"

"That doesn't even make sense, you suck, Amori's!"

"Gon, don't do it!"

"Don't leave meee!"

Gon blinked at the request, and Killua realized he was holding his breath after they had said that. He let it go and then turned his eyes to Gon. "Don't do it…” He muttered under his breath. Gon met the eldest's eyes with fiery determination.

"I'm sorry, I can't do that.” Gon stated seriously. That again took the brothers back. The biggest one stepped forward menacingly, and Killua took one towards the situation too. They won't be able to stop him if they try anything on Gon.

"What the heck man?” He asked, his hand curled into a fist, and Killua mimicked it in his pockets. "You just said you were sorry for stepping up in our business and asked us how to make it up! Now you won't do it!?”

"I want to make it up to you. But I can't do that. This opportunity is something I can probably never find ever again somewhere else. This is my only chance and I was taught growing up never to let my chances slip away, I have to grab this with both of my hands.” He held up his hands, clenching his fists in resolve, and Killua found himself relaxing, uncurling his own fists. He's got this… he won't fall for it, and he won't do what they say. "So tell me something else I can do to make it up to you, but I won't leave for no reason.” He said, and Killua could've fell over.

"Serious?! You don't have to do anything for them, idiot! He thought angrily, so fed up he could have just left, but he needed to know what Gon did next. What the idiot would say next. The brothers appraised him thoughtfully and the youngest lit up with an idea.

"Fine. We think your not being respectful because you just tried to show us up after a performance. You need a couple more years before you can do that to us. At the Academy we have Music Showcasing where students can sign up to perform and the Chairman plus judges award a winner every season. We've won that thing before, so if you can beat us in the winter contest, we'll forgive you, but if you don't come in first place, you're not good enough to stay at the school anyway. It'll just be disrespectful to us if you just tried to show us up here then fail to even win something we have before!” He said, a finger raised. His brothers nodded their approval before the eldest added.

"N-not just the school, the whole music industry! We want you out!” He sniggered. Killua's face contorted in anger. WHAT?! What kind of ridiculous, hair brained scheme- it didn't make any sense, none of their reasoning made sense, there's no way Gon would-

Gon, who was previously looking down in consideration, glanced up.

"Fine."

Killua collapsed against the doorframe, barely able to hold himself up, but he didn't have to do much
to keep attention off him, everyone listening exploded, voicing their dissent.

"No!"

"Gon, that's dumb!"

"You'd have to win first place, that's hard to do!"

"Don't leave meee!"

The brothers smiled evilly.

"Great. So, you have to win first place for us to forgive you. If you don't, you leave the music industry."

"No," Gon said, and everyone froze in shock, Killua whirling around to look back at Gon's face. No?

"No, I don't want your forgiveness anymore." Gon said, shaking his head, his eyes bright with determination. Killua could have face-palmed. *Then why agree idiot? There's no need for the contest anymore!*

"If I win the contest, it'll show I belong here... I'll finally able to prove something to myself too. I won't need your forgive then either. I would show I had the talent to beat you at your own game; there won't be a need for me to say sorry. If I win, it's because I had more talent than you." Gon looked each of them in the eye, hoping his words would reach them.

"If I beat you, you guys should work harder to get better instead of picking on kids with more talent than you! I shouldn't have to lower myself so you guys can feel better. I'll take this challenge, so we can both get better at what we love, and reach for a better standard of us!" Gon exclaimed, then a warm smile lit his face, the warmth hitting everyone around him. "Let's get better and sing together! This school is not only to learn but to make connections with everyone around us. If I lose, I'll still leave and get out the music industry, because if I can't win a simple showcase... there's no way I can become a popular world star... and find that guy..." He said, seeming to talk to himself at the end. He lifted his head to meet every single one of the brothers in the eyes with a warm glow. "So let's work hard until the contest and have a nice fair competition!" He held out his hand. Killua blinked, his eyes bright as he looked at this... light that illuminated the world.

*He was almost mine... Gon...* Killua thought sadly.

"Oh gawd, Gon...!" A fan sobbed out infatuated.

"That was beautiful!"

"I hope you win Gon!"

"You suck, Amori!"

"I wanna try harder now too!"

"He's so inspiring and amazing!"

"This is so going on social media so I can show off my new fav!" The brothers again felt pressured to not be shown up in terms of values, so the eldest hesitantly let his hand out and Gon grabbed it in a deal sealing shake.
"You have to get first place…" He reiterated, and Gon nodded.

"Or else I leave." He agreed. They let go and the fans began filtering out, reviewing their photos and pictures and chatting about what just happened as they headed to lunch.

"Wow, Gon's so amazing!"

"They way he handled them was so hot!"

"I wish he'd handle me!"

"Oh my gosh, Patrisha! Don't be a perv!" Laughter echoed and faded away down the hall when finally Gon turned around from the brothers, his face lighting up in a more friendly way.

"Killua!" He cheered, running towards him, but Killua's was less than amused.

"You dum-dum, why the hell would you agree to something like that?" He said, his face in a neutral frown. Gon stopped next to the white haired teen with a smile.

"Because I needed to make it up to them! But then after they explained the music contest thing, I knew it was just a way to truly test my abilities! And it'll be fun! I just need to win." Killua's frown deepened.

"I don't think you understand how difficult it is to win those things! Not every student sign up for it. When they do, they train and practice for weeks! They take it very seriously, because they can use it as leverage in resumes and applications. It's a huge thing to be placed first in a showcase from a school full of the best; to be the best of the best. And their deal was that you don't have to only beat them, you have to get first place! This was stupid, if you think this was really your greatest opportunity, you wouldn't have made such a narrow chance of you winning," Killua scoffed. Gon frowned but then smiled again.

"I know. I did that on purpose. My dad's a World Star, and I think the only way I could ever become someone who could surpass him is by being one of the best! I want to win first place too, Killua." He admitted. Killua blinked at him with owlish eyes.

"Your dad's a World Star? Who?"

"Neh, Killua, you said the students train hard for the showcase. I don't know how to train to become better, think you could tell me how?" Gon asked, twiddling his thumbs. Killua blinked, dumbstruck.

"What? Why the hell should I help you, moron?" He asked, turning away and moving out the room.

"What? W-well, why not?! I mean, well, then why did you wait for me instead of leaving?" Gon asked, following after him. Killua's eye twitched because he didn't really have an explanation that made sense to his brain or wouldn't give Gon the wrong idea.

"I wasn't the only one who stayed behind, Gon! Don't you have somewhere to be?" He asked, throwing a glare over his shoulder. Gon froze as Killua got farther away, finally escaping from him.

"Oh man! Zushi's waiting for me!" Gon shouted out and sprinted down the other direction. He took a quick detour to get his bento from his locker but then ran to where Zushi was located, close to the cafeteria.

"Zushi! Oh, man, I am so sorry! I had no idea how late it was, I was held up after class because-" Gon slightly panted, giving a deep bow.
"The Amori brothers?" Zushi finished for him, a small chuckle on his lips. Gon straightened up in surprise.

"How did you…?" Gon asked, holding his bento to his chest. Zushi turned the phone he had in his hands over to show him a feed on facebox, relaying the video of Gon talking and making the bet with the three older students. Gon blinked.

"Wow, so everyone knows about it already?" Gon asked surprised.

"Should be if they checked the Academy class page." Zushi said, turning the phone back to him to watch the end of the video. "You're really amazing, Gon!" Zushi said, turning to head inside the cafeteria. Gon blushed lightly and rubbed the back of his head.

"Thanks, Zushi. I try." He said walking in with him. As Gon walked in, the cafeteria lapsed into silence before it became louder in their buzz now that the topic of conversation was inside.

"Wow… is it really that big a deal?" Gon asked as he noticed plenty of people pointing and talking like he was already famous.

"Well, yea, for a couple of reasons. You basically told the whole school you're confident enough to win first place in a contest that we highly regard. Some people who might have been willing to sign up are threatened by you and see you as competition, some others see you on their radar as someone to use to advance their own careers, and then there are others just excited to see new and amazing talent. Let's just say this winter showcase will be… eventful." Zushi said, heading to a line for a salad.

"Mhh… Do you think you could explain to me the Music Showcase to me a little more?" Gon asked. Zushi nodded happily.

"Yea! So its seasonally, thus making it quarter annual. There's a fall showcase in October, winter showcase in December, the last day of the semester before winter break. Spring showcase is in March and the summer showcase is in May, the day before summer break. The judges change every showcase but the Chairman is always the main one, and he always try to get alumni of the school as the other guest judges. You give a performance like it's a number in a concert, original only and the criteria they grade is normally the things we learn in school such as perfect pitch, range, physical singing, dance routines. So because of that, it's rare underclassmen apply, normally it's only seniors. When underclassmen apply, they don't expect first place, they barely expect to place, they just want the experience. It was amazing when Amori's won, but that year… and specific showcase… was an exception. It was weird." Zushi explained. Gon nodded.

"Cool… so I need to work really hard to be able to beat seniors with years of learning and experience…." Gon said slowly, and he felt his chest tighten. His eyebrow furrowed upward, a worried smile on his face. "I can do that, right?" he breathed out. Zushi got his salad and turned to Gon.

"You ok?" He asked slowly. Gon smile tightened but before he could say anything he heard his name.

"Hey, Gon! Over here!" Gon turned around to see Ponzu standing up, flagging him down at a table with Pokkle and others he didn't recognize. He focused on his friends to ignore the sudden dread feeling that tried to creep up on him and smiled while waving back.

"Ponzu!" He cried out.
"Come sit with us!" She shouted, waving towards the table.

"Sure!" Gon cried back and turned to Zushi. "You don't mind, right?" He asked. Zushi smiled back. "No, I didn't really have anywhere specific to sit anyways!" They made their way over.

Hisoka lowered his phone to watch Gon trot across the cafeteria.

"Hmmm… this winter showcase will be a real interest…" Hisoka hummed in a silky voice. Illumi looked up from his pasta and cocked his head curiously.

"Why?" He asked. Hisoka gave his friend an irked frown.

"Do you not check the school's feed?" He asked, waving his phone around Illumi's general sight. Illumi slurped up a strand of pasta with the same neutral face and waited a moment before he answered.

"No. The only reason I use social media is to post self advertisement and eye candy for my fans. I wouldn't even do that if my parents didn't tell me to." He admitted with a shrug. Hisoka sighed.

"Why do us two have to be such anti-social freaks…" He smirked playfully. Illumi's eyebrow twitched downward in a hint of irritation.

"Me? I'm not antisocial, Hisoka, I decide not to have any friends. What's your excuse?"

"I'm shy. Hey, Illumi, what does that make me if you say you don't have any friends?" He said, leaning his head on his hands. Illumi's eyelid drooped, over it.

"Then show me the video that's so important." Illumi said, holding out his hand. Hisoka smirked over at him.

"I'll show you if you tell me what I am to you." Illumi blinked.

"You're an idiot. I have my own phone. You just failed my friendship test, now you're nothing to me." He said, pulling out his dark custom designed phone. Hisoka's mouth dropped open in shock but then a smug smile graced his features.

"That just means I was your friend, so I just have to make it up to you now. Illumi, you like chocolate-?" Illumi's hand found Hisoka's face and pushed it back away from him.

"That's rude and insensitive, I don't like chocolate and I'm not allowed to have any chocolate, none of the Zoldycks are cause sugar is bad for the throat. Don't get me anything." Illumi said, clicking through his feed. With his hand flush against Hisoka's face, Hisoka couldn't see the small pink tinge settled on Illumi's cheeks.

"Then you forgive me?" Hisoka asked, muffled against the hand.

"Right, whatever." He muttered, although the words were able to be made out clearly, and pulled his hand from Hisoka's face. Hisoka sent a victorious wink towards the fans watching and most of the girls squealed in excitement.

"Found it." He chirped and played the video. Hisoka sexily placed a nacho chip into his mouth while making fanservice eyes at those watching, idly listening to the video he already watched to get a feel for where Illumi was in the video. He blinked in surprise and looked towards Illumi (to the dissatisfaction of the girls watching) when he heard Illumi pause the video as Gon was about to shake hands with the Amori brothers.
"What's wrong? Too much excitement for your doll face?" Hisoka asked as he watched Illumi drill holes into one spot of the video.

"This was after class?" He asked. Hisoka raised a confused eyebrow.

"Yea."

"Mhhh… no good…" Illumi muttered intelligibly again, staring at his fluffy haired brother glaring intensely in the background by the door. He played it, Killua moving out of sight again.

"What's no good? Those loser brothers? I know, it's hilarious, they definitely won't get first place, but they don't need to to get rid of that adorable shortie. But he seemed pretty confident, so that's why the winter showcase will be interesting." Hisoka said before popping another corn chip in his mouth.

"If he loses he leaves, huh?" Illumi reiterated. Hisoka nodded, but his pale friend wasn't looking at him. Illumi looked up and over to where Gon was sitting.

Alright, Killua isn't with him right now… So he might have come to his senses… but if this kid doesn't leave him alone, Killua might get distracted again. I'll wait and see what happened next first… Illumi thought, satisfied for the moment.

"It's boring." Illumi decided. "It'll be amateur hour, like watching kindergarteners in an art contest."

"Ouch, Illumi, what if I wanted kids? You insulted our child's artistic ability-" Illumi interrupted him by slamming his hands down on the table and standing.

"I'm not hungry anymore." He stated. "I'm in the orchestra room." Hisoka pouted after him, some of Illumi's fans also crying and whining their agitation.

"I paid for these nachos and I plan on finishing them! Adios, Illumi." Hisoka huffed. Illumi closed his eyes in relief as he walked. Thank goodness, he needed a break from that headache. He walked out the door in sophistication but almost ran into three colorful teens.

"Oh." He stated to stop the string of curses he might have said in his surprise. The boys looked nervously at one another before they threw the younger forward.

"I-Illumi, s-sir!" He said, wringing his hands together. "We need you to apply for the winter contest…!" He said. Illumi cocked his head habitually.

"Why? If I compete, it won't be a contest…"

"It's Gon! It's a very hard business, and it's dog eat dog. We need to get all our competition out of the way… Even if we acknowledge we'll never be as good as you heavenly Zoldycks…" He said, and Illumi idly noted they were trying to suck up to him, "But we rather try to keep the amount of rookie attention grabbers out. This is for serious peoples, and we're happy to crush the rookies so there's no one else in our way! We'll settle with being at the bottom, but not below rookies who don't know their place. So if you compete, you'll definitely get 1st place, then Gon would have to leave the school and the music industry!" He piped.

"How would you know that Gon would keep his promise and leave the school?" Illumi asked.

"We saw it in his eyes when we talked to him. He'll definitely keep his side of the bet. We just need him to lose…" The eldest replied. Illumi tilted his head and delicately placed a finger to his lip. He was going to wait to see if this Gon guy was gonna be problem, but he supposed he shouldn't wait for there to be a problem in the first place. Illumi already recognized him as a threat to Killua, so he
could just deal with him this way. He leaves the school and Killua never sees him again, and Killua remains focused with no one to distract him. He'll be the greatest World Star and it'll all be because of his wonderful and attentive older brother.

"Ok." Illumi stated, moving the finger into the air in confirmation. "We sign up after Fall showcase right? I guess my father would want us to enter one once in our time here at the Academy, and it is my senior year. I'll do it and make sure Gon loses. Good bye losers." Illumi stated and walked past them. The three brothers frosted over at the burn of being shouldered off by someone much more talented than them.

"Well… well, we don't have to worry about Gon anymore… He'll be out of here real soon. He doesn't even seem like he knows much about the showcases, so his ignorance will be his downfall." The eldest said to his brothers, as though a comfort. "He won't make a fool out of us again, treating us like opening act or something. Let's go practice for the fall showcase guys." They moved away from the cafeteria.

Gon placed the empty bento box in his locker. "I would have never guessed that Ponzu and Pokkle were getting together an a capella group! They all seem really nice." Gon said, closing his locker and checking his schedule.

"Yea, you should have joined! They asked so nicely." Zushi said, giving Gon's arm a playfully punch. Gon shook his head, and just barely held down the rising gut feeling.

"I need to concentrate on getting better for the winter showcase." Gon said.

"You know you can sing in groups right? You're friends with Killua, right, you should ask him to sing with you! There's no way you'll lose." Zushi exclaimed, fisting his hands. Gon frowned, remembering what Killua said. He doesn't like to sing for others for free and if he doesn't think he'll like their singing. He had to remember to keep that in mind to think through it to help Killua, but for now he knows not to push it anymore.

"No, Killua won't sing. But that's ok. I don't want to depend on someone else's strength to win, if I'm not strong enough to do it solo, I can't call myself a World Star!" Gon said. Zushi frowned.

"Gon, you're putting alot on yourself, putting yourself up against people who are about ready to graduate and go out and be World Stars! You're still learning-!"

"Isn't Killua my age? If he contested, don't you think he'd win?" Gon asked and Zushi leaned back a bit in surprise.

"B-but that's different! He's been trained relentlessly, it's diff-"

"If he knows that much already, I can too. I just…" Gon rolled his neck when the dreading feeling threatened to lock up his muscles. "I'll just need to cram. And find someone to teach me. Killua may not sing with me, but I think I can get him to teach me. I'm close, I almost got him to, back when the bet was first made. Leave it to me Zushi, this concert will be nothing!" Gon assured, and they heard the minute bell ring in warning.

"We gotta go to class, but I'll see you tomorrow, right? See you, Zushi!" Gon exclaimed, running off in one direction. Talking to Zushi was just giving Gon stress right now, and he felt the only thing that would really ease his heart was seeing his super cool friend in class and those baby blue eyes that takes his breath away. He looked at his schedule one more time, seeing he needed to go to Range 111. Gon briefly wondered why the numbers were in the hundreds if they were second years, but if
Killua had it, he shouldn't think he was lacking or anything.

Gon ran into the class, his whole being becoming at ease when he spotted the white haired teen in the back. The late bell just began to ring so Gon settled for the brief look he got of Killua and just parked it in the front. He felt much better just knowing Killua was in the same room so he'll concentrate in this class.

A plump small and blond lady walked in wearing a cute woman suit with little frills about her neck.

"Welcome class! I'm Mrs. Burnly~" She rang out in a high vocal pitch.

*Opera.* Killua thought after he heard her voice. Immediately he decided he didn't like her.

"This is Range 111! Some of you may be wondering why it's in the hundreds! Range isn't taught to first years, so this is the basics of Range, technically! Now, for this class, we will be focusing on increasing people's range. The voice is an instrument and a muscle, and you make muscles stronger by exercising it everyday. You increase your range by pushing outside of your safe range every once in awhile! They say it takes a month to increase your vocal scale by an octave."

*Lies.* Killua thought with annoyance. She probably just wants to sound noticeable. Or maybe that was true for normal people who didn't work on it until the moon was high in the sky. He shook his head to get out of his thoughts.

"Now, I'm sure you all are getting tired of it, but you all know I need some sort of benchmark to appraise you all towards! It's time for a pretest! I promise it won't take long, especially with Mr. Zoldyck's help. C'mon, get up here while I tell them about the test!" She said, urging him up. Killua's eyebrow twitched in annoyance. Should he go up there? He doesn't know what she's gonna ask him to do, and she didn't ask him to sing, but she might when he's up there.

"Why?" He asked, keeping his voice neutral and his head propped on his hand. She turned her attention back on him as she spun around with papers in her hand.

"Teacher assistant!" She sung, and Killua stuck his tongue out in annoyance. That was a bother, but at least she wasn't asking him to sing. He stood up and started making his way to the front, Gon finally turning to watch him. He tried to catch his eyes, but like the first day, he seemed to avoid it.

"Alright, so I want each of you to fill out this questionnaire, Killua will be passing it out," Killua gathered the papers into his arms as she handed it over and he glanced over it as he walked to the first row of desks. "It asks questions like, 'if given the option to sing a song, which would you sing!' and 'what's your favorite color~! Nothing hard, I just want to get a basic understanding of how you all are." She went by her desk and pulled aside a podium with a small microphone on it so it stood diagonally from the back corner.

"As you finish your papers, come line up to this side of the desk here and give your papers to Killua then cross over to stand behind the desk here. You'll sing into the microphone from the highest pitch you can and scale down to the lowest you have. You can scale down in one giant stream, you can scale down with your hatsu, anything you like, I just want to know your highest pitch and your lowest. Then pick a note, any note, to sing your do re mi! I'll take that as the range you're most comfortable singing in." She said, clapping her hand together adorably.

*She's like a teddy bear…* Gon thought before his attention was arrested by Killua moving closer to his location in one seat up front. Gon again tried to catch Killua's eye as he moved closer, opting to ignore the teacher's idle chatter. Killua felt annoyed at how hard Gon was trying so he finally flicked his eyes over and gave him a quick flash of his tongue that was meant to be mean, but all Gon did
was light up from finally getting his attention. Killua slumped as he passed out the papers to the person next to Gon. Maybe it would have been more effective to keep ignoring him.

He stepped in front of him, and for some reason, this specific paper decided to stick to the one behind it and Killua struggled to separate it. And then Gon was looking at him like he was the light of the world, shamelessly observing him, and the disgruntled expression on Killua's face deepened, along with the shade of red on his cheeks.

"Screw it..." He muttered embarrassedly and slapped down about 3 to 4 papers in a bundle. "Pass it down..." He muttered comprehensible. He felt his stomach twisting into knots and he could have dropped the papers with how nervous he felt. Now that he passed the lump of papers to Gon, he actually didn't have any more papers to pass out so he went and stood to the left of the podium, leaning against the teachers desk to wait for the students to finish and room filled with idle chatter as they filled the sheet out and the teacher herself sat herself down in one of the empty student desks facing the podium and hummed in a beautiful pitch to herself as she waited.

Killua could feel the eyes on him as he waited, fiddling with his nails. Of course the students would stare at him, especially if some were his fans, but it was when he felt Gon's heavy gaze on him that he truly felt unnerved. How annoying, he should just take a hint and stop trying to make eye contact with him, and with how often Gon was looking up, he was going to finish that worksheet half past never. Killua huffed and looked out the window when the first person finally made their move. Gon gaped at the person walking up and looked down at his sheet. He was only half done! He should put a move on or he'll never finish.

A line started to form by Killua as he collected the sheet of the person waiting to go up to the podium next and those behind that student held onto their sheet as they waited for their own turn. The first student went up behind the podium and Mrs. Burnly straightened her back as she readied her pen, Killua looked on bored.

He sang out from the E above middle C down to a resounding E below middle C. Killua huffed the hair out of his eyes as he collected the sheet of paper behind the person who went up next. *That wasn't even 1 and a half of octave... Poor range* Killua thought. He figured for this class this teacher would try to get them to be able to sing in 3 full octaves, from high C to low C, which Killua could already hit, and then some. The guy's range was obviously bass, as Killua expected most guys' to be until this teacher expanded their possibilities. Next girl carried her voice around like a swing as she sang from a high A to middle C and her vocal range was soprano. One after the next and the next, it was all very predictable. Killua listened to all these poor excuses for range and the predictable safe ranges, idly collecting papers, zoning out as to not fall asleep while standing, so he didn't notice when Gon was next and standing right next to him.

"Hey, Killua." Gon said lowly through his mouth. Killua almost jumped, no one really tried to talking to him yet as they prepared to sing. When he saw who it was, he wanted to facepalm himself for being so unattentive.

"What?" He asked through almost unmoving lips.

"What's your safe range?" Gon asked, fully facing him with curious eyes. Killua huffed, trying not look over Gon's sheet curiously.

"I don't have one. I can sing whatever I feel, in whatever range I pick. I'm not inclined to any specific range." Killua muttered back to him. Gon cocked an eyebrow but other than that, his smile never moved.

"Ok, which one's your favorite?" Gon tried. Killua furrowed his eyebrow but before he could even
open his mouth, "Next!" from Mrs. Burnly. Gon moved away, taking away his golden hue eyes with him, and Killua missed the warmth that radiated off him.

*Whatever... who cares what my favorite range is, I'm suppose to sing what I'm told.* Killua thought as he looked towards Gon standing behind the podium. Killua found whenever it had to do with Gon, he was immensely curious, barely able to remember to pick up the waiting student's next sheet before giving his full attention to Gon's pretest.

Gon gave a few testing hums before he started at the highest pitch he had. Killua unconsciously bit his lip, blown away as Gon probably had the highest pitch he's heard besides girls who trained specifically to hit pitches meant for dogs. He probably almost hit the high end of Killua's range. Gon began to descend slowly before plunging down like an IMAX cinema intro, and it went so low, the resounding vibration Killua usually felt in his chest when Gon speaks around him spread out to his whole body, reaching every fingertip and strand of hair, and he swore some of his organs moved. The low note (probably lower than what Killua could go) had Killua gripping the table behind his back, and some of the girls in the class swooned and cried out in bliss as quietly as they could as not to disturb Gon or accidentally make him stop. It was like the whole world was shaking with Gon's caressing note, and that tone was enough to reach somewhere deep inside Killua, someplace he forgot about himself. Somewhere that was locked and trampled on and thrown out by all his training and drills and schooling, somewhere that held something that Killua fed lies, where he said *I don't like to sing...*

Gon reached in and knocked, cracked it open a little and tried to pick up what was broken. A heavy blush fell over Killua's cheeks as Gon broke the note and began his do re mi's in his bass range and Killua placed a hand over his mouth with the realization.

Dammit.

Killua wanted to sing with him...

Killua timed it for when Gon just finished his last do.

"I have to go." He stated, and placed the papers down on the corner of the teacher's desk where the students could still place it before they move to the podium, then began moving out the room. He hoped turning his back on the students after speaking and bringing attention to himself would hide the massive blush burning up his face. He needed to get out of there, and out of Gon's sight and away from his freakn' light!

Gon looked after Killua when he spoke, one foot in the direction of his seat. His face betrayed the sad feeling he felt. What happened? Was it something he did? He was hoping to gauge Killua's reaction of his singing after he finished, see if he was impressed, but he left before Gon could even turn around. Was that his fault?

*Wait, you could be overthinking this. He might just need to go to the bathroom! Yea...* He was able to ease himself into the seat with that thought, but he still felt like going after him. The teacher frowned when Killua turned to leave.

"Oh, pooh! There goes the eye candy, girls!" She giggled scandalously. "Well, hopefully he'll be back..." She said turning more seriously. "This is his participation grade, since I've heard so much about how he will not sing~" Gon worriedly looked over.

"Hah?!!" He asked. "W-well, I'm sure he'll be back…!" Gon assured. "So, you can give him 100, he already did so much!" Gon tried, leaning over trying to point out Killua's name for her to put 100. The teacher pulled the clipboard away.
"Mhh… I agree, but if he's skipping the rest of class, I'm not awarding him for that. He'll get the 100 when he comes back." She said and gave a resolved nod. Gon huffed and put his head in his hands. Well, Gon won't have any of that. He'll give Killua 10 minutes, then he's gonna find him and drag him back to this room if he has to. Friends don't let other friends fail! Even if Killua doesn't think of Gon as his friend yet.

Outside, Killua barely walked 2 feet away from the room, a hand over his chest while his heart beat wildly and a hand on the wall of lockers to keep himself up. Closer to the bathrooms, he finally let himself fall against the lockers and slid down to the ground.

*What's happening to me... This has never happened before*

*At least not for a long time...*

*Ok, so I want... to sing with someone my parents didn't tell me to... that just means I can't! Because I never could...!*

*Isn't that why you stopped singing in the first place? To stop the pain that came with the restriction on your own voice?*

Killua put his hands over his ears as though that could stop his internal voice.

*There was never any pain, I was trained for my parents, it'd be ungrateful if I denied them my voice they worked on so hard!*

*Are you serious!? You never asked for this! That's what was beat into you head, you don't feel that way! So what if you want to sing, doesn't he make you happy-*

Killua's eyes snapped open.

*Nope, that was another problem for some other day.* That dumb idiot is screwing with thoughts, and he had enough. He stood up. He won't let Gon make him all weird and trippy. He was gonna walk back in and ignore that fool like his life depended on it, because he could swear his life does. The life he knows anyways.

*What does it mean if I want to sing with someone...?*

Forget it, think about it later. Killua walked back to the room and placed his hand on the knob, but hesitated. He let out a breath he didn't know he was holding then opened the door, making sure to keep looking ahead and not where he knew Gon's seat was.

"Killua!" Came the childish call, like his mother just came in after leaving for a week. Instinctively upon hearing his name be called, he turned to look. Mistake.

Gon's eyes were bright and pouring every emotion into him, like he didn't know how to control his expression. Did he even? Then with his face, and all the attention and care Gon gave him, coupled with the memory of his voice, god, his voice, Killua's face flamed on and his knees buckled slightly, grabbing the edge of the podium as he passed. He gave a dark glare at the person standing there as to give off some passive aggressive frustration and then moved back to the desk.

"I'm back..." He muttered and shoved his earphones on, pulled out his phone to blast his music and then continued picking up papers, all the while pointedly not looking at Gon.

*This sucks...* He thought, looking out the window while trying not to wince at the loud music in his ears. It scrambled his thoughts so no coherent ones could form, and he needed that. He hopes he
never wants to sing with anyone else ever again if it felt like this.

Gon pouted at the reaction he got from Killua when he walked in. He seemed to be in a bad mood. Did his singing do that?

_C'mon Gon, you shouldn't do that to yourself! You're being conceited, Killua might be going through something really serious that has nothing to do with you! And you have to be there for him!_ Gon nodded in agreement with his conscious. Right! He'll wait til after class to talk to him, and hopefully make the white haired idol feel better. The teacher got Gon's attention and pointed out on her clipboard she gave Killua the 100, and Gon smiled feeling better then mouthed a 'Thank you!' Killua didn't have to worry about his grades now. Gon looked up at the clock. 20 more minutes until the end of class…

-o0o0o0o0o0o-

The bell rang and Killua blanched at the situation. His bookbag was still in the back and Gon was seated closer to the door even if he was at his seat in the first place. He'll definitely cut him off before he escapes. His face fell into annoyance as he made his way to the back of the class. He picked up his bookbag and sighed before chancing a glance over his shoulder. His breath hitched in his throat when he saw Gon by the door with a small sad smile on his face, but then he just ducked out the room, with what was most definitely his new groupies following after him.

He just… left?

Killua gripped his fists at his sides. What the hell… why was Gon so… nice?!

Gon walked down the hall, slightly scuffing at his shoes. Gon wanted to wait for Killua, they even had the next class together, but he could see in Killua's eyes the last thing he wanted was to be bothered. So as much as Gon wanted to be in the loop, he'll definitely cut him off before he escapes. His face lit up a bit in thought of tomorrow. He asked Mito for extra money to buy Killua his chocolates, so after school he'll definitely be able to make him feel better tomorrow. He's a little scared of how he'll fare with this school's academia, but he'll get through it. He did pass 9th grade year already! Gon looked down at his schedule to figure out his last musical class of the school year.

_Note Recognition._

Hm, no number? So he guessed it was just something people had every year to keep up on that skill. He trotted his way to the class, excited about what he'll learn this year in that class. He'll be on his way to be a World Star in no time!

He entered the room and saw a pretty, tall lady in a long skirt and blouse.

"Good afternoon!" Gon greeted her, stepping up to her. "I'm Gon!" He said, sticking his hand out. Thinking back to his other classes, there weren't a lot of time when the teacher was already in the class and not coming in with the bell.

"Hello, Gon! Welcome to Note Recognition, I'm the teacher, you can call me Palm, please take a seat anywhere you like." She hummed, but her voice sounded like it was slightly strained as she spoke. Gon cocked his head curiously but kept smiling.

"Hello, Gon! Welcome to Note Recognition, I'm the teacher, you can call me Palm, please take a seat anywhere you like." She hummed, but her voice sounded like it was slightly strained as she spoke. Gon cocked his head curiously but kept smiling.

"Hello, Gon! Welcome to Note Recognition, I'm the teacher, you can call me Palm, please take a seat anywhere you like." She hummed, but her voice sounded like it was slightly strained as she spoke. Gon cocked his head curiously but kept smiling.

"Right! Thanks." He went and sat in the front and took the time to examine the room. The room was a bit bigger than the usual classrooms and in the front was a grand piano along with a white board while in the back, the teacher's desk was placed to the left and the usual leisure area was to the right.

_Wow, a grand piano…! I don't know how to play that. Will we learn in this class?_ Gon thought. But,
no, that's not very possible… It wasn't instrument 101 or whatever the class would be called. Gon
supposed he has to wait for class to start to know the learning objective this year. Gon noted the
people walking in, feeling a bit nervous when student after student streamed in, some who knew him
greeted him kindly, but Killua had yet to walk in. He took a calming breath. Killua would come, he
hasn't skipped a class yet.

True to it, seconds before the late bell rang, Killua sauntered in with his fine-tuned grace and his eyes
met Gon for a brief happy second before it moved away and he made his way to his usual back seat.
Gon's face fell a bit but then Palm began talking and he focused again, trying to push thoughts of
Killua out of his mind.

"Hello class, I'm your teacher. But I think we can all agree I'm a little too young to be called a Miss,
so let's just stay on first name basis, shall we? You all will call me Palm!" She said, holding a hand to
her face.

"I don't think you're all that young-" Some student tried to call out sassily.

"Do you want to die?!" Palm interrupted in a strained voice. Everyone leaned back in their seats
shocked and she withdrew back within herself. "Oh, that's no good… Sorry, but you should know
better than to talk about a woman's age! I promise I'm very nice, class, just… listen to what I say,
okk? And no one fails!" She did a clumsy little curtsey and Killua face fell in annoyance.

She's mental!

"Welcome to Note recognition! In this class we'll be sharpening the skills of recognizing notes and
note sounds. By going off what was taught last year, by the end of this year you should be able to
see a note on the music staff and sing the sound it makes, hear a note and recognize what note it is,
and sing a note while another is also being played." She said. The class grew into outcry by the last
objective.

"What?!

"That's crazy! We need silence to focus on our music notes!"

"Palm, that technique is too advanced!"

"Silence… please, quiet…!" Palm said out in sweet voice. "I need you to be quiet so I…” She started
to strain. "So I can EXPLAIN!? Please? Thank you.." She said, getting them to finally quiet down.

"You know this class is ongoing every year, so you'll have to learn it eventually. But I want to show
the higher ups that I am capable of teaching such techniques! So yes, one of your exams will concise
of being able to sing a whole song while a whole different song is being played… in your ears." She
said, pointing to her head with what was probably supposed to be a charming smile, but came out
much creepier.

Was her hair getting messier?
The class thought.

"So! Pre-test! I want to know if you all can sing a note I tell you, I'll play the piano note to double
check." Palm said, going behind the piano and sitting down, looking a lot more elegant than she
looked not too long ago. "You'll come up, I'll say a note, you sing it out: Meeeee-me-me-me-me…
And as you hold out the note at the 4th 'me', I'll play the piano note. It should line up quite nicely. If
not, you get a point off. You can adjust your voice before the 4th 'me' as you want to try and hit the
sound you think is correct, but you must hold the constant note by the 4th one. We'll do this for 5
notes and the pretest is out of 5 points! Simple, right? Not too hard…?" By the end of her sentence,
she took on that straining begging tone to her voice. The class all nodded and voiced their consent vigorously. Killua rolled his eyes. This was gonna be a trying class.

"Who wants to go first?!" She asked back in her pleasant voice. The class hesitantly looked around before a student bravely volunteered.

"Great! Come on up, er…" She checked her roster. "David!

Gon watched the students go up one at a time nervously. They got 3 out of 5s, 2 out of 5s, even zeros, no one getting full points yet. Gon's never done this before, he's sure he'll fail as well.

"Next!" She called out as she wrote down the score of the last student walking back to their seat. Gon looked around at the small pool of people left, including Killua.

"I'll go..." Gon shrugged. Killua bit his lip to stop from bursting out laughing. He looked like he was walking up his death! Killua can't believe Gon was still so scared of failing and looking bad, and he gets this puppy dog look on his face as though to escape judgement. Actually, Gon probably can't control his emotions too well, his face is too honest, so it wasn't like he was doing it on purpose. This guy was such a dork…

And you wanna sing with him!

Killua's face fell again. Ugh… that was true.

Gon gave Palm a cautious smile and she gave back an encouraging one.

"Ok, E over middle C!"

-Gon sat back down then put his head in his hands. 1 out of 5. And that was only because Palm took it easy on him and offered Middle C. Gon normally hummed that note most times when tuning his guitar to keep reference so he knew that one. How embarrassing, but it was how most students were finishing. He shouldn't feel too bad. The last of the students went until it was Killua's turn. Gon thought Palm was gonna let him pass like the other teachers and the class would continued, but then she looked up.

"Killua? You're the last one." Gon bit his tongue to prevent himself from saying Killua's line of 'he doesn't sing' and maybe add a 'I'll sing for him!' He'll let Killua take care of it as he does in the other classes, but Gon won't let him take a failing grade. He turned back to face Killua to see what he'd say but was shocked when he saw Killua was nearly by the front already. Everyone else seemed just as floored as Gon… Would they finally hear the blessing that was Killua's singing? He stopped at the front beside the piano and spun around on his heel to face the students. He swivled his head to look at the teacher.

"Ok, you'll get-

"I don't sing." Killua said matter-of-factly. Palm froze up and everyone braced themselves. What is he doing?! She'll go off!

"B-but…" She started in a strained voice. Killua refrained from rolling his eyes. She'll get voice nodules if she keeps that up. "Everyone needs to take the pre-test-, I need to know your ability so I can-!" Her eyes began to shake and Killua sighed.

"It's note recognition, right? So you don't need me to sing, I just need to recognize the note. So, play
a note on the piano and I'll tell you what note you just played. That's fine for now, right?” Killua asked. Palm seemed to calm down but a couple haters in class bristled.

*Who does he think he is, just making every teacher bend the rule for him? Too high and great to sing to us commoners, just sing, Zoldyck!*  

"Er… Alright… That makes sense. It's similar enough. Alright, I'll play now. 5 notes." Palm said, and positioned her fingers. Killua zoned out, his eyes on the top of the piano to focus on the notes she was about to play.  

*Ding…*  

"B over Middle C."

*Ding…*  

"G below low C."

*Ding…*  

"A below Middle C."

Gon watched on, barely able to keep his mouth closed. Killua was really amazing after all! He-!  

"No way! That's not fair!" Someone shouted and both Palm and Killua's murderous glares zeroed in on the student, but by then others were also voicing their dissent.

"Yea, we all were failing from your test and now he gets something easier!"

"Easier?!" Killua ground out, fists at his side. Palm shook her head.  

"No, no, it's not any easier. I would even say it's harder. If any of you took this test, I'm sure more of you would get zero out of 5s!" Killua crossed his arms, satisfied with the scold.  

"Well, at least make sure he's not cheating!"

"Yea! He's looking, like, right at the piano! He can just see what notes you're pressing!"

Palm cocked her head, mostly surprised at her students' childish behavior then swung her head Killua's direction as though to say 'Do you mind?' Killua sighed out heavily then turned around to face the board.

"Great. Let's go." He droned. Palm fixed the class with a scorning glare then looked down at her keys.  

*Ding…*  

"G below Middle C." He said, his voice bouncing off the board and back to the class, the acoustics seeming to harmonize with his own voice.

*Ding…*  

"High C." Palm gave the class a daring glare then turned to Killua.  

"I'll play 3 more to make up your other three." She said. The same student stood up.
"Sorry Palm, I still can't take that! How do I know he's not looking in the reflection of the board to still see the keys? Just make him sing!" Even other students began to think he was stretching it.

"No, man, c'mon…"

"What your accusing him of doing require more skills and is a lot more work than just recognizing the notes she's playing!"

"Ya, just let it go…"

Killua had twisted the top half of his body to give the student an angry side glance. He huffed and turned towards the door. Gon stopped himself from hopping up and following Killua and also shouting at every student in here for being childish. Though it was mostly the one student now. Palm watched as Killua went through the door but left it open before she turned to the class, her voice strained.

"What is with all of you?! I should have you know it's rude to push your emotions on someone, you have to let them see how professional you are first and hope your feelings are reciprocated!" Gon was a little confused if she was still talking about Killua and was vaguely wondering if he should stop her when Killua's voice rang out from down he hall.

"Play it. Give me 5." Palm blinked in shock.

"O-oh! Ok, er, here they are!"

*Ding…*

"A over high C."

*Ding…*

"D over low C."

*Ding…*

"B below Middle C."

*Ding…*

"G over Middle C."

*Ding…*

"B below high C."

The class was shocked into awe as Palm looked up from the piano. "All correct…" She strained. They heard Killua's footsteps coming back and the class exploded into murmurs of how amazing Killua was.

Gon was barely able to keep his eyes in his head. Killua really was amazing! The fact he knew that so well even with the noise distortion from being farther away from the noise source… and accurately knew the notes even while he was still in the classroom! Killua really was amazing! It kind of explained why Illumi was so bent on having Killua sing with him even when offered a whole classroom of senior prospective World Stars.

Palm stood up from the piano as Killua sauntered back in, his eyebrows set slightly in anger, and she
placed her hands on her hips.

"I hope you all are satisfied now, he's proven he has great note recognition." She said and his following fell in love with him all over again.

"Oooh, Killua~~" They swooned. Gon watched him make his way back to his seat and waited until he sat to finally reboot his brain and look away. He really was amazing! Gon just wanted to know more about him, what else can he do, the music he can write… He hasn't been this captivated with the concept of someone since his father. He gripped his fists in determination. He'll definitely become friends with Killua!

The bell rang soon after Killua's test and everyone moved to leave as soon as possible. Gon figured Killua looked as good in a mood as any so he waited for him. Killua looked up from his phone, possibly having just played some music (and Gon wondered what kind of music he listened to) and spotted Gon waiting for him, a wide smile on his face. Killua's lips stretched out in an annoyed grimace.

"I'm getting tired of you harassing me!" He barked.

"You don't mean that!" Gon laughed off easily, his deep voice tempting Killua to keep him laughing.

"Grm… What do you want?" Killua grumbled, sliding his bookbag further up his shoulder and shoving one earphone away from his ear. Gon walked beside him as they made their way out the school.

"In Range…" Gon said, slightly trailing off. Killua stiffened but tried not to let it show.

"What about it?"

"You left right after my test, and you looked a little weird…" Gon said, and Killua rubbed a hand through the little fringes at the base of his neck nervously.

"I… so? I needed to go!"

"I figured, but I wanted to know if you were alright… if you needed to talk about it?"

Killua glared at the sun-kissed teen next to him and hoped the flush on the cheeks would be taken as anger.

"No, there's nothing to talk about, and even if there was, I wouldn't talk about it with you!" He said and made himself briskly walk away from the other.

"Ah…! Killua!" Gon shouted after him, giving a short chase before thinking better of it. "If you ever need to talk, just know I'm here! I'm great at keeping secrets!" He tried, then let his arms fall at his side. He hoped that was enough as he watched the starlight teen walk angrily away, both headphone housings planted firmly on his ears.

Gon probably would've given more chase if he didn't just remember he still needed to surprise Killua with the chocolates. He got excited thinking about what Killua would do when he gives it to him. Will his eyes bulge out of his head? Will he finally give him a full bellied laugh and sing from happiness? Gon began jogging towards his house. He shouldn't overdramatize this. He doesn't know how much Killua loves chocolate, he's only heard about the extent from Zushi and he might have been over-selling it. Gon's never even seen Killua eat chocolate. Or eat. Once they're friends, he has to ask where he eats lunch too. Suddenly feeling the weight of the money Mito gave him in his back pocket, his jogging picked up in resurgence as he made a beeline for the chocolate shop.
Killua felt his muscles unwind as the beats in the music infiltrated his body, reaching every crevice and transporting him to another place. He sighed through his mouth, letting the music take him away to a realm where he could think without his chest flipping out in anxiety. Music always did calm him since he was younger.

~Turn your face towards the sun

Let the shadows fall behind you

Don't look back, just carry on

And the shadows will never find you...

Now that he was on his lone walk home, maybe he could sort out his thoughts of what happened earlier.

You know what happened, Gon's voice was nothing like you've ever heard before.

Of course I have, Milluki can reach that bass no problem, he can probably go even lower than Gon.

But the feel of his voice… Killua had to hold down a shiver as he thought back to how it shook him to his core. Milluki doesn't sing like that. He doesn't sing with half as much feel as Gon does. None of us do anymore.

~Lost in the rock and roll

Got lost in a promise

Of a love I never known...

What does that mean, we don't sing with feel?

Just that, since we were of age to properly start learning the basics of music, the joy of singing was sucked out of us.

How can you think that? Thoughts like that border on anarchy. Do you think you would have half as much skill you do now without the help of your parents and older siblings? You are who you're able to be because of how they raised you. Killua vaguely remembered when he was growing up how Milluki would call Killua spoiled, he was the most spoiled of them all because of the extra training and attention he received.

~Shadows chase me far from home

I remember when my heart was filled with gold…

Gon sings just fine, and he seems to still have that shine in his eyes for the music. Killua remembered promising himself to never sing unless his parents ordered him too. It was too much of a bother and people took advantage of his voice for selfish reasons. He wanted to use his voice for his own, like before, when he was younger.

~And you know

I've been burned
I've been burned
I've been burned…

He also resolved not to sing with anyone who didn't impress him or he didn't deem as good as him. He figured singing won't be fun unless there was someone else just as good as him, and for the 10 years of his life he's been singing, he's never found it outside his family. Did he think Gon was as good as him…? No way...

~You've seen me lose control
It's not worth
It's not worth
It's not worth
My soul…

Killua realized with a start, it probably wasn't the skill of Gon he wanted to pair his voice with. He saw in Kastro's pretest that his voice could use some work (although his sandpaper like voice had it's rustic charm… another shiver suppressed). But it was probably what Gon represented, what Killua was always chasing in the fact he refused to sing with anyone. He didn't want to sing with anyone unless it was fun. He wanted his warmth and charisma and smiles and stage presence, and how much would Killua let loose paired up with a fool like Gon on stage? Would his infectious performance seep into Killua and cause him to act like a clown up there too? Killua fought back a smile. How fun!

~Turn your face towards the sun
Let the shadows fall behind you
Don't look back, just carry on
And the shadows will never find you...

Yea, Gon represented something he lost when he was younger. That was the only reason he wanted to sing with him. Killua covered his mouth again, biting his lips in thought. That made Gon dangerous… Killua knew he'd probably react to Gon against his will, his happiness will probably want to make him burst out in song like no one's ever made him feel. He'd have to keep away and be careful. Gon may have earned his brand of 'worthy' but it didn't mean anyone around him and Gon get to hear their voice dance together. They weren't deemed worthy to listen to him. Focus… Killua's goal was to carry the Zoldycks name and become the best World Star, exclusive and expensive. He couldn't do that by throwing his voice around this way and that. (Or so he was told).

Careful… Focus and Keep distractions at bay.

This won't be a problem as long as he can finally get through Gon's head they weren't friends.

Killua smiled at the outcome he came to just as he heard a text message come in through his headphones, the music briefly muted down to a low volume and a ding came out prominently. He pulled out his phone, quite happy with himself for resolving this situation himself so nicely. Just as he thought of how proud Illumi might have been at how he came to that conclusion somewhere in the back of his head, he registered the text message came in from Illumi. Killua cocked his head curiously and looked up, seeing his house coming into view not far down the street. Why would
Illumi text him, isn’t he home? It wasn’t like Killua was coming home late, he would get there soon, he could tell him whatever then.

He opened the text anyways with a shrug and his eyes widened.

Mom’s mad at you. Careful.

What? Damn. Killua shoved his phone in his pants and bit his thumbnail in slight panic. That’s right, Kite said he’d send the email out by Wednesday. He supposed he should thank Illumi for the warning. That way his eardrums wouldn’t burst as soon as he walked in. And maybe he could even come up with a quick lie to get him out of it. Ugh, what lie could he come up with for an F?!! The grade was what it was. Now all he could do as he walked up the walkway was prepare himself. He paused his music and shuffled his headphones down away from his ears and around his neck. He held the knob and breathed in a steeling breath.

Opening the door revealed the same quiet hallway he always walks down, and it was still quiet. The quiet before the storm, huh? Killua tiptoed in and closed the door so that it made no noise as it closed. He continued tiptoeing and looking left and right, expecting any of the doors to suddenly swing open with a screeching opera singer behind it. Also, he was wondering where Illumi was. If he knew mother was mad at him, he was somewhere to behold her wrath. If he spots him, he’ll know to avoid going that way.

A door he had already passed swung open behind him and he froze, briefly and quite hysterically thought about diving into one of the rooms to his left.

"KILLUA!" She cried out. He cringed and turned around on his heels. He saw she came out the door of the music recording booth room, same one as yesterday, but normally when it's closed, it meant no one was inside. He was just hoping that was the case when he passed it but obviously not. He didn't bother to answer her and just stick his hands into his pockets, letting his eyes fall onto a random space to one side. "What's this I hear about an F?!" She screeched. He knew she didn't want an answer. "You better have a good explanation!" He knew she wouldn't listen to reason, so he waited for that beat to pass that she let hang that was suppose to be where the kids try and explain themselves.

"This is not acceptable! I come home from the record company, ready to go into training with my little baby Kalluto, convinced my good boys are doing their best in school, then I see in my inbox an email from your teacher!" She shouts. "I'm thinking it's to tell me my boy, my darling, star boy, was too good and needed to be transferred to a higher class, and I needed to explain again that you'll stay where we put you, but NO!" Her voice began getting in higher pitch and faster pace in hysteria and Killua considered rebelliously lifting his headphones over his ears to cushion the sound waves she was belting out. "You're FAILING! Killua, we Zoldycks do not FAIL! We have a reputation to keep at that school! And when I find out you are failing because you would not sing?! Killua, that is ridiculous, we did not give you our blood, sweat, and tears just to fail about something so simple as singing! Well…” Her voice took on a dark tone Killua recognize as the start of her issuing out the punishment, but he still remained unanimated. It seemed to decrease the severity of the punishment most times when the kids just took it like pin cushions.

"You didn't want to sing in school? Then get ready, you're singing now. Then you'll have an excuse not to sing.” She said, pointing towards the music booth room she just came out of, her sleek glasses gleaming menacingly. Killua finally animated at that, looking up with panic in his eyes to meet his mother's eyes for the first time since she spotted him.

"Mother, no, I-!" He cried out and her lips crumpled up in anger.
"NOW!" She said and the words died in his throat. His eyes fell to the ground as he trudged forward to the room she pointed at.

"We'll start with music demo number 4 then go with every 4th song after that." She said as Killua passed under her arm and into the room. Killua sucked his teeth, "tsk," but still went into the room. The mother's accessorized face looked down the hall and pointed.

"Illumi! Get him 8 bottles of water and the tell the physician to expect Killua at midnight." Killua would have been surprised that Illumi was so close to his location if his attention wasn't arrested by what she just said.

"Midnight? Mom, you can't-" Killua cried, not caring at how his voice had climbed up several octaves in his panic.

"AH-AH-A, do your warm-ups!" She shrieked over him in delirious anger. He gave one stomp of his foot and stormed further into the room. Illumi, who was down the hall, cocked his head. Mom? Killua doesn't call mother that unless he was really prepared to talk his way out of her punishments. He thought. "Yes, mother." Illumi said and crossed the foyer into the kitchen. Illumi took out his phone while placing the water bottles on a tray to text Milluki.

Until Midnight. He wrote then picked up the tray, balancing the bottles on them to transfer them. He let out a breath to dispel the clenching protective feeling from his chest before he entered the room and do something he would regret. He knew Killua had to endure this, it will make him stronger. They all went through this as punishment and it makes them more disciplined and better than any of those wanna be World Stars at the school. Illumi will encourage this because he's worked way too hard to make his brother 10x better than himself. He entered as Killua placed his booth headphones on and Kikyo was angrily punching settings into the sound board. Killua dragged his droopy kitten eyes to Illumi and he had to crush his emotions Killua tried to revive in him. He pointedly ignored him.

"Here's the water, mother. I'll alert the physician. If his voice gets too hoarse, don't keep him or the physician won't be able to do much." Illumi forewarned.

"I think I know the limit of my son! Leave us!" She said, grabbing the water and slamming it down next to her. Illumi held back a sigh and graze his eyes over to Killua to see how he was faring before he left. He was happy to see Killua set his eyes to gorgeous deep freeze cold stone again. Good. Never let them see weakness and they can't feed off it.

"Alright." Illumi left the room and left the door open. Even if he closed it after him, she'd open it again. Heading up the main stairs to their bedrooms, he could already hear Killua's explosive voice sing a very dramatic and taxing song, echoing out to the halls of the house. Passing Milluki's room, he heard Milluki already had music blasting through his room's radio system. Illumi walked in his own dark room and nimbly dialed the volume on his room's radio system up on his way in. He focused on those music notes instead of the yelling singing Killua was belting and that Illumi could still hear from the second story.

He may encourage this as necessary discipline but he rather not hear his adorable baby brother's voice be tried and strained until it couldn't make another noise. Just thinking about it prompted him to turn back around and put the radio to it's full power and close his door. He closed his eyes to compose himself then decided it wasn't enough and he moved to his bed, shoving headphones on his ears and blasting a random piece of music from his list. The two musics clashed together to make a mosh of nonsense but it was fine. It drowned out the noise. He knew if Killua was singing like that til midnight, no dinner would be served at the table, and it'd be delivered to their rooms by their
butlers. But Illumi couldn't even think about food right now… Sigh, and he was so excited to tell Killua about his decision to partake in the winter showcase. Thinking about his lovely brother cheering him on just wanted to make him win some more but now wouldn't be the best time… He sighed as he could swear he heard Killua hit an explosive high note. No, no, that's ridiculous, he wouldn't be able to hear him through the clashing music. But no one was really settled in the house when mother made a punishment. He hoped he could just sleep tonight.

Honorable Mentions:

Question- from Assassination Classroom [Submitted by @Dragonbooks249] (The theme of Gon trying to become Killua's friend, I really liked it but couldn't find a way to put it in properly! Really cool song, you should look it up! Gon would sing it.)

Featured Music:

I do- Boyz II Men
Bills- LunchMoney Lewis
Towards the Sun- Rihanna

=End Chapter 2=

Chapter End Notes

Is it obvious how much I love Killua yet? Really obvious? Awesome, I really love him, get ready for some unneccessay praise of Killua! X3 It's not that bad, I promise. Isn’t Gon a loveable idiot? Did I warn of the cringe yet? LOL. I'll just tell you now, those thought conversations in Killua's head with the bold and italics is a fight against Illumi's voice that's so embedded in his head. :) But he doesn't know it's not his own voiced thoughts.

Another side note, would you guys rather have me put the features music list at the top so you guys know what it is before it comes up? (I list the songs in order of appearance in the chapter) Thanks! Remember to check out the music list on youtube for the specific songs I used for the story! It's posted on my tumblr.

Please remember to go ahead and submit suitable songs. I want to interact with my audience :D

I also have a tumblr where these things can be submitted, where I'll be posting my own fanart (Cause I'm a dork) and short stories/ behind scenes: Its HunterxAU now, twilastar (pen name! :D)

=Update= (6/11/2017)

Now, I'll also be adding honorable mentions before list of featured music (which will also be going up on the youtube list). These will be songs that either fit the theme of the chapter, but I couldn't find a way to incorporate it, or songs that a character could have sang as well, and I had to decide which! It will be specified!
Thank you!
OMG, you guys have made me so happy with all your comments and the good vibes from everyone else who didn't! It really helps me get motivated to keep writing! I have been excited to continue writing for weeks now! (I just have to sit down and write it!) I have listened to everyone's song suggestions, and I have to tell you, I'm downloading a couple to be on my permanent music list because they were so good! And they are also going into the story, needlessly say. I can't use all of them, at least not in this arc, but thank you for all your suggestions! I love all of your suggestions!

-This chapter needs to go through major formatting later, I didn't get to do it this time around, please ignore anything weird, thank you!!!-

I want to thank my editor for all her help and putting up with all my whining that my story isn't really good, which she promptly helped me with: Canzie (Her tumblr is canzie-gum and whats-wrong-aniki)

Musica Academy Showcase

The Academy showcases are quarter annual, one for every season. There's a Fall Showcase in October, Winter Showcase in December before winter break, Spring Showcase in March, and Summer Showcase in May, before summer break. Sign ups for the Showcases are anytime after the end of the last Showcase. The Judges change every showcase, guests ranging from alumni to special celebrities guests, but the Chairman is always the main judge on the board.

The performance is given like a number in a concert and you're only allowed to perform original works, no covers or remixes. Participants are graded on advance factors such as Perfect Pitch, Range, Physical Singing, Dance routine, etc. Such are these normally perfected by those in their senior year so it's rare when underclassmen sign up, it's mostly a showcase for seniors. When underclassmen apply, they don't expect first place, just experience.

Chapter 3: The loud silence

Gon shook his head as another idea came and went. No that wouldn't work either… The gift bag bounced against Gon's thigh as he walked, so he shifted it further away from his body, lest the expensive gifts get damaged.

Gon has been thinking since last night ways to show Killua that people didn't have to be… worthy to sing with or sing to. There shouldn't be an exchange if he can make someone else happy with his voice. Gon's sure he'll figure out something, but for now he had more immediate problems.

Today was Wednesday.

Academia day.

Gon put his free hand in his hair in frustration. This sucked! He knew going to a school for singing...
would be just too good to be true! He could never truly escape actual homework…! Well, he supposed he shouldn't complain, it was only one day in the week and whatever homework the teachers could assign wouldn't be due for another week. Which reminded Gon that he had to remember to do Kite's project with Melody. He's seen her in a couple of his other classes but never really spoke on the project or much anything since he's been too focused on the content he was learning.

He's got to get into contact with her again and make a solid meeting time. But for now, Gon would settle for nervously playing with his jacket zipper until he could make sure these classes will pass without trouble this year. He entered the school and looked for Zushi as he did (technically) the past two mornings.

Zushi was standing by the entrance of the school playing with what looked like a mini video game console. Gon bounded up to him excitedly.

"Hey Zushi! What's that?" He asked. Zushi looked up, the game on the screen now paused.

"Morning Gon! You really don't know? It's the JoyStation Mobile." He said cocking his head. "How could you not know? Have you never been to the mall or anywhere that sells electronics?" Zushi asked. Gon chuckled sheepishly while rubbing the back of his head. When one didn't have money, one tends not to hang around places that have expensive items they couldn't afford. It was easier to keep from pining over the newer things on the market when he stayed away from those money driven incorporation and finds ways to have fun for little or no money, he learned that quickly when he was little. But also not having the newer things contributed to thinning out his friends as he grew up, he mostly had fans, not confidentials.

"Yea, I don't go to the Mall often…" Gon decided to settle on. Zushi frowned.

"Aw, yea, well, I can understand, I can't get to the mall unless Wing drives me. I can't wait til I can drive."

"Oh, I can drive. I mean, I have my permit and Mito leaves me the car in case I wanted to go out and practice, but y'know, I have to be careful cause I'm not allowed to drive without a licensed passenger anyway, but I'm just not interested in going to the mall in the first place." Gon rambled with a shrugged. "Rather do stuff like camping or hiking." Zushi stared at him with wide eyes.

"What kind of teenager are you?" Gon laughed him off even though Zushi was kinda seriously waiting for an answer.

"Well come on, let's go by my locker. If Killua's coming in today he'll have to drop by his locker and I found out yesterday Killua's locker isn't too far from mine!" Gon said, wrapping a hand around Zushi's upper arm and dragging him forward to the hallway with his locker. Zushi scoffed.

"Gon, I already told you, no one really sees Killua before school!" Zushi said and that made Gon slow down but he still trucked on.

"But today's academia day! I thought it'd be a little different…?" Gon said, looking back at Zushi. Zushi shook his head.

"I've seen Illumi and Milluki before in the instrument rooms or with their fans, but for some reason, we don't see Killua. I think he hides from his fans because it's very possible he's the most popular Zoldyck." Gon thought back to how that swarm was around Illumi the first day, screaming how everyone should love him. Then he imagined that around Killua and realized he'd hide too.
"B-but…" Gon hummed, looking down at the bag in his hand and Zushi finally took notice of it.

"What? What is it?" He asked trying to look inside but Gon let it fall back to his side.

"I got chocolate for Killua and I was hoping to give it to him before classes…" He said, thinking about giving it to him in a more private setting after pulling him aside from all the eyes. Zushi sighed.

"I can't believe you actually got him chocolate! But… I'm sorry, I don't think you'll find him before classes. Hey, what classes you have today? We may share some." Zushi said, pulling out his schedule. Gon pulled out his schedule, his movements painted with disappointment, and held it by Zushi's.

"Oh, we have reading together and lunch right after! That way we don't have to meet up to go to lunch together." Zushi said, smiling up at Gon. He smiled back but still looked sad, the bag seeming to carry a huge weight on his arms.

"C-c'mon Gon, you shouldn't…" Zushi said trying to cheer him up, but suddenly Gon's eyes lit up at something behind him. Zushi whirled around and his mouth dropped open in surprise. He rubbed his eyes. Was that a ghost? Zushi's eyes, along with most people's in the hallway, followed Killua's movements as he walked down the hall like he was some after image they didn't really believe was there. His silver phones was firmly planted on his ears, the blue screaming kitty decal glistening as he moved. He wore a black turtleneck and purple pants with straps on the bottom half of his pant legs, his blue bookbag on his shoulder. Very simple but elegant and fashionable on the photogenic teen, his white hair around the frame of his face like a halo. He had his eyes on the ground as he walked in, seeming to refuse to acknowledge anyone was around, but Zushi knew he probably felt everyone's scrutinizing gaze at his neck. If he was wearing a turtleneck, that only meant one thing—A shift in the shoulder showed the top of bandages underneath his high collar.

Yea. Zushi wanted to open his mouth and say something, but his brain wasn't able to register why that was. Only when Gon zipped past him did he remember why he needed to say something to stop him.

"Gon! Wait!" Zushi cried in delay, running after his older friend. Gon skidded to a stop in front of Killua, rocking on his heel to keep from falling over onto the smaller frame. Killua took a step back in surprise, raising an arm in reflexive defense as Gon's shoes suddenly entered his line of vision of the floor. Recognition flooded his face when he took in Gon's huge smile and he rolled his eyes.

"Morning Killua!" Gon cried out cheerily as Zushi ran up next to him. Zushi held Gon's arm in some weak plea to pull Gon away. Killua nodded his head in Gon's direction in greeting then his eyes fell on Zushi and Zushi was blown away again at how amazing it was just to be by Killua and under his gaze. He suddenly admired Gon for being able to withstand it all the time, his aura was amazing and suffocating.

"S-sorry, Killua, I don't think he knows…" Zushi muttered out, feeling like he should bow his head, not to meet the eyes of the talented teen. Gon looked between the two of them confused.

"Know…? Know what?" Gon chuckled slightly, feeling out of the loop. Killua took his hands out of his pockets and began nimbly moving his hands around, forming shapes and motions before quickly moving to making another and Gon could only watched amazed as though being shown a magic trick. Was Killua showing him something cool? This was so cool, Killua was so cool! Killua saw the dumb awe-struck wonder in Gon's eyes as he locked onto his movements and his hands stalled, not knowing what to do. Zushi chuckled nervously again and only as Killua stopped did Gon realize what he was doing.
"S-sorry, I don't think he knows that either-!"

"That was sign language!" Gon gasped amazed. Killua was just more and more impressive everyday. He cocked his head. "Why are you signing?" Gon asked curiously, a sinking feeling entering his chest. Killua furrowed his eyebrows in frustration then motioned at his throat with his hand before flicking it out as though throwing his voice out, then shook his head. Gon's mouth fell open slightly.

"W-what?! Why?" Gon asked, almost dropping the bag he had in his hand. "Is it permanent? What did you do? Did someone do this to you?! Is someone out to get your voice out of jealousy? Killuaaa-!" Gon panicked, and Killua shook his head and hands furiously throughout, but with Gon not heeding, Killua finally shot his hands out and covered Gon's mouth. He sighed and pulled away, his hands curling as though to start signing again, but then seeing Gon zero in on his hands as though through willpower he'd understand this time, he put them down, fists at his side. His sharp eyes whipped to Zushi and he shoved his hands towards Gon.

*Explain!*

Zushi swallowed a yelp. "S-sorry, I only know assumptions and rumors, I just thought you'd want to explain it properly…" Zushi said, poking two fingers together and turning to Gon. Killua signed something to Zushi and Zushi furrowed his eyebrows. Killua huffed out a giant sigh of frustration and did it again slower.

"Oh! Ok…" Zushi said, and Gon reluctantly removed his intense gaze from Killua to Zushi.

"What happened?" Gon asked.

"Ok, well… It's kinda… common knowledge when the Zoldycks come to school covering their necks with turtlenecks or whatever, we can expect their necks to be bandaged up underneath."

"Why?!" Gon asked, slight feelings of anger and protectiveness surging forth.

"We…" Zushi said flicking his eyes to Killua, who looked just as curious as to what the school assumed what it meant. "Don't know. But we do know they don't speak and it's probably from vocal nodules."

"Voice nodules…" Gon murmured back numbly and turned to look at Killua who nodded, relieved there was now communication going on. Gon knew what voice nodules were. With how loud and explosive most of his concerts were, Mito took him to a doctor after every one to make sure there were none, and if there were, the doctor would advise them on how to take care of them so that they don't get worse, and now he barely ever got them because his vocal chords were so exercised. Gon turned back to Zushi.

"How long do they last?" Gon asked. Zushi exhaled a little, seeming happy that he didn't say anything wrong.

"Only a day. We heard they have a family doctor that is a qualified vocal therapists, the best money can buy, that does everything in their power to make sure it doesn't last long and that they're healed up better than before." Another look in Killua's direction confirmed what he said. Gon's eyebrows furrowed downward in another surge of anger. When he asked his next question, his eyes didn't leave Killua's, even though Killua was still looking towards Zushi.

"How often?"

Killua's eyes now flicked over to Gon in surprise. Zushi also directed his attention to Gon more fully.
"W-... well it's not like it's periodically. It just happens sometimes..." Zushi said. Killua found Gon's gaze too heavy, it wasn't something that fit on his face, he shouldn't look so serious. He felt caught in the gaze but also wanted to look away at the same time, he eventually was able to rip his eyes away and to the ground. Gon's eyes were probing him for something, he was trying to find something off and telling. "...But based on my experience last year, each of the Zoldycks come in with nodules at least 2 times a year... Killua's probably has the most-

A sharp glare from Killua caused the words on Zushi's tongue to run back into his throat. He made a small choking noise than lowered his head like in the presence a king.

The one that comes in with them the most.... Gon was able to infer from the sentence. Killua's eyes looked up as though uncaring but something in his eyes seemed pleading, as though for Gon to understand, it's just something they go through.

Gon knew from his own experiences and the often visited doctor that he calls friend that certified vocal therapists help the patient recognize the harmful habits that were causing the voice nodules and replace them with proper techniques. When caught on time, vocal nodules could be reversed through nonsurgical therapy.

But what he also knew from his many trips and practices that the therapy the doctor prescribes normally has 2 effects: heals the existing nodes and prevent future ones from developing, basically creates stronger vocal chords. What Zushi was saying was that the Zoldycks often got vocal nodules, not even accounting the ones they got outside of school months, probably during their actual active concert seasons. But that would also mean, with their great certified physician that heals them as soon as possible, they have probably created strong vocal chords that nodules won't form on easily, and however the hell they were getting nodes now had to be worked at... and deliberate. The pleading look in Killua's eyes suddenly seemed to make more sense and made Gon more angry, but Gon didn't let it show. He just put on his best smile and faced Killua.

"That sucks you can't speak today, but at least it's only for one day, right...? But, that means we won't be able to talk much... But then again, that's ok because I can talk for both of us!" Killua's head sunk down in irritation.

Seriously? He thought. Now he can't even give him a proper silent treatment to make sure he knows he's not friends with him because he'll know it's just his voice. Killua just shrugged. It's just for one day after all. He walked past Gon to his locker and Gon and Zushi followed after him.

"Wow, Killua you smell really good!" Gon piped up from behind and Killua could have fallen over. EMBARRASSING! He whirled on Gon with a flush face and pulled down his turtleneck's collar before pointing at the bandages. Gon leaned in slightly and sniffed before pulling away and holding his nose.

"Ugh, what is that? It's really strong!" Gon said. It smelled better as a breeze. Zushi leaned forward as well to sniff.

"Oh, is that some sort of evapo-rub? Gon, it's probably to make sure his airways stay nice and clear for him to breath. Probably part of the therapist prescription to heal properly. And it's probably scented to Killua's preference." Killua nodded proudly at Zushi. He could be useful to keep around for the day. When he looked over at Gon his breath hitched in his throat at the admiration in Gon's face.

"Wow! Killua, your tastes are so good! What is that, vanilla and..." Gon gave the air a sniff again. "Wood shaving?" He chuckled and Killua blushed. What was up with his nose? He whirled around deciding now to ignore Gon. He opened his locker to get his books for that day, and he heard Gon
"OH! Right, Killlluuuuuaa!" Gon said teasingly. Killua sighed into the locker before turning and facing Gon. "I got you something!" He said holding the gift bag out. "Surprise!" He giggled and Killua curiously tried to peek inside. He gave Gon a suspicious look and took the bag and opened it further to see the contents.

Killua's eyes widened along with Gon's smile. He was reacting along the lines Gon expected to him to. His eyes deepened their depth into beautiful wonder until his eyes were as expansive as the cosmos itself and then they were fixed onto Gon's eyes and he couldn't get enough.

"Chocolates… No, Chocorobots."

"He got me chocorobots… my favorite."

That same small hidden place in Killua's chest cracked open a little further and he suddenly valued these chocolates as dearly as his headphones. It took him back to a time where music was fun and it wasn't all business. He got him his childhood favorite chocolate, this guy who sang like singing was fun, unlike everyone else in this stupid academy.

"Forget it. Killua smiled and pulled a box out. He vaguely registered chocolate probably won't help his throat but anyone was a fool if they thought he wasn't going to have at least one. Killua pointed at Gon and nodded his head in thanks. Gon grinned so widely he had to close his eyes.

"Oh, Killua! I'm so happy you like them!" Gon cheered and watched Killua lean against the lockers and open the first box of chocorobots, hanging the gift bag full of the chocorobots from his elbow. He tossed a couple in his mouth and held another between his fingers in a queue. He blinked then looked over at Gon who looked a little expectant. He inclined his head forward.

"What?"

Gon tilted his head to one side. "Well… Can I have some?" He asked, a slight tinge on his cheeks. Killua swallowed a bark laugh and placed the chocolate in his mouth, licking the melted chocolate off his fingers. He held up a finger and shook it along with his head.

"HUH?!" Gon exclaimed. Zushi rubbed the back of his neck while laughing.

"I told you he really loves chocolate!"

"I just thought he'd be so thankful he'd give me at least one!"

Killua's stifled laughter brought their attention back on him and they both smiled under the noise of his twinkling laughter. He seemed to be in a better mood than when he first came in, so that was enough of a treat for Gon.

"Oh yea! Killua, what classes do you have today?" Killua stopped laughing as he processed Gon's question. He reached into his bookbag and pulled out his schedule and gave it to Gon, then turned to his locker to finish fishing for his books. Gon looked at their two schedules.

"Ah, we have Algebra together…" Gon said, scanning the sheet. "And cooking?! Why do I have to take cooking?!" Gon cried and Killua stifled another laugh with his head in the locker.

"Well, they're electives! Even as World Stars, we need certain skills or hobbies we should hone, like if as a World Star you guest on a cooking show! You don't want to look bad by not being able to cook, or maybe as a World Star you host a cooking show with your title. It's like a chance to try out
what abilities you could hone along with your singing talent." Zushi explained while Killua finished zipping up his book bag and hefting it back over his shoulder.

"Hmmm… And we have free period together before school ends." Gon concluded giving Killua his schedule. "That's too bad, I'll miss having you in every class with me!"

Killua snatched his schedule and flicked Gon's forehead. He turned to Zushi and signed something then Zushi turned to Gon.

"He said every time you say something embarrassing now, he'll flick you." Zushi said. Gon gaped at Zushi.

"You can understand sign language? Can you do it too?" Gon asked.

"Well, Wing said it's useful to know multiple languages as a World Star since as a World Star you'll be travelling, well… the World! And sign was one I really wanted to know to communicate with those that might not be able to…" Zushi explained, getting slightly embarrassed.

"Wow, Zushi you're really amazing…!" Gon murmured and looked down. "I never really thought about that… I'm really behind, I've got to start learning more languages myself!"

"Mh! Good luck!" Zushi said, and the bell to start classes rang. Killua raised his hand in parting and started off one way and Gon pouted after him. "Gon, don't be too sad, you'll see him later." Zushi said. Gon nodded. He just hoped the chocolate really did have the desired effect he wanted and Killua considered him a friend now…

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Forget it. That's what Killua thought when he opened the bag and found all those chocorobots. He knows they are expensive and this guy was too nice and too bright and why out of everyone in the whole school would he choose to spoil him? He didn't deserve it.

So yes, he decided to forget it. Forget everything he resolved in himself yesterday as he walked home.

Ya. Father would be proud.

He made a friend!

…

Killua popped another chocolate treat in his mouth and rolled it around his tongue in thought. So now he wanted to sing with Gon and he considered him a friend. Right, so… he can sing around Gon. He just had to make sure no one else was around when he did, right? It's that simple. Right? He decided not to think about it now and how complicated he was making it and just sat in the back of the class.

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Gon looked down at the schedule then back up at the door just to stall from going inside. It seemed there was a wing of the school specifically for academic classes. Gon gulped. He knew he just had to get through this.

He opened the door and scanned the room. Students were loitering around, some sitting on desks and chatting while others stood around them in cliches and admiration. Gon was only slightly surprised to see Knov at the desk reading a light novel, and figured the already employed teachers were used to teach academic topics for 50 minutes of the day.
So Knov knows more about History... Gon thought thinking about the class he was in. He abruptly looked up as a thought struck him. Right... I still need to look up those plays and musicals from his class... Gon remembered. It was never assigned as an actual homework assignment, but he wasn't going to sit idly by when he was the only one that could make the most out of this experience for himself.

Gon walked forward and knew he didn't have to sit in front of classes that aren't music related, and honestly in his old high school, he was more often than not in the middle or the back of the class goofing off and being the class clown. However, a second scan of the class showed that Kurapika was sitting in the front row furthest from the door.

Melody.

Right. Gon had a second agenda to attend to and he hadn't really worked on it since Monday. Time for the next phase of his plan. Thinking about how similar Kurapika was to Killua, he could even say this was a prototype plan being worked out. Again, it was kinda mean using them as a guinea pig, but again, he doesn't have to tell them and it wasn't like he didn't honestly really want to help Melody and Kurapika out. So, on with the plan!

Gon sat down next to Kurapika with a flourish.

"Hi!" He chirped. Kurapika looked up from his book as though surprised anyone would ever try to talk to him. But once he saw who it was, a warm and affectionate smile (that suited him in Gon's opinion) graced his features and he closed the book while marking his last place with ease.

"Gon. How are you?" He asked, folding his hands over the book.

"I'm good! I mean, a little nervous! I was never good at normal school stuff, just barely passed through while goofing off in class..." He admitted with a sheepish shrug. Kurapika smiled at him scornfully.

"Gon, you shouldn't take light of academia. A good education is very important, for anybody, and it's something no one can ever take away from you no matter what." He held up a slender finger.

"I know, I was just never good at it. It's not like I never tried... music was the only thing that came easy to me." He muttered and Kurapika's heart felt for the boy.

"Oooh, Gon... You know, on Wednesdays, they have tutors for the extra hour we would normally be let out early. The school prides itself not only on it's talented students, but their grades, so they'll do anything they can to help. Its for the students, by the students. I myself volunteered for History tutoring, so if you ever need any help with this class, I'm available then and any other time you can catch me. I'm not too bad in the other subjects..." Kurapika said, slightly twisting his neck as though saying something a bit far fetched. "So I can also help you in those as well, as much as I can." He nodded.

"Wow, Kurapika, you must be really smart!" Gon gushed and Kurapika blushed slightly. He shook his head, his golden strands shaking about the frame of his face.

"N-no, I think it's quite the average education, it may just come a bit more easily to me, I have a very good concentration." Gon furrowed his eyebrows. He was so nice! Was he only like this to only people he liked? Or maybe he wasn't mean but he ignored others a lot?

"Kurapika, what's your standard on singing with people?" Gon asked, staring intently in his eyes. Kurapika snapped his eyes to Gon's, their eyes locked for a moment just before Knov stood up.
"Time for class."

"Alright, now go in groups of two to read over the assigned reading. Anything you don't read in class should be read by next week." Knov said, waving his hand flippantly. As the class of 50 minutes came close to an end, the class's attention span was shot and Knov was not about to try and keep it for the last 10. He's tired enough from trying to keep it at all throughout the whole period.

Kurapika reached over to touch Gon's hand and Gon looked over to see Kurapika with a thoughtful look on his face. Gon nodded, knowing his silent request to work together, although Gon expected there wouldn't be much history work done. But hopefully his plan will be ready to move on to the next stage.

The classroom gradually filled with idle chatter and Gon moved his desk to face Kurapika's.

"Well?" He asked again, and Kurapika reluctantly met his gaze. Gon was such a light and happy person, it was almost scary and unnerving when he got serious like that, and Kurapika hoped he wouldn't see it very often from now on.

"Why do you ask, Gon?" He asked softly instead. Gon blinked. Wasn't expecting that… but then again, he didn't think this through completely.

"There's…" Gon let his eyes drift back to the desk. "I…" Kurapika sighed.

"If you're wondering if I'll sing with you… and want to meet my standards…" Kurapika hummed, his voice a willowing dance in the air. "I have to tell you I don't know myself if you meet my standards yet. I don't want to tell you because then I won't know if you're doing it just to meet it or if that's really you. I'll tell you this much, you definitely interest me and have the makings of a World Star. You're serious about it. That's one thing you pass on."

Everyone who is able to get into this academy is serious, Kurapika. They wouldn't have been able to if they weren't… Gon thought, thinking back to what Zushi told him, how people are mad at people like him who feel he didn't do enough to deserve to be there.

"It's not… I don't want to sing with you, Kurapika. I won't try to meet your standards even if you tell me. I'm curious to what it is and, actually, to why you have one." Gon said. Is he copying the Zoldycks for that exclusive feel?

"Oh…?" Kurapika drummed his fingers once on the desk in front of him, surveying Gon as if he saw him for the first time. "You don't want to sing with me?"

"Ah!" Gon freaked over the implications he gave him. "I didn't mean it like that! I meant… like, I hope to sing with everyone eventually while I'm in the school, but I'm not actively trying to sing with you right now…?" Gon tried to amend. Kurapika blinked then stifled a beautiful laugh behind his hand.

"Gon, I wasn't exactly upset about it… I mean, I suppose I was a little put off because I assumed everyone wanted to sing with me. That's why I have my standards, actually. In this school, if you attach yourself with the right people, you can easily pass your classes, get opportunities through connections, and advance your singing career by riding someone else's more talented coattails." Kurapika explained. "Obviously the more talented ones are targeted, so when I first came here I was asked constantly by others to be partners or in groups or a part of their project, a couple more weeks
after that, people started getting upset that I wasn't... focused on one person or group of people to "stick" to... essentially the ones I favor more to help advance, however unconscious it was. I was never one to take partiality to anyone, so of course I hadn't, but based on that I was able to figure out how most of these under-talented people work in this school. If they were really serious about becoming a World Star, they would try harder to become like one of those that they want the scraps from." Kurapika ranted, getting agitated just from the memory of it.

So, that's what he meant... but not everyone are like that... in fact I think most people aren't, he just had a bad run in with people who thought freshman would be easy... Gon thought taking in everything. His breath hitched in his throat at a past memory. Does Killua think the same thing about me? Does he think that's why I've been bugging him? Gon couldn't linger longer on that as Kurapika met his eyes again.

"So, my standards fundamentally are they have to be as talented or more talented than me. They have to show aspects of a World Star in the making, outgoing and confident, that's where you caught my eye, Gon, they have to be invested and participating in class, which if I remember correctly, you've sat in the front of every class. Obviously they have to sing well or at least need little help in getting into top shape. Knowledgeable in an instrument would help, languages are good, academia must be top notch, they should have a reputa."

"Ah-ah, Kurapika, isn't that... too high? Too much?" Gon asked and Kurapika met his eyes confused.

"No, I think that should be the minimum of most everyone in here." Gon scanned his view left and right as though that would show the skill level of everyone around him.

"Then how many people have you sang with because they met your expectations?" Gon asked resting his eyes on the blond again. Kurapika flushed slightly.

"Erm... since I've come here?" He asked. Gon shrugged sure. "You know what, I don't think that's important!" Kurapika decided, crossing his arms. Gon smiled helplessly.

"OK, then what do you do for projects?" Gon already knew Killua was so strict in his resolve that he already failed one.

"I settle for someone I've sang with before or at least won't fail me..." Kurapika said. Gon scrunched up his nose in deep thought. That's no good... is he even excited about singing anymore with that mindset?

"Kurapika, how long have you been in this school?" Gon decided to ask. Kurapika looked up in thought.

"Yes... 3 years. I can't seem to get out of second year. I don't know why, there must be some hidden agenda teachers grade us on, because I got a letter from Netero himself that I failed second year based on something I was missing. Something I didn't learn throughout the year. Which is ridiculous because I passed all my classes with A average." He huffed.

Gon let his eyes fall downward and rested his chin on his propped up hand. Something missing? Hidden agenda? I'll have to ask Netero about that later... Gon thought. But now I have at least half of Kurapika's standards to help me when I work with Melody! I would have hoped for a shorter list, but what he gave me is fine. I can move on to the next part of my plan. I need to talk with Melody.

Gon walked out the classroom and towards his locker. The rest of the time was thankfully spent
talking about less heavy topics and he actually got to know more about Kurapika, like how he had art as an elective last year and fell in love with it. He's hoping to do something with art when he becomes a World Star like open or adopt an art museum or have classical pieces incorporated in his concerts.

Gon opened his locker and placed his thick and heavy history text back in. He pulled out his schedule and saw he had… Algebra!? Danggit! That was probably his worst subject, he can barely recall how to say larger numbers correctly. And If given plenty of time, he can solve any problem, but his rate is probably slower than the school system would appreciate. He sighed and put in his algebra text in his book bag.

Slumping off to the class, he stared at his schedule. For some reason, there was an inkling in the back of his head probing him. Something about Algebra… it was something important he was forgetting. Staring at it, he was hoping to remember, but it was starting to stress him out as he got closer to the door. He decided trying to remember wouldn't do him any good and he'll just accept what comes to him. Walking into algebra room, he already felt the white boards on the 3 walls closing in on him, but then a flicking movement caught his eye.

Gon turned towards the back of the room and blue orbs drilled into honey brown and Gon didn't think he could smile so wide. Killua was waving him over, a smile on his face and a box of those chocolaty robots on his desk. Gon felt his chest fill with a light, bubbling happiness and he was practically running to his captivating friend.

"Killuuaa!" Gon wailed, and Killua's eyes widened. Killua was waving Gon over, he wanted his attention, his company! That made Gon so unbelievably happy he closed his eyes as he dove for the moonlight teen. He toppled over the top of the desk and somersaulted on the ground, landing in a heap in the back of the classroom.

Gon gave a slight groan and looked up from his upside down position on the wall to see Killua had jumped out his seat for Gon to grab at nothing. Killua was laughing that stifled twinkling laughter, holding both his mouth and stomach as he looked at Gon through squinted bright eyes. The rest of the class looked on concerned.

"Mooooah, Killua, why'd you move? I just wanted a hug…” Gon grumbled flipping over to stand up straight. That just made Killua laugh harder, but when a laughter slipped through that didn't sound so muffled, Gon noted it sounded raspy and harsh, then Killua was coughing, his head to one side modestly.

That anger flared up again but it was overwashed with concern. Gon was by Killua's side faster than he knew he could move.

"Killua, are you ok?" Gon asked worriedly, hands on his back and shoulders, not knowing how else to help. When the coughing subsided a few seconds later, Killua flailed his arms around to both dismiss Gon's concern and get his hands off him.

"I'm fine." He mouthed unconcerned. Gon swallowed a huff of anger. He must be more used to this than he thought. Who would do that to him? Was it his parents? Or whoever trained him? He wanted a word with them. Killua coolly nodded his head in the direction of the desk he was seated at and then pointed at the seat next to it. Gon happily complied. Luckily for him, Killua was already seated in the back, a seat he often preferred in math anyways.

"So, in my first period, Kurapika was there too! Did you know that you're not the only one in the school who refuses to sing with others? Well, he will sing people but they have to meet his standard… unlike you who have no exceptions." Gon said, extenuating the last word for comedic
effect. Killua gave him a side smirk and Gon just remembered he probably shouldn't be trying to make Killua laugh right now. Killua was more amused that Gon was serious about talking for the both of them today. Gon noticed the half eaten box on Killua's desk again.

"Hmm?" Gon intoned, pointing at the chocolate. Killua looked down at it and gave another cat like grin in Gon's direction that Gon found himself entranced in. He picked up the box and shook a delicate finger his way then picked his pen next to his paper and quickly scribbled something in a neat catscratch.

If you wanted some, why didn't you get any for yourself? These are mine. He passed over for Gon to read. He pouted.

"Because I wanted you to be the one to give me some!" Gon exclaimed and Killua started snickering again. Gon pressed his mouth in a thin line then waved his hand vaguely.

"Alright, it's fine, I get it." He said, and Killua looked at him curiously like he was planning something else. "That's ok too. I'm just happy you really like it as much as I'd hope. It was the only reason I didn't try to accompany you home these past couple of days… I wanted it to be a surprise." Gon said and Killua looked on thoughtfully. So… he never hated him… not even that first day after gym… Killua waited for anything else Gon would say but just then the teacher came in and Killua's head cocked to one side almost involuntarily. She looked familiar.

"Hello Class! Sorry, some of you may not have met me yet. I came in from my summer engagements a bit late. I'm Bisky Krueger but please, and I do mean please call me Bisky!" She intoned, her light fluttery voice giving many students the impression she sang light pop songs. She wrote her name on the board and Gon seemed to finally click to life after remaining still for a few moments.

"WAIT! You're the teacher? You're not a student?" He asked and most of the class turned around to face him, including Bisky.

"Oh~! Well, if you're implying I look young enough to be considered one, brownie points for you~!" She squealed and the class hung their heads. They knew Gon well enough to know he doesn't know how to not speak his mind, they should have known he would say something that simple minded and straightforward. "But, no, I am a teacher, retired World Star, although I do dabble in a bit of performances, cameos, openers, and coaching (in case anyone wanted to know)" She said behind her breath in the hopes of getting hired. Gon nodded earnestly but then Killua's mouth fell open. He recognized her! She was in a picture with her mom when his mother was younger. She's ANCIENT! He would have told Gon as much if he had the voice so he could stop fanning her old ego.

"But enough about me! It's time for math! Who's excited? No one? Right? But let's get it over with, it's once a week for 50 minutes. I assume all of you have at least that much of an attention span." She turned to the board and opened the algebra book on a stand by her.

"Alright, any questions on Inequalities?" She asked, turning around to the students. Gon sweated in his seat, hoping he didn't look as dumb as he felt. He looked down at his paper seeing these upside down triangles of equations that somehow led to one x equaling a number. He could follow it until the order of operations were put into the mix. Gon mixed it up all the time. How was he suppose to know which to apply when, what to subtract where and what did the parentheses have to do with it? Gon didn't know exactly what to ask and he didn't want to hold up class just to ask her to do the whole lesson over again but slower, and even then there was no saying he was going to get it then.

He could feel his eyeballs swimming in his skull and Killua looked over only for his face to fall with
concern at Gon's expression. Killua probably knew that look all too well by now. Bisky looked up at the clock to see there was still time in class.

"Alright, well if no one has any questions, let's have you guys do some practice problems." She said, turning to the book and flipping through the pages. Killua watched Gon sink in his chair slowly in the corner of his eyes as if to avoid attention or at least slip into the core of the earth where no one will ever find him again. She wrote up a couple problems, probably to take up the rest of class, and turned around.

"Let's find our first victim. This is always fun. Any volunteers?" She asked, and Killua didn't think Gon was flexible to bend that low. Her eyes roved the sea of students like a hawk and Killua clearly saw when her eyes zeroed in on Gon and he saw him flinch, and he felt himself get irritated. She opened her mouth.

"How about you, G-" She started but was cut off when Killua abruptly stood up. Gon looked over with wide eyes as Killua strode forward as did the rest of the class, including Bisky. She flapped her mouth open to speak but then he moved past her, just taking the marker out of her hand. It wasn't like Killua was a genius at math, and it was such a pain to do this in class, but he didn't like the way Gon was acting, he rather keep him from doing something that obviously made him so uncomfortable. That was what friends did, right? His hand flew across the board, working the problem out, the triangle getting smaller until it led to the answer of x. Killua turned around when he finished to seek Gon out. He was finally sitting back up in his seat, leaning forward slightly too, as if in awe and Killua found himself suddenly sheepish. It wasn't that impressive, that idiot was the one who was too stupid to know how to do inequalities. He'll have to help him later if he wanted it. Killua didn't even notice the rest of the class looking at him the same way Gon was but for different reasons. They were surprised Killua participated at all.

"W… well, thank you very much Killua. Ok then, time for the next question, er-" She said turning back to the students, but then she heard movement next to her and the class was staring to her right again. She turned to see a furiously determined look on Killua's face, working out the next two problems as well.

Like hell I'll let you call on Gon, you old hag. I'll do all the problems you throw at me, so leave him alone for now… He thought determinedly as he burned through the problems with ease. Bisky blinked as he was midway finished with the third problem before she could reboot her brain.

"HEY, WAIT A SECOND KILLLUA!" She cried out, yanking the marker out of his hand. "Let the other students have a chance to practice." With his hands free, Killua signed at her in a fluid motion, Let them practice in the text book! She looked up to meet his eyes when she finished interpreting the sign and he looked back down at her challengingly when the bell rang. Everyone jumped out their seats, eager to leave the black mathic room, while Killua finally eased out of his defensive stance and broke contact first. He started moving back to his seat while Bisky helplessly sighed. Class was over, there was no reason for fighting it anymore, what's over is done with. Gon was standing by his desk, his bookbag over his shoulder and Killua's in his hand, and that awed impression glued on his face as he followed Killua's movements. Killua gave him a small smile. At least he didn't have to explain himself to Gon, he's pretty sure he'd die of embarrassment! He pulled his bookbag into his shoulder as Gon finally came back to life.

"Killua, that was amazing! You're so smart and amazing, and you looked so cool up there, like-mh!" Killua first placed both hands over Gon's mouth at a loss of what to do to make him stop, his body pleasantly buzzing and his face on fire from his spew, then remembering what he told Zushi, he removed his hand and flicked Gon's forehead.
"Ooow! Killua, you're gonna condition me that way." Killua smirked, able to regain control of his blood pressure again, and nodded as though to say That's the idea, Gon chuckled. "It won't stop me from thinking it, Killua! How cool and confident you were and the way- awh!" Another flick as they walked forward.

"Killua." Bisky said, waving him over. Killua sighed and reluctantly turned away from Gon who was busy nursing his forehead at the time. "You should be the tutor for algebra. Plus I think with the incentive of having you teach, more students would actually show up and learn something." Gon looked over curiously. He imagined Killua teaching him, but somehow could only think about how many more flicks and bruises he'd obtain in one session. He stifled laughter at the thought of it. Killua just shrugged noncommittally then waved her off. Bisky huffed.

"Think about it!" She called out as Killua inclined his head at Gon for them to go. Gon followed Killua all the while chatting his ear off, carrying the conversation for the both of them. Gon turned to move one way and noticed Killua was about to move the other. They both halted and turned back questioningly.

"I need to go to my locker." Gon said. Killua let his head loll around then zipped his bookbag slightly open to show the multiple books inside. He already had his books for all his classes until lunch.

"Oh… that's smarter…" Gon chuckled, rubbing the back of his neck sheepishly. Killua huffed and looked down at his nonexistent watch before moving to follow Gon. Gon lit up brightly.

"Yay!" He squealed, grabbing Killua's hand and practically skipping down the hall, meriting the attention of everyone in the hallway at present. Gon couldn't care much at the time, he felt way too happy because after everything that happened today, he is certain, 100% that Killua was his friend, and it was SO COOL and WAY MUCH MORE COOLER than he EVER imagined being friends with Killua, it was like being shot over the moon while being presented the best gift he could imagine, Gon didn't know, World Peace or something. Gon was shocked when Killua dug both heels into the ground after a little hop to stop them, effectively pulling his hand free at the same time. Gon whirled around confused and slightly upset at the lack of his warmth in his hand but in one fluid motion he also positioned himself in front of Killua's prepped fingers, a flick launched as soon as Gon rested. He thinks it was the hardest all day. He leapt back howling.

"OOOOW, Killuuuaaaa!" He groaned, his voice reaching a higher pitch. Killua shrugged, rather having this attention then the other embarrassing attention Gon brought about him. He still had a reputation he didn't have plans on ruining yet. Gon followed after him. "You're mean!" Gon huffed, but realized Killua probably did something necessary, Gon was way too happy at the idea of Killua wanting his company. Was it even that natural to feel that way about gaining a friend? Maybe it was just because it was more difficult to befriend this one friend, or he was still so star struck, it was too good to believe Killua was his!

Gon felt his cheeks heat up a bit. Not his, his friend. Yea. Gon stopped in front of his locker while Killua leaned against the lockers facing the hall with a bored expression. Gon couldn't stop the wide smile on his face even if he tried. That was Killua. Next to him, waiting for him. Because they were friends. Gon tried to keep up the conversation for both of them but sometimes he just got too lost in thought about Killua even though he was right there in front of him. Gon wasn't used to being so dazed out when he had someone to entertain right in front of him, but at the same time it made sense? Well, Killua was right there providing thought-fodder. His eyes and Gon trying to count how many shades of blue he could name in them and how many times they changed in the light. The fluffy hair he compares to a lot of things, clouds, marshmallows, bunnies, kittens, the starlight, the moon's grace- then Killua was snapping in his face again.
"Sorry, sorry, what was I talking about again?" Gon asked. Killua craned his neck forward and squinted, inquiring to Gon what that was about. "Sorry, Killua! You're just... so distracting..." Gon admitted and Gon only saw Killua's face flush slightly before he got another flick on his head. Gon groans, and rubs his head. "That's not fair Killua! What you think is embarrassing and what I think is embarrassing are two different things! How am I supposed to know what not to say? I was just telling you the truth this time," Gon said, his tone lowering in dejection. Killua gave him a thoroughly thoughtful look then reached out at the one spot he kept flicking at all day. Gon flinched, half expecting another flick, and that caused Killua to hesitate a moment, but then reached out completely and rubbed at it almost apologetically. Gon's smile came back as wide as possible and Killua's grimace came back two fold. He's starting to think Gon actually didn't have any shame. He lifted his eyes up to the ceiling as the minute bell rang. Gon didn't even know they stayed by the locker and chatted like normal high school kids.

"Ooohhh, that's class..." Gon muttered sadly and Killua offered a smile and nudged him with his elbow as though to cheer him up. Gon nodded back and started off with Killua to class, although at the pace they were moving, they were both probably gonna be late. That's fine with Gon, it's not like he wasn't late before in his old high school.

Gon had Reading after he parted with Killua, and the teacher was none too thrilled that Gon had come in late, but all he could do was offer his best stage ready smile that had all the girls and some of the boys swooning in his charm and the teacher let him off with a warning. He sat next to Zushi who questioned him about the darkening mark in the middle of his forehead that he waved off ("It doesn't even hurt" Gon assured), and as much as he wanted to chat with his friend Zushi who he barely had classes with, the class was so boring that Gon ended up sleeping through it. Zushi woke him, saying he let him sleep cause they weren't going over anything important anyways and there was no homework, then they walked to lunch together.

Gon sighed after he scanned the lunchroom and failed to see Killua around anywhere. He was kinda hoping the same way that since it was an academic day, he might join the rest of the school in the cafeteria.

"What's wrong?" Zushi asked, taking note of Gon's sigh.

"Huh? Oh nothing, it was just a yawn." Gon fibbed, waving his hand dismissively. Although, in the back of his mind, he didn't know why he felt he had to lie that he didn't see Killua, he normally told Zushi about that stuff anyway. He pointed to Pokkle and Ponzu's table. "Since I already have my lunch, I'm going to go sit over down. See you when you get lunch." Zushi nodded in agreement and waved off. As Gon walked, he wondered if he lied because he didn't want to seem like he was obsessing over Killua. He didn't want to seem like the rabid fans that follow the Zoldycks around when they can, but to be someone who sincerely likes Killua for Killua. He shook the thoughts away, concluding he probably won't be able to find an answer with just a few superficial thoughts, and sat at the table.

"Wow~ Let's see what Gon's bento looks like today!" Pokkle chuckled, leaning over the table to see Gon's food. Gon smiled widely at him.

"I don't know why you're so impressed, it's just a lunch box with dividers! Basically..." Gon said, lifting the box top off. Neatly packed rice balls were layered in the largest pocket, fruit were in the top left pocket, cubed jello in the top right.

"Yea, but it's always so pretty! Why are things from Japan so elegant?" Ponzu mourned, holding her phone over the box and snapping a picture.
"Hey, I didn't say you could take a picture!" Gon cried out with a false sense of wronging. She waved him off.

"Oh please, it's not like I'm gonna post it... y'know, saying that it's yours- c'mon, this will look so cute on my page! I need more followers anyway..." She said. Gon huffed with playfulness exasperation then, "Alright." She squealed her appreciation. Pokkle looked on questioningly while Gon picked up one of the rice balls with his hands and stuffed one in his mouth. Only when he had his mouth full and occupied with chewing did Gon notice his look.

"Wah?" He spoke around the mush.

"Well, where are your chopsticks? Don't you use those? Or am I just being racist?" Pokkle asked, quickly covering his possible rudeness with rushed words towards the end. Gon held a hand up to mouth to stop his laughter and swallowed the mass in his mouth to speak properly.

"No!" Gon chuckled. "It's common to use chopsticks in Japan, but we're not there, I'm probably more used to using knife and fork anyway." Gon explained just as Zushi came and sat down.

"Oh, so you do know how to use them though?" Ponzu said coming back in the conversation after looking up from her phone. Gon nodded and Pokkle leaned forward more interested.

"Teach me!"

"Me too!" Ponzu squealed. "I always wanted to learn! It looks so cool!" She said.

"What are they talking about?" Zushi asked, popping one chicken nugget in his mouth.

"Chopsticks. But guys, I don't even have any!" Gon exclaimed, holding his hands out helplessly.

"Ah! I wanna learn too!" Zushi exclaimed, and Gon laughed, cradling his head in his hands.

"Guys, how can I teach you without the sticks?" He asked. Pokkle looked around his plate of food as though looking for misplaced chopsticks and Ponzu bent down into her bookbag.

"Here!" She said, passing out small metallic and colorful sticks. Everyone cocked their heads questioningly at her.

"What are these?" Pokkle asked, looking at her like she was passing out shrunken heads.

"Oooh~ They're crochette sticks! I crochet in my free time." She explained, pinching two together sloppily in practice. "And I have multiple colors for the mood I'm in and in case anyone wants to join me." Pokkle stared at her for a beat then frowned.

"You never asked me to join you." He said almost with a pout. She rolled her eyes.

"Cause I know you never would have! Especially not in front of your friends in the a cappella group, you'd say it's too girly!" Pokkle huffed and crossed his arms.

"That doesn't mean you didn't have to ask me." He mumbled.

"Oh, you're always like this-" She started but then Gon pinched his chopsticks and interrupted with a nervous chuckle.

"Ahaha...ha, sorry, is it ok we get food on it anyways?" He asked and their attentions was back on him. They both flushed when they realized they were acting inappropriate for the environment they were in.
"Sorry, erm, yea, it's why I got the good metal ones, they'll be easy to clean off." She said, a soft smile sent his way to silently assure him they were fine. Gon nodded at both the silent and spoken statements.

"That's actually why it's better to get metal chopsticks if you're serious about eating with them." Gon said and used his other hand to orient his chopsticks properly in his dominant hand. "So you wanna hold the first one like a pencil…" Gon said, pointing at the one between the base of his thumb and middle finger.

"Wait, you hold your pencil like that? I hold it with my pointer!" Pokkle cried, trying to mirror Gon. "You also have it in the wrong hand." Zushi commented, pointing at his left hand. "Unless you're left handed?" He chuckled as Pokkle blushed from the comment.

"I'm ambidextrous…" He muttered, stubbornly trying to fix it in his left hand.

"No, you're not!" Ponzu said in his ear, then turned to the snickering others, "No, he's not, he likes to pretend he is, but he doesn't even practice often." She said then turned back to Pokkle as they laughed, "Just switch hands." She reprimanded, Pokkle let out a giant sigh but did what he was told and Ponzu smiled satisfied.

"Ok, this one shouldn't move so you should stiffen up your hand. I'm sure you can become more laxed when you're more used to it, then…" Gon said, but then he felt a pressure on his shoulder, fleeting but heavy with intent. Gon turned his head over the shoulder that was pressed upon and felt his jaw drop slightly at the receding figure.

Killua was slightly bent over with the act of turning around to wave attractively, a paper cup with a tea bag in one hand, and an endearing smile on his face. Directed at Gon. He took the little detour to Gon's table to say hi. Killua's attention on him even as everyone in the cafeteria couldn't seem to look at anyone else but Killua. But he was looking at Gon.

Gon felt himself get giddy on some sort of euphoria as his smile broadened even though Killua had long turned his back to him and was already on his way out the cafeteria double doors.

"Gon? You ok?" Zushi asked, a little teasing note in his tone. Gon blinked and shook his head as though to bring himself out of a trance.

"Yea.." Gon said, though it came out more breathless than he was aiming for. "Yea, I'm fine… Where was I?" He said, gaining more control over his voice. He could still feel his shoulder tingling where Killua had touched him, like he was still there ghosting by him. His smile widened without any prompting, feeling happy at the notion (once again!) that Killua was his friend.

Illumi watched his baby brother leave the cafeteria and returned his gaze (with quiet anger running deep behind his black eyes) to Gon who had returned his attention to his friends.

"See, this is why that guy has got to go. Killu didn't even say hi to me." Hisoka rolled his eyes and went back to entertaining his fans with card tricks.

"Ahh, what kind of planning is this?" Gon cried, looking down at his schedule. "Why would they put cooking class after lunch?" Gon turned to Zushi who was walking at his side.

"Well, technically that's not the only cooking class offered, you can request they change the schedule." Zushi said, pointing at it. "But if I remember correctly from this morning… Don't you share that class with Killua?" As he reached the end of his sentence, it took on that same teasing tone
from the cafeteria. Gon blinked and stopped in his tracks.

"You're right!" Gon cried. "Thanks Zushi, I have to go and see if he'd already there, see you tomorrow!" Gon said, pulling Zushi into a side hug and zipping down the hall.

"Other way!" Zushi cried and soon Gon whizzed by.

"Thanks! Bye!" He cried over his shoulder.

"Bye!" He sighed. "I wonder if he even knows...?" He muttered to himself.

As the assigned cooking room speedily approached, Gon checked himself and realized he was running, so he slowed down to a stop before reaching the room. He let a breath out, trying to channel some of that chill Killua has all the time to at least appear slightly normal, like he wasn't winded running to a class just to see someone.

He opened the door and pouted when he didn't see Killua at first. Looking up front, he saw Wing, as messy as always, writing what looked like instructions on the board from a book. Gon let himself in completely to examine the room. There were 4 cooking benches that seated 2 each, the benches supplied with a sink, small stove tops to either side, and a small oven underneath.

Gon observed most students had taken a bench that didn't already have a person seated. Gon furrowed his eyebrows. They should be sitting with each other, not acting like antisocial idols. Gon wanted to address everyone at once, and trying to think of an efficient and appropriate way to do this, he placed a hand on his chin and closed his eyes in deep thought for a song to sing. In his old school, he often sang out in hallways, classrooms, and for jokes, but others thought it was annoying and inappropriate, but now here in this music inclined school, it would surely be normal for people to be singing throughout the halls, right? Go down one hall and might be held up or late to class because there was a giant song demonstration or flash dance? Gon could have laughed at the thought, and hoped if the school wasn't already like that, he could make it like that.

Slightly shaking his head in thought to get back on track, not noticing how Wing was staring at him weirdly from behind since he was just standing in the front of class with eyes closed and a troubled expression, the other students carrying on, much too used to Gon's behavior already. Gon almost thought he had a song in mind and opened his eyes to get a feel for the atmosphere to see if it could be sung at the moment and nearly jumped out of his skin when Killua was standing in front of him, studying his face curiously. He cocked his head to one side with slightly squinted eyes.

"What are you doing?" His body language spoke.

"KILLUA!" Gon cried with joy and gathered Killua in his arms for a hug, his vaporub scented thing filling his nose pleasantly. A surprised squawk escaped Killua and Gon noted the voice that escaped didn't sound as harsh as that morning and he didn't slip into coughs, so that was a good sign. He was recovering...

Gon noted with relief, but then a hand was pressed against his face and he was being pried off Killua's lithe body.

"Moooh~" Gon moaned as Killua successfully pried him off like Velcro, Gon's displeased face being distorted in a smush. Gon relented and stepped back from the teen with a playfully annoyed look. "Sorry, I was happy and surprised to see you!" Gon said, Killua nodding numbly to show he was listening. "Like at lunch!" Gon said, lighting up as he remembered that small trifle, "I was completely surprised! I didn't expect you to come greet me! Did you enjoy your tea?" Gon said after Killua's eyes widened slightly at that. He let his eyelids droop back to it's normal casual height before rolling his eyes. He wondered why Gon would be so surprised he greeted him at lunch, they were
friends now, weren't they? Unable to say anything, he just nodded at his last question. He touched his throat and gave a thumbs up.

*It really helped my throat.*

Gon smiled brightly, and forgetting the issue of everyone sitting apart, took Killua's hand to claim a bench for themselves. As Gon turned them towards the seats, Killua took in how everyone had their attention on them (well, more like Gon, but he was an extension of that since he was interacting with him), and most of them had supporting, amused, or affectionate smiles. Others had teasing smiles. Killua flushed before covering his face with his free hand, allowing Gon to drag him to a bench, trusting he won't lead him to anything that would trip him (and embarrass him further).

"This bench good?" Gon said, turning to Killua only to see he had his face covered. Killua removed his hand with a drag once Gon addressed him and pointedly ignored his confused stare. He saw Gon picked the bench behind the one right in front, and he didn't mind it, it wasn't front row, close to the door, whatever. Killua nodded, his hair bouncing with the motion and Gon raised his hand to pet it, an amused and distracted smile on his face, but Killua slapped it away, almost like it was reflex. Killua looked half surprised he did it himself but he also looked at Gon accusingly for even trying.

"Sorry! It's really fluffy! Should I ask first? Can I touch your hair?" Gon felt his hand tingle thinking about touching Killua's starlight hair. What did it feel like? Like magic? Mist? Fluffy or silky? His thoughts were derailed as Killua shook his head no, a small smile on his face, like Gon told a joke with a punchline that wasn't that funny.

"Awww! Killuaaa!" Gon whined, his voice going higher in his childish complaint. Killua rolled his eyes so he didn't give in. He choose one of the two seats to sit in to continue ignoring Gon's tantrum, the one closest to the middle aisle of the classroom.

Gon pouted and took the other seat once he realized Killua wasn't going to give. He placed his hands on his cheeks to prop his head up and idly wondered why he was so upset. Killua makes him so weird… like stupid but times two, he can't even think properly sometimes. Gon sighed and almost forgot Killua was next to him since he didn't speak then remembered he needed to be talking for both of them.

"So, Killua, I never got a chance to tell you but remember when I went to my class after algebra? It was reading class! I ended up falling asleep! I would've been embarrassed but I don't think anyone noticed." Gon said, and watched with a happiness rooted deep in his chest as Killua place a slender hand over his mouth and stiffly chuckled at Gon. It was like someone was grabbing his lungs and squeezing them, making it harder for Gon to breath.

*That's so you…* Killua thought.

"Ya, Zushi said-" Gon continued, encouraged by the entertained Killua, but the class bell rang and Wing started.

"Alright class, welcome to cooking."

"I don't know why they let you do cooking!" Someone from the back yelled out and Wing opened his narrow eyes back there in irritation.

"I'll have you know that despite my…" He self consciously tried to tuck his shirt tail in discreetly before he continued. "Looks, I am an excellent cook. I cook for my family everyday."

"It's not take out?" Someone else joked and the class let out quiet laughter. Wing gestured for the
class to quiet down with an exasperated but light expression.

"Alright, alright, I understand, but please properly assess my skills before you decide I am unsuited to be your teacher." There was outcry of distress.

"No, Wing!"

"We didn't mean it like that!"

"We want you to be our teacher!"

"We were just joking!"

Wing signalled for quiet again although a small smile was present. "I understand. Well, let's all hope we can all learn well enough today. As you can see we'll be making…” He turned his profile to the class to motion to the board. "Cookies.” He said in chorus with the class. They cheered.

Gon felt a squeezing pressure on his jacketed arm and turned to look at Killua who looked so excited, it was adorable. Killua turned his excited gaze from the board to Gon, his eyes sparkling and dancing, unspeaking. Gon chuckled.

"So you really like sweets, huh?" He asked and Killua seemed to finally register how excited he was acting and leaned back coolly, although that happy smile never left. He nodded, a fox like smile gracing his features and Gon nodded determinedly.

"Then we definitely have to make the best cookies today!" Gon fisted his hands. Wing signalled for quiet again with a conductor's flourish, successfully getting them to hush at once. Gon couldn't help but admire the professionalism everyone at the school harbored.

"I just wanted to clarify for everyone since this class is an after lunch class, we won't be making full meals lest you can't finish it or take it home, so it will be mostly small desserts and appetizers." Killua's fist darted out and punched Gon's shoulder in excitement. He faced him again.

"Did you hear that!?" His face portrayed. Gon winced as he rubbed his shoulder but nodded with a smile. Something told him they were both gonna love this class if Gon got to see this side of his friend all the time.

Killua punched Gon's arm again.

"Ow! Killua, I'm following the instructions on the board!" He said then moved to add the baking soda again. Killua's movements were quick and nimble, grabbing Gon's carefully pinched fingers and bending it back towards the back of his palm, the baking soda spilling out to the counter.

"Ah! Ah-ah, Uncle!" Gon cried as his fingers were bent backwards unnaturally. Killua let go and swiftly grabbed the measuring spoon Gon was planning on using and placed it pointedly in front of Gon's face.

"What? It says tablespoon!" He cried, and Killua lowered it, pointing to the board. Gon squinted questioningly. His mouth formed a perfect 'o' and slowly turned to face Killua again. He smiled sheepishly. "Ooohaha, it's suppose to be a teaspoon." He chuckled. Killua nodded and took the proper spoon, scooping out the baking soda himself.

"Thank Killua!" Gon said, trying to be appeasing. Killua waved him off as he continued. They mixed it, some spilling out, some flour dusting their faces and clothes, Killua stealing tastes of the
batter and then it was time to add the chocolate chips. Killua smiled mischievously and pulled out a bag of chocolate chips. Gon nodded.

"One bag of chocolate chips." He reported from the board. "Go ahead. I'll mix." Gon said, positioning the bowl. Killua pulled out the tab, his fingers slipping and the bag stubbornly remained closed and he made to pull it open with his teeth when Gon held up his hand.

"It's ok, Killua, I got this." Gon said taking the crumpled bag, missing Killua's conniving smile. Gon opened the bag pretty easily and idly wondered why Killua was having so much trouble then proceeded to pour the contents into the bag. He was about to pick up the spoon to mix when pale hands entered his line of sight pouring a whole nether bag of chocolate chips. The contents were poured while Gon was still in shock then the bowl was whipped out his hands.

"AH! Killua!" Gon tried, reaching to take the bowl back, but Killua waved his arms around, fending off Gon's attempts to retrieve the bowl. Gon huffed with fists at his side as Killua quickly worked to incorporate every chocolate chip even though it looked like a mess of brown bumps. "Killua, that's way too much chocolate! That's twice the instructed amount of chocolate! Will that even bake properly?!" Gon asked, trying and failing to get the bowl again as Killua ducked this way and that before simply sticking his foot onto Gon's chest from his seated position on the bench to keep him away. Killua shrugged.

*How can you go wrong with chocolate?* Killua thought as he finally got it all mixed. It did look pretty sad, the ratio of dough to chocolate chips were skewed immensely, and he vaguely equated this to just placing chocolate chips to bake by themselves, but decided what was done was done. And these were gonna be boss chocolate chip cookies.

"What this?" Wing asked from over Killua's shoulder and Killua looked up with innocent eyes as Gon looked like Calvary finally arrived.

"Killua added way too many chocolate chips!" Gon cried out and Killua whipped his head toward him. Tattletale, He thought with his mouth in a moue. Wing tsked at the sight but Killua possessively kept it tucked under his arm as if daring anyone to try and dump it out because it's 'ruined.' *Like chocolate can ruin anything. If anything, you couldn't add enough chocolate!* Wing looked to the others in class, already starting to scoop out their finished batters to bake.

"Well… try to bake it anyway. We'll see how it comes out." Wing says and Killua grins while Gon shrugged in resignation. "But! Make sure to keep an eye on it. It won't have as much batter to bake in the oven so it might finish faster." Gon and Killua nodded and Killua stood up to prep the batter. Wing, satisfied enough, goes to survey the rest of class.

Killua walked out the class stuffing another chocolate mess into his face. Gon shook his head with a slightly unbelieving expression. He didn't know Killua liked chocolate this much, it seemed unhealthy. Killua eyed him with slightly puffed cheeks from his full mouth and cocked his head to one side questioningly. Gon shook his hands in front of him.

"No, no, nothing! So you like the cookies we made?" Killua smiled widely having finished off what was in his mouth and nodded. Gon smiled warmly, causing Killua's smile to falter.

"I'm glad…" Gon murmured and looked up as though just realizing where they were. "Aw… oh no, we don't have the next class together, do we?" He asked. Killua wiped off the crumbs from his cheeks with his sleeve while his other hand reached into his back pocket. He held it out for Gon and pointed at the last class. Gon gasped happily.
"YAY, we have free period together!" Gon cheered, taking Killua's hands in celebration. Killua's smile cracked to one side as he flushed in embarrassment, those passing in the hall staring now. He whipped his hands out of Gon's hold and hit Gon on the arm.

"Ow, what?" He asked. Killua rolled his eyes then flicked him on the forehead again, although he was trying not to in the first place. "Ow…! Embarrassed?" He asked for confirmation. Killua crossed his arms, hips jutted out slightly to one side, and nodded. Gon pouted.

Killua was really cool, but really mean. And also was embarrassed easily for someone who was going to be a World Star and be subjected to paparazzi scrutiny. Gon nodded nonetheless.

"Ok, ok, but…" Gon said, his smile returning brightly. "I'll see you after class!" He squealed as he ran off down the hall and Killua covered his face as people at first stared off after him then to where he came from, Killua still standing there.

Everywhere he goes, he just brings about attention.

I sure can pick 'em… Killua thought, shoving his hands in his pockets and walking the other way, determined to act as though nothing happened. But I suppose… it was more like he chose me. Killua let a small smile grace his features as he remembered first meeting Gon. He held in a laugh at how Gon acted for his attention. Ya, he chose me.

Gon barely paid attention in his science class. They were just going over science safety rules and when you go over it once, you go over it a million times. He was more curious what Killua was doing then, what class he had, if he was having fun or was bored like him. The class let out and Gon followed his schedule's room number for study hall/free period to the library. He entered and saw Killua was already there with feet up on one of the library's many study tables.

"Killua-!" Gon began in a loud voice as he surged forward when a chorus of "Ssshhhh!" quieted him. Gon took in the fact that the room was also filled with other students that had free period and an old looking lady was standing near the edge of where the tables began. Gon pressed his lips together in remorse then did a couple quick shallow bows in succession to apologize.

"Sorry, sorry…" He said quietly. He turned back to Killua who was pressing his own lips together in an attempt not to laugh. Gon furrowed his brows playfully in Killua's direction.

"You're so mean!" Gon whispered, sitting close to Killua so he hears. Or maybe he just wants to be close. Killua shrugged and he held up his finger when Gon tried to say something else, probably ready with conversation that he's been supplying all day. Killua looks up as the bell for class rang muted throughout the library, Gon still looking at Killua curiously, then pointed to the front where the old lady was.

"Now class…” She said in a wobbly voice like she could keel over in death at any moment. "This is free period. You should use it to study, but you can go anywhere. Don't bother any other class, but I can't stop you from going home early either." She said and most of the class pumped their fists happily but quietly celebrating. "Go on." She said after a pause, then Killua finally turned his head back to Gon and inclined it for him to finally go ahead. Gon smiled widely.

"Let's go!" He said, gripping Killua's wrist and yanking on him as he made his way to the exit, Killua almost stumbling to his feet to follow, both ignoring the "Shhhh"s that followed them out at Gon's outburst.

Killua was going to have to get Gon's attention if he tried to bring him out of school. But he soon
saw he didn't have to worry about it as Gon led him further into the school instead, towards the cafeteria. Gon went out a couple side doors and led him to the outside eating area, stone circular tables underneath the shade of the trees. It looked serene and private in the afternoon light with the sun streaming in through tree leaves, landing on stone tables like art. Killua felt a sigh escape his parted lips in awe, never having seen such a pretty scene, having escaped to the roof for lunch since his first year here.

"There! It's nice and quiet and private out here." Gon said, breaking the silence, although it wasn't annoying.

Killua kneeled over slightly as a blush fell over his face. Doesn't Gon ever listen to himself speak? That sounded too suggestive. Killua already knew he liked listening to Gon's voice, his tone of voice rumbling his chest soothingly, and since that range class, he imaged singing with it, how they'd sound, so of course if it's Gon breaking the silence, Killua would never mind it. Killua would even want to try and sing with him now while they were in private if it weren't for his throat. But he has to do something about Gon's blunt way of speaking.

He whipped up to see Gon still standing, his arms out to the side as though presenting the tables like a work of art he made, so he strode forward and flicked Gon on the head.

"Ow! Embarrassing? But what'd I say?" Gon asked, rubbing his forehead. Killua let out a breath to let out the heat that gathered in his head then sat calmly at the table. Gon huffed but decided to drop it as well.

"I'm so happy! Today wasn't so bad!" Gon said, starting up his one sided conversation with Killua as he's been the whole day. It made Killua feel like some sort of diary but it also helped Killua feel closer to Gon, like he was trusted with his most inner feelings or something, like a real friend.

"I was really scared I would have a bad day just because it was academic. But I suppose at least for the first day I shouldn't have been scared." Gon said, twiddling with his fingers. Killua eyed the action slightly annoyed, finding the tick unnecessary. What was the point, worrying his fingers like that wouldn't accomplish anything. Maybe it was a bit unfair, since he was trained not to have bad habits, telling tics or nervous pattern, but inadvertently, they taught him how to hate it in general, even if it was other people's.

"Today was easy and I got to--" Gon had continued but trailed off when Killua touched his hands to stop the fidgeting. Gon looked over at Killua and Killua removed his hands while simultaneously turning his head away from Gon. Gon smiled warmly but had become aware of his unconscious fidgeting when Killua stopped it. He put his hands in his lap instead. "I got to hang out with Killua alot, so I was happy. I'm happy right now, sitting next to Killua..." Gon said, and he watched the tips of Killua's ears turn pink from his face away from Gon. It made Gon excited for some reason, having that effect on him, so he continued, "He was so cool in algebra when he-!" He tried but then Killua couldn't stand it anymore. Gon's mouth was covered and was left staring at the top of Killua's head as Killua looked down at the seat between them.

Killua let out a breath to regain control of his flaring embarrassment. Was Gon doing this on purpose? Was he teasing him? Thinking back to the last couple days and how he acted even before Killua allowed him around himself made him think... this was how Gon was. Killua wasn't sure he could handle all that attention and praise. Perhaps being around his critical family made him feel inadequate and hearing these praises from someone he considered an equal (he wanted to sing with him for pete sake!) made him feel too light headed. Gon needed to stop.

Killua peaked up once he's sure his face isn't red and sees Gon just waiting patiently for Killua to do... something. Killua experimentally released his hands from Gon's mouth only to see a smile
"Sorry, I know. I'll try harder not to embarrass you. I think. I still don't know what you consider embarrassing. I just say how I feel!" Gon expressed. Killua shrugged, schooling his expression into a neutral one. He'll keep this one so Gon won't have to feel so bad anymore.

*I'll endure it…!* Killua gritted his jaw closed in determination. *I said I can… so I will!* Killua swears he'll just let Gon talk… just be with him.

"Ok, well… then I won't talk about today! I'll talk about the days past." Gon nodded, determining that was safe enough. He almost started excitedly spilling out how pretty Killua looked when he first walked into class then remembered, *nothing embarrassing!* He swallowed the gasp that almost came to start it off and smiled instead to give himself more time to think of the *other* parts of his day.

"Well… I'm really happy I was able to come here! I think I have to thank Netero for that." Gon started and Killua looked at him surprised. "I was able to eat lunch with him one time. He said he's the reason I was able to enter so quickly with no try out and a second year too! I'm really grateful to him. And we didn't have to pay! I'm happy because my aunt Mito works really hard to pay for everything, the bills, the grocery, the apartment… I think she feel bad that I have to grow up with little but I think it's fine! I'm with her and we have each other and that's enough. But because of Netero, I was able to come here on whatever scholarship or whatever he has down on my file for me to come here free. I was ready to make my dream of World Star come true no matter what, though. Even if I couldn't come here to study." Gon said, and Killua nodded numbly while gazing out at the table, telling Gon he was still listening.

"And I met so many kind and nice people! Like you Killua! Though… not at first… But obviously you came around. Zushi and his father are nice and oh! All the teachers are great and amazing! They know so much, they say things all the time that I didn't know before! And all the students, they're amazing too! They know so much, like how to harmonize and sing, and they look like they can follow most of what Knov says when he starts talking with those big words…" Gon said and Killua rubbed one of Gon's shoulders while nodding to reassure, *yes, I'm still listening.*

"Yea, the students are so amazing. They sing great, and they're talented. I saw that much from Mr. Kastro's class… when those boys performed, right? They had so many people screaming for them, and they were other students too!" Gon said, and Gon felt Killua tensed slightly at the mention of those brothers, Gon feeling it in Killua's firm grip on his shoulder.

"Yea, that bet…" Gon felt the anxiety come back gnawing at his insides, the feeling he was keeping at bay so well for the past day. "I'm sure I'll be fine…" He said, a light chuckle that did nothing to assure Killua he was fine. He turned cobalt blue eyes on Gon, but Gon kept his eyes on the table, unseeing. "Zushi said those other students work really hard to win those things. That some might even get angry that I bet my attendance at this school to win. They might even think that either I think so little of my opportunity at this school that I don't care to bet it off or that I'm so cocky I can win a talent expo they have spent weeks, *months*, investing in… That's not it, I think I just didn't know… Mito says often that I bite off more than I can chew, get way in over my head in a lot of situations." Gon gave another anxiety driven laugh and it almost sounds hysterical even though he tried to make it light and airy. Killua tried to give what he hoped was a reassuring squeeze to his upper arm.

"But it's ok, I'll train hard! I'll make a song and I'll block out a routine and do my best because I've always been able to make it out some how…" He stopped in his speech and dazes out, as though thinking of all the other times in his life he's made it through something through willpower alone. Killua placed his head on Gon's shoulder, reminding him he wasn't alone, that he wasn't just talking to the air, Killua was still listening, *yes, I'm still listening.*
Gon snorted to stop another laugh.

"I don't want to leave the school..." He let out in a voice that makes Killua think Gon is crying. He peeked up but only saw determined eyes. "Killua..." Gon murmured and Killua sat up, slightly leaning forward to meet his eyes, but Gon still just looks forward. "I'm worried... I didn't mean to upset anyone. I just wanted to sing. I don't want to leave the school. I just want to sing. I've met so many people and learned so much just from 2 days, I don't want to leave, I wanna sing... I'm not sure I can do it... I'm worried... Killua..." Gon trialed off and Killua placed his head on his shoulder again, squeezing his arm. You're feelings are being received. I think I get it... Yes, I'm still listening. "Killua's a good listener!" Gon said, trying to be happier again, but Killua could still hear the sadness in the back of his voice. Killua cocked an eyebrow although Gon can't see it.

I can't exactly speak. Killua thinks to himself, and wondered if Gon would still think if he's a good listener if he could speak.

"I'll talk about the future next." Gon said, and Killua can pick up his slight need to get out of his own made funk. Or maybe it was something he didn't sort out until now as he spoke. "I can't wait to find out everything about singing in class for the year! And everyday after school, I'll work on an original song and make a dance and practice it everyday until I can do it in my sleep." Gon said, raising his fist on the arm Killua didn't have his head on. Killua carefully listened to Gon's worries and hopes that he seems to bury behind happiness.

Yea, Gon... I'm still listening.

Killua closed his eyes as Gon spouts anything funny, happy and bright to get back to normality.

The final bell rings and children spill out the Academy like it was on fire. Gon accompanied Killua back inside, Killua with a soft smile on his face. Gon successfully talked himself back to his old self again, having started talking about the project he needed to work on with Melody.

"We're gonna make her look and sound so good, Kurapika won't help but want to know her. That's phase three of my plan. By the way there are 4 phases." Gon chuckled back at Killua and Killua bows his head slightly in acknowledgment, a small smile on his face.

"Oh, and Killua, are you sure you don't want to help me practice for the winter showcase?" Killua was shaking his head no before Gon even finished his sentence. This dumb butt, this was his own mess, his stupid bet he placed himself in stupidly. This had nothing to do with him and Gon had to figure this out himself. Killua thinks Gon could do it, it shouldn't be that hard to beat these amateurs, especially since Gon is someone Killua considers good enough to sing with. Gon pouted.

"Ok, ok..." He gave in. "Are you going home now?" He asked. Killua shook his head and pointed off down a hallway. Gon didn't know what he was going to do but he answered his initial question. "Ok. I'm heading to Netero! See you tomorrow, Killua!" He cheered and ran off and Killua blinked before rolling his eyes and heading down a hall, raising his metal alloy headphones up to play his music. He was still surprised he knew Netero personally. Gon knew some right people in high places.

~I lost my heart inside a dream

Of diamond rings and finer things

We never die, forever young

Fell for you once, I'll dive again
Through heaven, hell, against the wind

We love like simple people do...

He'll do well, and Killua suddenly felt pride, like Yes, that one there, the one who's going places? That's my friend. He picked me. Killua snorted at how pathetic he sounded and how disappointed Illumi would be, but whatever, he doesn't care about what that last-piece-of-end-bread thinks. He's happy with Gon, that bright, sun-kissed child, and he was going to sing with him cause he wanted to (something that hasn't happened in a long time) and he was going to make sure Gon stays happy.

~Oh every night I close my eyes

I see the sun and you're my paradise

And when you're lost and go too far

I'll be the light you run to in the dark

I'll be the light you run to in the dark...

Gon knocks on Netero's door after having bypassed Cheatle first.

"Come in!" Netero calls out from inside. Gon smiles as he opens the door. He hesitates at seeing the old man had company. They had suits on and clutching papers as though they were frustrated… and somehow Gon believed they were and it was the man behind the desk's fault.

"Oh! Gon! C'min, C'min, sit anywhere, sit… Er, guys, could you maybe…?" He said, waving his hands at them to move aside.

"But sir, the meeting! We still need to discuss the budget for the concert…!" One guy strained out, probably done with dealing with Netero's foolishness.

"Oh, that's so boring, we can talk about that later. We made good progress today. You can go." Netero nodded, and made for them to leave. They huffed, muttering under their breaths as they left as one corporate mass. Gon blinked as they made their way out, feeling slightly guilty and apologetic on Netero's behalf.

"Did I interrupt something important…?" Gon chuckled as he sat down in one of the seats those other suited fellows were too tight to sit in.

"No, no, no… this city," He sighs, "They think everything should be planned down to a tee before anything even happens? Where's the fun in that? It's boring to do when you want to be loose and enjoyable before a performance. They suck the enjoyment out of being a performer. They need a little… joshing. So what brings you here Gon?" He asked. Gon lit up with a determined glint in his eyes as he remembered himself.

"Netero… what secret criteria is there to graduating the second year?" Gon asked. Netero blinked at him. The way he asked wasn't really much of a question, he wasn't trying to get Netero to deny or confirm there was a secret criteria, but he knew there was and he wanted more details. Netero let out an amused sigh, but bringing air back into his lungs only fueled laughter as he let it back out. Gon tilted his head slightly in curiosity but kept that determined look in his eyes.

"Oh Gon… You don't have to worry about that criteria. You'll pass the second year just fine, I can tell from your eyes. You're fine." Netero said, his eyes slipping closed after letting his laughter die down. But opening his eyes, he was met with Gon shaking his head no.
"Mh-mh… I wasn't asking for my sake. I'm asking for Kurapika. This is his second time in the second year and he doesn't know why. He said he suspected a second agenda and after talking with him, I know there is. I want to know what it is. To help him. Help everyone who thinks like him. You said you'd help me with that, right? With changing the school for the better…?" Gon asked, eyes drilling holes into Netero, as though the criteria was in his eyes and all he had to do was search hard enough. Netero moved his eyes to the desk… For such bright eyes, they sure can be intense… He thought, scratching his cheek.

"Ok." Netero hummed. "That's true. But I can't just tell you! That would pass multiple people who have been stuck if this gets out. This secret criteria is almost like a screening process for those missing that certain quality."

Gon nodded seriously. "Then I won't tell him the criteria directly. Or even tell him that it's the criteria he needed to graduate to the next level. I just need to explain it to him like it's something I believe, right? That should be believable since you said I would pass it no problem…" Gon said, almost like blackmail. Netero laughed again.

"You really are amusing Gon! I won't be bored with you at my school. I made a good decision if I say so myself. Alright, I'll tell you. Make sure these students are star quality, not just faking it to pass, or I'll be holding you back for 4 more years to entertain me." Netero warned.

"Right!" Gon said, leaning closer to the desk in anticipation. Netero sighed and leaned back in his chair.

"It's passion." He said. Gon blinked.

"Huh?" He stated dumbly. "D-doesn't everyone have that? In this school?" Netero shook his head.

"No… some of them came in with all the passion in the world. You don't strive to become a World Star without having passion at first. But things change. People and their dreams change. This school changes people. Some have talent and might have wanted to pursue it because they saw how happy it made their parents… then the parents do everything in their power to make sure their kid becomes famous, they book appointments, lessons, interviews. They're over pushing can cause the child to lose interest, it's not fun anymore, it's all work. Or through the process, they found something else they like and don't want to be a World Star anymore, but because of their talent, their parents push them into it to make themselves rich and famous. Both cases, the student loses their passion. They can sing all the right keys and hit the notes, but no feeling in their voice, not feeling it, the music's no good. You'd be surprised at how well the audience and fans can pick up the artist's lack of passion. They'd never be able to reach World Star status. Then there are students who enter with passion and the students here take it upon themselves to wean out weaklings, to screen others so they don't have more competition as they enter the workforce." Gon nods thoughtfully.

"Take Kurapika for example. What a great student first year! He participated, sang with anyone who asked. Genuinely wanted to get his education and become a great World Star. Then the students changed him. Tried to get him to do their work, carry them through, he shrank in himself and cut off his passion because he saw the world as a cruel mechanical thing now. He doesn't see the joy in singing anymore if the whole world is like that. We don't do anything to stop the students because we aren't here to baby each student, give them all lollipops and say 'Everyone's a star!' They have to deal with this now, because it only gets worse in the music industry. Especially with shady and wrong music producers. Music producers could be as pushy or coattail riding as any of these students. Worse even." Gon nodded thoughtfully.
"So yes… this is very similar to what you wanted to do in the first place. Get the student to love singing again, see it as a passion instead of work. See it as a career instead of an occupation. Kurapika plays Cello most times for instrumental performances, but it is so dead and empty… However, based on the music composition, I can tell it's suppose to be sad, reflective, and thoughtful. If he adds his feelings, put himself into it again, the audience will feel that and his music career can take off properly. Help him get to that point and I'm sure he'll graduate this time." Netero explained. He waited for Gon to say something, but he only saw Gon had his head down, eyes lowered to his lap, dazing off.

"Gon…?" Netero asked. Gon blinked and looked up, a smile seeming to force it's way on his face.

"Sorry!" He cried out, a tint of strain in his voice. "I was just thinking… Netero, is Killua going to pass the second year?" He asked, and Netero can almost see the urgency in his eyes. Netero sighed with a wry smile.

"Gon, I can't disclose that. I can't tell you of other students' grades, and the secret criteria is apart of that. I only told you of Kurapika because you already knew of his status from him, and you're set on helping him directly first, right?" Gon frowned but nodded. He huffed and stood up.

"W-well, it doesn't matter what his status is right now. I'll get him to be as passionate about singing so he graduates with me and Kurapika and everyone else in second year! I won't leave him behind." Gon states, fists at his side in determination. Netero smiled.

"That's the spirit." He says, feeling slightly tired from Gon's excess energy. He remembered being like that once. Gon really will be a bright and amazing World Star once he gets out there.

"Right, first I need to make a list of ways to get Killua to like singing…! Then I need to try making Kurapika like singing with Melody, and if that works, it should be the same for him! Great! Thanks Netero, I'll go now! I promise not to tell anyone of the secret criteria!" Gon nods and heads to the door.

"Right! Bye Gon! It was great talking to you! Keep up the good work!" Netero called after him. "Yea…" He mumbled as the door sung closed. "I should work out that budget…" He leaned down and started jotting down numbers speedily.

The analog clock ticked on the wall, the red carpet and black paint giving the room a generally gothic and olden look. Illumi looked up at it, interpreting the 7th hour before turning his attention back to the center of the room from where he stood, leaning against the wall by the giant wooden double doors. Killua sat on a lounging chair in the center of the room, legs crossed over by the ankle and hands behind his back, lazily placed on the plush material of the chair. A young man with a stethoscope over his neck and normal clothes rubbed at his eye sleepily as he pressed a wooden stick on Killua's tongue.

"Scale." He monotoned out, removing his hand from his eye to squint into the dark cavity of Killua's mouth. Killua began at middle C and went up reaching high C an octave up. Illumi's trained ears could hear the slight rasps of his voice and his eyebrow twitched again.

I told mother not to overdo it. He should have healed by now.

The doctor sighed, removing himself from Killua's space and Killua closed his mouth, a bored look on his face as he waited for their family physician to say something.

"Go drink the herbal tea and wait 20 more minutes. No talking, as you know. Come back after the
20 minutes are up, we'll see if you're good to go." He said. Killua nodded once and stood up in one swift movement, hands in pockets and heading out the door. Killua eyed Illumi from the corner of his eye as he passed him as though questioning why he was still hanging around.

"Don't look at me like that, Killu. C'mon, let's go get your tea..." Illumi said, going to ruffle his hair, but Killua's hand snaked out his pocket to counter Illumi's hand, smacking it away so he didn't touch his hair. He continued out the room undeterred and Illumi rubbed his hand, letting himself fall back.

Killua could be such a drama queen. But Illumi supposed that was his and their parent's fault. They spoil him so much, he turned out the be the prima donna of the family. But Illumi couldn't help it. That was his precious baby brother who he loved and was adorable. He'd do anything for him. Like compete in the showcase he didn't want to be in just to get rid of that distraction that calls himself Killua's friend. How useless, the notion of friends. Illumi made it to the kitchen, just catching Killua dumping copious amounts of sugar in his tea.

"Killua-" Illumi started but then Killua sent him a murderous glare. He sighed. "You're addicted to sugar, Killu. I should kill Milluki for what he did to you..." Illumi said, semi-dramatically (well, as dramatically as his monotone allowed). Milluki was the one who introduced chocolate to Killua in the first place, he didn't properly hide his candy stash and Killua found them one day in his room. Illumi knew but never thought it would have been a problem for so long now. Now he wishes he told his parents about Milluki's prohibited chocolate earlier, Killua can't get enough and Milluki is acting like a begrudging supplier. Killua rolled his eyes and began to drink his tea.

"Killua you know you're suppose to drink that raw. And sugar's bad for your throat. Is that how you've been drinking your tea? Maybe that's why you haven't healed yet..." Illumi muttered. Ok, so now I'll throw away every piece of sugar in the house. I'll get Killua off his addiction even if he hates me for it. He'll thank me later when he realizes his errors. Milluki will be a little sore but nothing a steam bun won't fix I suppose... Illumi stayed lost in his thoughts, Killua enjoying the silence as he drank. The time passed and Killua headed back to the room and the movement caught Illumi's attention, he jolted out of his thoughts to follow him. Killua's eyebrow twitched annoyed.

I can't even tell him to bug off! Killua thought annoyed. He entered the room and the doctor turned around from his clipboard, following Killua's movements to the center of the room and onto the lounge. He walked over.

"Scale." He said, just standing in front of him instead of executing any check up. Killua began and the physician strained his Zoldyck family tuned ears to listen for any discomfort, strain or graininess. His lips twisted into a smile as Killua finished his scale beautifully, always finding pleasure in hearing Killua's singing no matter how sparse.

"Great, you're fine." He nodded satisfied. "You shouldn't get them again so easily, but be careful..." He said, rolling his eyes (unknowingly along with Killua), because he was required to say that, although he knows it's never the boy's fault when he gets them. Then Illumi stepped forward.

"Killu. Stand." He said, standing by the chair. Killua stood but rolled his eyes as he listened. "Harmonize exercise 3. You're tenor. I'll do melody." He said and Killua blinked slightly surprised but then nodded slowly. Illumi swung an elegant finger in the air in a swift gesture then they both began singing in time.

"Please, celebrate me home... Give me a number, Please, celebrate me home...! Play me one more song That I'll always remember, And I can recall Whenever I find myself too all alone, I can sing me home...!" They harmonized beautifully and the physician wiped a tear from his eye.

"Killu, you're so cute-" Illumi started but then Killua punched him in the gut, forcing all the air from
his lungs.

"Don't say stuff like that, bro!" Killua screeched, his voice going up multiple octaves in his fervor. "Why am I surrounded by embarrassing idiots!" He covered his red face.

"Yes, he's healed. All pitches are fine." Illumi huffed slightly straightening himself out as though Killua didn't punch him. Killua knew he'd be fine, he just wanted to stop his sentence.

"I'm out of here…" He growled, marching out the room, the other adults in the room watching him go.

"Yea…” The physician sighed. "Next time, don't go calling me in the middle of the night for nodes! I'm exhausted." He rubbed his eyes again and moved to leave to his on-property residence. Illumi nodded.

"Yes, sure…” They both knew if that was requested of him, there was nothing he could do but comply unless he wanted to be fired. Illumi looked to the door Killua had left. Then cocked his head to one side.

Should I have told him I'm going to compete in the showcase?

Meanwhile in Gon's house, when Mito got home around the same time as the day before, she questioned the concentrated and darkening bruise in the middle of her nephew's forehead.

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Featured Music:

Run to Me- Clarence Coffee Jr.

Celebrate Me Home- Kenny Loggins

=End Ch 3=

Chapter End Notes

Yes, I didn't... there was... I had... there were parts in this chapter I really liked and then there were parts I didn't like, so this chapter is so-so in my rank of favorites. The next one's pretty cool. :)

Thank you for reading! I hope you enjoyed! I realized this one is shorter than the first two, but those will be the longest until... the end and start of other arcs! Hoped you enjoyed reading even if its a bit shorter.

Please remember to go ahead and submit suitable songs. I want to interact with my audience :D

I also have a tumblr where these things can be submitted, where I'll be posting my own fanart (Cause I'm a dork) and short stories/ behind scenes: Its HunterxAU now, twila-star (pen name! :D)
Hey everyone! It seems everyone supports my very very high praise of Killua, so I'll continue with no hold bars and you guys can't regret it! And you guys have also haven't said anything about the music list being at the bottom so that will stay there too! You guys are doing great in suggesting songs! They've all been great songs that I love! I don't know how many will be able to fit into this arc, so I want to ask you guys stop suggesting songs for a couple chapters until I need help with songs again! Really, you all have great tastes but I can't fit them all in yet. Since I'm not focusing on future arcs just yet, I'll tell you when suggestions are welcomed again! If you ABSOLUTELY have a song you MUST suggest, this isn't a strict rule! I would still be plenty happy to see song suggestions in the comments! (good news, I'm figuring out how to use ao3!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Musica Academy Showcase

The Academy showcases are quarter annual, one for every season. There's a Fall Showcase in October, Winter Showcase in December before winter break, Spring Showcase in March, and Summer Showcase in May, before summer break. Sign ups for the Showcases are anytime after the end of the last Showcase. The Judges change every showcase, guests ranging from alumni to special celebrities, but the Chairman is always the main judge on the board. The performance is given like a number in a concert and you're only allowed to perform original works, no covers or remixes. Participants are graded on advance factors such as Perfect Pitch, Range, Physical Singing, Dance routine, etc. Such are these normally perfected by those in their senior year so it's rare when underclassmen sign up, it's mostly a showcase for seniors. When underclassmen apply, they don't expect first place, just experience.

Chapter 4: Soft Sounds

The world was painted over in a wash of light blue, the sky clear with only a few wispy clouds scattered by the horizon, a crisps wind cutting through air, and the very edges of the west sky were glowing soft orange with a promise of sunrise soon. A yawn ripped out Killua’s throat as he was bent over tying his shoes on the front lawn of their massive gated property. He closed his mouth with a small pop as he let a hum gather in the back of his throat in warm-up then drew to full height, bouncing from foot to foot. He glanced to his left and nearly jumped with how intently his older brother was staring at him, his earbuds hanging around his neck.

“What the hell, bro, why are you staring at me?! You don’t have to wait for me, just go.” He said, going back to his hopping, then stopping to stretch one arm over the other.

Illumi pressed his tongue to the roof of his mouth in thought and to stop himself from speaking.

I don’t know… Should I tell him? It doesn’t matter right? He shouldn’t care, that Gon kid is not his friend. So I should tell him so that he comes cheer me on… Then why do I have a bad feeling about
He was brought out of his thoughts as his attention was directed to the full sized gate doors swinging open. Killua turned around and smirked as he saw who it was.

“Wow, it’s a piggy in human clothing~!” He teased in singsong and Milluki flushed angrily.

“Shut up, Killu!” He cried out pathetically and then proceeded to pull down the front zipper of his white sweatsuit. Illumi and Killua watched casually, already too used to having this happen every morning. Underneath the sweatsuit Milluki wore, he hid normal clothing. Today, he wore a black t-shirt with a print of a tuxedo on it and worn blue jeans, kicking off the last of his sweatpants. From the pocket of his sweatshirt, he pulled out a bag of pork rinds and then collected the discarded pieces of clothes into his duffle bag.

“Bro, our parents will find out you don’t go jogging to school in the mornings eventually…” Killua said in astonishment, slipping his hands in the pockets of his own black and blue sweatsuit.

“Not if you don’t tell them.” Milluki said in a mocking voice, scrunching his nose in Killua’s direction to irritate him. Killua rolled his eyes and looked back down the street. Milluki shot a look in Illumi’s direction as well, although it wasn’t as provokingly as he had done to Killua, since Illumi was older and Milluki respected him. But Illumi just closed his eyes and shook his head. He had no reason to tell his parents that Milluki didn’t jog to school with them at this ungodly hour.

Plus, he’s pretty sure they already know. I mean, how could they not know? If they send all their children out to go jogging in the morning before school and Milluki comes back never losing even one pound of weight, even gaining more, they must suspect he’s not running. But Illumi’s been engaged in enough conversation with his parents to know they’re ok with it (or at least accepted it). If he’s going to specialize and continue in composition and conducting, he doesn’t need to be the most physically fit or attractive. Most aren’t, it’s why composers stay behind the scenes.

“Good.” He said and turned the opposite direction of the school.

“Where you going this time?” Killua asked as he raised the silver headphones halfway up to his ears.

“Mr. Valderhen’s.” He said, mouth already full of snacks.

“Ah! Get me some!” Killua cried out with sparkling eyes. Illumi rolled his eyes. That German’s candy store.

“No. Don’t bring any contraband back please.” Illumi instructed, and Killua very audibly voiced an annoyed groan. Milluki shrugged.

“Fine! I’ll be at school later. Bye.” He said as he walked out of earshot. Illumi turned to Killua to see him shooting him an intense stare.

“No. Don’t bring any contraband back please.” Illumi instructed, and Killua very audibly voiced an annoyed groan. Milluki shrugged.

“What?” He cocked his head to one side. Killua huffed again and hoisted his duffle bag further up his shoulders and then placed the headphones firmly over his ears.

“What?” He cocked his head to one side. Killua huffed again and hoisted his duffle bag further up his shoulders and then placed the headphones firmly over his ears.

“He murmured under his breath as he pulled out his phone and played the music.

He started to run just as the first twinkling notes of the music began and he schooled his breathing as he prepared to sing, the words coming to him easily from memory.

“How can you see into my eyes, like open doors...Leading you down into my core, Where I've
become so numb,” Killua was suddenly finding this song very fitting to how he felt meeting Gon. Killua let his voice carry out in the higher range without much trouble.

“… Without a soul, My spirit's sleeping somewhere cold…! Until you find it there and lead it back home…” Killua let his eyes close briefly almost in a prayer. Gon’s the first one that have done this to him and he hopes if he lets him take him wherever, however he wants, it won’t backfire on him.

(Wake me up) “Wake me up inside,” He let the echo accompany sing in his headphones, passing up on singing it. The range too low for him to comfortably (or preferably) switch between, and instead decided to pretend it was Gon singing with him in that bass tone he so desperately wanted to surround himself in entirely in a duet. (Can't wake up,) “Wake me up inside” (Save me,) “Call my name and save me from the dark…” (wake me up). Killua let the words flow from him like prayer, singing with more feeling he thought he could muster since he started his singing training at 5 or 6. “Bid my blood to run,” (I can't wake up) “Before I come undone,” (Save me) “Save me from the nothing I've become…”

Killua already knew he used to like singing when he was younger, sing everywhere, to everyone. Especially to his brothers when they would come back from their own singing training exhausted, Killua too young and naive to know what was in store for himself. His parents made him think that voices were a tool, not for enjoyment, and boy, did they suck that out of singing. He closed off, and became that machine, that tool they wanted to use. It was the feelings he kept locked in his chest that Gon dusted off and cracked open with that amazing voice of his, it held all the feelings he used to have for singing.

Killua was gonna open that part of him to Gon now, he was going to reach back into the part of his mind that was passionate about music and singing and give it to him. Give it to him and hoped Gon knew what he was doing cause he didn’t think he could handle anymore bad memories associated with singing. He sighed out and continued in his song as he let his breath comes out in even puffs, feet pounding the sidewalk.

“Now that I know what I'm without...You can't just leave me... Breathe into me and make me real, bring me to life…”

Illumi jogged lightly behind Killua, his earbuds in his ears but no music playing through them. He usually starts off after Killua and listens to him for a few beats since he’s rarely able to get Killua to sing to him anymore then plays his music to sing himself. But there was something different that made Illumi want to listen a little while longer.

As Killua sang, he almost sounded… better than before. Like during all the time they’ve been in recording sessions and practice, he’s been holding back, hiding this hidden edge to his voice that made his voice sound more acute, precise and beautiful to listen to.

Like… what was that…?

Emotion?

He was singing with feeling, and it sounded amazing. Was he never singing with emotion before? He sounded fine, so he supposed it didn’t matter whether he did or not, but what was spurring this on?

He suddenly got a bad feeling about Gon again.

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Gon walked up to the school with headphones in his ears, the show tunes coming through the speakers. Gon had remembered the self-assigned homework of looking up the plays Knov had said they should know, and he spent all day yesterday watching them online while also writing down notes of certain characters he liked to help Melody’s own character development. He didn’t want to make her someone else, he just wanted to take notes on characteristics he thought every World Star should have and how he could help her develop her own. But since watching the musicals, he fell in love with most of the songs, downloading a few to his phone’s playlist. He was so excited, he listened to it on his way to school.

“Popular… You wanna be popular~…!” He sang to himself as a new song came on. “I wonder if there are plays and stuff the school puts on. That sounds like fun!” He murmured to himself. He tried to be in a couple plays back at his old school, but they never gave him serious roles! Just comedic effect ones. Maybe if the lead has to be a good singer and can carry their voice through the auditorium, he has a chance for a bigger role. That is, if they have plays.

“Very very popular~ Like me!” Gon sang out while bouncing up the stairs to the entrance, a few people giving him stares for either singing or being so peppy first thing in the morning. Killua peered down from atop the roof, a wide smile on his face from hearing the familiar voice.

“Gon’s here!” He cried to himself and pushed away from the ledge to get to the roof access steps. He quickly jogged down the stairs, when he reached the bottom, he cracked it open a sliver to see if anyone was right outside the door. If he does it right (as he always does every morning) he can slip out quickly and it will look like he appeared from nowhere, just walking with the flow of the crowded hallway. But just in case, he normally doesn’t leave until after the bell rings, or he doesn’t go up the roof at all. Confirming no one was nearby, he slipped out with a quick twirl to close the door behind him and then strolled along with the movement of the students.

He heard Gon singing from further down the hall and his smile widened. What an idiot, singing to himself when no one else in the school sings around like that. Gon was always interesting to Killua, so let the fun begin. He marched his way forward and finally found the clearing Gon was in the center of. The sea of students seemed to part for him as they heard him come, sticking to the sides for a good view of their new favorite newbie. Killua could see his fans eyeing him with admiration and he rolled his eyes.

They’ll be annoying. And Gon will find that out soon enough.

Gon was singing along with something from his headphones, fading in and out as he occasionally stopped singing to hear what was being sung, a slight hesitance in his voice, but he had his eyes closed happily in the action. Killua made his way over and wanted to maybe trip him for walking around with his eyes closed, but suddenly his eyes flew open like it had back in cooking class when he was just standing in the front of the room.

Gon’s mouth formed an open mouthed smile as Killua temporarily stopped in his tracks, surprised.

“Killua!” He cried and ran up to meet him halfway.

“Hey, Gon!” Killua greeted and Gon’s smile got brighter, making Killua raise one eyebrow in question, although his own smile didn’t falter.

Gon was so happy Killua got his voice back! He didn’t realize how much he missed it until he just heard Killua speak now. Literal music to his ears, it sounds even sweeter than the first time, since he’s had a taste without it.

“Killua!” Gon cried again out of sheer happiness. Killua chuckled and the chiming laughter made
Gon’s chest feel tight with something…

“Gon!” Killua chuckled out again, like they were doing something silly.

“KILLUA!” Gon crooned out in a reverberating pitch and leaned forward to hug him but Killua put a hand to his forehead, effectively stopping the arms from wrapping around him.

“Oi! Why are we just saying each other names?” He asked in another chuckle.

“I missed you! I missed your voice!” Gon started tearily, “Oh, when I realized someone had taken away your voice, I-“ He began to let some irritation into his voice, remembering how the nodes were purposeful, but when he saw Killua’s eyes widen at the mention, he shut his mouth with his lips pressed in a tight line.

Whoops.

Killua let go of his forehead and Gon leaned back up into proper standing position.

“Haha, I mean… Hey, Killua, are you wearing that nice smelling stuff today?” He asked, leaning forward and dipping his head towards his neck. Killua leaned back as much as Gon leaned forward and punctuated his discomfort with a slap to Gon’s cheek to push him away. Killua slapped a hand over his mouth in shock and also covering his spilling smile.

“Oh! Gon! S-sorry, that was reflex, but what the hell?” He asked after Gon had withdrew, rubbing his cheek. Killua’s slap wasn’t really that hard, but the quick movement stung a little.

“Sorry, I just wanted to know, you smelled really good yesterday.” Gon slightly whined. Killua chuckled into his hand before slipping both into his pockets.

“No, I’m not wearing anything today, at least not anything extra.” Killua said, letting the slight awkward moment slip away with Gon’s pacing. Gon nodded, smiling brightly, then let his eyes take in Killua completely.

He wore a pink short sleeve sweater over a white long sleeve shirt and blue shorts the stopped right before his knees, his ever present headphones on his neck.

“Oi, oi, oi!” Killua snapped in Gon’s face. Gon looked up to see a light blush over Killua’s features. “It’s not nice to just stare at someone like that…” He turned his head to one side slightly and regarded Gon through the corner of his eye. “Damn, you’re embarrassing…” He muttered. He never had someone made him feel so self conscious. And Gon was just shamelessly looking him over like that, he could at least be discreet!

“Sorry! You just always look so nice, Killua!” Gon said, a smile on his face and hands clasped behind his back. Killua’s eyes widened before he cockily placed a hand under his nose.

“Haha, thanks. I know I have great tastes!” He said, then placed his hands on his hips and looked down at himself, allowing Gon to continue looking him over too. “It’s not easy pulling off pink, but I do it and make it look good!” He bragged, cat-eyes narrowed in pride. Gon chuckled and Killua flicked his eyes up and down Gon.

“But you…” He started… “You don’t have much of variety, huh? You wear… like, the same thing everyday!” He said with slight complain.

“Hey! There’s nothing wrong with what I wear. The jeans and jacket can be worn with anything.” Gon said, deciding not to mention it’s mostly because they didn’t have the money to buy fancy and
expensive clothes that usually make an impact for school reputations. He’ll let his singing make the impressions.

“Ah-huh…” Killua intoned, unbelieving. “Oh right! I almost forgot.” Killua pulled out his phone. “Give me your number.” He said, fiddling with the device. Gon made an ‘o’ with his mouth then recited it to him. He nodded and Gon got a text. “There! Now we have each other’s numbers.” Gon hopped in one place excitedly. They really were friends after all! Killua waved his hand as he turned. “C’mon, I need to go to my locker.” He said and started walking down the way, Gon following soon after him.

“So what were you listening to? When you were singing your way into the school?” Killua asked, turning his head towards Gon.

“Oh! One of the song from one of the musicals Knov-sensi asked us to know. ‘Popular,’ it’s so catchy! Most of the songs from that play are.” Gon said, remembering he still had his headphones in even though he had paused his music long ago, and pulled them out.

“Ah. Wicked. Decent play…” Killua supplied carelessly and Gon dropped his jaw slightly at that.

“Decent? It’s great! It’s award winning!” Gon cried. Killua gave him another sideways glance and stifled a smile.

“Eh…” He said, but the slight mirth in his voice gave him away and Gon realized he was teasing. Gon knocked one elbow to Killua’s side playfully and Killua laughed when he realized Gon caught on. Gon again felt his chest squeeze, and he wondered if he should be this happy that he finally got Killua to be his friend. When they rounded the corner to their lockers, both their faces lit up.

“Zushi!” Gon said, bounding forward. Zushi turned and found Gon’s eyes and smiled.

“Gon! Good morning!” His eyes turned behind him and saw Killua speedily making his way over too. “Good morn-"

“No way…!” Killua said stopping in front of a small bag that was taped to the front of Killua’s locker that the other two failed to notice. “That piggy came through!” He cried happily, his voice going up half an octave. He pried the bag off the locker carefully and the other two boys surrounded him on either side to see what was inside as he peeled it open.

Inside was various assortments of colorful and bright pieces of candy. It was nothing big, the whole sum being able to fit in someone’s pocket, but these candies looked especially expensive and specially made.

“Thaaannk yooou!” He squealed out to no one to in particular, and pulled out a lollipop shaped like a bunny’s head. He promptly slide it into his mouth then sighed out as the sweet and sour taste washed over his tastebuds. “Mhhh! I love Mr. Valderhen’s candy…” He moaned around the lollipop.

Gon’s mouth opened and closed as he tried to speak, suddenly feeling his throat closing up at the sight of the lollipop hanging out of Killua’s mouth and rolling around with his tongue. A strangled noise made it out and Killua turned his attention on Gon, the stick out one side and the opposite cheek bulging with the candy on the inside (So cute! Gon thought) and his smile widened. A quick cough to clear (or open) his throat and he pointed at the bag.

“Can I have some?” He asked.

“Ha!” Killua barked, letting his head loll back with the laugh. “These are very special candies. It’s a privilege to even get one! If I give you one now, and you can’t get anymore, you might die. I can’t
put you in that kind of danger, I just got you.” He said, and patted a soft and warm hand on Gon’s
der cheek and Gon felt his cheeks heat up, though not as noticeable as Killua’s with his porcelain skin.
Gon, in his scrambled sense of mind, thought that made total sense and went to agree but then Zushi
spoke up.

“If that’s the case… what happens when you reach the bottom, Killua?” He asked. Killua turned
away from Gon, and he felt like pouting. He was left looking at the back of his fluffy head.

“Well, you see. I ration my candies so when I finish I’m back home. And to end it on a low note, I
eat chocolates, so I forget I ever had some. Or else I might die.” He said, putting a hand to his chin
and taking the lollipop out to speak properly. Zushi laughed and Killua smirked down at him before
moving to open his locker.

“Some people might actually want the last taste to be the candy cause of how good it is, but then
how can you get over it for the rest of the day? Will you ever eat again? I’m disciplined to cut my
losses and only enjoy in the moment and immediately eat chocolate after to get over it.” Killua said,
opening his locker, and Gon looked inside without much thought. Killua had his wednesday
academic books lined up on the inside like a mini bookshelf, and based on where algebra and
cooking was, it was in order of his classes. A small duffle bag was at the bottom of the locker, a
mirror was on the door of the locker, and, what amazed Gon the most, was the glowing stickers of
stars, making the darker corners of his lockers look like the night sky.

“Wow, Killua, you’re locker is so cool! Can you decorate mine like that?” Gon asked and Killua
instinctively used the locker door to narrow the opening so Gon couldn’t see all that much. When he
processed what he said, he hesitantly opened it a little wider, but not as much as before.

“Your locker? I can help you decorate it, but you’ll need to buy your own decorations.” He said,
stuffing some notebooks and folders in his bookbag. Gon pouted. More talk about buying and
money. Sigh, did you really need money to have fun with your friends?

“Who did you say got you those again?” Zushi asked, eyeing the bag of candy Killua had placed in
his locker.

“Oh. My big brother.” He seemed to sense Gon stiffen at the mention next to him. “My other older
brother, Milluki.” he amended, his eyes closing with a little headshake.

“Oh? Can you tell me about them, by the way? Your family I mean. What do you all do? Zushi said
you guys specialize in different things. Oh, when do I meet your family?-” Gon asked.

“Woah, woah, woah, Gon!” Killua cried out, waving his hands in front of him. “What’s what up
with all these questions? One at a time!” He said while Zushi covered his mouth with one hand to
hide his snickering. Gon could really be as excitable as a pup sometimes.

“Sorry! I’ve been really curious about you since I saw you, Killua! I have a bunch of questions,
and-”

“Ah.” He interrupted, a hand on his chin in thought. “Fine, I understand that much, but I don’t want
everyday to just be ‘bombard Killua with questions’ day. I do enough of that for the school system.”
He pointed at Gon. “Write down the questions you have to ask me so you don’t forget, but only one
question per day about me. Unless it’s natural in conversation or I say it myself. And no, what you
did earlier, spouting questions off at me like it was a lightening round, that’s not natural conversation.
If I feel generous that day, I’ll answer up to three, but I doubt it.” He crossed his arms as he finished.
Gon looked off in space as he processed what he said then nodded.
“Ok! I can do that!” He said, just then the bell rang.

“Oh, time to go to class.” Killua said, starting to close his locker. Before it clicked, he remembered something and swung it open again, pulling down the bag, taking out a couple more pieces of candy before replacing it and then closed the locker door. He headed towards class, the others behind following on his heels.

“I can’t believe it… he’s so nice…” Zushi whispered to Gon. Gon looked down at him with wide eyes.

“Of course he’s nice! Why would you think he wasn’t?” Gon asked. Zushi gave him a flat look and Gon’s mouth formed an ‘o.’ “That… that was different, he was… he didn’t know we were friendly, so he didn’t act friendly. It’s fine, of course he’s nice.” Gon nodded.

“You know I can hear every word you guys are saying, right?” Killua asked with a smirk, turning his head to one side. Zushi and Gon blinked before they both laughed nervously.

They entered the room and Killua started going towards the back while Gon and Zushi lingered by the front. When he realized he wasn’t being followed anymore, he stopped and looked behind him.

“What?” He asked.

“Well…” Zushi said, and looked to Gon.

“I can’t sit in the back, Killua. Come sit in the front with us!” Gon said, undeterred with the challenge of moving Killua’s usual seating.

“Why can’t you sit in the back? If I sit up front, I’ll gain unwanted attention, teachers will start to think I want to participate in class. C’mon, Gon.” He said, the last words coming out like a command, punctuated with a wave of his finger. Gon puffed up his cheek slightly.

“I can’t sit in the back because then I won’t be able to concentrate! Especially with you next to me, I’ll be too distracted. I’m not as talented as you, so I really need to focus in class, and the teacher’s don’t know my potential like they know yours so I want to participate! Sorry Killua, I’m not going to the back.” He huffed, stubbornly sitting down in his front row seat from yesterday to prove him point. Killua blinked at the back of Gon’s head then looked at Zushi who looked about as nervous as a criminal on death row. He shrugged his shoulders, incomprehensible gibberish coming out as he made a gesture towards Gon as though he wanted to apologize for him and then moved to sit down as well.

Killua gave out a loud and dragged out sigh before marching forward to the front. He put his hand on Gon’s shoulder and leaned over to see his face from behind the teen. Gon was stubbornly looking ahead at the board.

You better know what you’re doing…

“Gon… I’m not gonna sit in the front. Come back a couple seats and I’ll sit behind you, ok? It doesn’t have to be the back.” He said in a soft compromising voice he sometimes heard his father use. Gon’s intense staring match with the board finally ended as a light entered Gon’s eyes again and he looked up at Killua. Killua liked when his eyes were bright the most anyways.

“I’ll only move back to the second row.” He said, although something about his tone said he knew there won’t be anymore problems.

“I’ll be behind you.” He said, with a slight sigh. “But sit by the window so I don’t have to be flanked
by losers.” He said drawing to his full height and placing his hands in his pockets. Gon’s smile could light up a dark room and he directed it all at Killua. Killua looked away with a scratch to his cheeks.

“Ok!” Gon jumped up and moved behind the first row, sitting by the window. Killua turned to follow and realize students that were already inside the classroom had saw the whole thing and was watching with weird looks on their faces. He tried to give death glares to each of them before sitting in the seat behind Gon, then promptly let his head fall between his folded arms to hide his face. Zushi moved and sat next to Gon, a small chuckle slipping through at the meer incredulity that happened. Killua is still super scary to him, but he’s warming up. But he knows Killua is more Gon’s friend than his own, and he’s fine with that, it’s just nice to talk to him periodically and be in his presences. Having a cool friend like that (especially after the school year before filled with loneliness and outcasting because of ‘certain circumstances’) was refreshing and made him feel cool too. As others filed into the classroom, they were surprised to see Killua closer to the front than usual, and some tried sitting next to Killua (behind Zushi), but Killua would give them glares or silent hisses to keep them away, and soon they were filled in on what happened (aka, rumors) on why he was sitting up front.

Killua had his headphones up before others came in because he knew there would be mumbling and murmuring that would only serve to piss him off. So he put on his music as he usually did, the lollipop stick waving around his lips indicating Killua’s process of whittling it down.

Gon chatted happily with Zushi, coming up with questions to ask Killua, writing it down on a piece of paper, waiting for class to start.

Wing came in late as usual, giving a quick start at seeing Killua closer to the front and by his son, but then continued professionally.

“Your papers are graded. Everyone did great.”

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“Alright everyone, before class ends,” Wing said as people packed up early. “I’m going to give you your assignments due Monday. Write a brief paper on a World Star that graduated from this school. Figure out their hatsu, and see if you can find an interview saying how they found it. Other than that, just information on them like what kind of music they sing and what their practice schedule is like, or what not. It doesn’t have to be longer than 2 pages.” Wing said, then went and sat down at his desk, indicating he was done until the bell rang.

Killua scratched down Canary almost out of habit but then scrunched up his mouth in a pinpoint in distaste.

I don’t have to do the assignment… He thought, hesitantly scratching out her name. He slapped a hand on Gon’s shoulder and lifted himself out of his seat to look on to Gon’s desk.

“Hey, Gon, who are you going to do it on?” He asked, trying to peek at his paper. Gon threw himself onto his desk to cover his paper.

“NO! Killua, you can’t see the questions I wrote down to ask you until I ask you!” He cried out. Killua let his hand hang in the air where Gon’s shoulder just was in his grasp for a moment longer before he slid back in his seat, a smile on his face.

“I was asking if you knew who you’re doing the assignment on. Were you even listening? Do you know what the assignment is?” Killua asked while Zushi was also laughing at Gon’s reaction. Gon got up and turned around in his seat to face Killua.
“Who are you going to do it on?” Gon asked, flicking his eyes down at his paper. Killua slipped his hand forward to close his notebook.

“I’m not going to do it. I asked you first anyway.” Killua said. Gon pouted.

“C’mon, you should do it, it’ll be fun!”

“No, it’ll be boring.” He huffed. Gon shook his arm to get his attention again.

“C’mon, please! You should participate in class more! If you do, you’ll see that it is fun! Even if you don’t do your own, we can look stuff up together? That’ll be fun… right? Cause we’ll be together.” Gon said, boring his beautiful amber eyes into Killua’s. Killua blinked then looked away, realizing he was getting sucked up into his gaze. If he thought about it, he realized he would’ve relented if he stared any longer.

“I… I’ll help you, fine, but I’m not doing the assignment.” He said, looking out the window to the trees outside. Gon smiled.

“Yay!” Gon cheered. “How do we look up if a World Star graduated from this school?” He asked, leaning forward a bit more.

“In the library, there is a list of Alumni that graduated from the school compiled in a huge book. You can basically just shuffle it open and point at a picture on the page. It’s like a yearbook but for graduates.” Zushi supplied instead. Gon nodded at him.

“When should we go?” Gon asked, turning to Killua.

“Whenever you want to, stupid…” Killua muttered, keeping his gaze fixed on the trees outside. Gon continued to stare for a beat longer.

“Hey, Killua, when can I ask you my one question?” He asked suddenly and Killua looked up at him.

“Huh? Oh, uh… anytime is fine, you know, as long as I’m free.” He said. Gon nodded and glanced at the clock.

“Killua… Why do you sing?” He asked, a quiet intensity in his eyes as he studied Killua’s face and eyes. His eyes seemed to dilate, expanding the horizons and depth of his eyes as he was taken aback by the question. He expected something more along the lines of what he was asking that morning.

Zushi also looked surprised, peeking over at the sheet of paper he was helping Gon comprise earlier in the class. That question wasn’t even on there. Where was this coming from? What did he miss?

Killua opened his mouth to answer and his mind screeched to a halt. What do I say? Why do I sing again?

“I…” He felt his face heat up slightly at how foolish he must look and let out a cough, then scratched the back of his neck. “Because I’m told to.” He muttered. That didn’t sound right… But I don’t sing unless I’m told, though… He thought with furrowed eyebrows, looking down at his lap. He didn’t see the flash of emotions cross Gon’s face at that. He opened his mouth to say something else for him to elaborate then remembered he only gets one question per day. He pressed his lips into a firm line in slight frustration.

“Are you sure?” He pressed. Killua looked up and bit his lip. Could he tell he didn’t really think that was why?
“I mean…” Killua trailed off, looking down at the ground.

“You don’t have to answer now…” Gon said with a soft smile, and the bell rang, most students quickly filing out, but none of the three boys moved as though they didn’t even hear it. “You can answer me by the end of today!” Gon replied cheerily to remove some pressure. “Think about it. I don’t think that’s why you sing.” Gon stood up and picked up his paper, showing he did indeed hear the dismissing bell. “Walk with me?” Killua felt his limbs go numb, right up to the tips of his fingers, but he didn’t think it was from anxiety this time, and he really didn’t think music could help pump the feelings back into them. Killua nodded numbly, just simply staring at Gon’s face when he wasn’t really seeing him, just trying to think.

Why do I sing.

Well, I’m hoping you can figure that out for me, Gon… Killua thought as he stood and put his notebook in his bookbag and stood beside Gon. Zushi stood up as well and they walked out the door, Zushi giving Wing a wave.

“Well, I’ll see you at lunch. Bye, it was nice talking with you Killua…” Zushi said, a light blush on his cheeks. “You’re really cool! Bye!” He zipped off the other direction as though he’d get socked for saying something so he ran away. That snapped Killua out of the daze Gon put him in and he rubbed the back of his head embarrassed.

“Ah, er… oh, dammit you guys are annoying…” Killua muttered but Gon just laughed.

“Do you need your locker?” Gon asked looking over at Killua with warm eyes. Killua felt a blush rise and looked away.

“Naw, I got my stuff until lunch.” He said. “Let’s just go to the next class already.” He moved quickly ahead of Gon as to give him time to calm down. How can anyone be as friendly as Gon? What did he do to merit his attention and friendship…? Gon caught up and fell into step with him, carrying easy conversation with his white haired friend. They entered the room and Kite gave them both looks. His eyes seemed especially intense when it fell over Killua. Gon felt Killua tense almost imperceivable next to him but then he looked away.

“I can’t sit up front with you, all the other desks are taken. I’m in the back.” He muttered for only Gon to hear and moved to the back. Gon pouted but understood. Gon looked back over at Kite and saw he was watching Killua move back there but then averted his eyes when Killua faced the front again. Gon moved to sit, but Kite motioned for him. Gon blinked and placed his bookbag down in his front row seat and walked up to the man.

“Yes, Kite?” He asked with a slight bow. Kite raised an eyebrow but then continued.

“Killua had nodes yesterday, right?” He asked in a low tone. Gon’s eyebrows furrowed upward as he remembered then it furrowed downward in anger again as he remembered there was no way it wasn’t purposely created.

“Yea…” Gon’s voice had lowered itself in anger, an intense glare directed at the ground. Kite flicked his eyes to where Killua was watching them, Killua’s expression laced with slight irritation at seeing Gon’s body language.

“Proper singing position.” Kite said under his breath and Gon immediately went to stand in it. “More relaxed.” He urged and Gon let out a breath and rolled his shoulders to relax and fell into a better one. “Good. You’re Killua’s friend now, right? Did he tell you why or how he got them?” He asked. Gon sighed, but forced himself to stay in the proper relaxed singing position to keep his anger in
check, he suspected that much when Kite asked him to stand in it.

“No. But Zushi told me the Zoldycks come in with nodes all the time. But I know how nodes are
healed, especially if they can get the best doctors, then they would have to work at it to get the nodes.
They weren’t on accident or from over practice. Whatever was done was specifically for giving him
nodes—!”

“Relax.” Kite scolded, gauging Killua’s reaction again. He looked about 2 seconds away from
getting up and dragging Gon away. Gon relaxed again, but Killua barely looked convinced anymore.
“I figured as much. I asked Killua if it was ok to send his failing grade to parents and he freaked a
little but hid it well. I’m a little concerned but it’s not my place as an instructor to assume things
without solid proof.” He sighed.

“I can’t just give him good grades just to protect him though. It’s unfair. He’s not the only one with
hidden scars, his case is just… a special case. Well, Gon. You’re the first friend I note Killua has
had. You’ll look out for him right? No matter where you go, you’ll stay by his side and make sure he
stays out of trouble right?” Kite asked. Gon lit up and Kite was reassured without Gon ever having
said anything yet.

“Right!” He cried out happily and the class already in their seats looked over. Kite sighed out a small
exasperated sigh.

“Yea, yea, take your seat.” He said, motioning to the seat behind Gon. Gon nodded vigorously and
spun on his heel, bounding in the movement to his seat, feeling happier than he has in a while.

That’s right. Even though he was angry on what most likely his family did to him, he has him now.
And he’d be damned if he let anything else happen to Killua while he was his friend. He’ll protect
him. His cheeks began to hurt from how widely he was smiling.

Killua finally settled down in his seat, letting the tension in his body seep out once he saw Gon return
to his seat happier than before. He didn’t know what Kite was talking about but he’s sure it was
about him and Gon was getting angry about it. He didn’t know if Kite was talking bad about him
and Gon was getting irritated because he wanted to defend him or some other stupid sappiness like
that, but he didn’t like how Kite was making Gon feel. He was going to go and drag him and himself
out of the class so Gon didn’t have to worry about him anymore, but both Gon and Kite seemed
satisfied with how to conversation ended, so he supposed he’ll be fine.

“Alright class, we’ll do some vocal warm-ups and continue with the lesson, then with the last half of
class, you guys can get with your partners and continue working on the pre-test.” He said, then
signalled for everyone to stand. “Proper singing position.”

The class exploded into chatter once Kite allowed them to start on their projects. Some were
practicing their singing while others were blocking out movements to perform with, others discussing
other matters of the performance. Gon waved Melody over and she trotted over.

“Hello again, Gon. Are we going to pick what song we’re going to sing today?” Melody asked. Gon
shook his head in the negative and she opened her mouth to say something but something over his
shoulder caused her eyes to widen and she closed it. Well, based on the star struck look in her eyes,
Gon could guess exactly what she saw. (He almost felt giddily smug about it! Knowing Killua
would always want to be with him too now that they’re friends…)

“We have plenty of time to pick a song to perform it. We have to work on your stage presence first!”
Gon said. Most of the class was shocked at having seen Killua make his way over to lazily sit behind Gon, one foot up on the desk as the other swings above the ground. So it was true, they were friends? It wasn’t just Gon forcing himself on Killua! He genuinely wanted to be in Gon’s presence. Well, it was to Gon’s credit, everyone who came into contact with Gon’s warmth understood the feel he emitted; everyone just wanted to bathe in. But the fact he was able to reel Killua in with it made him that much more admirable.

Gon just continued smiling and talking with his partner as Killua just basked in the presence of Gon, hanging out with nothing better to do, more than happy just to listen to him speak.

“S-stage presence? Gon, all we have to do is stand up there and sing, we don’t have to-”

“Nope! Stop right there, cutie. 1! If you’re going to be a World Star, you have to know you always try and give more than just the minimum requirement!” Gon said, wagging one finger, then the next joined it. “2! That’s the first thing we got to work on. Your confidence! We got to get rid of that stutter and timid disposition.” He crossed his arms and leaned back to wait for her reaction. Her eyes just widened as he took in what he said.

“O-ok…” She murmured and downcasted her eyes.

“Nononon, that’s all wrong.” Gon said, putting a hand under her chin and raising it. “Confidence! Don’t let the other person make you feel lower. Even if you do feel lower, act like you’re not and you’ll begin to feel you aren’t! Haha, that’s like that one play-” He turned to Killua who raised his lazy cat eyes up to meet Gon’s at the address. “-The King and I, ah it’s really good, that beginning song, ‘Whistle a happy tune! Make believe you’re brave And the trick will take you far. You may be as brave As you make believe you are!’-” Gon sang out a short segment and Killua gave a small affectionate smile. What a kid. Gon turned back to Melody who looked like she was listening intently.

“I understand… but Gon, that sounds easier said than done.” She said, holding her fingers together and head lowered. Gon furrowed his eyebrows in frustration and stood up.

“C’mon stand up. That’s what I’m here for, to help you.” Melody stood up timidly and Gon shook out his limbs. When Melody just stared back at him he sighed playfully and did it again.

“C’mon too.” She blinked and then did it stiffly. Gon shook his head. “No, no, c’mon! You gotta feel your limbs become spaghetti! You know what that is, right? Do it!” Gon cried, taking her hands and shaking her with him. She barely stifled a laugh and began to do it a bit more loosely. In Gon’s pace, they didn’t notice the rest of the class taking note of their little lesson. Kite looked up, his head cocked to one side as he thought of something.

There’s something very familiar about Gon… He thought as he watched him push his teachings onto the poor shy girl. Once Gon’s decided they were both plenty shook, and Melody's mirthful laughter came out every couple of breaths, he stopped.

“Ok! How do you feel like now?”

“Spaghetti?” She giggled and Gon bent over in playful exasperation.

“Good enough!” He dismissed. “Ok, now singing position.” He said and she did, hands folded elegantly in front of her adding her own personality to it.

“Nice! Alright, see how your chin is raised? That’s how you should try to walk around. How does it make you feel?”
“Um… professional? Elegant…” She said, then darted a tongue out to lick over her buck teeth peeking over her bottom lip and her head lowered ever so. Killua noticed and noted she was probably the timid girl she was because she wasn’t confident in her looks. He didn’t blame her, it was easier to be confident when there weren’t such external flaws people could pick at you with if you put yourself out there.

Then why be a World Star… He thought to himself.

“Great! Now, you are.” Gon said, taking both of her shoulders in each of his hands and looking her earnestly deep in her eyes. He wanted to let her know with every fiber of his being that she was, it didn’t matter how she looked. Staring into his honest orbs of amber, Melody believed it.

“Yea?” She said, her chin raising again. Gon nodded affectionately.

“You keep that in mind. You know that you are, and no one can tell you otherwise. You’ll be surprised at how well it comes across when you yourself believe it.” Gon drew to his full height releasing her shoulders. “Alright, now let’s try it out. Killua.” Gon called, looking back at the lounging teen. He looked over, having just popped a piece of candy in his mouth. Melody felt herself shrinking at the call.

“Come over and talk with Melody. Like it’s after her concert or something.” Gon said as Killua drew himself off the desk.

“What, I’m intimidating?” Killua joked, tossing the candy to the back corner of his mouth to keep it out the way.

“Very…” Melody muttered under her breath, but when Gon looked over she shot her chin up.

“Ok? Go!” Gon cried, standing off to the the side. Killua lolled his head forward, making eye contact with Gon as he thought of what to say.

“Em… Nice concert.” He said, slipping one hand out of his pocket to gesture to her. She immediately put her head down and brought her fingers together.

“Er, th-thank yo-”

“No, no, Melody, chin up, elegant, think elegant!” Gon said, reaching over and tapping the bottom of her face gently. She closed her eyes as she shook her nerves out and lifted her head again.

Ok… I’m elegant… She remembered Gon’s eyes that shone so brightly, that she could truly believe, that he really saw it in her. What do I say now? She looked into Killua’s eyes, nervous at first at how intense they were with the gaze, but after holding it, it was like she was transported somewhere else where she was on the same level as him. She wasn’t Melody but someone more beautiful, a graceful flute player.

Killua said something carelessly, but he’s actually really interested of what she’s going to say, and he’s hooked on her words. She could pretend that in those deep eyes he also truly believes she’s elegant. Her voice came out steady, smooth and silky like she’s never heard it before herself.

“Thank you.” Killua blinked in shock as he practically saw her transform before him after hesitantly making eye contact with him. The rest of the class sucked in a breath at the enchanting voice, having unconsciously turned their attention to see the result of Gon’s teaching, allowing her voice to echo through the room. She suddenly looked like a Cinderella hidden behind pauper's clothing, but held beauty underneath to be uncovered. Kurapika blinked as he took her in as if for the first time.
Gon cried out happily as he took her hand.

“Ya! That was perfect! Melody, you really are amazing!” Melody blinked, coming out of her stupor. She giggled and pushed her glasses up the bridge of her nose.

“Really?” She asked.

“Yea, you had some great confidence.” Killua chimed in, hands in his pockets and leaning back charmingly. She blushed and looked up shyly at Gon.

“What do I do to accept praise confidently?” She giggled.

“Try a hair flip!” He said with a smile and small wave of his head like he had hair to flip. She laughed then flipped her hair back, feeling more comfortable and free.

“Thank you!” She laughed and they all chimed in small laughter before Killua went back to sit down.

“Ok, next, we should work on displaying that confidence while you’re singing!” Gon said, and backed up to look her over.

“Does that mean we’ll choose a song now?” She asked, clasping both hands together. Gon shook his head again.

“We’ll have plenty of time for that! We’re going to sing some songs that portray confidence just for practice. Do you know ‘What the hell’ by avril?” He asked with an innocent head tilt.

“Excuse me?” She cried out nervously and Killua bursted out laughing.

“How on earth does that song exude the kind of confidence Melody wants?” Killua guffawed. Gon looked over with a small pout.

“Don’t be mean Killua! Then what would you suggest?” He asked. Killua held his hand up in surrender.

“Hey, you’re the leader here, I won’t say anymore.” He said, and Melody looked nervously between the two.

“I’ve heard of that song, but I’m not comfortable with the ideals it portrays.” She piped up. Gon waved his hands at that.

“We don’t care about the words, just the level of execution required. It’s really high energy and confidence to yell out like she does all the time.” Gon explained. “Ok, so…” He started, but then was interrupted with a call.

“Gon.” Gon turned around to see Kite waving him over. Killua bristled again at Kite talking to Gon, but he realized he had no reason to. He thinks. It should be fine… But he was being really secretive with Gon’s little talks.

“Sorry, one second!” Gon said with a curt bow and bounded away. The rest of the class was able to properly focus on their projects now that the distracting show Gon put on was placed on hold for a moment. There was something about Gon that just demanded the room’s attention, his way of speaking and presenting himself… it was almost impossible to ignore.

“Hey… Mel.” Killua whispered to catch her attention while making sure Gon didn’t notice from his
place in front of Kite’s desk. Melody looked over at the call of her shortened name and came closer
to the lounging Zoldyck. “You know another part of being a good World Star is not being a
pushover to those who are ‘in-charge’ of you. They want to help, but you don’t have to listen to
every single thing they say. It’s good to compromise. They can’t do without you after all. You’re
irreplaceable.” He said lowly so only she heard, keeping his eyes on Gon to make sure he suddenly
didn’t turn around, then looked to Melody only after he finished speaking. He leaned further back in
his chair as he realized she was staring at him with wide eyes and a blush on her features.

“Wh-what?” He stuttered caught off guard from her reaction.

“Thank you…” She said, a soft smile on her lips. *He said I’m irreplaceable*... She thought. If Killua
Zoldyck thought so much about her, she could truly pretend she feels the same. He let his surprise
from her initial reaction fade and he smiled back.

“Of course.” He said, and held up a fist. She looked down at it then gave a small chuckle, tapping
her own small fist against his.

“You’re very nice. Before today, you had this really icy exterior about you, almost like a shield.
Now you have this warmth radiating around you, very welcoming.” She took a pause as Killua
sucked in a breath in shock. “Is it Gon?” She asked quietly, turning to look at the sun-kissed male at
Kite’s desk. Their conversations seemed close to ending. She turned her eyes back on Killua and he
was looking at Gon too.

“I think so… I’m hoping to… learn something.” He said. *Half truths. Not too bad.* He turned back to
Melody and they exchanged warm smiles.

“Right, so I won’t be singing any Avril.” She giggled and Killua rolled his eyes.

Not if you don’t want to.” He said. Gon turned around.

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Gon reached Kite’s desk, not letting the small uneasiness show on his face.

“Yes, Kite?” He asked as he reached the desk.

“Gon, are you japanese by chance?” He asked, a hand on his chin. Gon blinked.

“Er, hai.” Gon nodded. Kite smiled slightly.

“Who’s your father?” He asked with mirth. Gon bit his lip lightly.

“Er…” Gon toned, looking at the wood grain pattern on the desk in front of him. Kite sat up more in
his chair.

“Is it someone named Ging?” Gon’s head snapped up at that.

“How did you know?” He asked slightly nervously.

“Ah… that’s how you got my albums… wow, I don’t think I’ve seen you since you were 2, maybe
three.” Kite said, staring at Gon as though trying to recognize the differences from when Gon was
younger to now. Gon blinked.

“Huh?” He asked dumbly.

“I used to work with Ging. We worked on composing songs together, he’d help me finish my
movements in smooth jazz and I’d help him come up with lyrics. I was just a small stop on his map of experiences, but he’s very famous. One of the top World Stars out there… is that how you got into this school?” Kite asked.

“No, no, I was asked to apply by Netero, I don’t think he knows who my father is. Please don’t tell anyone. I want to become a World Star on my own term, using my own strength.” Gon pleaded. Kite nodded.

“I wasn’t planning on it. You asked me how I knew? I was watching the way you were impacting those around you, your brightness infected everyone around here, especially Melody who you were focusing on. You positively affect people you interact with, and it reminded me of Ging when we worked together. He’d be proud to know his son came out so wonderfully.” Gon smiled widely.

“Thank you… That’s amazing that you knew my father… would you mind… could you tell me more stories about him when you have the chance?” Gon asked hopefully. Kite smiled warmly.

“Of course. I’m here after school for an extra hour, and on Wednesdays I’m here for 2. Ok? Drop by anytime. I’m usually free for lunch too.” Kite said, inclining his head forward. Gon nodded happily.

“Ok! Thank you!”

“You can go now.” Kite said, and Gon turned around on his heels and bounded back to his friends who looked like they were talking about him behind his back. But that would never happen! Or at least nothing bad, right?

“Ok, right! So, I’ll pull up the lyrics and you try to sing it as confidently as-” Gon said, pulling out his phone and Melody interrupted, Killua’s eyes slipping closed as he sank further in his seat.

“Actually, Gon.” she said. “I still don’t want to sing that song.” Gon blinked.

“But we have to practice your stage pres-!”

“I know.” She said soothingly. “But we can keep thinking of another song that needs to be delivered with confidence that I like singing. I think that’s a very important part of delivery, right? To at least like the song?” She asked reasoning.

“I agree.” Killua replied, his eyes still closed. Gon whipped his head in his direction when he spoke and blinked as he seemed to process what happened. He puffed out his cheeks.

“You-! You did something to my student!” Gon cried out and Killua tried to suppress the cheeky smile trying to break out on his face as he felt more than saw the glare sent in his direction.

“Now come on, Gon, we can just search?” Melody asked trying not to break out in laughter herself. She pulled him forward but he stubbornly kept his glare on the reclining star until she patted his cheek to look down.

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After class, Gon told Melody he’d text her the next time he was able to practice the pre-test. They would finally pick a song to block out a short and simple dance and perform it in her new found confidence. She was able to perform a song in front the class (well, not really infront of the class as an audience, but when most of the class quieted to listen to her, she didn’t back down. If Gon didn’t know better, he’d think she was actually basking in it, FINALLY!) and Gon noticed she didn’t look at or mention Kurapika once. That was the best part. Kurapika needed to realize he wasn’t the ‘end all be all’ and that sometimes he needed to humble himself to get someone else. And the fact that
Melody could possibly get over Kurapika will help with his phase 4 of the plan. She needed to be independent and able by then. Of course all these phases are Gon’s secret agenda and no one knows of them, so he bid her good-bye with the promise of contacting her for their next meet up.

“Bye Gon! Good bye Killua!” She said, softer for the latter.

“Bye, Melody.” Killua bid before Gon could. Gon whipped his head back and forth to look at the two, Melody walking away and Killua looking at him strangely.

“What was that? That little exchange…!” Gon said, wiggling his fingers to represent the strangeness of it.

“What? I don’t know what you’re talking about.” Killua said, starting to head to his locker.

“C’mon! There was something between you two, I saw it! You two have been all secretive and exclusive since Kite talked to me!”

“Oh, us? What did Kite talk to you about?” Killua asked. Gon opened his mouth then closed it. He couldn’t tell him all that.

“I…” Gon trialed.

“Right! If anyone’s being secretive it’s you!” Killua said, poking his nose. Gon scrunched up the poked nose and sighed.

“Kiiillluuuaaa! You’re gonna make me jealous!” Gon droned out, voice thrumming around Killua’s head. Killua scoffed.

“Jealous,’ he says…” Killua said opening up his locker. He fixed his hair real quick in the mirror then pulled up his duffle bag to reveal a lunch box. Gon opened his locker at the same time and got his bento out.

“So, Killua, have you thought about my question from earlier? Do you have an answer yet?” Gon asked amicably enough but Killua grimaced, his mood plummeting a bit.

“No… I’m gonna think about it during lunch.” Gon turned to him hopefully and Killua held his hand up. “Alone.” Gon mood sank as well. Now two downcast boys were heading towards Zushi’s locker and the lunch room. Zushi lit up when he spotted them but then hesitantly lowered his waving hand at seeing the two sad boys.

“What happened?” Zushi asked. They gestured at each other and said things at the same time, then faced each other as they realized they blamed each other.

“What happened?” Zushi asked. They gestured at each other and said things at the same time, then faced each other as they realized they blamed each other.

“Me?!” They cried out in chorus. “You!” the tense beat passed then they bursted out in laughter.

“Sorry, it’s nothing Zushi. I’m just gonna go think about some things.” Killua said then casually brought his hand up in departure. “See ya.” He walked down the hall. Zushi then turned to Gon.

“I’m hoping he’ll join us for lunch when he doesn’t have things to think about.” Gon said watching him move away. Zushi smiled and patted his back supportingly. “It’s my own fault for asking him such a hard question I guess…”

Zushi nodded. “Where did that question come from anyway?” He asked.

“Well, tuesday, he told me he doesn’t like to sing for others because there’s no benefit for him, so
he’ll only sing for concerts. So I asked him why does he sing. I mean, he never said he doesn’t like to sing, he just doesn’t like to sing for others. So I wanted to know what kept him singing instead of quitting. His answer from this morning was just too sad… I hope he comes up with a better answer.”
Gon said and looked down at Zushi. Zushi just nodded, looking down the hallway Killua was just walking down.

“You’re really amazing Gon…” Zushi said, almost to himself.


“Let’s go join Pokkle and them.” He said instead turning inside. Gon whined slightly.

“Zuuuushi!” He brightened up as he remembered something. “Oh yea, does this school do plays?!”

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Killua popped another bright candy ball into his mouth as he looked out over the roof of the school, his headphones firmly over his ears.

Why do you sing?

~I’m tired of being what you want me to be

Feeling so faithless, lost under the surface…

He let himself get lost in the music and melody, left alone with his thoughts. He used to sing because it was fun. Because it made his older brothers happy. At least he figured it did when he was younger— even after they would return to the main house from music training for the day, exhausted and spent, they would let him follow them around and stay in their presence and climb on their bed while they were trying to rest and just sing. Anything, everything, whatever they wanted, and they’d just listen to him sing.

~Don’t know what you’re expecting of me

Put under the pressure of walking in your shoes...

Somewhere in the back of his mind, Killua knew his brothers were tired from singing or dancing all day so even though sometimes he wanted his older brothers to sing for him too, he’d sing for them instead so they could be happy.

And he thought it made them happy. He hoped it did.

~(Caught in the undertow, just caught in the undertow)
Every step that I take is another mistake to you
(Caught in the undertow, just caught in the undertow)...

Back then, Milluki had made him his headphones, the ones he wears to this day, and told him to always keep singing. Custom and specially made, Milluki made it waterproof, damage resistant, with a lightweight metal alloy. The screeching cat design on the hull was more like an inside family joke-sort of Killua’s brand.

~I've become so numb, I can't feel you there
Become so tired, so much more aware
I'm becoming this, all I want to do
Is be more like me and be less like you...

After he started his own music training, and his brothers were put in charge of his hellish hours of training, he began to hate them (even though it was never really their fault, but he was a child and it was hard to grow out of something that’s been rooted for so long) and he stopped singing for them. It was possible Milluki made him the headphones knowing what was in store, wanting him to remember how it was before the strict instruction.

~Can't you see that you're smothering me,
Holding too tightly, afraid to lose control?
'Cause everything that you thought I would be
Has fallen apart right in front of you...

He now valued the headphones because it reminded him of the time when he still loved singing. When the reason he sang was his brothers. Was to make others happy. And his brothers made him happy too. Killua could still get Milluki embarrassed when he paraded them around all the time and handled them with such care, Anyone watching would have thought it was his child. It’s why it’s still so pristine although he’s had them for about 10 years.

Why do you sing?

~(Caught in the undertow, just caught in the undertow)
Every step that I take is another mistake to you.
(Caught in the undertow, just caught in the undertow)
And every second I waste is more than I can take...

Killua thought if he couldn’t sing to make his brothers happy, he could still sing to the world and make them happy. He knew music gave him joy so he strived to impress his parents and become the leads in Zoldycks concerts, become like a poster child of their empire. But he didn’t realize it came with all the interviews, paparazzi, articles with lies, parties with old people he didn’t know or care about, expectations and people who just wanted to know him for the connections and ease of access he could provide. There was no happiness in that world. Only corrupted people with too much money for their huge pockets.

So why don’t you quit?

~I've become so numb, I can't feel you there,

Become so tired, so much more aware

I'm becoming this, all I want to do

Is be more like me and be less like you...

Killua gripped at the cuffs of his shirt. He couldn’t stand that thought. He didn’t think he could bear to ever stop singing. But if it was so troublesome and fruitless, why continue? He thought of his little sister Alluka (He gripped his sleeves tighter) and his father… He could still make those people happy. And Gon… he seems to know some secret about singing and maybe if he keeps singing and keeps waiting… something will push, something will break and then everything will be different and he’ll be happy. So he’ll wait.

~And I know

I may end up failing too.

But I know

You were just like me with someone disappointed in you.

I've become so numb, I can't feel you there,

Become so tired, so much more aware.

I'm becoming this, all I want to do

Is be more like me and be less like you.
I've become so numb, I can't feel you there.

(I'm tired of being what you want me to be)

I've become so numb, I can't feel you there.

(I'm tired of being what you want me to be)...

Killua could hear Gon’s voice in his head, eyes honest and smile pure.

Killua… why do you sing?

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Killua made his way down the stairs of the roof access with 5 minutes until the end of lunch. He felt oddly at peace after thinking through something he’s probably been putting off thinking about until Gon asked. He needed to tell Gon he had the answer. Or… some kind of answer.

He was walking towards the cafeteria when the doors opened and he met eyes with the boy he was searching for.

“Gon…!” Killua breathed with a smile after recovering from almost smacking into him. Gon’s smile widened to the point Killua was worried his face would split in half and sort of felt happy that he had that kind of effect on Gon—that he made him so happy.

“Killua!” He skipped forward for a hug and Killua actually let him, grunting as he collided harder than he expected. “You let me hug you!” He cried out victoriously. Killua chuckled and backed up to look Gon in the eye.

“I have your answer.” He said and Gon’s eyes zeroed in in focus, and Killua was able to keep eye contact this time.


“Ok… I sing because the small pleasures. I want to. And I’m waiting. I sing because I’m waiting for something to hope for.” He stated, letting his eyes slip close. When he heard himself his eyes snapped open and a blush reached from the tips of his ears down to his neck. “I-I mean! Ah geez, that sounded so sappy!” Killua moaned, covering his face, even the tips of his lithe fingers were also flushed red. “Forget I said anything!” Killua cried out, shooting his hands out and covering Gon’s face as he kept his head down. “Oh man, I should’ve thought that through better…” He moaned. Then he felt Gon laughing against his hand, the vibrations dancing across his fingers and arms and down his spine and he slowly removed his hands as he waited for Gon to tease him mercilessly. Gon finally opened his eyes, eyes so deep, it was like melted chocolate and Killua couldn’t look away.

“I like that answer better!” He laughed deep in mirth. Killua blinked as his blush receded. “You’re last answer was too sad… this answer is so much better. It means I can still help you. I’ll be your hope, Killua!” Gon said, grabbing his hands and holding it to his broad chest. Killua’s blush returned but not as deeply.

“W-what are you even saying, you idiot?!” He bit out, yanking his hands back to his own chest.

“I want to help you! I want to help you love singing again! To anyone, everywhere!” Gon explained and Killua scoffed.
“Please… the only person I really want to sing with is you.” Killua said with a eye roll. Gon felt his heart stutter at that and he found himself smiling like an idiot, a “huh?!” spilling through his lips. Killua blinked.

“Ah… I never told you…” He said as though just remembering. Gon laughed happily.

“Killua-!” The bell ring and people began pouring out the lunch room.

“Woa! C’mon Gon, we gotta get out the way.” Killua said twisting behind Gon and pushing him forward. He realized he probably shouldn’t have told him, Gon was embarrassing enough without knowing that, so he was secretly happy for the distraction of the bell. They got to the lockers and Gon looked lost in thought as they shuffled through their books. Killua looked at Gon through the corner of his eye with slight wonder.

What is he thinking about now…?

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They had just entered Harmony class together when Gon got a text message. Killua looked over his shoulder to read with him. It was from Melody:

Kurapika talked to me!!

Both of them gasped and they tried to fight over the phone to type first but Gon won out by saying ‘It’s my phone!’

“Ask her if she spit in his face!” He asked, close by his ear as though that would allow him to control Gon’s thoughts.

“Shush!” Gon said, waving his hand at Killua’s face. He typed in ‘What did you do?’

“No, tell her to never speak to him again!” Killua said.

“You know, Killua, I didn’t realize how salty you could be, I never should have told you about Melody’s situation.”

“Ah, she would have told me eventually.” Killua waved off finally coming off Gon’s shoulder and sticking his hands in his pockets. Another text came in and he peered back over his shoulder.

He introduced himself and I said I know, then I told him I had to go! I pretended to be elegant like you told me and it helped! I felt empowered and not the least bit embarrassed! She texted.

“Lame! She should have flipped him off.” Killua stated and Gon sighed.

“No, she took the high road, like a lady. This is good, everything is going according to plaaaaaaaahhhhh mean, ahaha,“ He droned nervously as Killua gave him a weird look. “Hey, Killua, can I ask you another question today?” Killua huffed,

“Is that what you were thinking so hard about at the locker? Another question that will take me a hundred years to answer? Is that a goal of yours?” He asked, heading to the back of the classroom.

“No, and um, ahem…” Gon coughed, trying to catch Killua’s attention as he stayed by the front. Killua stopped as his shoulders tensed, signalling he remembered. He lolled his head as he turned with the momentum and sighed out, resigned.

“Take your pick.”
“Right there is fine!” Gon said, pointing to the row Killua was standing by. It was the middle row, equidistant from the back and front. Killua huffed.

“Ok.” He took a seat and Gon went and sat next to him.

“So, can I ask you a question?” Gon asked again and Killua was about to answer when a girl’s voice cut him off.

“Gon! Oh…!” Ponzu strolled up to them. “That’s new.” She said, looking at Killua.

“Isn’t it?” Killua replied sarcastically, and Gon tapped his wrist. “What?” Killua whispered under his breath.

“Hey Ponzu! Whats up?” He asked.

“Not much, you just left lunch kinda early.” She said taking the seat next to Gon.

“Yea, just had some stuff on my mind.” Gon said, shifting so he wasn’t completely facing Killua and having his back to her.

“Mh! So anyway, I looked up the theater department on the school page after you asked about plays, and it looks like we work on those things in the higher grades. As an idol, acting is imperative too!” She said and Gon’s eyes lit up.

“Yay! But what about now? Plays and auditions and volunteers?” Gon asked. Killua could have fell asleep from boredom listening to this stuff.

“Hey Gon.” Killua said as Ponzu opened her mouth to reply. Both their attentions fell onto him, the farther one more annoyed. “I decided I will let you ask me another question.” He said, propping his head on one hand, a fox like smile across his face. Gon lit up.

“Wow, really?! Oh, what was it again...?” Gon said, rubbing at his strong jawline.

“Well, while you think of it, I can tell you about theater auditions outside of grade levels.” Ponzu giggled innocently when Gon’s attention was arrested by her, Killua’s face forming into one of an annoyed grimace.

“Oh, ok, but I think I remembered now.” Gon said and Killua smirked. Killua put his thumb and pointer finger on Gon’s chin (the digits feeling cool to the touch causing him to shiver slightly) and turned Gon’s head back in his direction.

“Yea, he remembers, so try not to distract him, yea? He’s a little simple minded.” Killua sneered in her direction and she puffed her cheeks out in annoyance. Killua’s eyes turned back to Gon’s, feeling triumphant at garnering Gon’s attention, and stilled slightly at how Gon was staring at him. He realized his hand was still on Gon’s chin and he quickly moved it, feeling heat rise to his cheeks.

“W-well, what was the question?” He asked, averting his eyes. Gon blinked and remembered that was what Killua told him he could do.

“Oh yea, can you go out with me saturday?” He asked, cocking his head cutely to one side. Both Ponzu and Killua sputtered.

“HUH?!” He asked, sitting up straight in his chair now. Gon looked between the two of them.

“What? What did I say?”
“You… Did you just ask Killua out?” Ponzu asked.

“Y-yea? Why?” He asked, looking a bit nervous. The blush crept up Killua’s face and he placed his head in his hands like a cradle.

“Ugh…” Another one, oh no, I’m gonna have to cut off all communications, darn it I just got him, I really thought it’d be different…!

“Wait, Gon… like romantically, or just an outing?” Ponzu specified, holding one of Gon’s shoulders. Gon blinked.

“Just an outing... What- oh, no, I don’t date, no, not in high school. And especially with becoming a World Star, my aunt Mito told me to be careful who I ask out, because paparazzi are mean. I just meant to come out with me, out on the town.” Gon explained. Killua heard and collapsed onto the desk.

“Ugh…!!” He groaned louder. How could he be so stupid? How could he think Gon was asking him out? That was his friend! And he’s a guy, he doesn't even know if Gon swings that way, and they haven’t known each other long, of course he’s just asking him out as a friend, ugh, he felt stupid. He peeked over to see Ponzu with a semi-understanding look on her face.

I don’t blame you... Her look seemed to say. I thought the same thing. Maybe it was just because it was Gon. But also because it was Gon they should have known better.

“Guys, what happened? Killua, are you ok? You look sick..” Gon asked concerned. Killua sat up and gave a small cough.

“No, I’m fine.” He said and pulled at his collar feeling a little too hot. “Er, Saturday, yea, I should be free. Was that the question? That wasn’t much of a question, Gon.” Killua said, leaning back in his chair. Gon blinked.

“No? Ok… when we’re out… can I ask you questions throughout the day?” Gon asked and Killua huffed.

“I mean… I guess, if it’s spaced out enough. And it doesn’t annoy me. But if we’re doing it like that then I can refuse to answer a question I don’t want to.” Killua said, wagging a finger for emphasis. Gon nodded.

“…Right, is that it? Are you done? Can I speak with Gon now?” Ponzu asked, a bit sassily Killua would add. He let a small growl slip from the back of his throat then muttered, “Fine. Gon, give me your phone.” He said, sticking his hand out. Gon blinked but then gave him the phone and turned to Ponzu.

Opening the messages, Killua saw they never replied to Melody’s last text.

Hey, sorry for late reply. Good job girl, you should have spit in his face though. He typed stifling a snicker so Gon didn’t know what he was doing. Ponzu continued telling Gon the auditions are much like the normal ones, but certain ones are closed specifically for classes taking theater.

Haha, hello Killua. She texted back and Killua let out a huff of laugh.

You know?

I don’t think Gon would advise spitting on people. Do you need my number?
No, I’ll take it from Gon’s phone.

The minute bell rang and Killua took it down quick. As he took the number, another text arrived.

Talk to you later. Killua nodded and text back.

TTYL.

“Are you still here?” Killua asked as he looked up, sounding sarcastically pleasantly surprised when he slipped Gon’s phone back into his pocket. Ponzu squinted her eyes in his direction, a small bitter smile on her features.

“Yes, I am. I’m actually gonna sit here.”

“That’s new.” Killua said, a hand over his mouth.

“You-!” She cried as Killua snickered, but before she could continue, Gon helplessly in the middle, the teacher came in.

“Hello class! Happy second day of Harmony! Who missed the class? Right, it was fun last time, with the upper class harmony, and the beautiful harmonizing. Gets you excited, right? Well, than we’ll get right into it so you all can get on your way to sounding like real World Stars! Today we’ll be learning counterpoint: Multiple lines of music to one set of melody. Now…”

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Killua popped one more candy in his mouth in hopes of keeping awake, the gummy texture giving way to the sour syrup inside. It was hard to keep awake when she was so bad at making Harmony fun! She should put on some videos or make jokes or something, but after minute 25, Killua was zoning out.

“OK!” She said sharply, jerking most of the class back to attention. Turned out Killua wasn’t the only one. “Now, we’ll practice counterpoint!” There were pleased murmurs around the class and Killua could relate, counterpoint was one of his favorite harmonizations and fun to record. She began to write titles and names of plays and songs on the board and Gon nudged Killua.

“Look! Look, I know most of those plays because I looked up the ones Knov told us about!” Gon said proudly. Killua gave him a small smile.

“Nice…”

“Alright, so I want you all to partner up and pick a song from any of these options I wrote on the board or whichever else you could think of! I’ll be going around to make sure you all are keeping harmony and pitch. There should be beautiful music~ in here! Through this practice, you should be able to keep a pace the two of you decide, harmonize with a partner and keep a note even though someone is singing a different line and note than you.” She crooned and people began moving around. Killua grabbed at Gon’s arm and pulled him to his side so Gon could know to start shifting his desk to face him, when he was met with resistance and Gon hardly budged. Killua leaned forward to look across Gon’s desk, already knowing who was the problem.

“Excuse you-”

“What happened to not participating, Killua?” Ponzu snapped back quick nearly the same time.

“I don’t want to participate with tone deaf dead weights, you tangled pair of headphones, now let go
of Gon-

“WOW! You really called me that…!” She cried out incredulously and Gon barely remembered to retract his arms after getting caught in the middle of their arguing match. They both looked up at him, miffed expressions on both of them.

“Guys…” Gon started and let out a breath. “You have to stop fighting. Now we’re all friends here-so there should be no reason for all this animosity.”

“You know such a word as animosity-?” Killua started teasingly, and Ponzu leaned down in her seat so she could reach over and kick him. “Ow! Bitch, I swear-!” Killua made to stand up, but Gon grabbed his arm. He made a pacifying glance at Killua and he sat back down crossing his arms.

“Ok, Ponzu, I know you’re my friend, but I can’t be the only one you want to sing with right? Even if I don’t sing with you, you can find someone else, right? Killua doesn’t want to sing with anyone else right now, so to get him to participate, I need to be the one to do it, ok?” He asked. Ponzu huffed, turning her head to the side.

“I get it… but Killua is just really annoying!” She said, pointing accusingly to him.

“I know you are but what am I?” He sneered out and she stood up swiftly.

“I’ll see you after class, Gon.” She said tightly as Gon squeezed Killua’s forearm warningly.

“Bye Ponzu.” He said, eyes still on Killua. Killua stuck his tongue out after her and moved to face Gon then jumped when he realized he saw that.

“I-”

“Ah!… It’s fine. But please, try to be nicer! She’s my friend.” Gon said with a smile that had all the understanding in the world. Killua lolled his head back and let out a loud groan.

“Fine, I’ll try.” He drawled and Gon smile widened.

“Great! Now, what do you want to sing?” Gon asked, turning his desk to face Killua. The rest of the class had already partnered up and began singing, beautiful melodies and harmonizations or counterpoint vocals covering the class in a loud cloud. Killua turned his desk to face Gon as well before looking at the board.

“Umm… I don’t care, I know all these songs. Pretty simple. The question is which you know and which you want to sing.” Killua said, his fingers caged over his mouth as he propped his head up with his hand. Gon let his eyes rove the board and it settled on a name.

“I know! I love Dr. Horrible's Sing-along Blog! Let’s do “My Eyes!” Gon cried out. Killua blinked.

“Wow, I would have thought you’d pick something from Wicked since you just got into that. Dr. Horrible wasn’t even one of the plays Knov said we should know.” Killua said, sitting up straighter in a proper sitting singing position.

“I know, it’s something I know from when I was younger. I must have watched it like… 10 times in a month once.”

“Haha, obsessed much?” Killua teased and Gon waved it off.

“Ok, so we’re starting from the begi-” He started and Killua held his hand up.
“No. There’s no reason to do the solo parts, we’re suppose to practice the counterpoint part, so we’ll start from there. Pick the note.” Killua said, straightening his shirt. He looked around to make sure everyone else was occupied singing their own counterpoints. If they sing with the mass of voices in class, no one would be able to listen in. Hide a tree in a forest, you know?

“Mh…. Oh! Killua, I wanted to ask you, what’s your favorite range? I asked you in Range class, but it was my turn before you could answer. That way, I know which which note to pick and which counterpoint part you get.” Gon said. Killua blinked. He totally forget that one part was a girl and the other was a boy. Meaning someone did have to be the soprano. Killua felt a blush fall over the bridge of his nose, because honestly he didn’t mind the girl part, in fact… “I prefer the tenor range…” Killua mumbled, averting his eyes from Gon in case he decided to look on judgmentally or tease.

Killua actually loved harmonizing instead of singing melody and tenor instead of singing bass. But his family rather train him for Melody and bass, giving him low voiced recordings and the bass melody in group harmonization. It worked better for his image and the way he spoke just indicated he’d sing best in the bass. But he enjoyed hitting the high pitched and the sharp and flats in harmonizations. So when he finally looked up back at Gon, he wasn’t expecting the understanding look like it was totally normal.

Or he should have expected it, with Gon being Gon.

Plus, Killua thinks Gon doesn't really know much about the Zoldycks, so he shouldn’t have expected Gont to bring up all those times he sang bass instead and questioned it out of him. It was just another new tidbit of information for Gon and he wasn’t judgemental about.

Another thing Killua loved about Gon. He was a true friend, someone he could be comfortable around; to be himself. A refuge. It left a warm feeling in his chest, and he just wanted to sing with Gon more. He was more excited for this assignment now!

“Great! I think it’d be awkward if I had to sing the higher part cause I like to think I specialize in Bass. Hey, Killua, it’s like our voices fit each other’s!” Gon exclaimed happily. Killua smiled back warmly.

“Mh. Let’s try it out, yea? You know the words?” Killua asked. He placed his hands comfortably on the desk in front of him, relaxing his body and limbs.

“Of course. Ok let’s go with… A below middle C. Ready, 1 and 2…” They both inhaled, and just before he started, Killua picked up everyone was still in their own songs, so he would sing with no restraint. He wanted to give it to Gon, not hold back like he usually did in the booth with his brothers, but make sure Gon could help him cause he put everything on the table.

"Anyone with half a brain Could spend their whole life howling in pain…” Gon sang out, harmonizing with Killua’s part, “Take it slow… He looks at me and seems to know~” Gon’s voice reverberated in his chest, making him feel excited at how well they sounded together and they only just started singing together. His fingers began to warm up as his body responded positively to the teen singing to him, with him.

“The things that I’m afraid to show...And suddenly I feel this glow, And I believe” Killua continued, Gon coming in “‘Cause the dark is everywhere And Penny doesn’t seem to care That soon the dark in me is all that will remain”

Gon had to keep himself from gasping and force himself to keep singing when Killua first started to sing with him. He sounded angelic, he’s never heard anyone sing like him, a unique tone of note that definitely sounded great on higher range. And he was more surprised on how great they sounded
together, Gon’s low with a hint of husky voice paired with Killua’s velvety voice created something euphoric. He was suddenly reminded how Killua wanted to sing with him, Killua chose him to be the second half of this beautiful gift and he gave himself to the song- the performance- and it was just him and Killua.

Their parts came together to more of a harmony in the next lines, “There’s good in everybody’s heart, Keep it safe and sound…” “Listen close to everybody’s heart, And hear that breaking sound...” Their bodies moved naturally with the turns of their voices, hands rising and falling, heads bobbing with the sharps and flats.

“With hope, you can do your part... To turn a life around~” Killua sang out letting his eyes slip closed in the moment, Gon matching his part in vocal harmony, “Hopes and dreams are shattering apart

And crashing to the ground...” Killua didn’t know it would be this amazing to sing with someone so different, but maybe that’s why Gon picked him out of the sea of students when he first came to school, it was why he let Gon in, so he can remember this feeling... this feeling, and he loved to sing again. If just in this moment, in the little bubble with Gon, with their music filling their ears beautifully. Killua opened his eyes to meet dark chocolate eyes boring into his, vibing together in both harmony and mind. He knew Gon thought they sounded great too. They shifted keys as they launched into the next lines of the song,

“I cannot believe my eyes... How the world’s finally growing wise...” “I cannot believe my eyes

How the world’s filled with filth and lies ...”

They sang together, smiles breaking out on their faces as they kept eye contact. It was fun! This was why Killua wanted to keep with able, musically inclined individuals. He’d probably have to carry anyone else’s voice, but with Gon, he matched his step, his voice, his tempo. It wasn’t work or a struggle, it was fun. Gon started first in the next chorus, “But it’s plain to see…! Evil inside of me...” “And it’s plain to see...! Rapture inside of me...”

“is on the rise...!” “is on the rise...!”

They let their heads rise and fall with the notes and held out the last harmonizing note, feeling as though coming down from some sort of high. It was amazing, for both of them. It was the first time Gon heard Killua sing, and the rumors certainly have some credit to them, he had no idea he sounded this amazing. He was happy Killua chose him all over again and was left with a warm feeling throughout his body, happiness buzzing in his ears while their harmonizing notes intertwined with each other.

Killua was absolutely pleased with his first time with Gon, and it was nothing like doing it with his brothers. Gon obviously added feeling to his music, bouncing off Killua’s energy causing him to add feeling- and the song only got better as they poured themselves into. Killua smiled probably as widely as Gon was smiling back at him as they finally ended the beautiful note, but then his ears picked up... nothing.

The class was quiet.

Killua gave quick glances to his left and right as they were in the center of class, and everyone was looking at them, most of them in awe, some with tears in their eyes at the beautiful performance.
Everyone… everyone heard him sing. His face flooded with red and he tossed his head into his arms on the desk, trying to bury himself.

_Since when?! How long?! Oh man, how embarrassing, ugh, these people will probably think I’ll sing whenever for them, or we’re on equal terms because I sang, or something else ridiculous like that… Illumi taught me better than to just lose track of my surroundings like that…!_ Killua’s thoughts raced a mile a minute.

“Killua?” Gon said, slightly chuckling. The only thing he could see was his fluffy hair on the desk, his ears pink tinted, and a couple fingers on his arm also tinted pink. He didn’t move. Just barely shook his head no in a tight shake. Gon shrugged but knew there was nothing _really_ wrong. Gon knew Killua wasn’t ready for singing for others yet, he wasn’t comfortable since Gon hadn’t carried out his master plan yet. He’ll let him relax as he basks in the afterglow of singing with an angel. That’s what Killua was, right? An angel. He sounded like one. Gon wanted to sing with Killua again. It was fun!

The class erupted back into noise again, but instead of singing, it was talking about Gon’s and Killua’s.

“They were amazing!”

“I never thought Killua would ever sing in class! Now we’re one of the lucky few to have heard it!”

“We’ve been blessed! I’m cured, my skin is cleared, my crops are-!”

“Gon was good, but I never knew he sounded _that_ good in a duet…!”

“I can’t believe he decided to sing with _Gon_, but not me!”

“Oh, please, you wouldn’t have sounded nearly as good! Could you have even hit all those sharps and flats without frustrating Killua?”

Gon made eye contact with Ponzu who was still staring. She finally realized what she was doing and closed her open mouth. Gon shrugged and gestured to Killua as though most of it was Killua, the smile never leaving his face. She turned back to her partner with a dazed kind of expression and he turned his attention back on Killua. His cheeks were starting to hurt but he didn’t think he would stop smiling even if he could. Even just thinking back to them singing made him smile wider. He didn’t think he could ever not smile if he thought back to that. He placed his head on the palms of his hands and just stared at the top of Killua’s head, waiting for him to look up but was plenty satisfied with just looking at the top of his head and imaging what his hair would feel like if he was allowed to touch it.

“C-come now class, stop talking, there should be singing! Focus! Re-focus…!” The teacher called, still a little dazed by the performace herself.

_What is he still doing in second year…?_ The teacher thought in a daze.

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Gon idled himself with listening to others singing the rest of class. They sounded really good! They were sure to be great World Stars in the future… and they sounded like they were having fun, and he’s sure connections were being made. People were singing with others who they’d enjoy singing with and people will make note of others they want to sing with, and everyone’s just doing what they love and what they do best. Singing.
Gon didn’t want to brag.

He didn’t want to sound mean.

It wasn’t fair, because it wasn’t even him that made it sound that great.

But honestly, none of them ever even reached close to the level of sound him and Killua made. The other students sounded great, and more credit to them, the renditions of these show tunes in the hands of musically inclined students gave it new light and enjoyment, because people could also act out what their parts were in their singing. Hearing them sing just made him want to bug Killua and get him to sing something else with him, show everyone else how real singing sounds like! And he just felt so smug with the fact that before Gon came, no one was able to get that beautiful voice singing out during class. He didn’t know what’d he do if he knew Killua sang with anyone else after he refused to sing at all. It was fun, it sounded great, he wanted to do it again, but right now, Gon was more concerned Killua would never raise his head ever again.

It was a few minutes before class ended, and most people had stopped their exercise, deciding to pack up and chat instead for the last few moments of class.

The redness Gon could see faded merely minutes after the class re-focused but he still didn’t move, not even tried to speak. Gon still waited, convinced he couldn’t stay like that all class.

5 minutes, 10 minutes, 15 minutes.

Gon was pouting. He reached a hand out to poke his head, but then retracted it.

Be understanding… He probably felt that this was something personal, not for others to hear… he probably just feels some sort of violation of privacy since everyone listened in on something not for them. Gon thought, chewing his nail in impatience. He didn’t mind if Killua didn’t want to sing anymore today, he at least wanted to talk to him again, see his blue eyes. Just as he was wondering if he should place his desk back in normal classroom placement, Killua shifted. Gon froze, not wanting any sudden movements to scare the skittish Killua. Classmates who noticed him moving looked over, as though expecting him to burst in a musical number. Gon felt slightly irked at that. He’s not going to sing all the time just because they stole in on something they were never meant to hear…!

Killua lifted his head half off the desk, just high enough that he could see Gon through his bangs. He mouthed something and Gon blinked.

“Huh?” Gon asked and Killua squeezed his eyes shut. Then he moved to sit up completely, slipping his eyes open in flutters. Gon couldn’t believe how beautiful he was. Watching him finally rise like a princess out of a slumber was like waiting for a butterfly to come out of it’s cocoon, and it didn’t disappoint. He opened his mouth to say as much about him being beautiful, then remembered he probably already had enough blood rushing to his head for one day. He bit his tongue. Killua let out a sigh and locked eyes with Gon, seeming intent on ignoring the rest of the class’s eyes.

“What time is it?” He asked in a low voice.

“Class is almost over, almost 12… Were you sleeping, Killua?” Gon asked, not bothering to match his low voice. Killua had closed his eyes when Gon spoke again, a soft troubled expression on his features. Why was he whispering? “Do you have a headache?” Killua snapped his eyes open at that.

“No, I…” He licked his lips in a quick movement and flicked his eyes left and right. “I’m fine. I was just feeling a bit out of it…” He moved his hands together in a fidgeting movement that Gon
followed before bring his eyes back up to Killua’s eyes. Something seemed to click in his mind and he spoke without really knowing why, “Killua, why don’t you listen to your music?” Gon asked, tilting his head to one side with a soft smile. Killua blinked at him but he seemed to ease more, however subconsciously.

Gon’s smile widened further. “I won’t mind. We can walk to class together, but you can just listen to your music.” Killua nodded slowly while looking at Gon like he was some magician. He hesitantly raised his silver earphones up while keeping eye contact with Gon, as though making sure it was still ok, then finally looked away and took out his phone and turning on his music. Gon smiled, feeling pleased at how much better Killua seems to be doing. Gon could gather Killua was probably coming down from some anxiety, and needed something to help. Gon knows he listens to his music a lot, so Gon suggested it. And after seeing his reaction, Gon knew that was probably something Killua used to help with it. Probably helped him cancel out the world and isolate himself in a place he could gather himself. The small smile that came on Killua face as Gon could hear (and kinda see) the thumping bass of a song Killua put on made Gon’s smile widen even more. He was happy he could help. The bell rang, and the class began filtering out, disappointed they didn’t get much else from Killua, even a bit mad at Gon for not making him, and Ponzu walked over.

“Hey…” She said with a smile and flicked her eyes over in Killua direction, who had his eyes closed for the moment.

“Hey.” Gon greeted back easily, climbing out of his desk and pushing it line up with the others.

“I… that was amazing.” She said after a beat.

“Right? I told you I should partner with Killua. He wouldn’t have ever sang with anyone else.” He said, keeping his voice low so Killua didn’t hear him just yet.

“Yea, I’m happy I listened to you…” She admitted watching Gon move over to Killua’s chair that he was still in. He put his hands on the back of the chair and just as Killua’s eyes slipped back open, Gon was pushing his chair back into place.

“Wh-! Gon!” Killua cried out, instinctively raising his feet so it didn’t drag on the ground as Gon pushed him, along with the desk, back into place. Ponzu stifled a laugh at the stricken face Killua made.

“What?” Gon asked bending forward from behind Killua’s desk to see his face. As his face made itself known, Killua reached up and flicked his nose, causing him to flinch back immediately back out of view.

“You don’t just push people around in the chair! Geez, I’m heavy, you didn’t have to do that.” Killua said standing up and picking up his bookbag in one swift movement. He then just noticed Ponzu still with them and made a face.

“What are you still doing here?” He asked.

“For your information, I have the next class with Gon, so I was planning on walking with him to the gym!” She replied back without missing her bite.

“Well, too bad for you, I’m walking with Gon, so go make some new plans!” Killua said, waving his hand off as though that would drive her away. Gon smiled, he seemed to have recovered and is back to his old self. Killua grabbed his hand, bringing him out of his thoughts and began to drag him towards the door.
“C’mon Gon, let’s go.” He said.

“Wait, Killua!” Gon said, digging his heels into the ground to stop him. Killua looked back and raised an eyebrow. Releasing his hand, Killua lowered the headphones over his ears, letting soft piano noises spill out. “She can walk with us!” Gon said, like it was obvious. Killua groaned and pulled out his phone, pausing the music and stopping the idle noises in the air.

“If she walks with us, she’s gonna try and talk to us.” Killua said.

“Yea, that’s what normal humans do.” Ponzu nodded slowly for him, like he was a child trying to understand something adult. He glared at her and Gon slipped in between the two.

“If you guys can’t play nice, I’ll walk to the gym by myself!” Gon scolded and the two stopped glaring. Killua huffed and Ponzu nodded.

“Ok.” She conceded.

“Let’s just go.” Killua grumbled. Gon smiled and trotted out the room first, letting the other two trail behind him.

Upon reaching the gym, the teacher assistant redirected the students from going straight into gym and into the locker rooms.

“You’re locker numbers are one the board, your lockers have your uniform. Put them on then enter the gym from the back entrance.” She said like a recording relaying the directions over and over again.

“Bye Ponzu~” Killua said triumphantly as he turned down the way to the boys locker room with Gon. She stuck her tongue out at him and turned on her heel with a huff.

“Killua…!” Gon said with warning in his voice. Killua let out a sigh.

“What! I don’t understand why we have to be nice to her.” He said, crossing his arms.

“Because she’s a friend! She’s really nice! You’d know that if you give her a chance instead of always being mean.” Gon said and Killua rolled his eyes.

“Yea, sure, ok.” He droned. Gon gave an eye roll of his own.

“Anyway, I wonder what the tailor made uniforms looks like!”

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Killua felt his eye twitch as he openly gaped at Gon, along with most of the class.

Gon… your legs…! Killua thought, shamelessly bringing his eyes down the form of the physically fit Gon. The uniform shorts stopped mid-thigh, but that didn’t deter Gon’s long island of sun-toned legs.

Your boots!

How can there be that much length of bare skin and then when it’s cut off by boots under the knees, it can still stretch for miles.

Legs for days… Killua thought in a daze, no longer in control of his own mind. Who knew the tops of his green sneakers under his jeans hid what were actually boots underneath. He looked good… gorgeous…
And the top of the uniform, the gray and blue cotton-like fabric tailored to comfortably fit everyone like a second skin, hugged Gon’s curves like the way most people in that gymnasium imagined hugging him now. And by curves, he meant muscle tone… His pectorals were shaped, giving to broad shoulders and the faint start of abs could be seen indented on his stomach. The sleeves on his forearm hugged around his buff arms like a woman would hang off it, wrapping her fingers around it to measure the size admiringly.

_Geez… the things t-shirts and jackets can hide…._ Killua though because that’s exactly what Gon has been doing. Hiding all of this from everyone. Which was completely unfair.

He was stretching mildly in the middle of the gym- arms over chest, arms over head, then he swung up his leg, with little problem or resistance. He caught it up above his head stretching it out, and Killua’s jaw dropped further if that was possible.

_So flexible…!_ Killua was pretty sure he felt a bit of drool was threatening to spill over his lips so he quickly slammed his mouth shut and looked away, effectively breaking the spell the rest of the gym was still under. He’s pretty sure as the class saw how flexible he was, some passed out and other people’s knees gave way. Gon looked around concerned for a moment, and every one averted their eyes, whistling like nothing happened, even those who found themselves on the floor.

Gon just kept looking more and more like a captivating World Star.

“Oh! There you are Killua!” Gon cried out from behind Killua. He tensed up and whipped around, watching Gon start making his way over.

“Nope! Don’t!” Killua said, backing up matching the steps Gon took to reach him. Gon faltered at that and he cocked his head curiously to one side.

“What? What happened?” Gon asked. Killua was barely keeping himself together with Gon at that distance, if he had the bright boy any closer with his sinful skin so exposed, Killua would think he would be passing out soon, too.

“You just…! Stay over there!” Killua said, sure his face was red. It was embarrassing, but it wasn’t like Killua didn’t have a sense of what _drop-dead good looking_ looked like, and Gon’s physique fit the bill as most students there would agree. Most people were already starting to take pictures.

“Killuua-!” Gon started in a whine, moving to take another step which Killua matched in a half step back, but then the front gym doors opened in a dramatic flourish.

“Hello, my gems!” Bisky cooed, walking in with a floral skirt on and a mesh shirt over her own gym shirt, white stockings up to her knees and black sneakers.

A couple students knowing who she was squealed as fans.

“Omg, it’s Bisky-chama!”

“Oh, she’s so cute!”

“What’s she doing _here_?” They called out while Killua decided it was better to focus on her than Gon. He didn’t understand if these people were her fans why they were still cheering. They should be calling her a hag and fake, maybe boo her out the school. She held her hand up for silence and just as desired, silence fell over the gym.

“Class, I am going to be your gym teacher! As a retired World Star, I started focusing more on the health of younger World Star so that they may be as healthy as _me_ when you guys are my age!”
There was slight murmuring through the gym.

“What is she talking about? When we get to her age?” Killua heard Gon ask from somewhere to his right.

“Ha, don’t let her fool you with that baby face. She’s actually really-” He said, turning to speak with his friend, then was abruptly reminded of the situation as he drank in striking muscles hugged nicely in gray material and skin too exotic looking for even an adult movie. He stopped himself from jumping out of his skin from surprise and just backed up 3 steps, red faced.

*When did he get next to me?! I must have really wanted to be distracted!*

Gon pouted at his reaction and probably moved to get closer to Killua again when Bisky spoke, seeming to be answering a student’s question posed when they weren’t paying attention.

“That’s right, I’m 57 years old.”

The gym grew so quiet you could hear a pin drop. Then great noises of disbelief.

“What?!”

“No way!”

“You look so young!”

“Wow, your training regime must be crazy!”

“Oh, ok kids, it’s ok! I have a whole branch of exercise videos for you guys to buy if you want to exercise enough to stay as young and healthy looking as me! I’m only here to make sure all you idols are healthy and strapping! Having good health makes it easier for classes like physical singing and dancing and activities like when you are on stage and blocking out a dance or moving a lot across stage while singing. Also, it can get very easy to become unhealthy in this life style with parties, luxuries and laziness of sitting around writing songs all day. It’s my job to make sure no one gets all weak and feeble as an idol. Our looks and health are our foundation, after all. Alright, so today we’ll be doing some pre-testing.

“We’ve got some stuff set up, like bars for chin ups, hurdles, ropes to climb and I’ll gauge how much and what level you all are at! Everyone split up to the different obstacles, me, the teacher assistant, and my personal assistant, Cookie-chan, will be going around and watching each of you- making notes. Just go around doing your best, think of it as a freestyle workout session!” She said and students began to move.

“Hey, Killua!” Gon said, turning to where Killua stood but not bothering to move in his direction anymore. Killua winced slightly and turned his head to look at Gon’s bright smiling face. “Let’s go do the ropes first! I want to see how fast you can climb! I bet I can beat you!” Gon said, prodding competitively. Killua vaguely registered he was asking for a race but when he heard rope climb, all he could think about was ‘Back muscles… arms straining…’

“I-I” He managed, cringing internally how it came out in a higher pitch than he wanted it to.

“Oh! Or the chin up? I bet I can do more than you!” He tried, a teasing smile on his face. But all Killua could see was his imagination running wild, ‘Chest, pecs heaving… biceps pumping…!’

“Excuse me.” He managed, cringing internally how it came out in a higher pitch than he wanted it to. He made large strides to Bisky and looked down at her, trying to look threateningly, but she only
looked up innocently, blinking as she waited for him to say something.

“I… am going out to the track. And I am running. The whole period. Don’t send anyone else out there with me, especially not Gon, not even if he begs. If you send Gon out there with me, I’ll just run faster. Maybe even run home, got it?” He couldn’t stand it, couldn’t think about Gon… chasing him, he suppressed a shiver. And if he stayed inside where he would compete with Gon on those obstacles that seemed like fanservice at this point for everyone in gym, he was sure to be drooling over him in no time.

Gon was his first friend. Killua never really thought about which way he swung, he was too busy being unimpressed with everybody in this school. And maybe this had something to do with the fact Killua was in love with Gon’s voice, which created such a rise and reaction out of him, but to be fair, he had no idea he looked like that under his baggy clothing. And he’s studying enough idol and fashion magazines to know what was aesthetically pleasing to him. Curving bodies, wide chests and toned muscles, not too muscular to be overdoing it, and tanned skinned, ranging in the darker tones. And Gon had it all.

He found him attractive, but he found others attractive too! It didn’t mean anything. He was just too close, offering close contact and body moves. He just needed a moment to get over it, accept that that’s how Gon looks like and just appreciate his friend looks so… nice. But he can’t stay in the gym to do that, watching Gon, or else there’d be an awkward boner he’d have to explain away.

Bisky looked bored with the request and for a moment he was worried she’d deny him and he was already racing through his mind on backup plans, blackmailing, escape routes to get what he wanted but then she held out her clipboard to him.

“Input your stats. I would think as a Zoldyck, you all do these, like… weekly or something, right?” She said, giving him an odd look. “You know what you can do already?” She asked as he took the clipboard, trying not to break out in a victorious smile.

“Yea, definitely! Great…” He murmured, looking at the board and getting ready to fudge some numbers. When they did those work out things, he didn’t exactly keep count or look over the stats, that was Illumi’s job, and they didn’t exactly do every obstacle she had set up. Like the rope and the hurdles, but he figured what muscles they needed to use on the obstacles and estimated what his limit was for each.

He gave it back and she scanned it, looking overall impressed.

“Oh. Go ahead and work on your endurance. BUT, I’ll have you know, I’ll want you as a student I could call on for example then!”

Killua grumbled, unhappy with the sudden condition thrust onto him but nodded nonetheless. She smiled pleased and shoed him away with a manicured hand. He turned on his heel and bristled at seeing Gon staring at him so intently. Gon gave a hopeful smile and Killua bit the inside of his cheek before turning to the back entrance of the gym that led to the tracks. Gon trailed after Killua’s figure and went to ask Bisky about it.

Killua considered putting his headphones on, but considering how much he estimated he’d be sweating that period, he decided to set it aside carefully underneath a tree. He stretched and was off at a steady pace.

Luckily for him and true to her word, he didn’t see high nor low of Gon, not even by the double doors’ windows. He ran lap after lap trying to exhaust himself as to not get so riled up over Gon’s fit and lean physique. Maybe he could associate Gon’s good looks with being tired and it won’t affect
him so much. He ran, trying to burn the image of ‘this’ Gon in his mind so he could be used to it. He ran, singing to work on his physical singing as well while he was at it and made sure Gon was back to just being his friend, not some eye candy he hangs around.

By the end of the period, Killua collapsed onto his butt by the doors that led back into the gym, soaked in sweat, his shirt sticking to him uncomfortably, doing his breathing exercises to get his breath back, but satisfied.

*I’m over it.* He smiled, sure of himself. He’ll be fine when he sees Gon.

He picked up his headphones and phone and checked what time it was. There was about 10 minutes left until the end of school and they would be dismissing the student back to the locker rooms to clean up soon. He opened the doors, still panting slightly and scrunched up his nose at the musky and damp air of a bunch of tired and sweaty students. He looked around and for the most part, everyone was done and just standing around as the three gym teachers talked briefly about somethings.

He spotted Gon, and saw that he was occupied talking with a couple girls, but what made him happiest was the fact that he didn’t feel that rise when seeing Gon in the gym clothes. He sighed out a breath of relief and went over to go relax in Gon’s presence. He picked up some pieces of their conversation as he lazily made his way over.

“Yea, you looked really flexible stretching before class!” The girl closest to Gon said. Her hair was dyed in different strips, indicating to Killua that she was probably in the Academy under some training to be in a girl group. The other girls behind her looked to be the rest of her girl group.

“Really? Thanks, I’ve been stretching everyday since I was younger, so that kind of stuff is no problem.” Gon said, scratching his head.

Too modest… Killua thought with a cat like grin, feeling second-hand pride of his friend. He reached the wall behind them, seeming not to catch Gon’s attention yet and leaned against it, watching offhandedly.

“Yea, we had to work really hard to get that flexible in a short time span.” A girl behind the leader said.

“Yea! But with how flexible you are, you could probably do some of our dance moves easily!”

“Ya! Wanna try them?”

Gon’s eyes glistened with the challenge.

“Sure!” He said and the girls squealed with excitement. They moved out into formation and pointed out to Gon where he should stand to see their moves. A couple people around them who noticed something about to go down began giving them space and their attention.

The leader in front looked at Gon over her shoulder.

“We’ll start off easy, Gon, and see what you can really do.” Gon nodded back.

“No need to hold back. I can keep up.” The girl grinned then exchanges glances with all her other members.

She bent forward in a swift motion, her head by her knees and hair pooling around her feet and then the other girls followed in sequence and then they all shimmied up with a quick hair flip. Gon barked
out a small embarrassed laugh at the sensual move, but set to do it.

“Mind I don’t do it exactly? Maybe make it a bit more…?” He asked, vaguely gesturing towards his body. The girl laughed and nodded. He bent forward, his head by his knees like the girl’s was and then he moved back up alternating his shoulders forward with boyish charm. The girls around him squealed their approval then turned back to their leader for the next move. She gave a sly grin and then did a little kick step forward before bringing her leg around in a windmill high kick, the other two girls recognized the dance in the middle and joined in flawlessly.

_The training of a girl group…_ Killua thought, commending them for their memorization of the moves even as the leader does it with no warning. Gon nodded with a distracted smile, seeming to play back the move in his head to make sure he saw it right. He made a kick out like a B-boy and then did the windmill with high kick and someone from the watching crowd whistled among light applause and cheers. Killua’s eyebrows went up, surprised Gon was able to make it look good when it was obviously made for girls. And he had little trouble remembering a dance move he saw once and executing it with little to no coaching.

This went on for a couple more dance moves, the girl group putting out a great show and Gon following up with his own little boyish flair on the moves, but then Bisky interrupted the fun.

“Ok, ok, class, time to hit the lockers, you should shower before heading home, right?”

The class groaned, but Killua remembered himself how sticky and gross he felt and happily got off the wall to head to the showers in the locker room.

“Aww…”

“Man, I hope we get another free day soon!”

“Yea, being in class with Gon is so fun!”

Killua had barely made a couple feet of progress to the door when he was latched at the arm from his right.

“What the-?” He started, turning his head to find a head of teal.

“What was up with you? Why’d you leave Gon?” Ponzu asked in a hushed voice. Killua quirked an eyebrow.

“Like I have to tell you anything.” He scoffed, shrugging her off his arm.

“You should know he looked so sad when you left. And Bisky said he couldn’t even join you. He tried to hide it under a smile but it just didn’t look as bright.” She scolded.

“Well, how should I know? I wasn’t there.” Killua said to dismiss it, but it actually bothered him. He didn’t mean to make Gon sad, he just needed to get back in a normal state of mind. “Good thing he had you there to make up for it.”

She rolled her eyes but then peeked over his shoulder.

“Hey Gon.” She chirped. That was the only warning he got before he was enveloped in Gon’s strong arms and warmth.

“Killua! Where were you? I missed you!” He asked, giving a cursory squeeze before letting go and falling in pace by Killua.
“I was j-just running!” Killua huffed, running a hand through his hair to get it out his face. He felt a bit flustered from the sudden contact, after all Gon was his first friend, but also… he may not have gotten it all out his system yet and the sudden contact wasn’t helping.

“Wah, if that’s what you were doing, why didn’t Bisky-” He stopped, as though trying to hide the fact that he had asked from Killua. He raised an eyebrow at Gon, waiting for him to continue.

“Hi Ponzu!” He greeted back finally, however abruptly. Killua snorted a laugh.

“Hi Gon. You looked awesome during that dance battle!” She said. “You sure can dance. Hopefully I have you in my dance class next year.” She giggled as they exited the doors that led to the lockers rooms. “I’ll see you later, Gon!” she said and turned to the girl’s room. The other two boys made their way to the boys’ locker room in comfortable silence, the air filled with the others’ conversation.

“I’m pretty sure I impressed everyone with how many push ups I could do.”

“Please, I planked so hard.”

“I didn’t know I could jump rope that long!”

Killua rolled his eyes. He ended up wondering how Gon really did during the tests as they separated to head towards their own gym lockers that held their normal school clothes. Since no one was talking about him, he couldn’t have done better than average. Which meant he only looked that nicely toned because he often exercised lightly or did something equivalently as active.

Killua was just pulling off his disgusting shirt (he was taking that home with him to wash today) when Gon rounded the corner. Naked.

“Killua!” He cried out and Killua turned to face him before whipping his head around in the opposite direction.

“G-Gon! What the hell, put on some clothes!” He cried out red faced. Luckily, it seemed like boys’ locker rooms were always noisy and rowdy and he didn’t attract any attention to his already embarrassing situation. Not over it, definitely not over it!

“Killua! Take a shower with me!” Gon cried, grabbing a wrist and acting like Killua didn’t say anything or act out of the ordinary.

“Sh-shower?” Killua gaped out, looking back over at Gon’s face and forcing himself not to look at anything lower that his chin, his head raising with the effort. It was hard not to admire beautiful art when it was right in front of you. Gon nodded vigorously.

“Ya! They have little private showers and a couple of large rooms with multiple shower heads! We can shower together, c’mon hurry up, take off your clothes, let’s go!” Gon cried, yanking on Killua’s arm, but his brain was stuttering to restart.

“Ya! They have little private showers and a couple of large rooms with multiple shower heads! We can shower together, c’mon hurry up, take off your clothes, let’s go!” Gon cried, yanking on Killua’s arm, but his brain was stuttering to restart.

“Wh-my-my clothes…?” He knew his face must be red but he couldn’t form any words, mind blank at whatever the hell Gon was. He was suddenly rocked off tilt as Gon was now dragging him to the showers.

“Killua, you’re so slow, we’re gonna be here all day if you don’t move faster!” He vaguely registered Gon saying. Into the large chamber with showerheads spaced out on the walls, 9 in total, 3 on each wall except the back wall, Killua blinked and his mind finally caught up with him.

“Gon, I’m not-!” He started, turning around with irritation only to see Gon suddenly falling out of
sight and his bottom half suddenly felt very breezy. “Meep…!” He let out in a strangled voice, multiple pitches higher, maybe his highest.

“Kill-... Killua!” Gon cried, going to catch the passing out Killua. “Killua, your nose is bleeding!”

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“Sorry…” Gon said again for the umptenth.

“Hmmp.” Killua huffed out for the umptenth time.

Gon and Killua was able to shower together after he woke. In Killua’s fever dream, he was spoken to by a giant flying cat about how Gon was just another male, and Killua totally agreed and woke up, totally completely over Gon’s bode. For real that time. He was more irritated with how pushy Gon was being to get him to shower with him more than anything now that he wasn’t as flustered anymore.

Gon picked it up as the shower continued in tension and he kept apologizing for his brashness.

“Mito said I should be more careful about how I act. She’s used to it, but others can fall into shock from it. Is that what happened to you Killua? You went into shock?” He asked. They were now walking down the hall that led to front of the school. They ended up showering a little after the dismissing bell rang anyways because of Killua’s little… anyway, they both felt better and clean now.

“You’re darn right I went into shock, you underside desk gum!” Killua said, poking at Gon’s head ending it with a flick. He huffed and stuck his hands back into his pockets, closing his eyes in irritation as Gon rubbed at his head next to him.

“Oww…” He murmured. “I’m sorry Killua! I just wanted to shower together! In Japan, they do it all the time, it should be fine since we’re both guys, and I just really wanted to see Killua’s body-”

Killua’s eyes snapped open as his cheeks reddened.

EMBARRASSING!!

“GAAH!” Killua shouted, interrupting the rest of his sentence, shooting his foot out and stomping on Gon’s.

“OOW OOW OW! Killua!” Gon cried, hopping on one foot and cradling the other in both his hands, as Killua continued forward, shoulders hunched as he tried to erase what Gon said from his mind and whatever meaning his brain was trying to give it.

“DAMMIT GON YOU ARE SO GODDAMN EMBARRASSING, JEEBUS KRIST!” He shouted out over his shoulder, then stopped and turned around. “Can you please think before you speak, please?! If you don’t, I might die, do you want me to die, Gon? Do you?!”

Gon put his foot down, a distressed look on his face.

“No way! I’d never want that, there’s no way I want Killua to die!” Gon assured, coming forward to meet up with Killua and then they both continued side by side again.

“Good, then from now on, think very carefully what you say around me, got it?” Killua said, sticking his finger out to point at Gon threateningly. Gon gulped then nodded. Killua placed his hands back into pocket as they exited the school.
By the crosswalk at the end of the street Killua looked over at Gon to see him furrowed in thought. He almost scoffed in affectionate amusement. Gon really was like a kid sometimes.

“Gon, what is it? I literally see the gears turning in that skull of yours.” Killua chuckled, touching a finger to his own temple. Gon looked over with a small smile.

“Can I walk you home?” He asked. Killua blinked, feeling something in his chest tighten, but he scoffed it off, and away it goes, like it was never there.

“No way, stupid. Longer exposure to you would mean more chances for you to blind side me with your comments.” He smirked, looked left and right then crossing the street. Once on the other side, he turned to see Gon with small wistful smile, but it was content all the same.

“Ok, Killua. I’ll see you tomorrow. Remember we’re going out saturday!” Gon called. Killua nodded.

“Yea! Text me later.” Killua called with a one handed wave before turning and heading down the sidewalk. Gon beamed at his back.

That’s right! Gon can text Killua because he has his number! And Killua wants Gon to text him because they’re friends! And Gon can’t believe he’s this happy with the starlit teen, and then he was reminded of the harmony class and he doesn’t believe his smile could be any brighter as he turns and makes his way down the street towards the plaza that came right before his apartment complex. He hoped he didn’t look too creepy.

“Oi, Gon! You look happy today…!” An old lady from a dollar store called out from in front of the store where she was arranging some merchandise in the window. “Finally got yourself someone special?”

“Yea! You can say that!” Gon beamed, walking past without thinking she was possibly meaning something else. She blinked owlishly after Gon.

“Gon finally got a girlfriend?” She muttered to herself.

Gon reached the floor of his apartment and was surprised to see the door was unlocked. He opened the door to good smells.

“Mito?!” Gon cried out excited, quickly shrugging off his boots and slipping on his slippers.

“Oh, Gon! Okari!” She cried from the kitchen (Welcome home). Gon raced in and caught himself on the counter to stop his momentum.

“Mito! What are you doing home so early?!” He cried out, rounding the corner more calmly and giving her a kiss on the cheek in welcome.

“Oh! One of my co-workers got a heart attack, and the ambulance came and the fire department, I don’t even know why the fire department came, nothing was on fire, but anyway, there was such a big commotion, my boss decided to let us all go early. She probably thinks his heart attack was because of work stress. She’s probably right, but hey, it let me leave early!” She chirped, and Gon couldn’t believe she could talk about it so lightly though.

“Right… Well anyway, I’m happy you’re here! What are you making?” Gon asked, trying to peer into the pot she was stirring. She slapped her hands over Gon’s eyes while also pushing him away from the stove.
“No! Surprise. Go relax, you haven’t even taken off your bookbag yet!” She said and Gon sighed.

“I just got excited knowing you were back earlier than normal. I love being with my aunt Mito-san.” Gon said taking off his bookbag while heading to his room. Mito smiled warmly as she continued cooking.

“So how was your day, Gon?” She asked removing some things from the fire before adding more ingredients to the pot.

“It was really great! OH! OH! Mito!” Gon called out, running out a moment later with his vintage blonde gibson Guitar in his hands, gentle in his grasp. “Remember Killua, I told you about him?” Gon asked, placing the Guitar in the living room’s empty guitar stand and turning to prop his elbows on the counter, excitement oozing from his very stance. Mito looked up in thought and decided to tease him.

“Oooh… the old chairman, right?” She asked, barely able to hold back her giggles. Gon frowned, disappointment dripping off him.

“Mito! Don’t kid around!” He cried, she smirked.

“No, no, don’t tell me! It was that bird you saw when walking home that one day!” She giggled. Gon puffed his cheeks out in annoyance.

“Mito!” He bit out. She laughed.

“Ok, ok, sorry. Yes, the white haired boy in every class with you. Very talented, I believe you said. So confident in his abilities, he doesn’t even participate in class. Sounds like a very bad boy if I ever heard.” She said. Gon waved it off.

“Yes, yes, that’s what you said last time. But that’s not what I wanted to tell you! Today… he sang with me!” He cried out in a high and happy pitch. She turned to look at him, slight surprise etched on her face.

“Wow, Gon! That’s great! I had no idea your magic powers worked so well that you could even get the most coldest of people to melt…!” She said, slightly teasing. Gon smiled none the less.

“Oh, Mito, it was beautiful, he was beautiful! His voice- wow, and when we harmonized, oh Mito, I think harmonizing is my favorite thing in this world now. If I could harmonize with Killua, I would do it all day. Do you think he’d let me?” Gon asked, seeming to be daydreaming to himself as he swayed himself back into the living room and sitting on the couch.

Mito giggled. He was so cute. She blinked then did a double take towards Gon. Wait… did he know?

She watched Gon tune his guitar. She knew Gon was innocent, oblivious, and friendly enough not to know, but when he talked about Killua so much like this, did he really not know? She never really thought about how Gon would come to like someone; if he liked someone enough, then that person was for Gon. Guy or girl, and she’s sure Gon never really put much thought into it either. Liking was liking after all, and one can’t help their emotions. But if Gon really doesn’t get it after this much… when would he realize his emotions to actually act on it? She supposed she shouldn’t be too worried. He didn’t want to date much in high school anyways, so he might know and just not want to act on it.

She shrugged and began plating the dishes as Gon began strumming away on his guitar, an airy and light tune filling the apartment that made Mito sway her head. These were the moments she lived for.
Living this simply with Gon whom she loved was enough for her, which is why she’ll work harder than his stupid father ever did for Gon to reach his dream. She swung around with two plates in her hands.

“Lunch is ready. Stir fry, anyone?” She asked, coming closer to set it on their Kotatsu table. Gon gasped with glee, placing his guitar back on the stand.

“My favorite!” He said, sliding underneath the comfortable cloth.

“That’s what you always say about everything I make…” She said with a small smile, but slide under as well. Gon smiled brightly at her then dug in.

“Itadakimasu.” She said, clapping her hands together in a little prayer and began eating too. Yes, just like this, she was happy enough.

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Mito kissed Gon on the forehead as he settled in his bed.

“Good night Gon.” She said, moving to the door and closing it behind her, turning off the light behind her. Gon flipped over onto his stomach and grabbed his phone from the stand next to his bed. His fingers flew over the screen as he typed out the message.

Killua, are you awake?

He stared at the screen, a beat passing with no reply. Gon looked at the time and saw it was only 9:30. He should be awake, right? Only a few more seconds passed before his phone vibrated, the text message pushing Gon’s up.

Ya, whats up?

Gon smiled, feeling his chest squeeze in undefined emotion and he rushed to text him back.

I wanted to ask you for ur adress! So I know where to pick you up saturday. Gon waited as the three dots thrummed, indication Killua was still on the other side. He thought about how he should ask Killua for a picture to add to his contacts, but then Killua texted back.

No, there’s no reason for you to come to my house. I’ll come to yours. Give me your address.

Gon pouted briefly. He was hoping to see where Killua lived, but it was ok, because he was excited for him to see his home. He sent the address.

K, I’ll see you after breakfast on saturday. Talk to you tomorrow. Killua replied and Gon smiled resolutely. Saturday. When he heard Killua only sings for his concerts, and there wasn’t really any incentive to sing otherwise, Gon knew he had to do something. Show him that there were better reasons to sing, that singing can be something to do out of happiness. When Gon heard he didn’t quit because he’s waiting for something to show him that there is some other reason to sing, Gon knew he could do it! If Saturday was a success, Killua would become a great World Star.

Gon settled down and went to sleep. He dreamt of flying through the stars with a luminescent moonchild with the eyes of the bright blue sky.

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“I could have told you that…!” Killua said, a wide smile on his face as they exited Physical Singing
on their way to lunch.

“I can’t believe I aced the pre-test!” Gon crooned out, his syllables held out in sing song notes.

“Right? Now we’re both like teacher assistants to Kastro.” Killua said, having been informed of his own passing grade even though he didn’t participate. “In this school, when you pass the pre-tests, the teacher marks you as more advance and doesn’t work you as hard, you get called on for more examples and help, and you get exempted from certain assignments. The pretests help teachers standardize and systemize the students so they know how hard to work on each student.” Killua explained as they walked to their lockers.

“Wow… I never knew I’d be doing so well on a subject so early when I never got any formal training like everyone else here. I have just always tried my best to give big and momentous performances. It’s more fun to move around, so I guess I just got use to it.” Gon said, opening up his locker and taking out his bento. Killua closed his locker door, his own lunch in his hands.

“Ya, I figured you had a large endurance from how energetic you are, and I can image your concerts aren’t that different. Well, now we don’t have to worry much about Physical singing, it’ll be a breeze for the rest of the year. Maybe we can check out the backstage during class!” Killua said with excitement, a smile stretching on his face.

“Ya!” Gon cried out just as excited. “I bet there are trap doors and high rafters we can explore!” Killua laughed at his enthusiasm, walking along with him as they reached Zushi, waving as they approached.

“Wait! Killua…” Gon called and Killua turned back around, an eyebrow up questioningly. Gon took a breath, half prepared for rejection, but Zushi’s encouraging stare gave him a bit more courage.

“Er, Killua, why don’t you eat lunch with us?” Gon said, face slightly strained with a lopsided smile. Killua blinked.

“W-what?” Killua asked processing the question.

“We, uh, me and Zushi and our other friends. Why don’t you eat lunch with us? You can meet everyone and it’ll be great! I mean, I don’t know where you usually eat lunch, but it must be pretty lonely, right?” Gon asked, getting a bit more hopeful and eager in his request. Killua looked away from Gon’s bright face for a moment, a coiling feeling springing up in his stomach at the request. They want him to eat lunch with them… He thought back to everything Illumi tried to teach him on friends, and stardom and being the best… But they want my company… and it’s fun… it’s interesting having friends…! Killua looked up, a teasing smirk on his features to hide his real emotions.

“Only this one time. Geez, you guys are so clingy.” He said, a finger in the air. Gon and Zushi looked at each other.

“Yay!” They cheered, then flanked him, hooking their arms into the crooks of his elbows and pulling him forward into the cafeteria.

“H-hey! I can walk myself!” Killua cried out, his face reddening when people’s attention turned to them as they bursted through the double doors. He would have lowered his head, placing his hands up as a shield, but he was still in their captive grasps. Both Gon and Zushi were used to the attention
and were just soaking it up, and taking it in stride.

“No way!” Gon said.

“What if you change your mind?” Zushi finished. Killua rolled his eyes while groaning.

“That’s not- If I wanted to- I wouldn’t have agreed if I was just going to change my mind, I’m not 
that fickle!” Killua argued as they neared what Killua gathered was their normal table. The cafeteria 
patrons following Killua with their eyes.

“That’s Killua?”

“He’s in the cafeteria… and there’s no chocolate?”

“He never comes in here!” Looking the table over, Killua’s eyes narrowed, mirrored by the girl at the 
table.

“What is he doing here?!” Ponzu asked.

“You never said you sit with her.” Killua griped, looking over pointedly at Gon who just shrugged it 
off with an easy smile.

“Come off it, Killua, you two were getting along great yesterday.” Gon said, sitting down at the 
table, subsequently dragging Killua down with him on to a seat.

“Wait, what am I missing here?” Pokkle asked, looking between Killua and Ponzu, staring more 
heavily at Ponzu.

“I have to go get food! I’ll be back!” Zushi said, smiling happily at Killua before waving at the rest 
of the table.

“It’s nothing, Pokkle,” Ponzu stated with confidence. “He’s just in the same class as Gon. And you 
know, he claims they’re friends or something, so he sits with Gon.” She said. Killua’s eye twitched 
in irritation.

“What do you mean, ‘I claim,’ It’s Gon’s fault, he wouldn’t leave me alone!” Killua snapped back.

“Anyway, ya, I didn’t tell you cause it wasn’t important!” Ponzu finished. “Cause it’s not like we’re 
friends.”

“Yea, I wouldn’t want to be friends with a girl that has such a weird fashion sense! I mean, what the 
heck is even on your head?” Killua snapped, pointing at the large hat. She fumed.

“Like your one to talk! I see you in so many fashion magazines, but it seems none of their influence 
rubs off on you! I mean, what are you even wearing today?” She snapped back, pointing at his 
burgundy shirt paired with what can only be described as watermelon pants, 2 black arm warmers 
dragged up to his elbows. They both glared at each other while Gon looked over Killua, as though 
just realizing what he was wearing himself.

“I think he looks nice.” Gon said, and Killua removed his eyes from the girl to look at Gon. He 
realized Gon never let go of his arm, their elbows still hooked around each others. He slipped his 
hand out, a light blush on his cheeks.

“So embarrassing.” He muttered under his breath and crossed his arms. Zushi just made it back just 
then with a fish sandwich.
“What’d I miss?” He asked. Gon shook his head.

“We’re just about to introduce Killua to everyone!” He said. “You already know Ponzu and Zushi, this is Pokkle, he’s in our gym class with us, and he’s starting an a capella group with two other students, Balda and Pekuba. They’re gonna be called the Cantabile!” Gon said, and Pokkle rubbed the back of his head, abashed.

“You don’t have to mention that to him…” Pokkle said. “He won’t care about that kind of stuff…” He knew that at Killua’s level, hearing about the struggles of less talented people must be annoying. Killua’s eyebrow twitched downward briefly.

“Cantabile… huh?” He said, after a beat. “‘A style of singing characterized by the easy and flowing tone of the composition’… You knew that was what that mean when you decided on the name?” Killua asked, propping up his head on his hands, trying to look genuinely interested. It wasn’t like he wasn’t, he was just kinda offended he thought he wouldn’t be. Pokkle looked floored that Killua addressed him at all.

“E-er, ya! Actually. We were studying for music theory last year, and at the time we were trying to think of a name. When I studied over the term, I thought it described us pretty perfectly.” Pokkle said, getting more engaged as he continued. Killua let a small smile come onto his face as he listened, then nodded.

“That’s pretty cool. You recorded yourself yet?” Killua asked and Pokkle seemed to shimmer.

“Ya!” He cried, trying to fish out his phone.

“Ugh, now you’ve done it…” Ponzu muttered nearly under his yell.

“Want to hear it?!” He cried, poking at his phone to pull it up. Killua let an easy smile broaden his face and nodded.

“You can just connect it to my bluetooth headphones and play it, it should be under KrazeKat.” Killua said, moving to put his headphones up. Pokkle nodded, determinedly moving through his phone. Gon smiled at how nicely Killua mingled with the others at the table, taking in his profile and smiling face. His head nodded to the music and his mouth moved as he said something, but Gon couldn’t hear, much too absorbed in Killua’s features to pay attention what he said. So he almost jumped when someone tapped on his shoulder.

He whipped his head around to see one of the girls from the girl group in the gym yesterday, it was the leader if Gon remembered correctly (and he did).

“Hey, Gon! I wanted you to come meet the other members of our group. We told them about you and they so wanted to meet you!” She said, hands lingering on his shoulder. Gon smiled warmly up at her.

“Sure!” He said, half standing in his seat before turning back to the rest of the group, Killua’s eyes on him. “I’ll be back!” He said, slipping one leg over the bench then the other to stand by the girl. He turned and the girl winked at the table before turning with him.

Killua pressed his lips in a thin line, annoyed Gon left when he was the one that brought him over to the table in the first place. He was the buffer for the group, the common denominator to fill in when it got awkward since it was his first time really meeting them. He suppose he could just bother Zushi if it got real bad, but he wanted Gon here.

He turned back to the table and gave his attention to Pokkle, his stage smile on his face reserved for
when he needs to smile for a crowd, disguise his real emotions for the camera. Maybe he could get this kid to talk for the both of them until Gon comes back.

“These sound great. You ever try to pitch this to a record company? This kind of experience would make your resume look better when you graduate.” Killua said, pulling his headphones down to let the music flow softly in the air. Pokkle looked down a little sheepishly.

“No, I never was able to… but maybe if I could get some connections from someone I know…” He said, looking away from the table and to some far wall. Killua’s face fell into that of unimpressed boredom.

Of course.

His parents had their own record company, where his dad spent most of his time working on the talents they had signed up. Pokkle probably wanted him to pass on his demos for his dad’s consideration, to get recorded and produced under the Zoldycks’ name. There’s almost nothing more impressive for a resume, especially if he could even get signed up professionally.

Zushi spoke up, a light chuckle in his tone, “Hah, I’m sure you would be able to find some way to get professional recordings without connections!” He said, a slight strain in his voice. “With hard work or with your own abilities!” His eyes flicked to Killua’s and Killua realized he was doing it to get off the topic at hand. “Haha, when’s Gon coming back…?” Zushi muttered to himself, Killua just barely catching it, and looked over Killua’s shoulder to find out his progress. Killua, curious himself, looked that way only to see what looked like the whole girl group flirting with the teen. Killua huffed and turned back to the table. He should just leave, there was no reason for him to stay, he was just barely enjoying himself, while Gon was off being some susceptible eye candy for carnivorous girls.

He would at least stay to eat and if Gon wasn’t back, he’d leave. He opened his lunch to dig in.

“H-hey…” Ponzu said, a nervous pitch in her tone. “What kind of food do you eat if you’re bringing in your own? I mean, I would assume your family has certain lunch menus for you that are good for your throat?” She asked, her phone curiously out.

This was the worst. Where’s Gon? Why couldn’t he be here to fill out this weird silence instead of everyone’s curious questions directed at him. It was like an interview with people who’s never had the chance to get to know the inner workings of the Zoldycks and they were trying to get all they could.

“Ya, there’s specific foods our butle- er…” He sucked in another breath, but he knew he let slip butlers. “Yea, and um, they pack us stuff like organic and natural foods, leafy greens and gross stuff like that, the high water content is good for the throat and stuff…” He said, then blinked at the end, realizing he was rambling stuff Illumi normally would talk his ear off about. He blushed slightly. “Er, I-”

“Um, that’s cool! Can I take a picture for my page? I’ll include all that you said too! I like to pepper my page with a bunch of food pics every now and then. Get it? Pepper?” She said, laughing a little tensely.

Killua didn’t want to laugh. He wasn’t expecting to. So it came up like a bark before covering his mouth as he let out the chuckle.

“What are you, stupid? That was a lame pun.” He laughed, placing his hand down to point. Something in the air shifted, and everyone around him seemed to relax from some unknown tension, their smiles easier.
“No it wasn’t! It was a good one! It was why you laughed!” She countered, waving her phone. “C’mon, can I take a picture or not?” She asked easily. Killua shrugged and pushed his box over.

“It’s not like it’s placed in there pretty. Just a salad bowl with some cut up strawberries and junk.” He muttered, scratching a bit at his cheek. She angled her phone over the box as Zushi and Pokkle leaned over to see as well.

“It looks cool if anything!” Zushi said and Killua elbowed him.

“You always say that about me.” He rolled his eyes.

“No, really, it’s like really professional looking.” Pokkle admitted. “Like something your assistant gets you while in between your music video recordings-” He ended his sentence in a huff as Ponzu elbowed him in the rib slightly. Killua let out a huffed laugh.

“Ya…” Ponzu passed his lunch back.

“Thanks Killua.” She said before looking down and worked on adding the captions.

“M, no problem…” He said, digging in. A whoosh of air and Gon was pressing at his side. He looked over at the asian teen, a piece of salad dangling cutely on the perch of his mouth and Gon giggled at him.

“Hey guys, back.” He chuckled, ripping the tip of the leaf from Killua’s mouth and popped it in his mouth. Killua blushed before smacking Gon on the arm.

“Ow! What?” An innocent smile on his lips.

“Why’d you do that for?” He grinded out after he swallowed. Gon shrugged.

“It was right there! That’s what you get for not putting the food in your mouth properly.” He said, holding his hands out like it obvious.

“Oh, is that so? Then you better watch out Gon, you might end up without a lick of lunch today. This was a war you started.” Killua said with a challenge, and Gon met it with the same vigor. Before he slumped visibly.

“AW, wait, that was the perfect picture moment!” He cried out distressed. Killua blinked.

“Hah?!” He asked crudely.

“For your number in my phone! I need one, a good one!” He explained and Killua’s eyebrows furrowed.

“I can just take one for you. Here, give me your phone.” He said, holding out his hand.

“No way! I want to take it! And if you take it, it’ll be too staged! I want it to be natural, something that reminds me of all our good times when I look at it.”

“You really are an idiot, aren’t you?” Killua asked, trying to fight down his blush. He was doing pretty well if he says so himself.

“Well, if I’m an idiot for wanting a good picture, than ya, I’m an idiot!” Gon fired back and Killua’s mind blanked.

“What?! You- Idiot!” He said again, punching him in the arm again. “You make no sense!”
“I don’t have to since apparently I’m an idiot!” Gon replied again and Killua rubbed at his hair in frustration.

“Do they flirt like this all the time?” Ponzu said, leaning over to talk to Zushi.

“Ya…” Zushi replied with an amused look on his face. Ponzu nodded but adopted the same smile. Killua seemed a lot happier now that Gon was back. They can’t make him as happy as Gon could, but that was something unique to Gon. Whatever it was Gon had was the reason Killua was even in the cafeteria in the first place.

“Killua?” Gon asked, his note taking on a hint of remorse, and Killua looked up from his mind breakdown. “It’s fine if no one else joins us Saturday, right?” Gon asked, and Killua cocked an eyebrow.

“Huh? What do you mean?” He asked, sitting up straighter to look Gon in the eye.

“Well, those girls wanted me to go out with them saturday… but I told them I was going out with you. I mean… I could have invited them along, but… I wanted to just hang out with you. Is that ok? For me to be that selfish?” Gon asked, angling his head downwards and his eyes upward cutely, as though trying to rebuff any retribution that might come his way. Killua blinked, finding it hard to breath as he blushed then pushed at Gon’s head.

“I-idiot! What did I say about embarrassing things?!” He asked, crossing his arms and turning away.

“Emba- what did I say?” Gon asked. Killua pinched the bridge of his nose.

“There’s no point if you don’t even know what’s embarrassing and what’s not. You’re just always going to say them, aren’t you?” Killua asked, his eyes closed in patience. Gon smiled.

“I guess so.” Killua let out a sigh then turned to meet Gon’s gaze again, a slight blush on his cheeks.

“It’s fine… that it’s just the two of us…” He said softly at first, then cried out. “Geez, making me say embarrassing things!” He said, and he shoved Gon off the seat nearly onto the floor. He smile satisfied with himself but then Gon grabbed Killua’s arm to keep his balance- bringing him down with him.

“Wha-!”

“Ugh-!”

Ponzu, Zushi and Pokkle laughed as the two fought on a pile on the floor. The rest of lunch was able to fly by with plenty of light conversation thanks to Gon, and soon people began filtering out as they got ready to head to their next class.

“Alright, let’s go, Gon.” Killua said, standing up with his lunchbox in hand. Gon nodded and stood up but then, “Wait, Killua!”

He looked across the table at Ponzu who stood up from her seat too. “A minute?” She asked and Killua arched a silver eyebrow.

“Go ahead, I’ll wait for you by the doors.” Gon said, a gentle nudge to Killua’s shoulder. Killua huffed but then went to join her. She smiled gratefully at Gon over his shoulder then lead him further away from the table.

“What is it, tophat?” Killua asked, his arms folded behind his head. She rolled her eyes and crossed
her arms.

“You know… Pokkle didn’t mean any harm, right?” She asked cautiously. She had every right to be cautious when Killua rolled his eyes, his irises getting colder.

“Ya, right, cause when people try to befriend you just for the fame, there’s no harm. It’s just how this industry works.” He scoffed. She shook her head.

“No! You see… Pokkle- he really likes his a capella group, and… well, I’ll be honest, we haven’t been the most supportive of friends, and then when you, Killua Zoldyck, comes over and told him that it was great… I think he got really happy, he’s really proud of his stuff. That if you liked it, you might give it to your parents for consideration. This isn’t like those industry incidents, he wasn’t going for it because he thought that was all you were good for. He was asking you like a friendly favor, not a condition. He’s not gonna stop trying to be your friend over this. It wasn’t like that…” She said, almost pleading with her voice for him to understand. But he already did, how could he not when she put it like that. He flicked his eyes up to her, having looked down in thought while she spoke and nodded curtly.

“I get it… Was I that obvious?” He asked. She sighed out a breath of relief.

“Ya, you loser. You’re like, a total bummer to be around when Gon’s not there. Well, you’re barely tolerable then, but really.” She huffed. Killua bit back a smirk to properly glare at her.

“Yea, what’s your excuse? You’re never tolerable.” She gave a huff of a gasp as he turned, his arms folded behind his head again. “And I’m a frickin’ delight, princess.” He said airily as he made his way back to Gon. She rolled her eyes and headed to Pokkle. He’ll need some talking to as well if he’s to make friends with Killua.

Killua fell into step beside Gon, who smiled widely at him.

“What?” He asked.

“You guys do get along.” He said, his voice tight with happiness and Killua scowled,

“Do not!”

“Do too!”

--------------------------------

Killua let out a breath of happiness.

“Ah! Finally it’s the weekend! I have to tell you Gon, when I first met you, I didn’t think you’d last the week.” Killua said, tilting his head to view Gon’s face as he walked beside him. Gon turned to face Killua, a questioning eyebrow raised.

“What do you mean?”

“Well, I thought your happy-go-lucky attitude wouldn’t stand up to the rigorous dog-eat-dog styles of the Academy. That you’d drop out after your heart was crushed by the rookie crushers. But turns out, you’re doing so well, you’re gathering a following. Which is impressive for these selfish, self absorbed group of narcissists.” Killua explained, his hand waving this way and that. Gon looked ahead unseeing as he took that in, and Killua wondered if that was insulting to Gon’s abilities. He was about to open his mouth to say something along the lines of ‘just kidding’, but Gon spoke first.
“This school really is like that, huh…” He said, looking upwards. Killua curiously watched him as
Gon seemed to reach some sort of conclusion. “That shouldn’t be how the industry works… we
should all be like one tight knit network of connections. I think everyone should be friends
somehow, so I think we should change the school.” Gon said, turning to Killua with a bright smile,
but it was overshadowed by the ridiculous resolution Gon just suggested to Killua.

“WE?” He reiterated. “First of all, that’s ridiculous, cause no one’s gonna change their ways of greed
and selfishness, and 2, why should I help you?” Killua asked, stopping as they reached the crosswalk
where they part ways. People diverged around them with grumbles.

“Well, they probably won’t until they know it works. And I want you to help, Killua, because you
said something like that before, that you won’t change, but you’ve already sang with me!”

Killua sputtered with a blush on his face before he narrowed his eyes in anger.

“That’s different! I’ll only sing with you!” He explained, his fists at his side.

“And that makes me happy, really happy,” Gon said, putting his hands out onto Killua’s shoulders.
Killua’s atmospheric eyes locked onto Gon’s deep chocolate ones and he was pulled in, his resolve
shrinking in the brightness that was Gon. “But I think Killua should be happy about singing enough
to sing with everybody.” Gon said, and Killua had to blink a couple of times to break his spell,
looking down abash.

“I mean, I can’t promise anything, Gon, but geez, you sure are ambitious.” He muttered and Gon
gave him another warm smile that made him thankful once again that Gon chose him to be his friend.

“I think we all were at one time… to aim for something as high as World Star. We all need that
wonder again. We can show them. You’re pretty amazing Killua.” Killua’s face flushed red and he
shrugged Gon’s hands off his shoulder.

“Agh, I can’t deal with you, you are so embarrassing.” Killua said, crossing the street, then turned
around to see Gon smiling after him on the other side. “I’ll come pick you up tomorrow after I’ve
had breakfast! Like… 10 or something.” Killua said smiling, Gon nodded.

“Bye Killua!” Gon said and Killua began walking backwards, waiting for him turn down his street,
but Gon only watched him go.

“Go, you idiot!” Killua called out, although he couldn’t stop the smile on his lips. Gon playfully
pouted and cupped his mouth for his voice to reach Killua (although Killua’s sure with the set of
lungs Gon has, he wouldn’t need it).

“I will when I make sure you make it down the street safely!” Killua threw his head back in laughter
and almost stumbled down onto his back. He looked back over to Gon to see he was almost in the
middle of street, concern on his face. It just ripped another laugh from Killua.

“I’m fine. Go!” He said, cupping his own mouth. Gon huffed but finally relented, throwing his hands
up in a wave and turned right at the corner and out of sight. Killua turned around himself and barely
placed his hands on his headphones to pull it up over his ears when he felt his phone vibrate in his
pocket with a text.

He lifted it up, not bothering with his headphones yet, and saw he actually had two, one from a little
earlier in the day. He opened up his chatbox.

I’m back. Not coming to school.
It was from Illumi. That’s right, he wasn’t at school that day because he was scheduled in for interviews at a couple TV studios. He wasn’t suppose to be back until 5 that day, but Killua supposed he was too boring for the TV shows to try to keep rolling. The second from Milluki.

**Made a new track, don’t really like it, but I’ll send it to you to listen. Keep if you like it, delete it if you don’t.**

Killua smiled with excitement. This little piggy is too modest, he loves every remix or EDM tracks Milluki makes, but he’s too hard on himself and how it should sound. Killu lifted the headphones and pulled out his music list from the history, and indeed saw a new song received from bluetooth wireless.

*Here, Alessia Cara L.Remix*

Killua played it and folded his hands behind his head as he strolled home. The beat was cool, deep and thumping, reaching up and ruffling even into his hair. He wished he knew how to make music like Milluki did, but he’ll settle just for listening to his tracks, to be the first to hear it and to even sometimes be there for the process. Milluki may have wanted to be a maestro and orchestra composer, but Killua thought being an electronic maestro of the soundboard was cooler. Whatever, what makes him happiest, he supposed. But just in case.

**Sounds great, aniki, I would add this to one of your albums.** Killua texted back just as the song’s beat trickled out. He waited for a reply he probably wouldn’t get as his music list automatically shuffled and launched into another song.

His home life wasn’t the best and he was plenty happy he had something else to do than sulk around the house saturday. But being in a talented family had it’s perks, like getting the first of tracks Killua likes and getting actually *good* music than the mainstream crap they replay on radio stations. He could live with it.

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Gon walked down the sidewalk with a grin on his face. Gon was excited for tomorrow. It should be a great day.

=End chapter 4=

**Evanescence ft Linkin Park - Wake me up inside**

**Wicked- Popular**

**The King and I (animated version)- Whistle a Happy tune**

**Linkin Park- Numb**

**Dr. Horrible Sing-along Blog- My Eyes**

**Here (Lucian Remix)- Alessia Cara**

Chapter End Notes
-Rears head with creepy smile like hisoka-
Allo, its me, twilastar, with messy head organizations and barely acceptable story
writing! Thanks for coming back and reading what came out of my head. In this, we got
to see a glimps of Killua's anxiety. I have to tell you, I tried doing research on anxiety
but it's very variable from person to person so I just based Killua's off of mine - although
I've never had panic attacks :I
Aloot of Killua's habits to deal with it are mine! :D music, bass, warmth, alla that that
we'll see in upcoming chapters. (Mini arc? Anxious!Killua coming up!)
(Crowd: and what about that ending!?)
Haha, good point, I was writing this and technically it was one big chapter with the next
so I had to split it somewhere, the bad and choppy ending is the result of that. Don't pay
it any mind!
Again! Cringy writing and imagery I hope I can sear into your brains through telepathy
bc my writing sure won't do it. Sorry about meme-y songs. They are actually very
fitting!
Thank you all for reviewing your songs, they're definitely helpful- but again to repeat
what was up in the front notes, I'll not be accepting any song suggestions any more for a
bit. I'll tell you guys when I would like suggestions again. Thanks!
Wow, It's a little on the late side but school's coming up again! Yay... or something! I want to put a trigger warning at the beginning of this chapter. I do talk about anxiety in this chapter, and I don't know how it works for everyone or how bad it is for certain others, but sometimes when reading about or just seeing the word anxiety can give me anxiety. Freaks me out abit, but it could give a panic attack to a reader who isn't prepared? So I would like to put on here just in case...

In this chapter, I delve deeper into real world problems of anxiety, financial issues, and self confidence, I hope you guys like it and I didn't do it completely wrong or insult others in similar situations.

I CAN’T BELIEVE I FORGOT TO THANK MY EDITOR LAST CHAPTER, lol, she's still amazing and especially helped me with this one late into the night after procrastinating on it a lil bit... canzie-gumm/whats-wrong-aniki on tumblr, Thank you! (she's amazing)

(Edit suggested by a reader- Music list will now be on the top for you guys to pull up listen to in advance! Still in order of appearance in the story.)

Featured Music:
- Sia- You're never fully dressed without a smile
- Train- Drops of Jupiter
- John Mayer- Daughters
- Stevie Wonder- Isn't She Lovely
- Jackson 5- My Girl

TRIGGER WARNING: Topics of anxiety

Musica Academy Showcase

The Academy showcases are quarter annual, one for every season. There's a Fall Showcase in October, Winter Showcase in December before winter break, Spring Showcase in March, and Summer Showcase in May, before summer break. Sign ups for the Showcases are anytime after the end of the last Showcase. The Judges change every showcase, guests ranging from alumni to special celebrities, but the Chairman is always the main judge on the board. The performance is given like a number in a concert and you're only allowed to perform original works, no covers or remixes. Participants are graded on advance factors such as Perfect Pitch, Range, Physical Singing, Dance routine, etc. Such are these normally perfected by those in their senior year so it's rare when underclassmen sign up, it's mostly a showcase for seniors.

When underclassmen apply, they don't expect first place, just experience.
Chapter 5: Rustled Music Sheets

Killua looked up, squinting slightly against the bright morning sun to look at the short and homely looking apartment building. Leafy vines grew aesthetically up one side of the red bricked building, going up all four floors. Banisters in front of a couple apartments held clothes over the edge to dry in the sun.

Then Killua gave another look around him at the location of the apartment, at the close knit middle class neighborhood with a bustling tourist trap plaza not a couple streets down. He looked back at the building as he thought, *This is where Gon lives?*

He looked down at his phone to check the address again and make sure it's correct.

Killua looked back up with a slanted smile.

*It's nice.*

He began walking up the steps to reach the floor Gon lived on. He was surprised Gon actually lived somewhere so quaint but modest since he attended the Musica Academy. As far as Killua knew, every student going to that giant showoff of a school lived luxuriously with large houses and abundant money to burn- spoiled, really. Killua couldn't really say anything since his situation was similar. For the students, everything had to be large and over the top to scream '*look at me*'.

Killua didn't think he'd like the modesty of this place so much. He grew up around the flashy and grandiose, so it surprised him how the looks of Gon's place made him so much more… at home?

Killua stopped in front of the door- apartment 405, shrugging his over-the-shoulder sweater a bit more equally onto his shoulders which draped over his black tank top. He took a quick breath and knocked on the door. He shuffled a little nervously from foot to foot as he waited for Gon, or whoever to open.

But he didn't have to wait long. There was loud shuffling inside, a muffled shout and then Gon filled the frame as he whipped the door open.

"KILLUA!" He cried out, way too brightly. His hand immediately reached out to grab Killua and bring him into a hug.

"G- Oof!" He wheezed as the breath was knocked out of his lungs from the tight hug Gon enveloped him. He should have noticed how broad Gon's arms were from his hugs long ago, it was so obvious now.

"Gon, you'll suffocate him!" A woman's voice said from behind Gon. Before Killua could peek an eye open to see who it was that spoke, Gon released him and he was able to breath again.

"Sorry, Killua! Are you ok?" Gon asked, hands hovering worriedly around Killua's chest. Killua let out a surprised laugh and waved him off.

"It's totally fine." He waved off airily and straightened out. He was just a little taken off guard, honestly. "Morning Gon."

Gon smiled brightly back at him,"Good morning Killua!" He cried back in return. He then took the time to look over Killua blatantly. "Wow, Killua, you always looks so cool, no matter what you wear, and… wow, you're wearing earrings again!" Gon beamed, taking him in. Killua placed his hands on his hips, a cocky nose in the air.
"Hah, Gon, you flatter me. You should try it sometime." Killua said, placing a finger to Gon's chest, waiting for Gon to look down before flicking his finger up to his nose. Gon grabbed at his nose and gave a short cry, but still smiled at his friend. Before he could open his mouth to reply, their exchange was interrupted.

"Gon, aren't you going to introduce me?" Mito asked from behind and Gon straightened up again.

"Oh right!" Gon said and turned, allowing Killua full view of the young red head women. "Mitosan, this is my friend, Killua, the one I told you about. Killua, this is my aunt Mito." Gon said, waving his hand back and forth. Killua flicked his eyes over at Gon for a moment before turning back to the women. *He talked about me?*

"H-hello." He said, bowing slightly in hesitation. Her eyebrows rose marginally in surprise before bowing back.

"Hello, Killua." She raised up and looked kindly at him. "You bowed?"

Killua rubbed the back of his neck.

"Er, you- Gon called you with a, um, -san and… are you guys… Japanese?" He asked, turning to Gon for confirmation. Her mouth formed an o before turning to Gon with her hands on her hips.

"Gon, how could you not tell him that yet?" She scolded.

"Ah, it never came up!" He cried, scratching at his temple as he tried to recall. Killua snickered at Gon's cute air-headed attitude, it was so like him.

"Well, it's nice to meet you." Mito said and Killua nodded back in return.

"Likewise." He answered coolly then turned to Gon. "So, Gon, you ready to go?" Killua asked, motioning to the door with his thumb. Gon nodded.

"Let me just go get my jacket!" Gon said taking a few steps backwards, then turned to run further inside. Killua took note as Gon retreated that he wore a plain black tee shirt that fit smugly on his toned figure and jeans that ended just above his knees, his boots continuing below the knee.

Killua watched him run to the back room, a small smile on his face when he realized Mito was still standing there, observing him the same. He flushed slightly and turned his attention back on her, a little flustered as he thought of what to say next.

"Er-

"Have you eaten yet, Killua?" She asked with a warm smile. Killua let another easy smile grace his features and he nodded as he relaxed.

"Yea, I'm fine. No need to worry." He said, waving reassuringly before slipping his hands in his pockets. Mito inclined her head before moving to head back into the kitchen.

"You know, Gon was right when he said you were like a painting. No wonder you're such a successful World Star."

"You-He- What?!" Killua squeaked out, his stomach doing weird flip things at what she said. Gon came back out with a green half jacket around him shoulders.

"Ok, I'm ready! Oh, I really hope you like what I have planned for today! Let's go. Bye Mito, we'll
be back!" Gon said, hooking arms with the red faced Killua and whisking him out the door, bringing
the door closed behind him.

"Itterasshai!" Mito called out as the door closed. She sighed. "I wonder if I wasn't suppose to tell him
that?"

Killua followed Gon down the steps, half because he was dragging him. Two thoughts were running
through his head and he decided to dwell on the safer of the two. He sped up to match Gon's
thunderous steps so he wasn't being dragged.

"Hey, you never told me you were Japanese!" He chided with a teasing smile. Gon pouted.

"I'm sorry! It never came up!" He said again, slowing down as they reached the sidewalk in front of
the apartment building.

"That's so cool!" Killua said, his eyes shining as he looked at with Gon with a new light. "I wish you
told me earlier, but it seems so obvious now. You know, I always thought Asian cultures were the
coolest, especially Japan. Their art is so beautiful, their architecture's so unique-!" Killua rambled,
hopping ahead of Gon slightly in his excitement. Gon felt his chest lighten at Killua's words. He
thought he was cool?! That made him so happy!

"That's great Killua! I'm happy you feel like that, especially because it's you." Gon said. He slowed
down before stopping at an entrance of a parking garage. Killua slowed down and looked behind
him.

"Gon?"

"Er, you don't mind if we don't take the car right? I kind of wanted to show you around as we
walk…" Killua blinked then let his jaw drop slightly as he made his way back to Gon.

"You have a car?! Lucky! My parents won't get me one, they think I'll run away and never turn back
if they get me one…" Killua mused and Gon cocked his head.

"Why would they think that?" Gon asked. Killua blinked as he looked at him.

"Well, … because I would- but that's not the point! The point is you're lucky you have one. Mh…
It's fine if we don't take it today, but you gotta bring it around sometimes to school so we can ride
away in style." Killua said as Gon walked up to his side and they began walking down the sidewalk
together again.

"Sure!" Gon agreed.

"You have your license?" Killua asked, and Gon shook his head no.

"Still a permit. But Mito said just make sure I don't get pulled over. It technically her car anyway, but
she lets me use it, so it's our car." Killua nodded as he took in the information. Gon took in Killua's
side profile as he waited for Killua to say something. Gon finds himself doing that often. He asked,
"Killua, you know I'm Japanese now… what's your heritage?" Killua looked over with those deep
ocean eyes and Gon felt a soft smile form on his face.

"Me? I'm first generation Italian American. My grandfather and father was born in Italy where they
did Opera in theaters, then my dad met my mom-" His face twisted with something Gon couldn't
place before his features settled back into neutrality, "And they moved here, had us kids, and yea.
"We go back sometimes... How about you?" Killua asked. Gon's smile was wide.

"That's cool! I was born in Japan and we moved here when I was young, around 2 I think? We go back every summer because Mito's mom, Abe, is still back in Japan. We stay with her when we go." Killua's eyes sparkled as he listened.

"No way! Can I come with you one of those summers?! I'd love to go to Japan!" He cried, throwing his hands in the air. Gon laughed, feeling lighthearted at seeing Killua so happy and excited.

"Ya, sure, I'm sure Mito won't mind, it's just one extra ticket." Gon said.

"Oh, no way, I'd pay for my own. I know those tickets are expensive. I would have bought one myself to go alone a long time ago, but my parents would never let me. You're the perfect reason to go!" He schemed, a hand to his chin. Gon pouted.

"That's all I am? A way for you to go places?" Killua waved him off.

"Oh shut up, you know that's not true. Besides, the way you make it sounds, I'd think that was a good thing." Killua said with a teasing smirk. Gon's smile returned.

"You're right! I'm Killua's ticket to the world!" Gon cheered, running forward in excitement. Killua laughed and ran after him, ignoring the looks they got from people on the streets. Soon after turning down a street branching off the plaza, Gon slowed down in front of a large victorian style house with a small sign in front of it. Killua squinted his eyes to read the chipped paint as Gon strode forward up the walkway.

*Heaven's Blessings*

Killua's eyebrows furrowed, issuing his confusion as he followed Gon up.

"Gon, what is this place?" Killua asked at his elbow as Gon walked up to the door.

"My surprise!" He answered secretively. Killua opened his mouth to say something when Gon knocked twice briefly then entered. Killua's eyes widened as he stayed by the door frame, *Isn't this someone's house?*

He hesitantly stepped over the threshold, watching Gon enter. He walked past the stairs positioned directly across from the front door into the large living room to the left. The living room had a couch by the window that looked out over the street and another in front of the stair railing, a fireplace in the middle of the wall farthest from the entrance, a chest to the left of it and toys everywhere.

*They're probably supposed to be inside the chest,* Killua thought with a small frown at the messy state of the house. He leaned against the doorframe as Gon looked left and right.

"Gon, what?"

"Hey, you guuuuys!" Gon shouted into the house, startling Killua.

"Gon what the hell-!" He started scoldingly, stepping a little closer but then heard a chorus of cheers coming from the next room over- a doorless entrance into what looked like a kitchen from Killua's view. Kids of all ages and sizes came flooding in, practically tripping over themselves to get in the room with Gon. Killua was honestly scared as he was unprepared to see this, and for a brief second he was scared they were going to maul Gon or eat him.

Gon just laughed as he bent down to accept the brunt of the hugs from the children to reach him first.
"Gon!"

"You're back!"

"Yay, Gon's here!"

"Let's play, ok, Gon?!"] A flood of children's voices bursted from the small crowd of children. If Killua estimated, he'd guess around 15 of them. That's enough for a pre-school class! Who the heck makes this many children? Why were they here again? Killua thought his head would explode from confusion when Gon spoke up again.

"Guys, guys, calm down!" His voice laced with laughter tried to speak over them. At his voice, they relaxed and moved off him, looking up to wait for him to speak. "I brought a friend with me this week!" He said and looked up at Killua. Killua stiffened at the attention, not prepared for the introduction. The kids turned towards him then gasped.

"Wow, she's pretty!"

"Gon, look, it's an angel from the story books!"

"OMG, I know who that is! He's famous!"

"Gon, why'd you bring him?" Killua rubbed the back of his head, a deep blush from some of their comments. Gon nodded at him.

"Well, go on. Come in and close the door and introduce yourself."

"Oh! Uh…" Killua stammered, coming closer inside and closed the door and turned to beady children eyes. "Hi, guys… I'm Killua Zoldyck. Er, one of you said it, but yea, I'm working to become a World Star, so you might have seen me around. I go to school with Gon, and I actually… don't know why he brought me here." He said the last part with gritted teeth and directed at Gon. Gon smiled sheepishly.

"Well, Killua, I wanted to introduce you to all my friends here at the orphanage!" He smiled bright, and the kids turned their attention back to Killua, bright smiles offered as though they rehearsed for when they hear the words. Killua stiffened then felt his body lax, his mouth parting in a soft 'oh…' He thinks his heart melted.

"Ah, really? Well, then, I guess that sign out front really wasn't lying when they said this place was filled with a bunch of Heaven's Blessings!" Killua said affectionately, poking a couple children's noses playfully.

"That's what I tell them all the time." A woman's voice sighed, traced with exhaustion. Killua snapped his head up to see a brown haired woman, hair tied in a neat bun and wearing nun-like clothing. She was leaning against the door frame that led into- Killua leaned a bit to see further down- a kitchen. She was young, maybe in her 20s, and a tiredness was obvious in her features. Killua stood up.

"Ah… Hi." He greeted. "I'm Killua." She smiled warmly with a kindness that was large enough to take care of all these kids.

"I'm Gia. I see that look on your face, don't worry, I'm not the only one here taking care of these angels. I'm happy to see Gon finally brought someone with him this week. We were starting to wonder when Gon would bring one of his friends." She said teasingly. Killua blinked and looked back at Gon who was smiling sheepishly back, although one of the little girls by him tried to get his
"I'm the first one he's brought here? Why did he bring me here again? Killua's attention was brought back to the woman, Gia, when she spoke again, a playful tint in her voice.

"Hmmm, You know… if Gon's here, that must mean it's a certain time…" She said wagging finger as though trying to remember. Gon laughed as the children gasped in excitement.

"Smile o'clock!" They cheered out and a couple of children ran to a small old style radio in the corner while Gon stood up, Killua was just lost in the storm of it. A beat started playing and Killua blinked owlishly at Gon, starting to understand what Gon was doing.

Gon looked over one last time as though to try and convince Killua he was still innocent in the scheming and bent over to talk to the kids.

"Do you guys want Killua to sing too!?" He asked and Killua scoffed, but still the same the kids cried out, "YEA!" Gon stood up straight and looked over at him.

"You'll sing, right, Killua? You won't deny a bunch of orphans, right? Or try to charge them? It's fine to sing just to make them happy?" Gon asked as children came to grab at hands with small fingers.

"I-I..." Killua stuttered. "Of course I'll sing…" He muttered an embarrassed blush on his face. Gooooommm! He thought threateningly although he kept a smile on his face for the kids. *He tricked me!*

"Woo!" Gon and the children cheered. The music picked up and Gon launched into singing first,

"Hey, America! Let's turn it up, Yeah, check out our style, 'Cause you know you're never fully dressed without a smile!" Gon sang out, pointing at his cheeks to create dimples, the kids singing along with him for the last part of the verse.

"Your clothes may be Chanel, Gucci, Your shoes crocodile, But baby, you're never fully dressed without a smile!" Gon sang with laughter in his voice as a couple of girls came out and flaunted their modest clothing as though it were the best, and Killua smiled, his arms jumping as the kids hanging off them hopped a little dance to the music. They all sang out with Gon when he reached the verse of 'never fully dressed without a smile,' letting him take the longer and faster parts for his own.

"And if you stand for nothing, you'll fall for it all, 'Cause we got all we need, got love and more, You're never fully dressed without a smile! And if you stand for something, you can have it all 'Cause if it's real, you'll open every door, You're never fully dressed without a smile!"

The kids vocalized 'Oooh!' with childlike innocence, Killua's ears easily picking up where some were offkey, others trying to hit harmonization, but they just had overall kid like charm in the music.

"You're never fully dressed without a smile!" Their voices were not the best, far from it, but it was the kind of singing that was precious to listen to and Killua just observed with a smile. "Oooh~ You're never fully dressed without a smile!" Then Gon was looking at him, an encouraging smile on his face, the kids caught it and looked over with expectations. Killua nearly jumped out of his skin, caught off guard from not expecting to sing right then. He heard the beat and cue come up for the next verse and -floundered for what else to do- he sang.

"Ready or not, Give all we got, Yeah, you can't deny That baby, you're never fully dressed without a smile!" Killua sang, slowly getting more into the performance now that his brain had time to process the situation. The kids all momentarily stopped moving as they looked on in awe at Killua's voice.
They broke out their revere and yelled out with renewed vigor the last line with Killua, and Killua smiled, his next notes tinged with laughter, they were so cute, and they were singing along with him!

"Don't sink the boat When you lose hope I'll keep you alive, But baby, you're never fully dressed without a smile!" Gon smiled brilliantly at Killua as he sang, popping along with the kids as they oscillated their voices playfully with the music. Killua looked so happy! Was his plan working? Most of them were by his side now as he sang and entertained them.

Gon joined in with harmonization as Killua launched into the next verse with the kids, spinning in a circle the kids formed with him. "And if you stand for nothing, you'll fall for it all, 'Cause we got all we need, got love and more, You're never fully dressed without a smile!" Killua looked over at Gon with a sly smile as the kids stopped singing again to glance between the both of them. They sounded amazing! They began hopping around again, doubly excited.

"And if you stand for something, you can have it all 'Cause if it's real, you'll open every door, You're never fully dressed without a smile! Oooh~ You're never fully dressed without a smile! Oooh! You're never fully dressed without a smile!" Killua took the next verse, dancing playfully with the kids as they played out with the last verse, feeling lively with this new surprise Gon brought them.

"Now look at us, We pick it up, We set it on fire," He leaned down a touched someone's shoulder as though to put out a small fire. The girl shrank away, coming down with giggles and red faces. "'Cause you know you're never fully dressed without a smile! We show it out, We're playing now, We're living the life, But baby, you're never fully dressed without a smile! Oooh~ You're never fully dressed without a smile! Oooh! You're never fully dressed without a smile!"

Gon couldn't get over how playful Killua was being, and how he was feeding off his young audience's energy, and Gon was so happy because Killua was so happy! This was working better than he hoped, singing the lower harmony as they launched into the last chorus. Gon didn't know what he was expecting when he brought Killua here, for him to at least not just straight up reject the children, but Killua was soaking it up, playing with them like he had experience. Did Killua not really know this was how great it could be when one just sings for the happiness of it? Gon hoped this really did work the way it was intended. Killua looked over at Gon as the music twinkled out to its bare instruments and their voices were mostly on show. They harmonized together, vibing like they had in class and Gon could feel the squeezing in his chest he got back then too as he looked into Killua's deep eyes.

"Oooh~ You're never fully dressed without a smile!" They finished out, and the kids that they didn't realize had gone silent and still to listen to their singing, erupted in cheers and squeals, splitting up to either of the teens to jump on them.

"Wow!"

"You guys sounded great!"

"I love you, Killua!"

"That was 'mazing!"

"Thank you Gon for bringing your friend, this was awesome!"

Killua chuckled but let out a grunt of surprise when one girl pulled on his arm so he was forced to kneel closer to the ground.

"Play with us!" She asked, and two other girls flanked her with puppy dog eyes.

"Ah, yea, sure!" Killua said, a small smile pulling at the corner of his lips. They cheered and dragged
him closer to the fireplace, pulling out dolls. Gon smiled sheepishly at his retreating figure even though he knew Killua couldn't see it. *Sorry Killua, you weren't exactly prepared for this, but I couldn't tell you, it'd ruin the surprise.* Gon thought rubbing the back of his head as he looked after Killua playing with the girls and their dolls without missing a beat, when a robot was stuffed in his line of sight.

"Gon! Gon, let's play powerrangers!"

Gon nodded, turning his attention back on the kids.

"Yes, yes, sure!" He said picking up his own robot. "I wanna be bad guy!"

"Kids, lunch!" Gia called.

The kids let out groans of disappointment. Whenever lunch was served, Gon left soon after, so that meant it was almost time for him and his new friend to go. They got up, leaving their toys in their positions on the floor and began filtering out the living room and into the kitchen. Gon got up and patted down his pants, watching the kids go with a smile on his face. He turned to look for Killua only to see a small girl by Killua's knees.

Gon cocked his head to one side. He knew her, Alyssa, she was the shyest and youngest of the orphans. Gon smiled, happy she was able to talk to Killua so soon when she only met him that day. That meant she was coming out of her shell. He walked closer and picked up their conversation.

"Killua, won't you marry me?" She asked cutely, her hands folded behind her back and eyes angled upwards. Gon stiffened where he stood, slightly caught off guard by her question. He didn't understand why it bothered him when he heard her ask that, and the soft smile on Killua's face wasn't helping the unknown emotion.

"I can't do that." He said, and Gon's relief was puzzling. She pouted.

"Why?" She asked.

"Well, because we're both much too young to be getting married. I'm still in school and when I finish with that, I won't be around alot because I'll have to travel everywhere. It won't work out very well." Killua said patiently and Gon's heart melted at the sight. When was Killua so good with kids? She nodded understandingly.

"You'll come back, won't you? With Gon?" She asked, and Killua smiled again, his eyes closing with the action.

"Ya, of course. Now go get lunch." He said, gently shoving her towards the door, and she merrily skipped off. Killua looked down at the doll he still had in his hand and threw it off to the side before standing up, Gon coming closer to his side. Killua looked over as Gon's movement caught his attention and Gon opened his mouth to say something.

"Oooooff!" Gon cried out, bending over after Killua swiftly delivered a punch to his gut.

"Gon, what the hell!?!" He cried out, his voice tight and high with anger but quieted down so the kids in the next room don't hear. "What kind of underhanded, cowardly scheme was this to use kids for your sick plan?!"

Gon could only wheeze out a laugh as he tried to get air back into his lungs.
"K-Killua, I just didn't want you to say no! I know it wasn't the nicest to spring this on you, but I think it worked pretty well." He said, standing back up to stand at his full height. Killua crossed his arms and gave Gon a questioning look.

"It worked? Please tell me, what exactly worked?"

"You sang with others! And you had a good time with it! You can't tell me you weren't having fun, even if they weren't the best singers." Gon reasoned, hands on his hips and leaning in coercively. Killua gave a skeptical eyebrow raise.

"That's different. They're kids. No one trained them yet, I sounded like that when I was their age. Those other teenagers have no excuse for sounding as badly as they do." Killua said, and turned his head away from Gon, whapping Gon's face full of hair in the process. Gon backed up a little and scratched at his face to get the tickle out.

"C'mon, Killua, what I'm saying is singing with the other students can be fun even if they're not the best. You can create connections through singing just like you connected with every kid here, and you can find a reason to sing besides money. Hmm?" Gon asked, popping his head around Killua's shoulder to find his eyes. Killua pouted and Gon's eyes fixated onto that movement. He swallowed feeling his face heat up and he moved to stand up straight again, out of Killua's view.

What was that?

Killua turned to face him again, looking annoyed, and Gon smiled to hide whatever might have been his expression.

"I don't… Fine, Gon, I won't just sing for money. I never really thought of it that way in the first place. I'll… try to be more understanding of people's abilities, since it doesn't have to be great, but it doesn't mean I have to couple my voices with theirs." Killua tried, shrugging. Gon sighed with a smile on his face.

"Does that mean you'll be willing to sing for others, at least? Not just selectively?"

"Well.. it's not like I'll try to make them pay some sort of price. That's what you wanted, right? I'll…think about it." Killua muttered, looking down and away and Gon smiled, happy his plan worked at least to some extent. He only needed to push a little more. Gia walked through the entryway just then.

"Boys, why don't you join the kids for lunch? You must be hungry, entertaining them like that." She asked, leaning on the frame.

"O-oh, we couldn't…" Killua refused politely, waving his hands slightly in the air. He didn't want to impose on orphans.

"Oh, goodness, Killua, you've got to stop looking like we're some sort of charity case…!" She chuckled, and Killua's face scrunched up in subdued incredity, Aren't orphanaged exactly that though…? "Come now, the kids will miss you if you leave this suddenly. Please? We're having grilled cheese?" She asked and Gon jumped to life beside Killua before he could say anything.

"Grilled cheese! You bet!" He cried, hooking his elbow in Killua's and dragging him towards the kitchen where Gia had already moved back into.

"W-wait, Gon!" He cried, flustered. Cheering children welcomed them.
"Bye!"

"Bye Killua!"

"Bye Gon onii-chi!"

"Come back!"

"We'll miss you!" The kids called out the door as Gon and Killua walked down the walkway, turning their bodies to wave goodbye as they moved. They trotted down the sidewalk until they couldn't hear the kids anymore.

"They're a nice bunch…" Killua murmured, reminiscing the past hour and a half they spent there. Gon nodded, his eyes on the sidewalk ahead of them.

"Ya, it's real nice there, and Gia tries her hardest... And sometimes I go over and they'll tell me about how another one got adopted. I think they'll all find nice homes soon."

Killua looked up with a small distracted smile on his face.

"Ya… adoption. It sucks they were left parentless for whatever reason… I would definitely adopt when I get older." Killua said. Gon smiled, vibrating in his excitement.

"Right!? I would just adopt everyone in that building if I could! They're so nice and deserve parents who they know loves them! Every single one of them…!" Gon mused. They walked a bit in the fallen silence before Killua spoke up again.

"Er, that song we sang, it sounded kinda familiar?" Killua asked, rubbing the back of his neck. Gon blinked.

"Oh! It's a remake from the older movie Annie. They love that movie, but they can't really relate, because Gia is so much nicer than Ms. Hannigan in the movie. But they do think about it all the time, getting adopted by someone rich and caring. It's a little silly but understandable." Gon nodded, Killua mirroring him unknowingly.

"I haven't watched that movie in a while… I haven't really watched a lot of movies recently. Too busy." Killua commented and Gon made a mental note for their next outing, he would suggest a movie. "You watched any good ones lately?" Killua asked, turning his gaze back on Gon, and Gon shook his head.

"None of them interested me lately. Maybe in the future… I'll tell you about it and we can both go?" Gon suggested, his smile lopsided. Killua smiled and nodded.

"Sure, if I find the time. I don't have all the time in the world to hang out with you, Gon." Killua teased, poking his side, emitting a laugh from the tanned teen.

"I like to think you do. It makes me happy..." Gon said looking ahead of them once more, and Killua was about to say something along the lines of 'embarrassing!' when Gon spoke up again. "So, what do you want to do now? What do you usually do in your down time?" Killua closed his mouth in brief thought but then a smile came to his face, mischievous.

"It's a little far, Gon, a little closer to the city. You up for the walk?" Killua asked. Gon nodded.

"Ya! Even if it's far that's ok, because I'll get to talk to you and learn more about you!" He cheered and Killua rolled his eyes.
"You're always like this. C'mon then." He said, picking up his speed and heading in the direction the Academy is located. Gon followed his lead.

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Where Killua led them was like the small plaza Gon had by his house but bigger with more commercialized outlets, playground parks, fast food chains, and honking cars instead of mom-and-pop stores and a roundabout as the largest stretch of green.

Gon spun in a small circle as he idly followed Killua, taking in the sights. He hasn't been in this part of town, never having to go very far for their needs like food and clothes.

"Wow, this place is so cool! It has a very 'citywalk' feel!" Gon said, catching up to Killua as he strolled down the sidewalk, maneuvering the walking pedestrians easily.

"Right? It's a little far from my own home but the farther, the better when you want to get away from it all. It's easier when I take my skateboard, and there's a skatepark here, so that's fun. There so much to do within walking distance, it's a little corner of entertainment central." Killua nodded.


"Do you plan on buying a skateboard? It'd be kinda pointless to teach you if you don't have one yourself."

"But I at least want to learn." Gon insisted. Killua huffed.

"I don't even have a skateboard on me to teach you. That's not what I came here for anyway. This way my good man." Killua said, turning into a narrower side street where it was less crowded. Gon followed curiously.

The street led and opened up to a clearing, the back of a building lit up with blacklights and neon colors.

"This is The Arcade." Killua introduced with side smug smile and Gon mouth formed an 'o' as he stared at the building. "This place is awesome, it always has a butt load of games to play. It's always switching games out because it's smaller than most arcades since it's sharing the building with whatever storefront is out on the main road, so it can't hold every game they want to. But that just means it won't get boring and there's always new games! It's like a secret gem of great entertainments. Only real gamers can be unconsciously attracted to find this place." Killua explained with a cheshire grin. Gon regarded him with adoration as he explained.

"Wow! So you're a real gamer! That's so cool, I've never been to an arcade before!" Gon turned his gaze back on the building. Killua let his eyes widen, a disbelieving smile on his face.

"Huh? Really? Not even a small one? The ones they have in the small waiting rooms of some restaurants?" Killua asked. Gon shook his head.

"I mean, I've seen them but I never went in and played. I haven't played a lot of video games so it never really interested me." Now Killua's disbelieving smile fell and was replaced with a dropped jaw.

"Oh no, this situation is critical, we gotta get you in there, asap." Killua said, hooking his arm in Gon's and bringing him inside, both getting enveloped in darkness.
Gon squinted his eyes to adjust to the darkness, and became awed at what he saw. Small winding lights embroidered the walls and dark carpets were dotted with tiny lights making it seem like they were walking on the night sky. The black lights made the colors on the game's designs to glow and pop in surreal colors.

There were others in the dark room—people in baggy clothing and skater-boi style fashion hung around, playing games, talking and eating small snacks. A few greeted Killua with a head nod, Killua barely returning a wave of his hand back, an air of coolness about him that Gon couldn't get over. Why was Killua so cool?! Killua stopped near the back of the large room by a row of machines, releasing Gon's elbow as he reached into his pocket. Gon leaned over to look at the side of the machine, pictures of enlarged quarters falling out of the scenery.

"Is this a game?" Gon asked, innocently, and Killua froze momentarily then face palmed himself.

"It's worse than I thought..." He mumbled seemingly to himself, and Gon just cocked his head with a helpless smile. Killua turned to face him again, a couple of bills in his hand. "Listen, this is a bill-to-quarter machine, quarter machine for short. To play games at arcades, you're gonna need a lot of quarters, so they usually have them inside the building to convert your bills," At this he pulled up the couple bills he had in his hand, "Into quarters." He said, and turned back around to start slotting them in.

"Wait, how many do we normally need? Isn't that a lot of quarters you're getting?" Gon asked and Killua waved him off as the hollow chamber at the bottom of the machine clinked full of quarters.

"It depends on each game and we'll need a lot, we can burn through the quarters faster than we expect, so, better safe than sorry." Killua said, cupping the quarters into his hands then distributing them into his pockets. "We're gonna have so much fun." He practically giggled and Gon felt himself get excited just because Killua was. "C'mon, I'll take you to my favorite game! The game owner switches games a lot but the more popular ones he tries to keep or at least get a similar variation of it. This game has been here for as long as I've been coming." Killua said, taking Gon's hand in the dark and pulling him forward. Gon felt the heat spread from Killua's hand into his, and then spread all over his body in a hazy fuzz. Gon frowned slightly, not sure what to make of his body reactions.

I don't understand what's wrong with me... He's thought, unable to remove his eyes from their linked hands, his stomach coiling in butterflies as though he's about to perform or... fall off the side of the building. If Killua was saying something, Gon wouldn't know, his brain barely able to function in the dark lights with Killua's hand in his, as though the darkness was only making it worse. He doesn't know why, though.

What seemed like all too abruptly, Killua turned on Gon, releasing his hand, a wide excited smile on his face.

"Jungle Safari!"

Gon felt his chest squeeze at the wide gorgeous smile on his best friend's face, making it hard to breath. He matched the smile with ease, the feelings in his chest making it easy to grin that wide.

"Mh! Let's play!" Gon said, and Killua briefly explained the game as they both slide into place of the two seated machine. Gon was so happy with Killua at his side, but sometimes his body reacted to him too much, and it scared him a little, but there was no way he'd ever let that stop him from being with Killua. The happy moments far outweighed the bad. They jumped from game to game, Killua passing the first few levels with ease, showing his skills with the games and Gon trying to reciprocate it, but normally failing on level one for his first few turns.
As Killua said, they burned through their quarters pretty fast, but also time flew faster than they anticipated.

Killua slotted in 2 quarters into a motorcycle game that Gon wanted to retry and he dug in his pockets for the next two he needed. Gon watched him from atop the plastic bike as Killua dug in first the front right one, front left, back left and right, then shrugged his shoulder.

"I'm all out, dude."

"AWWW!" Gon cried out as Killua pressed the thin circular metal bar to get his quarters back. He stood back up as Gon got off the bike and stood next to him. Killua offered a mischievous grin.

"Looks like I got you pretty hooked, huh?" Killua asked, and Gon pouted.

"No fair, how can you tease me with the taste of games then just cut me off like that?" Gon asked as they began moving to the exit.

"Oh please, it doesn't have to end here, just gotta play on your system at home." Killua said. They both squinted as they entered into the street and got blinded by natural sunlight.

"System?" Gon asked. Killua blinked and looked over.

"You know, your joystation." Killua said, despite the sinking feeling in his gut.

"My what?" Gon asked, confused. Killua gaped at him as they joined the streamline crowd on the main road.

"You don't even- you've never played video games?" Killua asked and Gon shook his head no.

"What? Why? Who would- it was Mito, wasn't it? Has she been stifling you, Gon?" He asked, placing a comforting hand on his shoulder, and Gon shrugged it off, feeling a bit annoyed.

"Mito doesn't stifle me! At least… not all the time! I'm sure I don't have a joystation because we can't-...!" Gon started, stopping as he wasn't really comfortable telling him about their financial stress yet. Since Killua was so wealthy, it probably wasn't even a concern to cross his mind. Killua's eyebrows went up, waiting for Gon to go on.

"You can't?" He asked to clarify if that was the end of the sentence.

"I can't… ya." He said. Killua opened his mouth to say something when a growl erupted from Gon's stomach and he held it, multiple people around them giving them strange looks. Killua gave him an amused smirk.

"Hungry?" He asked and Gon smiled helplessly.

"I guess. How long were we in there?" He checked his phone and his eyes widened.

"Wow, 2 hours. It's already 2 pm." Killua gaped, showing him the time on his phone and Gon blinked.

"Huh… Games are really distracting…" Gon realized, and Killua snorted.

"It's kinda the point. Well, where do you wanna eat?" Killua asked, pocketing his phone and Gon looked up in thought.

"Mhh… I wanna know where Killua likes to eat!" Gon said instead, turning his gaze back on him
and it was Killua's turn to think.

"Well… my tastes are kinda expensive. I'll eat wherever Gon wants to." Killua patted at Gon's back and he pouted, feeling like Killua picked up he can't afford as much as him.

"No, no, Killua!" Gon insisted, taking his shoulders and shaking him. "Seriously! We can go anywhere, even if it's someplace you've never been before and just want to try, we can go!" Gon felt the need to let Killua know he didn't have to worry about the money, Gon could supply, he could take care of him, Killua could depend on him.

Killua blinked at the desperation in Gon's face and had to stifle down his snickers. He shrugged Gon's hands off his shoulders, sighing the laughter out his system, and held his hands up in a pacifying manner.

"Ok, Ok, I get it, let's see…" He said, and let his eyes wander while he thought, but then his eyes landed on a restaurant across the street. "Ah! I always wanted to try Korean barbeque! What is that, is that an authentic one?" Killua asked, pulling at Gon's arm so he could see where he was pointing. Gon laughed as he spotted the restaurant he was pointing.

"How should I know?" He chuckled and Killua scowled at him.

"I don't know, haven't you seen them over there?"

"I've been to Japan, Killua, not Korea!" He laughed again and Killua blushed out of embarrassment.

"Shut up! Never mind then." He grumbled, stuffing his hands in his pocket, but Gon didn't mean to laugh at him. He just got so cute when he was so excited over Asian culture, and it made Gon feel like he was impressing him. He liked impressing Killua.

"No, it's ok! We can check it out, even if it's not authentic, it should be good." Gon said, taking one of Killua's arm and leading them towards the restaurants. Killua's pout came out but his body relaxed, meaning he felt better! Well, felt good enough for Gon to continue their date- er, their outing.

They got inside and got seated at a table with a grill in the center and a vent directly above it. Killua couldn't get over it, looking at everything and commenting on how cool it looked and trying to feed Gon as much information he knew about the Korean culture.

Gon sat at the table, leaning his head on his hand propped up by his elbow as he watched Killua try to peek up the vent when Gon just remembered he should try and take more pictures. He pulled out his phone and swiped to get his camera out, snapping a testing snapshot.

Gon's breath hitched in his throat at how truly photogenic Killua was. He was looking down at the grill, one hand feathering the vent hanging low to the table, a small engrossed smile on his face as he took a break from speaking to Gon to admire more of their surroundings. Light from the storefront windows spilled onto his skin, illuminating it and making his pale skin look more ethereal and his eyes sparkle, much deeper than it was when Gon first met him. He was beautiful. Killua suddenly was at his shoulder.

"HEY! I didn't say you could take a picture of me!" Killua bit out, grabbing his phone before Gon could react.

"Wha- yes you did, Killua!" Gon cried out in protest, trying to grab his phone in delay. Killua perused the picture for a second before deleting it.
"No!" Gon cried as Killua handed it back.

"When in the ever loving scent of laundry did I say you could take my picture?" Killua asked, crossing his arms as Gon mourned the deleted picture.

"Back at lunch yesterday! I was telling you I needed a picture of you for your contact, you offered to take it yourself but I said I had to do it! You said I could!" Gon cried out, crocodile tears in his eyes. Killua looked off thoughtful.

"Oh… ya..." He muttered, and Gon eyebrows furrowed further.

"OH YA?!" He shouted and Killua snickered while trying to shush him.

"Oh ya, oh ya, I'm sorry!" He laughed holding out his hands in a pacifying manner. "Next time, just tell me, ok? I can't exactly afford any embarrassing pictures to end up just anywhere."

"Mh! Although, I don't think you can ever take a bad or embarrassing picture… you're really photogenic." Gon said, looking back down at his phone as though that would pull back up the first picture. A light blush dusted Killua's cheeks and he nudged Gon's head to the side.

"Isn't that word too big for you?" He mumbled taking his seat beside Gon again and soon after, the waitress came and took their order, then she was bringing their food and meat to grill. Their idle chatter filled the space between them comfortably, each getting to know each other more.

Killua's laugh petered off and Gon's face hurt from smiling so much while talking with Killua.

"Yea? And then what happened?" Killua asked, leaning closer in anticipation and Gon leaned towards him, lowering his voice to a smooth note.

"I never told Mito I found the Iriomote and tried to keep it, I didn't know it was an endangered wildcat! I ended up losing it after I pulled it's tail and it attacked me before running away." Gon said. Killua's eyes widened slightly, Gon's bass voice thrumming in his chest in a pleasing way. A shiver went up and down his spine and a blush worked its way across the bridge of his nose.

Killua realized their proximity and pulled away with a small laugh to be natural.

"Dude, if your voice gets any lower, it'll be underground." He chuckled, turning away to hide his blush. Dammit, I'm so weak for a deep bass….

"Oh, haha, yea." Gon said, his voice taking on a more playful, lighter tone.

(Gon didn't realize he was subconsciously flirting with Killua, trying to sound cooler to him by lowering his voice seductively.)

"Um, so how do you like the food? It seems pretty authentic to me." Gon pointed down, and took another bite of his food just to fill his mouth. Killua looked back to Gon and processed the question.

"Oh, right! Yea, It tastes great, although I guess it's more of an acquired taste, I know not everyone would like these kinda taste profiles…" Killua said, a small smile on his face. "I'd like to try Japanese food next time though." He said, looking over at Gon. Gon smiled, unable to help it. He was just so happy to think that Killua gets so excited by him just because he was Japanese. Gon nodded and made a mental note to also take Killua out to a Japanese restaurant on that movie date, a good one, with authentic food and good vibes.
"Hey, Gon, can you speak Japanese?" Killua asked, cradling his head in his two hands as he leaned on the table. Gon smiled, swelling with pride and the need to impress Killua.

"Of course!" Gon said, wiping at his mouth. "Watashi wa Freecss Gon desu, yoroshiku onegaishimasu. (My name's Gon Freecss, nice to meet you.)" Gon folded over a bit in a little bow and Killua's eyes lit up with sparkles and he made little clapping noises with his hands.

"Wow! You sound so natural! It's better than my Japanese." Killua said, then nudged him with his elbow. "But no need to be so formal." Killua scoffed and Gon gave him a disbelieving smile.

"You understood what I said? You know Japanese?" He asked, now more impressed and interested with Killua.

"Well, ya. I mean, to be a World Star, it'd be helpful to learn the world's major languages." Killua said, then smiled and lifted in hand in greeting. "Yoroshiku." Gon smile widened and he let out a chuckle.

"Wow! How many languages can you speak?" Gon asked, eyes round with wonder. Killua looked up in thought and began counting off his fingers.

"Eight… Ish? Nine? I don't remember…" Killua huffed and waved off like it was no big deal. Gon's mouth dropped open.

"What?! No way! How'd you learn them all?" Gon asked, completely floored.

"Well, my parents are crazy, they hired all these language teachers when we were younger, cause that's the best time to pick up languages or something, and we've had language classes in between our normal music training everyday, with homework and everything! It was horrible, especially learning Russian, like what even is that language?" Killua complained and Gon sat up straighter.

"Wow, Killua really is amazing…" He mused then looked up with a smile. "Say something!" He cried out excited. Killua laughed lightly.

"Say what? I'm saying things right now." He said, raising a hand in the air questioningly.

"No, no, in another language!"

"Which one?"

"I don't know! Which ones can you speak?!" Gon asked, bouncing slightly with excitement. Killua laughed at his childish manner. He really was like a puppy.

"Umm… I'll say something in Italian, cause that's the one I'm most confident in after English." Killua said, placing his hand on the table in concentration. He cleared his throat playfully while looking off to the side thinking of what to say.

"Il cibo è buono." Killua said, waving his hands at the food. It was Gon's turn to look admirably at Killua and Killua laughed at him. He put a slender finger under Gon's chin and pressed upward, closing his mouth for him that hung open in amazement. Gon snapped out of it and clapped.

"Wow, you sounded so… Cool! So foreign, so…!" Gon struggled for the right word.

"Italian?" Killua asked with an italian accent and Gon nearly squealed.

"Killua, you can't do that, you're too cool! What did you say?" He remembered to ask.
"I said, 'the food's good.'" Killua said, then slightly frowned. "Which is nearly gone. Ah, that's too bad, we gotta eat more cuisine like this again."

"Do you not normally eat this stuff?" Gon asked. "If you've been overseas already?"

Killua shook his head. "I haven't been overseas yet, my brother's have, the most I've had is a nationwide tour when I had my debut concert, but even if I did, there was no way in hell they'd let me eat this kind of stuff! If it's not helping your voice, it's hurting, or something else stupid my mother would probably say." Killua said, sweeping the rest of the food onto his spoon and popping it into his mouth, finishing the meal. "You done?" He asked, talking around the food in his mouth and pointing at his plate. Gon nodded, pulling out his wallet and standing up.

"Killua, you shouldn't say such mean things about your mom…" Gon scolded lightly. Killua scoffed, the huff of air chiming the space between them.

"You say that, but you don't know my mother. She does the craziest things and is literally insane, don't even worry about it." Killua said, pulling out his own wallet. Gon got distracted for half a second, thinking if Killua's mom was as crazy as Killua was trying to portray her… was the nodes her doing? But he was soon brought back to reality when Killua pulled out his black leather wallet.

"Killua, what are you doing?" Gon asked, putting his hand over Killua's wallet to put it down, halting their movement to the front counter. Killua stared back at him like he was acting strange.

"I'm… pulling out money to pay for my fooood?" He mused with small chuckles, pulling out the syllabus musically as though it were obvious what he was doing. Which Gon could gather that much, but it was more like…

"Why? No, don't do that, I'm paying for us. I brought you out, I should accommodate everything." Gon said, trying to lower Killua's hands enough for him to get the idea and put his money away. Killua breathed out a laugh.

"You're kidding, right? That's ridiculous, if you think I'm getting let you pay for double the amount of food you didn't even eat, you're crazy. There's no reason for you to pay, this isn't a date or anything…" Killua said, slightly blushing at the end as he remembered exactly how Gon had gotten him out here in the first place, thinking Gon did ask him on a date. Gon whined and Killua whipped his head back in his direction, incrediety scrawled over his features.

"Seriously? You're gonna cry about this? What are you, 12?" Killua asked, poking his head. Gon let out another whine.

"Well, because when you put it like that, it makes no sense that I want to pay for you!"

"You mean logically?"

"But I just want you to know that… I can pay, c'mon Killua, let me pay, please?" He begged, pulling out puppy dog eyes and a pout. Killua blushed as Gon bent into his line of sight, the expression too adorable and Killua found his brain shorting out.

"I-I, fine!" He stammered out, and Gon's bright smile was back on his face, almost making Killua want to squint against the dazzling features.

"Yay!" Gon said, jumping up and running ahead to the counter and Killua rebooted back into life.

"W-wait! Augh!" He groaned, rubbing his face. "Dammit…" He had to be careful around Gon. He was finding out he could hardly ever deny him when he looked at him like that…
Gon paid for their meal and they both made their way back into the streets and began walking along with the flow of foot traffic, pleasant silence filling the space between them. Killua pulled out his phone, frowning slightly at seeing no new messages or notifications before noting the time.

"Well, it's 4… what do you wanna do now?" Killua asked, turning to Gon and Gon faced him too.

"Mhh…” He hummed. They had wandered a little further away from the city walk type area and into a more downtown urban resident area, and just across the street from them, Gon saw a park adjacent a basketball court and playground. "Oooh! Let's go to the park!" Gon said, taking Killua's elbow with his hand and dragging him across the street without looking back at him.

"The park?" Killua asked confused. "That's for kids!" He cried in complaint.

"Who says?" Gon asked, swinging open the fence and pulling Killua along to the large structure, a couple kids on it already as they made their way over.

"Th-the Government- Gon! This is embarrassing!" Killua cried, lowering his face as kids and a couple supervising parents looked over at the two teens climbing onto the playground.

"Killua." Gon said, a strange seriousness in his voice, removing his hand from Killua to stop dragging him along and Killua looked up at him. Gon had one foot on the first step that led into the inner parts of the metallic sets, turning back to look at him with eyes so intense his usual amber eyes looked like melted chocolate. Killua swallowed, finding his throat dry and his stomach twisting strangely.

"Killua, what are you so worried about? Why are you so worried about what other people think? Will making sure they're happy with the way you're acting make you happy? Doesn't that stress you out?" Gon asked, Killua's hands clenched into fists at the word 'stress.'

"Gon, you know it's different for us, we- we're going to be stars, we can't just go around doing whatever we want…” He said, and Illumi’s and his parents teachings began ringing away in his ears, drilled in like a well lectured lesson. "We have to put up this image of perfection, we aren't people anymore, we're entertainers, and World Stars, and we need to act as such…” Killua felt his nails digging into his palm, and he let them relax at his side. Gon smiled at him like he was dealing with a child and Killua felt his face burn up. "W-what!?” He bit out and Gon stepped down from the step to fully face Killua.

"Fine… we need to try and be good enough for our fans, we need to make sure we don't defile our own names… as World Stars, we need to work a little harder to make sure we don't disappoint our fans and give them our best. But we'll try our hardest, cause that's all we can do, and we're not World Star's yet, so we shouldn't push ourselves so much yet. We have our whole lives to do that after we start our careers. And look around you Killua…” Gon said, placing a hand on Killua's shoulder, and hesitantly, Killua took his eyes from Gon's gaze and made a slow sweep across the park, the kids taking back to playing and only a few parents still glancing their way.

"Is anyone watching for you make a move? To make a mistake? Is anyone taking photo's or videos? We have plenty of time to stress later… Can we play right now?" Gon asked, bending his head into Killua's view for his attention again. Killua peered into Gon's eyes, feeling his body relax as Gon's voice worked it's way into his limbs, shaking and soothing his muscles. His eyes slipped closed, closing Gon off from seeing the emotions flashing through them. He sooo wanted to listen to his words… Illumi's are so much louder… but maybe if he could just… listen to Gon's undertoned bass, he can fall into it and just… play? For once?

Killua let a smile slide onto his face and let his eyelids slip open once he was certain his eyes didn't
contain everything he was feeling.

"I guess… you're such a dork sometimes, no other teenager in their right mind would still wanna play on these things…" Killua said, crossing his arms. Gon smiled brightly, happy to have gotten through to him.

"I don't know why though! Why is it so childish to have fun? If growing up means never having fun again, I never wanna grow up." Killua snorted and spun around Gon to climb up the two steps onto the first platform of the playground.

"Idiot! We all grow up someday." Killua sneered, his hands on his hips childishly looking down at Gon. Gon took the challenge with a grin and hopped up the two steps, squeezing by Killua before turning to look back at him.

"We can all grow up, but we don't have to lose our innocence." He chirped, and Killua let a soft smile grow on his face.

"The Little Prince." Killua muttered and Gon nodded with a wide nod.

"I'm happy you at least know about that. C'mon, flower." Gon nodded his head to incline Killua to follow before bending down to crawl through the colorful tube. Killua blushed, but didn't pay it any mind as he followed after Gon with vigor and happiness.

"No way am I flower, I want to be fox!" Killua chimed, his laughter spiraling through the air, and Gon could swear bells were chiming in the distance and birds were chirping in sing-song response. He liked it best when Killua was happy.

He would try his best to make sure Killua stays happy.

They played through the obstacle course called a playground, eventually befriending a couple kids that wanted to play with the 'cool older kids'. Killua showed them how to swing to the top of the monkey bars, he walked on top with elegance as he made sure the kids didn't fall as they crawled across, Gon underneath, the parents having a heart attack back at the bench. They slid down the slide in a train and played tag, but fun and games were over when one kid fell off the slide they were jumping off and the parents brought the kids home. Gon and Killua tried to apologize, Gon not able to apologize enough, but the parents assured them it was fine.

With the park now to themselves, Gon and Killua took to the swings, leisurely pushing off to swing in a lazy sway. The late afternoon sun painted the sky in an orange glow as warm as Gon's eyes and Killua looked down in thought, a small smile on his face.

It is this easy? He thought. To have fun…? To let go…? What's wrong with this? Why was this so discouraged? He wanted to believe Gon. That this was fine as long as they were still kids. That's what they were after all. Gon was like his Little Prince, showing him the wonders of the World he forgot, or never knew and suddenly he was very happy Gon was his friend again.

If it's like this… I think I can follow Gon on anything he's doing… He thought.

"Killua." Gon's voice brought him out of his thoughts and he looked over to see him looking at him, folded onto his swing seat. "Back at the orphanage… you seemed really good with the kids, like a natural… have you worked with kids before?"

Gon had just been staring and admiring Killua (he even got a picture, a serene Killua bathed in soft afternoon light, Killua being way too far into his head and thoughts to notice), thinking back to playing with the kids just now and it had reminded Gon he was curious about that since that
morning.

Killua blinked and let out a huff.

"Oh, well… I'm the middle child, right? I got a younger sibling I played with when I was younger so I know how to play with them, I guess. And sometimes, when my older brothers were too busy to play with me, I played by myself, but I made games to play with my imaginary fri—" He stopped then, seeming to to physically bite his tongue to stop his mouth vomit.

"No, no, keep going!" Gon insisted, not wanting him to get embarrassed again. "I had an imaginary friend too!" Gon giggled and Killua finally seemed to relax, snickering at Gon.

"Wow, I can't believe- aha, well, yea, I would play with my pretend friends like they were younger than me anyways, so let's just say I've had a lot of practice with playing well." He hummed, turning his profile to Gon again as he stared at the playset. Gon smiled softly, happy Killua could be this open with him.

"Killua, sing with me." Gon asked, not really sure why he asked. Killua turned back to him, a stunned expression on his face.

"Huh?" He asked dumbly. It seemed around Gon, he always made his mind blank.

"Sing with me. I want to harmonize with you again." Gon said, lowering his voice again as sincerity leaked into his tone. Killua shivered unperceivable and looked away.

"G-geez, Gon, that's some way to ask me. So bossy." He muttered sassily, trying to will the weird feelings away. Gon rubbed the back of his neck sheepishly.

"Sorry… But will you?" He asked again. Killua looked at Gon from the corner of his eye, closing his eyes in exaggerated irritation.

"Fine, just… tell me what you want to sing…" He mumbled, a blush creeping over his cheeks. Gon's smile widened with excitement and his brain almost came up empty from the prospect of having to pull up a good song on the spot.

"Oh! I know…" He chimed and waited until Killua looked over with curiosity as to why he didn't say it right away. They're eyes met and Gon saw that quick contraction of his pupils Killua's cerulean eye that usually happened when Killua met his gaze. "I like Drops of Jupiter."

"D-..." Killua stuttered, trying to pull up the song from his sound files in his brain and his mouth formed an 'o' as he remembered what that was. "Sure… I'm not sure there's a lot of harmonizing in the beginning." He said, running the song through his head to recall anything he might need to remember before reaching it in the song. Gon smiled.

"Then I'll sing first." Gon nodded and Killua looked back up at him. "You come in with harmonization when it's there." He said and Killua lolled his eyes to the ground before nodding.

"Yea, ok." Gon gave a small quiet cough to clear his throat and hummed a note, deciding that was good enough to take as the starting note. He looked on at Killua, feeling the words more heavily in his throat then he remember they ever felt.

"Now that she's back in the atmosphere With drops of Jupiter in her hair… She acts like summer and walks like rain Reminds me that there's a time to change…" Gon's gaze felt too heavy to Killua, and he looked away, feeling a blush crawl onto his features, and he was beginning to believe that was going to be a staple of being around Gon. Why did it feel like he was singing to him instead of with
"Since the return from her stay on the moon She listens like spring and she talks like June, hey, hey, hey...Hey, hey, hey," Killua was happy for when he was able to come in and harmonize. "But tell me, did you sail across the sun? Did you make it to the Milky Way to see the lights all faded And that heaven is overrated? Tell me, did you fall for a shooting star– One without a permanent scar? And did you miss me while you were looking for yourself out there?" That feeling of singing with Gon came back, and he got swept in the music, creating his own harmonizing notes even where there was none in the actual song.

"Now that she's back from that soul vacation Tracing her way through the constellation, hey, hey, hey (mmm) She checks out Mozart while she does tae-bo, Reminds me that there's room to grow, hey, hey, hey (yeah)... Now that she's back in the atmosphere, I'm afraid that she might think of me as plain ol' Jane Told a story about a man who was too afraid to fly so he never did land."

This was how it was to sing with Gon, to feel this freedom, this reminiscent happiness that gave him feeling when he sang, that it was so right. And they painted a picture with their voices, created atmosphere with their notes, and Killua was flying through the stars with Gon.

"But tell me, did the wind sweep you off your feet? Did you finally get the chance to dance along the light of day And head back to the Milky Way? And tell me, did Venus blow your mind? Was it everything you wanted to find? And did you miss me while you were looking for yourself out there?"

Killua slipped his eyes closed to relish in the feelings, hoping to hold on to it for the next time he ever had to sing without Gon again, because he almost couldn't imagine how he did before, how he found the strength to. Gon felt a bit upset that he couldn't look into the wide expanse that was Killua's eyes, but he looked so content and happy, he suppose it was fine like this too.

"Can you imagine no love, pride, deep-fried chicken?
Your best friend always sticking up for you even when I know you're wrong
Can you imagine no first dance, freeze dried romance, five-hour phone conversation?
The best soy latte that you ever had and me...

Their harmony rang through the streets, the held-out, trilling note beautiful in the setting sun. Gon stopped singing as he marveled at Killua, but Killua continued, barely registering Gon had stopped, and Gon could have listened to him all day...

"But tell me, did the wind sweep you off your feet? Did you finally get the chance to dance along the light of day And head back toward the Milky Way? And tell me, did you sail across the sun? Did you make it to the Milky Way to see the lights all faded And that heaven is overrated?" Gon jumped back in, too excited to hold himself back from singing along with his favorite person, and Killua opened his eyes again to a smiling Gon, and couldn't help smiling himself.

"And tell me, did you fall for a shooting star, One without a permanent scar? And did you miss me while you were looking for yourself? Na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na, na...
And did you finally get the chance to dance along the light of day?
Na na na na na na na na na na na na na na
And did you fall for a shooting star, fall for a shooting star?
And now you're lonely looking for yourself out there...." They finished off, and Killua realized they were a bit too close, having leaned in during the song. He straightened up and cleared his throat.

"Ahem... that was fun..." He chuckled out, and still feeling Gon's gaze, stood up from the swing. "What do you want to do now?" Gon seemed to snap out of whatever spell was over him and got up as well.

"Right! Um..." He looked around. "Let's see... if we continue further downtown, there's this lake with a boardwalk and plaza. When it turns evening, they have these festivities, like street performers and side stands with snacks and stuff, and they have these lights around the lake that's really pretty when they turn on at night." Gon suggested. Killua made a face.

"Downtown? That's pretty far from your home Gon, and we didn't take the car."

"Oh, from there, there is this side street that's a straight shot back home. It shouldn't take longer than 20 minutes to walk back from there." Gon assured, shaking his hands and head. Killua regarded him a while longer before a smile broke out.

"Sure. Sounds interesting." Killua said, peaking at his phone and giving it a slight frown again. Gon would have asked about it since that was the second time that day Gon's saw he's done it, but he turned back with such a care-free smile Gon thought he imagined it. "Let's go."

They headed down the streets, and the breeze began to pick up as they got closer to the lake's location, the houses gave way to larger streets and side stores, street lamps lined the roads giving the air an ethereal glow like they were no longer in some known place on Earth.

The sun set, but left behind its glow of orange, purples, and red in the sky, stars beginning to pimple out in the sky. Killua took everything in as he passed, Gon again finding himself lost as he regarded Killua and how cute he was often, lit up in the sunset colors and the lights spilling onto the streets from the store windows. He took a couple more sneaky pictures when he was sure Killua wouldn't notice.

"Oi! Gon, look at those!" Killua said, pointing to one of the side stalls. They were selling donut holes, 5 skewed on a stick. "They look like dangos!" He laughed, carefree, and looked over at Gon and Gon felt his breath catch in his throat at how beautiful Killua's eyes were in the dimming lights around them, sparkling with the reflections and his hair whipping every which way around his face from the late summer breeze.

"Do want some?" Gon asked, already reaching for his wallet. Killua's eyes flicked down to the movement and he scoffed, a smile still on his face.

"I mean, I think you'll buy it for me whether or not I say yes, so sure." He said, hooking arms with Gon and dragging him forward. The lady behind the stand fried it fresh right there in her stand and gave them their donut snacks. They both thanked her and strolled down the streets, music filling the air, musicians battling other musicians for people's attentions as they performed street-side.

"This place really is cool... Nice choice..." Killua hummed, the finished stick stuck in his mouth, played with in between his lips. Gon felt his chest lighten up even more at Killua's words, beyond happy Killua really was as happy as he hoped he would be. His chest was so light, Gon thought he might be able to fly if he jumped hard enough. Killua's eyes suddenly lit up, looking somewhere across from Gon.
"It's the lake!" Killua cried, and jogged across the small green park, benches, sidewalks and street lamps wrapped up with small white lights. Gon turned and chased after him, not wanting to be too far from Killua.

Killua stopped his momentum with the gate that edged the lake, looking at all the colors and lights gleaming off the glassy surface, the colors blending in a beautiful display, the fading sunset reflected off like a backdrop, more stars out and the inky blackness of night dominating the sky now.

"It really is beautiful…" He murmured, and Gon felt a heat wash over his face and something heavy settle in his chest, like he's suppose to do something, his hands itched to do something, something with Killua. He reached his hands out, not really knowing what he intended to do, and he ended up wrapping his arms around Killua in a back hug.

"You're beautiful…" Gon ended up murmuring as he wrapped him in his arms, not knowing where it came from but knowing he meant it with every fiber of his being. Killua stiffened in his arms, and Gon could feel where his back pressed against his chest that Killua's heart rate sped up. Before Gon could even feel Killua's warmth mingle with his own, Killua pulled away, wringing himself to the left and out of Gon grasp. It was pretty cold without him in his arms.

"W-what the hell, that's not- you can't just say that kind of stuff to guys…" Killua said, darting his eyes left and right, as though looking if anyone heard or saw what happened. Gon pouted.

"But it's true! If you think the lake's beautiful, you're at least 3 times more beautiful." Gon could see Killua tense at that, and even in the dim light that illuminated his face in a soft white glow, Gon could see the blush that covered his face and down his neck.

"I-! I can't believe you!" He cried, marching towards him and almost instinctively Gon covered his forehead with both hands. Just as he did, Killua was lifting his fist with a flick ready. He blinked at what Gon did, but instead of being deterred, Killua let a cheshire grin grace his features and his hand curled up, his arm came back and he gave a quick jab to Gon in his gut.

"Auughhh…" Gon groaned, curling downward, and he felt Killua pet his head.

"Oh, nooo. Are you ok?" He cooed teasingly and Gon would glare at him if he could lift his head, so he glared at Killua's shoes.

"Geez, I can't speak around you." Gon complained, working his way to stand back up and Killua crossed his arms.

"Not with that mouth, you can't! I don't understand how exactly you were raised, but it's weird and unnatural and most people would run for the hills, or explode in a ball of embarrassed fire around you." Gon's mouth puckered up and shifted this way and that as he let Killua's words sink in, and then it spread into a wide grin.

"But you stay around anyways!" Gon cried and Killua's eyes widened in shock. "You must like me alot!" Gon cheered and Killua looked to the side, looking like he maybe wants to curse.

"Whatever! Let's go! We haven't even made our way halfway around the lake." He grounded out, grabbing Gon's hand and pulling forward. Gon felt lighter than air hearing Killua didn't deny it. He's happy Killua likes being around him too, because Gon loved being around Killua.

They walked, pointing out stores and street performers, Killua making fun of a couple of them even though Gon tried to tell him to be nice. They watched caramel apple makers through windows and someone with a dancing monkey. They were nearly at the street that Gon said would take them back
to the house when another small grassplot held a small stage and some flashing strobe lights coming from a small machine.

"Wow, what's that? Fancy…” Killua mumbled, and Gon couldn't tell if he was being sarcastic or not. The performers were just getting on stage and announcing their song, starting with a small strum to get in-tune and Gon smiled, grabbing Killua's free hand again.

"Let's go check it out. They must be good if they have these lights and stuff!" Gon suggested, looking back at Killua who looked bored but shrugged.

"Sure." He complied, speeding up to walk next to Gon so he wasn't dragged and let go his hand. They stood in front of the stage, a couple rows of people already standing there as they launched into their song, and it was pretty good. Gon looked to his side and saw Killua bobbing his head, a small smile on his face as he listened to the bands twinkling and whirling noises and sounds. More people were gathering and Gon wondered how it felt to be up there right now. Seeing all these people out to see you, catching their attention with just your skills and smiles, performing your heart out for people who you don't even know but you bring smiles to. He wondered how the view was.

"Now…” The lead singer panted out into the crowd, his voice low, but not very pleasingly, like he was trying too hard to sound sexy or winded. "Who's ready to rock!?" He cried out, and the crowd screamed out their approval, Killua even let out a small whoop, feeding off the energy and Gon let out his own cry of happiness. The band let into it, the music loud and not as light as their past songs.

The music was thumping and loud, and Gon's chest reverberated, but not with the bass, (they didn't have a bass guitar up there, and the drummer looked almost bored with the song they picked) just with how loud the music blared through the speakers shook Gon. He felt, more than saw, the crowd number increase, people starting to jump and headbang with the music, people pressing in to get closer to the energetic music. Gon laughed, feeling himself getting swept up in it, and began hopping himself.

The music could be better, but it was fun and the crowd was enjoying it, plus Killua didn't complain about it yet, so. Gon turned his head to talk to Killua precisely about that, half expecting to see Killua jumping along with the crowd, but he was met with the back of his head. Gon stopped hopping, watching as Killua's head jerked this way and that as he looked around, his body language stiff and tense, his shoulders hunched in the tension. Gon felt his chest lurch and he reached a hand out to his shoulder.

"Killua?” Gon asked, tentatively, wondering if he would even hear him over the blasting music (too loud, it's too loud to Gon now), and Killua jumped, turning his head back in Gon's direction. His eyes were wide and his pupils dilated like a scared cat ready to jump out of its skin, his beautiful eyes shaking slightly as he regarded Gon like he forgot he was there.

Gon felt like a bucket of ice water was poured over him and he grabbed Killua's arm, bringing him closer, "Let's get out of here…” He said in low voice, feeling protective, making sure Killua could hear him by bringing his mouth to his ear. Gon had already started to move, Killua already tucked under his arm, when Killua nodded to his statement.

Gon held him, moving away from the crowd and loud music, until he could barely hear it anymore. Gon's mind was racing at what happened. But what did happen? Killua was scared? Or the way he held himself, was… that was stress? No, anxiety? Did Killua have anxiety?

Gon wanted to hold him forever, keep him safe in his arms, but Killua was pushing at Gon and he let his arms fall away from Killua's back, allowing him walk straight and normally.
"Geez, Gon, ever heard of personal space?" He had a blush over his features as he joked. Gon blushed at him, his mind reeling in on itself as he thought back to everything. Killua's fine? Gon searched his body language, but nothing seemed out of the ordinary, all traces of the tense Killua seemed left behind at the concert. Gon would let it go for now, but he made a mental note to ask about it later, probably when Killua would feel more comfortable talking about it. He needed to know exactly what happened so that he knows how to take care of Killua better if it happens again.

Killua shoved his hands in his pockets and kept his eyes on the ground as Gon led them to the street that led away from the boardwalk and downtown plaza. It was emptier since most boardwalkers were at that giant concert and the performers that lined the streets weren't as frequent as the two of them walked farther from the heart of the festivities. Gon kept light conversation in the air for Killua, aiming to pretend nothing happened as long as Killua did.

They passed the last performer on the edge of the festivities, his gentle guitar strumming, humming and mumbling nonsensical words and Killua pulled his hand out of his pocket, tossing a coin into the open guitar case as they passed.

They walked in comfortable silence, the sky finally completely draped in dark blue, the sky spread with stars as piercing as Killua's hair. Gon opened his mouth to say something, probably to say as much, when Killua spoke first,

"What time is it..." He mumbled, pulling at his phone and pulling it out. "Hm, it's only 8..." He slid his eyes to lock onto Gon's. "Did you have anything else in mind you wanted to do?" He asked, and Gon got the feeling he was trying to end their time together. Gon, slightly panicked, let out a laugh a little too loud for the empty street.

"Of course! Killua!" He laughed, shoving his shoulder and looked away with a natural lolled of his head, although his face was stricken as he racked his brain for something. Killua rubbed his shoulder (although the shove didn't hurt) and looked at the back of Gon's head confused.

"Well?" He asked.

"Oh! Wh- you- we didn't have dinner yet! Killua! Why don't you have dinner at m-my place?" Gon asked, losing control of his voice volume, cringing as it broke at the end. Killua obviously snickered down a laugh and looked up to the sky, in the dim light his eyes were a deep ocean blue.

"Mh... dinner at your place? I don't wann-"

"You won't impose! In fact, I'm sure Mito already made you dinner! You'll hurt her feelings!" Gon was practically begging now, but he really didn't want his day with Killua to end, not yet, and it was always easy for him to give in to his strong feelings. Killua looked over at him, his face a mask Gon couldn't read, and then he finally sighed, a small smile on his face.

*Why can't I ever say no to this idiot?*

"Fine. Dinner should be fine." He hummed and Gon beamed.

"Yay!" He cheered, shoving Killua's shoulder again and bounding ahead. "Race ya?" He called out as he walked backwards. A mischievous smile stretched across Killua face and he started running, the words "You're on," wisping in the wind as he passed the caught-off guard Gon. He twirled on his heel and followed Killua, laughing.

Mito stood at the front doorway, glaring down at the two teenagers grinning sheepishly up at her. She had heard them barreling up the steps, probably disturbing all the neighbors on all the floors they
passed, and then they burst in through the doors, shouting about some race. She was nearly shocked out of her skin, but coming back into her senses, she knocked them both over the head and herded them back over to the door.

Gon rubbed at his head, muttering 'ow,' but he was use to it, Killua looked at her wide eyed like he just witnessed a world wonder.

"You can't be that loud this late at night! People are trying to sleep or relax! And you ran in here with your outside shoes, bringing in all this dirt and dust I have to sweep up now. Save your rowdiness for the day time before I make you guys sleep outside like the animals you're acting like." She scolded and Gon began smiling sheepishly, hands behind his back, and Killua followed his lead.


"I don't want to be any trouble." Killua voiced. Mito gave them side glances but nodded.

"Fine. It's ok, Killua, I know it was Gon's fault." She said with a hint of affection in her voice and Gon gasped while Killua snickered.

"That's not fair! How do you know?" He asked.

"Well, this just seems like something you'd do." She shrugged while walking away and Gon slumped. "Remember to take off your shoes this time!" She called over her shoulder. Gon sighed and bent down to his unlace his boots. Killua followed suit and bent over next to Gon, then whispered to Gon.

"Gon… what's sweeping?" He asked and Gon looked at him with wide eyes before laughing.

"You guys don't have a broom in your house?" He asked through his peals of laughter. Killua frowned.

"I don't know! Maybe! What does it do?" He whispered loudly, feeling embarrassed again. Gon fell over to his side laughing and Killua stood up, positioning his sock-clad foot over Gon's stomach to stomp down, but just then Mito came back over. He zipped his foot back to his side and hands behind his back. She raised a suspicious eyebrow at the laughing Gon but she had the broom.

"Oh, that..." Killua mumbled, scratching at his cheek. He's seen the butlers do it sometimes when Killua's up late enough or stayed home from school, but he's never bothered to ask what they were doing. Gon finally gathered himself together as Mito began sweeping the dirt they stomped in.

"By the way, dinner is ready, the plates are by the stove." She said after she determined nothing suspicious is happening. Gon hopped to his feet, his camo slippers on his feet.

"Yay! Killua, those there are the guest slippers, there." Gon said, pointing at the pale pink slippers by Killua's feet. Gon waited until his socked feet were within the confines before pulling him forward. "Thanks Mito-san!" He called out over his shoulder.

Walking fully into Gon's house for the first time, Killua tried to take everything in as Gon pulled him along. Gon was veering right from the main entrance hallway and into the tiled kitchen segment which overlooked the living room. The TV was on the wall to the left of the entrance, a long couch across from it on the other wall, an empty guitar stand on the wall by the windows and a few japanese inspired paintings and words on the wall, and in the center between the couch and the TV was...

"You have a KOTATSU TABLE?!" Killua cried out, wringing his arm out of Gon's death grip that
was intent on getting them dinner and jogged back to the living room. "I've always wanted one of these!" He expressed as he came closer. In range, he shot underneath the blanket of the table, and there were movements shifting the covers before he popped out the other side.

"Ah, it's so warm! It's exactly like I always thought it'd be! Oh..." He whimpered, placing his cheek to the table. "This is so cool! You live so Japanese!" Killua said, calling into the kitchen. Gon smiled at his pale friend who was geeking out again over his interests.

"Well, ya, it's what we are!" Gon said, putting on dinner on two plates for the two of them. As Gon was plating his food, Mito finished sweeping and came into the kitchen, making a plate for herself. The two Freeces brought the plates over and was positioned on the table for the three dining.

"Uuuwa, this looks so good..." Killua hummed. He was used to getting professionally made plates, plated so pretty it could win chef competitions, but this just looked homely and robust. Would he even be able to finish it all? He knows it's rude when you don't finish the food in Japan. He was brought out of his thoughts when Mito addressed him.

"Killua, I'm happy you were able to join us for dinner." She smiled affectionately at Killua and Killua felt the blood rush to his cheeks.

"It-it's no problem... I was... going to eat dinner anyways..." He chuckled and Mito smiled again. How can she look so full of love for someone she just met today?

"Alright, well, let's eat." She sighed and she held her hands up. Ah, Killua knew what this was! He also lifted his hands and clapped with her, both saying "Itadakimasu!" a small smile on his face, happy he was able to do so in a proper setting. He then noticed Gon didn't do it and was just digging in.

"Eh?! Gon, what are you doing? Aren't you suppose to do the little- prayer thing?" He asked, watching Gon. He stopped stuffing his face and looked up at him.

"Hmm? Why?" He asked. Killua blinked.

"Well, isn't that what you do in Japan?" He asked. Gon smiled.

"But, we're not in Japan?" He asked. Killua wanted to open his mouth to argue but that was just... logic.

"Hah?" He asked dumbly not knowing what else to do. Gon giggled at the face Killua made.

"I mean, it's fun to do the cultural stuff, and it helps me keep in touch with my heritage, but we're not in Japan, and there's no strict rules or obligations to do them all." Gon assured and Killua nodded slowly.

"That's true..." He hummed then smiled and clapped again. "Thank you for the food!" He chuckled and began digging into the home style meal.

The meal was filled with idle chatter about their day and Mito telling Killua a little more about herself. Gon took a few more photos, which Killua let him keep even thought he was super embarrassed. Mito tried asking about Killua family, but she soon found out that was a futile attempt as he somehow fluidly and naturally managed to guide the conversation else where while giving minimal information. He obviously didn't like to talk about them.

The meal ended and Gon got up as Killua's laugh petered off at something Mito said.
"Killua! Come on, I wanna show you my room!" He said and Killua got up just as excited.

"Sure!"

"Have fun!" She called, picking up the dishes left behind by the boys. Killua followed Gon into one of the three back rooms which led into Gon's, figuring the other two was Mito's room and the bathroom. His eyes fanned over the small space, a bed under the window facing his dresser, a mirror on the sliding closet door, clothes and other thing slung about the room messily and in the corner by the end of his bed was…

"Wah, is that..." He cried out, walking towards the vintage blonde guitar. Gon smiled as he walked passed Killua and sat onto his bed.

"Yea, my dad left it here with me. I'm guessing because he probably has something cooler. But I like to think he left it for me because he actually wanted me to have it." Gon hummed, folding his legs up underneath him.

Killua turned to look at Gon, his back to the guitar.

"You're dad? Where is your dad?" He asked, placing a knee on the end of the bed. Gon squished his lips to one side of his face.

"He left us when I was really young. Ging Freeces." Gon admitted and Killua's eyes widened at that. Ging? He's heard of him, one of the top 5 World Stars out there according to both his dad and Netero before. "He left because he was traveling the world as a World Star. Apparently he's really good, he has a lot of fans. We tried to follow him, moving from Japan to America, but then he was moving on again before we barely even got settled in. He doesn't really have a living space, he either lives on his tour bus or in hotel rooms rented out for him by his agency." Gon said, shrugging, a sad look in his eye. Killua didn't like that look.

"Is that why you want to be a World Star? Because your dad is one?" He asked softly. Gon looked up at Killua, a little more fire in his eyes.

"Yea! Well, sort of. I'm sure I love to sing and perform because of my dad, but I want to become a World Star so I know the life he loved so much, he was able to leave his family behind… and I want to become the best, even surpass him. I know I can do it. I just have to work hard." Gon nodded, a bit of that sad look entering back into his eyes. Killua pressed his mouth into a line, feeling slight animosity for the father that left this bright child behind to chase after him because he was so selfish as to chase a world of material things. He could have at least tucked Gon in some corner of his tour bus as he travelled, but then again, if that happened, Killua would have never been able to meet Gon, and he didn't know what he'd do if he never met Gon. Probably still be the shell he was before.

He looked back at the golden guitar, still surprised Gon has such an expensive guitar in such good condition, considering how old it should be if it was real. Well he supposed it was possible if he treated it as well as Killua treated the very silver headphones around his neck and never touched it. Well, if Ging left it with him at a young age, he probably never even taught him how to play.

"Mind if I…?" Killua asked softly after a moment, gesturing to the guitar. Gon blinked, like remembering he was still there then smiled encouragingly.

"Yea, go ahead. I don't do much with it anyways." He intoned and Killua gave a curt nod. He picked it up gently by the neck of the guitar and cradled it into his body, settling properly on the bed and facing Gon.
Giving a strum, he heard it was out of tune, and went to work on tuning it then looked up at Gon with a smile, who was looking back at Killua like he was the coolest person in the world. And…

"Gah, why do you always have that camera out?" He groaned, covering his face. Gon let a smile spread on his face as he lowered the camera.

"I just… I just liked the way you looked holding my guitar." He said softly. Killua was already lean and thin, he looked even smaller behind the clunky guitar, and it made a warm feeling spread through his chest watching Killua handle his prized guitar with such care. Gon's starting to get the feel that he should try to photograph Killua when he gets that feeling. Killua rolled his eyes, the red receding off his cheeks, then returned his attention back to the guitar.

He began strumming out a tune. Gon recognized it immediately after hearing the first two chords.

"Fathers be good to your daughters…" Gon sang out along with Killua's soft strumming. Killua joined in with higher harmonization, and they still couldn't believe the wave of goosebumps that washed over them when they sang together, it was scary good.

"Daughters will love like you do… girls become lovers, who turn into mothers… so mothers be good to your daughters too…" Killua stopped strumming.

"Hey, where is your mom anyway?" Killua asked. Gon blinked then let out a snort like what he asked was funny.

"Well, Mito's the closest thing to a mother I have. So, technically, my mom's in the living room!" He chuckled. Killua blinked.

"You don't know?" He asked, gaping. Gon shook his head.

"The only person who would have known would be my father, and he left before I knew I should have a mother, and I think it would be insensitive to ask Mito about my mother when she's trying so hard for me to begin with. Besides, I don't really care. I don't need to where she is, I don't miss her, I don't feel like anything is missing. Mito's always been there…" Gon explained and Killua smiled.

Mito who had been cleaning the dishes heard Gon singing, and as she loves to listens to him sing, stopped washing to move closer only to hear his voice become accompanied by Killua, creating beautiful harmony she became mesmerized by. She stayed by the door to listen to them sing when Killua stopped and asked about his mother. She felt a bit nervous but when Gon had finished his answer, she found herself wiping at tears.

"Oh Gon…." She whispered and turned away to finish the dishes. That was the little ray of sunshine she loved so much.

Killua strummed again and again Gon recognized it almost instantly, jumping in to sing happily,

"Isn't she lovely…" He sang out, purposely trying to add more zeal in his voice to mimic the blind musician's voice. Killua giggled a little before coming in with the harmonization as before. "Isn't she wonderful, isn't she precious, less than one minute old. I never thought through love we'd be… Making one as lovely as she. But isn't she lovely made from love…" He strummed to the finish but let his fingers idly pluck the chords musically to keep notes in the air. Gon sighed.

"I love that song…" He murmured, and racked his brain for other songs he could sing with Killua. "Oh, this one too! I've got sunshine…!" He sang and Killua lit up, his fingers flying nimbly across the strings to play the chords, then sang along as the next verse came up along with the tempo. "On a cloudy day… When it's cold outside, I've got the month of May. Well, I guess you say what can make
me feel this way…"

They tried to segment their singing like the song, Gon singing first, with Killua echoing after and Gon skipping off his first line to sing the highest part, "My girl...! Talkin' bout my girl! My girl!"

They laughed at their failed attempt, although the music still sounded nice. It continued on, with Killua starting the strum to see if Gon knew it before the words came in and Gon starting a song to see how quickly Killua could get the chords out to accompany their voices, and they both harmonized with each other. It was fun and their synchronization and ease of talent made the time go by, lost in the game of chase and challenge.

Killua still couldn't believe how fun and exhilarating it felt to sing with Gon, it left his skin tingling. It was carefree with no pressure to sing well, which just made it that much more fun, finding himself laughing while he sang, mirroring the funny faces Gon would make at him. They were in the midst of another song when Mito knocked on the door, a frown on her face.

"Boys, it's getting late. Gon, maybe you should drive Killua home?" She asked. Both the boys blinked owlishly at her then glanced at each other. Gon reached for his phone on the bed in between them, Killua peering over curiously.

"11 o clock?!" Gon cried out shocked. He had no idea it had gotten that late.

"What?!" Killua mimicked the shock, getting up and placing the guitar back on the stand. He yanked his own phone out his back pocket and peered onto the screen, his panic and urgency subsiding a little at what he saw.

"That's so weird... Illumi normally at least texts me if I've been out for too long..." He mumbled mostly to himself. Controlling as he is, Illumi would have blown up my phone if I stayed out any longer than 9... maybe he thinks I'm at home? But he would double check that, that isn't like Illumi at all... Killua was lost in thought but Gon was no better. He didn't want Killua to leave!

"W-wait! Mito, if it's already so late, can't Killua sleep over, please?!" Gon pouted, placing his clasped hands under his chin, giving her his best puppy dog eyes. She crumbled slightly at the sight, and gave a small whine that Gon knew that meant she'd give in.

"If... it's ok with Killua. You're family must be worried. Maybe you wanna check in with them?" She asked, and Killua finally tuned back into the conversation. He gave them a blank stare then another fleeting glance at the phone.

"Erm... I mean..." If Illumi hasn't texted him already. "It should be fine. I..." He turned to look at Gon's dumb bright face with his stupid hopeful smile and the fun personality and Killua sighed. "I'd love to sleep over." He chuckled, but even before he got the full sentence out, Gon was cheering and jumping off the bed.

"Yayy! We can get the sheets and put a bunch of pillows on the floor and talk all night-!" He cried, running to his closest, immersing himself waist deep and throwing heavy comforters out over his shoulder.

"Ahem? All night, oh no, a good singer needs plenty of rest, do not stay up too late, if I wake up and you guys are still awake, you both are getting spankings." Mito scolded. Killua started chuckling, but a quick glance at Gon told him she wasn't kidding. She'd do it. He straightened up and both boys replied "Yes ma'am." She smiled and nodded.

"Good. Good night boys. See you in the morning." She said, walking out the door, leaving it open a crack. The teens looks over at each other and smiled excitedly. Killua helped Gon place the sheets on
the ground, but when he tried to build a tower of pillows for himself, Gon was whining his complaint.

"Killua, I'll need something to sleep on!" He complained, pulling his pillow fort apart. Killua blinked at him then cocked his head to one side.

"Huh?" He asked. Gon pouted.

"If you keep all the pillows for yourself, I won't have anything to sleep on!" He cried.

"You have pillows, right there, on your bed-!"

"No, Killua, I'm sleeping on the floor with you! Like a real sleepover!" He cried and Killua's eyes lit up in realization.

"Oooh… You wanna… I don't know Gon, I move alot when I sleep, you might not like having me as a bed mate." He tsked, but was only met with another wide smile.

"I move alot when I sleep too!" He cried and Killua barked out a laugh.

"Wow! Ok, fine, but don't complain when I end up kicking at your face." He challenged with a smirk. Gon met it with the same fire in his eyes.

"Only if you don't complain when I try to bite your leg." He countered and they laughed. Gon suddenly swung his head in the door's direction, quieting his laughter. Killua remembered then too that they're suppose to be trying to go to sleep.

"Oh, heehe, hold on." Gon said in a hushed tone, and scooted to the edge of their makeshift bed and nudging the door closed. "Better."

The bed made, Killua got up to look at their handiwork then looked down at himself.

"O-oooh. What am I gonna wear?" He cringed and Gon hopped up.

"That's easy! I'll just give you one of my night wears." He said, jogging over to a drawer and Killua followed at a slower pace. By the time Killua got there, Gon twirled around with the clothing in hand. It was a large gray T-shirt and sweatpants.

"Ah. Thanks." He said, taking it and turning away. It wasn't much different than what he wore to bed at home, but he mostly went shirtless at night. He slid the silver headphones off his shoulders, looking around and placing it carefully on the stand with Gon's guitar before he slipped the door open to exit into the hallway and the bathroom. Gon pouted because he didn't think he needed to leave the room to change- they even showered together! But he wouldn't try to make him uncomfortable, which reminded him…

Gon finished changing himself into a tank top and a different pair of sweatpants when the door slid back open. Gon turned around with a smile on his face only to be met with a dissatisfied expression on Killua's.

"This… isn't going to work." He groaned. Killua underestimated how broad Gon was, even if what they wore to bed was similar, their body type definitely wasn't the same. Killua was much more lean and thin.

The shirt hung on Killua's frame, his body swimming in it and his form hidden, but it kept on his shoulders well enough... But the sweatpants Gon gave him hung so loosely around his slim waist
that if he wasn't clutching a fistful of the hem, it would fall right to the ground. Gon bit his tongue to keep from laugh at the cute sight.

"Ah, sorry!" Gon knew he was small, but he didn't know he was this slender. "Do you want a pants with drawstrings?" He asked. Killua narrowed his eyes at the amusement Gon failed to keep out of his voice even though he managed not to laugh at him. He won't stand for this belittlement.

"Ah, no, I can just sleep in my boxers. They're basically shorts anyways." He said, and he released the bundle of fabric in his hands. Like a curtain at a magic show, the pants fell from his waist and, pooling at his ankles, revealing creamy white long legs, continuous and smooth. The boxers were either too short or the shirt too big and long, but they didn't cover much, just barely peeking out from the bottom of the shirt where the leg sprouted from. Gon suddenly felt warm again and felt like he shouldn't be viewing this unfiltered, so he turned his head away, rubbing at the back of his neck out of habit.

"Aha, are you sure you don't want any pants?" Gon felt the need to ask to make sure he was ok with this.

"Yea, it's fine…" Killua said, shimmying his sock clad feet out from the discarded pants around his ankles. He looked up to see Gon looking at anything in the room but he him and he felt a wave self-consciousness hit him. "Wh-why, would you rather I-?" He started but then Gon whipped his head back in his direction, and just having Gon look back at him helped his sudden self consciousness to subdue.

"N-no! I just wanted to make sure…" He muttered at the end and Killua scoffed before rolling onto the bed.

"Idiot. It was my idea." He replied before rolling forward onto the bed. He unfurled from the sumersault by Gon's feet and looking up like a pup ready to play, a mischievous smile on his face. The shirt rolled up to reveal those seemingly missing boxers, making the shirt look more fitting, but the fabric twisted around him and his hair disheveled like that….

Killua's… so cute! Gon thought feeling the heat settle on his cheeks again. He felt restless then and what Killua did looked so fun, he wanted to play.

"Ok!" He crooned, then tackled Killua in a play fight, and they wrestled, the padding and pillows softening their toples into the ground. Killua ended up winning, sitting atop of Gon with a triumphant smirk on his features. He may have been small but he had moves, using Gon's size against him and making the most of his own strength.

They were talking while playing small games like rock-paper-scissors when they heard a small creaking out in the hallway, and they both froze, breath held to hear what it was. It could have been the building settling…

But it could have been Mito.

Gon flew up and turned off the lights and tucked himself under the sheets next to Killua, both curled up in balls facing each other, the only light coming into the room came from the blue tinged night sky of the stars and moon that had yet to peek through Gon's window.

They spoke in quieter hushed tones, letting sleep lazily come visit them, but Gon didn't want to forget. He wanted to ask tonight. He just had to ask him.

"Killua…" Gon asked softly, and Killua's gaze flicked up to meet his, blue eyes still vivid in the blue
tinged darkness.

"Ya, Gon?"

"You..." He let his tongue dart out to wet his lips as he thought how to phrase his question. "Do you have anxiety?" Killua blinked, once... twice, then he sat his head up on his arm.

"What? No, I don't. Why would you ask that?" He asked, his voice no longer set at a whisper to preserve the quiet of the night.

"B-because!" Gon said, now sitting up more himself. "Back at that concert, where the music was really loud and we were in the middle of the crowd, you looked really freaked out. Cause then, are you claustrophobic?" Gon asked. Even before Gon finished his sentence, Killua's eyes widened as he remembered what he was talking about, and he sat up as well, although his movements were a bit more stiff, and briefly Gon regretted making Killua feel uncomfortable again. He let out a long sigh then slowly started shaking his head.

"I can't possibly have anxiety. There's no way, I have been drilled since birth to thrive in public situations, to be fluid conversationally, and mask off any outward signs of weakness. So, for one thing, there was no way you could have seen me freaking out, I'm sure I could have been able to hide it, easily, from you." He said, then poked Gon in the forehead. Gon pressed his mouth into a thin line, knowing this wasn't something he was suppose to muscle his way through with his loud and pushy talking style. He needed to approach this a little differently than he usually did.

"Ok... well, you may be able to hide that kind of stuff from other people, but I notice you a lot, Killua, so I know when something's off, and... I think you were just being really bad at hiding it at that moment, which I don't blame you for since you seemed unnerved." Gon said, stressing certain words so Killua wouldn't interrupt him, which he looked ready to do multiple times through his sentence, his mouth opening and closing and many expressions running on and off his face. Gon gave a pause to let Killua say anything at the end of his sentence, but he just looked down, his lips sucked in his mouth. Gon let out a small sigh.

"And... anxiety is a little weird. You can get it from certain events in the past and it can be triggered by certain things that remind you of that time, but then it can also just come in waves afterwards, randomly and at the worst times. You might be able to play it off better at some times, but some situations just freak you out to the point where you could just have a panic attack. Small situations that should be able to be handled easily become too stressful for you..." He tried to explain, and Killua finally met his eyes as he talked. Maybe it was just the darkness but his eyes seem to be shaking again slightly. "I... Killua, back at the concert... what did you feel?" Gon asked and Killua closed his eyes, letting out a sigh, and Gon thought he looked so serene, but still waters run deep.

"It was just..." He sighed again through his nose and he let his eyes open again, and Gon feared he wouldn't say, his eyes were so shallow again. "I was fine." He muttered. Gon deflated, figuring he would stop there, but then he continued, to Gon's satisfaction. "We were in the crowd, but there was plenty of space around us, and we were closer to the back, the exits to get out the crowd were obvious and easy to get to. Then the rock started, and that was fine too. It was a little loud and it made it hard to think, but there was no reason to, right? We were having fun, dancing mindlessly to... eh, ok music." He said, sure he was trying to lighten the mood, but Gon was too zoned in, hanging on every word to make sure he understood clearly. Killua squinted his eyes at Gon, the gaze becoming much too heavy to be of any comfort anymore. But he already decided he trusted Gon enough to tell him something he probably hasn't tried to tell anyone in years.

"Then the people came... They... pushed in, y'know, you could feel it, the pressure in the air, as they tried to get closer to the stage or to just squeeze in..." He said, internally cringing as he stuttered...
over a word. Gon glanced down at the movement in Killua's lap, his fists curling and opening like he
didn't know what to do with them. Killua pressed his lips together, and his eyes were to the left of
Gon now, unseeing like he was lost in the memory of the concert. Gon felt the need to do something,
so he took one of his hands, it clutching around Gon's as it was closing into fist.

Killua startled back into the present, startled at the sudden weight in his hands, and snapped his eyes
to Gon who gave him a reassuring smile, the heavy gaze lighter and Killua could breath a little
easier.

"Well, th-that's..." lie. "That was fine, but with the music, I couldn't think and suddenly I felt trapped
and cornered and I couldn't find any exits, my arms, they started feeling numb and tight all at once
and my mind... blanked." He let out, relieving the feelings as he spoke, but they fleeting right after,
the warmth in his hand too comforting to allow his... anxiety to overcome him. Did he really have
anxiety that badly?

"You were frightened." Gon concluded and Killua lowered his head. That bad, right? A World Star
shouldn't have anxiety, should get over it. It was a fear he told Illumi about years ago, and he told
him more training will help with that, will get rid of it... but Killua thinks he made it worse. So he
made a mask instead so Illumi didn't know, no one would, and the training stopped.

"It seems you started feeling panicked when you felt pressured?" Killua let his head come back up to
meet Gon's golden hues, Gon's voice reaching into his chest and vibrating his limbs like a miniscule
message on every fiber of his muscles. Killua nodded numbly. Gon nodded, looking down, looking
lost in thought, and Killua thought it was so funny when he could see him physically turning his
gears thinking, and he wanted to say so, but he didn't trust his voice at the moment. He also wanted
Gon to keep talking, to keep that resounding voice floating through the air.

"What do you usually do when you get that feeling?" Gon asked, facing him again and Killua
straightened, feeling tired all of a sudden. He let a small sound come out his throat then looked over
at his headphones on the stand. Gon followed his gaze and his eyes lit up in realization.

"The music helps?" He asked and Killua felt like laughing, Gon was too funny sometimes. Why was
he talking to him like some sort of child... some sort of special needs child, he didn't need this, he
wasn't weak, there was nothing wrong with him. He removed his hands from Gon's.

"Ah..." He let out, then coughed to clear his throat. "It usually does, the, uh, noise cancellation helps
rid the stress, grounds myself by giving me a break from the situation, and most of my music has this
bass that... helps. It makes me feel numb, but a good numb? I don't know..." He said, rubbing the
back of his head. Gon stared at him, and Killua could feel it on the side of his face although he made
a point not to look at Gon, even through the side of his eyes.

"Does... Did my voice help?" Gon asked, pointing at himself and Killua's face morphed into one of
delirious disbelief. How did he figure that? Did he know the extent he loves his voice already? When
did the conversation take this turn? "I remember when I called you at the concert, you reacted. Did
my voice help?" He asked. Ah, so he was aware his own voice resonated like a good bass, so that
was the only extent. Well, Killua figured that was all the extent that was needed.

Maybe Killua didn't even know himself, that he loved Gon's voice so much because it was soothing
and familiar, like a heartbeat, like his music. It was an escape without having to put on those
speakers. He didn't know if he should admit it.

"Killua, I want to know so that I can help you." He insisted, seeing Killua's unresponsive
movements. "I only want to help any ways I can help..." He whispered and Killua closed his eyes
before nodding, feeling heat settle over his cheeks as he exposed something that felt very secret. It
sucked, feeling this vulnerable, and maybe… oh? Was that his anxiety flaring up again? He sighed to release it, slow it's consumption over him, and he missed Gon's hand in his. Gon nodded then stuck a hand on his shoulder, shifting Killua to face him properly, looking him in the eye.

"Killua. You should know this isn't your fault. There is no way this is your fault. You shouldn't feel ashamed, or embarrassed, or feel like something is wrong with you." Gon assured, keeping those intense bright eyes boring into Killua's, and he couldn't look away. They were oddly bright in the darkness, the moonlight that was creeping into Gon's window reflected off, giving it a deep strange color of deep brown hues and golden flecks, and Killua wanted to tell him that, but he was too mesmerized and trying to take in Gon's words he was saying so seriously, he wanted to believe them, he wanted to believe this was fine. Maybe it would be fine, with Gon with him… helping him. If he'll let him.

"You're so strong to have been dealing with this by yourself for so long, not even knowing what it was to try and help yourself, so it's good you had your music. So bass helps… Warmth?" He asked. Killua let his eyes lower as he focused on the warmth of Gon's hands on his shoulders, and yea, he nodded, he found it comforting. Gon nodded, feeling a small smile on his lips. "Ok… we can work this out together. You don't have to feel stressed or alone anymore, I'll make sure you're ok as often as I can, yea? And if anytime, you just really need to listen to your music, don't even worry about it. You just put on your headphones and close your eyes, and feel better ok? If we're with our friends, I'll deal with it."

At that, Killua looked back up into Gon's eyes, his beautiful eyes, and his hand flew up to hold Gon's wrist, and Gon gave his shoulders a squeeze.

"No. No, I won't tell them about it. I'll just deal with it so they leave you alone for a while, ok? Just leave it to me, I'll protect you, ok?" He said, softly, and Killua was much too lulled to think through if Gon was lowering his voice on purposes. Killua nodded and Gon let his smile widen. He was so cute, and Gon wanted to protect him forever.

"Ok. Do you want your music now?" He asked and Killua squinted at him. He tried his voice for the first time in a couple of minutes. He doesn't know why this talk made his throat feel like it was swelling up, like the air was too heavy to breath.

"I'm not stressed right now, idiot." He was pretty proud it came out that well. Gon smiled softly and nodded.

"Wanna lay down?" He asked and Killua gave another small smile.

"Geez, stop talking to me like I'm a child, Gon." He chuckled, and lifted the sheets before settling it over his shoulder, his head hitting the pillow. Gon smiled down at him.

"Ok. I just wanted to know you were ok." He said, settling down himself, next to Killua. Gon watched his face, his eyes darting on the sheets in the space between them, like he was thinking through something, maybe re-running the conversation in his head. The moon light was peeking through the window, starting to creep on the floor of Gon's room, the light hitting the tips of Killua's fluffy hair from behind, creating a halo where it bounced off.

*It looks so soft...* He thought, and reached out to touch it, and Killua was shooting his hand out, flicking it away like reflex again, and a exasperated look on his face that said *really?* Gon chuckled sheepishly then put his hand back under his head. He felt really happy Killua was able to talk about that stuff with him, it made him feel like they were even closer friends, and he wanted to be really close with him. He felt the need to say something personal too so Killua can feel closer too...
"Killua." Gon whispered, and Killua's hazy eyes sharpened back into focus from his thoughts and he gave his attention back to Gon.

"Ya, Gon?" He whispered back, and Gon smiled at him. He really like when Killua said his name. Killua blushed and pushed his face. Wait, did he say that out loud?! "Don't just smile at me like that after you called me!" He cried out in a loud whisper. Oh.

"Heehee, sorry Killua, I just really like the way your voice sounds."

"Shut up." He mumbled, bringing his hands back to pillow under his head.

"It's true. It's really silky but still deep, like you could just start singing at any moment."

"Gon!" He cried out, his voice raising in pitch, which Gon picked up meant he was in a state of extreme emotion, usually embarrassment or anger. "I said shut up!" He strained out, the blush reaching the tips of his ears. Gon smiled sheepishly.

"Sorry, sorry, I didn't call you to embarrass you."

"Then what?"

"I wanted to tell you something. Like how you told me something, so we could be closer." Killua's eyes widened but then lidded out of recognition.

"Ah, of course. Ok, what's up? You bipolar?" He asked, half joking. Gon rolled his eyes.

"You shouldn't joke about mental disorders." Gon scolded lightly and Killua sighed.

"Ugh, of course you'd be the one to reprimand me on that. Ok, so what? Spit it out." He probed. Gon nodded to let him know he'd say.

"I… Me and Mito… we're not exactly… rich." He shrugged and his lower eyelid twitched up at how… underwhelming that sounded. Killua's face reflected exactly that.

"Wh-what? Gon, duh, I mean, ya, I picked that up." Killua said, waving his hand around the room as though to prove his point. Gon pursed his lips together. Killua didn't get it, but he didn't want to stress it. It was still hard for him to talk about, especially when Mito works so hard, but he supposed it wasn't any easier for Killua to explain his stuff either. Well, Gon mostly spoke for him, but still. He'll continue and then they'll be great friends, best friends that know everything about each other.

"No, Killua. I…" He darted his eyes around the room and Killua could pick up the distress, so he opted to stay quiet to let Gon say exactly what he meant.

"I'm… going to school on a scholarship, I don't even know what it is, like- I'm going for free basically… and I can only have big concerts every other month because Mito saved up and put aside enough for me to put it on, I sometimes have to do it on sidewalks or in the park with no lights, speakers or anything… We buy the groceries that's almost expired because that's what cheapest, and-and-" Gon said, but stopped, his stomach twisting painfully when Killua's finger landed lightly on his lips, stopping his speech. Although he didn't know if he would be able to speak over his finger anyway, his throat felt like it closed up and the air in his lungs dissolved like smoke. It was pleasant but scary.

"Gon… you don't…" His eyes were clear and deep, and Gon could fall into it, but they searched his
to say 'I understand.' "You don't have to say anymore." He let his hand slide off and back at his side. "That's…" Killua huffed. He had no idea, he assumed everyone going to the academy were rich pricks and even if they weren't super rich, they all had some sort of sense of holier-than-thou, didn't even know the meaning of humble. They complained and whined and were a spoiled bunch, heck, Killua wasn't too far off from all that, yet here was Gon.

Gon was struggling if what he was saying was any indication, him and Mito in this small little apartment so close to a plaza it had to be a lower price, but he was happy. He toughed things out sometimes, but he was still bright, days weren't always up but he was trying his hardest.

Money was an issue but he didn't make it his problem.

Killua let out a small chuckle and Gon thought he was laughing at him. He thought Killua would get up right there and just say 'Wow, I was hanging out with someone so low and poor, how dirty… I wasted my time…' and Gon felt an immense amount of dread, he wouldn't even know what he'd do if Killua said that to him. But suddenly Killua looked up, his eyes flashing in anger.

"You idiot, then why the heck did you buy me everything all day-!" Gon's hands slapped over Killua's mouth quickly as he was shouting. Gon held his breath as he listened for any footsteps indicating Mito was coming, Killua just glaring daggers at the side of his face. Gon finally exhaled then looked back over at Killua cautiously.

Ya, still glaring.

"Killua, I didn't want you to think I couldn't buy you things-" He said, carefully removing his hands.

"But you CAN'T-!" He barked out and Gon's hands were back over his mouth, a groan coming from low in Killua's throat as he tried to get the sentence out. Gon furrowed his eyebrows and shook his head. Why was Killua making this so complicated? He'll just have to spell it out for him.

"Killua! I don't want you treating me differently just because I might not have the money to do certain things with you! I don't want you buying me things or refraining from things because I can't and I wanna still buy you things as long as I can!" He exclaimed, his voice raising himself. Killua blinked at Gon, Gon's tan hands over his mouth a stark contrast to his porcelain skin, then he closed his eyes, in what Gon could only read as resignation, so he cautiously removed his hands again. His mouth was firmly closed, his eyebrows furrowing as he took in what Gon said.

"I… can understand that." He muttered, opening his eyes and Gon smiled. "I can understand that, and I won't treat you differently, but you have to understand," He said firmly, poking a finger to Gon's chest, his eyes lit up with fiery determination and Gon swallowed. "If you're allowed to buy me things, I'm allowed to buy you things too. I won't go around buying everything for you, I have my own allowance and I can't just waste it on you, but if I wanna buy you something because I want us to enjoy it together, then I'm allowed to- upupupup!" Killua tutted as Gon opened his mouth to protest. "You can't stop me." He finished and it left Gon's mouth hanging open. Gon closed his mouth with a "hurrumph." and looked thoughtfully to one side.

"That… makes sense… Ok, and you also can't tell anyone at school about that stuff either. For some reason, when people heard that about me in my last school, I would lose friends really fast…" He mumbled and Killua could swear he could hear his heart breaking then reforming with a vengeance on whoever did that to his precious light. "Killua…" Gon said waringly, and he snapped his eyes back to Gon, who was looking at him sternly. "No, you can't go around taking revenge."

Killua's mouth hung open. "I didn't say I would-!"
"I saw it in your eyes, you were looking all angry and your eyes were darkening." Gon said, still looking firm. Killua let out a "hurrumph" of his own as he looked off and crossed his arms, and Gon finally smiled.

"Don't worry, I won't tell anyone…" Killua muttered after a moment. "After all, this is only something between best friends." Killua said, like some sort of contract, like daring him to tell someone else because he had other best friends, but it only brightened Gon up.

"Ya!" He cried out in a cheer, and pulled Killua in for a hug.

"Ah-ah, Gon, shhh!" Killua let out while also frantically trying to pry Gon off. "Also, get off me!" He cried and Gon just laughed into Killua's chest.

As they drifted off to sleep, their lingering thoughts floated in their head as they thought about the teenager next to them.

_Gon is so self sacrificing…_

_Killua sure keeps alot of things to himself…_

---

Gon threw his arm over his eyes then shoved Killua's leg off his stomach again so that he laid with his back slightly exposed to Gon, his legs crossed over haphazardly. Killua's been moving and throwing himself like that ever since he fell asleep. Gon let out another sigh and looked over at the clock on the dresser.

3 in the morning.

It's still no good. Gon can't get to sleep. He felt so restless with Killua next to him, like they shouldn't be sleeping right now, they should be playing. Maybe it was because he spent the whole day playing with Killua and now his brain is conditioned to think everytime Killua was near, they should be doing something, moving, something! But he knew it would be unfair to Killua if he woke him up just to play or just because he couldn't sleep.

He turned and propped his head on his elbow and turned to look at his sleeping friend. His face was set peacefully and his mouth slightly parted as he snored lightly. The moon was now positioned at a perfect angle to shine fully into their room through his window, sprawling over Gon and Killua's makeshift bed. Gon was surprised the moon was that bright, it was like a street light was positioned right into their room.

Gon squinted at Killua. In fact, how could Killua sleep when there was a giant bright light shining right onto his eyes. He was tempted to poke him to see if Killua was actually asleep, but he knew he was just secretly hoping that would wake him up so he could play with him.

He observed the shadows the moonlight made on Killua's face, the shadows of curve of his nose and lips falling on his cheeks, the shadows of his hair more wispy falling over his forehead. His hair was still so soft looking, and Gon was still so curious as to how it felt, silky or fluffy? Like cotton or threads? Gon's hand lifted to Killua's forehead then he stopped himself, shaking his head that he shouldn't when he knows Killua doesn't want him touching his hair.

He went back to looking at his face with nothing better to do. The moonlight lit up Killua's pale skin, making it seem like he was illuminating under the glow and his hair was made of stardust. His thick black lashes curled delicately over his cheeks and Gon wondered how he could look this… _Beautiful._
Gon knew in Japan, skin this pale was considered gorgeous, a mark of nobility too, and vaguely pondered how Killua kept his skin so light and smooth and flawless. Gon leaned a little closer to the spotlighted star, really, he couldn't find a single blemish on his skin. Killua's nose twitched from the tickle of Gon's breath over his face and Gon backed up flustered.

Right, right, Killua was just laying there so nicely like a doll on display, he forgot Killua was sleeping (like he should be trying to do) and he had personal space (something Gon invaded multiple times already on Killua, so he should learn to stop, it obviously made him uncomfortable). Gon huffed and determinedly set his mind to get to sleep. He closed his eyes and counted sheep, 327 of them, then he sang lullabies to himself, in his mind as not to disturb Killua's sleep, over and over. Then he began thinking of last wednesday's history lesson and he finally began to lull to sleep. His mind flitted in and out of consciousness, some absurd images coming in and out as he knew his brain was piecing together a dream for when he was fully immerse in deep slumber.

Finally, He thought, when just then he heard shifting on Killua's side and knew he was about to move again. Gon will just have to ignore it and whatever bodypart of Killua's would be flung on him.

Then,

Cotton Candy. Cotton Candy that was soft like a bunny's fur.

Gon's eyes snapped open, and there was Killua, his head resting on Gon's shoulder, nearly his chest, and his hair was shoved up on the side of Gon's face. His mouth was open as he snorted in a sleepy gasp and he exhaled, his warm breath fanning over Gon's shoulder exposed by the tank top.

Gon sucked in a sharp breath as he felt that warm feeling settle all over his body again, most heavily on his face and the pit of his stomach. A shiver ran up and down his spine, coiling up right by the warmth in his stomach. He felt like he was standing, tipping and wobbling, on the edge of a tall building or cliff, nearly free falling, and it was amazing and it was intense and it was scary.

It scared Gon because he didn't know what it was, and Killua was doing it to him and he didn't know how to react or what to do. within 2 seconds of Killua cozying up on him, Gon tore himself away from Killua, scrambling backwards and sitting up, holding a hand to his chest in hopes of slowing his heart rate down. He kicked at the sheets, feeling too hot now, and he didn't hear the sheets shifting next to him.

"Gon…?" His soft sleepy voice came and Gon nearly jumped at the voice, he didn't think he woke Killua. But thinking about it, in his panic, he just ripped his shoulder from Killua, probably letting his head fall abruptly onto the pillow beneath Gon. Gon looked over at him, he was sitting up with the sheets pooling at his waist, rubbing sleepily with a loose fist at one of his eye, the other peaking at him with a dream hazed hue. He sat up against the moonlight, casting a dark shadow on his silhouette, and he looked like a child, he looked so cute.

"A-ahh…" Gon murmured, clutching at his tanktop now, feeling his chest squeeze and the words escape him, his brain shutting down. Killua let his hand fall to his side and he squinted at Gon.

"What happened? Why are you up?" He asked. From his perspective, Gon was completely lit up by the moon behind him, and he could see he was flushed and discomposed, staring at him kinda strange. "Did you have a nightmare?" He asked. Gon realized he was staring and that Killua asked him something but he didn't hear a thing, lost in how angelic he looked with the halo around his tuffs of hair.

"Ah, sorry for waking you Killua…" Gon said, "Let's just go back to sleep." He chuckled and Killua
gave him another squaring look before closing his eyes and slipping back into the sheet.

"Fine… if you're sure your fine…" He said, pulling the cover over his shoulder. "I can't make you tell me."

*Killua, I couldn't tell you even if I wanted to.* He thought as he settled down next to him. He heard more than saw Killua go back to sleep, his breathing slowing and his body movements again becoming wide. Gon slid out of bed just before Killua's arm slung over his chest again and he stared down at the bed Killua took up with the expanse of his body.

*I feel really restless now. I won't be able to go to sleep unless I do something…* Gon thought… then fell to the ground, starting a round of push-ups. *I'll just have to tire myself out.*

---

Killua sleepily bleared his eyes open, hearing an incessant buzzing and feeling the vibrations pinpointedly by his feet. At seeing the pale roof that wasn't his house, he become disoriented and confused before he remembered that he had slept over Gon's place.

His first sleep over with a friend. It was nice.

Now if only that buzzing could stop.

"Goooon…" Killua moaned, flipping onto his stomach and scrunching up his face in disgust when he nearly smacked his face into a foot. The heck? He lifted his head up in a swift motion and saw he was oriented on the opposite side of their bed, both of them sprawled out sideways and the pillows thrown about. Wow, first time he moved *that* much, but he supposed it was easier when you were on the floor without fear of falling off your bed (even though he's already done that a couple times in the past). But still, the buzzing continued, the pattern irregular and buzzes shorter so he could only assume it were text messages, a flood of them as the other person on the line desperately tried to reach the target.

Killua's senses were sharpened as a feeling of dread washed over him. *Illumi?* He gathered himself to his knees just as Gon groaned sleepily himself and patted his hand out for the buzzing by his head. Killua crawled over him and got the phone before he did, but that wasn't right… This isn't his phone, this is Gon's. He looked left and right, delivering Gon's phone into his searching hand and located his on the dresser by the bed. He lunged forward and checked his phone for messages. He felt something like a bucket of cold water wash over him.

No messages?

Something must be wrong. This isn't like Illumi at all. He usually had the reigns on Killua's life reigned in so tightly, it was suffocating. It was unnerving thinking something was happening, he was planning something while in wait. He didn't like how he didn't know, he couldn't predict, what Illumi was doing.

"Killewwaa…" Gon's sleepy voice rang out, sounding drunk with the strange way he held out the syllables. Killua chuckled and placed his phone back down. He was being ridiculous, he was thinking too much, this was fine. If there was really an issue, *someone* would have contacted him. He'll just enjoy his strange and new found freedom and be with Gon for now.

"Ya?" He asked, turning around as Gon stretched his back out, the phone in his hands finally silent. Gon blinked at him and held his mouth in an attempt to stop his laughter.

"I didn't think your hair could get any messier!" He laughed and Killua threw a pillow at his face.
"Idiot! Who was blowing up your phone, hah?" He bit out, crawling over curiously.

Gon looked down at his phone, remembering that was in fact the reason he was awoken so abruptly. Checking the time on his phone first, he saw it was 7 in the morning. This would normally be an... ok time to be up, but he didn't get to sleep til late like, 4 nearing 5, so that meant he got maybe 3 hours of sleep, he was tired. He suppose he was lucky he was a morning person or else he might have had to hit something with how grumpy and cranky he'd be.

His eyes widened when he saw who it was sending nearly 20 messages.

"Melody?" He asked, opening the latest text to see the whole chain of texts.

"For real?" Killua asked, peeking over to see what she sent to Gon so urgently. He scrolled to the top for the correct sequence of messages.

-Gon, the pretest is tomorrow and we haven't worked on the song!

-Are you awake?

-Gon we need to work on it today!

-I was just wondering because you said you wanted to make it a full blown performance!

-Gon, I can't get back to sleep, I was awakened by my stress

The messages just continued on similarly, probably texting just to wake Gon. Killua snickered as Gon placed a hand over his mouth. He totally forgot, which he shouldn't have, honestly, he just thought they had plenty of time, ugh, he's such a procrastinator. But this was the worst time because it held the fate of someone else's grade and love life. He should have committed more time to his friend if he was really intent on helping her.

"Duuude, you're fu-

"Killua, get up, we have to get ready, I need to go pick up Melody, KILLUAA!" Gon freaked, pushing Killua over and standing to pace the floor. Killua just let out a laugh from being tossed so easily.

"Geez, calm down, you're up now right? All you guys have to do is pick a song and determine who's going to sing what part." Killua said, standing up and, feeling a breeze, remembered he wasn't wearing anything for pants except his boxers.

Gon shook his head and grabbed Killua's arm, herding him out and towards the bathroom to the left of his room.

"No! Killua, get ready, there's toothbrushes under the sink and the toothpaste is on the counter, towels in the cabinet, please Killua, hurry, I need to go!" Gon order, his phone pressed up against his ear. "Ah, Melody? Great-" He said, as she seemingly picked up on the other side, before closing the door on Killua, cutting off the conversation. Killua pouted and turned towards the bathroom.

"Bossing me around like that..." He mumbled entering the bathroom and looked around before ducking his head under the sink for those toothbrushes Gon said they had. There were a cluster of them in a little cup, all wrapped up in plastics like the ones dentist office's hand out. He pulled out a lightening blue one and pinched the two sides to peel it open, rinsing it under the sink and adding the paste before sticking it in his mouth and scrubbing at his teeth. He lazily strolled over to lean on the door frame of the bathroom, looking at the closed door of Gon's room, when the door across the hall
opened and Mito poked her tousled bedhead out the door. She spotted Killua who froze upon seeing her sleepily squinted eyes and she stepped out completely in her robe.

She walked over to Gon's room door and heard the muffled hasty conversation then pointedly turned to Killua, her face questioning.

Killua shrugged.

"He procrastinated and now he's rushing plans with his partner." Killua spoke around the toothbrush. Her face lit up in understand then smiled warmly at Killua and he blinked, slightly shocked. She stepped closer and rustled his hair.

"Good morning Killua." She said, with voice filled with love only a mother could hold. He let her touch his hair, too shocked to do anything else. How could she be so friendly, so nice, so caring to someone she just met yesterday? She held affection for him like they had known each other for years. She moved towards the kitchen.

"You two will need breakfast before you go. Gon will be in too much of a rush to make some for himself." She muttered, making conversation. Killua snapped out of it and nodded, recalling how frantic Gon looked as he pushed him out. He wondered if Gon would even have enough patience to sit and eat.

He wandered back into the bathroom and finished cleaning up, his face and mouth rinsed. He came out, hearing Mito already sizzling something on the stove that smelled amazing! Killua took one step in the direction of the kitchen when Gon's door flew open, he was fully dressed in his usual green hoodie and jeans, slippers on his feet.

"Killua!" He sighed out in relief at seeing the male finished with the bathroom. He grabbed his arm and dragged him inside the room. "Get dressed, I'll explain the plan for today on the way."

For today? Killua thought, his mind reeling from how easily Gon really could drag Killua around, catching and moving him like he was as light as a doll.

"Gon, were you thinking I was going to spend all day with you today too?" Killua asked before Gon could get out the door. Gon turned back at that, some of his vigor deflating as he took in Killua from the door.

"I- did you not want to?" Gon asked and Killua scoffed.

"It was more like you assumed I would. You didn't even ask me. I told you I was free Saturday, but how do you know my Sunday isn't busy?" He asked, crossing his arm. Gon pressed his lips together. He really wanted Killua with him, but he didn't have time to properly apologize.

"Killua, will you come with me today?" He asked instead, turning to face him completely. Killua sighed. He just wanted to give Gon a hard time for not asking, but he didn't really plan on saying no. At this point, Killua felt if Gon would just ask, he'd do anything. As long as no new messages flashed on his phone screen, he was free.

"Idiot… hurry up, we're going to be late." He muttered, waving his hand to dismiss Gon. He jumped happily and leaped out the room as Killua looked around for his clothes from yesterday. It wasn't ideal, but it would work. He couldn't very well wear Gon's stuff, he's too big for his frame if yesterday was any indication.

He just settled his silver headphones over his bare shoulders that were exposed from his wide collar mouthed shirt when Gon bursted back in. He gave Killua's form one once-over before deciding he
was presentable and grabbed his wrist and dragged him out the door.

"Great, we need to hurry."

"Fine, Gon, let go-

"HOLD IT!" Mito shouted, halting Gon in his tracks, Killua barely able to stop himself from running smack into Gon's back. "I don't know or care what it is that you have to rush to finish or anything because you decided to put it off, but you are not leaving here without a proper breakfast." She said, her voice laced icily. Gon cringed but tried to fight it anyway.

"But Mito, Mel-

"Sit!" She barked and Gon parked it at the island's stool. Killua snickered before Mito snapped her sharp gaze on him and he swallowed whatever humor he felt bubbling out and sat in the seat next to Gon keeping eye contact with her as if to make sure this action did not displease her. Only when both males were firmly seated did she finally let a warm motherly smile grace her face again.

"Good! I have crepes for both of you." She sang out, pulling two plates up from behind the cleft of the island, placing it in front of them. "Strawberry compote for Gon, and nutella and strawberry for Killua, with extra chocolate on top." She said, winking at Killua as his eyes sparkled at the chocolate concoction placed in front of him, his preference flavors discussed at the dinner table last night.

"Ah! Thanks, Mito!" Killua shot out first, snatching up his fork and knife with lightening speed and digging in.

"Yea, thanks!" Gon said, also excited about his crepe, strawberries being his favorite fruit and flavor. Mito nodded, happy they were eating properly before whatever crazy day Gon had in store for both of them.

When they finished, they slipped their shoes back on at the front door, Gon snatching up the keys as he told Mito he'd be taking the car, and they skipped out to the parking for the apartment.

"Nice! It's been forever since I've been in a car that wasn't driven by a butler or family member taking me to an appointment or scheduling." Killua crooned as he slid up to the ride Gon headed towards.

"Ah? I'll have to take you out more. You should have plenty of fun before becoming a World Star." Gon commented, unlocking and ducking in the car. Killua came in with him and checked out the front dashboard.

"Gon..." He said, sounding distracted. "Is this a convertible?" He asked, observing certain buttons that gave that indication. Gon chuckled, then scoffed out in a valley accent, "Yee-ea." jamming the key in the ignition and bringing the car to life.

"No way! Gon, you gotta let the hood down!" Killua shouted, shoving Gon as he eased out the small parking lot.

"Wh- Maybe later, Killua, I'm kinda gonna be in a rush, I don't want your hair to get any worse." Gon said, pretending to sound distracted like he didn't just tease Killua. Killua gasped dramatically.

"You saggy armpit, shut up!" He cried out, then pulled down the tab on the roof to open the mirror, musing his hair to try and make it stick out in certain angles. Gon laughed, that was too cute.

"Killua, don't bother, you look fine. You're hair's perfect." Gon chuckled out after another dark look
from Killua when he laughed. He scrunched his mouth up skeptically, but only gave his reflection one more fleeting look before slapping up the tab to get it out the way.

"Well, spit it out, what's the plan for today?" He asked, placing his arms on the middle console.

"Yea, um, Killua, put on your seatbelt." Gon said after flashing his eyes in his direction. He was wondering how Killua could have twisted his body comfortably like that when he had a seatbelt on. It was cause he wasn't. Killua made a face.

"Ugh, what are you, the police?" He groaned and Gon rolled his eyes, easing to a stop.

"No, but we'll be facing one if we're pulled over because you didn't have one on. And neither of us have a valid license in here so that'll be points on my permit and- Killua! Please?" He asked, not feeling like explaining what was obviously just meant to be jab on Killua's part. Killua sighed but complied, opting to place his feet up on the dash in front of him.

"Ok!" Gon continued. "So, I wanted to help Melody really... find herself, right? You picked that up- yea, so I don't just want to do the assignment, I want to... blow it open to epic proportions. We don't need to- there's no need to make an original song, I don't even know where to start with that." Killua made a face, and Gon felt something flare up briefly somewhere in the back of his mind, but he just shoved that back far away back in the recess of his mind to forget for the day, maybe a couple days, "we can just do a great cover song, and hopefully through this process:"

"Wait." Killua said, holding a hand up, his voice deep with seriousness. Gon winced. "You don't... You haven't started on your winter performance?" Killua asked, an elegant eyebrow raised in accusation. Gon bit his bottom lip.

"I have time-!"

"Gon, that's what you said about this project, and here you are, rushing the day before to finish it. Besides, people take this stuff very seriously, practicing and working at it months in advance. I'm sure everyone's who's performing is already practicing, or getting started on making their musics. You need to start as soon as possible if you're going to get first place." Killua said scoldingly, and Gon felt the twinge come back, worry, panic and anxiety the cocktail of emotions coming in. It sounds hard, and near impossible, and he was too prideful and stubborn to admit he couldn't do it, and would try his hardest in the end, but he just wished he had a little... help.

"Well, if I had a coach...?" He asked leadingly. Killua leaned back into his chair.

"You better find one to get you on track then, cause I'm not gonna. That's not my business. You got yourself into this, work it out yourself." He scoffed, placing his hands behind his head.

"Please Killua? Why won't you help me? Isn't that what friends do?" Gon whined, the car veering left into a nice neighborhood. Killua sent a sharp glare in Gon's direction. That was one thing he didn't want to hear come out of Gon's mouth again. He did not want to be used for his talents so other people could profit, (and that is what people would do, Illumi's told him all about it, and he's seen it multiple times beforehand, those same exact words repeated over and over like a broken toy) when Gon was more than capable of beating all those amateur losers if he just focused.

"Yea, but I'm not your friend, Gon." Killua chided and Gon whipped his head over at him incredulously. "I'm your best friend. So, as the person who knows what's best for you, I think what's best for you is doing this yourself or other help that isn't as professional as me, and you'll gain so much experience, it'll be great." Killua continued. Gon barely heard anything after the first sentence. He was too busy beaming from what Killua said. It was true wasn't it?! They were best friends!
Killua knew it, Gon felt it for the longest time, and now it was solidified and he was so happy, he was filled with new vigor.

He wanted to do well, he wanted to concentrate and blow the competition away, just for Killua, just to show him he could be the best friend he valued him up to be.

Killua peaked at Gon through the corner of his eye when he didn't respond, but was met with a determined gaze directed out on the road as Gon drove, so he figured his talk was pretty effective. Hah, some kids just need an extra push.

Gon stopped in front of a large beige 2 story house, wide and spacious evident even from the outside. Gon put the car into park as Killua took in the house, letting out a low whistle. It wasn't nearly as big as his house, but the taste was good. Gon pulled out his phone and texted Melody and put it away when Killua turned back to face him.

"Ah, wait, you didn't tell me what we were doing." Killua said and Gon waved his hand dismissively.

"Well, Melody's on her way, it'll save time if I just tell you two at the same time." He shrugged.

Killua squished his mouth from side to side unsatisfied, but took it. It made sense, but he didn't want to wait. Soon the chubby short girl was jogging out from the front door, her head wrapped in a purple bandanna with her hair coming out in soft waves behind her, a floral turtleneck on and green maxi skirt. Killua lowered the window as she came down the winding long driveway, both of the males giving friendly smiles at her. She started at seeing Killua in the car as well, but soon enough was in the car.

"Good morning, Gon. I didn't know you'd be joining us, Killua." She said, slipping into the back seat, a bit breathless from rushing out.

"Ya, well, this moron hogged me all day yesterday to the point where it was a little late to go home, and I ended up sleeping over. He asked me to come along since I was already there." Killua explained before Gon could. She giggled.

"Well, you're welcomed company." She said in a soothing voice and Killua smiled before nodding. Gon, feeling happy with how things were progressing, decided to start pulling out and head towards the only clothing store he knew at a strip mall.

"Well, Gon, you were talking pretty… incomprehensibly on the phone, but you said something about how you plan on getting the project done how you wanted?" She asked, and Killua leaned in, interest piqued to know. Gon chuckled sheepishly, since he was a bit disoriented that morning being woken up to the beat of stress and forgotten assignments.

"Right. Well, I want you to be able to find who you want to be as a World Star! You need confidence and direction and passion, and well, what better way to start with confidence than with a whole new wardrobe!" Gon exclaimed and both Killua and Melody shouted, "What?!" Gon grinned cheekily.

"Ya! Clothes really helps a person's confidence, so buying you clothes that help you feel good is the first step to making sure this performance is the mark of your new beginning for the rest of the school year!" Gon exclaimed.

"As in…" Killua intoned after a beat, pointing at Gon. "You're gonna buy…?" Gon peeked over at Killua to see his face a bit disbelieving. He placed his eyes back on the road before deciding to answer truthfully.
"Ya."

He was never good at lying anyways.

"Gon! You can't-e!" Killua started, his feet coming down from the dashboard to plant firmly on the car floor as he took in Gon's side profile. But then Gon turned his gaze to Killua's warningly, although a smile never left his face. Killua gulped, it was scary how he could do that actually, but feeling Melody's stare on the two of them, he understood what he wanted to say that he couldn't aloud.

*Don't let on that I'm financially challenged.*

He huffed and crossed his arms, slinking down into his seat as Gon turned his eyes back onto the road.

"W-what? What's going on? Gon, I don't need new cloth-

"Haha, Melody, don't even worry about it. Just think of it as an outing with friends, you're window shopping, and whatever looks or feels good, we'll just get it for you, ok? This should be relaxing and fun, k?" Gon cut off, and both her and Killua got a sense it was some sort of stubbornness no one could break him out of now that he's set his mind to it.

What they didn't know was this was something he's had his mind set to do long ago, and now that he's so mindlessly put it off, he was on a time crunch. He didn't mean to be rude and cut Melody off, but she needed to know this was happening, and she was going to enjoy it.

"Er, ok, so that's… clothes, but what about the performance? Are the clothes we're getting today going to be for the performance?" She asked, scooting up so her head peeked up from in between the seats. Killua looked over at her and suppressed a chuckle. She was so cute, who could not think she was cute? He could understand Gon's thought process, if she could just harness what confidence she had, everything she did would be painted in gold and elegance, whatever she wanted to come across. Personality outshined looks any day, but she wasn't even that unappealing. She had more attractive qualities than bad.

Gon's answer pulled him out of his thoughts.

"Yea, you can if you want. This is just more of a wardrobe for the school year. To wear and feel pretty and confident and wear your personality on the outside so you have strength to do so? Yea. Sounds good."

"You're making stuff up as you go." Killua muttered, more as a fact than a question.

"That's cuz you guys keep asking questions that should be obvious! So I have to tell you something." He complained, pulling into the strip mall. The kind of place civilians go to, and not where future stars go to be seen.

"Uh, Gon?" Killua started.

"I'm sure the mall-" Melody tried.

"What? Guys, come on, you can't beat shopping at American Outfitters, they have great clothes." Gon said, cutting them off. Melody again got that stubborn aura but Killua wasn't having it.

"Gon, that doesn't sound like designer-"
"Huh? Killua, we don't need designer, down to earth and mellow is totally in right now."

"You don't know what you're talking about-"

"Killua, please, this is where I shop, along with, like, forever 21, which we're totally going to after, and-"

"Oh, Gon, Gawd, please stop, that's mediocre-"

"Killua! Ohmigawd, I swear to bob, I know what I'm doing, trust me!"

"You know wha- Fine! But if I deem you unfit, I'm taking over." Killua swore. Gon huffed and
puffed his cheeks, not confirming or denying that he agreed with that. Killua also went back to
sulking, but Melody just found it so cute. They must be really good friends.

Gon found parking and they all entered, Killua (at least pretending to be mad at Gon) put his
headphones over his ears to put on a front of ignoring Gon for his insolent stubbornness. Gon stole a
glance at him, and thought he looked so cool and aloof, he wanted to take a picture, but he knew
they were suppose to be trying to be mad at each other, so he'll wait until Killua gives in first.

Melody came out with something Gon wanted to see her in. They were in a private dressing room
with a furnished waiting room outside the dressing stalls that Killua got them for free somehow. Gon
didn't bother to ask if he paid, that would open up another can of worms in front of Melody he didn't
want her to see.

They browsed, looking for a different and wide variety of clothes for Melody to try on. They wanted
her try on almost everything so she knew what type of clothes she liked and what direction to go in
terms of fashion for buying new wardrobe she wanted.

She came out in something Gon picked, Killua lazing on the layout couch on the far side of the room
with his headphones down off his ears but music clearly playing softly through the speakers. He
lolled his head and made a face at the black slick jacket and off gray felt fabric pants, hugging her
frame unattractively. He's been making a lot of faces since Gon and Melody's been pulling stuff off
the racks. She keeps trying stuff on alot like what she already wears, long sleeves and long skirts,
hide as much of her skin and figure as possible. Gon just didn't know what girls wear, Killua
guesses.

"I don't know, Gon, this isn't really what…” She trailed, feeling bad they've already there an hour
and no forward progress has been made. Gon slightly pouted but a smile was on his face in a second.

"Well, that's ok, we'll find something, there's a whole store." He said, and turned to the rejection pile
behind him, ready to go put everything back. Killua paused his music and stamped his foot as he
stood.

"That's it!" Killua barked. "You're off the project." Gon whirled around at Killua's loud voice, He
generally didn't say or participate much at all since they entered the private room, staying lounged on
the couch, playing with his phone or something, as Gon and Melody scoured the racks.

"What!? Why for?!!" He cried.

"Cuz you're horrible at this. I understand, all these clothes you're coming in with, they look great, not
everything has to be designer, but you don't know what you're doing! It's sad, really, Gon, stay in
here. You." He said, turning to Melody who shrank under his authoritative tone. He could have
scoffed. Well, you can't make an alpha out of a doe in a day. "Get out of that hideous thing that
never should have been approved for production for the public." He barked and she quickly spun the curtain around her to get changed. When she came out, he dragged her out to the racks, Gon fidgeting impatiently around the small furnished room.

He was just about plotting on escaping the room to see what they were doing when the door swung open and Gon jumped backwards, trying to pretend he wasn't doing anything.

"I wasn't doing anything!" He shouted out, in case his body language wasn't good enough.

"Yea, yea, sure." He mumbled. Gon blinked after him looking at the clothes Killua was lugging in. Killua casted him a look over his shoulder.

"Sit down!" He barked, placing the slew of clothes in the dressing stall corner. Gon sat quickly to stay out of the way, wondering what Killua got that was so different.

Killua then turned to Melody, and with a gentleness Gon maybe only saw when he was with the orphans, spoke to her, "Try on any of the clothes in whatever combination. Whichever you like the best. Remember… Elegant." He said and she nodded determinedly. She slipped in and Killua sighed, taking his lounging seat back on the couch. Why was Killua only so mean to him? Oh, maybe, was he still mad?

"Killua, you should be nice to me too." Gon said, staring at the lashes laying on his cheeks before they flicked open.

"Why?" He asked and Gon tilted his head, thinking. "Exactly." Killua said, Gon still stumped. There was tinkling and chiming laughter from inside the dresser stall and both boys looked over as Melody came out.

She wore the purple bandana on her head still, but she wore a jean jacket over a purple undershirt, a flowy floral pattern skirt sweeping at her knees, black stockings hugging her curvy legs elegantly, curving off into little cute clad feet.

"I like this one." She said, heading to the body sized mirror to one side of the room and angling her body this way and that to see the outfit better. She only squealed more happily. Gon was clapping quietly while giving his praise on how she looked, Killua sat up from his lounged posture, a soft smile on his face.

"That's good. You still have a bunch more clothes left to try on." He said, nodding his head in the direction of the dressing stall.

"Mh!" She hummed, pulling at the front of her jean jacket, taking in more before she had to get out of it. She really did feel good, not self conscious as all. She finally understood what Gon was saying when he said clothes could make the person. She skipped back inside and Gon turned to Killua.

"How'd you do that?"

"Do what?" Killua asked, his arms draped across each other laxed.

"That- that thing where she liked her clothes and they looked good on her! How'd you know which to get?"

Killua lifted one hand to wave lazily, "Oh, that? When you hang around enough designers, you start to get a feel for these kinda things." Gon nodded numbly taking it in. Killua was so cool!

"Where do you talk to designers?" Gon asked, and Killua tilted his head to get a better look at the

"Killua has even been in fashion shows?!" He cried and Killua smiled, feeling smug.

"Yea! Of course, apart of being an idol is knowing how to sing, dance, act, and model, so naturally, my parents had us book shows. Also, after the shows are done, some of the designers let me keep some of the clothes! You've seen some I've worn on the runway, like the outfit on Friday with the feather necklace." Killua said, feeling braggy. Gon was openly admiring it, and Killua was eating it up. It was so satisfying to get attention from Gon, it was genuine and more fulfilling than getting it from a thousand faceless fans. Killua just wanted more of the bright man's rays shining in his direction.

Before anything could be said, Melody came back through the curtain in a long sleeved satin shirt with draping sleeves that came over and down her fingers, free hanging into the air, legging like jeans hugging her form. Gon turned to Melody to give her praise as she expressed how much she liked it again. Killua felt a bit irritated for a second as Gon's attention was stolen, but he knew he was just being silly and gave her his praise too a second later.

Melody eventually got through all the clothes Killua got for her, going with more girl-next-door type clothes and down-to-earth vibe.

"Great!" Gon cheered, gathering the clothes into his arms. "I'll go pay for these and we'll move on to the next store!" Gon exclaimed and Killua suppressed a sharp sigh. He'll have to remember to swipe Gon's wallet at the next store so he has no choice but to forfeit paying for the wardrobe. Melody probably has no problem with Gon paying for it, or no idea why it might be a problem, as it's usually safe to assume everyone attending the school were very wealthy or at least well off, as was the case with the vast majority of the student body. And with how inexpensive this place was, Gon offering to buy whole wardrobes for her was equivalent to friends buying each other little phone charms at dollar stores. Infact, Melody probably thinks the reason Gon brought them to such a cheap and public place was in order to buy larger bulks of clothes at a lower cost.

Once Gon gathered all the clothes that Melody stated she wanted, he left the room in an excited tizzy. Killua let out a long sigh, flopping backwards onto the long cushioned furniture. Melody giggled and clapped, excited and ready for the next store. This was it, she was redefining herself, she was finding herself, and she liked what was coming to fruition. She knew it would take time, and probably the first time she moves around with the new clothes, she won't feel comfortable and self confident, not like she does around Killua and Gon, but it's a work in progress and it's something she's prepared to work on. She turned to Killua who had his eyes closed.

"This is so exciting! I'm really grateful to you and Gon for doing this for me… with me. I never thought this pretest would be something so invaluable to my career." She said, skipping closer. Killua slid his eyes open and gave her a smile, sitting up straighter.

"Don't thank me, I didn't do anything. I'm just following Gon around, just like you. It's really thanks to him." He chuckled, then stood up so he towered over the shorter girl. "But this has got me excited too. I can't wait to see what else we can get at the next store, I should look for something that is a little different than what we've already gotten. Let me see you without that bandana so I can get a better idea-" He said, reaching for her bandana that covered the top of her head.

"No!" She cried out, pulling on the edges of it to pull it further down her head, twisting away from
Killua's finger tips. Killua froze, his hand suspended mid-air. He frowned softly, concern etched on his features.

"M-

"NO, I'm keeping my bandana on, it's part of my brand, I'm not going to take it off…!" She said, shaking her head while backing up although Killua had yet to move towards her after the initial attempt. He sighed and put his hands back down, sliding them into his pockets.

"What's wrong?" He asked and she shook her head.

"Nothing, I'm just… I need it on."

Killua frowned a bit deeper, feeling more irritated than concerned, but knew he had to practice his patience with someone as mousey as her.

"You mean like… a security blanket?" He bit the inside of his mouth briefly in a silent quick debate before moving his hands to unwrap his silver headphones from his neck. "This is like my security blanket too, but I can take it off real quick, see?" He asked, waving it around before putting it back on. She slowly shook her head.

"No, it's… necessary. I can't… I have to keep it on, to help me with my… self-confidence. I'll feel better if I never take it off ever again." She said and now Killua wasn't having it.

"Melody." He said in his firm voice. She raised her shaky eyes up to his steady ones and he let his eyes soften just a little. He stepped closer and he figured it was a good sign she didn't step back again. "It's ok. Let me see." He hummed lowly, trying to talk on a soothing voice. He raised a hand up and she didn't move away, just screwed her eyes shut, and Killua felt a little bad that she felt so uncomfortable with the situation, but if this was what he thought this was, he had to do this to make sure she knew it was ok, that she could love every part of her body with no weakness to strike.

His fingers gently pinched the side of the bandana and slowly but swiftly moved it back and away. Her cheeks heated up in what he could only assume was shame but this was just too ridiculous.

He removed her glasses next and she opened her eyes in surprise, to see Killua's soft smiling face.

"Heh, you're so scared..." He chuckled as she searched his face for any sign of judgemental. Underneath the bandana, her hair line was moved far back to the top of her head, nearly out of sight when looked on from face on.

"I don't understand..." He let out in a soft chuckle and she blinked her olive green eyes owlishly at him. "You're still beautiful just like this. You're still Melody, you're still elegant. You should still keep confident." Killua's eyes darted somewhere above Melody's head as he tried to remember what it was Gon said that last class. "As long as you believe it, there's no way anyone could deny that. It's all about how you carry yourself."

Killua danced his fingers along her hair tips to free and shake loose her slightly wavy hair to cascade around the frame of her face which actually looked pretty by her tearful eyes- wait, tearful?!

Killua's eyes shot to look at Melody, her eyes shimmering with unshed tears.

"Me-Melod-! Oof!" He panicked when he saw her tears, but she then ducked out of his line of sight and barreled into his chest in a hug, squeezing the air out of his lungs. She knows for a girl, hair is really important, it's part of their identity and female confidence. When growing up, she started noticing her hairline receding, and she was too embarrassed and ashamed to bring it up to her
parents, so she just started wearing her bandanas around, bought multiple styles to incorporate it in her fashion. She was already self conscious of her body, wearing clothes that hid her figure, and when she looked up what was happening to her, she figured out it was possibly female pattern baldness. It was genetic but she didn't know who in her family had it. She never met her grandmother but her mother looked fine. She kept it to herself and she slowly began to hate her body more, become more timid and self conscious, and mostly only going into music because her parents wanted her to go into classical music.

She finally started to feel better about her body thanks to Gon and Killua, but she was sure she wasn't ready for coming to terms with her balding. She was going to wear bandanas for while and maybe get to it later, maybe when she was more famous and confident (although somewhere in the back of her mind, she knew she would rather wear her bandana forever).

And now Killua was standing before her, with her bandana and glasses in one hand, looking at her with no harsh glint in his eyes. He barely looked at her any differently than when he didn't know what was underneath the fabric. For Killua to stand before her now, (Killua!) and tell her she was beautiful, she was elegant. Well, maybe she could at least pretend to think so too.

"Thank you…" She said softly, hindered slightly by her hiccups.

"Ah, er, Melody! Are you ok? What's wrong, why are you crying?!!" Killua cried out, helplessly waving his arms around her figure. He's not used to this close contact, barely used to getting it from Gon because of how he tanks it onto him, and now he's not sure how to comfort the crying girl (if she even needed it, she said, thank you!) "Melody!?!"

Gon sniffled and wiped at his nose, a small smile on his face letting out a couple of chuckles. He leaned on the wall right outside of the room with the door cracked open, the bags of bought clothes clutched in one hand and resting against his thigh.

Killua, you're such an idiot… so smooth. Gon chuckled again as he wiped at the stream of tears falling from his eyes. Killua was so nice, why does he pretend to be mean? That was really touching and Gon knew it would help Melody alot with her confidence. This project was possible.

Thanks Killua.

-o0o0o0o0o-

Gon came in about 5 minutes after that and Killua questioned him what took him so long and why his eyes and cheeks were puffy and Killua claimed the two other teens in the room were so weird when they started smiling knowingly to each other.

They moved on to the next store where Killua again took charge of the fashion choices (unironically) and Gon actually started talking to Melody about their actual project. They started talking about themes and ideas to think about before trying to pick it song, to try and narrow the selections available.

Killua walked in with a couple more outfits, catching the butt end of their conversation.

"Yea, we're all just trying to make it in the world through singing. We can all make it big, but sometimes it's hard!" Gon said, nodding along with Melody.

"Right? Sometimes, I'm scared to tell my parents I want to do more than just… play, I want to sing and dance, and act!" Melody said with honesty and Gon nodded.

"Yea! One day, I want to inspire others to go after their dream too, no matter how hard it is, even if
all the odds are against you, and the only way you'll get your next paycheck is washing dishes in some diner, it can happen! I want people to know anything can happen, no matter what's going on against you." Gon said. Melody seemed to blink out and she nodded numbly.

"Yea… inspire…" She murmured and Killua raised an eyebrow before throwing the new throng of clothes into the dressing room.

"Mel, you're up." He said, pointing behind him as he walked away from the dressing room. After that, Melody went quiet with thought through the rest of Gon's impromptu dress fitting session. Killua began thinking himself too, but he's used to being lost in his head and thoughts without checking out from situations in front of him, so he kept Gon company conversationally.

Killua was trying to think of a couple songs their talk reminded him off. He could instantly list a few his family has sung at past concerts, some more he just personally liked and had downloaded, but there were maybe one or two that was itching at the back of his memory, the few he thinks would really fit the bill of what their thinking about doing.

Gon scampered around the small dressing room, frantically searching as Melody finished with her clothing fitting, and even though Killua felt way too sly acting like he didn't know what was going it, it was more suspicious to not, so he asked "Gon, what are you looking for?"

Gon whipped his head in Killua's direction, and Killua double checked to make sure his face didn't give anything away.

"I can't find my wallet!" He cried out. Killua carefully morphed his face into one of curious concern.

"What? Where'd you last put it?" He asked, even inclining his head left to right as though superficially searching for it. What a master of your own trade, Killua.

"I-I don- I paid for the clothes at the last store and put it in my back pocket, I definitely put it in my back pocket, and then I came and got you guys and we came here, and I never took it back out, and it never left my back pocket!" He cried as Melody began looking too. Oh, Melody, don't look, you'll never find it. But Killua still put the concern on his face and lifted one cushion.

"Well… ok, it might be in the other store or on the floor from when we walked over here. We should check, so I'll pay for the clothes and we'll retrace our steps, ok?" Oh, yes, Killua, you sound so reasonable and responsible. Perfect.

But Gon then looked over at him, something glinting in his eyes that said he suspected something. That he knew something was up. That was impossible, there was no way he knew he had Gon's wallet tucked between the waistband of his jeans. Melody looked just fine with that.

"Yes, I'm sorry Gon, you might have lost your wallet because of me. I hope we find it." She inputted. Good girl, put guilt on his back so he's more prone to believe it. His eyes never even left Killua's, who was no longer keeping eye contact with him. That'd be suspicious, like a dare for him to say something was fishy.

"Mh… Killua, can I get a hug?" Gon asked, moving closer. Killua scrunched his face up in playful disgust, that's right, don't let any sign show that he might have unnerved you.

"What? No, you weirdo, we're trying to find your wallet. Hurry up, I'm hungry. It's like 3." Killua said, starting to gather the clothes, acutely aware Gon was coming up closer from behind.

"Mh!" Melody concurred, gathering up clothes as well. Killua whipped around before Gon got too close.
"Get away!" He laughed, dancing away from Gon's reach and towards the door. Yup, keep it playful, not desperate, and now you're home free.

"Killua, give me back my wallet!" He screamed after him. Killua let his laughter finally come out in a victorious way as he got to the cashier.

"I don't have it! We're going to look for it, remember, Gon?" He laughed, as the lady began checking out. Gon caught up with Melody along side him and he scanned him from head to toe as if trying to determine where it was without patting him down. Melody put the clothes she had in her hands down on the cashier counter too before looking between the two taller teens in confusion. Was Gon's wallet missing or not?

Gon pouted as the lady got all the clothes checked and into a bag and Killua offered his credit card. The lady was ringing it up before her eyes widened.

"Wait, you're Killua Zoldyck?" She cried and Killua rolled his eyes. He forgot coming to places this low down the ratings chain, people freak out over the fame people have.

"Yea, I am. Does that mean I get a discount?" He replied with false kindness and Gon elbowed his ribs, emitting an "ow!" from the white haired boy.

"Wow! I can't believe you're here!? Can I get an autograph? I have all your magazines!" She cried, ducking under the counter and pulling out a magazine with Killua on the cover. Killua made a face at it, why would she like his fashion aspect of his career when singing is obviously his main product? She held it out for a couple more moments with no one grabbing it when Gon finally took it and shoved it at Killua. He let out a long suffering sigh and plucked it up, taking out a handy dandy pen from nowhere and scribbling his signature. He shoved it back at Gon. Gon took it from her, he should give it back. Gon looked down at his friend immortalized on print and lazily flapped it open to look at the pages that mostly featured Killua. Meanwhile the lady finished ringing them up and gave them the clothes.

"Thank you for coming to Old Navy, really do, come again!" She squealed out as Killua and Melody picked up the bags, Gon too distracted with flipping through the magazine to help.

"Really... Don't count on it." Killua called back as the three started moving out the store. The lady looked happy, simply beside herself, when she just remembered Gon never gave back the magazine.

"Wait! My autograph!" She cried as the slidy door closed shut behind Gon. They moved to the parking lot and Melody stopped in her tracks.

"Oh. wait! Gon's walle-!" She cried.

"It's fine, I got it." Killua said, not even turning around. Melody blinked as Gon made his way around Melody who hadn't moved yet, not even phased himself.

"Oh." Was all she could say and continued to move. They packed up the back trunk, stuffed full of Melody's new wardrobe, and piled in the car.

"Gon, can I drive?" He asked as Gon just sat in the front seat, staring at a page. He blinked and looked up and over at Killua, running the question through his head again.

"Ha! No!" He giggled, and held the magazine out to Melody. "Hold that for me." He said, and Killua followed the magazine's movements with wide eyes.

"Wait... Gon, you were suppose to give that-" He exploded into laughter as he realized he basically
stole the magazine. Gon blinked as he didn't understand what he was laughing at then it clicked and he gasped.

"Oh! Oh no, I need to go-!" He cried out, reaching for the magazine again, but Killua caught his wrist.

"Nope! No, just keep it, it's already done." He chuckled, finding it too hilarious Gon stole from the clerk- probably a prized possession.

"B-But Killua, she so wanted your autogra-!"

"If you get out of this car, I'm jumping in the front and driving." He smirked and Gon bit his lip before bringing his hands back to the wheel.

"Ya, ya..." He grumbled, starting the car up. Killua grinned victoriously and put his feet up on the dash. He's been just winning alot today. A click to his left brought his attention just in time to see Gon lowering his phone as he checks over the photo just now. He blushed and almost tried to wrench Gon's phone out of his hands again.

"Wh-what?!" Was all he managed to sputter out.

"You looked really happy." Gon shrugged, pocketing his phone and pulling out, his hand on the back of Killua's chair as he twisted around to reverse. He grumbled under his breath as he crossed his arms and slumped in his chair.

"Whatever. I'm hungry. I'm buying lunch, where we going?" Killua said, his tone was obvious that there was no room for argument of who was paying. Gon sighed.

"Geez, Killua, can I at least get my wallet back?" He whined. Killua snickered under his breath.

"Maybe later." He chuckled. "C'mon, suggestions."

"Uuummm, I like Denny's!" Gon said and Killua nodded.

"Ok, any other suggestions." He said, looking in the side view mirror to peek at Melody. Ignoring the whines coming from Gon, Killua noticed Melody just looking out of it.

"You ok there, Mel?" He piped up, cutting off Gon's ranting. Gon realized what Killua was referring too and kept quiet as he waited for her to reply. She looked up, startled out of her thoughts.

"O-oh! Yes, don't mind me." She said in her musical voice of hers. Killua curtly shook his head.

"Where do you want to eat?" He repeated, not believing her, but willing to let it go for now.

"Oh, um, I'm in the mood for Chili's." She intoned, raising a finger as the idea came to mind.

"Chili's, it is. Drive, my good sir." He commanded, pointing off onto the road past his feet.

"Hey! There wasn't much of a vote or discussion-!"

"It's 2 against one. We're going to Chili's. Drive!" He ordered again, happily commanding Gon around since Gon wouldn't let him drive. Gon grumbled but continued on to find the nearest restaurant.

-o0o0o0o0o0o-
The friends got in and ate, most of the talk going on between Killua and Gon as Melody still seemed to be deep in thought. It wasn't until Gon was trying to tell Killua that he shouldn't order dessert in the middle of the day that Melody came to.

"Gon!" Melody cried out for his attention, determination burning in her eyes. Both of the boys looked over at her mid argument. "I… I've been thinking alot about what you said and…. Well, I want to pursue a career as an idol! My parents wanted me to pursue a career as a composer and musician, I followed along obediently because I wasn't confident in my looks or skills in anything else. But hearing what you had to say about becoming an inspiration to others who don't have confidence, to become a source of strength to others who also aspire to become an idol… I want to do it too!"

Killua and Gon blinked at her before they both exploded into shouts of agreements and approval.

"Ya! That's great!"

"Awesome, Melody! You'll be great!"

They both had complete faith in her. She knew it'd be hard work and she still needed to work on her confidence, and there would be a lot of commitment once she started to follow through, but she felt so inspired by these two uplifting boys, she felt it wasn't impossible and much more rewarding if it succeeded.

"Ah! Also…" She said after their excitement had quieted down a little. "I wanted to do it under an alter ego. Melody can continue on and become a composer and musician, but Senritsu will be the pop icon. I can't imagine giving up my instruments, but I also want a change that indicates the massive move I'm making."

"Woa! An alter ego!? That sounds so cool! I wish I had one! I should have thought of that!" Gon said, scrunching up his face.

"You don't need one Gon. Alter egos are normally made by personalities to act outside their brand. I don't think you have a brand Gon. You could do whatever, and people would assume it's normal. Besides, not all of them are great…" Killua muttered at the end, rubbing the back of his head.

Melody giggled as she picked something up.

"Do you have an alter ego, Killua?" She asked.

"Hey! That is not-!" Killua snapped, but then his eyes lit up in recognition. "Ah! I finally remember! Guys, I have a song you guys could sing for the pre-test! I've been trying to remember which song I thought you guys could use based on your discussions, and I finally remembered."

Gon and Melody leaned in closer in expectation as he filled them in.

"Yea…" Gon murmured softly at first after Killua finished before his voice raised in excitement. "Yea! That'll work! And it highlights a lot of points that represent both of us!" Gon exclaimed.

"It'll be my first appearance as Senritsu!" She giggled excited. She already knew she wanted all of her wardrobe she bought today to be the iconic clothes for her pop alter ego.

"Yea! And actually, now that we know the song, Gon, you'll definitely need to pick some stuff up yourself!" Killua said, equally as excited.

"Mh! And we should start working on blocking out a dance!" His eyes roamed in thought for a few seconds, his mind on overdrive as everything seemed to be falling in place. "And we should
probably pick up some tap shoes while we're at it."

"Tap?" Melody gasped, although the smile never left her face.

"Don't even worry about that, it should be simple enough." Killua eased.

"Great! Then what are we waiting for! We got stuff to do! We need to get this ready by tonight!"
Gon shouted and almost as if on signal, him and Killua were wolfing down the rest of the food, Melody laughing as she joined in at a slower pace.

Not too bad for a couple of students who procrastinated until the last day.

=End Chapter 5=

Chapter End Notes

Yay, that was chapter 5, my favorite chapter, I hope you liked it as much as I do. I don't have a chapter I like better yet. This was such a trip. I love Annie and the Little Prince, so I had to put it in there! The Japanese stuff, I knew from my Japanese classes, the Italian I pulled from Google translate, lol. And I made Killua in love with the Japanese culture because I am! Well, all Asian, but mostly Japan! XD

Still not taking song suggestions, but is there anything you guys would like to see new where I put the Musica Academy showcase info bit? And also, does anyone have a song in mind Gon should sing for the showcase? (I have a couple in mind, but there could be better ones!) Thank you, I'm taking suggestions for those two things until the next update!

So, yes, a lot/almost everything about Killua's anxiety I pull from my own. Warmth, bass, and a weight somewhere on me helps it when it comes over me. Coldness, very loud and limited spaces, and sometimes talks of it makes it worse or flare up. So when Killua's having it, it's a page from my own experience. I know it's different for everyone and didn't want to offend anyone on it. I did look up research on anxiety and how people get it chronically and whatnot which is what Gon was talking about.

What Gon is going through is slightly what I've been through, although I've been in a better spot for a while now, nothing to worry about! But we have been in a situation where we had to buy the stuff nearly going bad and to pinch the mold off the bread to eat because there's nothing better to eat. It can be hard to talk about and people can treat you differently when you have no money. They don't want to be burdened by your limitations. Anyone out there struggling, keep your spirits up, I'm sure better things will come soon! Make best of your situation for now!

And then with Melody, that's the part I'm worried most about offending people. I do have self confidence issues, and it's different with everyone, but I know I never had crippling self confidence, and I hope Melody's part was more comforting than seeming like an outsider who didn't know what she was talking about. Also, I do not have female pattern baldness, and just did research with that. Everyone with self confidence issues, keep up your spirit, things change as we grow older, find strength in those closets to you! :)
Thank you so much for reading! I love all my readers, even those that don't comment, I feel your good vibes! I think I had more to say, but I don't remember, I hope you enjoyed! See you on the next 15th! (I'll be in school by then, AAAAH!)

=EDIT= (11/17/2017)
Some formatting was fixed
Hey Guys, guess who finally watched La La Land this month?! The movie whose concept this story was based on? Except the concept was made up by me without ever having watched the movie? Well, I watched it and let me tell you it was something else... something waay different than what I thought it was if the differences between the movie and my story plot is anything to go off of. But I had this song planned to put in there since I first heard the song from a music app, so regardless of my disappointment of expectations of the movie, the song jist is what I still love! What did you guys think of Lala Land?

Enjoy the chapters! Next couple of Chapter Headers was inspired by reader Happinessxhunter! (Thanks so much for your comments and help!)

Songs for Chapter 6:
Another day of Sun- OST LA LA LAND
For the Longest time- Billy Joel
Best I ever had- Drake
What Now- Rhianna

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 6: Musical Notes you

Gon Freecss

A Music Star trainee from Musica Academy. His father is Ging Freecss and his mother is unknown.

Mito Freecss, his aunt, raised him since he was 2. She had been trying to follow Ging around on his tours and concerts so he could still be apart of Gon's life. Realizing how time consuming and money intensive that was, they settled down in California instead. If anyone asks Gon, Mito is Gon's mother. He has some daddy issues, some self esteem issues, and he and Mito are poorer than he'd ever like to admit, but he'll make it work.

He has 2 years of experience performing professionally and 5 years of just singing and practice. His rustic voice and explosive performances are the highlight of his Hatsu, his signature instrument is the guitar and break dance is his favorite form of dance on stage.

His friends are Zushi, Kurapika, Melody, Ponzu, Pokkle and his best friend is Killua Zoldyck

Killua made sure Gon dropped him off at a street that wasn’t too close to his house so that he didn’t know where he lived. It wasn’t that he didn’t trust Gon, but he didn’t want him coming over suddenly and then getting ambushed by his crazy family. He couldn’t do much about it at school, but if he could help it and limit the exposure outside of school, Killua would make sure he didn’t come over just yet.
He clenched and unclenched his fists as he stood in front of his door, nervous as to what he’d find. He checked his phone one last time just to make sure there really were no messages, and he could use that as ammo if he needed to in an argument. There was none! The evening street lights just flicked on as Killua propped open the door with a steeling breath to calm his nerves (or anxiety? He couldn’t tell the difference). He peeked his head in first and only saw an empty hallway.

“What the?” He moved in and checked inside every music-dedicated room on the way to his room. Empty. He was getting irritated. Was this a joke? He checked the door to their dance studio, but it was locked. He tilted his head at that, but he knew he wouldn’t know who was inside unless they came out anyways, so he moved on. He stopped at Milluki’s door and stuck his head in.

"Ay! Piggy!” Killua barked out when he finally found life, well, whatever Milluki’s poor excuse of life was, rotting away on that chair. Milluki jumped and rushed to cover his screen, his other hand expertly maneuvering the mouse to close the tab.

“What the hell, Killua, you should knock before you enter someone’s room!” He growled out, lowering his hands and revealing a screen setup for mixing music.

“Whatever, I know you watch that porn-o stuff.” Killua said lazily, before straightening up a little in attention. “Why didn’t anyone text me?” He asked. Milluki scoffed, playing around with some notes on the program.

“Ha, what do I look like? I’m not Illumi, that’s not my job to text you.” He replied.

“Wha- so, I don’t come home for 2 days and no one even bothers to see if I’m alright? Besides, Illumi didn’t text me either. Where is he?” Killua bit out. Milluki waved a noncommittal hand in the air.

“He’s been in the dance room.” He said. Killua’s eyes boggled at that.

“For 2 days? ” Killua cried out, his voice raising slightly in disbelief. Milluki shrugged, playing back thrumming notes overlaid with pulsing beats, before going back in and messing with a couple more.

“He’s come out a couple times, obviously, but he’s been in there alot, been busy at it.”

Killua rocked back on his heels as he thought about that. He’s been so focused on something that he didn’t even bother to check if Killua was in the house? He normally wants to know his whereabouts 24/7.

“Does he have a concert or show coming up or something?” Killua asked.

“How should I know, KILLU, LEAVE ME ALONE!” Milluki shouted, throwing a fit before throwing more notes on the dumb project he wasn’t even planning on completing, just trying to look busy so Killua would leave. Killua made a face and briefly considered asking to hang in his room, wanting to hear his progress with the beats but figured Milluki’s had enough of him. Plus he was pretty tired of dealing with stubborn people today, filled up from Gon’s stubbornness all day.

“Fine.” Killua rolled his eyes as he fell out of sight. Milluki sighed out and closed the program before pulling back up his anime.

Killua made his way back down the stairs and into the family room where a large blackboard was located across the entrance arch. The blackboard held the current dates and weeks at the top and written underneath were the appointments and shows each Zoldyck had coming up. A giant planner for the whole family to reference. Killua scanned his eyes over his marked events first, mainly out of habit, and noted he did have a photo shoot coming up on Tuesday, then looked up to where Illumi’s
schedule was written out, much more packed than the other’s.

But… there was nothing major coming up in the next 3 weeks, nothing to be busting his butt in the dance room for.

Killua sighed and turned around to head back to his room. This was strange, but hey, if they wanted to give Killua a longer leash, he’ll take all he could manage. He was walking up the steps when the door to the dance studio opened, the music spilling out from the sound proof room. Killua stopped and squatted at the banister to see Illumi walk out, his hair in a mid ponytail and wearing a tank top and gray sweatpants, both moist with sweat. He was wiping his face with a towel as he moved towards the kitchen. Too curious, Killua called out, “Illumi!”

He turned his face and he could almost swear his eyes lightened up just a smidge, but his eyes darkened almost immediately after so Killua’s sure he could scratch that down with his imagination.

“Killua.” He said in that melodious monotone voice. “I haven’t seen you around in a bit. Hiding in your room for a reason?” He asked, adding a head tilt and that was when Killua knew Illumi had no idea Killua wasn’t even in the house. Killua made sure that his face didn’t show the shock and stood back up, Illumi falling out of sight a bit.

“You’re so weird…” Killua muttered before climbing back up the stairs. He didn’t know why Illumi was busying himself with dancing or whatever, maybe he was finally finding an interest in something other than following their parent’s orders to the Tee, but it didn’t concern him. As long as Illumi didn’t know he wasn’t home for the past 2 days, there would be no punishment.

“You called me! Killu!” Illumi called after him, the monotone comical as he tried to get Killua to respond. He shrugged then moved to the kitchen to get water.

Gon hefted up the green camo duffle up further his shoulder as he enter the front entrance of his school. The duffle bag Killua bought for him (and another for Melody) to bring their outfits in. He insisted that, as idols, they’ll need it in their career, especially when they will have multiple appointments back to back and they need to change outfits from each event.

“Where would we change if we’re on our way to the next place?” Gon had asked.

“In the van, obviously.” Killua said, deadpanned.

“Where everyone can see you?” Melody freaked.

“First of all, they’ll be your personal crew: your agent, hair dresser, fashion coordinator; you shouldn’t have a problem changing in front of them, you don’t have the time. Two, the vans for idols normally have the windows tinted so no one could see inside anyways. If other cars could see who was inside, you’d have stalkers and fans following your vans everywhere to ambush you. Third, you guys should get used to changing where everyone could see. No one’s going to care anyways, especially in fashions shows, they need you changed and on queue asap, so they’ll rip you out of whatever you’re wearing and dress you back up again like a doll. In front of everyone else who’s going through the same thing. Don’t worry, it’s nothing major and nothing you have to worry about now while we’re still in school, but just… heads up.” Killua explained. Gon’s eyes still shimmered whenever he thought back to that. Killua was so cool, so experienced, so…! Star material!

Gon was excited for Kite’s class, he was ready to show everyone their hard work, their performance, and the new Melody! He knew everyone was going to like her as much as he and Killua did. He turned around the corner into the hallway to his locker to see Zushi and Killua already there, light
chatter reaching Gon from where he was. He hopped next to them with a wide smile.

“Good morning guys! Did you sleep well, Killua?” Gon asked, turning to his pale friend. Killua promptly rolled his eyes in reply. “Why are you asking me that? Why not ask Zushi if he had a good night’s rest?” He asked, motioning towards the younger. Zushi just chuckled amicably and shook his head.

“It’s fine. I slept plenty well, he asked you.” He assured. Killua huffed before he turned back to Gon and began opening his duffle over his shoulder to search through it.

“You better have everything.” Killua scolded, as he double checked through Gon’s bag. Gon sighed with a smile as he held his arm out to make it easier for Killua to access the bag.

“Yes, I have everything, Killua. I’m not that much of an airhead!” Gon chirped brightly, earning a disbelieving look shot his way before Killua resumed looking through.

“Alright… you pass, for now.” He said, zipping up the duffle again.

“Thanks, Killua. What were you guys talking about?” Gon asked, moving to enter his combination in his locker.

“This weekend.” Killua replied when Zushi nodded.

“It sounded really fun. I’d like to join you next time if that’s ok.” Zushi said while Killua sighed.

“I already said, it’s fine if you come!” Killua chided and Gon scratched at his cheek.

“Yea, we can totally plan an outing. Sorry I didn’t invite you. I feel kinda bad now.”

“No! No! I just know sometimes you’ll want Killua to yourself-!” Zushi said and Killua shoved his shoulder, nearly knocking him to the floor.

“What are you even saying!? Gon’s not that selfish, it was just a one time thing!” Killua cried, trying to get his blush under control, Gon just laughing at the reaction. Zushi balanced himself once more before looking at Killua with a weird look.

“You can’t tell?” He asked, and both Gon and Killua gave him weird looks back at him.

“Tell what?” They both asked, not even bothering to be weirded out by it, more interested in what Zushi meant. He blinked then vigorously shook his head.

“No, no! I don’t wanna say if you guys don’t even know.” Zushi cried, waving his hands in front chest. Killua would have protested further to make him talk but Gon was first to speak.

“Alright, we wouldn’t want to force you to do anything.” Gon complied as he unpacked his bookbag, leaving only his notes for the first class. Killua begrudgingly complied, crossing his arms and leaning against the lockers. Zushi exhaled a sigh of relief before turning back to Killua.

“Mh. So after you guys left the arcade?” He asked, and Killua’s smile returned.

“Right, so we needed to eat, right?”

Gon and his two friends entered Wing’s class together, talking and being lively, and the rest of the class still couldn’t get use to the sight. How not even a week ago, Killua was stand-offish, closed off and refused to even give anyone the time of day. When Gon came, they knew he was unnaturally
charismatic, bright and magnetic, a first for the school, but they didn’t expect him to have this kind of effect on the ashen haired boy. Now they saw a bright happy boy like they’ve only ever seen in magazines with his artificial environments. Killua sat in the third row, Gon sitting in the second in front of him with Zushi next to Gon and Killua propped his feet up on his seat.

Wing came in a few moments later before the bell (that’s a first!) and stood at the front of the classroom.

“Alright class, hand in your assignments.” He said, Zushi immediately pulling out a prepared sheet. Gon and Killua felt like a bucket of cold water was poured over them and the floor opened up beneath them. Their jaws dropped and they turned towards each other.

Crap!

Worrying about Kite’s class, they completely forgot about Wing’s Hatsu assignment. Dammit, Gon was suppose to arrange when they go. They watched the others pass up their papers and Gon could swear he was hyperventilating. He really did mean to do the assignment! He really wanted to, it sounded interesting! He’d get to learn about other’s Hatsu and maybe get inspired to find his own or at least how to get started. And now, beside missing that chance, he’ll get another failing grade. In the same class!

“D’oh…!” He groaned, cradling his head in his hands. Zushi noted this and realized he didn’t do it, and he patted his back apologetically.

“Sorry Gon. It does help my dad’s the teacher for this class, it makes it harder to forget to do the assignments.” He consoled, and Killua bit his lip. This sucked, he knew Gon was upset, but he couldn’t do anything about it this time.

Gon could barely concentrate in class as he wallowed in misery and despair over the assignment he lost. He thought he was doing pretty well! Keeping on top of things… Killua distracted him again… he spent all day Saturday and Sunday with him… but he would never regret doing it. He just didn’t want to waste or scorn his chances at school by failing or missing assignments. The class passed by faster now that Gon was lost in his mind (or maybe he was getting used to the extended periods and soon the classes would seem too short) and the bell rang. Gon sprang up and ran over to Wing, Killua close on his tail.

“Wing, Wing, Please!” He shouted, calling most people’s attention who hadn’t left the room yet or wasn’t bent on leaving it soon. “Let me do the assignment! I didn’t mean to not do it!” Gon cried, and Wing’s eyebrows furrowed.

“I’m sorry, Gon. I can’t just give you an extension when everyone else had a deadline they met.” Wing said, and Killua stepped forward to bring his attention.

“But he had a good reason!” Killua said, his silver tongue working faster than his mind. He looked at Gon to give the reason. Gon’s eyes widened at what Killua was implying. What he didn’t know was that Gon was horrible at lying. Wing looked skeptical but looked over at Gon too who was starting to pale.

“Uuuh!” He groaned out, keeping eye contact with Killua. What does he say? That he was out on a date wi- er, an outing with Killua? He was doing an assignment for a different class he had a week to do? Killua’s left bottom eyelid twitched and he turned back to Wing.

“Because I wanted to do it!” He cried, squeezing his eyes shut. Wing looked at him shocked.
“You did?” Wing asked.

“Y-yea, and I asked him to do it with me, to wait, but I was busy this weekend, and Gon being- Gon, he just decided to wait like some idiot, and so he couldn’t do it. We’ll get it done, we’ll turn it in Wednesday, in your class, I just…” He decided that was good enough and kept his eyes locked on Wing and hoped it conveyed truth since he mixed some in (ok, not really any except for where he said Gon was being an idiot and really did wait for him). Wing sighed and broke the contact and Killua hoped that meant he was giving in.

“I guess you don’t participate often, and if it’s Gon getting you to try in class, I should give you both a little while longer.”

They both exhaled a sigh of relief and Gon looked over at Killua to smile gratefully.

“Don’t get used to this. This is the only time I’ll allow this, if Killua’s participating now, he should have the same due date as the others. You either do it or you don’t. Got it?” They both straightened up.

“Yes sir.” They said and Wing smiled.

“Great. I’ll see you boys later.” They left the room, Zushi having waited for them outside the class.

“Hm, Wing turned you down?” He asked as he fell into step beside them.

“Huh? Oh, no, Killua got us an extension!” Gon said, a bright smile on his face. Killua smirked smugly and Zushi’s face fell.

“Hah?! Wing never gives me any slack! Unfair.” He pouted.

“Aw, c’moff it, babe, he’s just harder on you because he cares about you more.” Killua said, speaking across Gon to Zushi on his other side. Zushi nodded, but he still looked a bit downcast.

“I suppose.” He nodded.

“Mh, chin up. C’mon Gon, we gotta meet up with Melody so you guys can get ready.” Killua said, his voice laced with excited amusement.

“Ya!” He cheered and they ran ahead.

“Bye guys!” Zushi cried after him. “So they both don’t realize it? Well, this could be funny to watch…” He chuckled before turning away to his classes.

They ran into Kite’s class which was abuzz with excited pre-performance chatter, everyone up from their seats as they waited for Kite to bring them to the theater room. Some did small blockings of their dances while others practiced tuning their voices, others looked panicked probably from lack of preparation. Melody ran up to Gon, wearing her bandana and glasses, a green sweater and purple maxi skirt on and an excited smile on her face.

“Gon! We just need to go sign up with Kite so he can take attendance.” She said, fists clenched in anticipation.

“Right!” Gon exclaimed and ran up to the teacher leaning against the desk, waiting for the official bell to ring before he brings his class over. He signed them in over their barely contained enthusiasm, and they ran out. Kite reached out after them in surprise.
“Hey- Wait, Where are you-?!”

“We’ll meet you at the auditorium! We have to get ready!” Gon squealed over his shoulder back to the classroom. Kite met Killua’s eyes briefly as though asking for further explanation. Killua shrugged with an ill-concealed smile of his own.

“They need to get ready. Don’t worry, they’re not skipping. They’re just really excited.” Killua said. Kite huffed and reached onto his desk, pulling up another a clipboard. Killua took that as his cue and walked closer to Kite to take it from him.

“You’ll just write notes on the students. If you hear certain qualities of their voice that could be improved through known methods, write it down. I’ll be recording the performances, so when you can, write down specific lyrics for me to take note of. Just… make sure you show your knowledge of vocal training in the notes you write. It’s your grade.” Kite said. Killua sighed, bored, taking the assignment in his arm.

“Riiight.” He huffed out. He tried to keep his spirits up. Gon and Melody’s performance should be one to see! He scanned the room for Kurapika, the one who (technically) this whole Melody Project was being done for. He was rehearsing relaxedly with Pokkle, unaware of the goal of Gon’s project. Killua wasn’t even really sure of the full idea, as he was sure Gon wasn’t trying to get Melody and Kurapika together.

Soon the bell rang and Kite herded his kids to follow him to the auditorium a few hallways down, Killua walking beside him. When they entered the auditorium, the students saw how the red curtains were lit up in that rustic gold light and the bottom pooling on the stage’s hard harlequin floors, looking like a setup for a professional stage. That’s when they really began to get nervous for the grade of the projects. Some were getting jitters, especially the less experienced prospective idols, others were working to calm themselves to give a proper stage.

Kite scanned the place, and not seeing Gon and Melody, he turned to Killua for an explanation.

“They’ll be here!” Killua said, getting fed up with his lack of faith, specifically in Gon.

“Fine. Alright everyone! If you have music, put it up front, I’ll plug it into the speakers as your turn comes up to go!” He turned to Killua. “Did Gon and Melody have music?”

“Yea, yea, I got it.” He muttered. When Kite looked expectant for something, Killua waved him off.

“Don’t worry about it.” Killua said

“I don’t appreciate all this secrecy.” Kite huffed.

“You never said we had to be open about everything. We just had to perform. So sit down for your performance, kay?” Killua said adding a feigned kind smile. Kite grumbled under his breath as he strode forward on long elegant legs, something about regretting ever giving Killua a chance to raise his grades. Killua smirked, happy Kite won’t let him get bored with the way he poked and teased him. He followed him to the front desk at the edge of the stage, positioned where most judges tables were during pageants and such.

“Ok,... any volunteers for first?”

The pre-tests went by pretty well, and after the 3rd group, Killua was starting to wonder what was taking Gon so long. He was getting bored and itching to do something with his hands other than write these comments. The comments were easy and natural to write like a finely honed skill.
-Scratchy throat, slower approach to louder volumes

-Can’t recognize ‘re’, needs to run through scales numerous times

-The voices were horrible at harmonizing and they were bad at compensating the partner's faults. Need more partnered up training.

The notes went on like that, and Killua was dying, he was so bored. He visibly sat up as the phone in his pocket vibrated. He barely had to glance at it to know it was Gon texting him,

**We’re ready!**

Killua stood up while poking at Kite’s shoulder, the group on stage winding down their performance.

“Gon and Melody’s ready. They’re going next.” Killua piped, an excited smile on his face as got up and rounded the table to head towards the stage. It wasn’t much a request as a commanding statement. Kite bit back a growl. What a cheeky brat.

“Fine, they had to go eventually. Where are you going?” Kite asked, the last group climbing down from the stage.

“Musical accompaniment.” He stated like it was obvious. Kite blinked. He was going… *to do* something? Like participate? Gon really was Ging’s son if he got *Killua* to do something other than sulk at others. The others students looked after Killua as he sat at the grand piano to the left of the stage. He looked up and gave a wink to someone off stage right in the wings then started playing a springy upbeat tune on the piano, his fingers cupped onto the ivories keys, nimbly playing across multiple scales. Then off stage, a loud and clear melodious voice began singing.

“*Ba-ba-da-ba da-ba-da-ba*

*Ba-ba-ba ba-da-ba-da-ba*

*Ba-ba ba*

Melody came side stepping out on her tap shoes and most let out a silent gasp in surprise. The person who came out on stage looked so different that they almost questioned who it was. They were surprised it was really her. She wasn’t wearing anything they were used to seeing her wear, her whole image reinvented to look like a real idol.

Melody had her hair down, a large 90s style bow at the back of her head, a white button down blouse and a pleated black A-line skirt, black stockings down to her mary-jane style tap shoes. She stopped center stage, oozing stage presence, commanding the stage. Her voice rang out loud and clear and musically,

“I think about that day, I left him at a Greyhound station West of Santa Fé… We were seventeen, but he was sweet and it was true… Still I did what I had to do ‘Cause I just knew!” She swayed giving light clicks of her heels, perfectly in tuned with the piano Killua played to her right.

“Summer: Sunday nights… We’d sink into our seats Right as they dimmed out all the lights… A Technicolor world made out of music and machine… It called me to be on that screen… And live inside each scene !”

Gon’s voice paired with hers from off stage as he came into view, matching her side stepping tap moves before they both twirled and tapped back together on center stage. He wore a button down
white shirt, the sleeves rolled up to his elbow and buttons undone to just below his collarbone and straight black pants. People applauded and cheered in excitement like guest star just stepped onto the TV set as Gon came out.

“Without a nickel to my name, Hopped a bus, here I came Could be brave or just insane, We'll have to see!” Gon and Melody clasped hands and Gon spun her into a dance, her skirt flying up in a curling circle, and he spun her out back towards center stage as she took another solo, he made his way to the other side of the stage.

“ ‘Cause maybe in that sleepy town He'll sit one day, the lights are down He'll see my face and think of how he...” Gon joined in her next words, both stomping with their tap clad shoes. “ ...used to know me!” They turned away from each other, doing mirrored dances, coming to meet in a half circle half down the stage, mimicking the words they sang through dancing interpretation.

“Climb these hills I'm reaching for the heights! And chasing all the lights that shine! And when they let you down... You'll get up off the ground, 'Cause morning rolls around...!” Gon and Melody pranced up to the front of the stage, their explosive energy bounding forth as though they were actors on stage for a movie. “ And it's another day of sun!”

Killua peeked at the audience and he could already see Gon’s fans and others recording the performance. He didn’t blame them, this full out performance was infectious and could make anyone smile. He felt himself getting swept away with the pace, the fun in their performance reaching Killua’s playing, he playfully danced in his seat as he watched them, carefully but professionally playing the notes, fingers flying like lightning on the keys. He withheld a shiver as Gon’s solo part came, his bass voice caressing the air, carrying the melody in his voice.

“I hear 'em ev'ry day... The rhythms in the canyons That'll never fade away... The ballads in the barrooms Left by those who came before... They say "you gotta want it more"...! So I bang on ev'ry door!” Gon sang out, Melody twirling in the back, Gon dancing in front, making sharp taps and knocks on the ground with his tap shoes. He ducked out as Melody strode forward, her shoes making a swishing noise as she dragged a foot.

“And even when the answer's “no,” Or when my money's running low, The dusty mic and neon glow Are all I need!”

Gon came up behind her and sang, ducking his head left and right of her playfully.

“And someday as I sing my song, A small-town kid'll come along...!” They joined together in harmony. “That'll be the thing to push him on and go go!” They went into the chorus, doing their mirrored move towards each other this chorus.

“Climb these hills, I'm reaching for the heights! And chasing all the lights that shine! And when they let you down You'll get up off the ground...! 'Cause morning rolls around, And it's another day of sun !”

The song went into instrumental break of Killua solely playing the piano as they danced on stage, a jig swing type dance, both looking like they were having the time of their life while also remaining performers.

It was amazing what Gon did. While Gon was a great performer himself, his songs speak for itself, he seemed to be in his element when he performed with someone else. He fed off their energy and the partner fed off his, naturally sweeping them off into his pace and magnetism. Their performance exponentially drove towards explosive as they complimented each other, any flaws in their performance overwritten with the deliverance. His types of performances were the ones people
would choose to listen to over the World’s Best singer who had no feel.

Gon was amazing. He was light. He was brighter than any stage light. Gon spun Melody towards the front and turned his back to the crowd as they stilled and Melody looked up as though singing a ballad, her voice softening for the middle transition.

“*And when they let you down… The morning rolls around…*” They leapt into another dance number, the last as the song reached its climax to come to a stop.

“*It's another day of sun*

*It's another day of sun*

*It's another day of sun*

*It's another day of sun*

*Just another day of sun*

*It's another day of sun*

*Another day has just begun*

*It's another day of sun!*

*It's another day of sun!*

Their number finished, both in finishing poses and the class stood up and cheered, probably ruining the end of the recordings of the students with shouts. Kite also rose from his seat to applaud them. It was good, and the performance was solid, although he did have a few notes for the duo to work on, he could give them an A for this pre-test. Killua stood up from the piano as Gon and Melody climbed down the steps to his side.

“Guys, that was awesome! I’m pretty sure I saw you guys doing some things that weren’t rehearsed yesterday.” He teased and Melody let out a breathless chuckle as she caught her breath.

“Rehearsal yesterday wasn’t exactly substantial.”

“But hey, I remembered how to do the tap moves, so that’s a plus, at least I could improvise when I did forget.” Gon chuckled, less breathless than Melody, but a winded note did enter his voice. The next group started nervously getting up on stage, upset they had to follow something like that and worried of their grade suffering for it, and Kite called out to Killua.

“Hey, Killua, c’mon, you got work to do.” He said, sitting back down at the table. Killua huffed and rolled his eyes.

“Hey, guys, tell me how it goes with Kurapika, kay?” He said, giving a friendly pat on Gon’s arm before running off to the table.

“Right. You ready, Mel?” Gon asked, turning to his smaller friend. She looked up, her determined olive green eyes sparkling.

“Yea!”

Gon strode forward. Most people called out to him as he passed, commenting on how great he did, some trying to get him to sit with them, a few giving their praise to Melody behind him, but he only
kept on walking closer to the back where Kurapika sat.

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Kurapika was a very reasonable man, he was sensible and he’s been very careful who he surrounded himself with.

He experienced alot of real world characteristics, he’s seen what people could do, how shallow they can be, and the selfishness they show. He thought he’s seen so much of it, he knew it like a textbook example, could spot it in a line-up from frauds.

He believed he knew just by a look how a person was, because that’s just how he’s seen people act, shallow. Kurapika was seldom wrong on a person’s character when judging on looks and few tidbits gathered on that person.

But then, here was Gon.

Here was Gon, breaking down walls and his perceptions he’s built up since middle school. Gon shining brighter than any darkness he’s been subjected to. Breaking barriers down to build new ones up. He judged Gon once, but he was wrong. Or at least he didn’t understand him completely.

Gon continued to make his way to Kurapika, the lights from the stage haloing Gon to make his approach surreal, like a dream or a warm memory. Kurapika tried to keep up his poker face as Gon approached but he already had a feeling of why Gon was coming over.

He had a hunch what it was when their performance was through the roof, much more detailed than required for the class project. Kurapika is always getting pleasantly surprised by Gon. His academy year will definitely be more interesting with Gon.

Gon reached the row where Kurapika sat by his partner Pokkle, his presence almost stifling with his purpose. He stepped into the row in front of Kurapika’s, kneeling onto the seat of the chair to face him. His expression was bright but eyes dark with a strange intensity, coloring his eyes a darker chocolate hue in the dim light of the performance room. Melody, following as quietly and elegantly as a butterfly but as comfortably as a lioness in her own den. She sat next to Gon, sitting properly and turning to see Kurapika behind her. Pokkle scratched his cheek feeling awkward, being caught in some obvious confrontation, and tried his best to seem like he wasn’t eavesdropping or inserting himself, looking forward at the performance on stage.

“Hi.” Gon chirped, keeping his gaze leveled with the gray eyed blonde.

“Hi Gon.” Kurapika let out on a breath, a small resigned smile on his face.

“Did you like the performance?” He asked.

“Yes, Gon….” Kurapika sighed out. “I understand what you were trying to do with this performance.”

Gon tilted his head to one side. Kurapika let his eyes slip closed to continuing explaining and trying to contain some of his composure.

“You wanted to make Melody someone up to my standard so that I may consider her suitable to partner with in the future.”

Melody let her eyes close but kept the patient smile on her face, a look as though dealing with a child. Gon’s eyebrows furrowed, his eyes taking on a weird glint. Kurapika looked to Melody.
“I see now that I was wrong in judging you so quickly and will look forward to working with you in the future...” He said, trailing a bit as seeing her not as happy as he expected. His attention was brought back to Gon as he spoke up again.

“Kurapika…” Gon paused and looked up with pursed lips. “You’re wrong.”

Kurapika looked shocked, as if someone slapped him. Gon felt bad for making Kurapika feel like that, but technically this is what had to be done, to fully re-write what Kurapika knows and understands about this school and others in general.

“W-well, what-” Kurapika stuttered for a moment, caught off guard by Gon’s bluntness.

“Do you remember,” Gon started, smiling patiently still, “what you told me before about the students in the school?”

“Yes…” Kurapika replied cautiously.

“I think… that had made me angry back then, hearing you talk like that.” Gon said, and Kurapika was finally able to name that look in Gon’s eyes. A quiet sort of anger burning behind bright eyes.

“I understand that you had bad run-ins with a lot of people when you first joined the Academy. But that’s only a fraction of what you could discover here at the academy. You shouldn’t paint your view of the world one color just based on a few people. It must have been hard on you at first, but no matter where you go in life, there’s gonna be people like that. You should try to move past that, and gives those who may want it a chance.”

“Like Melody…” Kurapika hummed, catching on with a better understanding of what Gon wanted him to get out this. Because of people he met before, he never even gave Melody, someone who never did him wrong yet, a chance to impress him. He thought he knew what she could offer and it wouldn’t be enough to be up to standards. But she really showed that she could be more than that… and he should probably rethink his standards.

Gon let a small smile on his face, “When you let others help you, you’ll find things about yourself you didn’t know, learn things only they could teach you. You’ll make lifelong connections with amazing people who could help you as much as, even more than you could help them! You can make strong friendships with unbreakable bonds through this academy experience but only if you commit yourself to using the academy to its fullest potential.” Gon said, looking down, half speaking to himself too.

Gon was determined to use this chance until he couldn’t anymore, until the very last second, they’d have to drag him out this school before he’d stop using this experience to grow and become a better world star. Gon just wanted Kurapika to understand this too, to get that passion back and to not squander this opportunity. This was a privilege, not a right, no matter how you looked at it.

“I want you to like what you do, what you’ve chosen to do with your life. Remember the passion you had for singing when you first entered this school…” Gon gave him a soft affectionate smile, his anger diminished, leaving just the amity for his friend. “I would never want you to stop being nice because of mean people.”

Kurapika nodded. It was true, even coal could become diamonds, they just need a little help along the way. He can’t expect everyone to be performance ready. But while they work on that kind of stuff along the way, he’ll find invaluable company.

“I understand…” Kurapika sighed. Melody was finally looking at him again, a wider smile on her
face. He looked over at the newly confident girl, radiant even in the dim light with all her feel and smiled back. “Melody, I would like to apologize first. You have been vying for my attention for a while now and I never wanted to even give you the time of day. I have been very inconsiderate, and obviously have much to learn about giving people a chance. So if you wouldn’t mind… as it seems you may be very good at giving people a second chance, if you’ll help me with that as a friend of mine?” He asked. Melody lit up.

“Yes! Of course!” She hummed. She was so happy she was able to be apart of helping Kurapika become a better brighter person. How he was before was so sad…

Gon smiled at that, happy they were finally able to talk, viewing each other as equals- as peers. He turned, ready to get off the chair when Kurapika called for him.

“Gon?” He asked. Gon turned back with a cocked eyebrow and curious smile.

“Yes?”

“I’m… really happy I met someone like you.” He said. “You could really do alot for everyone around you and I look forward to your career as a singer. You could move the world.” He voiced honestly with a smile. Gon felt his cheeks heat up and he rubbed the back of his head sheepishly.

“You give me too much credit!” He chuckled. “But I’m happy I met you too. Everyone here! I just want everyone to be happy and sing together!” He said. As he about to turn again, he saw Kurapika smile from the corner of his eye.

“So Killua must be your next project, huh?” He asked with a smug note. Gon laughed but decided not to say anything. Pokkle, sitting a few seats away, smiled to himself, happy and proud of his friends. Gon really knew how to get things rolling. When he wanted something, there seemed to be very little to stop his determination.

Melody made her way around Gon to sit next to Kurapika and they spoke in low voices to trade words and conversation, getting to know each other better through the class.

Gon turned back to the front to watch the others giving their stage, but he couldn’t really focus on them. He knew they were really talented and good, but he wasn’t expecting anyone else to do what he and Melody did. Killua said so himself as they rehearsed yesterday, what they were doing was overkill for just a pretest. But none of the performances could keep his attention, just a few cover songs or poorly made originals.

He found his eyes wandering over to the judges’ table up front, the white tuft of hair bobbing next to the taller male as though Killua had trouble keeping awake. Gon giggled and covered his mouth to keep it from getting louder. Killua must feel so bored, with how talented Killua was, this stuff must be like sitting through a test you took already, but you have to wait for everyone else to finish.

Gon kept looking at the back of Killua’s head as he thought back to their performance. Gon’s happy that Killua was able to have a little fun during Gon and Melody’s performance even if everyone else’s performance may have him bored. Killua was able to do something with his hands other than write notes on mediocre idols.

Gon thought back to his time on stage. He had given a quick glance towards the piano where Killua was situated. The playful smile on Killua’s face as he jotted the keys and chords, his eyes bright and on him, Gon felt a new surge of energy at the sight, his smile getting brighter and his delivery getting larger.
Gon has been starting to feel that sort of excitement around Killua recently—restless like he should move and energy like he could launch. But it also comes with some sort of ill feeling. He doesn’t know what’s happening, he might be getting sick. But he doesn’t want to miss a single day of school, and even if it’s only happening around Killua, he doesn’t want to cut off his time to the stardust idol. He just got Killua to hang out with him!

Lost in thought, he didn’t realize the last group performing finally finished and Kite got up from his seat at the table, causing Killua to jerk awake. He bent over his clipboard and scribbled something down so Kite thinks he was paying attention. Kite made his way onto the stage and the quiet chatter of the students dwindled down and Gon leaned forward in his seat, curious to see if Kite was going to perform now.

“Alright class.” He said. “That’s everyone. I’ve heard some talking, and you might be concerned that compared to other people’s performances…” He looked sort of pointedly at Killua, Gon and Melody. Gon couldn’t help the smile on his face. It might have been bad to be called out like this in a normal high school setting, but in a performance talent school where it took everything just to stand out, Gon couldn’t hold down the pleased smile stretching on his face. Gon looked over at Killua to see him looking back with a similar pleased, cat-like smile over his features. He turned to see Melody was holding a petite hand over her own satisfied grin. Gon turned back to the front to pay attention.

“There is no need to worry, I was only trying to get a gauge on your voices, how it sounds and obvious notes that need improving. But this should be a lesson to all of you. You all are trainees to become World Stars, 2nd years no less. Every performance should be put on like a show, like a recruiter is in the crowd, you all should try to put on passionate production because life is your stage and you all are the performers. The others put a good example for how serious prospective World Stars act.”

The bell rang through the auditorium and they began packing their bags, some grumbling, some gossiping.

“They’re such show-offs.”

“Where did Melody hide all that confidence? It’s like she’s a whole different person…”

“I know, it’s like ‘Where did you hide the real Melody!? I just saw her Friday.’”

“Gon is so amazing! I want to be more like him!”

“I can’t believe Killua played for them! That’s probably why they did so well, anyone who works with Killua does well.”

“You’re right! It might not have been his effort.”

“Melody looks so cool now…!”

Killua jogged up to the others waiting for him, ignoring the jealous and admiring laced chatter around them. Gon beamed at Killua as he took in Kurapika and Melody behind him.

“I took it went well?” He breathed out, looking over at Melody, and her bright smile rivaled Gon’s with how happy she was, she was glowing.

“Yes! I feel amazing! Great! I finally feel like someone I’ve always wanted to be…” She hummed out musically and looked up at Gon. “And it’s all thanks to you. Thank you Gon.” She crooned, her voice dipping and rising like violin notes.
“It was nothing.” He chuckled, rubbing the back of his head and closing his eyes in a smile.

Killua turned to Kurapika.

“So… I’ve heard good things about you…” Killua said, a hint of sarcasm in his voice. Kurapika raised an elegant brow at him.

“I could say the same for you. Aren’t you the Zoldyck that never got around to singing with anybody?” He asked with a tilt of his head. Killua drew his lips into a line.

“I’ve had good reasons.” Killua replied curtly.

“So have I. The idiots at this school can really do a number on people’s trust.” Kurapika said and Killua released a short breath.

“I know, right? They see a talented person and it’s like they turn into leeches.” Killua griped. Kurapika let a small smile grace his features.

“Right, but apparently not everyone is like that. I hope to find good people outside of the leeches and give them a chance- like Gon would like.”

“Ha, good luck. As far as I’m concerned everyone’s a leech. I’ll stick with Gon til I see some proof.” Killua scoffed, crossing his arms. Kurapika lifted a curious eyebrow.

“You don’t even believe what Gon’s always advocating around you?”

Killua shrugged before Gon is suddenly by his side, slinging an arm over the lithe teen’s shoulders.

“Don’t worry, Pika, He doesn’t believe me right now, but I’m working on it. You’ll see him singing with anyone soon!” Gon exclaimed. Killua gaped at him.

“‘Scuse you, where did you get this?” Killua scoffed. Gon shrugged before teasingly lifting a finger over his lip.

“Se-cret!” He chirped. Killua growled and flicked his forehead.

“Ow!” Gon cried while Killua moved to head out the auditorium, the other two teens following suit before Gon followed. “I didn’t even say anything embarrassing that time!”

As the four of them headed for the lockers, Killua looked over Gon and Melody.

“Are you guys gonna change?” Killua asked, pointing a finger at their retro clothing.

“No, I think I look cool in these.” Gon said, sliding a collar edge between two fingers.

“Me too!” Melody said, doing a twirl and letting her skirt flair up. Killua rolled his eyes.

“You guys have no shame.”

“I think that’s a good thing! We’re idols, the better we embrace, the more likable we’ll be.” Gon shrugged and Killua rolled his eyes at his exuberant friend.

Gon skipped out ahead of the group as they walked together, “I’m so happy! This worked out great! Now we can all hang out! So what are you guys doing after school today-”

“Oh, ooooh no, straight after school, you are going to the library and doing that idol assignment you
forgot to do.” Killua said, interrupting Gon’s happy plan making. Gon twirled around to face his icy friend.

“What? But we don’t have to turn it in until Wednesday, we can work on it tomorrow-”

“Na-ah, no more of that procrastinating stuff for you. It obviously doesn’t work.”

“This performance worked pretty well for procrastination.” Gon shot back, crossing his arms.

“That was lucky, you can’t expect it to work like that every time, that’s how you fail-” Killua scolded, crossing his own arms.

“I bet I could make it work. C’mon Killua, it’s not fun to do the work early- OW!” Gon began to whine only for Killua to grab at his ear and pull.

“Oh-huh, I bet you do feel like that, you adrenaline junkie. No more of that, we’re getting the work done early so we don’t have to worry about it.” Killua said, his voice leaving no room for any more argument before letting go of his ear, allowing Gon to stand up straighter and rub at his ear.

“Meanie. I just… work well under pressure.” Gon said, looking away from the glaring white haired teen. Melody giggled, bringing the boys’ attention over to the other 2 accompanying them. Kurapika’s eyebrow were slightly raised while Melody held a hand over her mouth to keep her smile out of sight but her eyes danced in mirth.

“Interesting, Killua. I never thought you could be this friendly.” Kurapika said, amusement tinging his tone.

“Shove it.” Killua growled out, a blush covering his face before marching off to their lockers where he knew Zushi was waiting. Gon tilted his head at them, he opened his mouth to say something but Killua’s voice snapped back “Let’s go, Gon!” Gon jumped slightly then gave a friendly wave at his friends before departing from them to catch up with Killua.

“I know what you mean…” Melody’s soft voice sighed out. “I spent all day with them yesterday, and it was like meeting a new person. That definitely isn’t the Killua we’re all used to seeing around the school and it’s all thanks to Gon.” Kurapika nodded taking in the information as he watched the last of Gon turn the corner. He turned around to head to the lunchroom as he spoke to Melody comfortably at his side.

“Gon really is an amazing person, for his kindness to be able to touch someone as distant as Killua. I always felt a bit discouraged at how the Academy and the music industry could take the joy out of someone’s eyes. It seemed Killua was the most evident of that. He was the most accustomed to the fast life all of us were aspiring for, since he’s been getting the experience through his family name. He walked around like a constant reminder the fast life isn’t always the best, and I strived to harden myself so the world wouldn’t break me like it broke him. Turns out I had the wrong mind-set. I’m happy Gon came to our school.” Kurapika looked down at Melody. “I’m happy he met Killua and brought some light back into Killua’s life.”

Gon rubbed at the back of his head as they walked into the library several minutes after the last school bell rang dismissing the rest of the Academy. It was the same place their free period class met up for last wednesday, but it didn’t make it anymore familiar for him. He would rather be doing something else more fun, like messing with some chords on his guitar, or planning out a good calendar date for his next concert, something other than being in this place filled with books he probably couldn’t sit still long enough to finish reading through.
“C’mon, idiot, the sooner we get started, the sooner we can finish.” Killua scolded the teen lingering in front of the double doors. He grabbed his wrist and dragged him further inside to aid in the process. “I’ll help you so we can get done faster.” He mumbled, sort of embarrassed. It was still weird for Killua to try and use his talents honestly for someone else with no real reason, expecting nothing in return. Because he was a friend. For a friend.

He tched as he felt the heat of embarrassment rise to his cheeks. It was so hard trying to be a friend when he never had one, what does he do? Something uncomfortable and tight flared in his chest and he breathed a bit as if to bury it beneath oxygen. It helped a little but maybe he could try to get some music in his ears soon.

“Wow, thanks Killua.” Gon cried happily, unknowingly easing Killua’s chest with his rich voice. It made trying to deal with this new friendship thing a little more bearable.

“Yea, yea…” Killua mumbled, not letting his voice betray his internal struggles, and let go of his wrist as Gon was keeping pace instead of loitering.

“You too, Zushi! Thank you for coming even though you have your report done.” Gon said, turning his head the other way where the smaller brown boy was lagging behind having been left behind when Killua dragged Gon forward.

“Oh, it was no problem. I’ve been hearing so much of your guys’s good times together, I wanna take part too!” Zushi said. “I can just look around while you guys do what you need to.” Gon smile and nodded, happy he can hang out with even more of his friends. This assignment won’t be as boring as he thought it will be if he’s surrounded by his friends while he does it.

“Right! Now where was that book you guys were talking about in here?” Gon asked, looking left and right at the junction they were standing in.

“This way.” Zushi said and turned left between the row of shelves, the older two following after him.

“So, you gonna pick one randomly or you have one in mind?” Killua asked, his hands in his pockets.

“Oh… I think… I think I’ll look at the pictures and the names and figure out who I want to do my report on. It will just be a feeling that I should, y’know?” Gon said, turning to face him. Killua quirked an eyebrow, because he, in fact, did not know.

“Alright…” Killua hummed as they reached a clearing of the bookshelves, making way to tables further in the back where it was quieter than the front of the library. In the middle of the spaced out tables was a podium where a large book was opened invitingly.

“Oh is that it?!?” Gon cried out, running ahead and peering down at the pages. Rows of pictures and small descriptions filled both pages like a school year picture book. It was huge and thick.

“Yea…” Killua commented, a small smile on his face as he walked up from behind.

“Yea… it’s huge, isn’t it? I still think they should make it digital so they don’t have to renew it each year and make it even bigger!” Killua commented, a small smile on his face as he walked up from behind.

“Yea…” Gon hummed, his eyes darkening in focus already as he scanned the page. Killua quirked an eyebrow again in curiosity and moved forward to see what had gotten Gon’s attention so quick. However, when Gon just turned the page with that same focused look, realization dawned on Killua.

“Gon, you’re not really going to look at every picture and every page of that book for some feeling, right?” He asked, exasperated. When he only got concentrated silence in response, Killua huffed.
“Well,” Another scoff. “Well, then find me when you’re done or whatever…” He’ll help him with writing, no need to help him with the choosing process. He turned on his heel and left through the tall bookshelves.

“A-ahhh…” Zushi cried out softly after Killua, but was reluctant to follow and keep Killua company. He was still more Gon’s friend than Killua’s, since Gon befriended Zushi first. And based on the way Killua left just now, he wasn’t exactly in a mood that screamed, ‘come join me.’ It would probably be more awkward than helpful to go with him. So he turned back to Gon and saw he was still scanning over the book. He was staring intensely at a page that read the grad students on the page was from the 1980s. He felt himself sigh from an impatient feeling. This was gonna take a while. He turned to the bookshelf and browsed for a book to read.

Gon furrowed his brow as he looked at the page, but felt like he couldn’t focus on the words on the page… He was just too curious, and ever since the thought struck him a couple pages ago, he felt he wouldn’t be able to concentrate until he checked it. He bit his bottom lip and flipped through the pages to get to the idols with last names that started with “F.” He felt a (cold sweat) nervous anticipatory sweat gather on his brow as he pressed a finger to the page and scanned through to narrow down to where he hoped a ‘Freecss’ would be. He blinked.

Frida

Gon looked one name back from that one.

Franks

He felt himself deflate. Well, he should expect as much. He’s pretty sure his dad got famous without any previous training and he started in Japan, there was no way he would be an alumni of this school. He let out a slightly frustrated huff and turned a huge chunk of the pages to the back of the book to start on a random page again. He was starting to think this way of finding someone to do his paper on was pretty ineffective. Maybe he should just do what Killua suggested and point to some random picture on some random page and just shovel information on a paper to turn in. He felt disgusted with that idea of doing it that way, the insensitive approach to the paper is something he would never do himself. Something that insincere wouldn’t further his education.

He was turning away from the book, defeated and ready to call Killua for help, when a name caught his eye. He leaned back towards the book and scanned the page for what it was that popped out at him in that brief second. He was drawn immediately to a purple haired man closer to the bottom of the page. The man’s deep black eyes bore straight into the camera, stoic but not cold. His mustache covered the entirety of his lip so it was impossible to tell if he were smiling or frowning and he was sharply dressed for the picture. Gon looked for the information below the picture to find out who the man was.

Satotz

Graduated with 280th class

Rock Ballad idol

Gon felt a pull as he scanned the picture and reread the small text, and then a smile lit his face as he jumped up away from the book.

“I found one!” He cried, and turned around to see Zushi looking over at him from a table and an open book in front of him. “I found a graduate to do my paper on! I have a good feeling about this one!” Gon said, hopping over to his friend’s table as Zushi closed the book with a smile on his face.
“That’s good, Who?” Zushi asked. Gon blinked then chuckled sheepishly.

“Ahah, hold on!” He chuckled and ran back to the book. Zushi sighed helplessly, but it was so Gon. He walked up to Gon’s back as he began slowly enunciating the name.

“Saa… satoo…” Zushi looked over his shoulder and smiled amicably.

“Satotz. Interesting, we haven’t really talked much about this one. Most people choose the more famous idols or teachers from the school to try and win some brownie points. Y’know, nothing without benefits.” Zushi explained. Gon nodded and Zushi spoke again. “You may want to write it down, Gon.”

Gon nodded happily and took out a notebook from his book bag to write it down. While he wrote it down, Zushi looked up and around, trying to see if he could find a flash of silverlight hair somewhere in the bookshelves or on the second story balcony style floor. Gon turned back to him with the name written in his notebook soon enough and Zushi smiled.

“Shall we go find Killua then? He said to find him when you find one, in case you didn’t hear the first time.” Zushi said, concerned he really not might have since he was focusing so hard.

“Ah, right…” Gon nodded. He turned to the direction he last saw Killua head and started walking with Zushi by his side. They walked together, Gon clutching the notebook to his chest, feeling excited about his choice. He didn’t know why, but he just had a feeling. The feeling he was hoping for when he started searching.

He looked left to where he saw stairs lead up to the open aired second story but was sidetracked by a short rack, shelved with DVDs located by the left of stairs. Zushi stopped walking when he realized Gon was no longer walking beside him. He turned his head and saw Gon was bending down in front of the rack of DVDs.

“Ah! Oh right. Weren’t you curious about the Zoldyck concerts?” Zushi asked with a kind smile. Gon looked up.

“Oh, they’re here?” Gon asked, looking over the rack with new vigor.

“Yea, right down there on the bottom row.” Zushi pointed, leading Gon’s gaze at the last row of the shelf. A series of dark color cases with ‘Zoldyck’ written in silver, sharp font on the spine were put in order of the dates on the very bottom of the spine. Gon’s eyes shone and he turned to Zushi.

“Which ones have Killua in them?” Gon asked. He felt excited anticipation to watch the performances of the idols that fans say are one of the best in the business.

“Well…” Zushi started, putting his head up to calculate.

Then, “Oi.”

They both turned to see Killua coming down the steps, a thin binder tucked under one arm. “You’re finally done Gon? You took so long I was able to finish mine already.” He smirked mischievously.

Gon was readying to ask Killua himself which ones he was in, but all thoughts fell away when he heard him and a pout came forth.

“Wah, Killua! That’s mean! Why would you do it without me? I thought we were doing it together?” Gon whined, running up to the slightly taller teen. Killua tilted his head with a teasing smile.
“Huh? This is your fault I have to do it in the first place! I said I’ll help you, I don’t have to do the report with you.”

“Wahhh, Killua, then who did you do yours on?” Gon asked, reaching for his binder. Killua easily slid his binder out of reach and side stepped the rushing teen.

“Mh-mh, there’s no reason for you to know. It’s done. If you’ve gotten an idol to do it on, we’ll start now. C’mon, we’ll need a computer.” Killua said, walking off to the rows of computers located against the walls of the room. Gon pouted and walked after his friend, the DVDs forgotten for now.

“Ahh.. ah, I guess I can just help him check it out later.” Zushi shrugged and followed.

Killua sat at a computer and waited until Gon sat down to his left to place his binder at his right. Zushi sat at Gon’s left. They booted up the computers and Killua took Gon’s notebook with the name on the page and Gon pouted. Killua was so mean, he can be so pushy and demanding, yet he won’t allow others to treat him like that. Like how Gon just wanted to know who it was Killua decided was worth his time to do the paper on, but he was shut down while Killua was able to just snatch up all of Gon’s things.

“Mhhh…? Satotz…? I never heard of him…” Killua said, peering at the page as though looking longer would help jog his memory. He put the paper down and looked at Gon. “Are you sure you want to do it on this random guy?” He asked and Gon nodded determinedly.

“Definitely! I have a really good feeling about him! I really want to do it on Satotz.” Gon affirmed. Killua let his head loll to one side briefly while exhaling.

“Well, alright. We can find information on these guys anywhere on the internet. If they’re any kind of famous worth their weight, you can at least find what kind of music they did primarily. To find their hatsu, you’ll have to dig a little deeper. It’ll probably be inside certain interviews, documentaries, or biographies.” Killua said, clicking open the internet and typing things in. Gon blinked at him, barely following his speedy instructions and then scrambled to follow Killua’s example, clicking open his internet. He looked over and saw Killua had typed in Satotz name, so he did the same.

“Ok, what do I do now?” Gon said as he saw the first row of the internet results were in fact pictures of the purple haired man. Killua turned to face his computer and pointed at the first link.

“Start there. Read it and put down what you think is important for people to know who haven’t heard about him. This is only suppose to be a page, so keep it brief.” Killua instructed as he continued to scroll and click to new pages. Gon clicked it and as the page flashed white to load, Gon looked over at Killua’s screen again.

“What are you looking up?” Gon asked. Killua looked over at Gon for a moment then back to the screen.

“Well, I’m trying to find you those documentaries…” Killua said, a slight mutter in his tone, but still comprehensible. Gon blinked.

“Really? Wow, thanks Killua!” He gushes and went back to read his website with new vigor. If Killua was working so hard for him, he’ll have to work hard as well. Killua scratched his cheek as heat pooled in them from embarrassment.

“It’s whatever, I said I’d help you. Give me your email so I can send it over when I find stuff.” He said.
“Oh! Ya, sure!” Gon said, turning to Killua and sliding his notebook back over to his side, jotting it down. He slid it back over to Killua who glanced down at it as Gon continued writing. He let a smile come on his face as he continued to quickly run through the resources online. This was so normal, he felt normal. He couldn’t help but feel happy as he hung out with Gon and Zushi, well, mostly Gon, but whatever, this was normal! This was having friends. He would be happy just like this, being with his friends, being Gon’s friend.

-o0o0o0o0o-

After a few more minutes, while Zushi played a couple default computer games found on the main menu of his computer from boredom, Killua sat up straighter.

“Ah! Found it! Ah, maybe I made this too easy on you Gon? This has everything…” Killua said as he scanned over the biography he just found. Gon looked over at the screen to see the purple haired star sitting on a stool with a rustic guitar in his hands, strumming away, one foot on the rung and the other on the ground. It was a really photogenic pose that looked natural. These World Stars were really good at what they did.

“No, no, you should give it to me! I already have all that brief stuff! He’s graduated 280th class, and he does mainly soft rock ballads. He’s got a giant guitar collection, 3 platinum albums and his hair color’s natural. I just need the hatsu stuff!” Gon begged, clinging to his arm. Killua chuckled and shrugged the arm Gon wasn’t weighing down.

“Alright, alright, down boy.” He chuckled, copy and pasting the link and sending it to Gon on his computer.

“Yay, thanks Killua.” Gon cooed and opened it up to read for himself. Killua clicked off his computer and looked over Gon’s shoulder for the information. Gon read the biography that began from when he was a boy, so he skimmed a bit to the later parts when he became famous and found his hatsu.

“Wow… he can play the guitar so fluidly it’s like he’s not even pressing his fingers to the strings… and it’s like a songbird when he plays, how he flies between chords.” Gon awed, starting to type it down on the document he had open. Killua’s eyes flitted from the screen to Gon’s wide eyes and shrugged.

“Big deal, I’m pretty sure I could do that if I tried.” Killua shrugged.

“I don’t know Killua, aren’t hatsus suppose to be specific and particular to one person? That’s what gives them their edge and brand?” Gon recited from his learnings in Wing’s class. Killua jutted out his lip in a huff.

“Whatever…” He huffed. Gon tilted his head as he began thinking about their hatsu. He wondered what he would develope for his hatsu when they graduate and become famous. He supposed they still have plenty of time to develope them, they were still just learning about it for now after all. That was one of the reasons for Wing’s paper, to see other’s people Hatsu and get the students to start thinking of their own special and unique skills to apply to their talents. Gon was almost done filling his one page on Satotz’s information when his eyes skimmed over a quote and he froze then quickly reread it to make sure what he read was right--was real.

“Ging…” Gon murmured and Killua and Zushi turned to look at Gon’s dumbstruck face.

“Your dad?” Killua asked.
“Ging?” Zushi questioned. He remembered asking Gon about his dad, but Gon didn’t tell him. Did he tell Killua? He felt a little hurt, but he also understood, Gon probably had to share a lot more and act generally more friendly towards Killua to get any progress out of him and being friends.

“Satotz… He said he got into the industry because of Ging. He was inspired by him. He never met him but he’s heard of his works and what he’s done.” Gon read from the quotes Satotz provided in the document. He smiled wide. “He heard of how Ging donated to charities that helped children from tough backgrounds to pursue careers in music or other art forms. He had done it anonymously because he didn’t want people to know, but after some digging and cross referencing, Satotz knew it was his idol that’s done it. He actually does a lot of charity work without anyone knowing it’s him!” Gon said, pouring over the words. “Wow, I had no idea about any of this of Ging! I knew I had a good feeling about Satotz! I never would have been able to learn any of this about my father if it wasn’t for this paper on him.”

“Stuff you wouldn’t need to learn about through other people if your dad just took you with him…” Killua muttered under his breath. He wouldn’t say this kind of confrontational stuff straight to Gon’s face. He’s still happy it ended up with Killua meeting Gon, and he’s sure Gon’s already had that thought.

“How did you know that this guy would have information about your dad?” Zushi asked. Gon smiled at him.

“It was just a gut feeling. I listen to it most times, because my intuition is usually right… sometimes… well… it doesn’t hurt to follow it.” Gon said, getting less confident in his sentence as he spoke. Killua snickered behind him.

“Sounds like your gut gets you in more trouble than it's worth.” He snickered, his hand up to his lips to cover his smile. Gon turned back to him.

“No! It’s definitely always worth it, but… yea, I do get into some situations sometimes…” Gon chuckled sheepishly. He turned back to Zushi as a thought occurred to him.

“So, do you know who Ging is?” He asked.

“Yes, of course, he’s very famous, he’s one of the World Stars we discuss in 101.” Zushi said with a kind smile.

“Sorry I didn’t tell you earlier, I didn’t want you to judge me for my father and not for me. That’s why I’m hoping no one at this school figures out about my father. But it’s ok if it's you guys. I didn’t know you as well back then Zushi, but now I know you’d never judge me for my family background. You’re more sincere than that, down to earth.” Gon admitted. Zushi blushed and scratched the back of his head.

“Wow, thanks Gon. I’m happy you trust me with something so sensitive for you.”

“And what about me? How did you know I wasn’t going to judge you for your dad? If anything, it’s hardwired in me to judge who I hang out with based on merit.” Killua griped, poking Gon’s shoulder from behind. He really was shameless. He wanted Gon’s attention all the time and he valued Gon’s praises more than that of the world’s more exclusive critic. And he couldn’t help but describe the feeling in his chest as jealousy when he gives those praises and attention to others. Gon worked hard for Killua’s friendship, dammit! It must mean something deeper than these superficial things he had with those other amateurs. It’s why he’s starting to find himself getting weak to Gon and anything he asks or suggests. Did Gon find Killua down-to-earth and sincere enough to trust his secret to as well?
“Mmmh…” Gon hummed as he thought about it, his eyes roving the ceiling as though it might provide the answer. “Well… Because it’s you, Killua!” Gon said, like it was obvious. Killua blinked.

“Hah?”

Gon shrugged.

“I don’t know how else to describe it. If it’s you, I don’t mind sharing anything.” He said, his amber eyes locking onto Killua’s, so intense they looked like they were glowing. Killua’s breath locked in his throat and he looked over Gon’s shoulder to Zushi’s face to anchor him back to reality and make sure this is real.

“You’re a real idiot! That doesn’t make any sense!” He cried, shoving Gon’s face back, but not harshly. It’s a friendly push. “What exactly is it about me that makes you ok to share? Like, you said with Zushi, he was sincere or whatever.” He began muttering again at the end as his cheeks flushed. Now he’s really just fishing for it. Gon blinked and looked back at Zushi and back at Killua as if to compare and find what stands out for Killua. Gon just puts on a goofy smile again.

“Everything about you.”

“GAAH!” Killua shouts, standing up. That was so out-there and embarrassing and not at all what he wanted, but everything he was expecting, too vague and too specific. He was happy there isn’t anything about himself that Gon sees as a turn-off, but...

“Hey!” The librarian harshly whispered. “You’re being way too loud!”

“Sorry…” Killua muttered. He pulled out his phone as Gon gave his apology too and check the time. “I gotta go. You’re basically done, Gon. Just finish it up and print it.” He pocketed his phone again and made his way for the front of the library.

“Ah? But I wanted to walk you home?” Gon pouted. He knows the way to his place until a couple blocks, it’s at least farther than he used to know- down the sidewalk of the school where Gon would normally turn to get to his own place.

Zushi gives both of them knowing and incredulous looks from behind. There’s no way they don’t know right? He thought, It's obvious.

“No, there’s no point,” He says. “I’ll see you tomorrow, Gon.” He waves the hand that doesn’t hold the black binder tucked under his arm in the air without looking back.

“Bye Killua…” Gon whined and turned back to his work. He was less motivated to finish it now, even though he was only a couple sentences from finishing.

“It’s ok, Gon, you’re almost done. Here, while you’re waiting, I’ll go figure out which DVDs has Killua in it.” Zushi said, and stood up, making his way back over to the short shelf.

“Oh ya!” Gon cried, and flew his fingers over the keyboard to type up a summary of what he read from the source Killua had found for him. Even mentioned Ging. He skipped over to the printer at the end of the row of computers and printed out his sheet, sticking it in his notebook for safe keeping and made his way to Zushi.

“So?” Gon asked, hopping down to squat in front of the row of dark cases.

“Yes, well, remember I told you the Zoldycks don’t allow the library to have the DVDs until they’re sure they can’t make much more profit off of it, so the latest ones they have are from approximately 2
years ago. Killua was… 14 then, so that was his debut concert. You’re in luck, that should be the most interesting one.” Zushi chuckled, pulling out the last DVD on the end of the row. Zushi handed it to Gon and he flipped it over to look at the front. It was just the silver ‘Zoldyck’ on front floating over a dark outdoor stage with a lone light hitting the center.

“Are their concerts outside?” Gon asked looking over the case.

“Theyir summer ones are, since summer nights are cool in terms of weather, and it adds to the experience to have it under the stars. And yes, the Zoldyck debut concerts are held the summer before their freshman year here at Musica. But they do have an indoor concert hall for winter shows and more private and special occasions.” Zushi said. Gon nods then Gon stands up, Zushi’s head tilting back to look up at him.

“This is amazing, I can’t wait to see Killua perform for the first time. I kinda wish I was able to give Killua a DVD of me performing. I never thought to record my concerts. Maybe I can find a fan recorded video of my concerts on the internet instead? I feel like watching each other’s performances will help us be closer.” Gon said. Zushi began walking to the check-out with Gon.

“Interesting…” Zushi muttered. “Well, tell me how you liked it tomorrow or over the phone through text while you watch. It’s not only going to be Killua. It’s his debut, so most songs will be his or feature him, but there will also be Illumi and Milluki too.”

Gon bristles at the mention of Illumi but he tilts his head curiously at Milluki.

“Right. I don’t think I’ve seen him yet. Alright, then this will be a learning experience for a lot of things! I’ll see how the professionals are, Killua going full out, and Milluki, his… older brother?” He asked, to make sure he got it right.

“Right.” Zushi said. The librarian took the DVD and checked it out under Gon’s name and handed it back. He thanked her and they left together.

“Alright, then I’ll see you tomorrow! I got some studying to do!” Gon cried and ran off in one direction.

“Bye!” Zushi shouted after him. Gon felt so happy. Since he goes to the school for music, he wasn’t lying when he said he was going to study! Watching other people’s concerts are great ways to study for your own improvement. He loved going to school here! He was so excited he ran all the way home. He opened the door after unlocking it and acknowledged Mito wasn’t home yet.

*Not getting off early tonight.* He thought, heading into the kitchen and grabbing a snack to hold him over until Mito comes home. He enters his room and wonders if he should do something before watching the disc.

“Oh, what the hey, I don’t have anything better to do!” Gon cries, too excited to wait when he had no good reason. He leaped at the player and popped it in. He moved his gaze to the left and noticed the magazine he accidently stole from the lady at the clothing store they went to for Melody. He still felt bad for that… He picked it up and gazed at Killua’s cool autograph on the front cover where Killua posed for the photo.

He didn’t really have time to look it over properly yesterday when Killua had determined an idea for them to do. They had no time to waste to rehearse and get the assignment done. He let himself forget the DVD for a moment, leaving it on the home screen- shadowing figures of Illumi, Killua, and Milluki fading in and out, overlaying the image of the lone stage.
Gon flipped through it and found the 7 page spread featuring Killua and the fall collection he was modeling.

Wow, Killua looks so good! He always looks so cool with everything he wears… Gon remembered that pirate looking outfit he wore friday and a smile broke out on his face. Even wearing the weirdest things, he can make it look good. There were multiple images on the pages. One with Killua on his back, fall colored leaves adorning the grass covered ground and framing his face as he smiled happily up at the camera. He made the clothes look good and the small insert was his quotes on what he does on fall days.

Gon gazed at the way Killua’s eyes looked up at the camera, squinted in a smile and how his nose covered a little of his eye as he turned his head to one side. He blinked and turned the page, almost feeling like he had to force his eyes away from the photo. Another with Killua’s silhouette against the window of a cafe with the fall colored leaves on the trees outside. He sipped at a cafe cup as the expression on his face indicated he was being warmed from the inside out. Another text insert on what he does on cold fall days to keep warm. A couple other outdoor shots of him playing with leaves, on swings, and all in cool and fashionable fall outfits like oversized sweaters, skinny jeans, coats and scarfs. Killua looks so cool… and sooo cute… Gon felt like he was getting a little jealous. He’s already done so much, like appear in magazines and get interviews, and have concerts he’s suppose to be watching-! Right… He should watch that instead of staring at these pictures of Killua like he has been for the past… 30 minutes?! Gon blinked at the clock on his dresser before looking down at the magazine as if to accuse it for entrancing him for so long. Alright, so he’ll close the magazine, watch the concert and see if there’s any other homework he might have forgotten before tonight. He flips the page for kicks, and at the full page image blown up on the next page, his breath catches and his fingers freeze, keeping the page open.

It was Killua, wearing a sweater that actually fit to his figure, but the sleeves came up to swallow Killua’s fingers to half their length. Half of his body was hidden behind the tree he was peeking around, like someone playing hide and seek and getting discovered or teasing the seeker, his fingers curved elegantly on the trunk of the tree. His smile was soft and the wind blew at the perfect time, his hair breezed to one side and giving his far eye a peek-a-boo look, the blue barely making it’s way through his stark white hair. It was like Killua was right there, looking at Gon like that, and he suddenly felt his whole body get warm.

It gathered in his cheeks first but then an electric like feeling struck up and down his spine and the heat began to pool below in the pit of his stomach uncomfortably and Gon closed the magazine with a slap. It only helped a little, cause he could still see the image as clearly and vivid in his head as though he still had the page open. He breathed out through his mouth and in from his nose to calm himself and it worked for the most part.

Distraction… Gon chuckled slightly nervously as he reach the remote, the image still lingering in his mind like the picture had burned an afterimage into his retinas.

He moved the indicator over ‘play full concert’ and pressed the confirmation. The screen darkened and Gon could hear murmurs of the crowd slowing and quieting down as ‘shhh’ became prominent. The center stage slowly lit up where a dark figure with long black hair was situated, wearing a white dress shirt and black slacks. He raised his head as the lights come on full strength. Gon notices, as the camera changes angle closer to Illumi’s face, that he’s wearing make-up, or… more make-up than Gon’s seen when he saw him that first day.

Illumi speaks. “I want to thank everyone here for coming. This concert is a special one as it is the debut concert of my special little brother.” He raises one hand to the side, indicating offstage. The audience offers polite applause as Killua comes out, and Gon lets out a little gasps at how small
Killua looked back then. He’s so excited to see his friend so young! Killua joins his brother’s side, Illumi’s hand resting on his shoulder. He’s wearing a white dress shirt with dark blue vest over it and matching dark blue slacks. It brings out his eyes.

“Killua Zoldyck. This is also a special occasion as we’re celebrating his birthday as well as his debut with this concert.” Gon blinks. This concert was around Killua’s birthday?! When was this? He scrambled for the DVD to check the date at the bottom of the front face. July 7. Gon mentally tucked that piece of information away as he tuned back to the show.

“... So if you all would please join us in singing Killua a happy birthday to start off the concert.” Illumi said. Killua looked up at his brother with a smile on his face as Milluki comes out the same direction Killua came from, the applause from the audience more sincere than when Killua came out.

“Oh, that’s Milluki. Well he’s certainly… bigger than I imaged…” Gon mentioned to himself. And does no one share an actual resemblance with Killua? He thought. He could even see the resemblance between Illumi and Milluki. Milluki wore a white dress shirt with black arm sleeves that started at the elbow and ended down at the wrist and black slacks. He joined Killua’s other side, placing a hand on Killua’s other shoulder like how Illumi had his.

Killua turns to Milluki and gives him a smile as he did Illumi before turning back to face the audience and camera. Gon could see he’s also wearing make-up, a thick eyeliner on his eyes. Gon figures its for the show, for it to be seen, but he likes Killua’s natural eyelashes and shape more. And as the audience starts singing with the prompt of Illumi, Gon can’t help but notice how stiff and formal all of it looks. Like there was an underlying tension beneath the surface, a bomb ready to blow apart something barely held together by a thread.

Gon could gather how tense Killua was around Illumi after seeing them offstage in the harmony class. Maybe the tension Gon could sense was from Killua having to perform the show with Illumi so close to him when he had been so uncomfortable with Illumi being a whole classroom away from him. Was he also uncomfortable around this Milluki character?

As the refrain ended and the audience was about to launch into applause for the end, the three teens on stage reached up behind their ears to pull forward a mouth mic piece to rest of their cheek by their lips and the lights on stage flashed to more colors that complimented Killua.

Milluki began creating a complex beat with his mouth that Gon couldn’t even believe was possible (He sounded like a machine!), and they all jumped out into formation with plenty of space to move. Gon gasped, a smile on his face. That was really awesome, he wasn’t expecting it and it made him excited. The audience lit up and applauded at Milluki’s beatboxing and Killua and Illumi began singing along with his beats, their melodies harmonizing to create a sort of techno sounding tune, a remix of happy birthday. Gon’s jaw dropped at how they sounded like that with no instruments, and Gon couldn’t help but admit the difference in levels between not just him and Killua, but between him and all the Zoldycks.

They danced, swinging their arms and legs in large celebratory moves, singing out the last note in a three part harmony, and the audience stood to their feet, applauding. Gon didn’t blame them. That was amazing. He tried to watch all three of them move about but there was something about the way Killua moved that brought his eyes back to the white haired teen. Maybe it was that his hair was white, or he was in the middle, but he didn’t want to look away. He really did have a commanding stage presence.

The curtains drew down and the audience simmered down again, excitedly chatting of the performance while they waited for the next one.
It was amazing, Killua could dance, sing, and he could model. He was already so good at everything, why did he go to the academy? Gon took the remote and fast forwarded a short time until the curtain open and he played it, seeing the three out again, except they were in full suits, Milluki and Illumi’s in black and white and Killa’s in white and blue. They had a single mike in front of them as they were half circled around it.

The audience immediately quieted down, giving them full attention as they waited for the next song. Milluki started first, one hand coming from behind his back to start snapping at a steady beat, then Illumi with one of his hand and Killua joined the steady snapping last. They opened their mouths and Gon was absolutely mesmerized by the sounds of their voices.

They all started singing together in harmony. “Oh, oh, oh… For the longest time. Oh, oh, oh

For the longest-” Illumi and Milluki began harmonizing with each other, vocalizing the notes in a capella, and Killua took the main melody to sing. Gon was absolutely entranced by the musical sharps and flats Killua sang of the cover song Gon recognized immediately. Gon could tell the audience was eating it up too, with the silence they gave with all eyes on him.

“If you said goodbye to me tonight, There would still be music left to write. What else could I do, I'm so inspired by you, That hasn't happened for the longest time…! Once I thought my innocence was gone, Now I know that happiness goes on… That's where you found me, When you put your arms around me, I haven't been there for the longest time!” Killua looked so attractive up there, and the words he sang, his head swaying to the notes, it was like Killua was being sincere in his words, singing them directly to whoever was listening. It was enchanting and alluring. He could understand why they might have chosen to sing this song first, he captured the heart of everyone around him and now they would welcome him warmly as the newest Zoldyck member.

“Oh, oh, oh… For the longest time. Oh, oh, oh, For the longest-! I'm that voice you're hearing in the hall And the greatest miracle of all Is how I need you And how you needed me too, That hasn't happened for the longest time!”

Killua did sound really good, it was no wonder he was declared the most talented in the family, even though not every single one of the kids have been introduced or debuted. It was so very hard to focus on anyone else but Killua when he kept singing, and his suit was so white and his hair was so fluffy-Gon’s mind screeched to a stop when he realized how hot his face felt and he shook his head to clear his thoughts. He should focus on the concert, maybe figure out why Killua doesn’t singing around others.

“Maybe this won't last very long, But you feel so right And I could be wrong… Maybe I've been hoping too hard But I've gone this far, And it's more than I hoped for…! Who knows how much further we'll go on, Maybe I'll be sorry when you're gone… I'll take my chances, I forgot how nice romance is, I haven't been there for the longest time! I had second thoughts at the start

I said to myself Hold on to your heart. Now I know the woman that you are, You're wonderful so far, And it's more than I hoped for!”

Gon decided he loved the cover of this song by the Zoldycks. And he’d maybe download it to listen on his phone… perhaps the video too. Even though it’s just the three of them snapping, he liked the look on Killua’s face as he performs. Gon looked around for a pen and paper to write up the songs he liked the best during the concert as he heard the song come to a close.

“I don't care what consequence it brings, I have been a fool for lesser things, I want you so bad

I think you ought to know that, I intend to hold you for the longest time!” All three of them entered
three part harmony for the last couple of refrain repeats. Gon felt his body warm as he looked into the eyes of the Killua on screen who looked into the camera. “For the longest time

Oh, oh, oh, For the longest time… For the longest time, Oh, oh, oh, For the longest…!” The audience applauded as the curtains closed over the trio.

-o0o0o0o0o0o-

The concert continued with curtains opening and closing, audience applause, and drowning in all that was the concept of Killua. This concert really was all about him, he was singing most of the songs Gon’s seen so far, or appeared on stage to dance or play an instrument. Gon was starting to get concerned as it hit the halfway mark though- Killua had been in most of the performances. At most, Killua had one song he wasn't performing to be able to rest backstage. Gon knew that these numbers could really wear on you from having his own concerts and being the sole performer of the show. He should probably have more faith in Killua’s endurance, but his Zoldyck concerts look a lot longer than the concerts Gon hosts…

Gon breathes a bit easier when the next performance was a piano piece by Milluki. Gon discovered Milluki was really skilled at his piano playing- the sounds were fast and precise, and much more adept than Gon could ever be at playing the piano. It was soothing and a good half time for the concert.

But soon enough that piece was over too. The curtains closed and opened.

Gon was happy to see Killua again, he really did love watching him perform and hearing him sing, even if most times it was paired with Illumi, like now. It wasn’t that bad, they sounded good together- great, in fact, but he much rather hear Killua on his own.

The two fair skinned teens were situated a couple feet apart from each other. Both were wearing sleeveless jackets, the center unzipped revealing their toned bodies, baggy boy-band jeans with loose belts hanging off their hips, respective colors sneakers of white and black and blue, and mic earclips attached positioned over their mouths. They twinned their positions with one fisted arm above their head and the other by their waist, their legs out with one heel upturned.

The audience erupted into fanatic cries at seeing the photogenic duo in such captivating clothes, the exposed skin such a tease. Gon held a hand over his mouth to keep himself from laughing too loudly. It was impressive that they were able to stay there in their starting position without cracking a smile as they waited for the audience to quiet down so that when the music starts, they’d be able to hear it. When Gon’s audience show so much reaction and love for what they see, he could never help breaking character and smiling, sometimes a chuckle or two. Soon enough, the shrieks died down and the music started, the two of them coming into life, doing impressive footwork dances, and Illumi came to the front first to start singing.

“You know a lot of girls be Thinkin my songs are about them… This is not to get confused… This one’s for you…” Illumi spoke melodically as Killua made his way around charismatically in the back, and the girls squealed like real fangirls as Illumi dedicated the song to an ambiguous ‘you.’ They jumped back into sync when Killua lined up on the other side of Illumi, Illumi still singing first.

“Baby you're my everything, you're all I ever wanted. We could do it real big, bigger than you ever done it. You be up on everything, other [chicks] ain't never on it. I want this forever, I swear I could spend whatever on it...!” Illumi rapped. They jumped out and swinging their arms back in, their dance moves smooth and easy, sexy and alluring. He ducked down, mirroring Killua’s moves as Killua moved up to sing himself, the girls squealing again as their new favorite began singing.
“Cause she hold me down every time I hit her up... When I get right I promise that we gone live it up...” Illumi came to stand next to Killua again, and they both held their hands, pulling their fingers towards themselves in a come hither motion for the next line, “... She make me beg for it,” as they sang the next line, “till she give it up...” Both Illumi and Killua lowered their center of gravity and gyrated their pelvis in a circular motion up and down twice. Gon’s eyes zeroed in on Killua’s lithe motion and then the screen froze, the video paused as the two zoldycks were in a turning motion as they got ready to launch into their next move. Even though the image was paused in front of Gon, the motion kept playing over and over in Gon’s head before his eyes, the heat that was spreading through his body pooling again in his stomach like a coil. Gon blinked and put the remote down with shaky hands and sat back away from the screen even though before his eyes all he saw was that circling motion, the hips, his abdomen, his come hither face- Gon squeezed his eyes shut and shook his head, the heat becoming uncomfortable. He peeked one eye open to see the side profile of Killua’s face as he was still paused in the turn, and he knew he was blushing. He stood up quickly.

“Ok, uh, one quick... one quick cold shower.” Gon blinked once more at the screen, and based on the uncomfortable feeling in his pants, he should really take one.

-o0o0o0o0o-

When Gon got out the shower, dressed and dry, he looked at the paused screen and wondered if he should just press the play button, let it go on and forget he ever saw his best friend do that... that thing that made his stomach flip and chest tighten and brain short circuit- Yea, forget any of that...

He scooted up to the screen again on his knees and picked up the remote. What he saw his friend do wasn’t for him... It was just fan service, dance moves for a routine, something he’s done himself before. But almost without permission, he was rewinding the scene to start at the part Killua began singing. By himself, unaccompanied.

Just as he played it and he heard Killua sing his part, he heard his phone vibrate on his bedside table. He threw his arm back quickly to reach his phone, but kept his eyes glued to the screen until Killua’s hips swayed again and felt his stomach clench.

Oh gawd, I think I’m doing something naughty... Gon thought guiltily as he paused the DVD again and looked down at his phone, hoping the distraction will give him his sanity back, because surely he’s gone insane.

He sees he has a text message from Killua about 50 minutes ago and the one that he just heard was from Zushi. He bit his bottom lip and decided to open Zushi’s first.

So? Have you started watching the video yet? How’s Killua? I never actually seen it myself, but I heard its good.

Gon just felt awkward to answer that honestly as he found himself readying the next replay.

“Ehhh...” He whined slightly. He moved to open Killua’s text message instead of answering. Maybe talking to the teen idol he was enchanted by will help him realize that this is his best friend and he shouldn’t be watching him like this. He’s never had these feelings before, maybe they’re normal for teenagers and it’ll pass. One more view of the video and a pause and he vaguely wondered if it really would pass. He looked down at Killua’s words.

Hey, I forgot to tell you but I won’t be at school tomorrow, I got a fashion shoot for a magazine. Maybe I’ll be back by lunch, see ya then.

Ah... Gon thought. He looked up helplessly as he reviewed the devilishly attractive clip once more.
He really did feel addicted already and he felt like he couldn’t get enough. Really, this wasn’t much better than a teenage girl kissing their favorite teen idol’s picture in a magazine or staring up at that shirtless edition poster they put on their roof above their bed.

Gon groaned and put his head in his hands as his fingers found their way to the rewind button again, already familiarized with the location. Maybe… he could trick his mind into just fast forwarding this part and releasing himself.

No, wrong words. And his body already felt deprived at the thought of being removed from this eye candy.

“Oh my god… I just called Killua eye candy…” Gon moaned, his stomach twisting again and he fell over, looking up at the ceiling, the video paused and ready to be played again. “I think something’s wrong with me…”

Still he pressed play again and watched it again.

By the time Mito came home, Gon probably counted watching that scene 86 times. And he never finished watching the rest of the concert.

Zushi checked his phone one more time. He was wondering where his friends were.

He was in front of Gon’s locker waiting for the owner, and that was where Killua usually met him to wait for Gon too. Well, ‘usually’ is relative, he’s started doing that since Killua began taking on the role of Gon’s friend.

He’s starting to get worried about Gon. Killua hasn’t met up with him yet and Gon was coming to school later than usual. Plus Gon hadn’t texted him back since yesterday. Zushi only texted Gon once, but he was too nervous of being too intrusive to text him again. Gon might have had a good reason not to text back or for being late, but if first period began and Gon wasn’t there, he’d have to risk double texting him.

He’d be more concerned about Killua but Zushi didn’t have his number and it wasn’t unusual for Killua to just not be in school.

Zushi had just tucked his phone away again after checking it for the time and in case he missed the buzz for a text, worried, when he spotted Gon from the corner of his eye. He looked up relieved and happy, only to frown, concerned over Gon’s appearance. His hair seemed less kempt than usual, his green jacket wasn’t even bothered to be zipped up.

He had his headphones stuck in his ears and his eyes glued to his phone and Zushi could only assume he was watching a video. But Gon looked like he didn’t sleep well, and his face held an expression that Zushi deciphered as guilty concern. Zushi took a step forward to meet the boy that was still down the hall from him, but at the movement Gon looked up and met his eyes. There was a frantic look to his eyes as he recognized Zushi and his face contorted into one of urgency.

“Zushi!” He cried out and ran at him.

“W-wha? Gon, what happened?” Zushi cried out, backing up from the rushing teenager.

“Help me! I think I’m sick!” Gon cried out once he made it to Zushi, grinding his heels into the ground not to plow over the smaller child.

“S-sick?” Zushi asked, tilting his head. Besides looking a little disheveled, Gon didn’t look very sick.
“I think it’s my stomach! Or maybe my head! Or it’s a disease of the skin!” Gon cried, looking between his phone and Zushi. Zushi opened his mouth to ask further questions, but when Gon took one of his glances at his phone, his face flushed and he groaned a little, frustration and something else, and hung his head.

Zushi tilted his head forward to see what was on the phone but Gon let his hand fall limply to his side.

“Help me…!”

“Ok... ok, what’s the symptoms again?” Zushi asked.

“My stomach feels weird, like I’m falling, my chest feels tight, like I can’t breath, my head feels fuzzy to the point where I can’t get my thoughts straight, and all my skin feels tingly! And generally, I get really warm!” Gon explained. Zushi blinked.

“And when did this start…?” He asked slowly. He didn’t want to jump to conclusions.

“When I watched the Zoldyck concert with Killua in it... It happens whenever I see this...” Gon explained, taking a breath to calm himself, and then showed the video to Zushi. It was the part of the Zoldyck concert where Killua starts to sing his part of the cover song Best I Ever Had, up to the part where he does the pelvis swing, then it restarts automatically. “I can’t stop looking, but it’s giving me the funny feeling. I know Killua looks good, but I don’t know why I can’t seem to stop watching.”

Zushi looked at the video and put a hand on the phone to lower it once he watched it through one time, feeling a bit awkward to see Killua dancing like that. He would have wondered how Gon could watch it so many times if he didn’t already figure out Gon had a crush on Killua days ago.

But even feeling something so obvious like this, he still doesn’t know what this is? Maybe he’s never liked anyone else, so this was his first experience? Zushi wondered.

“Alright, well... first of all, we’re gonna close this, ok?” Zushi said slowly. He supposed Gon needed to be cut off from the source to be able to feel better today. Gon gave him a look like he just suggested they need to amputate his leg. Zushi held up a hand to stop Gon’s argument as he opened his mouth.

“You wanted my help, right? And I think if you’ve already figured out the funny feeling came from this video, then even you should know you need to put the video away. So...” Zushi concluded and Gon pouted, but listened, pressing his home button, dismissing the video.

“Ok... now, we’re gonna have to delete that.” Zushi gave Gon a look when Gon looked at him like he suggested they kill his firstborn with fire.

“Zushi, I-!”

“We don’t want to risk you falling into the temptation of looking at it again.” He said, wagging a finger at Gon. Gon bit his lip and decided it was best not to tell Zushi he had a copy of it back on his computer at home.

“I... fine...” He whimpered out and gave it to Zushi. Then he draped an arm over his face. “Just get it over with! I can’t watch...!”

Zushi chuckled, amused. This could be funny to see the way Gon would act around Killua if Gon never admits that he actually has a crush on Killua.
Zushi deletes the video and puts the phone in Gon’s outstretched hand. Gon grips it and pulls it to his person and clicks through it as though to see if it was still on his phone.

“Oh…” He groaned.

“It’ll be ok Gon, you’ll start feeling a little better now.” Zushi said, patting his older friend on the back.

“Zushi…” Gon moaned. “Am I going to die? I feel like I was doing something bad… in my stomach…” Gon asked, his head bowed.

“Hahah, no Gon, don’t ask me things like that, let’s just- er, hey do you know where Killua is? He should have been here by now.” Zushi asked, looking around. Gon straightened himself out, the frown still on his face.

“Ah, he won’t be around for the first half of classes today. He said he has a photo shoot and maybe he’ll be back in time for lunch. Don’t worry!” Gon said, starting to get back into his usual happiness instead of the foreboding gloom he was sporting.

“Ah, I see. That’s cool, I’ve got to ask him what that’s like, having all these jobs as a young idol. I wonder if it’s fun. It seems fun.”

“Mh! I still have my one question a day! I think I wanted to ask him something about his concerts or the type of musics he listens to… I don’t know which to pick! I wish I could ask more than one question…” Gon hummed. The bell rang and Gon looked up surprised.

“That was quick.” He murmured.

“Well, you came in later than usual.” Zushi offered and Gon lit up in recognition.

“Ah right! I was probably walking slower from looking down at my phone. Ok, then I’ll meet you here again for lunch!” He ruffled Zushi’s hair and Zushi laughed from the affectionate gesture. “Hopefully Killua would have made it here by then…” Gon said slightly to himself. “See ya.”

“Ya. Bye Gon!” Zushi cried and turned to walk to class, Gon doing the same.

He entered the pitch perfect class and multiple classmates and fans welcomed him again. Even though he knew Killua wouldn’t be there, he still felt a bit disappointed when he didn’t spot Killua in his usual seat in the back, right where the sunrays fall over him perfectly. He pouted a bit and sat in the front where he did before. Well, this will be an opportunity to study better. He knew he didn’t focus as much as he could have last week, so he could do better now without Killua as a distraction…

Knoèv came in and talked for the first half of class, telling them about arpeggios for the voice. Gon stared wide-eyed as he explained- the arpeggios were the notes of a chord played in succession, either ascending or descending. He gave them arpeggio exercises for them to practice on their own time and then paired them up to practice them in class.

Alot of the students wanted him to pair up with him, and Gon didn’t mind doing the exercises with anyone in particular, but he found himself wishing Killua was there so that they could sing together. He felt like if he did it with Killua, it would be more fun.

He ended up pairing with some girl who kept giving him these weird looks with fluttering eyes, and she could never remember what key they were in and was singing off key; either too sharp or too flat. Gon was happy when class was finally over and he was able to get out, feeling like he needed to
rub his ears to get the discordance ringing out of his head. He didn’t feel that much happier going to
the Physical singing by himself either. He slumped down in the back seats where they’ve been sitting
the past couple classes, imagining Killua was sitting next to him. He was surprised when he felt
someone sit in the seat next to him. Gon was already prepared to tell the person that he was saving
that seat for someone else when he saw it was the teacher.

“Kastro!” Gon cried out surprised. Class didn’t even start yet, what was he doing in the auditorium?

“Hey, Gon. You feeling ok?” He asked smiling kindly. “I couldn’t help but notice you looked a bit
like you got some bad news… and also Killua isn’t with you today?”

Gon’s eyes widen for a moment only for him to slump slightly. He supposed he shouldn’t be too
surprised Kastro could infer something was wrong, Mito always told him he was easy to read, his
emotions right at the surface.

“Yea… he’s has a photo shoot… I miss him.” Gon murmurs. “And I don’t even have my video…”
He mutters lastly, looking off bitterly, even though he could recall the video perfectly as though it
were right in front of his face.

“Ah. Why don’t you just ask to go with him next time?” Kastro asked. “It could be good experience
for prospective idols to get exposed to that kind of stuff. Us teachers can’t always bring students out
on field trips like that because most professionals don’t want to waste time babysitting a bunch of
rookies just for experience.” Kastro said, his hands in the air as he talked about those haughty
photographers in the entertainment business, but Gon just brightened as Kastro spoke.

“I can really go with him!?” Gon asked.

“Yea, I don’t see why not if you have a friend that can get you connections. And as long as your
absence is due to your career or sickness, it’ll be excused.” Kastro explained. Gon smiled brightly at
Kastro.

“Wow, ok! I’ll remember that the next time Killua says he has to go somewhere.” Gon said,
determination in his eyes.

“Allright. Well, I’ve got to get class started. You ready to help me out? We’re gonna do scales to be
heard all through the auditorium. I’d love for you to be my example and help me point out
weaknesses the others have.” He said. Gon beamed at the man.

“Ok! Sounds fun! I get to shout at the top of my lungs?” He asked.

“Well… maybe not the top of your lungs, you’re pretty loud.” Kastro teased. Gon laughed at that as
they both stood up. As Gon chatted with Kastro, both of them making their way down the center
aisle, the Amori brothers glared at their competition. Then they were giving each other knowing
smiles, remembering they won’t even have to worry about thier ‘competition’ much longer. Even if
he wins over the whole school, once he loses at the end of this semester, he’ll have to leave the
whole music industry and his fans will have to move on. He’ll fade into the ocean of has-beens.

Killua goes to run his hands through his hair when he feels another sharp pain explode on his wrist -
a spank and a sharp, “Don’t touch your hair !”

He rolled his lips into his mouth to keep himself from snapping back, feeling his frustration boil
under his skin. And the fact he couldn’t touch his hair was only making him crankier as messing with
his hair relieved his stress most times.
This whole shoot was stupid. They woke up early in the morning, earlier than he does to go to school, and they all piled in the van saved for music related work, himself, Illumi, Milluki (why, he doesn’t care), his mother Kikyo, and a couple of butlers and they drove off to this building that had the giant words **Teen Vogue** on the front sign leading up the driveway. That was when he knew this day was gonna be a bad day.

“Ew, mother, don’t tell me—” He started.

“Shush.” She said, not up to the task of dealing with her son’s mouth today. It was way too early and she hadn’t sent any of the butlers off to get her a caramel mocha yet. Killua just sank into his seat and crossed his arms, sulking immediately. He supposes he should be used to this by now, but he hated doing shoots for the teen targeted audiences the most. The photographers arranges them doing the most degrading and fanserving stuff they got. And the cheesiest outfits, ugh. He doesn’t think he’ll be picking anything from this collection to take home from *this* photo shoot.

They got them inside and the place was freezing, but that was usual. They did the Zoldyck’s make-up and hair and got them into cheesy high school cliche outfits for the magazine’s back-to-school special- clothes like jean jackets, uniforms with ties, even some chic nerd stuff with the polo and large square glasses.

The french-accented photographer was nice and pleasant to deal with at first, but Killua supposed the man could only take so much of Killua’s usual brand of crankiness before snapping. He guessed no one warned the poor guy.

“If you keep trying to touch you hair, I will cut your hands off!” He bit out again, peeking up from the monitor. “I swear, I have it just perfect the way I want it, so if you mess it up, I’m putting you in the clothes of fashion *faux pas*!” He cried. Killua gave him a sarcastic smile and wiggled his hands in the air in a promise to keep them away from his head and tucked them in the pocket of the hoodie he was currently wearing.

“Alright, now, give me shy confession.”

Killua made a face and he sighed, exasperated.

“Get it all out now, I’m counting down!” He said, ducking behind his camera.

“UUUUggggghhhhhheerreeeerrrr…!” Killua cried, throwing his head back in disgust as the man counted down from 3. Once he hit ‘One,’ Killua brought his head back forward, a shy smile sat lopsided on his face, his hair bounced about his head in a halo from being thrown forward, his shoulders hunched slightly in a coy shrug. The cameras flashed on his features, he shifted slightly, altering his moves to get a different angle, and 3 more flashes and the man squealed behind the counter as Killua sulked again.

“Ah! It’s beautiful! It’s magic! I don’t which to choose, I love all these frames!” He gushed, going back to the monitor to see all the frames side by side.

“Yea, yea…” Killua muttered. *What time was it? I gotta get back to Gon…* He thought idly, glancing towards his stuff on his director’s chair, his name on the back brace of the canvas fabric.

“Oh, I wasn’t going to let you, cause you’re such a brat, but you’re pictures came out so nicely and I’m so over the moon I’ll let you pick out any outfit from the collection to keep. You should be happy, their exclusive.” The french man piped. Killua looked over at him, unamused, before strolling off the white backdrop away from the hot lights.
“Right, like I'd want any of your cheesy stuff…” He mumbled, but still walked over to the rack to look over the clothes. He remembered each one that he wore, and the cringy memories that go with it. But he also remembers a couple of them being more comfortable than he expected, and looking better on him than how it looked on rack. With one in mind, he began pushing through the clothes for that complementing light blue colors, when Milluki shows up on the other side of the rack.

“I don’t understand why they let you pick out clothes. You only pick out the weirdest clothes. You have no fashion sense, Killu.” Milluki sneers, his eyes squinted from his chubby cheeks. Killua wants to sneer back, but all that happens is a bubbling laughter that spills out his lips. Milluki flushes and grips his fists at his side.

“Killua, I told you to stop laughing!” He grounded out and Killua wiped at his eye.

“Haha, I still can’t get over the fact they got you over here for the love-your-body campaign! Milluki, you’re so fa-!”

“Hey! You’re just jealous of my squidgy bits, but I love them-” He starts only for Killua to laugh harder, so hard that he’s having trouble get air back in his lungs.

“I can’t believe you-you used their actual scripted d-dialogue!” Killua wheezed. Milluki growled but thankfully Killua was able to finally calm down. “Aw, geez. Yea, ok, piggy. As long as you’re ok with it.” He snickers.

He won't ever tell him, but he preferred his big brother with his chubby body, he couldn’t really imagine him without it, and if he lost it, he wouldn’t be his big brother ‘piggy’ anymore. Then he’d just lose another childhood memory he holds onto. He loves Milluki’s squidgy bits too. He’d be caught dead before he ever said that, though.

His eyes lit up as he found the outfit he was looking for, pulling out a light blue and gray letterman jacket, a 99 on the back flanked by cartoon angel wings and a round halo was angled on the right 9 to make it look like it was draped on the curve. The front had a small 99 on the left breast and it came with gray pants with faded marks down the thighs and dark gray ankle boots. Killua nodded his approval before turning around to find someplace to change. He heard Milluki harrumph behind him.

“I guess even he could have a stroke of luck in what he considers fashion sometimes…” He mumbles, moving on to find something else to fill his time as he waits for Illumi, the last of them to shoot, to finish.

Killua came out his dressing room with his new outfit on and his duffle bag all packed up and ready to go when they called a wrap on the set. Killua pulled out his phone and checked the time. 11:30… He lowered the phone as he looked over at the photographer gushing over the much more agreeable (if not stoic) idol. Illumi needs to hurry up and finish so we can make it back in time for lunch… Killua grumbled, crossing his arms and settling on his designated chair. He narrowed his eyes as he watched Illumi bring his gaze past his shoulder for his pose, modeling a student -teacher outfit look.

He’s been acting weirdly these past few days, Killua’s more curious about it than anything. He knows Illumi doesn’t have any upcoming events that require him to be practicing as hard as he’s been noticing. Just last night, he again hogged the dance room for a good 6 hour block. But Killua could care less what his family does with their free time, he’s not about to willingly interact with them just so he can get an idea of how his brother’s brain works.

Fortunately for Killua, they wrapped up not too much time later.
“Great, great, you all were great, thank you, Zoldyck.” The French photographer expressed, facing Kikyo at the end of the sentence. She lifted a delicate finger to push up her uniglass sunglasses further up her face before taking one of his hands in a handshake.

“Of course. Pleasure doing business with you.” She smiled sweetly. The camera smile she’s taught all her kids to grace their face when in the eyes of the public and fans. They can all spot a fake smile with their practiced expertise; that just comes from the fact that they had to make sure theirs looked flawless. He turned to the kids after that.

“Yes, well, if you haven’t already, please, I implore you all to go ahead and take an outfit from the teen vogue ‘back-to-school’ collection.” He smiled. Killua just hiked his duffle bag further up his shoulder as he got ready to leave. Illumi turned to him then back at the line.

“I think Killu has the right idea. Those jackets look good and we could all have matching jackets.” Illumi said, walking over to the rack to find his custom designed jacket that was black and silver. M milluki frowned.

“Ew, we have to follow Killu’s choice of fashion? We’re all gonna die.”

“Ay! Piggy, you shut up!” Killua snapped, coming out of his shock. He turned back to Illumi. “But he’s right, I don’t want to match with you guys, uugh, my skin crawls thinking about it already.”

“That’s called goosebumps, Killu, and that’s from the visual aesthetic you’re thinking about. We’ll look great.” He said, finding his and pulling it up to inspect it before tucking it under his arm.

“What about the pants that goes with it? Or the shirt?” The French man asked.

“I only need the jacket to match.” He shrugged.

“I’m not gonna get mine…” Milluki grumbled. Illumi looked over at him.

“But you know Milluki, that letterman jacket was probably the only thing that flattered your size.” Illumi said. Killua cackled at that while Milluki flushed. Illumi tilted his head slightly at the reaction. Did he say something funny?

“Geez, if you were going to say something embarrassing as punishment for not listening, I would have gotten mine earlier.” He cried, going to get his own blue and green jacket. Illumi shrugged. He got the jacket, the goal was met, the means didn’t matter.

“Ok children, if we’re all set, let’s go back to the car.”

“Mh, you’re dropping us off at school, right?” Killua asked, trotting forth until he was walking next to his mother.

“Killua, you don’t have to, you can stay home with mommy if you want! You worked hard today, you don’t need to go to the rest of the school day, it’s almost over anyways.” She said. Killua scrunched his nose.

“No thanks, I’ll be going to school.” He grunted out. More time away from his family anyway, even if it wasn’t to go back to Gon.

“Yea, you can drop me back at school too…” Milluki grumbled, and Killua looked back at him, only to see him fiddling with his phone. Killua gave a suspicious look at him, but he guess it didn’t matter, he wasn’t bothering him by going to school.
“I’ll be going back home mother.” Illumi said as they reached the car. “I still need to practice.” He said. Killua furrowed his eyebrows. Practice? For what? Why so much? They opened the car doors and Killua went in first, climbing into the 2nd row back seat of their large travel van, Illumi and Milluki climbed in next, sitting in the first 1st row backseat, then the butlers filled while Kikyo sat in the passenger seat next to the Butler driving them.

“We’ll be going by the academy first.” She told the driver as they pulled out.

“You know, you guys can wear the matching jackets to the winter showcase when you come watch me perform.” Illumi stated looking down at the jacket in his hands. Killua’s hands froze over the play button on his phone’s playlist he was about to press, feeling like his blood ran cold. He looked up feeling stunned.

“What?” He croaked out. Illumi blinked and turned his head to look back at Killua.

“If you wear the jackets to the concert when you come to support me, it’ll really mean alot.” He said in that same emotionless melodious voice that would make anyone overhearing him think he was being sarcastic. But Killua couldn’t focus on that.

“You… You’re going to perform in the winter showcase?” He asked. He felt sick, felt like his hands were numbing and the blood drained from his face. He knew he looked pale and he could probably guess he was having a mini panic attack.

Illumi tilted his head the way he does, his hair draping over his shoulder slightly.

“... I never told you? Yes. You know Mother wants us to partake in at least one Academy showcase before we graduate.” He said. Illumi’s eye narrowed slightly, almost imperceivable, searching Killua’s face for something.

Killua didn’t listen to what he said after he confirmed his question. His eyes shifted this way and that, looking down at his lap as though searching for something, some answer, some escape, and he knew he was panicking.

Illumi couldn’t participate in the winter showcase! That was Gon’s concert… if Illumi competed…

A sense of doom washed over Killua and his chest began feeling tight, an unforeseeable pressure weighing down on his lungs, he knew he had to get music in his ears, asap . He leaned back, trying to keep his face neutral, no matter if it was pale or not.

“Whatever. Don’t expect me to go to your stupid showcase.” He mumbled, bringing his silver headphones up to his ears before Illumi could say more and stress him out. Luckily, as Illumi saw Killua lift the headphones and fiddle with his phone, he turned back to the front. Milluki peeked back at him once before they both faced the front and paid him no mind.

Thank goodness, Killua needed to think and he didn’t need to worry about searching gazes as of right now… He pressed play and found himself relaxing to the deep piano strokes that came through his speakers, at least enough to think this through all the way… get some comprehensible thoughts in his head.

Killua flexed his hands, hoping the feelings would come back to them. Illumi is participating in the Winter Showcase with Gon… He squeezed his eyes shut as another wave of nerves shot his thought process, but he was able to recover faster with the soothing piano in his ears. He opened them and stared at his hands that rested in his lap. If Illumi is participating in the showcase, there is no way Gon will win…
~I've been ignoring this big lump in my throat

I shouldn't be crying,

tears were for the weaker days

I'm stronger now, or so I say,

But something's missing

Killua couldn’t believe it. Why would Illumi decide to do this showcase? Why couldn’t he do the spring one? Or even just wait until the very last minute to do his? Well, now it didn’t matter who Gon got to help him or train him or anything, no one would be good enough to get Gon to a point where he could beat Illumi… He might as well say goodbye now.

~Whatever it is,

it feels like it's laughing at me through the glass of a two-sided mirror

Whatever it is,

it's just laughing at me

And I just wanna scream

What can he do? There was nothing Gon could do to beat his brother with his current abilities. Killua didn’t even know if he himself were to go up against Illumi that he could win.

Killua squeezed his hands together, feeling his breathing shallow out. His chest felt so tight, he couldn’t get enough air in.

Gon was impressive, but he was raw. He had potential but there was no way he could hone that fast enough to be performance-ready by the showcase...

~What now? I just can't figure it out

What now? I guess I'll just wait it out (wait it out)

What now? Oh, oh, oh, oh! What now?

Now, because of those stupid Amori brothers (he should really get rid of them, those fools. He could easily crush their music career with one word, all the Zoldycks were really influential like that) and stupid Gon, and their dumb BET! Killua might have to say goodbye to that idiot. The first idiot who dared to speak to Killua. Well, he was new... The first moron who was too dense to leave him alone after being told a couple hundred times… The first person who said he could see the emotions in his eyes, the ones that showed how sad he was… The first to say he would stick by his side because that’s what he needed most… his first friend who became something to him… Is this it then?

~I found the one, he changed my life

But was it me that changed

And he just happened to come at the right time

I'm supposed to be in love
But I'm numb again

Killua shot his head up and took a deep breath, a flash of Gon’s golden eyes flashed through his turmoiled thoughts, his deep voice a soothing beacon out of his stormy contemplation. He breathed a bit easier, but his eyebrows still furrowed with deliberation, a new determination in his eyes.

No, he wasn’t just going to lay down and let something else he wanted, he prized, be ripped from him. Illumi has always done this to him, he’s always pushed him over and dictated his life for him. Illumi and Mother have always been in his ears, telling him how he doesn’t need anyone, he doesn’t need any friends in his life, they’ll only make him weaker, distract him and get in his way. And when that’s done, they’ll only use him for his fame then leave him once they get what they want. But Gon isn’t like that, he knows it, Gon wants to get talent with his own hands, he wants to get better by his own means, and he won’t resort to underhanded cheats like that.

~Whatever it is,

it feels like it's laughing at me through the glass of a two-sided mirror

Whatever it is,

it's just sitting there laughing at me

And I just wanna scream

Gon has never made him weak, Gon’s only strengthened him. Before he met Gon, he felt like he was just always on the brink of fading away. Now when Gon’s around, he can’t seem to stop smiling, Gon’s filled him with life. He tried to fight it at first, it was the stubbornness of his training they’ve drilled into his head, but he realized that was never really him, that was never his voice. He’s always wanted friends. And Gon just might be the only idiot to help him find a way to get them. Opened the doors for him to make new ones. He just knows it, if Gon were to leave him now, he’d never be the same. He’d probably be worse than before. Gon showed him light and he doesn’t want to go back to that darkness.

~What now? I just can't figure it out

What now? I guess I'll just wait it out (wait it out)

What now? Please tell me

What now?

Killua remembered when he was really young; it was before he had started his training to become one of the Zoldyck Idols along with his brothers, he had walked in on his dad getting off the phone with someone and he looked really sad. He didn’t remember much since he was so little, but he remembered his dad had told him… ‘In this world, a friend is a most precious thing you can have… make sure you chose them wisely, they may be the only thing that holds you up or tear you down, ok?’... He’s surprised he only remembered now, it was probably buried deep beneath the following years of solitary training and all the venom dipped words from his brothers and mother, and the fact his father never said anything like that again since that night, as if he was never suppose to say it in the first place.

~There's no one to call 'cause I'm just playing games with them all

The more I swear I'm happy, the more that I'm feeling alone
'Cause I spent every hour just going through the motions

I can't even get the emotions to come out

Dry as a bone, but I just wanna shout

Well, now he knew what to do. He knew Gon wasn’t able to defeat Illumi on his own, Killua might not be able to either. But he’s seen what Gon could do, and while Gon might not be able to outclass Illumi, he may be able to win over the judges better than his emotionless brother. Gon has that light, he has that charisma that draws everyone in (it still makes Killua’s chest swell with emotion thinking Gon could have given his attention to anyone and everybody else, but he focuses solely on him) and that could be the deciding factor in who wins in the Winter Showcase. As far as Killua has picked up, Gon hasn’t started on his piece yet. Killua bit down on his thumbnail, vaguely noting how his hands had more feelings to them then the numb buzz they had before. That won’t do, especially when Illumi has already begun giving hours of training to the performance. Yes, Killua was able to piece together that his hours training and not even noticing Killua was gone for a weekend was due to his focus to win the thing.

~What now? I just can't figure it out

What now? I guess I'll just wait it out (wait it out)

What now? Somebody tell me

What now?

Killua knew what to do now. He had to help Gon. He knew it was going to be hard, Illumi had years more experience over both him and Gon, but he thinks it’ll be possible. Gon seems to know more about what people look for in a concert piece than the Zoldycks, he’s never seen an audience raise to their feet as fast as Gon’s audiences. These showcases need experience from all the school’s classes, which Gon doesn’t have but Killua does.

~I don't know where to go

I don't know what to feel

I don't know how to cry

I don't know oh oh why

Killua leaned back in seat, feeling his chest released some unknown tension and his breaths coming in deeper. He grips his hands together, feeling a fire of determination warm his body and he feels restless to get back to school. Maybe this won’t be enough. Maybe by the end of this, both of their efforts will have been too little and Gon will have to quit and leave him on his merry way. But Killua wasn’t about to let Gon slip through his fingers without trying his damnest. If Gon has to leave him in this darkness, he wasn’t going down without a fight. He was going down swinging with Gon by his side for as long as he can. And if after all their hard work, it still isn’t enough, he’ll maybe be able to let him go easier. He knows it’ll be easier to let him go after working himself ragged for him rather than if he didn’t do a thing. Because then what kind of friend would he be?

~ I don't know where to go

I don't know what to feel

I don't know how to cry
I don't know oh oh why
I don't know where to go
I don't know what to feel
I don't know how to cry
I don't know oh oh why

‘A Friend is a most precious thing you could have…’

He won’t let Illumi get this win easily. Not this time. He was done being submissive. It was time to fight back for a chance to do his life his way. Killua stopped wringing his finger and shoved his hands in his pockets to keep from fidgeting. He was too restless to get to school quickly and tell Gon. If they were going to do this they needed to start as soon as possible.

They needed to start now.

~ So what now?

Gon comes bounding out of the auditorium, leading the pack of students ready for lunch. That class really lifted his spirits. He thinks he’s been down since last night, so he’s happy Kastro was able to make him feel better now. He thinks that’s the longest he’s ever been down.

“Because of Killua…” He hums, not feeling too bad about it. It makes him appreciate Killua a little more, if he’s honest.

It was time for lunch, he wonders where Killua is. Should he wait for him? He makes it to his locker and gets out his bento box, looking over at Killua’s locker. He wonders if Killua would just want him to go to lunch and he’ll meet him in the cafeteria. Gon purses his lips together in thought. He would have preferred if Killua was already waiting for him at his locker, right when lunch started like he hoped.

Gon shifted from foot to foot, worried that if he left the locker to go to lunch at that moment, Killua might round the corner, so he lingered back a bit longer just in case. After the 3rd time thinking Killua might come in the next 30 seconds and he doesn’t, Gon decided to cut his losses and goes to find Zushi, hoping he’s still waiting for him.

As he’s approaching the corner of the hallway that turns down to the cafeteria and Zushi’s locker, Gon hears shuffling and the sounds of something hitting a locker. Gon eyebrows furrow and he hears a deep voice just as he turns the corner.

“You think you could show me up, you freshmeat? I’m way more talented than you, I got into this school on my own .”

Gon’s eyes widened at the scene. A large man hovered over poor little 11 year old Zushi, his back to the locker and the man had a finger to his chest threateningly. He was sneering in his face even though Zushi was looking down and away, trying not to egan the bully.

“Just leave me alone, Todo.” Zushi told him in a mutter, but Gon was able to hear him from there.

“Oh!? Still telling me what to do?! You must have caught some kind of crazy. Allow me to teach you to respect your superiors…!” Todo grunted, straightening out and pulling back a fist.
Zushi! Gon thought frantically as he made his way over in a blink of an eye.

“HEY!” Gon roared as he ran over, startling both of them. He made it over and stood in front of Zushi so Todo no longer had access to him. “Leave him alone!” Gon shouted, shoving him back, the large sumo wrestler looking man stumbled backwards off balance before catching himself and glaring at Gon.

“G-Gon…!” Zushi gasped behind him.

“Why don’t you pick on someone your own size? C’mon, I didn’t audition either, what, you want to fight me?” Gon growled, his eyes darkening and moving into a protective stance in front of Zushi.

“You! You’re that stupid kid from the video! You think you could just waltz in here and take everyone’s attention? You’re not all that, I’ll show everyone what a hick you are when you show up with a swollen eye!” He growled, charging back towards Gon. He lowered himself, getting ready to defend himself and his friend when there was a white flash and angel wings.

Todo’s arm that was thrown forward in a punch was guided off course, his weight and force being used against him, then a kick to his side sent him reeling backwards. Todo again caught his balance before he could fall over onto his butt and looked up at what hit him, it happened so fast.

“You!” He growled. Gon blinked and looked at the person hovering in front of him protectively.

“Killua!” Gon cried happily, his voice reaching a high song note. He could only see his back from here, but based on his outfit, he looked like he came straight from the photo shoot he said he had. His hair looked fluffier and well done, his letterman jacket had angel wings and the pastel colors complimented his skin, hair, and eyes and the whole thing made him look cute. From the snug fitting jeans and the ankle boots, Gon could feel himself warming again even though this wasn’t the time or place for it.

Todo balanced himself out and poised himself to attack again.

“You’re gonna pay for that! You Zoldycks think you’re all that…” He cried out.

“And you need to learn your place. You’re not even talented enough for me to ever remember seeing you around. Think you’re so high as to take it upon yourself to put down other rookies?” Killua scolded in a smooth voice that had both Gon and Zushi gushing over how cool he was behind him.

Todo charged forward again, throwing a punch. Killua caught the impact with his hand only to redirect it without taking the brunt of the attack. He stuck out his leg out and lowered his stance, Killua swung his arms over his head using Todo’s fist to provide the needed momentum to flip the large male over onto his back. Todo hit the ground with a resounding thud and he groaned out.

“Don’t go bothering them ever again.” Killua growled down at his face, making Todo feel even more inferior. He whimpered and scurried away, trying to get back up on his feet but made most of his escape on his hands and knees.

“Wow, Killua that was so cool, and I’m so happy you’re back-!” Gon started, pushing off the locker to start heading over to his friend. He still couldn’t see Killua’s face as he watched Todo depart, but then Killua’s hand twitched and Gon hesitated, realizing his friend was still angry.

Killua whipped his head to one side to give a sharp, fierce glare over his shoulder. Gon breath hitched in his throat and his brain seemed to short circuited. He stumbled, losing control over his ability to keep up straight. His knees gave out a little and he fell back against the locker, holding himself up under the intense gaze.
“Eep!” Zushi shrieked at the deadly glare Killua was sporting, but it wasn’t directed at him, so he happily moved out the path of destruction and stood behind Killua to see what would happen. Killua turned his whole body towards Gon and began making his way towards him.

“You IDIOT! What is wrong with you? Why would you throw yourself into the middle of a fight you know you can’t win?! Do you know how dangerous that is? And what if he messed up your face, that is one of the most important things for a World Star to keep unmarred and you…!”

Gon was pretty sure he forgot how to breathe as he gazed, awestruck, at his friend. He knew Killua was furious with him but that wasn’t what had him so breathless.

Since Killua had just come from the photoshoot, he still had his makeup on. His cat eyes were accentuated with deeper strokes of eyeliner, and at the ends of his eyes, smokey eyeshadow was applied to give him a mysterious look. His fluffy salon done hair was styled to be wild in a deliberate way that was even cuter than how it normally was, and it framed his face and made his eye color pop even more. Gon’s pretty sure they put something on those lips so that his usually pale ones have more color to them, the pink looking more plump and soft. He had a diamond-like earrings in both of his ears that winked at him from behind his halo of hair and the outfit was just great, looked better from the front, and Killua made it look good. He really did look like an idol, like how he looked in the magazines but right in front of Gon. He knew Killua was mad at him, and he was glaring and yelling at him, but that only sent a shiver up and down Gon’s spine, his dangerous expression making Gon more excited.

Gon tuned back in to Killua, realizing he wasn’t hearing what he was saying, too busy taking in his appearance, staring at his moving lips without making out what was being said. He slowly regained control of limbs again, although he still felt like someone replaced his bones with jelly with one striking glare from Killua. He pushed himself further up the locker as Killua approached, pushing a scolding finger into Gon’s chest. Gon became aware of his own face and realized he had a wide wobbly smile on his face. Wow, he must look like an idiot. But he doesn’t think he could stop smiling even if he tried. Killua really does look amazing.

“... And if you insist to fight to protect Zushi, then you better know what you’re doing-!” Killua was saying, his eyebrows drawn down in his anger.

“You look amazing…!” Gon breathed out, finally able to find his voice. Killua stopped and his eyes widened in surprised, his finger back at his side instead of on Gon’s chest. His cheeks tinted pink slightly and he looked down at himself before off to the side, crossing his arms.

“W-well, I just came back from the shoot, so…” He mumbled, then his eyes held annoyance again. He hit Gon over the head just as Gon was finally able to stand without the help of the lockers. “And I come back just to see you in a fight!” He scolded again.

“Oww… Killua! I had to!” He said, rubbing his head and staring back at Killua with fire in his eyes. “I promised Zushi I wouldn’t let anyone else give him a hard time for being able to attend the school as long as I was here.” Gon said, his eyes bright in determination. Killua blinked, lost in his eyes for a second before crossing his arms and looking off grumpily. His eyes caught Zushi cowering behind him.

“And you! Don’t make Gon do dangerous things like this. Are you ok?” He asked, the last of his sentence softening up. Zushi finally seemed able to relax, not getting the earful lecture Gon was getting.

“Ah, yes, thank you Killua!” He smiled. He was so lucky to have friends like them, especially Gon who was able to lead him to such an enabling person as Killua. Gon lightened up from his intense
fire to smile warmly at Killua.

“But that was really cool. You know how to fight, Killua?” Gon asked. Zushi also looked over expectantly.

“Of course. It’s self defense. All of us Zoldycks had to learn it in case some maniac gets passed our bodyguards, butlers, or security. Our parents don’t want us to be defenseless in a situation where we’re alone or help can’t get to us fast enough. It’s understandable if you two don’t know it yet since you’re not as famous yet,” Killua said, looking between the two of them. “But you guys should learn soon. When more people know about you, the more chances are weirdos will hear of you.”

Zushi nodded and Gon waved a hand.

“I can fight! I might not know self defense but I’ve already been in a couple fights in my life…”

“Really?” Killua asked, raising an eyebrow. “And you’ve won them?” Gon looked off to the side, not able to look Killua in the eyes anymore and Killua’s face dropped.

“Not… really… I mean, I’ve definitely won a few-!”

“No, you need to be able to defend yourself all the time. Not tire yourself out and then you still might be in danger. You need to learn proper self defense.” Killua said, poking Gon in the chest. He jerked his thumb over in Zushi’s direction. “Just take a note out of his book and agree to everything I say.” He turned to Zushi and put an arm around his shoulder. “That’s why I like you more.” His smile was cat like. Zushi lit up and Gon’s face fell into one of appall.

“You’re kidding, right?!” Gon cried out, reaching out to break their contact. Killua laughed and pulled Zushi along with him to keep Gon from pulling them apart. Zushi laughing at being dragged around like a doll, since Killua had the strength to do just that. Finally Killua stopped Gon with a hand to his head.

“Calm down, I like both of you idiots, despite what you both pulled.” He said, glancing at both of them. His eyes lit up in recollection and he turned to Gon, a glint in his eyes.

“Gon! I have to talk to you.” He said, removing his hand from his forehead. Gon blinked and tilted his head.

“Huh?”

“You haven’t started your performance piece for the Winter Showcase.” Killua asked, although it came out more as a statement. Gon smiled sheepishly before shaking his head no.

“And you haven’t found anyone to help you yet.” Another question he was sure about. Again, Gon shook his head. Killua drew his mouth into a tight line as hesitation clouded his eyes briefly before his eyes shone with a resolve again.

“Alright. I’m gonna help you to win the showcase.” He said. Gon’s and Zushi’s boggled at Killua, eyes wide.

“What?!”

“Really?!”

Killua nodded his head, his resolve seeming to grow now that he’s voice it, speaking it into existence, into possibility. He looked up, the light in his eyes brighter with determined fire. To fight
for what he wanted to keep.

“Yea. I’ll teach you.”

=End Chapter 6=

Chapter End Notes

Thank you so much for reading! Up to this point, the story and its plot have moved both faster and slower than I thought it would have. Remember to comment, Love you all!
=EDIT= (10/19/2017)
One of my reviewers on Fanfiction brought to my attention I forgot Melody in the list of Gon’s friends, and I was horrified! I added Melody in Gon’s friends list now! Also, my Fanfiction reviewers think they're so cute, so new tag unlocked!:
#GonbringsKilluabacktolife
Death of a Bachelor

Chapter Notes

Haha, yikes, I'm back at it again with another chapter! Hey guys, guess what?! I published this story 7 months ago, and I was trying to write this chapter when I did. Now, 7 months later, it took me right up til yesterday to finish it! Isn't writer's block a doozy? Well, now I'm all caught up on chapters and everything will be a writhing vortex of pain and catch-up! YAAAY!

Hope you like this chapter! It's shorter than the others, because- again- this was difficult to write, and it has one my highlighted scenes I had in mind when I started writing this thing. And you know when you get up to the scene that was like 'This is it!!! Don't screw it up!!!!' and then it's like... potatoe tomatoe... :/ I have the song list here at the beginning of songs that were sung out/lyrics written out. There's a Karaoke scene where the songs they sing are titles right there in the paragraph so you can look it up. Honorable mentions will be at the end and where they would have fit in the story.

Featured Music:
Candy Candy - Vocaloids
Death of a Bachelor- Panic! At the Disco *** (This is how I imagine Gon's singing! He has a beautiful voice and range!)
Sugar We’re Goin Down- Fall out Boy
Talking to the Moon- Dean Raven
Umbrella- Rhianna
Red Balloon- Charli XCX
Famous- Katy Tiz
Impossible- shontelle

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chapter 7: Death of a Bachelor

Killua Zoldyck

A student Music Star trainee from Musica Academy. His father is Silva Zoldyck, mother is Kikyo Zoldyck, brothers are Illumi, Milluki, Alluka, and Kalluto. Grandfather (Zino Zoldyck) is deceased.

His family is famous for being professional and the best in the music industry. Killua, as one of the kids, have went through The Zoldyck Training from Hell as to not fall behind the legacy of the Zoldycks, thought to be the most famous of all the Zoldycks ever produced. He started when he was 5. Before then, he loved his brothers and singing, and always wanted to try and sing for them to make them feel better after they came from their own training they had.

Milluki made him his headphones around the time he started in an attempt to make it easier for Killua, and Illumi got him his first dance shoes with kitten paw prints on the bottom. They still love him (although Milluki will never admit it) and Killua loves them too (Although Killua will never
He has anxiety issues rooted from the training days and Illumi’s intense routines. He misses his father all the time as he is busy with the record company and the mother is left to take care of them. He has a bratty personality and is addicted to chocolate.

His hatsu is his silky sweet voice that he can manipulate into any style of singing. He’s trained professionally in dancing, singing, songwriting... he's perfect! And he knows Italian, French, German, Russian, Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin.

His best friend is Gon Freeces, and the only other person he really thinks of as a friend is Zushi.

Killua wrung his hands together nervously as he stared down at his notebook, small notes scribbled down. This was impossible. He didn’t know the first thing about using his skills and knowledge to advance someone else’s skills; other people knew how to take and use his skills for their own advantage. Killua didn’t know how to form his thoughts into a lesson plan.

After they had gotten lunch and went to their next class, Killua needed to start concentrating. Gon had a million and one questions on what they were going to do, and honestly, Killua did not know the answer to one.

He shrugged it off with a “I’ll figure that out later,” but it really set in the fact that Killua had to help Gon, like, willingly, and his anxiety kicked in, clearing his thoughts as fast as Milluki cleared his laptop history when someone else needed it.

Killua waved Gon off to go focus in class, to sit in the front and everything. He went to the back of the classroom that is designated as a resting area for when songwriters needed a chill environment to focus on music and for their artistic juices to flow. He slumped on a bean bag, blocking out the world with his headphones and his playlist, and pulled out his notebook to write out a plan to help Gon sharpen his skills.

He had his eyes closed and his body lax, looking indifferent, gazing outside... but his mind was in overdrive. It was, ineffectively, running in circles, the few notes on his page useless to helping him figure out a strategy or plan. Maybe he isn’t cut out for this. There’s a reason he has never challenged Illumi. He only knows as much as Illumi has taught him, how can he go up against the master when he was still just a student himself? It wasn’t helping that he could periodically feel Gon’s eyes on him, intense and curious, even with his eyes closed. Frustration-!

C’mon Zoldyck, you can do this. Not everything you learned about music has been from Illumi. You’ve learned some things from dad... Anything he learned from dad, Illumi probably learned it first. Errg! Fine, ok... the Academy. These teachers. Their not the same every year, so there’s no saying Illumi learned everything you learned here. Killua thought back to the classes and tried to remember things the teachers said as any kind of starting point...

His eyes snapped open. He remembered that Kastro had pointed out Gon was breathing heavily after his performance in class, and that he shouldn’t be breathing that hard after just one performance. So he’ll need to up his endurance and stamina. Killua quickly wrote that down before his drive left him. Underneath that, he wrote down a few things he did to up his own stamina for Gon to do.

And dancing, they will need a choreography for the showcase... he’ll need to record a song- He looked up and squinted over in Gon’s direction. Does he know how to write an original song? Killua couldn’t remember if he ever said. He’ll have to ask later, but for now, he has something.
“Yea, this could work… At least I have something.” Killua just has to keep reminding himself that as long as he tries his best and fights his hardest, he’ll know he’ll have done everything he can for Gon. And that’s all I can do right now.

-o0o0o0o-

Gon bounced excitedly in his seat in their last period of note recognition- the last few minutes ticking away while Palm spoke of their exercise homework. He looked back at Killua again, seated in a love seat sofa, curled up over his notebook, a focused thoughtful look on his face as he carefully wrote something down just to cross it out.

Gon couldn’t wait to figure out whatever it was Killua had planned for them to do to get ready for the Winter Concert. Gon was feeling nervous and uneasy about the whole thing, especially since he didn’t know where to start. When Killua had told him he was going to help him, a weight he didn’t know was on him lifted instantly and he felt as light as a feather. He was so happy and relieved! And he knew whatever they would do together would be fun! He was so excited and he couldn’t wait.

“Gon.” Palm said and Gon focused back onto class. He was way too excited to pay attention.

“Yes?” He asked, already getting ready his sheepish smile.

“What notes should you focus on recognizing for the test?” She asked, anger already irritating her features. Gon laughed nervously as he scratched his cheek.

“Middle C to E above Middle C, careful to mind the sharps and flats.” Killua said, suddenly by his side. Gon blinked and looked up at him with wide eyes. He was paying attention even while he was back there focusing? Killua really was amazing. Killua didn’t look down at Gon as he continued to address Palm. “Got it. But we’ve got to go now. Let’s go Gon.” Killua said. He had something finally pulled together and he couldn’t waste much more time here. Class was basically over.

“O-oh, ok.” Gon said, furrowing his eyebrows and peeking over at Palm. He wanted to make sure this was really ok with her, he didn’t want to upset her more than usual. She was grounding out her teeth but she didn’t seem like she was going to stop them. Gon picked up his book bag and pushed his things in and jogged to catch up with Killua who was already heading out the door. Gon could already hear the grumbling and complaints of the others in the class.

“There he goes, acting all high and mighty again…”

“It’s no fair, the teachers favor him.”

“He just thinks he’s all that because he has more experience than us.”

“We don’t even really know his skills, we’ve never heard him sing…”

“He’s horrible at fan service.”

“Now he’s ordering Gon around.”

“Don’t leave me Gon! You’re the only light in my life, I only wake up to see you everyday! Don’t cut me off, Killua!”

“You got issues…”

“Shut up, SHAWNIE!”
Gon slipped out the room before Palm began yelling at her students for talking during class. Gon jumped into step beside Killua and turned his head to give him a smile, eagerly waiting for what he would say. His smile fell slightly when Killua didn’t even look over at him, still focused on the hall in front of them. Gon inspected Killua a bit closer. It wasn’t so much that Killua was focused on the hall in front of him, but he was so lost in thought he didn’t even notice Gon looking over at him. He noticed Killua’s usual cool stride was a bit stiffer, his movements preoccupied. Gon looked down to Killua’s hands and he was gripping them into fists and letting them go periodically. He noticed the headphones around his neck but he didn’t even hear any music coming through the speakers. He was stressing, big time, and he couldn’t even imagine what that was doing for his anxiety.

“Killua, are you ok?” Gon let out in a low voice, concerned. Killua’s eyes finally flicked over in his direction, regarding him from the corner of his eyes before looking back forward, but his movements seemed less stiff.

“Fine.” He said shortly, then licked his lips. “We’re putting our stuff into the locker then we…” His eyes flitted around the hallway, thinking. “... we need to go somewhere private…” He said the last part in a murmur, like he was talking to himself. He gripped a hand into a fist and held it.

“Killua, why don’t you listen to your music?” Gon provided, taking a hold of his fist and enclosing it in his hand, hoping the warmth of his body might help Killua feel at ease. He decided not to think about how the contact made his stomach flip or how Killua’s hand seemed to fit so easily in his grasp. Killua stopped walking and looked down at the locked hands before pulling it out quickly (to Gon’s disappointment), a blush on his face. He pointed a finger towards Gon.

“I can’t, I need to be here for you.” He huffed, the color leaving his face now that he cut off the contact.

“You are! You’re right here. It’s fine if you listen to music while we walk together.” Gon shrugged, an easy smile on his face. Killua’s eyebrows furrowed.

“No, I mean, my mind set, I can’t just leave you, to wander in my own mind when you might need me to answer questions or get something right. You need my attention right now, I can’t go… disassociating.” He finished. Gon tilted his head to the side.

“But Killua, you seem pretty stressed. I think your mind’s a little jumbled. If music’s able to calm you down and let you gather your thoughts, then I think you should listen to it. Then when you come back to me, you’ll be in a better state to help me more than now. It’s fine.”

Killua gave him a skeptical look but Gon could see in his ocean eyes that he was giving in. Gon reached out and Killua flinched but Gon ignored that as he pulled up his lightweight headphones over his ears. He patted it once while giving Killua a reassuring look.

“It’s fine.”

Killua already looked a bit better and focused rather than far away. His eyes still held a distrust, but Gon didn’t think it was directed at him, it seemed more like it was directed at himself. He nodded slowly after breaking eye contact with Gon then pulled out his phone. He played whatever was on screen and he turned back to the hallway, his gaze clear and sharp. He took Gon’s arm and pulled him along, his speedwalk getting them to the locker quickly. Gon was just happy Killua looked a lot better.

They get to Gon’s locker and Killua let go of Gon to go down the few paces to his own. Gon smiled over, distractedly packing away his things as he looked over at Killua. He really did look a lot better. His movements were purposeful and fluid again, his eyes clear and in focus. Gon might have been
seeing things, but he could swear he saw his lips twitch up in a smile. It looked a bit like when Gon solved a math problem or hard issue in his head. Killua grabbed his duffel bag at the bottom of his locker and closed it before looking over at Gon, waiting for him to finish. He looked *a lot* better. Gon’s mouth formed an ‘o’ and he hurried up to finish packing then joined by Killua’s side. They walked out of the school and just as they made their way down the stretch of walkway, the dismissing bell rang behind them. Gon didn’t know where they were going, but he was happy enough just to be next to Killua.

They just turned the corner towards the town plaza when Killua slapped a hand across Gon’s chest, stopping them both. Gon looked over at Killua as Killua lowered his headphones before Killua looked at Gon with a pleased smile on his features. Gon felt his mouth dry at the sight but before he could even string together any coherent thoughts Killua spoke, “You want to get cake?”

Gon didn’t know weather to smile or gawk at Killua. They were sitting in a very cute cafe, little tables with curving chairs and displays of sweets and treats in their front window. When they came in and sat down after ordering, Killua looked very serious, ready to get down to business.

But before he could open his mouth to speak, their cakes came in and Killua’s face brightened up so quickly and completely, a 180 transformation from what it just looked like, Gon didn’t know how to react.

He watched Killua dig into his chocolate slice while an open mouth smile tugged at Gon’s lips. This was too adorable. He knew Killua loved chocolate, but how he was acting was just too adorable.

Gon felt like he needed to say something, anything, but before his brain could catch up with the need, Killua brought his clear blue eyes back up to meet Gon’s amber ones, ready for business again.

“Ok.” Killua said slightly muffled before swallowing to continue. “First of all, I need to know how well you write songs.”

“Um… well I’ve written some of my own songs before and my fans liked them--” Gon blinked in surprise when Killua interrupted him.

“No I mean, like, how fast, how many words you write a day, how well you can make up beats and music-- that sort of thing.”

Gon nodded, understanding better.

“Well, I think up lyrics every now and then and write those down periodically, I work on a couple measures a week--”

Killua scoffed. “For a 3 minute song? No no no, that’s too slow.” Killua paused in thought. “I’ll have to help you with that then…” he murmured, more to himself. Gon pouted.

“C’mon, it’s not like I don’t know how to do it-”

“Gon, we don’t have time for amateur hour, I need to teach you how to songwrite like an artist who has to crank out an album on a tight deadline.” Killua scolded, punching his finger to the table top for emphasis. Gon huffed but gave in.

“You’re the professional.” Gon said, failing to keep the smirk off his lips. Killua’s eyebrow twitched slightly, but he also had a slight smile on his lips he struggle to keep down.

“Shut up. That’s another thing. If I’m going to be teaching you and helping you stay in this stupid
school, you need to listen to what I tell you to do. Like unconditional, no question asked.” Killua sat
back and crossed his arms, almost as though gauging if Gon was willing to go that far for his career.
Gon looked back with eyes so full of determined light, it seemed to glow amber bright.

“Of course!” He replied in all seriousness. Killua’s eyebrows rose up.

“Really? Serious? Like, if I told you to go... Slap that old lady to get experience of an old person
yelling at you for a song theme?” Killua asked, a smirk on his face as he pointed over at some
random lady. Gon’s eyebrows furrowed but then his eyes hardened in determination.

“I said I’d do it, so I’d do it!” Gon said, standing up.

“NONO, GON, NOO!” Killua cried but he was barely able to get it out through his laughter, so he
grabbed at Gon’s arm to sit him back down. Gon cocked his head curiously. “I was just asking to
make sure. Geezus, you really would. Alright, then, I don’t think there will be much of a problem in
getting you trained.” Killua said, finally getting his laughter under control, a cat-like grin on his
features. Gon smiled happily at Killua. Gon thinks Killua understands just how much Gon would do
anything for him.

“Ok. I passed my first test?” He asked. Killua nodded.

“Yea, sure.”

Gon whooped, and they got looks from people behind the counter. They shushed themselves while
giggling, heads down while trying to stop their fit of laughter.

“Ok, so…” He lifted his head up to recall his notes. “For the showcase, the most important thing is
an original song. Anyone can sing a cover, and create the dance and visuals. They want to know you
can be an artist, actually write it. Right?” Killua said, making sure Gon understood. He nodded. “So,
you need to know what kind of song you’re gonna wanna write, and get a feel for how songs are
and why they’re successful. The popular songs, lyrics that sound aesthetically pleasing, a complete
study.”

“How will I do that?” Gon asked with focused eyes. He actually looked really adorable with that
focused face. Wow, no wonder he had such a huge fanbase.

“You need to submerge yourself. The best way to understand songs and songwriting is to completely
expose yourself to all kinds of music. This way, songwriting can come a little easier. You can hear
what chords you like easier, what other people might like in a popular song, lyrics, transitions and
bridges, you need to learn it all. Picking up tricks from the professionals will be the best help you can
get, even if it's from me. So from now on, I want you listening to music as much as you can, all
genre, just expose yourself. By doing this, notes and chords will be familiar enough to use. Like
speaking a language, you’re gonna want to keep practicing if you want it to become fluid.”

“Oh yea, Killua, can you teach me how to speak a couple languages too?” Gon asked, interrupting.
Killua gave him a deadpanned look.

“What? No, we’re not wasting our time-”

“Wah, Killua! But what if I wanna put a different language in my song?” He asked, a pout on his
features. Killua stuttered a bit, looking a bit affected, but then hardened his stern look again.

“No, if you really do want to put a different language in your song, you can ask me and I’ll help you
pronounce it-“
“Killua, I wanna learn!”

“Then go get a teacher-”

“No, I want you to teach me!”

“Idiot! You- I- Maybe! If we have time! Geez, Gon…” Killua muttered, trying to fight the blush crawling up his neck. How could Gon already have this effect on him? Was this what it was like to have a friend? It was so hard to say no.

“Yay! Ok, I’ll take that. Continue.” Gon said, giving his head a slight duck. Killua scoffed at him, annoyed.

“Really? Thank you, Gon.” Killua said sarcastically. “Alright, where was I? Right, you’ll listen to music, all genre, all the time.” Gon nodded again. “Ok, now after that, we need to work on your stamina endurance. If we can get that up first we don’t need to worry about that as much as when we get down to business later.”

“Ok. How do we do that?” Gon asked. He was actually happy, he didn’t know how he was going to work on improving that himself. He supposed he could have just looked it up, but he was kinda hoping for… Killua, He just had a feeling Killua would do it. Or maybe he was just so hopeful he was feeding himself lies.

“Yea, you’re just going to be joining me in what I do. Every morning we’ll be running to school. To begin, we’ll just be running, when that comes easy to you, we’ll run while singing. That’ll bring up your endurance of dancing and singing on stage.” Killua directed. Gon nodded to let Killua know he was listening. “You would’ve received this training from school in the 3rd and 4th grade year, but you just couldn’t wait, could you? Had to join a competition for seniors.” Killua teased. Gon pouted. “C’mon, Killua, I didn’t know! Don’t blame me anymore.” He concluded with a wave of his hand. Killua scoffed but complied.

“Alright, the training I’m going to put you through will be intense if you want to be ready in a couple months… gawd, Gon, really?"

“Killua!” Gon cried, exasperated.

“Ok! Ok!” He snickered. “I need to teach you as much as I can so you can take it into your hands and make your song and performance. I’m just here to make sure you can do it properly. Your mentor, if you will.”

“Yea… you’re so cool!” He gushed. Killua blushed and leaned forward to flick his forehead.

“You need to control that mouth of yours as well. Right? We’ll work on that too.”

“Owww…” Gon muttered, rubbing his forehead. He wondered if he could get away trying to flick Killua back, but he figured that might lead to more flicks or a worse punishment for being ‘embarrassing,’ which honestly he hasn’t felt like he has been! He’s just being honest and sincere.

“Ok, so you’re gonna listen to music, that’s your homework. We’ll be running every morning to help bring your stamina up, and we need to actually start on performance training after school. I want to start you on note recognition on both instruments and vocal so when you get inspiration and want to sing it out or jot it down, you know what the notes are. This is… hours of drilling, Gon. You sure you’re ready for this?” Killua asked, and Gon almost formed a glare.
“Yes, Killua, I keep telling you. I said I’d do this, I asked you for help, I am willing, and ready and able and please stop asking, I want it.” Gon nodded.

“Alright, last call. I warned you.” He scoffed, leaning back and eating more of his cake. Gon smiled, satisfied.

“Good.” Gon knew Killua went through a lot to get as talented as he is now-- what he’s gathered from all his other friends is that it was rigorous and hard-- hellish really. Killua probably doesn’t even know how to train outside of that, but Gon’s really set himself up to get as hellish of a training as that. If Killua went through it, Gon could too. He could take whatever they made Killua go through. Plus this way, while Killua trains him, he could find out where and how exactly they ruined his view on music, and try and make it fun for him again.

Killua could pick up that Gon was ready for whatever, no matter how hard, but Killua wasn’t about to put him through all that. No way was he going to drive away his first friend by putting him through the Zoldyck training from hell. He didn’t need to know all that to have a fighting chance for the winter showcase.

“Alright, when do we start, do we start now? Today? Tomorrow?” Gon asked with an excited smile. Killua tried, but he couldn’t completely stop the tugging smile Gon elicited from him.

“Shut up. I don’t understand how you’re so excited, this is going to be hell-”

“I don’t care. I get to hang out with you some more, and learn more and get better at my music.” Gon assured, his eyes so bright like liquid sunshine. Killua looked at Gon like he had three heads. Honestly, he’s never met anyone like Gon. He was determined and bright eyed, it seemed nothing could get him down. He was downright embarrassing, but other than that, he was just… light. He was amazing and uplifting to be around, which is part of the charm Killua couldn’t resist anymore. Singing with him was one of the best experiences he’s had in a long time, and he just had a way to make him feel at ease.

Killua knew all this, and it was pretty powerful. It was something old, something nostalgic in the way Gon regarded music and composed himself. It was probably why Killua didn’t give up on Gon. Why he thinks there might be a chance to beat Illumi. Something there that Illumi’s missing, and it’s invaluable, unavoidable, absolutely needed.

And Killua feels like that will be the deciding factor of if Gon wins. Killua does not need to be better than Illumi. Gon does that just fine.

Killua huffed out a sigh, an affectionate smile on his face.

“Whatever. No, we’re not doing it today, it’s getting late.” Killua said, glancing down at his phone for the time. Great, 8 texts from mother. He felt a pang of panic run through him as he realized he doesn’t have a practice space for them. He’ll figure that out later. Geez he says that a lot. “And we can’t do it tomorrow, I have tutoring and then something that night for the Zoldycks.”

Gon pouted a bit. He wanted to get started as soon as possible. But then he remembered he wanted to talk with Netero tomorrow about a concert… He brightened up and waved his hands through the air dismissively.

“That’s fine. So, we would start Thursday afternoon after school. Alright?” Killua asked. Gon nodded.

“Osu!” Then he remembered what they were doing last. “Oh! Wait, what about the test for Palm’s
“It’s Friday. And technically, we’ll be reviewing for it Thursday, but I’m assuming you’d want to review for it earlier…?” Killua asked, trailing off as he waiting for confirmation. Gon nodded.

“Alright, well, tomorrow, we have that free period. We won’t be able to study in the library because we need to be singing but, we can study then specifically for the test and then work off of that Thursday for the rest of the scale.” Killua said. Gon smiled and nodded.

“Wow, you can manage your time so well. I usually don't plan out what I do and I end up procrastinating.” Gon rubbed the back of his head sheepishly, sticking out his tongue.

“You'll have to learn how to manage your time as a world star. So you know how many concerts or signing you can book. Most people leave that to their manager though.” Killua said.

“You have so much experience Killua!” Gon gushed, smiling as if Killua was the most amazing thing on the world.

Killua rubbed the bridge of his nose. “There’s no stopping you, is there?” He mumbled. There’s just constant exposure to Gon giving him embarrassing praise. *Then why are you so happy about that?*

_Shut up? Maybe? Brain? Thanks._

“Nope!” Gon said smiling his thousand watt smile.
Killua was wearing thick white headphones with white plastic cat ears on top and a microphone mouthpiece cupping his face. He had glitter on his face and in his hair that made every move he made sparkle. He wore a white sleeveless collared shirt and colorful arm warmers, suspenders connected his shorts to his shoulder. He wore white stockings and shin-high sneaker boots. He looked playful, and cute, and... whimsical. Was that really Killua? Once he was center stage, bouncing around like a child, the music started and he began his choreography while singing. Gon was surprised when he began speaking Japanese, and Gon fell in love all over again. He sounded beautiful. Gon recognized it as a cover. On the projector screen behind him the japanese characters of the song flashed on screen with the english lyrics beneath it and romaji above it. Killua sang as sweetly and smooth as honey and Gon couldn’t believe he wasn’t tired of his voice yet. He thinks he never will be.

“Look for love as sweet as cherry lollipops, Find a crush like white vanilla cream. Once again they hide themselves away from me, Cannot see the forest for the trees. Bit by bit I taste bit of apple rain, Knowing something good is soon to come, Breathe it in like candy-coated sugar cane. Happiness is now falling from above!

“Candy candy candy candy candy, Sweetie sweetie girls love! Chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing, Cutie cutie ch-ch-ch-chewing love!

Candy candy candy candy candy, Sweetie sweetie girls love! Chewing chewing chewing chewing chewing, Cutie cutie, – so candy love!”

Gon couldn’t believe it. Gon didn’t think Killua could be so cute. He didn’t think Killua could act so well. He looked so cute, and the headphones were fitting, Killua always did remind him of a cat. Gon watched Killua move on stage, unable to remove the smile on his face. This was really cute. And the song really fit him, singing about candy, especially how Gon knows Killua loves candy and sweets. This made Gon want to hug Killua or nuzzle him or cuddle him or something. As the song approached the end, Killua did a really cute thing, really cute. He twirled on one foot in a half circle to give the audience his back, then twisted around to raise his half curled hand to his cheek and rub at it like a cat, giving his butt a cute shake, then skipped off to the other side of the stage.

Gon paused his video and shook his head as though to come out of a haze. This feels familiar? He rewinded the DVD again.

Well, hey, he actually finished the DVD by the time Mito came home this time though.

The next morning, Gon had his headphones in as per the orders of his new coach, Killua. Gon thinks he’s getting better at this! He didn’t lose any sleep over the new video he made unlike the first one. And he could actually look up every once in awhile to see where he’s going.

But he still gets a little sad when he can’t look too long... well, that shouldn’t be too much of a problem when he sees Killua in the flesh. That’ll be his cue to realize he’s being silly in cooing over this cute, baby-looking Killua dancing on screen, turning around and rubbing his face like a cat before skipping off and the gif resets.

His chest will stop squeezing and he’ll maybe realize he should be freaking out a little more because it was wednesday and that meant academic day. But he just feels like this cute Killua is melting his brain, making him short circuit on all executive functions.

But hey, it’s better than the last video he made.

Gon glanced up to make his way through the hall when he saw Zushi waiting by the locker as usual.
Killua wasn’t with him though…

“Hey! Zushi! What’s up?” Gon greeted happily. Zushi looked up from his own phone and smiled before it fell. He gave Gon a look like he was dealing with a child.

“Really? Gon, again? What video is it this time?” Zushi asked. Gon gasped at him.

“Literally? Like, really? How could you tell? It’s not that bad…”

“But Gon, it’s obvious. You’re clutching the phone to your chest like it’s your precious.” Zushi motioned, pocketing his own phone. “C’mon, let’s see it.” Gon pouted, but his lower lip wobbled as he realized he was probably just in denial, trying to convince himself it’s better, but it’s probably just as bad as the other video. Excitement coursed through his body like a bubbling soda and a smile broke out on his face he couldn’t keep down.

He skipped and leaned the phone down for Zushi to see, pressing himself to Zushi’s side.

“Look! See how cute Killua’s being? I didn’t think he could be that cute! And in this song, he was speaking Japanese and everything! He sounded so fluent and smooth and-!”

“Gon!” Zushi interrupted, chuckling. “Seriously? Ok, so first thing’s first, you need to delete that again-” Zushi said, motioning for the phone.

“No! Zushi! C’mon, I said it’s getting better! I don’t need videos of Killua everyday, I can stop whenever I want.”

“Then stop now.” Zushi challenged, putting his hands on his hips.


“Do you really not get it? Do you even know why you want to keep rewatching Killua move around like some star-struck fan?” Zushi asked. Gon blinked at him, glanced at the phone then back at Zushi.

“Because he’s really cool?” Gon asked.

“No! I- ugh, this is really sad…” Zushi muttered exasperated, covering his eyes. Gon furrowed his eyebrows.

“What?” Gon asked. Zushi peeked at Gon from underneath a finger and then sighed.

“Ok, I wasn’t going to tell you, but I don’t think you’re going to figure it out by yourself.” Zushi closed the space between them and placed his hands on Gon’s shoulder, reaching up to firmly grab the taller teen. Gon looked at him with anticipation. Something he was missing? He couldn’t figure out himself?

“Gon. You have a crush on Killua.”

Gon blinked at Zushi then snorted a laugh as not to laugh straight in Zushi’s face. He shrugged his hands off his shoulders.

“I do not have a crush on Killua! Oh my goodness, even just saying that out loud sounds ridiculous. Zushi, that’s hilarious. That was a hilarious joke.” Zushi watched him with mouth agape as Gon brushed all that off and then proceeded to watch the gif of Killua he made.

“Gon! I’m serious! It’s pretty bad! It was obvious to me, like, the 2nd day you were talking with
him.” Zushi said, lowering the phone to get Gon’s attention again. Gon furrowed his eyebrows at Zushi, a little frustrated.

“Come on, Zush, I think I would know if I have a crush on somebody! Honestly… And I already promised myself this bachelor wouldn’t date anyone, at least not in high school. I need to focus on getting better and dating would just be too distracting. And on my best friend- no, no way.” Gon shook his head.

“Gon-Gon- then delete the video.” Zushi demanded, frustrated.

“W-what? No, that has nothing to do- this has nothing to do with the video, I refuse to-”

“Gon, don’t you remember what you were telling me with the first video? How you felt funny and you felt butterflies, or whatever? C’mon Gon, don’t you listen to love songs? That’s, like, the epitome of crushes! You’ve got it bad!”

“No! I don’t, and the video has nothing to do with it, and I won’t delete it, I’ll watch it whenever and it’ll be fine-”

“No, Gon, delete the video!”

“No, I want to keep-!” They began pulling the phone towards each other while exchanging words. It was quite a funny scene in the middle of the hallway.

“What this about a video?” Killua voice rang from Gon’s left. He felt his body run cold and he pushed the phone into Zushi’s chest and pushed Zushi away with it. Gon just suddenly felt nervous about Killua knowing he had that video about him running on replay over and over again. He dreaded the thought of Killua finding out.

“N-nothing! Killua, you’re late-” Gon laughed off nervously and turned to greet his friend when his voice hitched in his throat and his mouth ran dry.

Killua was wearing a black button up dress shirt with the sleeves rolled up to right above his elbow. From beneath his collar to a few inches below his collar bone, it was see-through lace with winding vines and leaves design in black, teasing his porcelain skin to the general public, coupled with white slacks and dress shoes.

Gon felt a shiver run down his spine as blood rushed to his cheeks. Killua looked absolutely… gorgeous. He always did. It was a little mean, honestly… Gon swallowed hard to try and say something, anything, to Killua, but he just hung his mouth open as he looked him over. Killua shrugged his shoulders then put his hands in his pockets.

“I know, it’s a little overkill, but my mom wanted me to look nice today for some reason. I like it, but it’s a little embarrassing, the stares I get from my fans.” Killua said, lifting an elbow upward to look his arm over. He looked back at Gon but he was still just staring. Gon didn’t even know what Killua said, but when their eyes met, it was like lightning struck and Gon felt like he’s been spinning for 3 hours, and now that he’s stopped, he’s so dizzy he might fall over at anytime.

This was stupid, this never happened before. This just happened because Zushi said something dumb like, you have a crush on your gorgeous talented best friend. No, no, Gon, don’t think like that, that’ll make it worse-! But haven’t you always thought like that? Thank you. Thank you brain.

Now Killua was walking over, so Gon straightened up, feeling stiff and preparing for some sort of blow? Killua was saying something, but Gon still couldn’t hear. Killua’s shirt shifted against his toned chest and Gon was more attentive to that then the the words Killua was trying to communicate.
He finally stopped in front of Gon.

“Oi! Gon!” Killua snapped, and Gon found Killua eyes glaring deeply at him. “I said have you been listening to music?” Gon swallowed and no thoughts came to his immediate aid so he just nodded dumbly. Killua huffed with one eyebrow crooked.

“Alright… geez, you ok?” He asked, and his voice softened in the slightest in concern and Gon thought his brain fried.


“Um, you look very nice, Killua.” Zushi provided, a slight blush over his features too. Killua shrugged.

“Whatever. Well, then… I’ll head to class since Gon seems to be…” Killua gave him a side eye, in which Gon just remained stiff and frozen in the face of, a dumb look of awe on his features.

“…Going through something. See ya.” He said, pulling up his own silver headphones fluidly over his ears and walking past Gon. Gon turned his body to keep faced towards Killua as he walked past and Zushi moseyed over to his side, an amused smile on his face.

“I may… have a crush on Killua.” Gon said once Killua was out of sight. Zushi laughed in victory, clutching his stomach.

“Yea, that was really obvious. I’m surprised Killua isn’t picking it up.” Zushi added.

Gon coughed, a little irritated Zushi found this so amusing when this was his fault.

“Hey! I wasn’t… this was… listen! This is nothing, it’s just a small little… thing! I’ll get over this. This was just because I was just watching him be adorable, so seeing him right in front of me flustered me a little bit. I’m not … it’s not that seri- it’s not a serious crush! I’m just a little star struck from watching a Zoldyck concert. They’re amazing, by the way. I’ll get over it- I will!!” Gon added indignant at Zushi’s smirk throughout his ‘convincing’ argument. I just can't think about what he said about liking killua and everything will turn out ok. We'll go back to normal.

Gon liked his new plan of action. That reminded him, he has to remember to talk to Netero after school. He was getting excited and faced Zushi. “I’m going to return the DVD before class. I’ll see you at reading!” Gon cheered, and began jogging off, placing his headphones back in his ears.

Gon stopped by the library, getting directed by the librarian where the slot was where he could return books and DVDs as to not bother her again. Geez, why was she so mean? Gon barely had time to get his books from his locker before the minute bell was ringing, and Gon booked it for his class. Classmates he passed that recognized him shouted greetings and comments as he passed happily. He barely noticed as he passed Hisoka slinking out of a darkened hallway, a smirk on his lips as he watched the bright happy teenager run by.

Gon had to apologize and bow his way out of detention to Knov when he slipped in History just as the late bell was ringing. He spotted Kurapika and gave him an easy lopsided smile that made most of the girl’s heart swoon.

“Ooooh, look at those dimples. I wonder if he’s looking for a ‘miss popular’?”

“Oh no way! Shut up, I gotta do my make-up so he notices me!”

“Uh, excuse you? Have you not noticed? The only way you can get Gon’s attention is by singing.
He’s in it for your voice, not your face.”

“Ggggrrr, why do they think I go to school for singing?! I can’t sing! I’ll never be his!” Sob ensued.

Gon sat next to Kurapika but he didn’t notice Gon yet. He was too busy pouring over a sheet of paper, a curtain of blonde hair preventing Gon from seeing anything much on it. Gon would’ve liked to try and get his attention but he’s already barely gotten out of trouble with Knov from the get-go, he’ll have to wait for a break in class. Luckily for him, by the last 10 minutes, Knov let them all do in-class readings until class was over. Gon turned to Kurapika, actually having been distracted by him all class. Kurapika was barely paying attention because of that paper in his hand. He patted his blonde friend’s shoulder.

“Hey! Kurapika, what are you doing?” Gon asked, trying to peek past his cascading hair. Kurapika flipped his head up and his hair away and Gon could finally see they were music sheets, worn and wrinkled from overuse. Kurapika’s been going at this a lot longer than just this class period.

“Oh! Gon, I’m so sorry.” He gave him an easy smile and Gon could have openly gaped at him with how surprise he was. Kurapika’s smile was truly carefree and happy as he smiled at him. Before, it seemed cold and calculated, trying to set its prey at ease for the final strike.

“I must have been ignoring you all class. I didn’t mean to, my teachers have been telling me all week I haven’t been paying nearly close enough attention, but I can’t help it.” His eyes lit up as he shuffled the papers so Gon could get a good look at them, and Gon found himself growing excited at how excited Kurapika was getting.

“Look! Ever since monday when you told me to actually put my heart into this, not just to ‘go with it’, and to throw myself into it with abandon because that what being an artist is about, I realized… I have a lot of emotions I want to put into words, into song! I have too many projects in my head, and so many ideas, tones, music notes, melodies, I can’t get them down fast enough and I want to get it down before I forget!” Kurapika said, showing Gon the sheets. Gon just smiled attentively, pouring himself over the sheets and song titles even though he didn’t know what it was really. He couldn’t recognize notes yet. Sure he could look at the notes and know what it is, but he doesn’t know what sound it makes without an instrument. Killua’s gonna fix that soon, so when he sees music notes like this, he’ll be able to imagine the notes in front of him like a painted melody, hear the chords, harmony and bass Kurapika painstakingly instilled on these sheets to develope more later. He’ll be better at this later.

“Amazing, Kurapika! I told you, singing is for the heart and to share a little bit of yourself with everyone. People like to know their idols. But what you said is kinda funny.” Gon said, passing back the sheets. “You wanted to get it down before you forgot it? Hahah, Kurapika, forget what? Isn’t it apart of you? How could you forget a melody that speaks solely with how you feel? I don’t think you’ll forget any of it, for as long as you remember yourself, you’ll know the song you want to sing.” Gon smiled kindly at him. Kurapika blinked at him, amazed at how brightly Gon can shine all the time. “So don’t lose focus in class, ok? I wouldn’t want you to fail.” Gon chuckled. Kurapika chuckled as well as he chuckled his head.

“You never cease to amaze me, Gon. You seem like you’ll always have something new to teach me… and I have a lot to learn to remember how to love music like you. Thank you, Gon. I’ll pay attention.” He smiled. Gon smiled back.

“Ok, Kurapika! But really, I can’t teach you much on music! That’s why I’m here, I couldn’t even read your sheets…” Gon admitted sheepishly. Kurapika smiled affectionately at the teenage asian.
“That’s fine Gon. You know, most students here don’t know how to.” Kurapika nodded.

“Ah, really?! That makes me feel better.” He replied with an eased smile.

Gon felt pretty good, this would easy. He already made it through this whole period without even thinking of Killua. He knew Zushi was being silly, as long as he remembered Killua was his friend, he’ll get over whatever this is. The bell rang and Gon got up, walking with a skip in his step as he went to his locker to get his books for Algebra.

“Oh ya! Killua has that class with me!” Gon said happily. He gets to hang out with him again, he always love hanging with Killua. It’s always fun and easy…! Well, not that that means anything more than that they were best friends! That’s right, Killua is Gon’s best friend! This won’t be weird anymore. He greeted a few more fans in the hall who shot him bright and fanatic smiles and got to Bisky’s math class.

“Hello, Gon.” She smiled warmly, but there was something cat like behind it.

“H-.” He smiled, but he wasn’t able to finish his greeting before a silky voice he has come to recognize anywhere interrupted him.

“Don’t listen to a word she says, Gon!” Gon turned his head to see Killua making his way towards him in the front of the class. He was grabbed and dragged away from Bisky before he could register what was happening. Gon blinked as he finally rebooted his brain.

“Hi! Killua!” Gon smiled, feeling his cheeks warm at seeing him in that outfit again. It really was a tease, exposing just enough milky skin to give a rushing thrill to any girl or guy looking. “You look… really good in that shirt…” Gon said. He didn’t get to say it earlier when he could barely breath, but he really wanted to let Killua know… because friends compliment each other! Naturally… But embarrassingly enough, that came out in a way lower voice than he meant, and it probably sounded a little… flirty…

Killua blushed and he let go of Gon’s hand and turned to him, halfway to the back.

“What the heck, Gon, don’t be embarrassing!” Killua whispered sharply, his eyes flashing dangerously. “I already told you, this is barely my style.” Killua crossed his arms as he turned back to his route to the farthest seats in the back. Gon pouted a bit at being scolded, but he could understand, his tone of voice was an accident.

“Sorry Killua… Hey, so what was that with Bisky just now?” Gon asked, settling into his seat next to Killua. Killua huffed in irritation as Gon assumes he thinks back to it.

“Nothing, she was just being stupid.” Killua said, his voice lowering as Bisky started up class. “She was gonna tease you because of what I did last time, just because I did the work for you…” He sighed.

“Tease? Oh, then don’t mind her Killua. I was really happy when you did, and it made you look really cool.” Gon smiled genuinely and Killua couldn’t keep eye contact with how bright and intense his eyes were.

“Yea, well… just trying to keep her from getting to you too.”

“That’s ok, teases don’t bother me as much as you, I think.” Gon shrugged. Killua turned to him with a raised eyebrow and challenging look.

“Really?” He asked amused. Gon’s eyes roamed down to the peek-a-boo skin teasing past Killua
lace. He swallowed hard and forced himself to look back up at Killua.

“Y-yea.”

Killua scoffed a laugh and faced the board where Bisky already started the lesson.

“Sure Gon…”

Gon didn’t even hear because he had already distracted himself with drinking in Killua’s looks again.

The rest of the class went by kinda fuzzy for Gon. Bisky gave out a worksheet for people to work in pairs and, of course, Gon and Killua worked together (because they’re best friends). And of course Gon didn’t get most of the math, and Killua claimed not to have a complete understanding of it, but he’ll try his best to explain to Gon how to get the answer. Too bad Gon couldn’t focus enough on the words Killua was saying to try and do his worksheet. How could he when Killua’s eyes were so amazing, and how could Gon never notice before the small silver flecks in his eyes. Anytime they were focused on Gon’s, he could barely think, they were so beautiful. He felt like he could drown in them.

By the time Gon realized what he was doing- *again*, class was over and Killua was saying something like, “I’ll turn in the worksheets, I did most of the work for you, you seem out of it today.” Gon blushed, scrambling to get up and apologize to Killua, but he was already out the classroom. He curled his lips into his mouth in frustration then let his head hang. He can’t believe he let this affect him this much, he was being stupid and he needed to get his head in the game.

He rubbed at his head as he walked to the reading class and met Zushi at the entrance to the classroom.

“Hey Gon, you got your reading book?” Zushi asked. Gon paused and looked at him like he had 2 heads for a second before he groaned and turned to bang his head against the doorframe.

“Crap, I forgot to drop by my locker and switch out my books…” Gon mumbled. It was a little too close to late bell for him to try and get the book now.

“Aw, Gon, that’s ok, you can share with me.” Zushi said with an understanding smile.

“Thanks so much, Zush…” Gon smiled.

“What happened? Why’d you forget?”

“I was just a little distracted…” Gon said, rubbing the back of his head.

“Distracted…” Zushi started, questioningly before it turned a little smug. “By Killua~?” He sung. He was grabbed and put under Gon’s arm before his hair was being rubbed down in a light noogie.

“Zushi! I told you, it’s not that serious!” He let the giggling boy out from his grasp, new curls and licks in his close cut hairstyle. “This is all just a new rush of emotions. But I know myself, these heighten feelings will go away and I know me and Killua will get back to normal. Yes, I was distracted by Killua in class and on the way here, because I wasn’t much help in class. But I’m sure by the next class it’ll be fine.” Gon nodded. Zushi chuckled.

“Alright Gon.” He shrugged, as long as Gon thought it was fine, he wouldn’t tease him anymore. He pointed it out in the first place just so Gon acknowledged it. Now that he did, his job is done, and Gon will act accordingly with his new information.
Gon thought it would get better through the day, that his feelings will decrease as the day went on. But for some reason, it seemed like Killua was out to get him today and make the squeeze in his chest worse.

At lunch, Gon and Zushi met up with Killua by the doors, Killua and Gon heading straight for their table since they had home lunch while Zushi needed to go get lunch from the lines. Alone at the table made Gon more nervous than he thought would be possible for having already done this the past couple of days. He ended up clumsily opening up his bento and spilling most of his rice, the main dish of his food.

Gon blushed, embarrassed to have shown such a side of himself to Killua, and of course he called him an idiot. But then he offered to share a half of his sandwich, an adorable blush on his cheeks that was probably from being embarrassed about being so caring.

Then Gon couldn’t focus on much of the conversation of his friends and those around him. Gon’s attention was mostly on Killua and he was constantly entranced by how soft his hair looked. He tried once to touch it again and Killua was slapping the attempt away without looking and carrying on. Why was he so cute? How could he be this cool?

Gon couldn’t stop smiling when he was around Killua.

Cooking class was worse than lunch. Wing had them cooking muffins, and Gon already knew Killua had a wicked sweet tooth. Killua was sticking his tasting spoon in the bowl whenever he could, playfully dancing around Gon and stealing the batter when he thinks Gon not paying attention. Gon wouldn’t stop him if he could, he would offer him the bowl to eat the raw dough if Killua asked. Besides, to watch the curve of his mouth on the spoon was distracting enough that Killua could use that as another chance to steal some more.

Killua lips effectively had Gon mesmerized through the class, his smile, his pouts, even his frowns had Gon appreciating the gentle and obvious beauty of Killua. His licks and tongue was just teasing, but it didn’t stop Gon from following the soft appending on its journey every time Killua found the need to lick the dough from his lips.

Gon’s thoughts would evaporate with every look from Killua.

Science class was torture without Killua and every moment away from his best friend was unwanted and displeasing. Gon was starting to think it was crazy, having a crush. How could it be so painful emotionally to be with and away from the person you were longing after? Gon decided it stupid to continue on with this crush thing and was determined not to look at Killua in that light anymore.

That plan was working pretty well as Gon met up with Killua in the library for free period.

“Let’s go work on your note recognition for Palm’s test.” He said with an engaging smile, and his lingering touch on Gon’s hand had him falling into line behind him without even really knowing what he just said.

Back outside at the stone tables, between the fails of note-tuning and general playing around, Gon fell for Killua’s laughs. His chest squeezed in the worst ways when Gon got Killua to bend over laughing, and Gon was constantly trying to get him to laugh during their study session.

It made it harder to breath.
“Aw, man, I didn’t get to teach you everything on note recognition that I wanted…” Killua pouted as the dismissing bell rang. Gon looked down at the practice music sheet Killua had quickly sketched down for him and could recognize the notes pretty quick and at least is confident in what sound they make for an octave around middle C.

“I don’t know Killua, I think this is enough to pass Palm’s test on Friday.” Gon shrugged.

“I don’t care about Palm’s test, we need to cover the basics as soon as possible… whatever, we can continue with the rest of the scale tomorrow at training.” Killua said getting up. Gon hopped up energetically to follow.

“Right! So what are we doing now? Can I walk you home?” Gon asked, maybe a bit hopeful, but he definitely wanted to stay with Killua a while longer. Killua glanced over his shoulder.

“I’m not going home right now… I…” He let out a small weary sigh. “Bisky got me into tutoring math for idiots that can’t keep up in class, saying more people would come if I’m the one tutoring. I’m gonna be staying after school for an hour every Wednesday… which is stupid because it cuts into possible training time… but that’s ok, I guess, we have this study hall time.” Killua reasoned, seeming to talk to himself slightly. Gon smiled softly at that, the way Killua acted sometimes was just so endearing. He ducked his head to hide his smile and blush as he rubbed the back of his head. This was getting bad… He might have to come to terms with the fact this isn’t just a fling or one day thing…

“Ok, well, I have to stay after school for something too… hopefully when I come back you’ll be done and we can walk home together?” Gon smiled brightly at Killua. Killua blinked at the smile before turning away, the sight giving him butterflies.

“Whatever, maybe if nobody shows up.” Killua huffed to breath out the feelings in his chest. Gon smiled widened.

“Great! Bye, Killua, I’ll come see you after I’m done!” Gon said running off through the halls. Killua blinked, a bit offput by Gon’s pace.

“Wait, idiot! Tutoring’s in the library!” He told him in case Gon didn’t know. Gon laughed sheepishly as he realized he didn’t know that. He’d have been running around the school just to find Killua after he finished. Well, not that it would have bothered him, he’d run around the world for Killua.

Wow, it was bad.

“Thanks Killua!” He cried out. Killua chuckled as he strolled over to the library to set up his math lessons.

Gon skidded to a stop in front of Cheadle’s desk. She jumped a bit, not expecting the sudden entrance of a visitor. She regarded the panting boy then realized it was Gon and gave him a friendly smile.

“Oh! Gon, it’s nice to see you. So what can I help you with?” She asked, folding her hands across her desk professionally. Gon smiled back with charm, happy to see her too.

“Hi, Ms. Cheadle-”
“Just Cheadle is fine.” She informed with a push of her glasses back up the bridge of her button nose. Gon nodded.

“Ok, Cheadle. Um, I just wanted to go talk to Netero real quick, he said I could drop by and see him whenever to talk about help with stuff.” Gon said leaving most of it vague. He wanted to keep this all a secret until he got the O-K for it. She scrunched up her nose in distaste for the lack of formality in that.

“He should be working, and you should really schedule a time to go see him, one does not simply drop in to see the chairman.” She said, clicking some things on her computer, presumably to bring up some sort of appointment check. Gon visibly deflated, unhappy with the prospect of having to wait and make appointments just to see his friend.

“Oh…” He hummed, scratching at his head. Cheadle glanced over at him and felt a bit bad.

“I mean… I could always check to see if he’s busy, but just this once to see if you can go in unscheduled.” She said. Gon brightened up at that.

“Oh ya! That! Thank you, Cheadle!” He smiled with a hum at the end. She couldn’t stop the smile in return, his bubbliness contagious. She picked up her landline phone and put it to her ear, and there are a few moments before she speaks.

“Yes, Hi, Chairman, a Gon Freeces is out here requesting—... What? But you should be working!... Netero…!” She groaned. She huffed then pulled the phone away from her ear and inspected it then put it back to her ear. “Hello-? Erg!” She cried out and slammed the receiver down. Gon blinked then rubbed the back of his head awkwardly.

“You ok?” He asked nervously. He didn’t want to be yelled at if she’s in a bad mood. She glanced up at him and was met with genuine concern. She sighed.

“Yea, I’m fine, this just comes with the job. Thank you, though, Gon.” She straightened up. “He’ll see you now, right through there.” She nodded. Gon lit up.

“Oh great! Thank you!” He cried and jumped off down the hall. He opened the door to Netero’s office and greeted the old man happily.

“Hi, Netero!” Gon said hopping forth and planting himself in one of the seats in front of Netero’s office.

“Ohoho, hello Gon! I got the impression Cheadle gave you a bit of a hard time of coming in to see me?” He asked, stroking his beard carefree. Gon dismissed that with a light laugh.

“No, no problem, really…” Gon said. Netero shrugged.

“No matter the case, I’ll make sure to tell her that you are welcomed to come at anytime without any of that appointment stuff!” He chuckled.

“Ah, but that seems like that will give her alot of trouble…” Gon said with furrowed eyebrows.

“Tough knuckles, my orders!” He snickered mischievously, stroking his beard. “You’re fun and I’ll always make time for you!”

“Ah…” Gon chuckled nervously. He was starting to think Netero was crazy. “Anyway I came here because I wanted to talk to you about the school’s problem. I have an idea I want to do, but I won’t be able to without your help.” Gon said, determination hardening his features. Netero raised an
“Something you need my help with? Why don’t you fill me in on the details…?” Netero smiled.

“Well, it’ll start with this big event, a concert… but that’ll only be the start. I’ll need the students to be able start clubs and smaller events through the school year that allows the students to find new ways to discover music.” He smiled. Netero leaned back in his chair as he took in Gon’s idea.

“Sounds good, but you know students were always allowed to make clubs.”

“Ok! They should also be able to break out in dance numbers in the halls, so maybe make passing a bit longer?” Gon asked. Netero blinked then laughed.

“Ok! So, what events were thinking about besides just the concert.”

“Oh, don’t worry, I have a bunch of this planned out. As someone who had to do his own concerts, I have a lot of experience with this.” Gon said, pulling out a folder from his bookbag. Netero caught a glance at the sheet and bursted out laughing again.

“Ah, I knew I was right in letting you lead this revival Gon. I haven’t felt second hand excitement like this in a while! I’m anticipating this… Alright, go on and explain this.” Netero encouraged. Gon smiled and spread out his pages of planning.

“Well, first, this has to be a secret right up until the doors open!”

Gon left the office 40 minutes later. He felt hyped and animated, too excited to wait for his plans to go into action. But he had to practice his patience if this was going to work and keep it a secret. He knows his excitement could sometimes give his ulterior plans away because he was being too obvious.

He breathed out through his nose and looked down at his phone for the time. He pouted. Killua is still in tutoring around now. He didn’t want to leave without Killua, but waiting for him will be boring… He’ll at least go see him real quick before he goes.

He went to the library and it didn’t take him long to find him. As soon as he stepped into view of the opened library double doors he spotted the beautifully unique tuff of hair sitting at one of the tables in the entrance open space.

Gon sighed out at the sight, and drank in the sight. He felt a warm feeling bloom from his chest and tingles skitted across his skin, and his thoughts were refusing to form anything coherent besides “beautiful…”

In the quiet of the library, Gon was heard, and Killua looked up, along with some no-face student-tutoree who Gon could not even bare to give a secondary glance to. In the moment their eyes met, Gon felt a shock zip up and down his back and he could literally feel his wobbly love-sick puppy smile run across his face from the numb feeling Killua gave him like a drug. The emotions ran so high, Gon felt he could drown in it.

“Wow…” He sighed out. He blushed then straightened himself out, catching himself, embarrassed. “I-I mean…!”

Killua just watched with an eyebrow raised from the table.

“You ok there, Gon?” Killua asked.
“Ahem, er, yea, I just… I was thinking of this joke…” Gon chuckled. Killua’s eyebrows just furrowed further in scrutiny.

“A… joke?” He asked. Gon laughed a bit too loudly then waved his hands in front of his face.

“You know what, never mind!” He smiled, and leaned against the door. “So, uh, whatcha doing?”

Killua squinted at Gon as the student to his right passed a paper to him, presumably with practice problems for him to check.

“I’m… tutoring, Gon. Like I said I’d be doing here after school.” Killua said sassily. Gon chuckled.

“That’s true…” He hummed. He was being stupid again, but Killua makes him like that. Gon couldn’t believe it. Maybe it’d be easier if he just accepts it… that he likes Killua.

The way his body sung with that mental confession got him thinking maybe that it was the case. Gon allowed himself to observe Killua a little while longer before speaking again.

“Ok, I’m going to go…” Gon said cautiously from the door. He was a little sad Killua was staying longer than him, but he had to tutor.

“Ah, Alright Gon. I'll see you.” Killua said, jotting something down real quick on the paper of the student sitting in front of him. He looked up and Gon felt overwhelmed again at all the emotions he's never been able to pull apart fast enough, all flaring up at the same time when Killua's electric blue eyes hit his. Killua fixes him a firm but friendly glare.

“Remember we're starting tomorrow.” Killua asserted. Gon barely suppressed a smile, and Killua wasn't even doing anything. Just the sight of him made him want to smile. He finally let it break on his face, the feeling too overwhelming and bubbly to fight.

“Alright...” He ducked his head out from the doorway, and started down the hall that led out the school. He really had it bad didn't he?

He really didn't want to believe Zushi, but everything today… it was too much. Gon didn't think this was just a rush of emotions. His normal rush of emotions usually leave after a few hours.

This wasn't the first time he felt attraction to someone else; he was a teenage boy, how could he not? But this was the first time he's felt this way. This was definitely different.

Gon's never felt this, his chest hurt sometimes from the emotions he felt building in his chest. His mind wanders and focuses on Killua more times than he could count, nothing else coming to mind, until he realizes all he's been thinking about all day was Killua. He didn't think he could think about someone so much since his father.

His whole body tingled, and it's always been since he's met Killua. Everything about Killua did him in, his eyes entranced him, his hair made him feel just as fuzzy, his voice- oh his voice, Gon could only think about all the time he's sung with him, and how it's really only with him, that really makes him feel warm.

Gon's never thought about romance. He figured he didn't care ‘who’ and he didn't need it now anyways. It would be too distracting from his goal.

But Killua seems like a distraction worth while.

Gon's always thought he'd be a bachelor for a long time in his life, never thinking about relationships
or settling down in… well, forever.

But this one just might have gotten him going again.

He really wants Killua.

“Ay, boy-o!”

Gon looked up and was shook to find himself already entering the plaza that leads to his home. He was so lost in thought he didn't even realize how far he's traveled on auto-pilot. He turned his head in the direction of the voice that beckoned him and saw one of the Chinese old ladies that owned the small dollar store (that sold such a variety of knickknacks and necessities) watering a tomato plant on the store front.

Gon waved good naturedly.

“Hey, what's going on with you? You're smiling so much, it's like you're challenging the sun!” She chuckled with an accent.

“I...” Gon shrugged. He didn't even notice he was smiling the whole time, but now that it's pointed out, his cheeks do feel a bit sore.

“And look at you, you look different- you're practically glowing!” She cooed before she gasped. “Gon, did you... did you finally find someone special?”

Gon's mouth opened but he couldn't find the exact words he wanted to say. So he just smiled wider, the point he felt like his face would rip in half.

“I guess so!” He chuckled happily and then continued in a sort of skipping walk away from the lady before she could react. It was fine, he heard her happy squealing from behind then heard the bell of the store go off, and he figured she was going off to tell the other two ladies that ran the store with her the gossip.

With how small and tight knit this plaza community was, he wouldn't be surprised if they all knew by this evening. Well, Gon's never been one to hide his emotions or thoughts, they would’ve figured it out just through his actions.

He looked up and the sky looking so much bluer, the people around him look brighter and happier. His steps fell in a rhythm, the cars drove by on a beat. A radio on the windowsill of an apartment compound above a clothing store tuned in and out of a signal, and Gon could feel a song coming on, the feeling too large for his chest to keep inside.

He gave a few more pedestrians a bright megawatt smile before he couldn't hold it in anymore. “Do I look lonely?” Gon started, his voice deep like honey seeping through the air. He rubbed at his face playfully, singing, “I see the shadows on my face. People have told me... I don't look the same.” He wiggled his eyebrows playfully to no one in particular.

“But I lost weight,” He swayed, dancing his way down the street, sliding his hands down his side to mime losing weight. “I'm playing hooky…” He did a quick twirl. “With the best of the best, put my heart on my chest, so that you could see it too.” He thumped on his chest as he continued dancing down the street with fancy footwork.

“I'm walking the long road. Watching the sky fall…” He stretched his hands out before him then above him. He thought about that lace shirt Killua wore today, teasing his senses, and he felt excited again. He brought his hands up, curling to fists as he thought about it, “The lace in your dress tingles
He jumped forward, throwing his arms out in a dynamic pose, “The Death of a Bachelor! O-o-oh! Letting the water fall.” He skipped to one foot and swept his other foot through a puddle on the side of the road to make little pellets of water fly up and fall about him, surprising a few people around him before they pleasantly smiled at who it was. He continued his jazzy dance down the street. “The death of a bachelor! O-o-oh! Seems so fitting for happily ever after, oooh! How could I ask for more? A lifetime of laughter- at the expense of the death of a bachelor”

By the time Gon finished the first verse, he got into the heart of the plaza. Residents used to seeing Gon around greeted him happily, already used to the sight of the sunshine boy sharing his joy in the form of song to the world. Others swept up in the fun of his moves followed to hear the rest of his song, feeling like dancing themselves. Gon side stepped a couple of people walking down the sidewalk as he continued with the second verse.

“I'm cutting my mind off, it feels like my heart is going to burst. Alone at a table for two and I just wanna be served.” Gon whirled into a chair sitting at one of the tables outside of a french style cafe. Couples around him turned and looked, the tourists more surprised and pleased at the street show. Gon’s eyes twinkled mischievously as he hopped up and rushed down the sidewalk to the flower shop right next door to the cafe.

He plucked up a flower and knelt to a little girl with a balloon standing there in awe of the cool singing teen about the streets. “And When you think of me... am I the best you've ever had?” She squealed as she took the flower, letting go of the balloon. Gon snatched it up, and leapt over to another woman sitting alone on a sidewalk bench, giving the balloon to her, “Share one more drink with me, smile even though you're sad.” He crooned to her, and her face brightened as she grabbed the balloon before it could leave her grip. She turned to thank him but only caught sight of his back as he continued jazily dancing and singing down the street. She swooned in her seat.

“I'm walking the long road. Watching the sky fall. The lace in your dress tingles my neck, how do I live...!” He bellowed out musically. He leapt up on top of a parked car to sing.

“The Death of a Bachelor! O-o-oh! Letting the water fall.” He slid down the front of it, people following him cheering at the charismatic display.

“The death of a bachelor! O-o-oh! Seems so fitting for happily ever after, oooh!” He held onto a light post and swung around on it. “How could I ask for more? A lifetime of laughter- at the expense of the death of a bachelor!”

He jumped off and onto the street then Gon started dancing as people started clapping. Some other street talents grabbed trash can lids to drum on, others tap-dancing a beat and rhythm, and other dancing along with Gon in the street. Music filled the air without anyone having an instrument. Gon broke out from his dance break to continue singing, the others around him giving musical accompaniment any way they could.

“How could I ask for more? A lifetime of laughter- at the expense of the death of a bachelor” Gon hummed, head shaking left to right as he comically threw his legs out in front of him to the end of his song and continued his walk to the apartment building. He spotted his mother’s car out front and he
lit up.

“Mito!” He cried and sprinted the rest of the way home. He threw the door open, keeping the knob in his hand so the door didn’t slam into the wall. Mito jumped slightly, not expecting Gon to come in so loudly. But she couldn’t be too surprised, conditioned by years growing up with the spontaneous, loud boy.

“Gon, wha-”

“Mito, Mito, I like him, I really, really like him!” Gon cried running over to the woman by the stove and lifting her up in a swooping circle before hugging his aunt. “I’m crazy about him, and I finally figured out, I like Killua!” He said, stepping back to look her in the eyes.

“Wh… Killua? You finally figured it out! About time!” She smiled with a wink and turned back to her cooking. Gon blinked with a smile. He expected her to be a bit more shocked. He’s the one who told her he would be sworn off from romance while he learns to be a world star.

“You already knew?” He snickered, coming up behind the woman. He noted he finally cleared her height, the top of her head coming up to his ear.

“Of course! It was obvious! I came home to you talking about him almost every day!” She hummed, stirring away.

“But… did you expect me to do anything about it!? I told you long ago that I wouldn’t pursue relationships until I was more established.” He said. He wanted some sense of shock from the woman. He wasn’t that predictable and obvious!

“But I also know, Gon Freecss, that when you want something, nothing will stop you, not even past promises to yourself, so…” She giggled. Gon huffed a bit playfully.

“Fine… But, whatever, I need to go plan the way I should woo him.” Gon said, turning around. He had to be careful about this. He remembered the way Killua reacted when Gon mentioned taking him out and he thought it was a date… and he doesn’t even know if Killua likes guys too. And the fact he’s just very skittish about affection, Gon had to be careful about his approach.

He almost made it out the kitchen when a stern voice grabbed his attention again.

“Hold on a second, Gon.” Mito said behind him. He turned around a bit cautiously from the sound of her voice.

“Y-yes Mito?” Was he in trouble? He doesn’t remember doing anything especially bad or scold worthy lately.

“I held off since you said you wouldn’t get into it in high school and you had your sex ed in middle school. But since this is something a little different than what they teach in school, it’s time to give you the talk.” She said, crossing her arms. Gon blinked, feeling an uncomfortable prickle at the back of his neck, but he tried not to seem fazed as he kept a smile on his face.

“Huh?” He piped back dumbly, a sweat drop at his cheek. Mito raised an eyebrow.

“You heard me, Gon.” She said walking forward. Gon backed up a couple steps, letting out a couple nervous laughs.

“No, no, Mito, I know the gist of it!” He chuckled.
“No no, there are a whole slew of different dangers for gay relationships.” She said, grabbing at Gon’s shirt just as he turned to try and run away.

“No, no, Mito, please!” He cried, trying to wiggle out of her grasp.

“No way, Gon, this is important.”

“This is awkward!” He protested.

She threw him into her room and closed the door with a resounding thud. Cringe-induced cries followed.

-o0o0o0o-

A text on Gon’s phone later that night reminded him they were going running the next morning before school and to meet up on the street where Gon dropped Killua off at after their sleepover weekend.

Gon rubbed his head as he walked up the sidewalk, the sky and air around him tinged a lavender-blue hue in the early morning light. The music in Gon’s ears was more like background to his thoughts now. The memories of Mito’s ‘helpful talk’ still haunted his thoughts, leaving a vacant look in his eyes every few moments. He still thinks some of it was unnecessary, he wasn’t planning on doing half of those things with Killua, any time soon.

Gon’s eyes lit up with its usual vigor as he recalled a certain part of his and Mito’s conversation. She did end up helping, giving advice on how to approach courting guys, and courting someone like Killua (based on when she met him). Gon felt like things will be easier than yesterday now that he understands more, and got things a little more planned out, he thinks he can do it. He can get Killua to receive his feelings, it’ll just take a little more time than he’d like, but he can be patient. It’s Killua, after all, it’ll be worth it when he gets his prize at the end.

Speaking of, Gon spotted the starlit teen ahead of him, and he felt as though the sun finally rose and any sleepy feelings were wiped away with the natural booster that was Killua. His smile widened and ran over to the stretching male who was waiting for him so patiently while pulling the ear buds out his ears.

“Gon, you took forever!” Killua snapped, standing to his full height to try and tower over the slightly shorter teen. Ok, not so patiently. Gon smiled sheepishly before sticking his tongue out cutely.

“Sorry! I had trouble waking so early, I moved a bit slow. But I’ll be faster tomorrow.” He promised, smiling at him. “Good morning, Killua!” He chirped at the end, remembering to greet him properly. Killua regarded him with a side eye a bit skeptically, but he must have found what he was looking for in Gon’s bright, smiling face because he sighed out.

“Fine. Ok, so, we’ll just start with simply jogging. When we get to the school, we’ll use the locker room showers to clean up. You have your normal school clothes in that duffel bag, right?” He asked, looking at the camo duffel bag hanging at Gon’s hip.

“Yup!” Gon piped. He looked over Killua’s black and blue sweat suit. Wow, he looked cool. “Will I get a sweat suit too?”

“Well…” Killua looked down at himself. “I guess, if you wan to. Your wardrobe is one of the things I’ll need to change later anyways.” He snickered slightly. Gon pouted.
“Killua, you really can’t be the one to talk about my sense of fashion!” Gon protested. Killua glared playfully.

“Yea? What are you saying?” He poked Gon’s chest. Gon glared back before bursting into laughter, Killua soon joined.

“We can roast each other’s fashion sense later, we don’t have time for this. We’ll run to the school and then shower. We’ll change into our clothes then put our running clothes in the duffle bag. After school we’ll take it home to take out the running clothes and put in ur clothes for tomorrow. Got it?” Killua said.

“Right!” Gon said hiking up his duffle bag.

“Good. Start stretching.” He instructed, bending down easily one leg to touch his toes. Gon stretched just as easily. They finished stretching and Killua came over to Gon’s side, the proximity making Gon feel a bit jittery and tingly. Killua held up his phone in front of Gon to show his music list.

“Just running can be boring so we’ll be running with music. I recommend queuing up some music before we start…” Killua pulled up a menu that showed Gon how he could do it on his own phone. “…especially upbeat songs that makes running easier: motivating, invigorating songs, yea?” Killua asked then stepped back to talk to Gon face to face.

Gon nodded.

“Ok, gimme a sec…” Gon said looking down into his growing music list, queuing up around 10 songs he likes pretty easily. He looked up to see Killua doing some quick last second stretches but was facing… the wrong way?

“Killua what are you doing? The school’s that way…” Gon asked as the first chords of the rock guitar spilled over into his earphones. Killua casted a look over his shoulder that looked gorgeous in the light.

“Yea, like 10 minutes away. We’re going around the long way to run for 30 minutes today.” Killua said, bringing his own headphones up to his ears.

20 extra minutes added to the trip to school?! No wonder we had to wake up so early… Gon thought as he took his place next to Killua. Well, no problem, he could do that no problem, it was just jogging, and he’s pretty sure his stamina is pretty high already. This should be no problem! Gon also let out a couple quick arm stretches as he watched for Killua to make a move first as the first lines of the song he was listening to came on.

~Am I more than you bargained for yet?

I’ve been dying to tell you anything you want to hear

Cause that’s just who I am this week

“Allright, let’s go!” Killua hummed and started off the jog with a leaping bound. Gon lit up, excited to be doing this with his best friend and crush, and followed after that booty.

~Lie in the grass next to the mausoleum

I’m just a notch in your bedpost

But you’re just a line in a song
(A notch in your bedpost

But you're just a line in a song)

Gon looked around their surroundings as they ran. It was all gated communities with large houses easily clearing the tops of the nicely trimmed hedges or painted high walls. This is where Killua told Gon to drop him off that time he wanted bring Killua home… that means Killua’s home is around here somewhere! Gon had to wonder why Killua didn’t want to show Gon his home. If he did, that would make them closer! Killua seeing Gon’s room really helped their friendship, he’s sure of it. So he’s sure if he see’s Killua’s room, they'll feel even closer… and Killua will be closer to understanding Gon’s feelings for him!

~Drop a heart, break a name

We’re always sleeping in, sleeping for the wrong team

Gon peeked a look over at the other running teen beside him. Well, slightly ahead, since Gon doesn’t exactly know where they should be going or if they need to turn down this street or that. Gon was hoping to see Killua give away some sort of hint of where his home was, like looking in the direction, or maybe pointedly not looking, but he only kept his eyes forward as he ran. Gon pouted, he decided his question for that day would be why Killua didn’t invite him over already.

~We’re going down, down in an earlier round

And sugar, we’re going down swinging

I’ll be your number one with a bullet

A loaded god complex, cock it and pull it

They turned a corner and Gon was starting to recognize his surroundings. Ok, so it’s not like he’s never been here before! He knows his way to the school from here if Killua suddenly disappeared. He ran a bit faster to run alongside the white haired teen. Killua only gave him a quick regarding side look but other than that didn’t make a move to notice. Gon smiled, Killua was so cool. Gon knew if Killua wasn’t by his side this would be so boring. Just remembering that Killua was beside had a surge of excitement running through him. He sped up a bit before giving a dazzling grin towards Killua who was slightly behind him.

~We’re going down, down in an earlier round

And sugar, we're going down swinging

I’ll be your number one with a bullet

A loaded god complex, cock it and pull it

~Is this more than you bargained for yet?

Oh, don't mind me, I'm watching you two from the closet

Wishing to be the friction in your jeans

Killua’s eyes widened a bit in surprise then a mischievous little twinkle entered his eye, one that made him look even more beautiful, then sped up to be ahead of Gon by a couple steps. Gon felt a
rush of adrenaline wash over him as he watched slightly surprised. Was he...?

Gon sped up once more to overtake Killua but that lasted maybe two seconds before Killua rushed ahead of Gon once more from his peripheral vision. Gon’s grin grew as his competitiveness bloomed in his chest and broke out into a run. Almost simultaneously, Killua did as well.

~Isn’t it messed up how I’m just dying to be him?

I’m just a notch in your bedpost

But you’re just a line in a song

(A notch in your bedpost

But you’re just a line in a song)

Drop a heart, break a name

We’re always sleeping in, sleeping for the wrong team

They both sprinted down the street, Gon could hear the pounding of their feet on the pavement and the ragged breathing under the music as they both booked it to beat each other in a spontaneous race to nowhere. Gon allowed himself to peak over at Killua’s face. Killua was flushed red while his eyes were wide in attentiveness to where he stepped and squinted in a smile. He was smiling so widely, and he looked so happy, Gon couldn’t help the bubble of laughter that spilt out from his chest and out over his lips. The laughter drew Killua’s attention and they met eyes. The silent taunt was exchanged and they both looked forward, leaning to try and go faster.

~We’re going down, down in an earlier round

And sugar, we’re going down swinging

I’ll be your number one with a bullet

A loaded god complex, cock it and pull it

They spotted a grassy patch at the end of the downward sloped street and they both tried to speed even more as they decided that was the finish line. Their feet fell into simultaneous rhythm as they got closer to the park entrance, trails of laughter left in their wake. They both leaped to try and touch ground first and rolled into a pile, panting and laughing hard as the song ended in Gon’s ears.

~We’re going down, down in an earlier round

And sugar, we’re going down swinging

I’ll be your number one with a bullet

A loaded god complex, cock it and pull it.

For the moment as more songs rolled through in a hazy murmur in Gon’s mind, they just laid there trying to catch their breath. Then, when Gon was able, he sat up and looked over to Killua.

“I won that race!”

Killua snapped his eyes opened, his breathing much better in comparison to Gon’s and sat up too.
“Seriously? There was no way you won that! I must have been 3 years ahead of you!”

“That’s not possible Killua, you were right next to me the whole time!”

“Idiot, if I was right next to you, doesn’t that mean it was a tie?” Killua chuckled at Gon’s antics, and laughed harder when Gon’s face fell into realization from his determined glare. Killua stood, almost completely recovered while Gon was still wheezing a bit.

“But it’s obvious you can keep up with me, which is pretty impressive…” Killua hummed, brushing dirt off his knees. A warm feeling exploded in Gon’s chest at the compliment, spreading to his fingers and legs, making him feel lightheaded.

“Wow, thanks Killua-!” Gon started.

“But we’re not here to race each other. Let’s stick to jogging from now on, ok?” Killua said. Gon pouted. He sure didn’t let that feeling last; now he felt more like he was being reprimanded.

“Ok…” He said, getting up, bracing himself on his knees.

“But… since you’re not horrible at running, we can start with singing while running tomorrow.” Killua said, stretching a bit. Gon smiled. That’s great! Progress!

“Ok, Killua!”

“C’mon, the school’s over here.” Killua said, then started off. Gon followed happily.

They got to the school and it was really early! There was no one in the halls, and Gon felt like he was trespassing. They went to the gym’s locker rooms to shower.

“Separately this time.” Killua scolded, poking Gon’s forehead as he moved past, a light blush on his face. Gon chuckled apologetically. He knows to back off now. If he wants Killua to relax around him and give him a chance, he’ll cool it with all the bluntness.

It was weird to Gon to be in an empty shower room with just Killua, he’s used to the ringing voices of other guys in the showers or adjacent locker room and the place was just too quiet with no talking. So Gon decided to do what he does at home when it gets too quiet. Singing.

“Talking to the mooon… trying to get to yooou…! In hopes you’re on the other side, talking to me too! Or am I a fool, who sits alone, talking to the moon~” Gon hears the slight snickering of Killua in the other stall and feels himself buzz with the joy of getting him to laugh.

After they shower and dress, Gon’s struck by the sight of Killua.

“You look… different.” Gon breathed, staring unashamedly at Killua. He blushed and pushed past him, fixing the straps of his undershirt that peeked out from his over-the-shoulder shirt.

“Shut up, I know.” He muttered, heading to their hall lockers. Early and sleepy students were starting to dot the halls. Gon followed him there, trying hard to notice what was so different about Killua. Killua opened the locker door and placed his duffel bag at the bottom then pulled out a small pencil case looking bag from his top shelf. He dug around in it and took out a pen looking stick and faced the mirror, and started drawing on his eyelids.

It took Gon much too long to figure it out.

“You wear make-up-!”’ Gon gasped. Killua glared at him from the angle of the mirror.
“I’m counting that as your question of the day. Yea, I wear make-up. As world stars we’re expected to look our best and on point. And I happen to prefer the cat winged eyeliner look anyways.” Killua shrugged.

Gon watched on, amazed. Killua was amazing. Gon knew he looked different, his eyes weren’t as pointy. But it wasn’t a bad different, it was another shape of beauty on Killua. He looked so cute without it anyways. Gon watched with interest how Killua’s skillful hands dabbed and swiped at his eyelids to create the look Gon was so used to seeing on him all the time. And it wasn’t even much, it was just enough to accentuate normal features to a flawless finish.

“You know, you should try to get into make-up too, Gon. You’ll have to wear it as world stars, there’s no way you’ll go to a professional appointment or concert and they not put make-up on you.”

Gon nodded slowly, recalling that blessed day when angel Killua descended with that sexy smoky eyeshadow from his photoshoot.

“Ok, Killua!”

Killua turned a bit surprised. He was actually expecting a bit more fight, wouldn’t it mark down his manliness or some other lame macho excuse? Well, of course he should have expected this, it’s Gon. He’s so open minded and willing to try new things.

“Oh.. I could teach you, if you want…” Killua shrugged, trying not to be embarrassed. Gon smiled widely at him and Killua couldn’t keep his gaze leveled.

“I’d love that, Killua!” He hummed. Killua really couldn’t stop the blush after that. Gon was so lucky Killua was his.

His friend. That’s what he meant. His friend.

That day, after they finished getting ready and making sure their stuffed duffel bags were at the bottom of their locker all tucked and out the way, Gon found out that Killua goes to the roof before school.

“Wow, Killua!” Gon breathed as Killua opened the maintenance door. “You’re so cool!”

“Cool? Just for coming up to the roof?” He asked, a blush on his cheeks.

“Yea! You just come up here whenever you want, all… coolly!” He gushed. Killua let out a laugh into the wind, and Gon felt like he was soaring. He loved his laugh.

“You’re so stupid.” He chuckled, sitting down on the gravel, in the shade of the giant industrial fans. Gon smiled, sitting down next to him. He didn’t mind being stupid for Killua.

“So what do you do up here?” Gon asked.

“I normally listen to music and wait for school to start.” Killua said, placing his headphones up over his ears.

“Aw, that’s boring. Why did we get here so early then?” Gon pouted.

“So no one knows where I go after I finish running and they don’t bother me.” Killua said. Gon huffed.

“Mmmhhh… I guess it’s not so bad as long as we’re together. But why don’t we talk with each other
instead?” Gon asked with a head tilt. Killua squinted at Gon. How could he say no to him?

“Fine.”

“Yay!”

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As more students filled the school and the time to the start came closer, Illumi’s eyebrows furrowed.

“I didn’t see that kid come in today.”

“You mean Gon?” Hisoka asked, leaning against the tree his friend and him was standing under.

“Whatever.” Illumi replied uninterested, scanning the crowd once more to see if he just made a mistake.

“You know, Illu, you sure are hanging around me more and more. Is there something you want to tell me…?” Hisoka purred.

“I’m only hanging around you because you deter my fans from crowding me too excessively.” Illumi said, still looking over the school yard.

“Why are you so interested in Gon anyway? You don’t even know his name- are you that interested in knowing your competition?” Hisoka asked.

“No. There is no way I’ll lose. But if I don’t have knowledge of where he is, he might be hanging around my Killu.” Illumi said.

“And that’s bad because…?” Hisoka asked. Illumi finally turned back to him.

“... This is why I don’t talk to you. You don’t understand me.” Illumi turned to head into the school, slapping Hisoka with his hair.

“Ah- Illumi! I can understand you! Does this have to do with the friend thing again? Illumi! Are we friends?”

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The bell rings and Gon slaps his face.

“Aw, man, I forgot, Zushi was probably waiting for us!” Gon jumped up, jogging in place in his impatience to get back downstairs.

“Aw, shoot! You’re right. Let’s go.” Killua said, opening the door. Gon slipped by and ran down the steps, Killua following suit.

“Wait- Gon!” He called before Gon swung open the door. He looked behind him at Killua.

“That was dangerous! And we’re not suppose to be up here! Let’s try not to get caught coming out of here, yea?” Killua said. Gon rubbed the back of his head sheepishly.

“Sorry!” Killua closed the door behind him and they rushed to their lockers.

“There you are-!” Zushi said as he spotted them before Gon was swooping him up in his broad arms in a hug.
“We’re so sorry, Zushi!” He said. “We forgot you’d be waiting for us.”

“Yea, we got here pretty early.” Killua said. Zushi laughed from Gon’s hold.

“That’s ok! Let’s just get to class, we don’t want to be late.” He said.

“Right! Sorry again!” Gon said, putting him down. Zushi waved them off. They got to the classroom and class began with Wing coming in barely on time.

“Alright class, I have your World Star papers graded.” Wing said, tapping the slightly disorganized pile of papers in his hands on the edge of his desk but it didn’t do much.

Oh right. Gon thought. Killua and Gon turned theirs in yesterday at the beginning of cooking class, Killua made sure of that even if Gon was in some sort of love drunk limbo.

“I have to say I’m impressed with some of the choices. There were some overlap of World Stars that people choose since they were obvious, such as Beyonce and EXO, but I did tell you to do it on a World Star that graduated from this school, so I had to take points off.” Wing said as he began passing back papers.

“I really liked you two’s papers, I’m glad I gave you both the extra time.” Wing said, passing back their papers. Gon looked down at the page, full points!

“Wow! Did you also get full points, Killua?” Gon asked, looking over. He was able to briefly glance a name before Killua coolly slipped the paper upside down.

“Ya, 100.” He smiled. Gon looked up at Killua.

“Why can’t you let me see who you did it on?”

“Cause-... it’s no big deal, it’s just someone I decided to do it on. If people knew who I did it on, they’ll try to make a big deal out of it, or make it weird.” Killua said.

“Ha, Killua, you need to stop worrying so much what people think-” Gon said, and Killua gave him a pointed look, “While we’re still in school! And besides, it’s me.” Gon said, reaching for the paper. Killua scrunched his nose and he blushed a bit, but didn’t stop him. “I already know who Canary is, she was your friend last year, right?”

Killua stilled a bit, but then nodded. He got a bit of a far off look so Gon decided to let him be while he reads the paper. Wow, she was really impressive. She is apart of an independent music brand, her hatsu is her slight urban accent she puts into her words when she sings, targeted more to a younger audience. She wanted to be able to sing what she wanted, and not have her singing be controlled by her record company. But because she works with an independent record company that’s not very well known, she has to work that much harder and do alot of her own promoting because the company doesn’t have enough money to do it. Gon let out a soft gasp. She was so impressive… well, she did graduate from here and became a world star, so she was bound to be impressive. But she was impressive enough to catch and keep Killua’s attention. He took note of her company.

Starlight

“Wow, this is really cool.” Gon said turning back to Killua.

“Ya, well, what are you telling me for…?” Killua muttered taking the paper back. “I already know that…” He muttered under his breath looking over the paper with reminiscing eyes. Gon smiled at Killua. Gon’s happy Killua wasn’t as hopeless to music as he previously thought. If he still had
people he looked up to already in the industry he would enter, he was looking forward to something. He turned around to pay attention to Wing’s lesson he already started.

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The rest of the school day went pretty normally, more instructions from professionally skilled people that made Gon so thankful to Netero for letting him get this instructions. But the last period in physical training, Killua refused to shower with Gon that day for punishment of last time. He made Gon get ready first and sent him out to wait for him at the front of the school so that they could go start their training.

“Hey, Gon!” Pokkle cried to catch Gon’s attention, running out from the school’s front entrance flanked by his friends, Pekuba and Balda.

Gon looked up from his phone and music to see who called him and greeted his friend with a kind smile, popping one earphone out of his ear to hear him better.

“Hey, Pokkle! What’s up?”

“Me and my friends are gonna head out for karaoke tonight, and we wanted to know if you wanted to come. We’d get those private rooms for maximum fun.” Pokkle said, a wide smile on his face.

“Karaoke!? Wah, that sounds so fun! We could get good food and have a bunch of fun just singing and stuff.” Gon gushed, punching his fist into the palm of his other hand. The 4 of them got pumped up before Gon was deflating.

“Oh, wait… me and Killua have stuff to do today. We’re suppose to train for the Winter Showcase.” He pouted. The others deflated as well.

“Oh, right… no, no, you’re right, you should do that, it’ll be super hard to win that, you’ll need all the time you can get to study.”

“Ya, and Killua kept telling me over and over again, ‘We’re starting today, Gon’... I’d feel bad about knowing it and booking over it anyways.” Gon hummed, looking up. But wait… “This might work… If I could get Killua to come and have fun singing without any incentive, I could help him get to love music for the sake of music a little more!” Gon said, murmuring to himself at first then growing in volume. Pokkle and his friends just kinda blinked like, ‘Was he talking to us?’ They jumped slightly when Gon turned to him.

“No! This could work! We’ll come, Pokkle!”

“We? Gon, there’s a reason I didn’t ask Killua to come. There’s no way he’d come to some event where he’d have to sing.” Pokkle said. Gon laughed a bit.

“Ha, Pokkle, you underestimate me! Killua will come and I’ll get him to sing. Or try to. That’s the plan anyway. He’ll see how much fun we’re having and want to join.” Gon nodded. Pokkle looked a bit confused but soon Killua was coming up from the school.

“Alright Gon, if you’re gonna work efficiently against Illumi we’ll have to get started right away.” He hooked arms with him, trying to get him to come along. Gon chuckled, keeping rooted in his spot, and Killua let out a small ‘oof’ as the resistance was met, pulling him back to Gon.

“Gon, what the heck, let’s go!” Killua sneered. Gon pulled Killua back to his side to join the circle of boys.
“Well, Killua… I know you said we’re gonna start working on the training stuff today…” Gon started innocently.

“Yea…?” Killua said slowly, turning his gaze to the other teens in front of him as if to get some sort of heads up on what Gon was hinting at. It didn’t sound too good right now.

“But Pokkle invited us to go out to Karaoke tonight! I thought it’d be ok-”

“-What, no way Gon, we can’t-”

“-It’d be really fun-!”

“-Seriously? I’ve been telling you since Tuesday that we’d start today-”

“-I knew you’d bring that up-”

“Gon!” Killua snapped, turning to him. Gon gave an apologetic smile to Pokkle and his friends awkwardly standing there for a moment before taking Killua’s elbow and leading him a few steps away. Killua pulled his arm from Gon’s grip before he got that far anyways.

“Killua-” Gon started appeasingly.

“Gon, I thought you wanted to win the showcase. I thought you wanted my help, you can’t be blowing off practice just for anything, Gon, you need to be serious about this!” Killua scolded, eyes narrowed dangerously. Gon chuckled nervously, he needed to defuse him quick.

“Haha, Killua, calm down.” Gon smiled easily. Killua growled but Gon took it a good sign he wasn’t going off on him anymore. “I do, I do want to do the training with you, I completely understand we have a short time to work with before the showcase. I was just thinking this could be something fun we do before we get started. Kinda like a party before going back to school or… the last meal before death row.” Gon said. Killua glared at him and Gon shook his head. “Not that last one- c’mon, like a moral booster before going headlong into ‘hard-work’ mode.”

Killua looked down in thought, his eyes softening up.

“Mh… I guess…” He shrugged.

“Yea! And it seems a little weird to start on a Thursday anyway, right? We can start on Friday, ok?” He said.

“Yea… whatever. Fine, go have fun. I want to hear that you got nothing less than 90s on those singing machines.” Killua snorted, pushing his finger into Gon’s chest, a light tone to his voice. Gon huffed a small laugh before tilting his head quizzically.

“What do you mean? You’re coming too, Killua.”

“What? Excuse me, I think you forgot the part where I told you I don’t go around singing like that.” Killua said, crossing his arms.

“No, no, Killua! It’s ok, it’ll be our friends and a private room! No one else will hear but us.”

“Gon, I told you, I don’t give out free concerts.”

“You also told me you’d try singing with someone else that’s not me.” Gon shot back and Killua scoffed, feeling called out.
“W-well…!” Killua tried to come up with something and only grew angrier with Gon’s growing smile. “Shut up! I don’t want to come, and I don’t want to sing.” He started walking away.

“Killua!” Gon cried, and turned back to Pokkle and the others. He made some sort of gesture and Pokkle couldn’t determine if he was telling them to wait there or follow, so they frantically made a decision as Gon turned to chase Killua and followed him.

“Come on, Killua, you have to come! It won’t be fun without you!”

“Sure it will, you guys have fun all the time.” Killua replied without turning back.

“Not like how we have fun!” Gon whined.

“I’m not going.” Killua huffed.

“Please? You’ll have fun, you can sing to music the way you used to!” Gon said.

“Not with others in the room! They’ll only want me to sing!”

“No, no, they’ll want to sing too! That’s the fun of singing!”

“Even if I’m better than them? That won’t discourage them from singing?” Killua asked, finally turning his head although he kept moving.

“It hasn’t discouraged me yet, Killua.” Gon said in the most honest voice he could muster. He counted it a victory when he saw Killua blush and turned his head away.

“No…!” He finally said after a pause. Gon pouted before a sly smile spread on his face.

“C’mon Killua…” He hummed, poking at Killua’s side which the ashen haired teen just swatted away. “When the sun shines, we shine together!” Gon sang out the familiar and earworm song, “Told you I’ll be here forever!” Killua looked back at the teen, slightly aghast.

“Gon, don’t…” Killua strained through his teeth, embarrassed. Pokkle and the others lit up as they heard the song, ready to sing along with the easy lyrics. They ran forward to walk with Gon’s pace by Killua’s side.

“Told you I’ll be here forever!” They sang in chorus.

“Oh gawd, Gon if you’re gonna sing, please don’t follow me and do it…” Killua muttered, facing back forward and trying to speed walk away.

“Now that it’s raining more than ever! Know that we still have each other!” They broke into harmony as they followed after Killua to get him to sing. Killua’s eyes widened as he saw a couple of straggling students behind after school, much like they were. They were watch the scene with wide eyes and he blushed deeply, waving away an apology for the disturbance his ‘entourage’ was making with a nervous smile and covered his face. Oh, why couldn’t the earth swallow him up? He stopped abruptly as Gon skipped ahead of him and blocked his path.

“You can stand under my umbrella! You can stand under my umbrella-ella-ella, eh eh eh!” He sang out, the others stopping behind them. They stopped singing as they wondered if their singing got through to Killua in their earnestly to get him to come. Gon waited a few breaths, watching Killua’s face for any signs.

Killua bit his lip, conflicted. And it was so stupid, he loves that song… why was Gon like this…?
“Come on Killua… you gotta learn to start singing like no one’s listening.” Gon said softly as he looked him in the eyes. Killua’s eyes widened before he looked down with a spreading smile.

Why was Gon so amazing?

“Because!” Killua sang out, turning his face up and throwing his hands up. The other four males cheers in their success to get Killua to come. Then they all launched into the refrain again, Gon hooking Killua under his arm.

‘This will be fun, right?’ Killua thought as he was laughing so much he could barely deliver the words of the song. ‘I don’t need to sing to impress. It's fun with friends. Singing for the sake of singing… right!’

Gon and Killua figured out Ponzu was also joining them, and they drove to a karaoke shop. They bought a private room like Pokkle said and they even bought some food like fries and pizza. Killua’s eyes lit up with delight, not being able to indulge in these kinds of food very often. Gon was happy Killua was having fun!

But once they were inside the room, Killua was starting to have second thoughts and doubts about coming. There was nothing wrong with the room, it was small, able to fit a small wrap around couch along the walls and a table that went in the space left in front of the couch.

Then there was about 4 feet of room left for people to stand and sing, then the TV opposite the couch. There was the song book on the table for song selection.

But Killua didn’t know about singing. There was a voice in the back of his head that told him this would turn out badly. The people he was with would treat him differently when they heard him sing. They’ll crave more of his voice and they’ll make him sing every song just to hear him. He shivered at the thought, dark shadows flashing across his mind, but then Gon was there in front of him, his brightness clearing the dark from his mind.

“Killua! C’mon! Sit over here next to me!” Gon cried. Killua smiled, trying not to let his nerves show on the surface.

"Sure Gon!" Killua hummed.

He planted his butt and didn't really move to partake in festivities after that. Gon went first, way too excited than it called for in the moment, but they all expected it. It's Gon, and he's adorably excitable like a pup and is very bad at holding in what he's feeling.

Funnily, Gon's first song choice was a crack, deciding on 'Who said we're wack?' by The Lonely Island. Everyone couldn't help cracking up as Gon tried his best to get into character and seem like some sort of gangster, but was just an adorable dork who got his pretend feelings hurt. Gon began scrolling through the book for the next song, and everyone's sure Gon would have hogged the machine if someone didn't do something. Luckily Pokkle already had a song picked out and pried the mic from Gon.

Killua was happy to listen to Gon sing, it helped him calm down a bit since he started first. He didn't appreciate the clenching of his jaw his anxiety was making him do, but he faked neutral good mood whenever Gon looked, so that was good enough.

He just felt much too nervous still to sing yet.

There were only two microphones available for use, so only two at a time could sing or people could
crowd one, but it was obvious most songs were for solos or for duets.

Pokkle and his friends most often didn't care, Pokkle taking one mic to sing and his two friends taking the other so they can all sing together. Pokkle sang 'Runaway Baby' by Bruno Mars, and 'Movin' out' by Billy Joel with his friends as sort of background singers.

When Ponzu wasn't amusingly arguing with Killua, she finally got up there to sing some good choices, at least in Killua's taste. He couldn't dog her for singing Beyonce's 'Irreplacable' and 'Love on Top' and singing 'Through the Fire' by Chaka Khan.

Killua tried to keep his heart from hammering away in his chest and keep his blush off his face. While Gon wasn't able to be up there singing and performing, he was right next to Killua, giving small nudges to get his attention, leaning into his space to whisper inside jokes, and kept his arms over the back of Killua's seat, close enough Killua could feel the heat off Gon's chest. It made Killua want to just lean closer, close the space between them and lose himself in Gon's warmth, and not to mention it made him feel relaxed and not out of place within this friend group.

Killua was disappointed when Gon got up again to sing, but that was short lived when he found out Gon was singing Destiny's Child's 'Bills Bills Bills.' Everyone was cheering for Gon and his passive aggression to this mystery man who won't pay his bills. Everyone was in a good mood as Gon so easily creates the atmosphere.

But Killua was really taken off guard when Gon was then suddenly turned to him.

"C'mon, Killua you should sing too!" Gon pitched forward to take his hand, but Killua was already shaking his head when Gon opened his mouth.

"O-oh, no, no way- I-!

"C'mon Killua!"

"Ya, Killua!"

"Please sing with us!" The peanut gallery decided to pitch in, crying out encouraging shouts, friendly enough. But Killua's chest squeezed in a panic, flashes of demands and shouting to sing, insistent even if he didn't want to. He opened his mouth again to protest, a squeak barely coming out in his choking panic that was probably unnoticeable to anyone else, but then Gon was suddenly flooding his view again and he breathed a bit easier, Gon's hand sliding into his. The warm weight helped tether him to the situation and not into his head.

"It's ok, Killua... we're all your friends here and we just want you to have fun too..." Gon said in a soft, reasoning voice. Killua sucked in a breath, his eyes locked with Gon's before he sighed, and Gon cheered, taking that as a yes.

Well, he wouldn't be wrong, Killua didn't want to ruin the good mood. Killua let his head hang but held his hand out palm up to get the mic and Gon happily dropped it in his hand.

"I'll pick the song for you!" Gon said, going over to the book.

"Ya, ya..." He muttered. He cleared his throat slightly, giving a discreet side eye to the small audience to get a peak of what their faces said. They all looked excited, all the boys besides Gon never having actually heard Killua yet at all. They looked expectant but happy.

Would they get upset with him if he wasn't up to their standards? Would he ruin the mood if his singing got a bit pitchy? If he didn't give 100%, would they tell him to get out? Try again? What-?
"I got it! Get ready, Killua! There's singing right from the start...!" Gon hummed teasingly, returning Killua to the levity of the situation, and punching in the song ID into the Karaoke machine remote. Killua blinked before remembering to react accordingly. He let a small cheshire smile cover his features.

"Gon, you insult me! I feel like you tried to get me a difficult song but it won't work...!" Killua chuckled and turned to the screen. He took a breath to calm himself again, his back to his 'audience.'

The words 'Red Balloon' by Charli XCX flashed on the screen in red bubbly font, and Killua's mind raced to pull up the file in his mind with the lyrics and pitch before the song could.

Killua almost missed the downbeat, brought the mic to his mouth, and sang out.

"~Ah-ooh! If you got troubles let 'em go! Let 'em soar so high, high into the sky, Just like a red balloon!"

Gon twisted his head around to scan the faces of everyone in room, knowing none of them had really officially heard Killua sing. He felt the smile on his face widen along with the huge, bubbling pride feeling in his chest at seeing all their faces. It was a mix of dropped jaws and admiring smiles, all too stunned to react besides that.

"Ah-ooh! Don't let your worries get to you... Let 'em float on by, high into the sky, Just like a red balloon!"

They finally reacted with appreciative shouts and cheers. It surprised Killua a bit, not expecting them to be so vocal with their approval. He smiled and gave them a brief glance before looking back at the screen to read and sing.

"Monday morning: Shoot up like a rocket. Yeah, the sun is shining, keep it in my pocket. Got this golden feeling never gonna stop, it just goes on and on." The people in the room were clapping along with the beat.

"Keep on clapping, Join the celebration. Turn the music louder on my favourite station, wanna spread my magic all across the nation, do it all day long!"

Gon’s chest felt like bursting at seeing the smile that fell on Killua’s face as he sang. He was having fun! He was actually having fun while singing! Killua let out a small chuckle and saw the next words show up, then remembered how fast the next lines were. He would have stumbled and messed up, but his training wouldn’t ever allow the mispronunciation of lyrics. He focused a bit to get a comfortable pace on the words, reading with care.

"Today, I opened my eyes And now I'm so happy and free, I've got my friends by my side And that's all that matters to me. So, come on, get up and join in cause this is just what you need, Let's do it all day long!"

Killua allowed a breath in and everyone laughed, noticing how he was caught off guard to sing. Killua blushed a bit but also allowed himself to laugh a bit into the start of the next lines.

"Today, I opened my eyes And now I'm so happy and free, I've got my friends by my side And that's all that matters to me. So, come on, get up and join in cause this is just what you need, Let's do it all day long!"

The others in the room sang out the “Ah-ooh” with him as he sang. “Ah-ooh! If you got troubles let 'em go let 'em soar, so high, high into the sky just like a red balloon! Ah-ooh! Don't let your worries get to you! Let 'em float on by, high into the sky, just like a red balloon! So turn it up now!” The
others sang the “ah-oohs” for him, everyone having a good time. “(Ah-ooh!)”

*So turn it up now! (Ah-ooh!)*

Killua couldn’t believe how fun this was. They weren’t upset that he was singing better than them, or that he messed up a little bit. He never thought that he could sing with people he considered friends, or be comfortable with the prospect. He had to thank Gon later for making him come, he would have never believed this to be possible if he didn’t experience this.

“*Bees are buzzing, Butterflies are dancing, And the trees are humming, Birds are singing songs*”

*Oh, can’t you see it's lovely? Life is beautiful, and it goes on and on!*

Gon couldn’t take his eyes off Killua. He looked so gorgeous singing up there, and he thinks Killua’s smile was the most precious thing. He wanted to protect it and always wanted him to wear it.

“*Today, I opened my eyes And now I'm so happy and free. I've got my friends by my side and that's all that matters to me. So, come on, get up and join in cause this is just what you need. Let's do it all day long!*”

“*Today, I opened my eyes And now I'm so happy and free I've got my friends by my side and that's all that matters to me. So, come on, get up and join in cause this is just what you need. Let's do it all day long!*”

No one in the room besides Gon thought Killua would ever actually sing, it’s why they never bothered him all night. They were happy enough just having him in the room and hanging out like a cool presence. They felt like that they were all getting closer as friends, hanging out and singing together just like this. Who knew this was all they needed to do to get Killua to sing? Some nice words and friendly intentions?

“*Ah-ooh! If you got troubles let 'em go, Let 'em soar, so high, high into the sky, Just like a red balloon!*” They all sang out “Ah-ooh!” with varying comedic effects.

“*Don't let your worries get to you, Let ’em float on by, high into the sky, Just like a red balloon! So turn it up now! (Oh!)*” The others sang the back vocals for him as he sang the lyrics. “*So turn it up now! (Ah-ooh!)*”

Killua closed his eyes to sing the vocals and everyone went quiet again.

“*Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah*”

*Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah*

*Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah*

*Ah-ah-ah*

Gon couldn’t believe how beautiful he sounded, his voice oscillating the scales and notes, like a careful painting. By the way everyone else was just listening, Gon thinks everyone thought the same. He was a really beautiful singer, and he’s getting a bit jealous that everyone gets to hear what used to be just for him.

But no, this is ok. This is what he wanted. This will lead to growth for Killua. He’ll be happy just
like to listen to Killua finish out the last of the vocals with perfection.

“So turn it up now!

Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah

Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah

Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah

Ah-ah-ah!”

Everyone erupted into applause and praise. Killua laughed, blushing a bit and brushing his bangs away from his face. The machine flashed a perfect 100.

“You were amazing!”

“Wow, I didn’t know you were that good!”

“Amazing!”

“Thanks-!” Killua chuckled before he was swept up in a giant hug by Gon. “Oof! Gon!” Killua laughed, his feet not touching the floor.

“Oh, Killua, I’m so proud of you! You were amazing, and you sounded so beautiful, and you looked like you were having so much fun!” He put him down and beamed him a giant smile. “I’m so happy.”

Killua smiled back. “Thanks… I’m having a good time, I am.” He nodded. Gon smile widened impossibly more.

“Let’s sing another song together!” Gon said, bounding for the book.

“C’mon, let us have a turn!” Ponzu said. “I don’t want to sit here and listen to Killua all day. I have to do that enough when he’s being annoying at school!”

“Shut up, no one asked you to hang around me at school.” Killua said, joining Gon’s side.

“I’m not trying to be! I’m trying to hang by Gon!” Ponzu said.

“Well, we kinda come as a pair, so…” Killua said with a ‘too bad’ tone. Gon beamed up at the teen by his side. He’s so happy Killua had the same sentiment, that they were such close friends, it should be common knowledge: If you want one, the other comes included.

“Fine! We’re still singing first! Pokkle, come on!” Ponzu said, kneeling by the book and pulling it away from Gon.

“Aw…” Gon pouted. Killua lifted Gon up with a laugh.

“It’s ok, Gon! We have all night to sing together.” Killua smiled and Gon felt like his chest would burst from happy Killua was making him.

“Right!”

Pozu got Pokkle to sing ‘Lucky’ by Jason Mraz and Colbie Caillat but then Gon was jumping up after so Killua and him can sing a duet. He found one Killua really liked after they had sang called
‘Busted’ by The Isley Brothers. It was hilarious hearing Gon cursing, and Killua was a perfect actor in pretending like he was put on the spot. With both of them hearing the song for the first time, some notes was pitchy but the fun was that they were together.

Then they finished the night out with some lighter funnier songs. Killua wanted to sing ‘Like a Boss’ by The Lonely Island, and no one was about to stop him from singing for everyone again. It was funny how much it kinda fit his cocky and ridiculously confident attitude. Pokkle’s friends sang the last songs, ‘What the Hell’ by Avril Lavigne (Gon thought it was about time someone sang it since Melody didn’t), and ‘I Have Nothing’ by Whitney Houston. Everyone agreed it was time to go when Balda and Pekuba found and sang ‘The Simpsons’ Theme song, which was just the words ‘the simpsons’ and the instrumental that was the rest of the song. They left as the song played out. Killua was so happy, easily falling into conversation with the others around them. It was like Gon was always saying, music really did help people make connections and grow closer together.

Pokkle just couldn’t let things be as they were. He was too excited (As anyone would be) to be friends with Killua now. And not just friends with Killua, but having him sing with and for him. There was no way he couldn’t brag about it.

“Yea! Killua totally went out with us to karaoke!”

“Of course he sung for us! We’re friends now!”

“No, he’s not as stingy about it as you might think. I think if you’re nice about, he’d sing with anyone.”

“Wow, Killua sings now!”

“Yea, he’s not being selfish anymore!”

“I can’t wait to hear him sing around school finally!”

“Yea, I could never afford their concerts and it’s not the same experience than if you hear him in person!”

“Wow, Killua sings!”

By late morning that day, a good portion of the school heard about Killua’s singing last night and that it wasn’t for any other reason than just to sing. And they all wanted a piece.

-o0o0o0o0o-

Killua raised an eyebrow at the hushed murmurs that the auditorium fell into once he and Gon entered the room.

“What the heck?” Killua muttered, seeing the mass of them turning back to look at him. Gon blinked observing the same situation.

“Are they all looking at you? Why?” Gon asked.

“I didn’t do anything weird today, I don’t think. Quick, do I have something on my face?” Killua asked, pulling Gon to stand in front of him and block the views of those in their seats. Gon blinked, his view suddenly filled with the sight of Killua, and that tingly feeling spread from his chest. He was hyper aware of Killua’s hands on his forearms as he quickly scanned his beautiful friend’s face.
“Nope, you’re good. Your masquerade isn’t even gooped.” He smirked, brushing a stray hair strand from his face. Killua’s face scrunched in displeasure at being the center or seemingly unwarranted attention. He pushed past Gon to slip into their back seats.

“Alright, they’re being weird…” Killua said, as Gon sat next to him. The late bell was ringing and an older teen was walking over to them, his sights on the two. Killua raised an eyebrow in suspicion.

“What is going on?” He mumbled.

“I dunno…” Gon whispered back, but he felt his fists clenching up, feeling his overprotectiveness for Killua flare up.

“Hi… Gon, Killua.” He smiled, twiddling his fingers together. Gon looked up at him then at the rest of the auditorium who seemed to have come to a complete hush and was twisting in their seats to see what happened next. Low murmur still went through the auditorium and some turned their heads when Gon looked over as though they were trying to pretend like they weren’t paying attention to what would happen next. Gon’s eyebrows furrowed. Was this a prank?

“What is it?” Killua snapped, also feeling a bit unnerved at seeming to be left out of some sort of conversation.

“Well, I was just wondering… if it’s ok with you… in one of my classes, we have an assignment to write a song, and we could get anyone to perform it for us. I really think you could deliver it the best in my vision.” He said.

Both Gon and Killua blinked at him and the whole auditorium was so quiet you could hear a pin drop as they awaited what Killua would say next. Killua’s eyes dropped from the man’s eyes to the seat in front of him. He scoffed as he felt anger blossom across his chest, threatening to grip his limbs in its control. Then he was letting out a couple laughs from the absurdity of it all. Was he serious? Did he hear right?

The rest of the auditorium was starting to murmur with skeptical whispers and conspiracy theories while the guy stood there nervously. Gon just looked at Killua’s profile, worried for his sanity as he just laughed a bit at the guy’s question instead of answering.

“Killua, are you-?” Gon started.

“Alright, class, we’ll get started-” Kastro began, walking out from behind the stage.

“Seriously?” Killua let out in an icy voice, the auditorium sweeping to silence again from the chill in the air at Killua’s voice. He stood up slowly facing the guy then looked at everyone else in the auditorium. “Is this for real? Did you all think I’d agree to something like this? Did something happen to give you all reason of otherwise?”

“Killua-” Gon started in a whisper.

“You better double check that ‘vision’ of yours, cause I’m not singing for anybody.” He let out in an icy tone. Kastro blinked, not knowing what he just walked into. The guy stood there shocked for a moment but then his eyebrows furrowed.

“That’s not fair! Pokkle said you sing for your friends!” At the mention of his name, Killua’s piercing eyes sought him out in the crowd, like he had always knew his location, and Pokkle sunk beneath his seat out of view.

“Typical-” Killua said under his breath.
“Is it because we’re not friends? I can be your friend, I was just asking politely right now.” He insisted, the rest of the auditorium firing up in conversation again. Kurapika and Melody looked about them with concern and Kurapika put his head in his hands. This couldn’t end well.

“Hey, now…!” Gon said, standing up too. That’s not how that’s supposed to go, that’s the sort of thing Killua hates. Before Gon could say anything else, Killua was slipping past him to remove the barrier between him and the guy. Gon stepped out into the aisle with him, wanting to try and keep the situation defused.

“You think that’s all it takes for me to sing with you? I’m gonna have to be the one who wants to sing with you, stupid, I don’t even know your skill.” He said. Others stood up from their seats.

“That’s not fair! You sang for Pokkle and his friends! He said all we have to do is be friends with you!”

“Yea! I know Pokkle’s group isn’t as great as you or anything!”

“You’re just being stingy again!”

“You don’t have a standard for us to try and be your friends!”

“Guys, guys!” Gon started. They were ruining everything, they were gonna undo everything Gon’s been trying to teach Killua about liking to sing again.

“You guys want me to be your friend?” Killua scoffed. “You guys don’t want me to be your friend. You want me to sing for you. To do your stuff for you so you can pass assignments and grades. You guys want me to sing for you? Fine! I’ll sing for you.” Killua snapped, going off down the aisle towards the stage. Gon blinked, then started after him, shocked. As was much of the auditorium, they had no idea he’d actually sing for them! This was crazy! This was insane! They were actually gonna get a personal concert by Killua!

Gon caught up to Killua and fell into step with him.

“Killua, you don’t have to do this-”

“No, Gon, they keep asking and asking. Might as well give them what they want, right? Right.” Gon slowed to a stop as Killua went forward to Kastro’s music fairy and whispered something to her. She nodded and started pulling up music as Killua continued on to get on stage, Kastro already getting off to make way. Gon let out a sigh. This wasn’t going so well, Killua was regressing, he’s sure… Everyone else seemed unbothered, going to the front of the stage to get the best experience. Gon scooted into his seat in one of the rows closer to the stage, sitting down and deciding to trust Killua.

A perky intro came through the speakers as Killua took up one of the microphones up front. He checked the connection real quick with two taps then began with the song, his theatricals kicking in and he walked about with sass. He regarded the audience, so ready for a performance before him, and he let out a small laugh.

“So, you guys want me to talk some trash, ay?”

“Not even thirty second, You’re asking loads of questions. You’re killing the connection! Ooh ooh!” Killua sang, pointing out to the crowd who quieted down once he started singing. They were stunned by his voice, his live performance and hearing his voice echoing out through the speakers and around them was an experience.
“We're kissing in the limo, You pass over your demo, Try to play me like Nintendo! Ooh ooh!”
Killua sang out, flipping his hair away from his face and gave a run through his hair with his free hand, a flirty move that most girls reacted to with shouts and cries. He let his hands fly about with points and his feet stomp with rocker band charisma.

“Don't act like you don't know who I am, You just mouthed it to your friend, no question...!”
Killua sang with a biting tone, vaguely pointing at people in the crowds who barely cared he was basically ripping into them and just cheered.

“You only want to touch me 'cause I'm famous! Get your friends to tape us! Do you think that I'm that wasted, wasted? Only want to touch 'cause I'm famous! Drop my name in Vegas!
Your ticket to the A-List, save it!”
Killua tossed his head back before giving scolding looks to everyone at the foot of the stage.

“You only want to touch me cause I'm famous!”

The people in the auditorium were having a blast, people trying to record him and others closest to the stage reaching up as though to get Killu to bend over and touch them or maybe the privilege of Killua stepping on their fingers.

Gon, meanwhile, is listening to the song Killua chose and wondered who hurt him. He sang out with bitter feelings, and he’s sure Killua wouldn’t have reacted that strongly before singing if this wasn’t something personal for him he was trying to overcome. Gon was getting a better understanding of Killua. And he wanted to help him overcome this trauma.

~Na na na, nanananana, Na na na, nanananana, Na na na, nanananana, Na na na

Some people were successfully getting some videos to upload to the school’s website. Others viewing it second hand were intrigued and confused.

‘Is this happening now?’

‘Is this for real?’

‘Where are you?!’

“I see you taking pictures...”
“Uploaded them to Twitter... I'm zippin' up your zipper...”
Killua winked into the crowd, making another round of cries.

“You could've been a keeper If you weren’t such a creeper. Go look for Justin Bieber!”
Killua theatrically shook his head as though disappointed, a faux pained look on his face before shooing the crowd away with lithe, precise hand movements. “Ooh ooh!”

“Don't act like you don't know who I am, You just mouthed it to your friend, no question...!”
Killua whipped his head to one side with the microphone in one hand, the other hand tossed behind his head, the epitome of performance personality. “You only want to touch me 'cause I'm famous!” The crowd again went wild, surging forward and jumping along with the music.

“Get your friends to tape us! Do you think that I’m that wasted, wasted? Only want to touch me 'cause I'm famous!

“Drop my name in Vegas! Your ticket to the A-List! Save it! You only want to touch me cause I’m
“One more strike, waste of time— I can’t get this right, Hard to know if they really like
Me or the money…!” Killua sang, his energy a little lower as he went back to looking down
condescendingly at those cheering for his voice. The majority didn’t care, eating up the words, his
voice, his looks— at least he was looking at them. Outside, students were swarming around, running
outside of classrooms as they got the intel that Killua was actually singing during school hours and
for free right now. Skipping and running out of class to find where he was.

“I don’t care about the fame, Cause I’d give it up just for one night With somebody who really wants
me…!”

Killua had closed his eyes in the moment of singing and Gon’s skin broke out in goosebumps at the
emotion his voice held. He never really realized it, but now that Killua actually did it, Gon noticed
that Killua never sang with him or at him with emotion. He just sang.

But this… his voice rocked with emotion…

It was breathtaking.

Killua peaked his eyes open to look down at the crowd again with a snarky smirk. “Too bad you’re a
waste of time.”

The auditorium doors opened and a girl cried out to the crowds behind her, “Guys, he’s in here!”
Then the place was flooding with students who wanted a chance to hear Killua’s voice personally.
Someone let out a shrill cry as Killua sang out with renewed energy “You only want to touch me
’cause I’m famous!”

Gon gasped out at how many people forgoed class just to come and hear Killua. Gon never knew
just how lucky he was to be able to hear it and how stingy Killua’s been to everyone else about
letting them hear. But Gon had to give it to Killua to keep up his stage energy and personality even
with the unexpected surge of fans or shouts that seemed to be trying to drown out his voice.

“Get your friends to tape us! Do you think that I’m that wasted, wasted? Only want to touch me
’cause I’m famous! Drop my name in Vegas! Your ticket to that A-List! Save it! Only want to touch
me ’cause I’m famous!” People took out their phone trying to record or put on their lights to flash the
stage in color and lighting, Killua dancing around in their drags of light, making him look like a
shining star on stage.

In a classroom off in another part of school, Hisoka leaned over to his friend’s desk, his leering smile
not meaning any good. Too excited to spill some tea, he dangled his phone in front of Illumi’s face.
Illumi sneered at his view being blocked but then blinked in surprise at what he saw on the screen.
Was that his Killu? On stage? Right now? Singing?

“What is this?” Illumi asked Hisoka sharply.

“Fun~” Hisoka chuckled deeply.

“Get your friends to tape us! Do you think that I’m that wasted, wasted? Only want to touch me
cause I’m famous!” Killua sang out. The cheers sang out as he looked down at them. His hair was
roused a bit more messily than it normally was, a few of his bangs covering his eyes in a beautiful
“I’m not even famous, anyways… hahaha, yet!” Killua sneered, ultimately landing the final blow that they’re so obsessed with him and he wasn’t even the tallest standard of what impressive was.

~Na na na, nanananana, Na na na, nanananana, Na na na, nanananana, Na na na!

Killua popped the microphone onto the stand as the last of the song played out and the crowd went crazy for his angle of haughty grace in his performance. Even Kastro had to give him his applause. Who was he to bar his students from singing when that was the goal of the whole Academy? Even if it did end up hijacking his class time?

The audience cheered like it was a real performance, fanatics of Killua wanting more. Kastro stood up and projected his voice to the crowd to try and get them to calm down.

“Alright, alright! Those who do not have my class right now need to go and return to their classes and teachers! I’m sure they did not appreciate you guys ditching in the middle of it!”

Gon got up to go to Killua, meeting him on his way down the steps. However, Killua was glaring off into the crowd. When Gon looked, he saw it was Pokkle who he was glaring at, but Pokkle looked to be getting an earful from Kurapika already and was sheepishly rubbing his arm.

“Killua…!” Gon cried out, trying to be heard over the crowds’ cheering.

“Hey, hey! Hold it! Listen to me!” Kastro yelled as he tried to keep students back. They were pushing forward towards Killua, multiple with papers in their hands for autographs and phones for pictures. Gon gasped at the scene, now he knew what Illumi saw that first day of school inside the circle of rabid fans coming at him.

“Stop! Stop it!” Kastro said, barely keeping the throng of students back like an underpaid bodyguard. Killua stumbled back into Gon as another surge had Kastro bumping into the teen. Kastro turned to them, his head over his shoulder.

“Gon, go, get Killua out of here. I have to calm them down.” Kastro instructed, gritting his teeth with the effort at trying not to let the crowd overwhelm them. Killua opened his mouth to say something but Kastro didn’t have to tell Gon twice. He grabbed Killua’s upper arm and booked it up the aisle of the auditorium, Killua stumbling to keep upright and behind him at Gon’s pace.

“Gon, calm down!” Killua cried. “Slow down!”

Gon looked behind him but only saw the audience ready to form a mob, mow Kastro over and follow them in some sort of Beatles-esque chase scene. Gon wasn’t having that. He stopped suddenly and dropped down to a crouch, Killua stumbling over Gon in surprise. But then Gon stood back up, catching Killua in his midsection, having him over his shoulder.

“Ooof! Gon! What the hell?!” Killua wheezed but Gon didn’t reply, he just turned on his heels and booked it out of there, smoke in his wake. By the time the crowd finally slipped away from Kastro and got out to the hall, there was no hints of Gon or which way they went anywhere.

-o0o0o0-

“Gon, you are way too dramatic…” Killua said as Gon finally put him down, huffing and puffing, at their usual table outside the lunchroom.

“What? Didn’t you see the way they were gonna mob you?” Gon asked, his cheeks slightly flushed
from how hard he ran.

“Well, yea, Gon, that’s how fans are. That’s why celebrities and stars have body guards, and why we learn self defense. But they wouldn’t have trampled me or whatever it was you were thinking.” Killua said, following Gon as they sat at the stone table.

“Could have fooled me, I was really worried about you. I had no idea so many people would have come to see you… they must be as amazed by your voice as I am.” Gon said with sincerity, holding Killua’s gaze. His face turned red and he turned away, his eyes closed in bashfulness.

“Stupid! They’re not amazed at my voice like you are… they just want to use me like usual. Pokkle had to run his mouth like I done changed my mind about how I use my voice and they prey on the first chance they can to use it for their benefit!” Killua ranted, crossing his arms. Gon’s eyes took on a hard edge as he remembered the performance.

“Killua.” Gon said to get his attention. Killua looked over at him with a raised eyebrow. “The song you sang… Did it hold truth in what you experienced?” Gon asked.

“Uh, yea, didn’t you hear what I was just saying? They only ever want me for what I can get them, not for me-”

“No, Killua, you-…” Gon looked off as he tried to think of how to say this. “How did you learn that? That they would only ever want you for your voice?”

“Oh, well…” Killua started. “Illumi told me… before I came here for my first year. ‘Don’t sing for anybody, they’ll only want to use your voice. Once you give them what you want, they’ll leave you without a second look behind. To use you as a stepping stone and leave without helping you up too.’” Killua said and Gon felt something in him relax and he breathed a bit easier.

“I see-”

“But of course I didn’t listen. It was my first time in public school, and what could my brother know, y’kno?” Killua said, his eyes seeming to gaze over. Gon felt his breath catch again as he listened to Killua.

“I went out fully prepared to try and live normally… make some friends, you know? I made a couple. One of them, she was probably my only true friend…” He murmured. “And there was this one guy. Made me feel really special. And I did what I could to help him.” Gon gave his full attention to Killua even if Killua was staring far off at an unforeseen object.

“Heh… I should have listened to Illumi. I didn’t know better, but I thought I did. He didn’t do anything for me, just careless words and promises. He didn’t care about me…” Killua’s glazed-over look as he talked about his experience made it seem like he wasn’t even talking to Gon anymore. But Gon wasn’t about to let his presence be known. It might make Killua shut him out again, and if this was how he was going to get more background on Killua, he would be quiet and just listen. Like Killua did for him. Gon wasn’t expecting Killua to start singing again, softly, under his breath. Beautifully sad.

“I remember years ago… Someone told me I should take… Caution when it comes to love, I did… I did. And you were strong and I was not… My illusion, my mistake, I was careless, I forgot, I did…”

Gon’s eyes widened as he realize… He dated this guy!

“When all is done, there is nothing to say… You have gone and so effortlessly… You have won, you can go ahead tell them…Tell them all I know now, Shout it from the roof tops, Write it on the sky
line, All we had is gone now. Tell them I was happy, And my heart is broken, All my scars are open, Tell them what I hoped would be impossible… Impossible… Impossible… Impossible…” Killua finished with his eyes closed and Gon could feel his heart hurt with how heavy Killua’s singing was laced with emotion. And again, it was about some past hurt, and, Gon knew, lover.

Gon felt angry, and secondhand hurt, then protective and possessive of Killua again. He took Killua’s hands, finally snapping Killua out of his revere and Killua locked eyes with Gon’s.

“Killua. Those people that hurt you and used you… They’re long gone and out of your life now. You have me now, and I promise you…” Gon looked down at a loss for words, not knowing how to make those words mean more to someone who’s probably heard it too many times. “I swear on my life, Killua, that I’ll never, ever make you feel like that. I’ll never let you regret any moment with me, and I’ll do everything in my power to make music worth singing for you again. I’ll help you forget you ever knew those people in the past. You can trust me, ok? I’ll always be here for you.” Gon said, trying his best to put all his earnestness and honesty behind those words, going up and cupping Killua’s face. Killua looked back at Gon with wide eyes, eyes as blue and expanse as the ocean, and so open and vulnerable and Gon will make sure to never make Killua regret being this vulnerable with him. He’d never want to betray his trust. He was so beautiful, he didn’t know who’d ever hurt him, and the thought made him mad. He’d just lean forward and kiss him if he knew that wouldn’t prompt a horrible reaction out of Killua. He just hoped Killua would believe him.

Killua’s eyes softened, almost looking purple in the soft sunlight, as a small smile broke out on his face.

“Gon…” He breathed out in a small laugh that made Gon’s chest squeeze. “You idiot. You think I don’t know that? You never told me in words like this, but you show it everyday with everything you do for me. I know you wouldn’t try to hurt me… this wasn’t your intention when you invited me to Karaoke. You’re just trying to help. But thank you…” Killua said, leaning his head into Gon’s hand, and Gon had to physically stop himself from pulling Killua in to his embrace. Because if he got Killua that close, then he’d be close enough to kiss. And Gon didn’t know if he would have enough self control at that distance to stop himself from doing it.

Luckily (or unluckily) for him, Killua moved himself from Gon’s hold soon enough and stood up.

“That’s enough about me and my sob story. Let’s do some training while we’re out here.” Killua said. Gon smiled widely and stood up as well.

“Right!”

-o0o0o0o0o0o-

Gon swallowed as he stepped to the front of the room for Palm. So many people have gone before and only done about moderately well. No one’s really gotten them all right. He was able to see the way Palm was administering the test- it was a mix of playing a key on the piano then reporting which note it was and pointing out a note on the scale then singing what sound it makes.

Killua was already exempted from the test, but Gon would have felt a bit better taking it with him. Palm smiled encouragingly at him as Gon stepped up.

“Are you ready?” Palm asked.

“Yes!” Gon piped, trying not to sound as nervous as he felt.

“Alright, lets see how much you improved.” She said giving an eye to Killua. Killua closed his eyes
in an attempt not to roll them.

“Right.”

She positioned her hands over the keys.

=End Chapter 7=

Chapter End Notes

Honorable Mentions:
Crush- David archuleta (Scene of Death of a Bachelor); Also Cannonball from Home OST Kiesza; Also Weak by SWV
Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger- Daft Punk (Running Scene)
Yum Yum- 7 Go up [Produce 101] for the Candy Candy song Killua was singing
Uptown Funk- Bruno Mars (More Karaoke singing) [suggested by Ao3 commenter @asyaforni]

The Umbrella singing scene was an idea inspired by another story I read from the Powerpuff girls Fanfiction called 'More than Human,' I love that story, so I wanted to try to get a scene from it!

New Tag unlocked: Pining Gon!

I hope you all enjoyed, if you have any song suggestions for Gon's concert to sing to his school, I will take some at this time until next chapter! Thanks for reading!

=EDIT= (11/17/2017)
I added new honorable mentions!
Dedicated to my precious baby cousin who turns 3 today. Happy Birthday DJ Malachi Green!

Whoo I’m back with fluff, and crap, and nonsence, and you guys are gonna read it because I tricked you to come into my story using good writing and editing that’s never gonna happen again lol. I’m so sorry, I’m just as dissatisfied with half my writing as probably most of you are. At most, for almost all my chapters, I like 30% of it… BUT I’M GOING TO FINISH IT BECAUSE I SAID I WOULD AND I’LL FOLLOW THROUGH WITH WHAT I STARTED!
I had the GIANT FANTASTIC HONOR of this story being published on my baby cousin’s birthday, he turns three, so I’m dedicating this chapter to him. HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DJ!
Hope you enjoy.

Featured Music:
Pon Pon Pon- Vocaloids
Hold my Hand- Jess Glynne *** (You all should try to find some way to get super special headphones to listen to this song, because it sounds like a dream when you hear everything. I’ve only ever heard it once in all it’s glory and I’ve never been satisfied since.) [Suggested by AO3 commenter @James. Even though this was already in the plan, you have great taste in music]
Shine- Salvador
Hold on Forever- RobThomas
If I Ain’t Got You- Alicia Keys
On Top Of The World- Imagine Dragons
Sing (My Chemical Romance)
Play my Music- Jonas Brothers
Something Big- Shawn Mendes [recommended by Ao3 commenter @anotherguestbleh]
Yesterday- Imagine dragons

See the end of the chapter for more notes


Zoldyck Family
The Zoldyck family is an elite family of high class musicians. Silva met Kikyo in Italy during an Opera concert in which they were both the leads at age 20. Zeno moved his son, Silva, and his new Fiancé, Kikyo, to America where they dominated the Opera World. They had their first 3 children during which they were still performing, but when Zeno died soon after Killua’s birth, they retired and focused on making their children World Star celebrities. Silva also opened the Zoldyck Record company label.

Everyone of the children who have gone through the Zoldcyk training has a specialty they decided to don and also another quirk they picked up through Training.

Illumi’s specialty is pop and locking hip hop dancing, Guitar, and he also likes teaching others how inferior they are.

Milluki’s specialty is composition (instrumental and EDM), Piano, and he also likes beat boxing with his mouth.

Killua's specialty is unknown/undetermined by his parents (although he likes harmony), drums, and he is also able to imitate voices almost perfectly and can also throw his voice.

The other 2 siblings have yet to go through training. The Mother is the one who takes care of the home while the Father mostly takes charge of the label.

Chapter 8: Window to Music

“Wow, I can’t believe how easy that test was!” Gon cheered. “I thought it would be harder. It was getting so easy I was worried I was getting it wrong!” He practically skipped down the hall and around Killua. Killua just watched with a proud smile.

“That’s right, that’s because of the studying we did. Now we just need to get the rest of the scale down so you can have that kind of ease with all notes. These are the basics that are gonna help you songwright. You can hum out a tune and know the notes just from the sound you just sang to write it down.” Killua explained.

“Wow, right! Thanks Killua!” Gon said, feeling pumped. He felt more confident than ever about the end of this year and the concert. This’ll be a breeze. “What are we doing now? Training, right? Where we going?” Gon asked, excitable as a puppy. Killua reached out and gripped the back of his shirt as to stop him from bouncing anymore.

“Calm down… Now, I didn’t want to bring you to my house so early but… it’s honestly the only training place I can get us on short notice. And it’s free, so-”

“Wow! I get to go to Killua’ house?! That’s amazing! I’m super excited-!” Gon said trying to bounce again, and bouncing Killua with him in the process.

“Woa- Yo! Gon!” Killua cried, and yanked hard on his shirt. Gon let out a choking noise as it pulled against his throat and finally stopped bouncing as he chuckled out sheepishly.

“Hee hee, sorry, Killua.” Gon hummed.

“Ok, geez. Listen, there are a few rules for going to my place.” Killua said. “No exploring, at all. You follow me, and where we go is the only place you can be. It’s not even ok to go or be there if I’m not there. Don’t think, ‘oh, I can go to the dance room because I’ve already been there with Killua, I don’t need him to lead the way-’ no! I have to take you there.” Killua explained. Gon’s eyebrows furrowed.

“Do I really sound like that?” He asked in all seriousness and Killua couldn’t help but laugh at what Gon decided to focus on in that sentence.
“Yes. Anyways, if you see any family member, just put your head down and keep walking, don’t make eye contact. You’ll be with me so they’ll know you’re my guest and shouldn’t bother you. But these people are famous and will act entitled.” Killua explained.

“Like you did when I first met you?” Gon asked, a small teasing note in his voice. Killua rolled his eyes.

“Yes, like I was. That’s why I know. My family is anyone not wearing a suit. You don’t have to worry about eye contact with those in suits, they’ll be avoiding your eye contact in the first place.”

Gon pouted. This didn’t really sound like a warm and welcoming place to grow up in. No wonder Killua regarded music as coldly and calculated as he did.

“Ok. Anything else?” Gon asked. Killua scrunched his nose up and then sighed.

“Just… if you encounter a situation where I didn’t explain or it can’t be solved with ‘pretend to be dead,’ just don’t do anything that will cause whoever you upset to want to destroy your music career. Because as the Zoldycks… they can do it.” Killua said in all seriousness. Gon nodded.

“Got it!... I’m going to your house!!!” Gon squealed excited and began hopping again. Killua laughed.

“Geez, if you’re gonna be like this then let’s run there to get some of your energy down. We’re singing Homemade Dynamite by Lorde. Go.” Killua said taking the lead and running ahead of Gon. Gon just smiled wider.

“Yes sir!” He cried before he launching into song as he followed Killua in a jog to his home. Killua was so surprised to hear Gon singing so happily behind him, with much emotion and feeling. Killua thought he was at another one of Gon’s performances, it had him running with a skip to his step. Wow, Gon sure can sweep anyone into his fever with just his own rhythm.

-o0o0o0o0o0-

Gon gasped up at the large house behind a large and extensive gate, still trying to catch his breath from running there. This place was huge! This was like the stereotypical house Gon thinks of when he thinks of classic hollywood actors home. Going into the gate, there was even a fountain with a circle driveway, and marble steps up to the dark victorian house.

“Killua, you’re place is amazing!” Gon said. Killua felt his chest swell up with uncalled for pride at making Gon impressed.

“It’s not much. It’s technically not even my house.” Killua said aloofly and cool as he tried to keep the smile off his face.

“You’re so cool, Killua!” Gon gushed following him up the steps. Killua opened the door a bit, peaking in first. Gon didn’t like that, that didn’t exactly scream ‘I liked growing up here.’ The fact that Killua felt like he needed to be cautious and sneak around his own house didn’t leave a good feeling swimming in Gon’s stomach.

“Ok, this way.” He said opening up the door to let them both in. It was actually a lot darker in there than Gon thought, he had to blink a few times to get used to the new light levels. The hall stretched forward a good bit, both sides of the hallway lined with doors alternating sides, 4 rooms in just this first hall.

“Wah, what’s in all these rooms?” Gon asked as he followed closely behind Killua. Walking in, Gon
didn’t have a good feeling. It felt ominous and scary, like a haunted house and a jump scare was around the corner.

“This one,” Killua said, pointing to the first door they were passing on their left, “is the closet. It’s normally always closed until winter, it holds our heavier jackets and umbrellas and rainboots. This one.” He said, pointing to the one coming up on the right, “This is the recording practice room. It has the mics set up and the sound room adjacent from it, but it’s smaller than our official sound and recording booth at Zoldyck Records. It’s normally used for drills, practice, and sound checks.” He pointed at the next room at the left.

“This one is a warm up vocal room. You know the set up in the back of all the classrooms with the bean bags and music based books? Yea, it’s basically that but a whole room dedicated to it. We usually just use it as a rec room though.” Killua explained. Gon couldn’t stop his jaw from hanging. So many rooms! Such different functions! They were so fancy and cool. And Gon couldn’t help but notice that Killua explained each room with a small soft smile. That didn’t seem so bad. He must have some good memories associated with this place.

“That’s amazing Killua! You’re amazing!” Gon said.

“What? I didn’t even do anything!” He protested going up the grand stairs in the main room after passing all those doors. Gon could see there were more rooms in hallways to the left and right and behind the stairs.

“Yea, but you get to do all this and have all this professional experience. I bet you would know what everything is in a professional booth.” Gon said. Killua kept forward as they got to the second floor which was darker than the first because of the deep red rolled out carpet in the middle of the wood hallway. It was also lined with doors on either side and small lamps mounted between doors. Gon could hear faint music from behind the doors, filling the air and keeping the atmosphere from being completely quiet.

“Of course I would know… we have our record company, and it’s not like I’ve never been there.” Killua said.

“Really?! Do you guys produce anyone I would know?” Gon asked, skipping to Killua’s side.

“Mmh… you know Chrollo?” Killua asked and Gon lit up.

“No way! That’s crazy, he’s super famous! But he kinda has a bad rep?” Gon hummed.

“Dad’s working on it.” Killua sighed. He opened a door two doors away from the stairs and to the left, the music more prominently spilling out into the hall.

“Wah!” Gon said turning his head left and right to take in Killua’s room quickly. His bed was centered on the very right wall, pillows upon pillows piled up on it, a small drawer to the right of the headboard, closest to the window. It had a lamp, an electric clock, and a small percussion cajon on top. Across from his bed was a bookshelf and a rug with bean bags on top, a cozy corner. He had a closet to the left of his bed, and a larger dresser on the wall to the right of the door. There was a large desk with school supplies on it the left of the door, a small lamp, dividers and organizers, a cup of writing utensils and paper on the top. His window right across from the door was a huge bay window with baby blue curtains letting in soft blue hued light. It looked amazing! And clean.

Then Gon heard the music, a bubbling pop sound seeming to come from the air itself, and Gon stilled to listen to the words.
Gon lit up as he heard the Japanese song but then Killua was diving for the wall to their right. Gon noticed the intercom looking device on the wall just as Killua was smacking it until the song stopped. His face was beet red as he stiffly turned back to Gon.

“Never speak of it.” He grounded out, and Gon put his hands up placatingly. Killua turned and put his bookbag at his desk and Gon followed suite by placing his bookbag on the ground by Killua’s desk.

“You know, it’s fine to like J-pop--”

“GON!” Killua cried out, his voice a few pitches higher. “I said don’t!” He said sharply, but the intimidation was cut in half by his red face. Gon laughed heartily and Killua found his heart rate picking up.

“Whatever, it’s nothing, it’s just a song I had sung on my vocaloid cover album…” Killua huffed, crossing his arms. “It’s not like I like it.” He insisted when Gon gave him a knowing look.

“C’mon, it’s ok to like it!” Gon said hopping over and shaking Killua’s arms to get him to uncross his arms. Killua rolled his eyes.

“I don’t though!” Killua said. Gon let out a few disbelieving chuckles but knew Killua was just too prideful to admit it. He already confessed to Gon he loved Japan, loving it’s pop music wasn’t completely out there! Then Gon lit up as he remembered something.

“OH! KILLUA!” Gon shouted way too loud from his excitement and Killua cringed away.

“What?” He laughed, sticking a pinky in his ear to tease Gon about his volume.

“Sorry- um, I watched your Zoldyck concert that’s at the school and-”

“You what?” He asked surprised.

“What? Did you not want me to?” Gon asked with a pout.

“Well… it’s more like ‘why’? Those weren’t the best…” He rubbed the back of his neck.
“Because… because I thought it’d help me get to know you better and I-”

“Always want to get closer, I know… Ok, what were you saying?” He asked, but he had a knowing look in his eye as he figured what Gon was going to ask about.

“Well… in the one song where you were singing in Japanese, you were wearing cat ears and looking all cute and stuff.”

“Uh-huh, ok, so I’ll just preemptively answer your question. That was one of my alter egos for stage personalities. But it’s ok, because I only had to do that the one time. Because I was younger, I did cuter stuff. As I get older, my parents will start letting me develop a sexier alter ego for stage.” Killua said with an eyebrow wiggle. Gon beamed, the thought getting him excited.

“Wow, that’s amazing Killua… I want an alter ego.” Gon said slightly to himself.

“You don’t have to, most celebrities don’t. With your type of performance, it’s actually better if you don’t. Most people have alter egos if they need to shake up their image to rekindle their popularity, to try a different genre they normally wouldn’t, or to add a change in pace in an album that’s all their usual identity. You have such a performance personality that you can do any kind of music or performance anyway, and your fans and, potentially your label company, wouldn’t mind.” Killua said. Gon nodded, listening intently. Wow, Killua sure knew alot…

“So why do you have one?” Gon asked.

“I don’t really know…” Killua huffed. “I think my parents are generally just trying to find something that’ll best fit me. So they’re trying everything. But eventually I’ll just portray the image of adaptability into any kind of music instead of having my own brand. It gets me kind of angry because then I can’t develop my own, but that’s the rigidness of having a label… you have to do what they ask…” Killua said with a sort of wistful defeat in his eyes although he was smiling. He looked so beautifully sad, and Gon’s heart ached. It was amazing to him how easily Killua could get people to get swept up in emotions and feelings… but he doesn’t do it in his music and singing often. He supposed that had something to do with his upbringing, but Gon was on his way to fixing that already… His label can’t control everything for him.

“What’s your label anyway?” Gon asked.

“Oh. All of Zoldycks automatically get signed under the Zoldyck Record company.” Killua said, seeming to snap out of it a bit.

“Wow… you guys are kinda set for life, huh?” Gon asked. Killua snorted with a short nod.

“Anyway, stop distracting me, let’s get to work-”

“Wait! You were the one that distracted me! I never got to ask my question!” Gon said, grabbing Killua’s arm and stopping him in his momentum to move away. Killua raised an eyebrow at him.

“What? You weren’t going to ask what that was about? An explanation?” He asked.

“No! I wanted to know if you still had it! The kitty headphones.” Gon asked. Killua blushed and his eyes flicked to the large dresser behind Gon. Gon turned around, startling Killua, and ran over to it.

“W-w-whoa! Wait, Gon!” Killua cried out as he caught on a little too late and Gon began digging through his drawers. Gon’s eyes lit up as he saw the stark white plastic things before Killua pushed him to the side and shut the drawers. “Yes! I still have it, geez…” He admitted with a red face.
“Can I see you wear it, pleease? Just once in front of me?” Gon pleaded, pulling out his puppy dog eyes saved for begging, and clasping his hands together to ask earnestly. Killua’s eyes widened in surprise at Gon’s insistence, his face heating up at the cute begging being done in front of him.

“Wh-I-Gon, you- would you just-!” Killua stammered as his brain failed to restart in the face of Gon’s cute attack. “Ok! Geez!”

“Yay!” Gon cheered. “What’s your alter ego’s name anyway? I know you were telling Melody about it when she developed her alter ego of Senritsu.” Gon said, tilting his head as Killua turned around to fish out the headphones.

“I don’t think I have one…” He muttered, his ears visibly red from behind, and some of it creeping down his neck.

“Wah?! I’ll make one. Killua-kun!” Gon gushed. Killua’s ears and neck was definitely red now.

“Gon, can you try to be a little less embarrassing right now? I might die.” He said. Gon laughed and sat down, waiting for the show.

“Ok, Ok, I’ve calmed down.” He assured, but in reality, he was just holding his breath to keep any more comments from coming out unwillingly. Gon saw him duck his head to put on the headphones and he shifted his hands for something else. Then he turned around with the cute blocky cat headphones on and colorful long sleeve fingerless arm warmers.

“Nyyaaaa~” He purred out with his best performance catty smile. Gon blinked once and twice, because he’s pretty sure his heart stopped at the adorable display in front of him. Someone should have told him direct exposure to this image would result in death. Killua was starting to blush again and shifted self consciously.

“G-Gon, say someth-”

“WAAAH KILLUA YOU’RE SO CUUUUTTTEE!” Gon shouted, jumping up and enveloping Killua in a bear hug, his feet coming off the ground and shook him left to right.

“Gon, woa, careful, hey!” Killua’s protest came out as Gon nuzzled into the crook of Killua’s neck. Killua felt his breath catch in his throat and a thrill ran up and down his spine before settling hot and heavy in the pit of his stomach as Gon’s nose grazed against his neck at a certain angle.

“G-Gon! Get off!” Killua cried out, his voice high pitched again, wrenching one arm from Gon’s death grip to slap it against the side of Gon’s face and push, his face burning red.

“Moooaaahh! Killua, don’t push!” Gon whined for a moment, his words slightly distorted from Killua pushing against his cheek, before letting go and they both got space between them again. Killua took off his headphones in a hurry, making his messy hair a little more unkempt in the process. He took a deep breath, trying to get his beating heart to slow down a bit.

Geez… what was that… He asked himself as if he would get an answer. He shook his head out a bit as he put the headphones away.

“Sorry Killua…” Gon mumbled behind him, scuffing his shoes against the ground guiltily. He messed up… he was too forward and probably scared Killua… he has to remember to be more patient with him. Killua turned around with a raised eyebrow, then saw how guilty Gon looked. He huffed out and went over to him.

“Gon, it’s fine, don’t even worry about it.” He said, waving a hand dismissively between them.
“Let’s just start the training now, ok?” He asked. Gon lit up at Killua reassuring him he didn’t completely scare him. Killua was even the one to approach him.

“Ok!”

“Ok, first things first, in the days you’ve been listening to a butt load of music, have you figured anything that you liked in the music? A set of bars? A genre?”

“Oh! Oh! I do! There was this song I really liked for its electronics…” Gon said as he pulled out his phone. Killua moved to sit on his bed, cross legged, and motioned for Gon to do the same while he pulled it up. Gon did, deciding to just sit at the edge.

“Here!” Gon found, pulling one of the headphone buds he keeps hanging around his neck when he’s not listening to music to give to Killua. Killua inspected the bud, frowning at the unrecognizable brand. He stuck it in his ears as the music started to play, the electronics impressive and twinkling, and even before the words came through the speakers, Killua recognized the song as Hourglass by Zedd. It was a really good song and choice, it showed Gon’s good taste in music. But Killua’s nose stilled scrunched in displeasure.

“Gon… how could you listen to music on these? You can’t hear anything.” He scolded. Gon blinked.

“Wh-what…? I-I can turn the volume up, if you need me to…” Gon said, looking down at his phone.

“No, I mean… sure it delivers the music, but you can’t hear any details, or make out the better subtle parts of songs that artists put in to elevate the music experience. It doesn't even matter if these aren’t noise cancelling, they need to be better quality headphones. Your next assignment is to buy better headphones.” Killua said. Gon frowned and looked back down at his phone. He supposed Killua’s right, and he already said he’d listen to all instructions Killua gave as to have a better chance of winning the Showcase… But these were the cheapest ones he could buy and he doesn’t have the money to buy better quality headphones… Well, Killua doesn’t need to know that. He’ll deal with it later.

“Well, what kind of quality should I be looking for?” He asked. Killua looked up in thought then back at Gon.

“I’ll let you listen to my headphones. They’re top grade, so you’ll know what sounds to listen to when you look for yours.” He said, pulling his silver cat headphones off his shoulders. Gon got excited, he gets to wear Killua’s headphones!

“Where did you get yours?” Gon asked, as he carefully took it from Killua’s hands.

“Oh, my brother made it for me… he made it back when I first started my music training so I have an easier time listening to music and using it whenever. It lightweight so it’s not a burden, waterproof, wireless, and noise cancelling for focus.” Killua explained. Gon’s jaw dropped as he put it on. That’s amazing. Killua pulled out his phone connected with bluetooth to bring up a song.

“Ah, this one’s a good one.” Killua said as he pressed his song. Gon furrowed his eyebrows in focus to listen well. He was startled when the music came on, piano keys, and Gon turned around to take survey of the room. He looked back at Killua who was looking on with an amused smile.

“That’s amazing Killua! It sounds like it’s right here in your room!” Gon said loudly, not able to head himself in order to control the volume of his voice. Killua snicked, resting his head on the palm
of his hand to continue to watch Gon in amusement.

~ Standing in a crowded room and I can't see your face

Gon jumped and had to look around again when the drums and other instruments joined in. It sounded so realistic, and cool, and the bass felt like it was thrumming through his whole body.

~Put your arms around me, tell me everything's OK

“Wah, Killua, these sound amazing!” Gon shouted again, the words crystal clear like he’s in the booth to hear her sing, like he’s getting a private performance. And they were so light, it was like the music was being delivered straight to his mind from the air and not from these wireless headphones.

~In my mind, I'm running round a cold and empty space

Just put your arms around me, tell me everything’s OK

Gon hopped a bit in his excitement and looked up at Killua who was watching on fondly. “Can I keep these?!” He asked, pointing at his head. Killua’s face never fell so fast. He snapped his hands out and snatched the headphones off Gon’s head from the headband, a glare on his face, breaking Gon from the heavenly sound.

“W-wh-!” Gon stuttered.

“No!” Killua snapped, putting them on the side of his bed.

“Wait, Killua, don’t be mad! I was just kidding!” Gon tried, chuckling nervously.

“Let’s get to training.” Killua said, getting up from the bed. Gon blinked after him before scrambling after him.

“I said I was kidding!”

~Break my bones but you won't see me fall, oh

The rising tide will rise against them all, oh

The training ensued without much problem and it mostly took place in Killua’s room. Killua focused on note recognition and pitch changes with sharps and flats. Gon needed to hit the note without having to find it by oscillating the notes closest to the target. With Killua’s perfect pitch, he was cringing and covering his ears whenever Gon didn’t sing the sharps or flats correctly.

Killua had Gon doing scales a lot, but it was more complicated with sharps and flats included besides the normal do re mi.

~Darling, hold my hand

Oh, won't you hold my hand?

Cause I don't wanna walk on my own anymore

Won't you understand?

Cause I don't wanna walk alone

I'm ready for this, there's no denying
I'm ready for this, you stop me falling

I'm ready for this, I need you all in

I'm ready for this, so darling hold my hand

Killua would sing notes, and Gon would have to guess what it was. Killua corrected and taught him more in depth whenever Gon got it wrong. Gon was always frustrated when he didn’t get it right, he needed this to come to him faster, he needed to get better quicker, and he always welcomed Killua’s critique. He was just happy he was doing it with Killua in the first place, so he’ll do his best to make sure Killua didn’t find fault with him and deem him untrainable. Killua made him sing the scales up and down continuously until he could add in 5 sharps or flats in a single octave. Killua was starting to wonder if Gon could do it when, even after 5 minutes, Gon was still frustratingly singing up and down the scales, tentatively singing half hearted sharps and flats. Killua shook his head because they weren’t bad, they just needed more confidence and volume and to be sung consecutively.

~Soul is like a melting pot when you're not next to me

Tell me that you've got me and you're never gonna leave

Tryna find a moment where I can find release

Please tell me that you've got me and you're never gonna leave

Killua had Gon practicing his singing position standing and sitting, falling out of it and going back into it correctly. Killua played music to have Gon try to keep time, he had Gon sing with a song, turn the accompaniment off while Gon continued singing and then turned it on later in the song only to hear Gon sang too quickly. Killua shook his head and they start again. Gon was determined to try as many times as it took to get it right. With the time crunch, drilling was the only way this would work. Gon wouldn’t give up.

~Break my bones but you won't see me fall, oh

The rising tide will rise against them all, oh

Killua sang a note and was pleasantly surprised when Gon got it right. Gon didn’t seem to notice, just focused and prepared for the next note. Killua sang 5 more notes and Gon reported the correct notes on those too. Killua finally just tackled Gon in a proud hug, snapping Gon out of it before he celebrated too. Gon did good! He was finally making Killua proud and showing some progress for their hours of work.

~Darling, hold my hand

Oh won't you hold my hand?

Cause I don't wanna walk on my own anymore

Won't you understand?

Cause I don't wanna walk alone

I'm ready for this, there's no denying

I'm ready for this, you stop me falling

I'm ready for this, I need you all in
I'm ready for this, so darling, hold my hand

Killua listened intently to Gon as Gon sang a song with a lot of sharps and flats. His eyebrows twitched and his face scrunched when Gon still had to search a bit to hit the proper note that didn’t grate his senses, but it was getting better. He just needed some more tightening up and drilling and he would be singing notes on key without having to search. Gon was also getting better at singing the scales. Killua ears piqued when he heard Gon inserting the sharps and flats he knew in the scale consecutively, 5 of them. When Gon turned and faced him expectantly waiting for his approval, Killua couldn’t help giving in and hugging him and giving him head pats while telling him how great he did.

~Don’t wanna know

That feeling when I’m all alone

So please don’t make me wait, cause I don’t wanna break

And I don’t wanna fall

Killua killed the music Gon was singing with, keeping his sharp electrifying eyes on him as Gon continued his song, trying to keep beat in his head. Killua waited until Gon reached the chorus then turned the music on. Killua already knew, but enjoyed seeing the look on Gon’s face as he realized he kept on time with the music. He smiles brilliantly at Killua and begins singing with more carefree nature instead of the intense focus he had to stay on time, and Killua couldn’t help it, he began singing with Gon too and silly dancing ensued. Gon was improving, and Gon was happy all over again that Killua finally decided to be his coach and Gon didn’t have to deal with this all alone.

~When you’re next to me

Can tell I’m not afraid to be

That you don’t make me wait, and never let me break

You never let me fall

Gon was able to sing the scales up and down, including the sharps and flats right on key. When Killua sang a note or asked for him to sing one, Gon was able to sing it out confidently, and it was right. Then Gon was able to sing a challenging part of a song with a lot of sharps and flats as well as the original singer did without having to search the notes. And without musical accompaniment.

~Darling, hold my hand

Oh, won’t you hold my hand?

Cause I don’t wanna walk on my own anymore

Won’t you understand?

Cause I don’t wanna walk alone

I’m ready for this, there’s no denying

I’m ready for this, you stop me falling

I’m ready for this, I need you all in
"You did great, Gon." Killua smiled as he walked him down the stairs and to the main hall. The sun was already nearly below the horizon, most of the sky outside a deep purple and a light orange where the sun was setting. With how dark it was outside, the interior of Killua’s moody house finally looked well lit. Gon smiled happily at Killua, he made Killua so proud today!

"Thanks Killua!"

"Ok, so I can see we still have plenty to do. You may have the sounds of the sharps and flats in your head now, but most likely when tomorrow comes, you won’t be able to hit them as precisely. The only way to fix that is more drilling so that soon it becomes second nature to know not only the main scale, but their secondary sounds." Killua said. Gon nodded taking in all the information as Killua spoke. He was so smart... he’ll definitely go home and practice to make sure he picks it up faster.

"Do not go home and practice continuously." Killua said as though he read his mind and Gon blinked, shocked.

"Wha- how-?" He stammered.

"I saw it on your face, you wanted to try and practice on your own. But you shouldn’t continue to put too much strain on your voice, it’ll ruin it. You need to go home and make lemon tea with honey and do not sing for the rest of the night. Try not to sing at all until you come back here. I’m putting enough strain on your voice as it is with this practice without you going off and adding more, ok?" He asked, his voice getting softer with concern at the end. Gon lit up. He always felt like he was on top of the world when Killua showed him concern or any type of affection and favoritism. How could Gon not do what Killua asked?

"Alright, Killua." Gon moved out the door into the darkening evening.

"If you really want to, then put on the scales on your headphones and listen to those to internalize the sounds you need to remember." Killua said, leaning against the door frame. Gon nodded.

"Good idea, alright." Gon said, moving to the small descending steps of the house.

“One more thing.” Killua said with some amusement in his voice. Gon turned around with a raised eyebrow. “Ask your aunt if you can pack a bag to sleepover tomorrow.”

Killua got the reaction he expected, Gon’s eyes widening but not as wide as his smile before he pumped his fist in the air and let out a shout of joy.

“Wow, I get to sleepover Killua’s place now!” He cheered. Everything was going to plan, they were only going to grow closer. Soon they’ll have drawers at each other’s place and then they’ll be dating- - Too fast, Freecs, slow down. Be patient.

“Ok, I’ll ask, but I’m sure she’ll let me. Ok, I’ll see you tomorrow, Killua!” Gon cried, running off down their front yard.

“Come after breakfast! I’m not gonna feed you!” Killua laughed.

“Whoo!” Gon just shouted in reply. He slipped out the gate and Killua shook his head, always amused to what Gon would do next. He’s definitely interesting.

Gon had always caught his interest, even from the first moment he stepped foot on Academy
property. He just never thought he’d be anything more than a mild amusement until the newbie crushers got to him.

Now Gon is… his best friend. Killua couldn’t help the wide grin that came with his overwhelming joy. He never thought he’d get one with his crazy family, but Gon doesn’t seem to care about how crazy his life gets. This really was amazing.

He pulled out his phone and texted Gon, ‘Text me when you get home safely’ And before he went to bed, he got Gon’s text back.

‘Im home safe, thanks ;)’

He tried not to think about how Gon probably sent the wink as a typo.

Gon was excited as he plopped up the long Zoldyck entryway, his packed duffle bag clopping against his back. They had all day today to get more work done. Even now he was listening to the scales Killua suggested, and even though he hasn’t tried to sing them, he’s pretty sure he could do just as well as yesterday.

Gon looked up into the sky for the position of the sun, and it was just a little after 11 am. Perfect, Killua should be done with breakfast too, but just in case…

He stopped in front of the door and texted Killua that he was outside, waiting patiently.

Soon, the door opened, and Gon got a brief rush of apprehension hoping that this was Killua answering the door and not one of his family members that could ruin the day with questions and hostility. But then Killua’s perfect crown of white curls popped out looking left then right and spotting Gon against the wall.

“Oh, there you are, perfect. Come on.” He said, greeting with a refreshing smile. Gon let a dazed smile grace his face as he was pulled in. How could Killua get him brain dead like this all the time?

“Alright, so I figured we can work on some other stuff today, like harmony, and drop some of the other stuff you did better on yesterday. After a brief recap, of course.” Killua chattered, a welcoming energy about him. Gon nodded with hearts in his eyes as he watched him. Killua was so amazing. He didn’t even want to do this before, and now he was happily aiding him for the show. Gon must be luckiest guy ever, he didn’t know what he did to deserve someone as amazing as Killua as his best friend.

“We’ll be in my room again, but I have some white boards we can use-” He said, before stopping abruptly and standing rigidly in place. Gon blinked then followed his gaze ahead of them to what Killua was seeing. An inky shadow-- no, Illumi, his hair in a low ponytail and wearing an all black outfit was crossing from right to left at the bottom of the foyer stairs. He had silver black beats headphones on and he was covered in a sheen coat of sweat, a water bottle in his hand. Gon could infer he was probably practicing for the Showcase.

Gon didn’t know what made Killua stop, or what this meant now, but this was what he didn’t want. He hoped Illumi didn’t ruin Killua’s mood. Maybe he’ll just keep on walking forward without turning his head and he’ll pass like a looming storm.

Gon must have jinxed it in his head because then Illumi stopped like he sensed something then turned his head to them. His eyes were just as intense and empty as he remembered, and Gon felt Killua tense up even further next to him.
“Killu.” Illumi said in that monotone voice, then turned to move down the hall towards them. Killua finally seemed to regain some sense and he sneered at his older brother.

“What do you want, Illumi? Weren’t you doing something?” He asked, moving a bit forward and to the right to come between Illumi and Gon. Just then Gon remembered to put his head down, and he looked down at Illumi’s feet.

“Yes, that’s true, very good observation, Killu.” Illumi said, reaching his hand out to pat Killua’s head. Killua stepped back to be out of reach.

“I’m not in the mood, Illumi, we’re just trying to—”

“We?” Illumi melodiously echoed back. His eyes left Killua’s to look over his shoulder and finally saw Gon. “Oh.” He hummed void of expression. Gon couldn’t help his curiosity and looked up, but Illumi was already back to looking at Killua.

“Why is he here, Killu?”

“I was trying to tell you!” He snapped, getting upset. Gon frowned. He didn’t like this, and just like before, Gon was ready to bring the attention off of his best friend to keep him from being upset.

“I don’t know why you brought my competition to the house, Killu…” Illumi said, his voice with a bit of an edge to it, and he reached for his headphones on his ears. “Or why you think you can talk to me like that.” He let his headphones hang around his neck. Gon furrowed his eyebrows as he heard a ticking noise coming out from the phones. Gon tried to strain his ears harder to hear anything else, but all he heard was that rhythmic, timely ticking like a metronome. No music or beat. But Gon didn’t have a lot of time to think on it because as soon as he heard it, Killua was freezing up badly beside him. Gon looked over at Killua, only to see him staring wide eyed back at his brother, his breathing shallowing out.

“I’ll forgive you…” Illumi said taking a small step forward, the distance Killua took to step back when he tried to pat his head, then began to reach his hand forward for Killua’s head again but slower, as if daring Killua to move again. “If you listen to your big brother well and take this intruder out the way he came. Only guests can come in, and you wouldn’t have any… I know because you don’t have any friends…”

Gon’s eyes darted from between Illumi and Killua, worried about what exchange was going on, why Killua was suddenly rendered useless, but when he heard Illumi utter that, Gon felt something in him crack.

“Hey!” Gon growled, standing in front of Killua, and Illumi withdrew his hand. “I don’t know who you think you are to tell Killua he doesn’t have any friends, but he’s my best friend and I’m his, and I won’t let you talk to him like that! Now leave us alone!” He bit out, Illumi’s eyes widened a bit more than it’s usual wide stare out of shock at Gon’s outburst. Gon took Killua’s arm without looking and maneuvered around Illumi, speedwalking-- practically running down the stretch of the hall and upstairs and to Killua’s room.

He moved Killua in front of him and began letting his hand flit around Killua’s profile searchingly, trying to make sure he was ok.

“Killua, Killua, are you ok?” He asked, looking him over. He met his eyes only to see them wide and constricted and darting around. His breathing coming out in uneven, shallow puffs, if at all. Gon took Killua’s hands as he realized he wasn’t breathing and probably having a panic attack.
“Killua! Killua, please, talk to me.” Gon pleaded, feeling Killua’s hands shake in his. He didn’t know what to do, hugged him and let out low hums in his bass that usually made Killua feel better. He pulled apart, anxious, only to see Killua had closed his eyes, squeaking noises coming out as he tried to speak.

“No, nononno, Killua!” Gon cried, completely frazzled. What does he do? He needed Killua to breath, he needed him to take even deep breaths-- his mind stopped as he came up with an idea.

“Killua, sing with me-- look, look at me, Killua.” Gon pleaded, and Killua opened his eyes to meet his, his shaking getting worse. “Sing, ok? You got to sing with me.” He asked, not knowing what else to do.

“Lord, let me shine….! Shine like the moon…!” Gon sang out, forcing himself to sing slower and deeper for Killua’s sake. He kept one hand in Killua’s and the other on Killua’s shoulder. Killua’s eyebrows furrowed as his lips mouthed the words as he quickly caught on to what Gon was singing. Gon was granted a bit of relief when Killua let in a raspy inhale and sang with him in the next line in a small raspy voice.

“A reflection of You… In all that I do…” Good, two more breaths… Gon nodded his head along with the beats, encouraging Killua to keep going. Killua took in another breath along with Gon and he actually tried harmony as he sang with Gon.

“Lord, let me be… a light for Your truth…” Gon felt a weight lifting off of him as Killua breathed easier and sang with less stress to his voice.

“Light of the world… I wanna be used… to shine for you…” They sang out in closure, holding out the last harmony note. Killua took in another breath, his face flushed red as he could breath again, but then Gon was enveloping him in a hug that took the breath out of his lungs.

“Oof, Gon-”

“I’m so glad you’re ok…” Gon murmured. He was so scared… he didn't know what to do… he doesn’t know how to take care of Killua, and that was the scariest part… He wants Killua to know he’s safe with him, and he can take care of him. Gon wants to learn how to care more for Killua… and to do that he needs to know more about him and every part of him… “I was so scared…” He whispered, and Killua blinked, surprised. Gon was really rattled with all this… Killua put one hand in Gon’s hair and the other wrapped around his midsection.

“I’m… sorry… But it’s fine… I’m fine now…” Killua assured, eyebrows furrowing. He’s really sorry to Gon he worried him this much… He squeezed his eyes shut and wished for the umpteenth time that he didn’t do those… He wished they wouldn’t happen, it just bothers those around him… “It’s better now…”

Gon made sure Killua laid down for a bit afterwards, but Killua still insisted he’s fine. Gon wasn’t going to ask Killua about it. He would never try to make him uncomfortable by trying to pry into something that was personal to him on that level if he wasn’t ready. He wanted to make sure if Killua was going to tell him, he’d approach Gon first. For Gon to pursue, it would be on the path to chase him away forever. He’ll wait. He’ll be patient and wait for Killua to tell him.

…. 

Killua didn’t tell him and, after assuring him he’s fine, they continued with training. Gon, of course, couldn’t focus or concentrate on training with what just happened. He often drifted off into his head about what he could have done better, what caused it, how he can help in the future. Killua wasn’t
completely in it either, but every time he had to call Gon back from his wandering mind, he felt a bit more down and moody. The training continued half hearted and distracted, no progress really being made. Throughout it, Killua continued to warp the events of what happened that were trapped in his thoughts. Convinced himself Gon kept spacing out because he hates him now, keeps thinking what a burden Killua was, how useless he was in the situation. No one wants baggage in the friendship, and Killua was probably the biggest baggage in the world right now.

Not to mention every time they heard something, anything, outside Killua’s door, they would freeze and listen until they determined it nothing. Gon finally got a taste of how ‘safe’ Killua usually feels in his house, in the sense that it was like being behind enemy lines constantly. Gon just wanted to know how to help, but he was starting to sense this was a bigger project than he thought.

Killua decided to call it quits as he noticed just how little they were progressing. Killua told Gon he could change in his closet or something, and when Gon just followed the order without even looking at Killua (Gon was too lost in his thought to do anything other than do what he was told at the moment) Killua was convinced Gon hated him. Gon came out the closet wearing an undershirt and sweatpants. By then, Killua had changed as well into large tee and sweatpants. The sky was darkening quickly and the blue curtains bathed the room in a melancholy hue, every color of his room drowned out in what seemed like every different shade of blue.

Gon noticed Killua shifting nervously as Gon went over to the bed.

“G-Gon…” He called, nervous. Gon turned to him, a bit surprised that Killua sounded nervous, then realized he was about to climb on his bed and Killua could have thought that suggestive. Gon blushed and backed from the bed.

“Oh, s-sorry-”

“You don’t have to stay.” He said, hiding his eyes behind his bangs with a tilt of his head. Gon’s mind blanked, not expecting that.

“Wh-?”

“If you’re uncomfortable… if everything that happened made you upset… I won’t force you to stay if you wanted to leave instead…” He said, his voice trembling a bit. Gon’s heart broke and he rushed forward before he even knew what it was he wanted to do. He put his hands on Killua’s shoulders and ducked his head down to hope and catch Killua’s eyes. Killua kept avoiding them.

“No, no, no! Killua, I don’t… I wouldn’t ever leave you after all this- you- we’re not- this wasn’t…” Gon stammered, searching for the words to assure Killua properly. He didn’t want to say something wrong, and he knew Killua wouldn’t get what he was trying to say if he babbled. “Killua… I’m not leaving, I just… gimme a second.” He said, bringing Killua over to his bed and sitting him down amongst his pillows. Killua made himself comfortable, taking a pillow into his lap to fiddle with. Gon sat on the bed, facing him and propped his head on his palm while sitting cross legged.

They sat in comfortable but sad silence, emotions laden in the air around them that Gon wanted to dispel. Gon thinks Killua has been in his head for too long and created these false thoughts that made him feel down… Well… Gon didn’t know how to express himself better than in song, so…

Killua looked up as Gon began humming, Killua’s eyes complimented by the blue hues around them, and Gon didn’t think there was anything more beautiful except when he was smiling in happiness.

“Another night and here we are again… All our faults laid out ahead.” Killua blushed and looked
down, but Gon frowned and stuck his hand out to lift Killua’s chin up. Killua hesitated before he put his cheek in the palm of Gon’s hand.

“Let it out, then let it right back in... All those voices in your head. And we both know everything, but we can't learn to leave...” Gon smiled softly and knowingly at Killua. Killua’s breath hitched at the look Gon was giving him. Thinking back to it, Killua does know alot more about Gon than most others do... with financial stress and all his worries he hides so easily behind smiles. But Killua would never leave Gon just because he knows about those kind of things. Maybe that’s what Gon wanted to portray... There was no way Gon would leave over something like this just like Killua wouldn’t let Gon’s secrets make him leave Gon’s life.

“So I'll tell you what you need... First thing, we make you feel better.” Killua smiled shyly, ducking his head like a child, and Gon’s heart soared. His smile was a national treasure. “Next stop, we pull it all together...” They’ll both work through this together and they’ll be here for it together. No one’s leaving the other. “I'll keep you warm like a sweater, Take my hand, hold on forever!” Gon began bouncing and patting a beat out on his lap. Killua noticed and reached over for the cajon on his desk and replaced the pillow in his lap to settle it there. He patted out the beat to the song as Gon sang.

“Just fall apart if you need to...” Gon sang earnestly and honestly. Killua should know he could put all his personal baggage on him and he’ll be there to hold him. “I'm here and I won't leave you now... Don't look down. Hold on forever.”

Gon scooted closer to Killua as Killua drummed out the interlude piece, already looking a lot better, a smile on his face.

“Lay down all your troubles end to end...” Gon sang, putting his hands out on either side of him. He reached his hands up with a wink. “They could reach up to the stars...” Killua blushed again at the mention. But Gon didn’t seem to care about the fact he had so much to carry. Maybe…?

“So many roads, you don't know where you've been... But you still know who you are.” Gon said with honest eyes, and Killua found himself drowning in it. He realized he loved the color of Gon’s eyes. Like chocolate and gold, and home.

Gon was home.

“And if I seem...” Killua joined Gon in singing harmony, “preoccupied, I'm wondering what to do... So here's my recipe for you!” They launched into the chorus, Killua laying out a peppy beat, his hand flying about the wooden cajon and filling the air with their harmony and music. Gon felt the moody atmosphere from before was being lifted, pushed out for their better mood.

“First thing, we make you feel better! Next stop, we pull it all together! I'll keep you warm like a sweater, Take my hand, hold on forever!” Their harmony was beautiful and they felt as though they were entering the euphoria from the first time, and Killua just wanted to keep singing with Gon. He felt Gon would keep him safe, keep him warm, and all he had to do was hold on forever.

“Just fall apart if you need to. I'm here and I won't leave you now...! Don't look down, Hold on forever!”

Killua rested on the drums to let themselves sing a cappella the bridge, and Killua closed his eyes to listen and appreciate their sounds and voices dancing with each other in the air.

“And we both know everything, but we can't learn to leave... So I'll tell you what you need!” They both turned to each other, singing the last line with teasing voices before going back into song with feel, the emotion Gon usually didn’t hear Killua sing with. It was the most beautiful sound. They’ll
can get through this.

“First thing, we make you feel better! Next stop, we pull it all together! I'll keep you warm like a sweater! Take my hand, hold on forever.

“Just fall apart if you need to! I'm here and I won't leave you now…! Don't look down… Hold on forever!

“Just take my hand, hold on forever… Hold on forever… Just take my hand, hold on forever…!”

Killua banged out a couple flourishing beats on the small hand drum before finishing and they both began lapsing into giggles, sinking back into the pillows and into each other. They couldn't tell why or what they were laughing at, but they were just so happy, suddenly in such a good mood, it was like having to cry because you were sad. You just have to laugh because you’re happy.

It took a moment to get giggles out and then they were lying there in a satisfied ambience. The night was so dark but the moon was starting to rise, the stark white light also being transformed into blue streaks into Killua’s room.

“...It’s so pretty…” Gon hummed into the quiet of the room. He didn’t want to break the tranquility yet.

“Yea…” Killua hummed back. “Gon…” He started, a bit of regret in his voice.

“No… don’t say you’re sorry.” Gon said, turning to his side to look at Killua better. Killua turned his head to Gon, wide eyed, then turned on his side too.

“How did you know?”

“I heard it in your voice…” Gon said, looking Killua’s face over, his lashes, his freckles, his lips… “You didn’t do anything wrong.” Gon added softly. Killua blushed and looked down, his hair hiding his eyes again. Gon reached out and brushed it out the way, and Killua met his eyes again.

“Fine… then I won’t apologize…” Killua said. “But I owe you an explanation.”

“Killia, I don’t want you to feel like you owe me--” Gon started, but Killua placed on a finger on his lips, and added an unnecessary ‘sshh’, because Gon had already swallowed all his words and probably his thoughts too. How can one touch from Killua render him so useless? But he was also addicted to it…

“I want to tell you everything… you’ve been so open with me and reassured me… I don’t know how many times you’ve told me that you won’t… leave me for it, so…” He said, huffing a bit as he searched his thoughts. Gon’s heartbeat raced as he realized what was happening. Ths was it. Killua was opening up his heart to him. And what Gon did with it after was what will make or break their relationship. Killua’s a tough one to try and open up, and Gon wasn’t about to squander it and make Killua feel stupid for letting him in on his life.

“Mhm…” Gon hummed, all ears. Killua met his eyes again.

“I’ll start with Illumi.”

“What Illumi was listening to was a metronome beat.” Killua said. Gon furrowed his eyebrows and tilted his head as well as he could on the bed.

“I don’t know? Because he’s a weirdo. Because he loves being mommy and daddy’s perfect little wind-up toy that performs on command. When we’re younger we go through something I coined as the ‘Zoldyck training from hell.’” Killua said. Gon held back a gasp. Was it really that bad?

“When we’re really young, like from when we can walk to age 6, we are raised pretty normally. We have a playroom where we played, although the toy blocks had music signs and notes on it. Music was always in the air in the house, much like it is now, but it was light and bright. There wasn’t such a...bad connotation associated with it.

“My brothers are older than me, obviously. Milluki is 3 years older than me and Illumi is 4. They started their training earlier than me, but I never figured out how bad it was. They would disappear in the mornings and when they came back, they were always so tired. Before they started their training, I would always love to hear them sing. They have amazing voices, and I always wanted them to sing for me. But when their training started, they were too tired to sing, they would drag their bodies to the bed and just lay there. Sometimes their voices were gone all together…” Killua stared blankly at the wall behind Gon, seeming to be back in the rooms, watching his older brothers lay in bed, still like death. Gon tightened his lips but waited for Killua. Killua closed his eyes for a moment before looking at Gon again. “So I would sing for them. I wanted them to sing for me, but I was happy to sing for them like they did for me if it would make them feel better. I mean, I would hope it made them feel better. I had an easier time telling if I made Illumi feel better. He would sit up in his bed and let me sit in his lap and I would sing. Sometimes he took videos of me, and I knew I had made him feel better.

“When Milluki started his training, he got grumpier and crankier, and was meaner to me. Sometimes he let me sing for him, sitting at the very edge of his bed while he laid face down and other times he would kick me out, telling me to stay out. I think it was at that time I started drifting apart from my brothers, but I never considered it was because of what they were going through. I just thought they were getting more distant and hated me. I started playing by myself more often.” He said, shrugging his shoulders thoughtfully, or maybe dismissively, Gon couldn’t tell. He continued with a sigh,

“It was right around the time it was my turn to start training that they started being a bit nicer to me. Milluki got me my headphones to make training easier… Illumi got me my first pair of dance shoes… they had kitten paws on the bottom of them...” Killua chuckled a little laugh but it didn’t reach his eyes. Gon wanted to reach out and comfort him somehow…

“But then the training started… I really didn’t understand until then. Mother took on training at first as my brothers continued to complete their training. Innocent enough at first, piano songs and practice. Vocal exercises and music scores you have to memorise. Then your studies ramps up, and you have to practice 10 different songs a week. Your dance practice ranges from the time after breakfast to dinner. I usually went hoarse and lost my voice the first few years of training…”

Gon tried not to grip his fist in righteous fury, but this was starting to get him angry.

“We needed to be elite… we were Zoldyck children, so we had to be perfect at everything and make a name for ourself in the music industry, lest we ruin the name. To get a perfect sense of beat and rhythm ingrained… They put you in a room, there’s one window too close to the ceiling to see out of, just so you get natural sunlight and let you know how much time has passed. Nothing is in there, a speaker is on the ceiling and it’s just…" Killua’s lower eyelid twitched, and Gon heard his breathing shallow out as his eyes became distant. “Ticking... the monotrone... they leave you in there for hours. It’s not that bad at first... you think you just need to be able to keep time to a song
they test you on later that day. And after listening to it for hours, you feel like you’re able to. But then a day passes, and only a meal is slid under the door. Days past, you block out the ticking noise, and you’re mostly just bored. A week in, and the ticking is the only thing you can hear. It’s everywhere, you beg to be let out. You shove your fingers in your ears, but it’s in there too. You try to rip out your heart because it’s ticking too... Bang your head against the wall just to get some sleep. You’re finally let out after a month but the ticking follows you around. But hey, now you have a perfect sense of rhythm… you hate it.” Killua bit his lips, his eyes focusing enough to glare at an unseen object. Gon decided to try and take his hand to offer Killua comfort. He didn’t want to make Killua retreat in himself, but he also couldn’t just not comfort his crush anymore. It was killing him hearing him say all of this. Gon was relieved when Killua finally locked eyes with him again at the contact and didn’t pull away. Killua let out a pained sigh but he trucked on.

“They made us stand for hours in the proper standing position, and didn’t let us move for the sitting position… When Milluki and Illumi finished their training, Mother let them head my training. Illumi had me drill dance moves until I did them perfectly, ripping through 8 dance shoes in a year. Milluki was relentless with note recognition, but that was the only thing he really taught me. With him, I basically just sat with headphones on for hours, telling him what notes I was hearing, and then he’d speed them up and I needed to keep up. I sat there until I got it all right in one go. He didn’t let me go to dinner or sleep. He’d eat his dinner in front of me and if I dozed off, he smacked me awake. Soon, he would play songs we hear on the radio and I had to tell him the notes as quickly as they were being played. At least the melody, but if I included the whole chord, he’d let me go sooner.” Killua developed a sort of snarl as he talked about his brothers, but then his face softened as he finished talking.

“I always blamed them… learned to hate them for what they were putting me through... In the back of my mind I knew they were just listening to orders, probably just carrying out the plans of what was done to them. But the younger me couldn’t separate my hate for what I was doing from who was doing it to me. My parents and grandfather believed I was to be the best Zoldyck of all the children... I already looked so different than the others, and my father said I had the best voice even though it was still being developed. They began to put more pressure on me to be the best and well refined so that I lived up to my potential. I still get anxiety from that sort of pressure...” Killua hummed, getting distant again. Gon remembered the time at the lakeside concert, when Killua looked uncomfortable with all the thumping music and crowd pushing in from behind and understood a little more. Any form of pressure that reminds him of everything that are on his shoulders will most likely trigger his anxiety and panic attack.

“That ticking still haunts me, when I hear it, it’s like I’m paralyzed. I’m back to that room, and I don’t want to be. And my brother listens to it all the time. When he really wants me to do something, he’ll have that playing somewhere--” Killua cut himself off at Gon squeezing his hand almost painfully. His eyes widened when he saw the dark intense look in Gon’s eyes.

“Even though you’re so obviously shaken from it? He doesn’t consider your feelings at all...” Gon let out in a low voice. Not the kind that usually gives Killua’s heart a skip, but sent chills down his spine.

“Gon...” Killua said softly, but before he could continue, Gon closed his eyes and shook his head.

“Do you have more? Keep going.” Gon opened his eyes, his eyes just as bright as they usually are, like Killua had seen some weird alternate universe for a second.

“A-ah... ok. Er, It had gotten really bad around the time for my debut concert to come out. I had already done a couple of anticipatory jobs-- sort of like teasers of what’s to come. A couple of children plays, photo shoots, recordings where they needed a children’s choir. But this was the big
thing, the summer before I went into the Musica Academy. I was still 13, so it wasn’t the one you had seen from the library, that was my birthday debut concert. We were working crazy hours to work get the concert perfected, and since it was my debut concert, I had the most numbers to perform, and thus Illumi drilled me the most to get everything perfect. Eating and sleeping was for when the performances went off without a hitch. In the middle of the concert, everything caught up with me, and I felt myself passing out in the middle of the number. I heard myself hitting the wrong notes because I ran out of breath too quick and went flat. So I went to leave the stage as not to make a scene, but I blacked out before I knew if I did or not.

“When I woke up, I was backstage in a makeshift bed and my father was there. Everyone was, but my father was right there at the front. I was so scared, I had messed up, and I think I started having my first panic attack… It stopped when he put his hand on my shoulder. I had never seen him look so sorry… He had said then that he shouldn’t have worked his children so hard, and that after that, no one would have to be trained as badly. But it was already done.” Killua let out a bit of a bitter laugh. “He was sorry… but I was already broken.”

“No!” Gon cried out louder than he meant to, making both of them jump. “No- sorry, no, no, Killua…” He said in a lower voice, moving his hand from Killua’s hand to Killua’s cheek, caressing him softly. Killua’s eyes widened as his pulse picked up and his face heated up. Gon’s hands were soft yet calloused at the same time. They were gentle on his face like Killua was a treasure and Killua didn’t know how to interpret that. This was way different than holding hands… And Gon was looking at him with such soft and gentle eyes that they looked like liquid gold even against the moonlight. Killua’s heart was flipping out and Killua wished he knew what to say at the moment, but it seemed like Gon wanted to speak so he’d just stay quiet.

“Killua, don’t say that. Don’t say you’re broken. You’re not broken, you’re just hurting. You’ve been scarred, and marked and a little bent but you’re not broken. You’re still here and fighting, and you haven’t been defeated. So much has happened to you but you never let it defeat you, you never let it overcome you. You showed your strength in not becoming someone like Illumi-- some doll for performing. You set your own standards, you didn’t sing for anyone you didn’t have to, you never did fanservice and even though you were pressured for being the most perfect, you let your imperfections show. You don’t hide behind anything or be fake. You’re real and amazing, and beautiful, and you’re not broken… Killua…” Gon said in a soft voice, holding all the affection he had for Killua in his tone. Killua’s lower lip crumpled and his eyes shone as Gon said his name at the end like it was the most beautiful melody conceived on earth. It was beautiful and Killua wasn’t sure he deserved for his name to be said like that… like something precious when he was this… battered. But Gon said it with such… honesty, how could he not believe him? Gon put his forehead to Killua’s as Killua closed his eyes and let some tears flow down his cheeks. Gon wished so badly he could kiss him… but he won’t push anything. He wouldn’t want to kiss him in this high emotion situation anyway, Killua might read it wrong later. Gon knows to be patient and he’s happy enough to be here for Killua like this anyway. He ran a gentle thumb across his cheeks to get the tears off as Killua fluttered his eyes back open.

“Gorgeous…” Gon hummed under his breath as his eyes darted back and forth across Killua’s face and counting all the flecks of silver in Killua’s eyes. Gon felt a warm feeling wrap all around him, spreading from his chest and really had to fight the urge to kiss him. It was so unfair, Killua was so pretty.

Killua’s face got red after Gon said that and he moved his face from Gon’s, sitting up, much to Gon’s disappointment. He already missed his warmth. Killua rubbed at his cheeks, both to get the tears off and to try and hide his horrid blush.

“G-Gon… thanks for listening to me babble… but I really did want to tell you all of that because you
deserve it. You’ve seen me go through so much and… well, I think you proved you won’t hate and leave me for it.” Killua said smiling down at Gon. Gon moved to sit up too.

“I’m glad you did! You’re my best friend.” Gon smiled softly, and Killua had to wonder if Gon was an angel sent to him… the moonlight behind him made a halo about his head and Killua felt like his insides swooped down and about. He looked away, holding his heart that suddenly picked up speed.

“You…” Killua’s face burned. “You’re my best friend too…” He muttered as loud as he could without exploding. Gon beamed.

“Yay!” He hugged Killua from the side and he let out a surprised grunt.

“Gon, get off!” Killua griped, pushing at Gon’s face, squishing the side of his face. Gon whined but released him.

“Killua.” Gon said in a more serious tone. Killua looked up to meet his gaze, Gon’s eyes with a hard edge to it like dark wood. “I’m sorry you had to go through that growing up.” Gon said. “They really did try to break you, and they came close.” Gon breathed to make sure he didn’t get any angrier. He wanted to protect Killua forever. He wanted Killua to hold on forever. “The things you went through… you didn’t just come to resent your brothers through this process, but music too. I want to change that. Music was never meant to hurt, it’s to help heal. It’s a communication of personality and thoughts. Connections and relief. I want to make that what it is again instead of something that was used to hurt you… Will you let me help you? You have to listen to me and my training tips as much as I have to listen to you, ok?”

Killua looked at Gon long and hard, and Gon couldn’t make heads or tails of it. His eyes had iced over and hid his emotions again, a poker face as he searched Gon’s face. Gon hated it when Killua did that-- shut him out. He wanted nothing more than for Killua to always be open to him, feel like he could be as open with him and nothing bad will ever come from it. But until then, Gon just kept that gentle determination look on his face for Killua to find his proof in. It seemed it worked because just as Killua sighed and closed his eyes, turning his face away from Gon, his eyes became liquid pools again.

“You seem to know what you’re talking about… and it’s not like that sounds horrible… I’m going to trust you, Gon…!” Killua said, turning back to Gon and wagging a finger. Gon lit up.

“And you won’t regret it!” Gon said, voice tight with excitement. Killua sighed playfully.

“Ok!”

“Yay! First of all, you’re getting way more hugs, because you need as many as you can get!” Gon said, giving Killua another hug.

“Gah! Gon! You’re so annoying!”

Gon just laughed.

Killua tossed and turned around in the bed trying to get comfortable, and settled down after a moment. He felt a frustrated growl build up in the back of his throat but he did his best to hold it down as to not wake Gon.

Killua always found it hard to sleep after emotional stuff that big, plus he had that run in with Illumi earlier that day. He didn’t find rest easy. He sat up carefully, Gon easily sprawled out on his large bed without making Killua uncomfortable with the lack of space. Killua found himself smiling softly
down at the idiot that was slowly making his life better. How could he find a friend so amazing like Gon?

No, he had to keep reminding himself, Killua didn’t find Gon, Gon found Killua. If it was up to Killua, he would have passed Gon up and continued to have a horrible crappy life hating music and his fate. Killua dragged a hand down his face and let out a careful exhale. He peaked again at Gon, finding a comfort in being able to see him right here on his bed. In his hell house. It made it more bearable. Killua smiled softly as Gon let out a snorted snore then kicked out the covers some more, turning to his side.

His smile fell a little as he once more took note of Gon’s muscles, toned and stretched out over his chest. His eyes traced the length of his arm before he shook his head to snap out of it. He rubbed his face again…

He was so gay…

He just hoped he could keep that part of him under control as not to mess this up and chase Gon away. He was certain Gon wouldn’t leave him if he found out but… he’s sure he’d act differently… maybe. Who knows, but Killua didn’t want to find out the hard way. Gon was the best thing to happen to him and he didn’t want to be the reason it tanked. Killua exhaled, trying to remember any of the tricks he usually did to try and sleep, his eyes wandering the room. He could still hear the distant sounds of indistinguishable music from the other rooms in the house but… they weren’t as bad to hear anymore. He looked back down at Gon. Killua had a feeling music would sound a lot sweeter from now on.

Killua ended up counting all the visible freckles on Gon’s shoulders and cheeks to fall asleep, like counting sheep.

He won’t admit the warm and comforting feeling of just looking at Gon’s face helped put him to sleep.

Gon woke up to breakfast being shoved under his nose. He blinked blearily as he clumsily grabbed at the plate and carefully sat up, acting upon routine rather than conscious thought. He blinked at the clock to his right, trying to read the glowing numbers.

7:30?

He blinked over to the other body on his bed. Killua sat cross legged on the bed with his own plate of food.

“Hope you don’t mind, but it’d be easier if we didn’t sit at the table for breakfast. Less chance for others in my family to see us.” He said, passing Gon a couple of utensils and a water bottle. Gon blinked once more than began rubbing at his eyes. he needed to wake up. Once he thought his eyes were pretty focused, he looked down at what was in front of him.

Eggs with chopped ham incorporated, a side of fruit and whole wheat toast. He tried to resist pouting. It’s healthy but the portions are pretty small.

“Why are we up so early?” Gon decided to ask instead.

“We have work to do! We kinda lost all day yesterday and I have an agenda to keep us on if we’re gonna get everything done by December. September is ending in a couple days, and we’ll only have 2 months to do everything.”
Gon swallowed down a spike of anxiety. What does he have to worry about now that Killua’s helping him?

“Right, ok. So, up early on the weekends. Got it.” Gon said, picking up the fork to start eating. And he had no problem with the idea to avoid the rest of Killua’s family. Gon feels happy, halfway through the breakfast as he realizes he’s eating breakfast with Killua in the quiet, private space of his bed room in the early morning light. Gon never felt so happy just to be in someone's presence... he wanted this... he was happy with Killua just like this...

Killua made sure that the coast was clear before they went downstairs. It was a little after 8, Killua assured him everyone would be done with breakfast by then and went off to their own devices.

"This way we can use the music room." Killua said, still looking about the hall with precaution. Gon nodded, feeling like he should be looking around too. They had went down the hall behind the free standing stairwell, a wider hallway than the one that leads into the foyer.

"You're house is really big..." Gon muttered.

"Yea... when you retire as the top of the opera world, you tend to want to show off your opulent wealth..." Killua muttered.

"You don't sound so happy about it... most would be happy to have a huge house like this." Gon asked carefully, wanting to investigate a bit more.

"Sure, if you're into emptiness. It's like, the largeness of the house just emphasizes how alone you are. I wouldn't mind just a small house in the future... someplace like your apartment." Killua said. Gon lit up although Killua couldn't see from behind him. He also wanted a small place in the future. He's happy Killua has the same ideals in home like as he does, it means they wouldn't clash about that in the future. Just another thing he learned about Killua they had in common. Killua turned to a room to his right, and when he opened the door, Gon saw sunlight splashing over the cream colored sun room.

"Waaah!" Gon gasped, his eyes taking in all the instruments. It was like they had every instrument in here! A large, black, sleek grand piano punctuated the middle of the room, overviewing the garden view seen through the full wall windows. There was a drum set and other percussions to one side of the large room and guitars and strings to another side.

"Amazing!" Gon cried, hopping forth and heading towards the strings. He carefully caressed a neck of one of the sleeker looking electric guitars before turning back to Killua who looked back at him with a soft look in his eyes.

"Wait! Which one is your favorite instrument?" Gon made sure to remember to ask before he forgot.

"My favorite...?" Killua parroted his question back, giving it some thought. Then he smirked easily and turned his back to Gon, pointing to the opposite end of the room. Gon leaned slightly to the right to see what Killua's was pointing at.

"Drums."

His finger guided Gon's sight to a full set of drums with snare and bass drum, tom toms, and cymbals.

"Wow... can you play me something?" Gon asked, walking over to Killua. Killua blinked, looking over at Gon.
"Play you... what? No, Gon, we don't have time for that! The goal here is to develop your primary instrument you can use for the showcase, and practice your scales and stuff with accompaniment!" Killua scolded. "We don't have all day, Gon."

"I know, I know, but I think... it'll help me focus if you do this before we start?" Gon tried with a boyish lop-sided smile. Killua blushed and turned away.

"Idiot... but you are gonna be impossible to focus if your head is on me playing... fine. A quick beat." Killua huffed like this was a burden, but he made his way over with a light step, excitement in his eyes. Gon smiled happily and waited patiently for Killua to start. Killua was so easy to read sometimes.

Killua sat on the stool and plucked up the two drum sticks, twirling them mindlessly as he thought of what to play. Gon's jaw dropped as he watched Killua effortlessly maneuver the sticks with a fineness Gon would have to practice a long while before he could do.

"Ah..." Killua hummed as he thought of what the play. An eased smile graced his lips as he hovered his sticks over the drums. He tapped into his immortal internal ticking to keep his beat and launched into a lively, thundering beat of bangs and crashes.

Gon watched with wide eyes that slowly melded into an appreciative smile, his head nodding slowly while listening. This was amazing...

Killua’s hands flew about with complicated and unexpected turns. Expected and usual sounds of drums were melded with other ones creating new sounds and a pattern refreshing to listen to.

Killua felt his limbs loosening and his eyes closed as he knew the position of the drum components in front of him by heart. Each successful bang on the drum brought him a sense of satisfaction, each sound and beat on time to the internal clock he set. He liberally brought his foot down on the bass drum pedal, each hitting on beat, to match his heartbeat. He loves the thump and the shake and reverberance of the whole process as his arms swung down and about and around him. Killua let a small smile on his face as he came to the climax of his beat, relishing in the music he was making. He finished out banging down on his crash symbol and let himself sit a moment to finish riding out his euphoria he gets whenever he gets really lost in his drumming. He let out a soft breath and opened his eyes only to see Gon looking at him so intensely. He almost fell off the stool in surprise.

"W-what?" Killua asked, putting the drumsticks on the tom-toms in front of him.

"Nothing, you just looked really happy. And you're really good at drums!" Gon said.

"Thanks." Killua said, happy he got some validation from Gon about his pride and joy. "I think I like drums the most because I finally get to do something with the ticking in my head. It's not the same, monotone, haunting noise. I make it something else, drown it out in the sound, dance around it and create a new beat that mutes the usual ticking... at least for a while..." Killua hummed, standing up and running a light finger across the rim of the cymbal. Gon was happy Killua had something that was like therapy for him, recover from the trauma his family put him through.

"And plus, I get to hit something." Killua shrugged. "And that's always fun." He grinned at Gon and Gon grinned brightly in return. Why was Killua always so amazing? Gon was never bored around him. He always had fun.

"Well, you got your request. Enough fooling around, let's get to training." Killua said firmly.

-o0o0o0o0o-
With all the possible instruments in their arsenal for use, this training time was a little more fun that the last. Killua used the piano more for the range training, playing through the octaves with nimble grace. He wanted Gon to increase his vocal range.

“It is impressive, almost as wide as mine. So we’ll work to make sure you’re very comfortable in whatever range you choose.” He said with a hum, warming up as he spoke. Gon nodded, listening intently like a good student.

“What’s the highest note you can hit?” Killua asked after a beat. Gon cleared his throat and sang out with a clear soaring pitch— Killua hit his arm.

“Ow! What was that for, Killua?” Gon cried out.

“Not in falsetto, idiot. Falsetto high notes comes from your head voice and aren’t as strong as your throat or chest voice. Try again.” He commanded, crossing his arms in his practiced position at the piano. Gon’s head swayed side to side a bit, a little confused with the terminology, but he’ll ask about it later. He clear his throat again then hummed through a couple notes in increasing pitch, tried a few open mouth vocalizations, and strained to hit a high note without falsetto. His voice crack and he coughed then chuckled a bit.

“Haha, I’m used to being able to sing higher than that!” Gon explained sheepishly.

“That’s because you’re used to singing in falsetto. Now I know what your real range is, we’ll work on getting your high notes into a higher range.” Killua said. Gon could see Killua was pleased with himself for finding new ways to help Gon, so Gon won’t take it personally. He’ll just need to work harder.

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Gon’s favorite part of the day had to be when Killua wanted to teach him an instrument.

“Alright, what instrument do you want to be your signature?” Killua asked. “You need to specialize in at least one as a World Star.” Killua said with an air of elitist attitude. Gon almost cocked his head to one side, but pointed to the guitars nonetheless.

“Ok.” He said. “We’ll get started on learning how to play it with the basics of at least how to hold it. It’s actually somewhat awkward for some of the chords.” Killua explained. Gon blinked and opened his mouth to say something, but he was drawing a blank. Did Killua think he didn’t know how to play guitar? The guitar was thrusted into his hands and he scrambled to grab it, too lost in his thoughts to have noticed Killua on his way back.

“You place this hand, here, and you want your fingers to hold each chord…” Killua said, reaching...
around Gon to guide his hands into the proper place. Gon bit his lip, feeling his face warming up and
moved his hands into proper position with little help.

“Yea…?” He asked lowly.

“Mhm, like that.” Killua said after a brief pause. Gon seemed to pick that up quick. He held a pretty
accurate hold on the guitar. “You’ll want to be careful where you hold your hands because the
location you put your hand on the neck will change the note…” Killua said. “Like with the A
chord…” He started, but Gon placed his hands in the proper position mostly out of reflex for the A
chord. Killua blinked down at that and Gon froze, pulling his lips into his mouth at the effort not to
laugh. Did he just get caught?

“You… You already know how to play?” Killua asked, although, it sounded more like a statement.
Yea, Gon got caught. He laughed a bit and Killua let out an embarrassed huff. “Why didn’t you tell
me!?” He cried, his face becoming that adorable pink.

“I’m sorry! You seemed so earnest in wanting to help me, how could I tell you no?” Gon laughed,
placing the guitar to the side. “What made you think I couldn’t?”

“You… you had said your dad left you the guitar, but because he wasn’t there, I assumed you didn’t
learn from him… I thought you just had it as a memorabilia.” He shrugged, trying to play off his
mortification he assumed wrong.

“Oh, Killua. I want to be a World Star, but I wasn’t about to depend on my dad to get me there.
Everything I know is from my own strive. I learned how to play because I knew I needed to play at
least that to become a star.” Gon nodded. Killua listened quietly before smiling at the end.

“Very good.” He coughed a bit, picking at his shirt. “Let’s review your guitar instead.” Gon tried
really hard not to tease him after that, but he loved making Killua blush.

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“Scales and Arpeggios.” Killua said, tickling the keys of the keyboard, up and down scales.

“My… hmm?” Gon asked. Killua rolled his eyes.

“Weren’t you listening in class that one day in Music theory to at least know what I’m talking
about?” Killua asked.

“I’m sorry! I daze out in that class often, lecture isn’t my strong suit.” Gon admitted, rubbing the
back of his head. “If you’re going to use official terms, will you at least define them for me, Killua?”

“Ok. I think you know what scales are. Arpeggios are broken chords, like this one…” Killua said,
playing the C-E-G chord on the piano, then playing each chord in succession and separately. Gon
gaped at the skill Killua showed. How was he so equally good at everything? Isn’t there some sort of
crutch for knowing so much?

“Killua… could I hear you play the piano?” Gon asked. Killua furrowed his eyebrows in confusion
than transformed into one of irritation.

“Gon, we have work to do, we don’t have all day for you to just ‘explore’ the things I can do!”
Killua fumed. Gon chuckled at that. Killua sure was easy to pissed off when it comes to music.

“Killua…” Gon started off carefully, but it only made Killua more upset that Gon sounded like he
was trying to explain something to a child. “Calm down first…!” Gon laughed after glancing at
Killua and seeing the way he was bristling. Killua huffed, closing his eyes and taking a few calming breaths.

“Ok… I don’t want you to get upset when I ask about music stuff… I know it’s probably still a sensitive topic for you, but it won’t get better if you keep making it a problem. When I, or anyone for that matter, asks you for music related stuff…” Gon bit his lip as he tried to think of the best way to put this. He was never good with words. “Try not to resent it. Don’t let it be a burden… don’t snap at the person for asking in the first place. What I asked was something brief and quick, it wouldn’t take long. It should be something fun, and you can use it to translate something about yourself. It can be something personal to help the other understand something, or a memory. It will help you enjoy music a little better if you remember it’s communication. It’s a community and it’s ours. So we should enjoy it, ok?” Gon finished, looking back up at Killua. Killua looked on at Gon with bright and admiring eyes. Gon made sure not to sound condescending or scolding… it was with understanding and no judgement, just to help. And the message he told… it was what Killua longed and wanted for the longest time? Couldn’t he try? Isn’t this why he kept Gon around? To help him love music again?

It’ll require a little change and being a bit more vulnerable than he’s used to but he’s willing to take the risks to love music again.

“Ok….” He hummed. He positioned his hands over the keys. Gon lit up and excitedly placed his arms over the top board lid of the piano, leaning in anticipation. He was happy Killua took his advice seriously and received it well. He hoped this only worked to help Killua throughout his years at Musica Academy. Killua let out a breath and closed his eyes to think. Ok, his emotions in his playing? Alright, he wanted to show off his skills to Gon a bit; he found himself wanting to impress the bright boy more and more these days. But… A faint memory brushed against the back of his eyes. He wanted to play something near to his heart… something he used to play for his special little sister in his life… She loved it, loved the meanings behind the words and always did her best to sing along…

His fingers flew along the ivory keys, his hands falling into a familiar pattern. Gon’s eyes squinted as he listened the familiar notes and then lit up as he recognized the beautiful melancholy notes as the beginning of Alicia Keys’s If I Ain’t Got You. Gon looked up at Killua and his heart almost broke at the beautifully painful look on Killua’s face, his closed eyes letting his eyelash rest against his cheeks in stark contrast. Vocalizations began spilling like honey from the back of Killua’s throat, his humming mesmerizing Gon with the beauty. Gon closed his eyes, immersing himself in the picture Killua was painting behind the music. It was sad but held value. This was important to him.

“Mhhh… Some people live for the fortune… some people live just for the fame. Some people live for the power, yea, some people live just to play the game.” Killua sung with a voice laden with emotion. Gon could barely pick out a specific emotion from the mix.

“Some people think that the physical things define… what’s within… and I’ve been there before… But that life’s a bore. So full of the superficial…!”

Gon finally understood from how deeply he sung the songs that Killua didn’t highly prize or enjoy the life of the rich and ease. At least not at the price it came with. Killua finally opened his eyes as he watched his own hands play.

“Some people want it all! But I don’t want nothing at all! If it ain’t you baby, If I ain’t got you baby!” Killua looked over at Gon and suddenly felt how heavy Gon’s gaze was on him. “Some people want diamond rings, some just want everything…!” He was suddenly very aware of the words coming out his mouth and felt his face heat up. He was tripping over the words towards the
end of the chorus and his fingers had trouble hitting the right keys of the piano. “But everything
means nothing… I-if I ain’t got yoo- ok!” Killua said, standing up suddenly, his face red.

“Thanks, Gon, that sure was a trip, I really appreciate the advice, but let's get to work now.” Killua
said, stumbling to get his suddenly lanky legs on the other side of the piano seat.

“W-what? B-but Killua, you were just…!” Gon stuttered, confused as to why Killua suddenly
stopped. He knows Killua was messing up a bit, but that was no reason to stop. “I was really
enjoying your singing just now…!”

“Yea, and I need to get you to that level now. C’mon.” He snapped. He caught himself, and turned
back to Gon. “Sorry, I didn’t mean to get upset.” He muttered, rubbing his arm. “Let’s just… we
have a lot to do.” Killua said, gesturing to the room. Gon smiled understandingly.

“Ok, you’re right.” Gon said and hopped off.

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Gon was able to see the room get painted in different lights and shadows as the sun went down
outside and then the fluorescent lights came on automatically when it was dark enough, surprising
Gon. But it made Killua laugh, so he didn’t mind too badly.

They were doing a great job running through yesterday’s lessons when Killua’s phone went off with
an alarm. Gon looked up from the guitar in his hands to see Killua dismissing it, a frown on his face.

“It’s like whenever we get into a good groove, it’s time to stop.” He huffed. Gon’s eyebrows raised.

“Stop? Why, what for?” He asked.

“It’s 10, Gon, I think you have to go home before your aunt blows a fuse.” Killua chuckled. Gon bit
his lip, he had no idea it had gotten so late.

“Alright…” Gon sighed, getting up and putting down the fancy guitar. It played and sounded like a
dream but he prefers his own guitar, he felt like he had a better grip on it.

“So, homework.” Killua said standing up with him.

“Again?” Gon whined slightly. Killua rolled his eyes.

“Yes. We’re almost done with basics review and mastery, so what I want you to start to do is write
song lyrics.” Killua said.

Gon nodded slowly, that’ll be easy enough, he does that all the time. They don’t always make sense
or gets used but-

“I want 2 complete songs by the end of every week. After 2 weeks of that, I want 2 complete song
lyrics every day.” Killua said. Gon blinked with wide eyes at his best friend.

“You… what!? 2 sets of song lyrics?!”

“Yea, with a theme and make sense. You don’t have to put them to melody or music yet. Just lyrics
for now.” Killua said.

“But Killua, that’s hard…!” Gon whined, following after Killua as he walked to the exit of the
instrument room.
“I know, just imagine how much harder that’s going to be if you had to start closer to the date of the showcase. Listen, as you keep writing and finding out about all the song topics you could write about, it gets easier. Lyrics will come and flow easier to you once you practice all the time. This way, by the time we get to the point where you need to start composing and arranging your showcase piece, writing possible lyrics will be easy. Got it?” Killua asked, turning to Gon as they reached the front door. Gon sighed.

“So, I need to give you 2 different lyrics sets by this Saturday?” Gon asked, sighing into the fall air, wisps of condensation coming out in the process.

“Mhh.. let’s make it Friday.” Killua said.

“Killua!” Gon protested in loud cry and Killua had to laugh.

“You can do it. Get home safe, ok?” He said. Gon begrudgingly smiled.

“Alright. Good night, Killua.”

“Night, Gon.”

Gon was happy with the way the day was going, considering the bad reps Mondays get. In both of his classes before lunch, everything was clicking alot faster than it usually took, he was understanding things better than before.

In Music theory, when Wing began explaining terminology, Gon understood what it was because he had already done and mastered half of them! He just didn’t know what they were called. He was always so excited whenever he figured out he was already familiar with something, he couldn’t help but turn around and express his excitement at Killua. Killua was always so nice about it, sharing a bit of his enthusiasm and praising Gon for knowing too. It was a bit patronizing, but he didn’t care. Killua was kind enough to be excited with him rather than brush him off… it was impressive that Killua never did brush him off at all everytime Gon did this because Gon did turn and gush at Killua throughout almost the whole class.

Then during Vocal Training, Kite made a secret quiz to test if people remembered their singing stance in both sitting and standing. Gon had fell into both when it was his turn without even realizing it because it felt natural after getting it drilled in by Killua during the weekend. When Kite explained the secret quiz and who passed and who failed, Kite pointed out Gon to congratulate him on his progress. Gon had to turn and beam at Killua who was already looking over at Gon and beamed back.

This was amazing! Killua was so amazing, he did so much to help him and it was affecting all his classes, not just the showcase. He was happy.

After lunch was Harmony 202. Killua and Gon was walking in with Ponzu. Killua and Gon were arguing about something that they were talking about at lunch when Ponzu gasped loudly and ran past the two teens.

“Baby!” Ponzu cried out. Killua and Gon turned their attention to who it was she was running towards. Pokkle was there with open arms to receive her.

“Woah, Pokkle’s in this class now? Why?” Gon asked.

“It’s normal for kids to be moved around classes depending on teacher’s notes. Sometimes it's not because they were bad or disruptive, but the teaching style wasn’t helpful to the student. The goal of
the school is, after all, to best teach the students to be World Stars. No expense is too small, not even constant movement.” Killua explained as he walked up to the two teens cuddling. Killua was still a bit sore about Friday, and Pokkle seemed to sense that as Killua walked over, and tried not to look over in his direction.

“While that is true, I have never been moved myself. I was quite surprised when my harmony teacher moved me.” A smooth voice to the boy’s left said. They turned and Gon lit up.

“Kurapika!” Gon cried, hopping over and lifting the lithe boy in a bear hug. Kurapika wheezed out a laugh.

“G-Gon! I understand you may be happy at my presence, but I doubt this is very appropriate.” He said, easing out of the hug. Gon laughed sheepishly, putting his hand behind his head and sticking out his tongue slightly once Kurapika was down.

“Hey, what's up?” Killua said, standing awkwardly to Gon’s right. Kurapika met Killua’s eyes before inclining his head towards him.

“Hello to you too.”

“This is great, we have more friends in our classes now! Right, Killua?” Gon asked turning to him. Killua turned his head as Gon turned to Killua, his eyes fixed on the floor.

“Whatever.” He said, then promptly made his way to the back of the room.

“Ah…” Gon whined slightly, watching Killua’s retreating back.

“Don’t worry, Gon. I’m sure he’s just hitting one of his moods.” Kurapika said reasonably. “No need to worry, he’ll get over it soon.”

“Killua doesn’t just get moods. Something’s wrong… I’m gonna go, I hope you enjoy class, Pika, I really like it!” Gon said, moving past him to sit with Killua. Kurapika shrugged. He wanted to sit with the tanned teen, but the back of the classroom wasn’t his preferred seat, so he moved to sit closer to the front. Gon eased into the seat next to Killua.

“Hey, Kill, what’s wrong?” Gon asked in a soft voice. Killua was fiddling with his phone and looked like he was trying to queue up some music to play.

“Nothing’s wrong.” He said with clipped words. Gon rolled his eyes.

“Seriously? You expect me to believe that?” Gon asked, trying to catch Killua’s eyes. Killua then actively began trying to avoid it.

“It’s nothing!” He insisted, finally meeting Gon’s eyes to firmly deny a problem, his eyes frosted over in its resolve. Gon met his with just as much fiery intensity.

“You know you can tell me. I thought this past weekend proved that.” He said with a steady voice. The mask on Killua cracked slightly, his lips parted and his eyebrows furrowed in the slightest, but then he looked away quickly.

“It’s… stupid. These people… they’re not my friends. I don’t know them, they’re your friends. Some of them just pretend to be my friends again for the benefit--” Killua said.

“Pokkle didn’t mean it like that--” Gon tried.
“Like hell you can speak for him!” Killua snapped, as the teacher came in, calling the class to attention. It was quieter and Killua licked his lips, flashing his gaze over the class but just lowered his voice, making sure to keep an ear to what Mrs. Richette was saying. “Are you just too honest and naive to think for just one second that he might be saying that stuff as an excuse? That he says that stuff to be let off the hook? You think people can’t be that evil and manipulative to use lies to get what they want?” Killua whispered with intensity, having to lean closer to Gon so could hear. Gon felt his heart break at what Killua said but also to what Gon was about to say.

“You sound just like Illumi.” Gon tried to keep his voice leveled as it threatened to shake. Killua widened his eyes as the color of his eyes became as expansive as the cosmos. Gon knew what that would do to him, and Gon hated making Killua feel anything close to that. But listening to him say that, to think he believes that, to think Illumi got through to him with what he preaches… it hurt Gon more.

Killua was amazing. And he helped Gon in more ways than Killua will ever know, maybe even in more ways than Gon would be able to tell. So that why he wants to help Killua that much more. He deserves to be as happy as he makes those around him, to feel joy and not have to be paranoid or feel this way about music and singing! The music community could be amazing if one immerse themselves in it and really connect. That's what Gon wants to teach to the school. And Killua was his personal project.

“Killua.” Gon said, taking Killua’s hands. His unfocused eyes finally came back into clarity as he looked at Gon, his eyes a beautiful blue, almost purple away from the light. “What I mean to say is… you don’t mean that. You didn’t mean anything you were saying. Illumi put those thoughts and opinions in your head without ever giving you a chance to mold your own. So now, only the things that support what Illumi told you is what sticks out and sticks with you the most. I want you to try and fight that. Don’t let him determine how you see others and their approach to music. Explore and make your own judgements. Make new connections and new friends. Ok?” Gon asked. Killua nodded slowly, his hands tightening on Gon’s slowly as though trying to keep hold of a lifeline.

“Ok, so now that I’ve introduced it, I was thinking we could put it into practice.” The teacher’s musically inclined voice resonated back into the boy’s hearing. “I want to do 3 part harmony projects. You’ll need 2 other partners, and seeing as we got 2 new students today, it’ll just be about perfect, 7 groups of 3! With harmonizing, you should always try to connect and look at the other’s you’re singing with. You need to be able to see and judge just based off the smallest cues how you should sing the next notes. Of course this is easier with 2 people, which is why I assigned 3, so I can challenge your guy’s ability to read your partners and make beautiful music! It’s about listening and complimenting each other’s notes.” She said. Killua was sighing by Gon’s side.

“Alright, so we need one more person to do this assignment with…” Killua hummed. Gon smiled, he was happy Killua was actually going to do this assignment because he asked to start singing and enjoying class… but…

“What do you mean, Killua? You need 2 other people to sing with for a 3 part harmony.” He said innocently. Killua looked over at Gon and blinked once.

“What?”

“Killua, I think this is a good opportunity for you to make connections with other people. Music is a really powerful tool to make connections. It can surprise you how singing with someone else can tell you things of the other person.”

Killua just squinted at Gon.
“Are you saying you’re not gonna sing with me?” He asked.

“Killu- come on, you weren’t listening. Please, go sing with other people so you can make connections and make your own judgment of the world. Alright?” Gon asked. Killua blushed as he looked out at the crowd of students jumping up to get partners. He knew he could get whoever he wanted if he just asked, but he knew no one was going to come up to him, too afraid he’d say no and give them a cold shoulder. It was embarrassing and humiliating to have to ask someone. He was actually hoping Gon would do it for him.

Maybe that was the problem and why he had to do it. It shouldn’t be this hard. Gon had his own problems when it came to music, but Killua had just as many, although different.

Well, Gon was his teacher when it came to these kind of things, and this was an assignment so…

He got up, putting his hands deep in his pockets and his shoulders by his ears as he began shuffling like some loser in the crowd, not really meeting anyone’s eyes. Just taking a nice stroll--

“Killua!” Gon laughed suddenly at his side.

“W-what!? Gon, what?” Killua asked, already way too embarrassed about this.

“You look so uncomfortable! C’mon, relax. Put your shoulders down and take your hands out your pockets.” Gon said, hands flying over his posture to fix, leaving warm traces at the contact. The warmth helped Killua stop being so tense and he let out a huff.

“This is embarrassing Gon.” He muttered. Gon looked up at that.

“Why?” He asked.

“This…” He stuttered, he wasn’t really expecting to have to explain. “It’s… no one expects me to be going around like some… normal person to ask to sing with someone who doesn’t match my level.” He said, looking down. Gon bit the inside of his cheek and stood straighter.

“Well, I think once you get past your pride… this whole school year will be easier.” Gon said.

“My pri-- ?!” Killua started in a huff.

“Yes, Killua. You’re embarrassed because your too prideful. You still think you’re above everyone, so it hurts your pride to have to ask someone ‘beneath’ you. But if you have to ask someone and show you’re on some… more equal level, people will be more receptive to you, and you won’t feel so isolated and you can finally enjoy the music community I was talking about!” Gon explained. Killua pouted. Why was Gon so much better at this than him?

“Ooookkk.” He bemoaned.

“Good, now try again. Go.” Gon said with a nice enough smile but Killua sneered back. He turned around again and let out a breath. Ok… no one’s beneath you Killua. Just… ask. His eyes fell on Kurapika. He remembered he was the one Gon wanted to try and teach someone similarly. He also seemed interesting, not as interesting as Gon, but Killua at least knows he sings good. A couple people was already around him but… He walked over and slipped between the lines of people giving their case for Kurapika to sing with them.

“Hey, Kurapika.” He started, those around him quieting down. “Er… wanna be my partner?” He rubbed the back of his head, feeling his face burn. Kurapika looked on with wide eyes and so did the others around him and Killua wanted to die right there. Preferably with a funny choking noise so he
could at least hear Gon’s laugh one more time before he died. But then Kurapika’s eyes were softening before he said:

“Of course, Killua.” He got up, ready to move.

“Ah, seriously?” Killua asked with a growing smile, his flush receding. His chest felt lighter and he felt accomplished and happy. This was great, no wonder people did it. Kurapika nodded again as the others moved away grumbling.

“Yes, I’d love to be one of your partners. And I assume the other one will be Gon?” He asked. Killua deflated.

“No.” He said grumpily. “He said I had to get my own partners and make my own connections…” He grumbled. Kurapika looked surprised then hide a soft light chuckle behind his hand.

“That’s just like him. He was saying something similar to me before. Alright. Then who were you thinking for the last partner?” He asked. Killua looked down at Kurapika’s shirt in thought. But he noticed Kurapika looking over his shoulder. Killua turned around curiously only to find Pokkle standing behind him. Killua gasped at him, surprised and somewhat upset, before his eyes went to the two people standing nearby behind Pokkle, Gon and Ponzu, looking over with wide grins while they hunched over a desk. Killua frowned, focusing back on Pokkle as he started talking.

“H-hey… Killua. Er, if you didn’t already… have a third partner, I was hoping…” He said, his sentence falling off as he continued. He was already expecting rejection. And Killua should give it to him! But… He wasn’t going to let his connections be severed before he had a chance to make it.

“Y… yea. You can work with us.” Killua muttered, feeling embarrassed again. Pokkle lit up.

“Seriously?!” He exclaimed. Gon and Ponzu gave each other a fist bump and Killua rolled his eyes as a small smile grew on his face.

“Yea.” He said with a stronger voice this time. He’s not better than him, or anyone. This was a community in which people sang together. And he wants to join in and sing. Besides, Pokkle was in that a cappella group that basically specialized in harmony. He shouldn’t be a bother, at least. “Let’s go back to the bean bags before everyone else steals them.” He said and rushed towards the back of the classroom and the other two followed.

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Killua stepped up to the front of the room with Pika on his left and Pokkle to his right. He was actually pretty nervous, he was wondering how this would go down. He was wondering if he could do this right. Gon was with Ponzu and some other rando he didn’t know yet, but he was still giving thumbs up and mouthing good luck from his seat.

“Alright, I’m so happy to see Killua decided to join in the activity!” Mrs. Richette said, to which Killua (with alot of effort) decided not to comment on. “Well then, what song are you singing and which harmony parts are each of you taking?” She said, putting her pen to her page in front of her.

“We’re singing ‘On Top of the World’ by imagine dragons. I’m taking the lower harmony.” Kurapika said.

“I’m taking upper harmony.” Killua said and some people in the class began murmuring. Wasn’t he always melody? Why was he taking harmony? Killua bit his lip but wouldn’t let them sway him. This wasn’t a recording session at home. He can sing what he wants. He looked at Gon to keep himself grounded. Gon nodded back his approval.
“And I’m singing melody.” Pokkle said.

“Alright! Please arrange yourselves as so! Pokkle will be in the middle.” She instructed and Killua moved to the side away from center, although feeling the classes’ eyes still follow his movements.

“Alright, whenever you’re ready!” She said. Killua exhaled slowly then began tapping a beat on his thigh with his hand. Pokkle joined with foot tapping then Kurapika started to whistle the beginning of their song, quite masterfully. He hit all the notes and beats well, hard to do with whistling sometimes in one go.

“If you love somebody Better tell them while they’re here ‘cause they just may run away from you!” Pokkle started, some of his fans whooping and cheering as he began. Killua didn’t realize how good Pokkle could sound when performing.

“You'll never know quite when, well then again it just depends on how long of time is left for you! I've had the highest mountains, I've had the deepest rivers, You can have it all but life keeps moving…!” Kurapika stopped whistling and they all inhaled as they launched into a perfect, smooth and beautiful 3 part harmony.

“I take it in but don't look down…!” Everyone in the class erupted into cheers at the sound and the ones performing had to smile, relishing in the familiar feeling of bringing joy to others using music.

‘Cause I'm on top of the world, ya! I'm on top of the world, ya! Waiting on this for a while now, Paying my dues to the dirt!” Killua carefully looked over to Kurapika and Pokkle as they looked at him too, making sure to read their head and hand movements to know what note they’re leaning towards next and to compensate for it. He listened carefully to the melody Pokkle was singing to tailor his notes to it. He couldn’t help the growing smile at the accomplished notes and harmony they were making. It was his favorite sounds and his favorite music to make.

“I've been waiting to smile, ya! Been holding it in for a while, ya! Take you with me if I can! Been dreaming of this since a child… I'm on top of the world.”

Killua and Kurapika fell off again to let Pokkle sing himself, Killua going back to tapping out the beat on his thigh and Kurapika whistling, each of them starting to get into a groove in front of their small audience.

“I've tried to cut these corners, Try to take the easy way out. I kept on falling short of something!

I coulda gave up then, but then again I couldn't have 'cause I've traveled all this way for something!” Killua’s eyes alight with excitement, he launched into the harmony again. The crowd held their breath to listen the more intently.

“I take it in but don't look down…! 'Cause I'm on top of the world, ya! I'm on top of the world, ya! Waiting on this for a while now! Paying my dues to the dirt! I've been waiting to smile, ya! Been holding it in for a while, ya! Take you with me if I can! Been dreaming of this since a child! I'm on top of the world.”

The three of them broke off into different harmony ‘oohs’ and everyone snapped and whooped at the beautiful noises and musically composed masterpiece. The three kept effective eye contact to read off each other’s body language and voices and went right back into singing words easily once they were all ready. It was weird to be this in sync with others who weren’t trying to control you.

“'Cause I'm on top of the world, ya! I'm on top of the world, ya! Waiting on this for a while now, Paying my dues to the dirt! I've been waiting to smile, ya! Been holding it in for a while, ya! Take
you with me if I can! Been dreaming of this since a child…

“And I know it’s hard when you’re falling down, And it’s a long way up when you hit the ground, Get up now, get up, get up now!” Most students were jamming out a bit in their seats, even the teacher. They didn’t know even Killua just being harmony was great too. And he was singing in the first place! This school year was looking up!

“And I know it's hard when you're falling down And it's a long way up when you hit the ground, Get up now, get up, get up now…

“(Cause I'm on top of the world, ya! I'm on top of the world, ya! Waiting on this for a while now… Paying my dues to the dirt! I've been waiting to smile, ya! Been holding it in for a while, ya! Take you with me if I can… Been dreaming of this since a child…

I'm on top of the world!”

Killua giggled by the end of it, looking over at Gon who stood up to applaud like a proud parent at an elementary recital among the other applauding students. It might have been a little patronizing, but that was ok. It made Killua feel proud of himself too. He had fun, this was fun. He was so thankful to Gon.

When Killua was going back over to sit and the next group was going up to set up and sing, Pokkle went over and caught his arm.

“Hey, Killua, I--... I feel like Friday was a mess and I didn’t really get a chance to talk to you to sort it out properly. I’m sorry about that, I was just really excited, I thought that maybe this meant that you would be more open for friends more so than singing for others, and I just messed everything up and I--”

“Pokkle, I--” Killua started with a sigh. Pokkle bit his lip, apprehension gnawing at the pit of his gut. “It’s… ok.” He said. Pokkle blinked.

“Wait, seriously?” Pokkle asked. Killua let a smile grow on his face.

“Yea, don’t worry about it.” He nodded.

“So… we’re cool?” He asked. Killua thought back to what they just did on stage and how great it felt, and how he actually learned some stuff from Pokkle during practice, and that… he didn’t want to lose that over some preconceived notion shaped by his brother.

“Yea, we’re cool.” Killua chuckled going to sit by Gon.

“Yea!” Pokkle cheered then turned to sit with Ponzu and tell her all about how Killua forgave him.

“Good job Killua…” Gon hummed happily. Killua shrugged, embarrassed again.

“No big deal. I just made some new connections.” He muttered as Kurapika sat by his side, since their sitting closer to the front. Gon smiled, so happy his friends were all friends again! He sat forward to listen to the next group’s presentation.

“Alright, Baise…” Silva said through the music booth’s microphone to get his charge’s attention. She looked up from her music sheet and microphone in front of her for a moment once she heard her boss’s voice come through her headphones.
"Yes, sir?" She asked.

"I heard… it was somebody’s birthday! I have a gift for you. You seemed to have been working so hard these past couple of months to get your album out, you might have forgotten to celebrate it.” He chuckled good naturedly. Baise blinked once in surprise then covered her mouth with a gasp.

"Mr. Zoldyck, you didn’t have to. Just being able to work under the Zoldyck label is enough for me..." She said. Silva shook his head.

"Nonsense, everyone should take a break every now and then." He said, pulling up a small gift bag with her name attached for her to see through the glass.

"Thank you, sir..." She hummed happily. But then her eyebrows scrunched slightly. "But... if there's anyone who works harder than any of us on your label, sir, its... you. You don't seem to leave the studio very often. And don't you have 5 kids at home? When do you have time to see them?" She asked. Silva gave pause, getting a pensive look in his eyes. Baise brought a nail to his lips to chew, nervous she may have said the wrong thing, crossed a line.

Silva let out a sigh, and looked down at the control panel that has often become his everyday view. Maybe she was right. He felt like he was drowning himself in work and kept away from home ever since that one day at Killua's debut concert; running away from the guilt from the whole ordeal and the aftermath. He didn't want to face all he failed, his children and wife. But maybe this was no better. Owning up to his mistake would be a better way about this situation than running, so that maybe he could one day look them in the eyes, forgiven.

He looked to his left at his planner he kept for the Zoldyck label. Even if he decided to go back home, he still made a lot of promises to people that needs to be kept before hand. He couldn't just brush them off. He at least had to complete his past promises made before he could do that. That was months and dozens of projects to get done. But at least he had the mind to start getting better. It's a first step.

"You're right Baise... I should see them more often. Thank you for reminding me I don't have an obligation to the label only..." It was easy to forget his family here. "I'll see to it I can see them more regularly. Happy birthday again." He smiled. Baise smiled easier now that he had said that, she felt better knowing she didn't say something wrong.

"Thank you sir."

"Let's do line 23 again." He said.

"Yes sir."

"You were amazing!" Gon gushed all the way to the last period of Physical training. Killua rubbed the back of this neck, but didn’t mind the ego boost Gon was feeding him.

"I wasn’t that amazing! Half of it was Pokkle and Kurapika.” Killua said. “Actually most of it!”

“Killua, no way…. are you actually praising other people?! ” Gon asked with a playful gasp. Killua laughed as he pushed Gon to the side. “Shut up.” Gon joined him in laughter when Bisky’s voice cut them off.

“Gon!” She shouted. Both teens straightened and turned to her. “Netero wants to see you in his office. You’re excused.” She said. Killua blinked and turned to Gon.
“Netero wants to see you? What for? What did you do?” Killua asked.

“Nothing! I mean… I don’t think… it might not even be anything bad, Killua, calm down.” Gon said, although he was worrying himself on the inside. Darn all those movies that put a bad connotation of being called to the principal’s… “I’ll see you later, ok?” Gon asked.

“Yea… after school at my place.” Killua nodded.

“I might see you earlier than that.” Gon winked and skipped off into a jog. Killua frowned as he watched Gon go. He turned back around to see Kurapika standing off by himself so he went to go stand by him and be broody too. Killua actually found out Kurapika does tutoring on Wednesdays too, for history.

Gon reached Netero’s office soon after he left the gym and knocked first this time, he learned.

“Netero? You wanted to see me?” Gon asked, poking his head in.

“Ah, yes Gon, c’min, c’min!” Netero called. Gon came inside with less fear, there didn’t seem to be anything wrong, Netero wasn’t calling with any grave voice. “I hope you don’t resent me for taking you away from classes, Gon. I just know from our last meeting that you wanted your flash concert to be a secret. And for that to happen, since after school you go off with Killua, you would need some time to get away and discuss more details.” Netero said.

“W- how did you know I go with Killua after school…?” Gon asked.

“What? I’m the principal, I’m allowed to have some secrets!” He chuckled an ohoho laugh. Gon sweatdropped and laughed weakly along.

“Well, ok, sure! This is perfect! I actually know when I want to do it, and it’s gonna be sooner rather than later. This Wednesday, after school.”

“After… but that’s the tutoring hour.” Netero said.

“I know, but not everyone goes to get tutored. Some just goes home. So if I put up some posters, those with the free extra hour can come.”

“But it’s kinda short notice…? Some people have plans in place.” Netero said.

“And some people don’t have plans. I’m also depending on social media to help with this movement, so even those that don’t make it can see it someway.” Gon said. Netero held his head as he laughed again.

“It seems like everytime I say a possible obstacle, you have the answer. Ok, Gon. I’ll trust you. What do you want on your posters?” He asked pulling out papers to write notes for Cheadle.

“Nothing.” Gon smiled. Netero’s eyes bulged out of his head and threw his head back in laughter. Gon always knew how to surprise him. What will he say next?

“Nothing?” Netero asked to clarify.

“Well, nothing specific. I want it to be really mysterious, anyone who really wants to come and find out what it is will come. Nothing but some colors and the date and time. Maybe some question marks.” Gon said. Netero wrote it down.

“Ok, ok. And what about the venue?” He asked.
“The auditorium!” Gon said like it was obvious.

“I’m sorry Gon, I can’t give you that big of a place. Your turn out might be too small. We have auxiliary performance rooms that are like small concert areas you could use.”

“Wow, you have things like that?” Gon asked.

“Of course! We’re a performance school, what kind of academy would we be if we only had one suitable performance area?” He asked, then began writing it down. “And I’ll add the location to the poster. And what about practice time?”

“I won’t need to practice. I’ll just sing from the feeling.” Gon said. He kinda had to sacrifice on that anyway, the time window was too small to fit in rehearsal.

“Wow, ok Gon. Who do you want on the prep committee? Stage hands? Make-up? All that?” Gon turned sheepish at the question.

“Well… to keep it as tight lipped as possible… I was hoping… no one?” He chuckled a bit.

“What? Gon, you cannot run this whole operation by yourself.” Netero said. Gon sounded crazier than him! “Someone has to do your make-up, and play the music and account for malfunctions during performance, since you don’t even plan on rehearsing--” Netero began.

“No, no, no. All that stuff is too professional anyway, I want it to be really rustic and not very grand. Intimate and homemade feel. I can do sound check a couple hours before the performance, I can do my own make-up, I have been the past couple of years. I don’t need curtains opened and closed, or a band or anything. I just need my guitar, a mic, and a stage. You forget, Netero, I’ve been running my own operation for years.” Gon said. Netero held down an impressed smile.

“You sure you’ll be able to reach through to the hearts of the students if it’s nothing fancy?”

“If they need it to be fancy, they’re not the ones I’m trying to reach right now.” Gon answered back. Netero finally laughed.

“Fine, fine. No one on board. How will you distribute the posters?”

“Myself. I’ll… come early the next two mornings and put up posters. And some during lunch. I’ll do the sound check during lunch on Wednesday.” Gon said, his eyes darting across Netero’s desk as he planned it out in his head. Netero nodded as he wrote things down.

“Ok. Just… one more thing.” He said. Gon looked up to meet his eyes.

“I think Cheadle will be a great assistant for you during this time. I know you want and are very confident in doing this on your own, but it’s very stressful in the midst of everything else you’re doing. She could at least take the load off somewhat and she wouldn’t tell another soul. You’d have a phantom assistant.” Netero offered. Gon bit his lip knowing how much work Netero usually puts on her and didn’t really want to add anymore on her.

“I dunno…” Gon muttered. “It’s fine if I do it myself.”

“Gon… I’m asking as a friend.” He tried again. Gon sighed.

“Ok. I’ll ask her. But if she says no, she doesn’t have to!” Gon said. Netero nodded.

“Fair enough.”
When Gon and Netero brought Cheadle in to talk about it, she completely supported what Gon wanted to do and was on board. She was a little peeved when Netero said this didn’t mean she was exempted from her usual duties but Gon assuring he could do as much of it as possible just made her want to help this earnest little sunshine boy more.

Gon stayed the rest of the period to talk of poster design, theme, and outfits and had to go when the bell was ringing. He knew he had to keep it secret from Killua most of all. That’s why he scheduled it during the tutoring hour. Killua won’t be curious enough to want to go and with a previous engagement, he didn’t have any incentive to. They went home together and practiced some more even though Gon seemed a little distracted. Then Gon asked Killua if they could jog separately to school the next day. Killua was a little suspicious but gave him the O.K.!

That morning he met up with Cheadle, his guitar in tow, so that she could adjust the acoustics of the performance room to the sounds (and also give Gon a tour of the small, personal room which he approved of greatly!) then they went to hang posters around. Gon liked it because he felt like a spy, having to put it up without being seen like a rebel leader. Well, it wasn’t that far off, rebellion was the theme of the flash concert. To go against the norms of what defined how music should be done in this age. His outfit they coordinated reflected that: it was black cargo pants and a black muscle tee, a bandana around his upper arm and black combat boots, one fingerless glove on the arm without the bandana. Gon also gave her the music itinerary for the concert and she told him how the lighting will look and the blocking of the moves.

After school that day after more practice with Killua, even though it was late, he was feeling too antsy and excited about the concert the next day to sleep (something that happened often before any concert he held). He rehearsed his songs some, going through them 3 times before finally getting to sleep early morning.

It was finally Wednesday, day of the concert, and Gon had sneaked away from lunch to put up some last minute posters. Throughout the past couple days he’s heard the school abuzz with rumors of the weird event most haughty students weren’t planning on wasting their time on. But he also heard some students too curious not to go. He was worried about the number of attendees to the event, but he can’t worry about that now, he can only do.

“Gon, what are you doing?” Killua asked with a cocked eyebrow. Gon jumped and twisted around urgently, plastering his body against the wall and the poster he was putting up.

“HUH?!” He chuckled, a forced smile placed on his face to try and avoid suspicion. Killua took his hands out his pockets to fold his arms. His cat eyes scanning over Gon for any clues as to the real answer.


“Because I just remembered… Killua, that, you’re late!” Gon made up.

“Late? Late for what?” Killua asked, a laugh tinting his voice from Gon’s bad lying.

“You have to go, Killua, no times for questions, quickly, go!” Gon pointed off, hoping Killua would just go and spare him. Killua threw his head back in a laugh.

“Gon…” Killua tried, his voice lost to his laughter.

“No! Go!” Gon said again. Killua shrugged with an eased smile.
“Ok, ok, I’m going.” He said, taking his phone out. He may just hang out with Kurapika until Gon got over whatever it was he was doing. He raised an eyebrow as he spotted a poster on the hallway wall. A dark purple fade to black design with a bunch of question marks on it and a mysterious date for that Wednesday after school. Killua huffed dismissively as he passed it. Whatever it was, he couldn’t go anyways because it was during his tutoring hours. Maybe he could suggest Gon could go to it so he can tell him about it later and Gon could have something to do while he waited for Killua after school. But he won’t worry about it.

After school, Gon tried his best not to hop around and move with anticipation pumping through his veins as he walked Killua to the library. He was super excited about heading to the performance room and starting the concert. But until then, he tried his best to listen to what Killua was saying, moving at what felt like a snail’s pace because he wanted to run.

“... So, if you have time, listen to your scales with the sharps and flats.” He was saying.

“Mhm.” Gon hummed.

“Also… there seemed to be some weird event after school today… I didn’t know if you wanted to go to that? Something you could do if you get too bored waiting for me?” Killua asked turning to face Gon as they reached the library. Gon paused then a smile stretched over his lips.

“Aw, Killua, you were worried about my boredom!”

“S-stupid, that’s because you have to attention span on a fish! Shut up, go or don’t go, I don’t care. Geez…” Killua exclaimed, face red and turning into the library.

“Bye, Killua, I’ll see you later!” Gon said and waited two beats before sprinting off down the hall. He got the the performance room, some students already sitting inside filling the air with curious and excited murmurs. The room was dark, the only light source coming from the spot light on the black curtains up on stage, but he could still see it wasn’t as many as Gon was hoping for but he’s sure more will be on their way. He ran up the side steps to backstage in the cover of darkness.

“There you are, Gon!” Cheadle exclaimed, her black shirt on and her hair in a messy ponytail. She looked stressed.

“Don’t you look good?” He smirked, flicking her ponytail to one side.

“Don’t start with me, Freecs.” She chuckled. “Hurry and get dressed. And do a sound check while there’s still not a lot of people out there.” She said, getting a mic ready. Gon ran to the back dressing room and hurried out of his normal clothes to the concert outfit. He loved the rush and prep of concerts, it was so official and fun and stressing in a good way that you know it will have all been worth it when it’s over. He came out to Cheadle strapping the mic mouthpiece over his ears and positioned by his mouth. She pressed a button on his waist and told him to sound check.

“Check, check, 1,2, do re mi...~” Gon hummed out, the sound coming out clear and over the speakers. The crowd in the room let out “whoo”’s as they felt that the festivities would be starting soon, and Gon let out a chuckle. This was gonna be so fun! He moved closer to the sides where Cheadle showed him where his guitar would be on stage right, the stand in which she would control the lights and where he could go in case of emergencies.

“Alright, whoo. Got it.” Gon nodded, trying to retain all the information. Man, after this, Gon’s gonna need Killua to drill him on memory. Suddenly, Cheadle was in front of him.

“This… this is amazing... what you’re doing, Gon.” Cheadle said, her hands flitting over Gon’s
outfit to make sure it looked presentable for show.

“Thanks, Cheadle.” Gon flashed a lopsided smile at the shorter lady in front of him. He felt his heart rate speeding up, a usual sign before he performs, and he reminded himself to slow his breathing. He heard the crowd, just on the other side of the stage’s undrawn curtains, their murmurs reaching a fever pitch laced with anticipation and curiosity. They were ready for him, and Gon was ready to do the thing he loved best.

He made another sound check with his mouthpiece and let out a few more warm ups that Killua taught him, and he was ready.

“Ok, Cheadle. You can go ahead.” Gon gave her the O.K. as he trotted onto the stage.

“Mh. Good luck, Gon.” Cheadle said, her eyes shining from the brightness that was Gon. The crowd was curious and restless, talking over each other in a giant mass of words, trying to guess what this was. There wasn’t as many as there could be, only maybe a 6th of the school having come, too intrigued by the poster not to. So of course Hisoka was there, somewhere in the back. He had expectations for what this would end up to be, but there wasn’t much he was hoping for. If this turned out to be a bust, he’ll leave. Simple as that. But he couldn’t deny his curiosity was piqued. He had hoped Illumi would come with him, but he had stated it seemed like a waste of time that could be better spent practicing for the Winter Showcase.

“Ah~ Illumi could be no fun sometimes…” The flamboyant clown muttered to himself although the smile never misplaced itself from his lips. His eyes widened ever so slightly to adjust to the sudden dimming lights and all talking in the crowd died down in anticipation and excitement. Few excited ‘Shhhs!’ and ‘It’s starting!’ could be made out over the low hush of the crowd and the curtains opened. An overwhelming excitement washed over the crowd and they let out electrified cheers, some raising fists and phones, ready to record this event for their lazier friends or students.

A loud clicking noise was heard and a spotlight flicked on to shine on center stage, where Gon’s form was lit up. His head was down and there was nothing else on stage with him, his black outfit framing his charismatic stance. More excited cheers erupted with new zeal as most students there were Gon’s fans, coincidentally.

Gon looked up slowly for dramatic effect and the crowd told him how much they liked the execution with another round of loud cheers. Gon let a slow smile creep on his face, he could never keep a straight face when he was getting such a pleased reaction from his audience. The crowd keep the energy up at seeing Gon’s sexy and rustic smile.

Gon thrusted a fist into the air, trying to get back into character, and the crowd responded, not really knowing what was going on, with cheers and their own fists in the air.

“Remember why you sing!” Gon cried out, causing most of the crowd to fall silent in confusion. What? What did he say? Remember… what? They barely had time to let that sink in as music started up from the speakers surrounding the small performance room. Gon started slow.

“~Sing it out… Boy, you've got to see what tomorrow brings…~” Gon sang, motioning one hand over the crowd. He raised the other one as he sang the next line. “ Sing it out… Girl, you've got to be what tomorrow needs…” He brought his hands out in front of him and pointed out to the crowd, his heel tapping as the music swelled. “ For every time that they want to count you out… Use your voice every single time you open up your mouth…!” The music came crashing around them and the crowd cheered in response. Gon began prancing around the stage to bring up the energy even more, and everyone found themselves being swept up in Gon’s pace. Jumping in their place, singing the words with Gon.
Sing it for the boys! Sing it for the girls! Every time that you lose it sing it for the world!... Sing it from the heart! Sing it till you're nuts! Sing it out for the ones that'll hate your guts!" Gon sang out, miming out with vigor the emotions of going nuts and not caring who hates you. People in the crowd singing along easily fueled by Gon’s raw emotion leaking into the crowd and affecting everyone there. It was infectious with Gon leading the stage.

"Sing it for the deaf! Sing it for the blind! Sing about everyone that you left behind! Sing it for the world... Sing it for the world!" The music took a break and Gon recentered himself on stage for the second verse. Everyone fed off what he was giving.

"Sing it out, boy they're gonna sell what tomorrow means...! Sing it out, girl before they kill what tomorrow brings! You've got to make a choice If the music drowns you out!" Some in the crowd roared their defiance in letting that happen. "And raise your voice...!" They joined in song with Gon again, "Every single time they try and shut your mouth...!"

"Sing it for the boys! Sing it for the girls! Every time that you lose it sing it for the world!"

"Sing it from the heart! Sing it till you're nuts! Sing it out for the ones that'll hate your guts!"

They crowd shouted out at the end of the sentences in a sing along. They wanted to give as much energy as Gon was.

"Sing it for the deaf! Sing it for the blind! Sing about everyone that you left behind! Sing it for the world, Sing it for the world!" Gon dashed over to one side of the stage and produced a guitar in which he began playing a guitar solo with the music. Then he was singing again, his foot tapping along with the swell of the music.

"Cleaned-up corporation progress! Dying in the process! Children that can talk about it, Living on the webways! People moving sideways! Sell it till your last days! Buy yourself a motivation, Generation Nothing, Nothing but a dead scene! Product of a white dream! I am not the singer that you wanted, But a dancer! I refuse to answer! Talk about the past, sir, Wrote it for the ones who want to get away!" The crowd clapped and sang along with Gon, "Keep running!"

Gon relaxed center stage, closing his eyes and focusing on relaying the message he wanted the crowd to hear, for his feelings to reach them.

"Sing it for the boys!"

"Sing it for the girls!"

"Every time that you lose it sing it for the world!"

"Sing it from the heart!"

"Sing it till you're nuts!"

"Sing it out for the ones that'll hate your guts!"

"Sing it for the deaf!"

"Sing it for the blind!"

"Sing about everyone that you left behind!"

"Sing it for the world!"
Sing it for the world!”

Gon opened his eyes and the crowd was taken aback with how much emotion shimmered out of his golden hued eyes, an intensity they don’t usually see from Gon.

“Got to see what tomorrow brings!

Sing it for the world!

Sing it for the world!

Girl, you've got to be what tomorrow needs!

Sing it for the world!

Sing it for the world!”

As Gon finished, most in the crowd having been singing along, Gon lifted his fist in the air and the crowd erupted into another round of loud cheers.

"Remember why you sing! Welcome, Musica Academy!" Gon cried out, and got a great cheer in response.

"Now... you guys might be wondering why you're here. But first, I want to thank all of you for giving this event a chance and coming out here with like, minimal information. Seriously, what's wrong with you guys?" Gon laughed and he received laughs and cheers in response. "Who comes to a strange event without knowing what it was?" Gon laughed again, the audience eating up his intimate speaking style, as though he were talking personally to his circle of friends.

"I wanted to organize this to remind this school why you all sing."

Another confused hush fell over the crowd similarly to how it did in the beginning of the concert when he said it.

"I haven't been here long, but I noticed a lot of things. I haven't heard friends exchanging their latests sound bites... I haven’t seen friends giving advice to others after finishing a project just because the competition’s too high... I haven't seen the excitement and nerves from knowing this is it… the last step before we all go out into the world to play our music. I haven't noticed the love of our career.

“When I came here, I was expecting an atmosphere filled with the essence of music, and creativity… Since I didn’t find it, I wanted to make it my mission to create it. I want to bring that to the school. But I'm gonna need the help of everyone here! Can you do that for me?!" Gon asked, playing to the crowd. They all cheered their affirmation.

"During this concert, I'll be singing songs that promote music for the love of singing, and our future career. To bring back the memories of why we wanted to start singing in the first place when we were younger. Bring these songs with you throughout the school year to carry you and motivate you to share the feeling with others. Sing to remind everyone your first home concert, sing to remind everyone how you felt when the crowd screamed your name, the top of the world feeling when you got over a million views on the video of your concert. The fist..." Gon said, bringing his fist up again, multiple people in the crowd following suit, "A symbol of our unwavering will, our refusal to let the trials and aspects of this career wash us out, to change us or make us sing what they want just for profit. This is our voice, our songs, our choice, we will sing...” Gon had to pause as the crowd roared their agreement "We will sing for the love of singing. We will remember why we sing!"
Gon went into his next song, strumming his guitar with peppy energy, as the crowd receptively shouted their agreement. Hisoka raised his eyebrows as an amused smile crossed his features.

"Ah... I'm so happy I decided to stay... I didn't know it'd be Gon, but he never disappoints..." Hisoka purred. "I can't wait to hear what Illumi has to say about this." Hisoka said, watching those who were recording the concert to no doubt post it later on.

"~Turn on that radio... As loud as it can go! Wanna dance until my feet can't feel the ground!~" Gon sang, happily strumming his guitar. He loved when he performed with his guitar. It’s like his best stage partner. The crowd could sense it too.

"Say goodbye to all my fears, One good song and they disappear! And nothing in the world can bring me down!" The crowd clapped and stomped along. "Hand Clapping, Hip Shaking, Heart Breaking! There's no faking What you feel When you're right at home, yeah!" The crowd again joined in with Gon’s singing.

"Music's in my soul! I can hear it Every day and every night! It's the one thing on my mind! Music's got control... and I'm never letting go, No, no! I just want to play my music... Woo!" The crowd cheered along, getting pumped and understanding a little better what Gon wanted in the end result. They loved the drive, energy, and his vision. He was starting a movement, inspiring those around him.

"Got my six string on my back..." Gon winked into the crowd, loving the reference to such a ‘loyal’ instrument he was playing with at the moment. "Don't need anything but that! Everything I want is here with me... So forget that fancy car, I don't need to go that far! That's driving me is following my dreams... Yeah!" Gon bounced and jammed along with the beat, losing himself with the music like he usually did in his concerts. Everyone was easily brought up in his pace.

"Hand Clapping, Earth Shaking, Heart Breaking, There's no faking What you feel When you're on a roll, yeah! Music's in my soul! I can hear it Every day and every night, It's the one thing on my mind! Music's got control and I'm never letting go... No, no! I just want to play my music! I just want to play my music!"

Gon recentered himself on stage as he launched into the bridge.

"Can't imagine what it'd be like... Without the sounds of all my heroes... Singing all my favorite songs... So I can sing along" They were to be someone’s hero when they grow up and go out to be World Stars... and what they here... they wanted to be the ones to determine what they sound like to those that look up to them.

"Music's in my soul... I can hear it Every day and every night, It's the one thing on my mind! Music's got control and I'm never letting go, No, no! I just want to play my music!"

"Music's in my soul! I can hear it Every day and every night, It's the one thing on my mind! Music's got control... and I'm never letting go, No, no!"

I just want to play my music

All night long!"

"Yow!" Gon cried out, playing a final riff off his guitar.

...
mind to the school. They'll work hard to bring the joy back into music. The hour started to roll into the next as Gon filled the small performance room with songs of love and music joy.

"Thank you so much for joining me here, guys, after school when you could have been home... working to advance your careers..." Gon huffed tiredly into his mike, holding his guitar. The crowd moaned their remorse, they didn't want the concert to end. It was an experience they loved and enjoyed, but all good things had to end, right? Others lifted their fist instead in response, they wouldn't have wanted to be anywhere else. Indulging and immersing themselves in music they enjoyed. Gon's been telling them the whole time how even enjoying other's concerts is a way to help mold their own image, getting inspiration and getting motivated. Gon smiled easily at the reaction.

"Now don't get too sad..." Gon chuckled. "I've got a few more songs to gift you guys. But I wanted to thank you guys before I forgot..." His lopsided smile made the girls swoon and squeal.

"Alright, here we go... let's finish this up together!" He riffed his guitar again to play the next song. Those who recognized it began to get ready to sing along as they did with all the songs Gon sang covers of that evening.

He gave a cute giggled before he began the countdown.

"1, 2, 3, 4!

"Oh, whoa, oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh oh oh oh!"

The audience sang the hooting call with Gon as they stomped and danced in the crowd.

"Play the lotto you might win it. It's like 25 to life so you bust out of prison! Something's in the air, something's in the air!"

"It's like that feeling when you're just about to kill it, Take your last shot you know you're gonna hit it! Something's in the air, something's in the air...! Whoa oh oh oh oh...

"Something big I feel it happening Out of my control!" The crowd whooped, knowing the movement Gon started for the school. Initiated by Gon, and carried out by his faithful fans.

"Pushing, pulling, and it's grabbing me, Feel it in my bones like Whoa oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh! Something big I feel it happening Oh whoa oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh... Something big!" This song helped to fill the crowd with an energy, the movement and goal of a mission just for them. Something big.

"It's like that feeling when you're 'bout to win the medal, And you worked so hard that you knew you wouldn't settle, Hands are in the air, hands are in the air!"

"When they hear you when you thought they wouldn't listen, It's like an anthem that the whole world's singing..." The crowd joined Gon in the next words, "Hands are in the air, hands are in the air! Whoa oh oh oh oh!"

The crowd began clapping in rhythm, driven by some force that electrified the atmosphere.

"Something big I feel it happening Out of my control, Pushing, pulling, and it's grabbing me,

Feel it in my bones like, Oh whoa oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh oh whoa. Oh oh oh oh

Something big I feel it happening! Oh whoa oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh whoa. Oh oh oh oh, Something big!

"Whoa Yeah, yeah! If we stomp our feet, The ground will shake!" Gon sang and the crowd stomped
their feet in time to the music. “If we clap our hands, The walls will break!” The crowd clapped loud enough to rival the music volume. “Yell so loud won’t forget our names!” The crowd let out a giant roar at once to let their voices reach the heavens. Even Gon’s skin broke out in goosebumps from the passion and raw emotion he was receiving back from the crowd. He couldn’t believe how well this was going. “’Cause something big is happening!”

“Take this spark And start a fire! Raise this up, We’re feeling high! They can’t tell us anything ‘Cause something big is happening!”

“Sing!” The crowd shouted out.

“Something big I feel it happening Out of my control! Pushing, pulling, and it’s grabbing me,
Feel it in my bones like Oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh Oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh oh!

“Something big is happening whoa! Oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh Oh oh oh oh whoa oh oh oh oh oh oh Something big I feel it happening oh!”

Killua huffed as he closed the book shut. He checked his phone again one last time for any text from Gon. He usually texts him during Wednesday tutoring. It was weird not to have Gon text him… did he do something wrong? Was he being distant for some reason? Did he find some other friend that was cooler than him and deserved more of his time?

“Alright, well that sums up this lesson. Do you get the topic better now?” Killua asked after pushing those thoughts out of his mind for a later time, focusing on the student in front of him again.

“Yea…” The teenage boy said with a tint of sadness coloring his tone that indicated he probably didn’t get it but was gonna go home and sulk about it instead of asking for more clarification. Killua rolled his eyes, whatever, he can’t help those that don’t want it. Killua began packing up and started to text a message out to Gon. The kid in front of him began scrolling his phone as well as Kurapika came over to his side, finished with his history tutoring.

“No word from Gon?” He asked in his velvety voice. “I didn’t get any texts from him either…” He said putting a hand on the table top to lean against it elegantly.

“Yea, it’s weird… maybe he’s busy…” Killua said with a frown and sent the message.

“Woah! Are you seeing this?!” The kid in front of Killua cried, calling the attention of both the talented teens. The boy turned his phone around and Killua saw the grainy image video streaming. But there was no doubt about it… That was Gon.

“What?! Is this live?!” Killua asked, half standing out his seat as he watched Gon dance and sing on stage in… one of the auxiliary smaller performance rooms.

“Yea! One of my friends went to that question mark thing! I guess Gon was putting on a flash concert. That’s so cool, I wish I went.” He said.

“I…” Killua blinked as he watched Gon give a wink and twirl and felt something in his chest tighten. “I wish he told me…”

---
“~Here’s to my future, Here’s to my YES-TER-DAY!~” The crowd joined in with Gon, the fun to shout out and sing with their idols. Gon hopes they’ll always remember yesterday and how it shaped them today.

“Here’s to change Oh, here’s to my YES-TER-DAY!~” They don’t have to focus on their mistakes of the past, it only helps them make better changes tomorrow.

“No tomorrow without a YES-TER-DAY!” They’ll be happy they even had a yesterday. A chance. Their dream right before them. So they’ll sing.

“Here’s to my future, Goodbye to yesterday!” The crowd broke up into their own harmonizing, the sound beautiful and only a continuation of the beautiful magic they’ve been making with each other the whole hour. They feel like this is a new community, friends and family making bonds in this events.

“All these years I've been searching... For who I'm supposed to be! All this time I've been wasting 'Cause I was right in front of me... Oh, it's a crooked old tradition. By a masterful magician! But in all this trouble I've met I haven't got one single regret, no!”

How could Gon regret anything about coming to the school? Even though he has that threat of leaving the school from the bet and he’s no doubt made enemies with those jealous of him, but it’s only shaped how he came out to be.

“Here's to my future, Here's to my yesterday! Here's to change Oh, here's to my yesterday! No tomorrow without a yesterday! Here's to my future, Goodbye to yesterday! Yesterday!”

Killua rushed with Kurapika and the other teen towards the concert. Killua could see now others were also making their way to the concert now that other afterschool activities were ending. By the time they got there, the doors were having to be propped open so people outside of it could possibly see and hear what was going on. Killua could hear the verses coming out the open doors, but he couldn’t even come in 3 feet of it.

“Oh, I'm a hopeless crash collision... 'Cause I'm a hostage to my pride! And by my own volition, I've been a saint, I've been the truth, I've been the lie...”

“Move it!” Killua bit out, already irritated that Gon didn’t tell him more about this event, and now on top of that, he had to deal with this.

“Excuse me.” Kurapika followed suit behind Killua with less irritation. He was more curious then upset about what Gon was doing. He was always so interested in what Gon was doing, and he found himself investing in what Gon did more often than not.

“Oh, it's a crooked old tradition...! By a masterful magician! But in all this trouble I've met I haven't got one single regret, no!~” Killua finally made it past the crowd outside the door, finding himself at the very back of the room. He hopped slightly to see over the heads of all the jumping and dancing students, trying to confirm with his own eyes that it was Gon on stage singing. He’s heard his voice too many times at this point not to be able to recognize what Gon sounded like, but he felt too confused at being left out that he was hoping it wasn’t really.

He spotted Gon past the phones in the air, each with mini Gons on stage as they recorded it, on stage bouncing with the relatively slow beat. How long has the concert been going on? Did he do it specifically when Killua was in tutoring so he couldn’t come? What was Gon doing?

“Here's to my future, Here's to my YES-TER-DAY! ” Killua was shocked at the reaction Gon got
out the crowd. He’s known school concerts to be very apathetic on the crowd’s side since they don’t like supporting other artists in this fierce competition for attention. He looked around in surprise to figure out who these people were that they were so receptive.

“Here’s to change Oh, here’s to my YES-TER-DAY! No tomorrow without a YES-TER-DAY!” Killua’s body shook with the reverberating shouts of the crowd, and he looked up to Gon on stage. Gon was eating it up, a smile on his face. Killua’s bottom lip trembled, he looked so happy… why wouldn’t he invite him to share in with it? It wasn’t like he doesn’t love watching Gon perform…

“Here’s to my future, Goodbye to YES-TER-DAY! YES-TER-DAY!” Killua was surprised at the breaks of the crowd into different harmony parts to sing like the original song, unprompted as far as Killua knew unless there was some conductor he couldn’t see in the front. It was spontaneous and fun and… Killua felt the corner of his lips go up in a smile, not being able to help but being swept into Gon’s energy. It was so Gon.

“A new day you can go, you can do Anything you wanna. It's your play, swing low, go high, Anywhere you wanna! You can reach for the moon, Anywhere your dreams could take you. Go astray, fade away, Just leave it to YES-TER-DAY!” A hand fell on Killua’s shoulder and he jumped slightly before turning to his right to see Kurapika.

“Are you ok?” Kurapika asked. He sort of watched Killua break down and build up right in front of him as Gon performed. He was worried about one of the people he actually considered a friend.

“I…” Killua looked up at the stage as Gon continued his performance with great charisma and smiled again. “Yea… I’m starting to be. I’ll be ok.” He said, turning back to Kurapika. “C’mon, I wanna go backstage.” Killua said, moving past Kurapika to the edges of the room. Kurapika sighed, the prospect of having to push through more sweaty, jumping bodies again did not please him. He grit his teeth and followed Killua. Either pushing to get out or pushing to get to Gon, he was gonna have to push through bodies anyways, might as well follow through with why he came here in the first place: Gon.

Gon swayed his body and bounced with every down beat as he strummed away at his guitar on stage.

“Here’s to my future, Here's to my YES-TER-DAY! Here's to change Oh, here's to my YES-TER-DAY! No tomorrow without a YES-TER-DAY! Here's to my future, Goodbye to YES-TER-DAY! YES-TER-DAY!”

Gon windmilled as he let out a finish strum with a flourish. He put his fist in the air, in which the crowd put up theirs as well in response.

“Remember why you sing! Take that with you as you go throughout your days… Thank you, Good night!”

The lights died and the room was plunged into darkness and the crowd let out echoing cheers.

Chapter End Notes

Honorable mentions
Love you any less - Rag ‘n’ Bone man: Hold on forever scene [Suggested by
@asyaforni] *** really good, just wasn’t used because it’s about love and Gon hasn’t confessed yet! Look it up!

Her Diamonds- Rob Thomas: Just big mood
Chained to the Rhythm by Katy Perry: For Gon’s concert, its a little forward and blaming and less encouraging and music like so it’s a mention for now, but it might also show up in later chapters, who knows lol

LOL, I don’t know anything about music. Can you tell? I’m making everything up, but I’m having fun. PLOT TWIST, I’m also as in love with Gon as I am with Killua. Did someone say Daddy Zoldcyk? Yes, it’s my head cannon that Silva is a teddy bear at heart, you can’t take it from me.

Unnies and Produce 101 and Produce 101 season 2 are great shows in which I got some of the training terms and activities from. I’d recommend if you like seeing the singing practice and recording process of my story! I certainly enjoyed and tried (Maybe too hard) to convey the activities.

Also, next chapter, I’m going to be trying out new writing styles. I know I’m not the best at description and such, so I want to read moe and get better with practice. I hope you guys will enjoy the story even with the experimental writing anyways. Please remember to comment and leave kudos! Thanks!

Note: Songs listed out in the story (i.e. Song title by Artist) will not be recorded again in the featured songs or added to the playlist because they are so brief in their mention or use, it’d really be clutter at that point.

=EDIT= (11/17/2017)
OH GEEZ How Could I forget? I put a trigger warning at the top about anxiety and stuff now. Wow, I feel bad, I should have given better warning. Also some formatting updates
Musics of the Hearts

Chapter Notes

Fresh off the press, lol. I'm definitely not the person who should orchestrating this piece of composition, but here I am, because who knows this au better than me? Here we go! (Oh yes! I'm renewing my thanks to my editor @canzie-gumm/whats-wrong-aniki for however many chapters I forget to thank her for!)

Writing Style number 1!

Just Fine- Mary J. Blige
These Words- Natasha Bedingfield
September- Earth, Wind & Fire
Friday I’m in Love- The Cure
Walking on Sunshine- Katrina & The Waves
I Don’t Feel like Dancin’- Scissor Sisters
Move Your Feet- Junior Senior
I Want You Back- Jackson 5
Beautiful girls- Sean Kingston
I’m Yours- Jason Mraz
You Can’t Hurry Love- Phil Collins
You Get What You Give- New Radicals
I’ll Be There For You- Bon Jovi
Life is a Highway- Rascal Flatts (it’s gotta be the cars soundtrack)
Shut Up and Drive- Rihanna
Lost Without U- Robin Thicke
Hallelujah- Jon Bovi or Jeff Buckley (either one, whichever tickles your pickle)
Try Everything- Shakira
Here- Alessia Cara
Magi- the Dayman *** (Hey, besides shameless plugging a good AMV for a different anime, this song is cool and good and the EDM is really good in my opinion and the video helps with the coolness… It’ll be on the music youtube list)

Shower- Becky G
Lose Yourself- Eminem
Moment 4 Life- Nicki Minaj
Otis- Kanye West, JAY Z (feat Otis)
Jesus Walks- Kanye West
Remember the Name- Fort Minor
If Only You Knew- Phil Perry*** (Male cover of the song, its beautiful)
Lose Control- Missy Elliott (Feat Ciara & Fat Man Scoop)
(I knew there was alot of songs, which was why I hesitated putting it in)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**Ging Freecss**

The Father of Gon Freecss. He left the Island of Japan when he was 20 to go and follow his dreams of being a World Star, leaving behind his home, school, and 2 year old son in the process. He had to start from the bottom without any formal training, but his natural charisma, rustic looks and singing voice, and persistence led him to the number one charts World Wide. He specializes in rock and rock ballads, and he tries not to think about what he left behind so he could focus on what’s in front of him.

But he is confident his son will make him proud, and he’ll see him on the charts one day.

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**Chapter 9: Musics of the Heart**

The school was abuzz with life the day after Gon’s concert. He had shaken the school down to its foundation and it seemed very few were unaffected by it. Everyday a new change was noted and something about the school was different. The students were finally excited about what they do.

At least mostly so.

With the start of Gon’s movement, the school split into groups, sometimes directly opposing another group.

There were the students with the readily accepting attitude of Gon's plans and goals-- his die hard followers and fans. The majority of the audience at the flash concert were Gon's fans because they were the ones who shared his ideals the most: open minded to new experiences and ready to try anything once. With the idea Gon proposed at the concert, the school could change in amazing radical ways.

There was other groups who didn't like what Gon proposed at all, antagonizing themselves against him and his fans. They liked the way it was before, what he was suggesting might actually decrease their fan base and ability to do well in class. They won't have anything going for them if they can't depend on making shallow popular pieces that statistics show the consumer base demands and will
buy. They doubt they will be able to make successful careers based on the new emotional personal pieces Gon proposed they do instead of just focusing on becoming ideal idols for record companies here at the Academy.

Others just don't like how some lower status students try to talk to others of high class for the sake of "connections???” and "fun???” like, they were way too out of the other's leagues to hang out with them. They should show their respect to their higher classes! Others liked the idea that skills doesn't necessarily have the determining factor in the success of their careers, but their passions can.

Some students feel like the whole proposed ideal for the school is a new kind of conspiracy theory for leeches to ride the coattail of the better students again. If they can play the passions and music-for-fun card well enough, it's an easy way to do just that. Some students actually do, like careful spies.

Some others just don't like the new flash dance and sing numbers that seemed to have taken the school by storm.

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Melody-- er, Senritsu skipped along the hall, a cloche hat furling her hair about her eyes attractively and her skirt billowing behind her. Her fans watched her go by with light in their eyes. Senritsu bit her lip to stop her wide smile as she noticed. Since Gon's concert to promote love of the person's music and underlying passion, she's gained a larger following than ever before for Senritsu. Her happiness was bubbling over into a fevered pitch and she wasn’t sure how much longer she could hold it in. She wasn’t exactly sure why she wanted to hold it in actually, she should feel free to sing out her emotions whenever now! Her own imaginary instrumental was all she needed before she launched into singing.

““You know, I love music, And every time I hear something hot, It makes me wanna move, It makes me wanna have fun!” Students’ attention were drawn to her, making her way through the hallway. Their eyes lit up, easily welcoming the musical number. Excitement travelled quickly through the crowded hallways as the hype picked up for the first musical number of the school day.

“But it's something about this song right here… This song right here! Its makes me wanna… Wooooh!

“Let it go… Can't let this thing called love get away from you! Feel free right now, go do what you want to do… Can't let nobody take it away, from you, from me, from we…!” Senritsu skipped around hall, playfully dancing with the other students who easily joined in the fun.

“No time for moping around, are you kidding? And no time for negative vibes, cause I'm winning! It's been a long week, I put in my hardest, Gonna live my life, feels so good to get it right!”

“So I like what I see when I'm looking at me When I'm walking past the mirror!” Melody sang out with 2 girls flanking her closets sides, acting as backup singings, harmony with her tunes. They posed by a classroom window where they could see their reflections and struck poses. Boys to their side checked them out, interested in the way they moved and danced. The girls only moved on, the feeling not mutual.

“Don't stress through the night, at a time in my life, Ain't worried about if you feel it! Got my head on straight, I got my vibe right, I ain't gonna let you kill it! You see I wouldn't change my life, my life's just fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, ooooh!” Melody sang, skipping on beat with each of her syllables, making a show in the corridors.
“Fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, ooooh! Just fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, fine, ooooh!

You see I wouldn't change my life, my life's just--!

“Threw some chords together, The combination D.E.F. It's who I am it's what I do, And I was gonna lay it down for you…” Melody passed a couple students by the locker; one boy with a handful of crumpled papers and looking a bit rough, and the other girl looked concerned but touched as he sang the words.

“I'm trying to focus my attention But I feel so A.D.D… I need some help some inspiration, But it's not coming easily! Tryna find the magic, Tryna write a classic… Don't you know, don't you know, don't you know?” The girl covered a wobbly smile as the male student shook his fist, letting small notes and ripped pieces of paper fall from his hands as he sang passionately instead.

“Waste bin full of paper, Clever rhymes, see ya later. These words are my own, From my heart flow- - I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you! There's no other way, To better say 'I love you, I love--”

“Our hearts were ringing In the key that our souls were singing.” A tall student strode past their scene, followed by some 5 odd students, all wearing loose fitting or artistic clothing. The student in front stood out most because of his afro atop his head. They all walked with a wide stride in their step.

“As we danced in the night, Remember how the stars stole the night away…?” The students behind him sang chorus, harmony and backup with him, creating a capella music for the song they sang.

“Ba de ya - say do you remember? Ba de ya - dancing in September? Ba de ya - never was a cloudy- -!”

“I don't care if Monday's blue…” It was hard to keep watch of the students walking fast down the corridor, when a negative energy brought the scene down to a bunch of punk emo kids sitting at the base of the stairs the cool kids just strolled by. They blocked the path of the stairwell and generally made people avoid them with their broody attitudes as they strum their black guitars and balanced their shoes on their skateboards by their sides.

“Tuesday's gray and Wednesday too… Thursday I don't care about you, It's Friday I'm in love!” They all broke out into almost ironic beautiful harmony, swooning left and right, obviously thinking of some out of league crush.

“Monday you can fall apart…! Tuesday, Wednesday break my heart. Thursday doesn't even start, It's Friday, I'm--”

“I'm walking on sunshine... Wooooh!” The broody emo kids all jumped in surprised and some had to duck as a teenage girl with flaming pink hair literally jumped the last 5 steps of the stairs and over the heads of the emos, hitting the floor in a sprint to nowhere-- just charged up on excited energy.

“I'm walking on sunshine, Woooah!” As she ran like she was on fire, others with her enthusiasm saw her and joined in her sprint to somewhere, an ecstatic glint in their eyes. “I'm walking on sunshine, woooh! And don't it feel go--?!”

“So I play along when I hear that favorite song… I'm gonna be the one who gets it right!” the excited hoodlums' songs faded out as they ran off at breakneck speeds, a more somber mood seen by a couple of higher classmen standing in a corner, looking out over the school courtyard. Looking torn up and confused, but determined, they sang harmony with each other.
“You better know when you're swingin' 'round the room, Looks like magic's solely yours tonight…”
They let their heads hang in defeat and confusion, witnessing another teen screaming another song and dancing off to the side. They just didn't get the craze, and it was going to cost them their high school careers!

“But I don't feel like dancin' when the old Joanna plays! My heart could take a chance but my two feet can't find a way… You think that I could muster up a little soft shoe gentle sway! But I don't feel like dancin', no sir, no dancin' today…” They shrugged, pouted and threw their little entitled mini-fits in their courtyard corner for higher ups.

“Don't feel like dancin', dancin'! Even if I find nothin' better to do! Don't feel like dancin', dancin', Why'd you break it down when I'm not in the mood? Don't feel like dancin', dancin'--”

“Don't, don't, don't stop the beat! I can't, can't, can't, can't control my feet!” A freshman with fashion trendy clothes and beiber cut rapped out in the middle of the courtyard, showing off some good hearted, if not mediocre, hip hop dancing. His girlfriend held her cheeks as she watched him with young naive love light in her eyes. “P- P- P- people in the street! C'mon everybody and move your feet! Don't stop (don't stop) don't stop the beat, I can't stop (can't stop) can't stop the beat. I won't stop (won't stop) won't stop the beat, go!” He hopped up in time to join hands with his girlfriend as she began skipping off back into the school, waving her hands in the air, her boyfriend boyishly joining in the swinging.

“Everybody, move your feet and feel united! Oh oh oh!” She sang perkily. “Everybody, move your feet and feel united! Oh oh oh--!”

“Oh baby, give me one more chance…!”

“...To show you that I love you!” A man on his knees in front of a woman stole the scene from the perky freshmen, heartbreak a familiar scene. A few of his friends singing backup for him to try to persuade the obviously unimpressed woman, her arms crossed and turned away as the man begged.

“Won't you please let me... back in your heart?!” She scoffed and began walking away after throwing her hands up uselessly. He followed on his knees, only adding to a more pathetic scene. “Oh darlin', I was blind to let you go…! (Let you go, baby!) But now since I see you in his arms… I want-!”

“You're way too beautiful girl…” As the man begging for the woman passed the open doors to the cafeteria, A trio of handsome dark men wearing urban clothing appraised a girl with similar style on the other side of the open area, hands on their chins and bobbing to their beat as they sang harmony.

“That's why it'll never work, You'll have me suicidal, suicidal When you say it's over.” They walked off before their heads followed another curvy beauty, stopping in the tracks. “Damn all these beautiful girls, They only wanna do your dirt... They'll have you suicidal, suicidal When they say it's ov-”

“Open up your mind and see like me…!” The doors that led out the cafeteria to the stone outdoor lunch tables let in the gentle sway breeze. A hippie guy sang with a ukulele in this hands. He sat on the tabletop with other hippie girls and guys sitting around him on other tables, seats, or the ground. “Open up your plans and damn you're free… Look into your heart and you'll find love love love love…” The handful of those that found friendship with the others broke out in gentle harmony, swaying with the words.

“Listen to the music of the moment people dance and sing! We are just one big family, And it's our Godforsaken right to be loved loved loved loved loved--”
“Oh, you can’t hurry love! No, you’ll just have to wait’!” A ‘jerk-y’ looking group of friends, with slicked back hair and girls with mirrors in their hands to look at themselves, jigged past the hippies, singing their 80s song with their old style dancing.

“She said, ‘love don’t come easy, But it’s a game of give and take’!” They entered the school, carving a path for themselves with tactless shoulder shoves and remorseless laughter. “You can’t hurry love, No, you’ll just have to wait! Just trust in a good time No matter how long it--!

“Wake up kids, We've got the dreamers disease…” A tall lanky teen in punk tie dye clothing sang, making easy way through the hall, sporting a rustic guitar in his hands as he strummed and sung away. A few people followed him, loving the easy going songs he sang, loving how his songs mirrored the ideals Gon sang about just last week. “Age fourteen we got you down on your knees, So polite, you're busy still saying please.

“Frenemies, who when you're down ain't your friend! Every night we smash their Mercedes-Benz! First we run, and then we laugh 'til we cry!

“But when the night is falling, You cannot find the light… You feel your dreams are dying, Hold tight!

“You've got the music in you, Don't let go! You've got the music in you, One dance left! This world is gonna pull through…!

“Don't give up, You've got a reason to live. Can't forget ‘We only get what we give…!”

Gon and Killua were seen gaping openly at the scenes unfolding before them just a little further down the hallway from where the last flower-child Gon-follower sang his diddy amidst the other songs that carried in the air like normal high school conversation.

"I don't think I'll ever get used to this..." Killua hummed, stepping to the side to dodge a pirouetting male.

"What?" Gon said, turning to face Killua as they got to their lockers. "You say that like this is a bad thing! I hope no one ever gets used to this, and feel inspired everyday to sing something new the next! This is amazing!"

"Yea, exactly what you envisioned when you made that concert last week, right?" Killua hummed, a bitter bite on some of his words although his mischievous smirk never left his face. Gon pouted, and took his attention away from his locker to talk to Killua.

"Killua-

"Speaking of lyrics, your next two songs are due." Killua said turning to Gon and holding out his hands expectantly. Gon jumped, then smiled excitedly, folding over to get the pieces of paper out of his bookbag.

"I hope these are better than last week's lyrics, those were just sorry..." Killua chuckled, reminiscing in what happened as he leaned against the lockers.

He remembered looking at the lyrics Gon turned in, barely composed or contemplated, more accurate to say they were more like loosely stringed thoughts thrown on paper. Then he looked up at Gon to tell him as much only to see him making the most hilariously sheepish face he's ever seen, he bursted out laughing for 5 minutes then let him off the hook-- he obviously knew how bad they were before he even turned them in for review.
"C'mon, Killua, you know why they were so bad! I didn't have time with the concert and all." Gon said, coming to his full height, papers in his grasp.

"That you didn't invite me to." Killua chirped easily. Gon's expression set a bit firmly with resolve.

"You know why I didn't. I told you why."

Back after the concert had ended, and Killua had reached Gon backstage being able to make his way even through the dark, he really didn't know what his plan of action was. He didn't know whether to try and play it off cool, scream his head off, or tell him what a good job he was doing while masking his pain of not being involved.

When he got there, the bright smile on Gon's face didn't help him make a decision. All thought processes were shattered in their tracks like a train into a solid brick wall. After a conversation of which Killua does not remember most of, he does remember asking why Gon didn't at least invite him to see him perform? Gon explained to him:

"Because I wanted to be a little selfish this time, Killua." He explained, taking both of Killua's hands into his own. Killua's breath hitched in his throat as his hands tingled and his face burned. "I want to be the one that helps you experience your firsts..."

Killua almost choked.

"I want to personally show you how to love music again and show you all music has to offer. I want to be the one who leads you through that journey... It can’t be as impersonal as singing to you in sea of faces."

The lyrics were in his hands and his mind began looking over and memorizing the words on the paper unconsciously, his occupied mind not remembering what it was he was suppose to be doing at the moment. He shook his head to bring himself back to the present and began to properly look over the lyrics on the sheets.

"Looks good, Gon." He said. One set of lyrics were labeled "Guu guu guu," and looking it over, it was very straightforward and simple with lyrics like 'Scenery I've never seen before, footsteps I heard for the first time, Every day is filled with new excitement, A different path than yesterday what kind of meetings will be waiting?'. Killua wasn't expecting anything better than that, these were Gon's first deadline lyrics, so simple would be the best way to go. Besides, it fits Gon's personality.

The other was a piece called "Smile Equation," and this one made Killua smile just looking it over. It was more laid back and personal with lyrics like 'Woke up a little early this morning, A large gain compared to usual. Take a perfect morning shower, Where will I go today?'. He was handing them back as Gon took the time to look proud of himself.

"Alright, now because of tight timelines and to increase your writing skills, I want one everyday, starting this Monday." Killua said, taking out books from his locker.

"Monday? But c'mon, that's the start of spirit week! I need to be pumping myself up about that!" Gon said, deflating as quickly. "I can't do that while stressing about lyric deadlines!" Killua shrugged, not really caring about Gon's superficial worries, but decided to try and help him make a solution anyways.

"Sure you can. Write a song for every spirit day theme." Killua said. There has never been a spirit week in the history of Musica Academy, but that also came to change after Gon's concert. The morning announcements the following morning, of which they usually have none, were of Netero
telling everyone that he needs students for the newly made Music School Spirit Committee. After a
couple after- school meetings, including a few of them with Gon sitting in to direct it in the way he
imagined it, the MSSC announced that spirit week would be the following week. Posters were
pasted everywhere detailing the themes and events of each day during spirit week; they were on
posters, on the school website, in the cafeteria on a banner, written in chalk out front on the main
school walkway, redone for the next school day so it remains vivid. Some of the students and most
of the upperclassmen found the new and sudden change annoying. They were fine before, why do
they need school spirit? But in Killua’s opinion… it sounded really fun! He was excited about it.

"Huh... good idea." Gon hummed, looking up in thought. Then he smiled brightly, his smile too big
for his face. "Actually, that's a really good idea. I'm excited for it now!" He cheered. He was
practically vibrating. Killua couldn't help a little laugh, infected with Gon’s excitement.

“Killu.”

Goosebumps crawled up and down Killua’s back and arms before he let out a tired huff.

“Not this again.” He muttered before turning away from his locker to his left where Illumi was
swiftly making his way over. Since Gon’s concert, Illumi had been convinced Gon was trying to
skew the concert in his favor by changing the values of the school from talent to 'passion.' Then he’s
been trying to get information on Gon, anything he could use against him or as leverage before the
concert— a crafty threat to his certain win of the showcase. Killua found it all annoying. Illumi was
hard enough to beat, and now that there’s been some hint of a fighting chance, he sought to crush it.
He wanted total and unquestioned chance of victory. And he’s been trying to get information from
Killua since Gon knew him the best.

But that wasn’t the most annoying part. It was who usually came along with him.

“Illumi, what do you want now?” Killua huffed as Gon rounded from Killua’s side to see what was
happening.

“Oh, you’re with him right now.” Illumi said, stopping just outside of Killua’s personal space. As he
stopped, the pink haired whimsical student Killua was dreading stepped out from behind Illumi like a
living shadow.

“Ya~ Gon!” Hisoka purred, his eyes closed in a cheshire smile. Hisoka’s been interested in Gon for
awhile, and with Illumi around bothering Gon now too, he has all the reason and excuse to sate his
curiosity. He held little back in the interactions between him and Gon and what was worse, Gon was
too naive and nice to know any better and ward him off properly. So Killua had to do it for him.

“Why did you bring him with you, Illumi?” Killua complained, gripping the straps of his book bag.

“You know why, Killu, he follows me around no matter what I do to get rid of him.” Illumi said.
“Have you found out any more weaknesses about Gon?” Illumi asked like Gon wasn’t standing right
behind him.

“Stop it, Illu, you know I’m not helping you win this. I’m helping Gon win.”

“I still don’t know why though.” Illumi said, acting all hurt, like Killua’s loyalty should have
unwaveringly been to his older brother. Killua had just begun rolling his eyes when Hisoka spoke,
addressing Gon.

“Hey, Gon, how has your music training been going?” He asked, looking Gon over with a barely
PG expression. Gon looked over at Hisoka with an unreadable expression, before he opened his
mouth to speak. But Killua was moving to stand slightly in front of Gon, Gon’s face falling with dissatisfaction behind him.

“Hey, no, no trying to sneak information out of him either, Hisoka.” Killua said defensively, Hisoka’s name coming out like the name of a poison.

“They can’t he? You won’t do it for me.” Illumi stated in that monotone voice of his. Killua groaned his frustration of his brother. These daily pesterance were gonna get him migraines by the end of the semester, if not an ulcer.

Gon continued to regard Hisoka with a cautious look as Hisoka ignored Killua interrupting him.

He opened his mouth again to speak to Gon. "Hmm~~ Eres tan tentador, pequeño. No puedo esperar para descubrir todo lo que haces..." Hisoka said, eyes lewdly looking over Gon, insatiable interest in his gaze. Gon’s expression changed to look half confused but mostly amazed at Hisoka speaking spanish at him, but Killua looked totally horrified. He was mostly irritated Illumi acted like he didn't know what Hisoka just said. Gon was so behind in his languages, he wanted to learn them--some-- any-- soon. It seemed like everyone in the school could speak at least one other language.

"Retrocede, Hisoka, deja tus comentarios perversos por algún sitio ilegal." Killua hissed, stepping forward in defensive challenge, eyes narrowed. Gon's eyes brightened at Killua from behind. They were both speaking so fluently and carrying conversation. Maybe. Maybe they were just talking and not knowing what the other one was saying. Gon does that sometime to look smart or cool. Hisoka’s eyes narrowed back in the challenge. Killua’s eyes darted to the shift in Hisoka’s arms, but then Illumi interjected sharply.

"Hisoka, that's enough.” Illumi said, knowing he wouldn’t get much else from Killua that day. "We’re leaving." He turned on his heel to leave, his hair flowing behind him like an aftereffect.

"Good." Killua spat. Finally.

"Hold on, before we go since Gon’s little guard won’t allow for dialogue, I just wanted to tell Gon, I have a couple songs released already in the market." Hisoka said in his musical voice of his. Gon's mouth hung open slightly.

"Really?" Gon asked. Killua rose an eyebrow suspiciously at Hisoka, but didn’t know enough about where he was going with this to stop it. It didn’t sound like Hisoka was trying to get some information from Gon using a weird angle, so he’ll allow the interaction.

"Of course. I have nearly an album’s worth of songs out in the market. Almost everyone at the Academy gets at least one song released before they graduate. The more talented and persistent you are, the more songs you can get out before you debut-- the more songs, the more popular and successful you'll be once you debut because you're name is more widely known.”

Gon felt a rush of exhilaration wash over him, getting reminded of all the possibilities this school held for him, the opportunities he could only get at the Academy. It reminded him not to give any inch for his fight to stardom, and as long as he held out, he knew that he was most likely to get at least an album out into the market.

"Amazing..." The possibility of world wide fame was a closer and more possible goal than he thought. But he couldn't do that if he lost the showcase. If he lost, he wouldn't just leave the school, but leave the music industry behind him completely. He was going to try harder.

"Anyway, Boy-ya. I wanted to ask you to check out my music. I would love to know what you think
of it..." He purred. "Hopefully you like it... then I'll have a better sense of what kind of person you are."

Killua didn't like that. That Hisoka was not only interested, but stumped, by Gon's personality did not make a good combination of what Hisoka might do next to figure Gon out.

"I do hope you like it, I want to impress you and fall in your good graces. I’m a fan myself." Hisoka purred. Killua glared at him, and Gon kept his face expressionless as he considered everything Hisoka said, if he should be happy or concerned about that.

"Hisoka." Illumi hissed, a couple paces away already. "Let's go already." Hisoka gave one final wink at Gon, despite Killua having tried to block Gon's face. He turned and ran off to be by Illumi's side.

“Geez…” Killua hissed. “Try to stay away from that clown, I don’t trust him and it unnerves me he’s interested.” He said. Gon furrowed his eyebrows. He realized he knows almost nothing about Hisoka except the unnerving aura he carries about him. Gon decided he would try to watch Hisoka’s videos and try to get a better understanding of what the older male is like. The mystery behind him and the unknown excited Gon a bit. Maybe he should try to write a lyric set on him one day to try and sort out his thoughts on him.

“Alright, Killua, I’ll try to stay away.”

“Good. Let’s head to class.”

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“Hmmm, what about meters?” Killua asked, the light from below them lighting up his features softly.

“I know most of the tempos from Adagio to Molto vivace.” Gon replied, swinging his legs over the rafters.

They were in Physical Singing, the class before lunch, and Kastro was drilling the students that didn’t pass the pretest.

“Again!” Kastro's voice echoed up around the auditorium. The handful of students in the class spaced out on the stage lunged forward holding a baton, some of them grunting out from strain. Then they were singing a warm up song as they were lowered in their stance.

“Alright, what about Majors or Minor chord groups?” Killua asked, looking over at Gon. Once Kastro had said that those who passed the pre-test did not have to be participate in today’s class, Killua and Gon exchanged excited looks. Other students were happy enough to just sit in the auditorium seats and play phone games. But Killua suggested to Gon they go exploring around the stage, familiarizing Gon with larger more professional performance spaces. That led to them running around backstage and finding the secret trap doors, looking through vanity lit dressing rooms, and climbing rafters and ropes as they had fun playing little games.

“Remember to breath through your songs.” Kastro said from below.

They were now up on the high rise wire walkway over the stage behind the curtain skirt, looking down at those on stage practising to bring up their physical singing abilities. Gon was sitting on the floor of the walkway, his legs swinging beneath him, while Killua stood next to him leaning on the railing.

“I know from A to G.” Gon signed out a bit. “Even on the guitar.” Gon said. They both let out small
They were trying to figure out what they should focus on that weekend by figuring out anything else Gon needed to work on. But it seemed like…

“You’re done with the basics Gon.” Killua smiled down at Gon. Gon beamed back up at him, pleasantly surprised. “You’ve got it all down. We can start with more advanced material!” Killua said.

“Wow! Yay, that’s amazing!” Gon cheered. As much as he loved fortifying his basics—his ability to perform is based on how well his basics were developed—what he needs right now are some results that will give him confidence to win the Winter Showcase on short notice. Killua chuckled.

“So, if we’re not doing basics training this weekend… I think we deserve a break and we can just brainstorm the first topics you want to explore into and the order of topics afterwards.” Killua said, taking a jolly rancher out his pocket and popping it in his mouth. “We should get through topics within the month if I coupled learning topics with real world practice.”

“Wow, a break! I don’t remember the last time I had a break.” Gon hummed playfully. “This is exciting, we’re getting closer to developing my number for the showcase.”

“Ya, but if we don’t finish it fast enough, you won’t have time to practice it and perfect it.” Killua reminded him. “So anyway, I’ll be over your house later.”

“Great.” Gon kicked his legs some more, each enjoying the company of the other. The students groaned out as Kastro below finally let them rest.

“Wow, that’s amazing, Gon.” Zushi said, listening to what Gon had finished doing in terms of his basics. It was amazing that Gon was able to pick up and hone his basics skills that quickly.

“He already knew most of this stuff from practicality, he’s been using these techniques since he’s been performing, just never knew the names or the technical way to do it properly.” Killua explained to the table they were sitting with at lunch.

“It’s so impressive. Gon, you’re like this super cool ideal student others would aim to be like!” Pokkle exclaimed, his arm over Ponzu’s shoulders as she ate. “You come in as a second year, you sign up for a showcase that’s usually only for seniors and you have a good chance at winning, and started and initiated this whole new movement at school.”

“Yes, the new movement to encourage people to love the music they produce was a great idea to spread your beliefs around the school all at once.” Kurapika said, taking the straw of his drink into his mouth. The main theme of spirit week was “Sing what you love,” mostly guided by Gon and those at his concert who were passed the torch on the topic. Kurapika generally had the gist of it since Gon said something along those lines when Gon was telling him not to give up on Melody or count anyone out. Gon rubbed the back of his head sheepishly.

“Wow, thanks guys, but it’s not that big a deal to me. It’s something that came naturally to try and do because that’s how it should have been in the beginning!” Gon said.

“Well, because of it, you’ve gotten quite the fan clubs.” Kurapika hummed, closing his eyes.

“Wah, you think so?” Gon asked as Killua sneaked his hand around Gon’s arm to steal a melon ball
“Guys, this wasn’t the point of me telling you where Gon was in his training.” Killua griped, pointing at them accusingly. “Try to help him think up some topics to explore. What do you think Gon would be best singing and performing?”

They looked around at each other and Ponzu decided to try and suggest first.

“I think he’d do best doing alternative!” She said. “Explore new chords and composition!”

“No, no, I think Gon should try a rapping song.” Zushi said. “Rapping is cool.”

“Rapping?” Gon asked under his breath as Kurapika shook his head.

“Why don’t we ask what Gon would like to do?” Kurapika asked, and they turned to Gon. Gon blinked then hesitated a glance at Killua, but he was only looking at him too.

“W-well, I… I would like a song that does everything!” Gon said. Killua’s jaw dropped and Kurapika’s head hung over his drink.

“Maybe… asking him wasn’t the best idea.” He admitted.

“Yea, as much of every component as I can.” Gon said. “And it still sounds good.” Killua rubbed his face and laughed a bit.

“Gon, that’s not very possible. Maybe one quarter of the things we discuss can actually fit in one song and still sound good.” Killua said, feeling like he’s going insane listening to Gon talk like that.

“Sure we can! We just have to try. We’ll figure it out when we get there. But we’ll just focus on the concepts first.” Gon said, determined. Killua barked a laugh. He opened his mouth to say something when someone interrupted them from behind.

“Killua Zoldyck!”

The table stopped all processes in confusion then turned around to face whoever was behind Gon and Killua.

There was about 5 guys standing there, one of them standing forward as the leader flanked by 2 on each side. He was obviously the one who shouted out for Killua, because he was also sweating bullets. They were dressed impeccably, white button ups, blue vest, combed back hair and white shoes. Gon tilted his head, confused. He didn’t really know what to make of this.

“Augh, not this again…” Killua muttered under his breath as most in the cafeteria stopped what they were doing to see the commotion.

“We think you’re amazing. And this song’s for you!” He said, his voice shaking with nerves, standing straight with stiffness as he delivered his lines. He finally relaxed some as they began singing in 5 part harmony.

“I’ll be there for you, these five words I swear to you!”

Gon’s jaw dropped at these people, who were now, essentially, serenading Killua. His Killua. His crush.

“When you breath, I wanna be the air for --!”
“You guys need to take a hint!” Killua shouted out over their singing, even though they just kept singing, doing a boy band side to side dance. Gon looked up, following Killua’s movements as he stood.

“I’ll be there for you! I’d live and I’d die for you! I’d steal the sun from the sky for you!”

“C’mon Gon, let’s get out of here. *This is* why I stopped coming to the cafeteria.” He said, taking Gon’s hand without really waiting for Gon to react and rushing off the scene. Gon was too overwhelmed by everything that was happening to really react properly anyways.

“Bye, we’ll see you!” Kurapika called out.

“Bye, guys! See you monday!” Zushi said as well. Pokkle and Ponzu waved as the band desperately raised their voices after their retreating forms in hopes their emotions would be conveyed.

“Words can’t say what love would do! I’ll be--!”

The cafeteria doors closed shut behind them.

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“Fan clubs?” Gon asked with a curious tilt of his head.

“Yea, the more talented and popular students usually gets them. And it’s not like some students don’t belong to multiple fan clubs, but some fanclubs have hardcore perpetual fans that are only loyal to one star. Like, I’m sure you have a couple too with people already obsessed and leading fan meetings too.” Killua explained, running a hand through his hair. Gon watched the fluffy hair move back into position behind Killua’s lithe fingers like waves in the sea.

“And they used to always sing to you like that when you went to the cafeteria?” Gon asked, not appreciating the dull burn settling in his core at the thought.

“No. You know from before that the school was too entitled to sing and stuff like that. They would just bother me with gifts and public confessions. It was way too embarrassing and annoying, because I didn’t like them, I don’t even know them. But they say ‘Oh, we just want to let you know how much we care even if you don’t return it!’ Annoying.” Killua huffed, putting the heel of his palm to his mouth as he propped his elbow on his knees. Gon snickered a bit at the voice Killua used to mimic his fan club. But it didn’t do much to sate his jealousy. Other people tried to woo his Killua? Well, he wasn’t his yet, but it was obvious he was the only one Killua was interested in. They should know to back off and leave Killua to him. Looks like he’ll have to do a little more and work a little faster if he was going to be able to call Killua his and off the market.

“And that’s why you started coming to the roof for lunch?” Gon said as a breeze came through his hair. Killua looked up, his eyes matching the blue sky above them.

“Ya. I was able to stop them from doing the majority of the stuff they were doing by the middle of freshmen year, but if I didn’t have to be with the school public any longer than I had to then I wasn’t going to. So I went to the roof whenever I could and disappeared when I’m not in class.”

“That’s why people never saw you or hung out with you outside of class before I came.” Gon finished.

“Yup.” Killua said, popping the p. He sat back onto his hands. Gon regarded Killua a second longer before leaning back onto his hands too and looking up at the sky. They were both sitting cross legged on the roof, in the shade of the industrial fan.
“So, it’s my fault they’re bothering you again?” Gon asked. Because they tried again but with singing, and with a song that obviously was filled with their passions and emotions, Gon’s message obviously gave them the incentive and motivation to try with Killua again. And he was bringing him around in the open where they could have all the opportunities to try their hand at wooing Killua. Or make their feelings known, or something.

“No, no, Gon. Don’t think of it like that.” Killua reassured, sitting up once more to take in all of Gon. He didn’t return the look as he kept his gaze on the sky. “There’s no… I mean… as a Zoldyck, I’m always going to have fans. There’s no way they would have stopped all together, and there’s no saying they tried again because of you. This is the sort of thing you just have to prepare for. It happens. They just had new ammunition to try out. You didn’t make them do it, or convince them to. You had good intentions.” Killua said and Gon finally looked down at him with shimmering eyes.

Killua was caught off guard as his breath hitched, trapped in Gon’s admiring gaze.

“Thanks Killua… They had one thing right, you really are amazing.” He smiled. Killua felt the blush crawl up his neck and he looked away, embarrassed.

“I-idiot, don’t say stuff like that. You sound just like them.” He muttered like it bothered him, but he liked it too much.

“Huh? Who told you I wasn’t one of your fans, Killua? I’m your number one fan!” Gon cried out with a playful tint, reaching forward to poke Killua in the ribs. He choked out a laughter, not expecting a poke then looked over at Gon like he was betrayed.

“Shut up, Gon, you’re not as crazy as half the people in this school.”

“Does that mean I can’t join your fan club? C’mon, I think you’re amazing!” Gon said, catching the location of where Killua was ticklish and reaching for it again.

“G-Gon, no-!” He cried out, betrayal lacing his voice before it exploded into laughter, Gon now on his knees to attack Killua with tickles along his ribs right under his under arms. Killua poorly defended himself as he dissolved into giggles and laughter-- and it was the most amazing sound Gon has ever heard-- then the school bell was ringing, dismissing lunch hour.

“Aw…” Gon hummed, sitting back onto his heels to let Killua catch his breath. He wished he could just stay up here with Killua just a little longer, in their own personal space. “We have to go back to class…”

“Huh? Oh, I forgot to tell you, we’re not.” Killua said, a bit breathless as he sat back up and ran a hand through his hair.

“Wat?”

“We’re skipping.” He stood up. Gon’s jaw dropped as he watched Killua fetch his bookbag.

“W-What? We’re skipping… B-But, we need school to teach us stuff.” Gon stuttered, flustered, lost for words at the sudden change in agenda. He never missed a day at the Academy yet. It’s too much of a blessing to scorn with things like skipping school.

“Well… it’s not exactly skipping.” Killua shrugged, picking up Gon’s book bag afterwards. “It’s an excused absence if you’re learning or experiencing something that pertains to becoming a world star while you are missing classes.” Gon lit up at that.

“Wo- wait, we are?! What are we doing?” He asked hopping up. His bookbag was thrown squarely into his chest and he let out an ‘ooff’ before he looked back up at Killua. His hands were on his hips
with a smug look on his face.

"We’re going shopping."

Gon’s face fell.

“Wat?”

“This school does a lot of things, but they don’t teach you idol fashion sense. And you need all the help you can get. So it should be excused if we go shopping.” He nodded.

Gon sighed.

“Killua, I don’t want to hear that from you— ooff…” Gon started before petering off to wheezing laughter once Killua gave him a good punch in the gut to shut him up.

“Shut up, I got perfect fashion sense.” He scolded, retracting his fist back to his side. Gon laughed a good deep laugh as he came back to his full height. “We’ll see, I just want permission to veto anything too over-the-top.”

“Fine.” Killua said, turning to walk out the roof access, Gon close by.

“Why do we need to work on my fashion sense anyways?”

“Do you have a fashion coordinator at home?” Killua asked back. Gon raised a brow.

“…nooo?”

“Then you need to learn to develop acceptable idol tier fashion to be able to wear and mix-and-match your wardrobe. Lesson one in being a World Idol: you’re never spotted looking less than your best.” Killua said.

“Aaahhh…!” Gon hummed in understanding.

“And you’ve been sporting the same outdated horrible hoodie-jeans look for way too long.” Killua said, pulling on the half zipped jacket zipper. Gon grabbed the offender zipper, an embarrassed blush on his cheeks.

“It’s a tried and true look!”

“You need to be making the future looks. And keep up with the times, be a bit experimental! Isn’t that what you’re all about? Being bold and out there?”

“…That’s true…” Gon hummed. If he could get some clothes that mirrors what kind of image he wants to portray, it’d be great for his career, but he won’t be able to afford most of what he’ll want. But it was still exciting to think about. “Ok! Sounds good!” They exited the front doors of the Academy, most of the hallways empty as students got to class.

“You brought your car, right?” Killua asked.

“Yes, I did.” Gon nodded, he tends to bring it on Fridays nowadays.

"Can I drive?" Killua asked with an excited smile as they got out to the parking lot.

"No!" Gon laughed. As far as Gon knows, Killua still doesn’t have a license or any training, and he’d prefer if Killua didn’t experiment with the car that wasn’t even his. Killua pouted.
"Fine, then I'm paying for the shopping spree." He said with defiance, purposely proposing another undesired consequence to Gon. But Killua would prefer if Gon lets him pay, he knows he doesn’t have much. Gon looked up with agonizing thought.

"...Fine." He sighed out defeated. He couldn't afford Killua to ruin his car. Killua let out a small celebratory hum.

-o0o0o0o-

The streets were free from most cars on the way to the mall because most teenagers were in school at the time and adults weren't exactly trying to get to the mall all the time.

"Amazing! The roads are so free! Boy, you gotta get it speeding! And we gotta put the top down." Killua said, his ankle boots clad feet crossed in front of him on the dash. He folded over his legs forward effortlessly and pressed the button to bring the top down.

"Hey, hey, hey, we're really supposed to do that when the car's not in motion." Gon chided from his seat in the driver's seat. Killua rolled his eyes.

"We're on the highway, there's not really a place we'll pause to do it any other time."

"Fine..." Gon half pouted, but he had to admit feeling the wind in his hair was great. He actually did speed up a bit, feeling the rush and free feeling, almost like he could fly if he could go fast enough.

"Ah, this is great!" Gon said, turning on the radio. Killua smiled brightly over at Gon. This was so fun. This is what friends was for. And that cold creamer-less coffee Illumi would never understand because he doesn't nearly have enough emotions to compute fun. A song with a drum opening banged onto the radio and a man yelled out a "Whoo!" and Gon brightened, recognizing the song immediately.

"I love this song!" He cried.

"I should have known. You're the type to be into free spirited songs like this." Killua smirked over at his friend, reclining casually in the chair with his feet up. Gon ignored him for the most part and raised the volume to the point where they felt the bass rattle their insides and seats. Killua could have sank deeper into the seat with the way the bass caressed him like this.

“Life is like a road that you travel on, When there’s one day here and the next day gone.” Gon sang along with the country song on the radio. He peeked over at Killua and decided to play it up towards him, hands gesturing and miming the words.

“Sometimes you bend, sometimes you stand, Sometimes you turn your back to the wind. There’s a world outside every darkened door, Where blues will not haunt you anymore… Where brave are free and lovers soar, Come ride with me to the distant shore!” Gon nudged Killua from his seat, as though inviting him himself. Killua looked over at Gon, finally giving him his attention, an amused smile on his face. Gon gave back a charming side smile himself before returning his eyes to the road.

“We won't hesitate… To break down the garden gate… There's not much time left today! Life is a highway! I want to ride it all night long!” Killua bobbed his head to the beat as Gon sang, his feet tapping the dashboard in front of him.

“If you are going my way…!” Gon winked over at Killua, keeping up the country act through the song. “I want to drive it all night long…!”

“Through all these cities and all these towns, It is in my blood and it is all around!” Gon stretched his
hands to the sky, satisfied with the feeling of the wind through his fingers. He turned to address his
words to Killua again. “I love you now like I loved you then. This is the road and these are the
hands…” Gon wiggled his hands and eyebrows and Killua laughed, it wisped away by the winds
and musics. “From Mozambique to those Memphis nights, The Khyber Pass to Vancouver's lights.
Knock me down get back up again, You are in my blood, I am not a lonely man.” Killua joined in
the singing with harmony and backup vocals with Gon, his fun too infectious to ignore.

“There is no load I cannot hold, Road so rough this I know. I will be there when the light comes in…
Just tell them we are survivors!” Killua chimed in with a “Whoo!”

“Life is a highway! I want to ride it all night long! If you are going my way I want to drive it all night
long!”

“All night long…!” Killua echoed afterwards, closing his eyes and throwing his head back as he
sang along the upbeat music.

“Give me, give me, give me, give me, yeah!” Gon sang.

“Life is a highway, I want to ride it all night long! If you are going my way”

“you’re going my way!” Killua sang back up. “I want to drive it all night long! (all night long!)

“There was a distance between you and I” Gon sang, reaching out to Killua without looking,
pretending to try and bridge the distance. Killua rolled his eyes, swatting his hands away even
though there was a smile on his face. He completed the echo regardless. “Between you and I…!”

“A misunderstanding once, But now we look it in the eye” Gon sang, taking his eyes off the road to
look over at Killua and gesturing his fingers between them. Killua laughed and poked his finger into
Gon’s cheek to guide it back to look forward, Gon’s smile spreading at Killua’s reaction.

“Oooh, yeah!”

The song broke for a guitar solo and Killua leaned back in his seat, biting his lip as he pretended to
rip out a guitar solo with an air guitar. Gon laughed and cheered him on. The lyrics came back on
soon enough.

“There ain’t no load that I cannot hold, Road so rough this I know, I will be there when the light
comes in…” Killua and Gon broke into stretched out harmony, “Just tell them we are survivors!”

“Life is a highway!” Gon banged the wheel and Killua stomped his feet on the dash in time to the
beat of the music. “I want to ride it all night long” Gon began ad libbing along with the radio man
throughout, leaving Killua to sing the rest of the chorus lyrics. He had no problem with that. He
loved listening to Gon sing anyway.

“If you are going my way, I want to drive it all night long!”

“Give me, give me, give me, give me, yeah!” Gon bellowed out into the wind swelling around them
in the car.

“Life is a highway! I want to ride it all night long… If you are going my way, I want to drive it all
night long! Life is a highway, I want to ride it all night long! If you are going my way, I want to
drive it all night long!

The song fell into exit instrumentals and the wind stole both of the teens’ laughter and trailing
exclamations as they whizzed down the road.
“Ew… this shirt is so gross…” Killua hummed, looking at one of the designer shirts in a clearance rack. He looked it over for a few seconds more before his face scrunched thoughtfully. “I kinda want it?” He pulled it from the rack as Gon came out from a dressing room behind him. Killua looked over and lit up.

“Wow, you look great Gon! I’m so amazing at what I do!” He exclaimed.

“You wanted to get me a whole wardrobe worse than this! We only reached an outfit consensus because I beta’d.” Gon replied. “The credit goes to us both.”

“Uugh, fine.” He muttered, going over to fix Gon’s collars. Gon was wearing a vivid forest green graphic tee with a jet black leather jacket with silver studs sparingly along the collar and deep navy jeans and black combat boots.

“I’m gonna miss my green boots.” Gon lamented, looking himself over in the mirror. But if this session at various designer shops showed him anything, it was that it was a change for the better.

“Whatever, it’s not like you don’t have anything in this new wardrobe that won’t match those outdated things. If you want, you could make it your signature, wear them sparingly so they become as famous as you. Put it in every music video, wear it to fan signings, wear it to certain concert numbers.” Killua suggested, worrying edges of Gon’s outfit to fit him to perfection. Gon turned to him suddenly, ripping an edge of the clothing out of his pinched fingers.

“Gon, what the-” He started.

“I like that!” He said, beaming at Killua. Killua stood up to his full height and raised a brow.

“The idea?”

“No. That you said all that… the way you talked… it was like I will definitely be doing this in the future. Which means I never lost the Showcase. You have that much faith in me Killua…” He ended softly. Killua blushed and looked away.

“Duh! Of course I see that sort of thing in your future. I have worked with you long enough to know your potential, it’s just a giant shame if you lose after all this. And if you weren’t so stupid, you would just keep going in the music industry even after you lose! There’s no reason not to!”

“I gave them my word. And a promise is everything.” Gon scolded, turning back to the body length mirror to check his outfit. Killua huffed, feeling pouty.

“Whatever…” He has to make sure he does everything in his power to shape Gon’s potential and make sure he wins. He won’t be perfect, but he just needs enough to win. It would be a shame to rob the world of the preciousness that was Gon. Gon smiled at Killua from the mirror.

“I’ll just win.” He beamed and Killua brought his head up then smiled back at Gon. He loved how he never got discouraged. “So, this is the last of it?” Gon asked.

“Yup, go and change back into those horrendous clothes and we’ll ring everything and it’s back to home.” Gon nodded. Gon really did feel bad that Killua was buying him all these things, but Killua always made sure to help Gon feel it wasn’t that big a deal, so he wasn’t as sheepish and jumpy as he was at the first store. And it was amazing to get every piece of clothing he could have ever asked for, money was no issue. Killua was his best friend and he would do anything for him.
“That’s what you get for trying to eat a chili dog. Now maybe you’ll throw that jacket away.” Killua said, climbing in the passenger seat after loading the bags of clothing in the back of the convertible.

“Killua, it’s just a stain, there’s such a thing as washing machines, you know.” Gon said with surprise in his voice. Killua cocked an eyebrow then laughed at the honesty in Gon’s voice, like Killua really didn’t know about washing machines.

“’Aight, Gon…” He giggled. The car revved up and they sped off to their neighborhood. Killua took the lead in turning on the radio this time, but they were both done with speeding since they were nearly stopped by cops on the way to the mall. An electro- guitar riff melody came on the radio and Killua lit up.

“I love this song!” He exclaimed, and Gon glanced over, surprised at Killua’s confession and taste in music. Is this the kind of song he listens to all the time in those silver headphones? He launched into song and Gon was captivated by the seducing tone Killua put forth in his voice.

"I've been looking for a driver who's qualified... So if you think that you're the one step into my ride... I'm a fine-tuned supersonic speed machine, With a sunroof top and a gangster lean!” Killua sang, miming with his hands and dancing accordingly with the words. Gon could barely look away, feeling like he was glancing over at Killua more and more.

“So if you feel me let me know, know, know, Come on now what you waiting for, for, for? My engine's ready to explode, explode, explode, So start me up and watch me go, go, go, go!” Killua crooned, pumping his fist in the air.

“Got you where you wanna go if you know what i mean~” He gave a wink to his imaginary audience. “Got a ride that smoother than a limousine~” He practically hummed, running a hand down his sides. “Can you handle the curves? Can you run all the lights? If you can baby boy then we can go all night~” He was just enjoying a good car jam, winking and wiggling seductively.

“Cos I'm 0 to 60 in three point five,” Killua held up his hands, pointing the 3, 0, and 5 with flirty eyes out to the road. “Baby you got the keys... Now shut up and- GON, LOOK AT THE ROAD!” Killua swiveled his head seductively towards Gon only to see him openly staring, an astonished surprised look on his face with something dark and wanting in his eyes. Gon jumped and whipped his head back towards the road, jerking the car to the left just as the car starting riding the side bumps on the highway. Killua was sitting up completely, clutching the side of his seats before he looked over accusingly at Gon.

"Haha, whoops!” He chuckled, a blush on his cheeks, but then proceeded to pretend like nothing happened.

“I just can’t believe the school took your idea so quickly though! It was like they were always ready to start singing, they were just waiting for a signal gun.” Killua laughed, putting Gon’s new clothes in his closet and putting his old ones in drawers. Their conversation had found their way around to the situation at school and spirit week as they worked.

“Well, I would hope so! If they love music, their hearts are always singing a song, and they should share it for the world.” Gon said, folding over a green shirt and putting it in a drawer he was positioned by.
“That sounds too cheesy… I don’t know, this whole singing thing is so weird.” Killua said.

"Well, I like it like this! Now the school is like a giant High School Musical!"

"A what?" Killua laughed at Gon, turning around with a cocked eyebrow. Gon slowly turned to blink at Killua.

"Killua... are you saying you've never watched High School Musical?" Gon asked.

"Um...? No, I didn't exactly have the most time to watch TV..." Killua hummed, hanging one of his personal favorites of Gon’s new wardrobe with care.

"Aw! Oh no! this is a shame! That series is one of my favorite! We have to watch it!" Gon exclaimed, throwing himself to the side.

"What? Why?" Killua asked, turning and frowning at Gon’s dramatics. "It doesn't sound that interesting."

"It totally is! It has a great love story plot-"

"Bleck-"

"And there's plenty of singing-"

"I'm sure it's no broadway-"

"C'mon, Killua! Try everything! If you agree to watch it, we'll watch something you want to. Please? You can show me something that you like.” Gon pouted and Killua swiftly looked away almost simultaneously.

"Geezus, Gon..." Killua muttered, then rubbed the back of his head. "Fine, fine. I'll watch it." He said.

"Whoo! Yay, today?!" Gon asked, sitting back up.

“No, today, we’re going to plan what concepts we’ll start with, picking up on training again on Monday. This Saturday is free day, and I got a Zoldyck concert on Sunday, so that’s another free day for you.” Killua said going over and sitting by Gon. “Just a breezy weekend before we launch back into training, so we can watch them tomorrow, ok?" He asked.

“Sure! Let’s get some paper out.” Gon said, scrambling to his desk to get a notebook. They set up and sprawled, looking down at the blank paper.

“Alright, so I was thinking we could start with general overview of different music genres that you probably won’t use for your final song-- genres like country, jazz, screamo-- but we’ll cover it because if you find out that you really do like it, then you could explore it further and develop it for the final showcase number.” Killua said.

“Ok!” Gon said.

“You’ll most likely use pop or rock for the final number, because that’s what people like and respond to the best in a concert setting, like All Star by Smash Mouth.” Killua nodded. “And I remember you said you liked the EDM in the music like Hourglass…” Killua began writing these things down. “So we’ll do that Tuesday. And then I want to fit in rapping early, because if you want to use it in your number, that’ll probably take the longest to format for your piece.” He said. Gon nodded, his fist
clenching as he felt the familiar clenching feeling grabbing his chest again. I know we’ll probably use more than just one day for each of these, but having a written schedule will help us know what we’re doing next.” He said.

“Ok…” Gon said again, a bit more distracted this time. That caught Killua’s attention and he looked up at Gon. His eyebrows furrowed and he nudged Gon a bit with his elbow. Gon locked eyes with Killua.

“You ok there?” He asked. Gon smiled hesitantly than gave a full blown smile.

“Ya! Ya, I’m listening, I was just thinking about everything…” He muttered. Killua nodded understandingly.

“I get it. You’re gonna do great, ok? We’ve got this.”

Gon felt a bit better, remembering he’s not doing all this on his own. He gave a bit more of a genuine smile to Killua.

“Right. Thanks.”

“So, we’ll be trying to pair up your practice with real world practice and experiences, like small concerts or quizzes…”

“Mh!”

-000000-

“I’ll be over tomorrow.” Killua said, addressing both Gon and Mito. Mito nodded as Gon pouted. He hated parting from Killua.

“Morning or afternoon?” She asked.

“Morning, but don’t worry about breakfast, aunt Mito, we’ll be leaving soon after I come.” He said.

“We’re going back to the orphanage.”

“Ah, I see. Then I’ll just prepare you two dinner.” She said.

“Er, no, that’s not necessary, I--” Killua started.

“No! Come on, you can stay for dinner and sleepover! Bring over a duffle bag and you can drop it off before we go. We’ll watch high school musical before we go to bed. It’ll be fun!” He said.

Killua’s eyebrows twitched, because he now concluded it was impossible for him to say no to Gon.

“Fine.” He sighed. Gon cheered and Mito smiled softly.

“Alright. Have a good evening, Killua,” Mito said with a mother’s tenderness. “Do text Gon when you get home safely.” Killua nodded with a smile. It was always such an amazing environment here.

“Yes, aunt Mito. Konbanwa.” He hummed, turning to leave.

“Bye Killua!” Gon shouted after him, and Killua’s reply was cut off by the door. A beat of silent passed before,

“And he hasn’t noticed your crush yet-?”

“I’m working on it!” Gon huffed, turning on his heels and running back into his room. He was going
to up the flirting and courting a bit more after today, with that stunt with the fan club.

-Gon let out a small sigh and huff as he sat down at his computer desk. Well, he doesn't know any assignments he could possibly do today, and he has nothing better to do. Everything was set up from when Killua was there, and he was going to bed soon, so he’ll look up Hisoka’s songs like he wanted him too. He looked up ‘Hisoka’, and the first song that came up was "Lost without you."

"Hmm, it must be his most popular..." He said as he clicked on the video. It started with a nice beat, and Gon's unease at watching the video went down a bit.

It started with Hisoka walking down an everyday urban street, wearing attracting clothes. He was actually surprised because his hair was down and combed in a side sweep. It was still pink, but down. A woman walked towards him and gave him flirty eyes as she walked, and he slowed, watching her walk past him. He smiled and followed after her. The the words began and it showed close up clips of him just singing in front of a blurred nature background.

“I'm lost without you

Can't help myself

How does it feel to know that I love you, baby?

I'm lost without you

Can't help myself

How does it feel to know that I love you, baby?”

The nature singing clips were slotted into clips with Hisoka basically wooing this girl. A clip with them at a cafe, him giving her roses while he sweeps her hair back, jewelry being draped over her neck.

“Tell me how you love me more

And how you think I'm sexy, baby

That you don't want nobody else

You don't want this guy

You don't want that guy

You wanna

Touch yourself when you see me

Tell me how you love my body

And how I make you feel, baby

You wanna roll with me

You wanna hold with me
You wanna stay warm and get out of the cold with me
I just love to hear you say it
It makes a man feel good, baby
Tell me you depend on it
I need to hear it”

The next part of the clip was of him driving them to a cottage in the woods, a one story luxury home, and the video indicated they had a steamy sex night with blurry and shifty images. Then they showed her walking around his house with only his white button up shirt on, and him enjoying the view, her sitting on the couch and he bends to whisper sweet nothings in her ear, and feeding each other plates of food.

“I'm lost without you
Can't help myself
How does it feel to know that I love you baby?
I'm lost without you
Can't help myself
How does it feel to know that I love you baby?
Baby, you're the perfect shape
Baby, you're the perfect weight
Treat me like my birthday
I want it this way
I want it that way
I want it
Tell me you don't want me to stop
Tell me it would break your heart
But you love me and all my dirty
You wanna roll with me
You wanna hold with me
You wanna make fires and get Norwegian wood with me
I just love to hear you say it
It makes a man feel good, baby
I'm lost without you
Can't help myself

How does it feel to know that I love you baby?

I'm lost without you

Can't help myself

How does it feel to know that I love you baby?

There was shift in the song and Gon got shivers down his spine as the previous images from the beginning replayed, but it showed more details omitted by camera angles or cropped video. The sex night included bondage and chains, more gagging then was previous believed or thought comfortable for the girl. Her walking around in just his shirt, when she moved past the couch, showed she was chained by her ankle, the end of the bound disappearing into a room in the background. Him bending down to whisper sweet nothings, the clip continued to show she was in his basement, her hands bound, and the theme continued. Gon’s jaw was hanging.

“Cause you will tell me every morning

Alright, baby

Ohh yeah, Ohh baby

Ohh darling, Alright

I'm lost without you!

Can't help myself

How does it feel to know that I love you baby?

I'm lost without you

Can't help myself

How does it feel to know that I love you baby?

Ooh yeah

Oh baby

Oh darlin'

All right right

Oh baby

Oh darlin'

Ooh ooh baby

All right right... yeah…”

Hisoka was walked down a pleasant street similar to that of the first street and a girl walked passed, looking up and off at something unseen. As she walked past, Hisoka turned, his lips formed as though he was whistling even though the video's audio was replaced with the song's ending chords.
He followed with a swagger, and a pair of handcuffs hung loose from his fingertips as though produced through a magic trick, and he followed after her off screen. Gon furrowed his eyebrows, unsure what to do with information. It made him generally uncomfortable. He at least had to hand it to the cinematics, the twist in the video was good and made you think...

"Yikes..." He muttered and looked down at the comments to know what his fans thought.

'OMG HISOKA YOU ARE SO HOT!'

'I WANT U TO TIE ME UP, DADDY!'

'Hisoka can bondage me anyday ;)'

'I'll tell you I love u, even if I don't meant it'

'Punish me, Hiso!!!'

"Yike, yikes, yikes on ice..." Gon muttered, feeling more unnerved by the comments. There are even this kind of people in the world... Well, there's a fan for every type, he supposed. He looked to the recommended to see what other songs Hisoka have done, although he's not sure how interested he was in watching them now.

There was another song, 'Latch' made by him, that also seemed popular, and Gon decided to also listen to that. The beat was cool and easy to listen to, Hisoka's voice smooth and cajoling. It made Gon feel weird (not the good kind), but the lyrics were definitely staple 'Hisoka.' He finally clicked off and decided it was time for bed. He had trouble sleeping that night.

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Luckily for Gon, the following Saturday was another free day. As much as he loved music and getting ready for the showcase, he still wanted time to spend with his favorite star lit teen. And he's sure Killua loves every minute from home and takes any excuse to leave its confines.

Gon wanted another not-date with Killua, he enjoyed the last one so much and it would be a good time to start upping his courting game, and already knew how to go about asking him on it.

"Hey, Killua... " Gon started as they walked down the plaza sidewalk towards the orphanage house. Fall weather came with the start of September and the two boys had their hands shoved in their sweater jackets as they shuffled side by side. Killua hummed a small noise of acknowledgement. "I saw an interesting movie playing later today, and I know you said you haven't seen a movie in forever, so I was thinking-"

"Wow, really? Gon, I'd love to! Wow, I haven't been to a movie in so long. What's this one about?" He asked, all attention and eyes on Gon. It made Gon shiver.

"Well, I think the main character..."

-o0o0o0o0-

"Yea, I have to go." Killua said that Sunday Morning. "I got a concert tonight and we have prep all day until then. I promise, I'll start figuring out ways to get you real world practice soon, ok?" Killua asked, pulling his duffle over his shoulder.

"Ok, I'll miss you." Gon pouted, folded precariously on the couch.
"Have a good day. Good luck with your concert." Mito said who had made them breakfast earlier.

"Thanks, aunt Mito. Bye, Gon." Killua laughed over his shoulder, refusing to return the affection shown to him.

"He’s a tough one." Mito side commented.

"I'll get him." Gon said, getting up from the couch to return to his bed. He hated the empty voided feeling he’s left with whenever Killua leaves him. But he couldn’t help but smile when he thought back to what he could only label as the perfect Saturday not-date.

They had went to the orphanage and Killua clicked as well with the kids as he did before, and they remembered him just as well. Another kid asked Killua to marry them, or adopt them, but Killua was so good with kids, he was able to defuse the situation without hurting their feelings. Gon was going to ask about it, but there was a look in his eye afterwards that cried out ‘private issues’. And maybe he was being a little selfish, but he didn’t want to ruin their day with personal problems when they could just enjoy each other’s company that day.

They went to the movie afterward, then went for a bite at another Asian restaurant Killua said he likes. Killua showed Gon how dexterous he was with chopsticks and Gon was thoroughly impressed, Gon wasn’t even that good with chopsticks and he grew up with it. When he asked how, Killua said it was because he was a drummer, so it was similar maneuverability.

After that, they were able to rent out some skateboards at a local skate park and Killua showed Gon a few tricks before helping him learn it himself. Gon didn’t think he could hear his heart in his ears until Killua was that close making those gentle correcting touches on him as he taught him how to skateboard. They walked a bit more before they went back home to watch the high school musical movies. They changed into comfortable pajamas and set up a fluffy bed on the ground in front of the TV and watched the movies with snacks scattered around them. They fell asleep soon after the second one started, but as far as Gon could tell, Killua liked them. Or maybe he was pretending for him, which only made Gon feel warm and fuzzy inside, knowing Killua would do that for him. But all good things come to an end… and Killua just left. Gon will see him tomorrow… but hopefully Killua will find time to text him during breaks his prep or something.

He turned over onto his stomach and pulled up his phone.

“Killua! Dammit, stop being so distracted!” Milluki yelled out. Killua jumped at that, and looked away from his phone surprised. It was locked and tossed onto his things in one swift movement.

“Whatever. What do you want?” Killua asked with practiced cool.

“We’re about to go up, don’t you want to do your little practice thingy?” He asked, messing with his bolo tie. Killua rolled his eyes but was secretly thankful. He doesn’t think if he doesn’t run through his performance song before he goes on to perform that he’ll mess up, but he hasn’t ever not tried to, so call him superstitious but he feels better if he does it first. He began speed singing his piece, muttering under his breath and making minimal movements with his hands. Milluki watched him curiously from the side of his eye.

They were announced on stage, and Killua stepped out, followed by Milluki. Killua walked across the stage.

Perfect Perfect Perfect
His shaking fingers demanded him to clench his fist to try and find some steadiness.

Do not mess up

The back of his neck prickled painfully and uncomfortably. His eyelashes reflected the spotlight as he stepped up to the mic, and his throat threatened to choke him.

Breath, his mind supplied helpfully. He took a deep ragging breath regardless.

His cool hardened mask kept all his thoughts and emotions hidden out of sight. As he turned to face the crowd, everything -- the shakiness in limbs, his shallow breathing lungs, his racing thoughts-- stopped, a wave of serenity being washed over him. His body stilled and quieted and numbed and he stared out at the slightly bobbing darkness out in front of him, the people unseen because of the too bright lights shone right in his eyes. It was like he was being interrogated, in spotlight so any mistake shone brighter than anything in the whole world. He knows his brother for sure is watching with that mindset.

But he already knew how to dissociate, and take himself out this situation. If he was too focused on task in front of him, he'd surely go through a panic attack, flashes of his birthday concert coming up to mind. But he was trained so well, his practices and songs ran through so many times, he could do them in his sleep, which is what he practically did out on stage. Running so smoothly on autopilot, it's like he was an actual robot on stage.

Perfect Perfect Perf-

The roar of applause hit him like a wall and he vaguely registered that he was giving his pre performance smile to the crowd. He turned to Milluki slightly and nodded almost imperceptibly to start the music. The keys lit up as Killua faced the microphone again. He wondered if Milluki gets nervous too, if his fingers shakes across the piano keys when he first starts? The pressure of performance could get to be a lot sometimes... but nobody in his family really talks about weaknesses like that.

“Now I've heard there was a secret chord, That David played, and it pleased the Lord, But you don't really care for music, do you?” Killua's satin voice sung out decadently low, and he was met with another round of applause.

Right, Gon has had performance experience before, but it was probably no doubt with smaller crowds than what will be present at the Showcase. And the implications attached to it probably doesn't help with any nerves during the show. Killua made a mental note to add performance ready training to their advanced training concept list.

“It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth--” Killua sung out. He cringed immediately after he hit the sharp note on the up rising, because he hit it wrong. Dammit, Killua chided himself. He was too distracted, and now as he remembers what song this was, it was actually a pretty difficult one with all the sharps and flats present in the music. He wasn't paying enough attention and now the note was all off, the note sounded like it was dying, he could die up there--

Somehow... his voice sounded great. The word continued to flow out,

“The minor fall, the major lift!” How was that...? Killua then realized the shift and return melody of keys by his accompanying piano player.

Milluki, Killua thought. Killua had messed up but it was now unnoticeable, maybe even to Illumi who was watching and listening closely, because Milluki flourished the keys to make it sound on
key. This song was already hard enough with all the sharps and flats, for Milluki to pick up Killua messing up and compensating for it in a split second... there was too much effort and no real reason to.

He wants something.

“The baffled king composing ‘Hallelujah’! Hallelujah, Hallelujah. Hallelujah, Hallelujah…”

The song soon ended, Killua kept his mind clear and on the song from then on as not to have to owe his older brother anymore than he has to. As they went off stage and the curtains began to close, Killua turned around to face Miluki as he entered the wings.

"What do you want?" Killua said, crossing his arms.

"What do you mean?" Milluki asked with a mean smile. It made his face look more piggish than normal.

"I know what you did out there. I knew I messed up before I even knew you covered for me."

"How do you know I wasn't just going to go off and tell mama and Illumi that you messed up? But I didn't want to ruin the concert just to see you burn?"

"You can try this blackmailing angle all you want, but I'm already agreeing to your terms. Just tell me what you want." Killua said, not losing composure. Milluki grumbled.

"You take the fun out of everything." He said. He hoped to at least get Killua to squirm, but he refused to play on Milluki's terms.

"I just want you to know you owe me one." He said, squinting out at Killua with his almond eyes. Killua furrowed his eyebrows.

"That's it? Nothing specific?"

"I do have something specific. But it wouldn't do any good to tell you about it now. Just try not to hang up on any of my calls from now on, huh?" He said, and pushed past Killua, purposely shoving Killua's shoulder with his own. "Try not to mess up during this concert anymore thinking about your boyfriend."

Killua's face burned.

"I was not-! He's not-!" Killua sputtered, but it didn't matter, Milluki wasn't listening and he probably wasn't even being that serious. "Whatever." He muttered. Great, now Milluki had one over on him... and he didn't even know what it was... Well, let’s see if Gon texted him back yet!

"Remember, whichever year-- freshman, sophomore, junior or senior-- has the highest count of the colors wins spirit points today. Whichever year has the most spirit points at the end of spirit week gets a special prize!" The peppy guy said over the school's speakers. Gon's pretty sure he recognized the voice as Katsuo, the spirit committee's treasurer. He had met him a couple times back when the meetings were being held and he was invited to join.

Gon was excited, sporting his own gold shirt for the second years. He waved and high fived encouraging other students in gold colored shirts, feeling very happy and spirited. This was
happening! His spirit week he planned is initiated, people are enjoying it and participating, it wasn't a bad idea! And Gon bets that the majority of the school will be better for it, if they can make music with a bit more emotions and fun experiences under their belt. He leaned by the lockers, waiting for wherever Killua would come from. They didn't go running that morning, so he could only wait to see his precious friend. He blinked when he saw him coming out from a side classroom door in a dark purple turtleneck and black slacks.

"W-wha- Killua!" Gon reprimanded. Killua jumped a bit.

"What?" Killua asked with confused irritation to his voice.

"Wh- you're not wearing our class's spirit colors!" Gon said, pointing down at his own gold shirt. Killua furrowed his eyebrows before he raised it in a question.

"Seriously? Today is Monday! Spirit color day! The class with the most students wearing the spirit color gets spirit points!" Gon said.

"Hah, you sound crazy. Is that all, Avatar Gon?" Killua teased.

"Killua! You have to partake in the spirit week stuff!"

"Why should I?" He was excited about the spirit week, but he was content with just observing what happened, not participating. He's sure this kind of stuff wasn't his scene. This sort of silliness could end up getting out to places he doesn’t want it to, and he needed to retain his image. He opened up into his locker and, first thing first, checked his makeup.

"You should try to try everything." Gon said, staring intently at the profile of Killua's face.

"Wow, you sounded like a cheesy tag line." Killua said, squinting his eyes at his reflection in his locker mirror.

"No... I sounded like a cheesy song...~" Gon said with a sing-songy inflection to his voice. Killua's eyes widened a bit at Gon's insinuation.

"Nooo, no, Gon, I am not going to be apart of the first song number of the school day-!

"Oh, oh, oh, oh! Oh, oh, oh, oh! Oh, oh, oh, oh! Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh!"” Gon cut Killua off with the first opening vocalizations of his song. He took Killua's protesting hand and closed his locker for him before running off down the hall. Killua's face was burning, everyone around them was staring! Gon slowed down to a trot as the song took on a conversational tone.

“I messed up tonight, I lost another fight. I still mess up but I'll just start again. I keep falling down, I keep on hitting the ground, I always get up now to see what's next!”

Gon sang, looking over at Killua. He furrowed his eyebrows as Killua didn't meet his eyes, too busy looking around at the crowd parting and looking at them. He took Killua's chin in his hand to bring his gaze back on him.

“Birds don't just fly, they fall down and get up! Nobody learns without getting it wrong! I won't give up, no I won't give in, 'Till I reach the end and then I'll start again!”

Killua stared openly at Gon, caught in his pace again, and he didn't even realize it. Gon hopped onto the staircase and turned to face Killua, climbing it backwards as he lead him up. People behind Gon slid down the banister to get out his and join a dance number occurring around the two of them.
“No, I won’t leave, I wanna try everything! I wanna try even though I could fail, I won't give up, no I won't give in, 'Till I reach the end and then I'll start again!”

People in the hallway was overjoyed that the original starter of the movement had finally done his own spontaneous song number, and he didn't disappoint. It carried his message as clearly and thoughtfully as his flash concert songs did. It rejuvenated his followers as they followed to listen and dance.

“No, I won’t leave, I wanna try everything! I wanna try even though I could fail! Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh! Try everything! Oh, oh, oh, oh! Try everything! Oh, oh, oh, oh! Try everything! Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh!”

They reached the second story of the school and Gon spun Killua around to be in front of him. He pushed and maneuvered Killua ahead of them as the crowd parted for the source of the music. Killua was mortified, covering his reddened face with his fingers, peeking through the appendages so he didn't trip and get embarrassed further. But, he was trying to listen to Gon and was starting to get his point.

“Look how far you've come, you filled your heart with love.” Gon smiled softly from behind. “Baby, you've done enough, take a deep breath, Don't beat yourself up, don't need to run so fast! Sometimes we come last, but we did our best!

“I won't give up, no I won't give in, 'Till I reach the end and then I'll start again! No, I won't leave, I wanna try everything! I wanna try even though I could fail! I won't give up, no I won't give in, 'Till I reach the end and then I'll start again! No, I won't leave, I wanna try everything, I wanna try even though I could fail!"

Gon stopped Killua in the middle of a four way hallway intersection and faced him towards him, the dancing people fading into the background as they were lost in each others eyes.

“I'll keep on making those new mistakes… I'll keep on making them every day, Those new mistakes! Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh!"

Gon began running off down another hallway, rushing past everything, and it was like Killua's eyes were opened finally. People wearing different colored but coordinated shirts, talking, dancing. It was lively and musical, and beautiful. Banners and art of school color and love of music was on the walls and the roof. Music was in the air, and it was almost like... a childhood dream come true... It took Killua's breath away. Gon turned back to look at him and Killua blushed, reaching down his neck. How could Gon be this amazing?

“Try everything! Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, Try everything! Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh! Try everything! Oh, oh, oh, oh! Try everything!""

Gon stopped in a hallway not too far from their lockers. The crowds around them cheered a bit in appreciation for the song and dissipated to spread the happiness and love of music Gon just started.

"Please…” Gon panted quietly, “You'll never know what you like until you try it." Gon said. "Spirit week might be fun for you too."

"...This peppy stuff isn't for me...” Killua muttered, less winded by all the pulling around Gon did, but more from all the steady attention he got from Gon throughout the song. "But, I'll try it if it makes you leave me alone." He admitted stubbornly. He sure knew how to not lose face.

"Yay!" He cried.
You brought me a gold shirt!?

I had a feeling I would need it!

Gon and Killua entered their vocal training class together, already used to the gold shirts everywhere since it was a full class of sophomores. They greeted Gon happily. Gon scanned the classroom and pouted when he didn't see the head of golden hair he looking for.

"Oi, where's Melody and Kurapika?" Killua asked, looking around himself.

"I don't know... maybe they're going to be late? Or they have an excused absence for doing something World star related?" Gon suggested.

"Or they think your spirit week is stupid and they didn't want to be here for it." Killua snickered. Gon nudged him in the ribs, Killua letting out a laughing 'ooff'!

"Shut up, Killua! You know Melody is the vice-president of the MSSC! She made most of these events herself, why would she think it's stupid?" Gon scolded, going over to his front seat.

"Whatever, I was just kidding." Killua said, sitting behind Gon and putting his feet on the back of Gon's chair. "I was gonna ask her about the events this week anyways."

"They're posted everywhere, Killua." Gon said.

"I'm too lazy to read that. I need it from the source." He chuckled, fiddling with his phone.

"Class is starting, phones away." Kite said, striding in with a commanding presence. Killua made a face, upset at being called out, but put it away. Gon couldn't help the nagging worried feeling in his gut about where his friends were. He was a little distracted in class.

At lunch, Gon was relieved to see Melody and Kurapika sitting at the lunch table as usual, chatting to each other amicably with music sheet papers in front of them.

"Melody! Kurapika!" Gon cheered, running forward. Killua's eyes widened, and was certain Gon didn't notice it yet, taking a more leisure walk over to their lunch table.

"Guys! Where did you go!? You weren't in class!" Gon said exercising his dramatics.

"Oh Gon!" Kurapika hummed surprised, Melody letting out a little giggle from Gon's whining. "I have something to tell you. I received very good news in the mail this weekend and I wanted to wait until I saw you in person to tell you." Kurapika hummed in his soothing voice. Killua finally reached and sat next to Melody, the two exchanging a small fist bump.

"Good news?! Really? What is it?" Gon asked with excitement.

"I was informed that..." Kurapika paused for dramatic effect and was very pleased with the adorable breath holding reaction he got from Gon. "...I graduated!"

Gon's eyes boggled out of his head in surprise.

"You... what!?! Kurapika, that's amazing!" Gon cried out, then he finally noticed. Kurapika and Melody was wearing white, the school colors for juniors-- 3rd years. "Wah, Kurapika! I'm so happy
for you!" Gon said, reaching over the table and hugging him. Kurapika gave out a breezy laugh and
Gon broke the hug to hug Melody too. "And you too, right, Melody?" He asked. She nodded.

"It's thanks to you, Gon." Kurapika said. "I was able to unlock a new part of me, the real part of me.
I was able to compose songs I was actually liking, instead of just dealing with. They were right
compositionally, but they would never do what they were suppose to without the emotional aspect of
it. Once I got that down, I was excelling all my second year classes. I received a letter saying I was
excelling so well, the second year classes were no longer sufficient for my level of skill and I was
moving up to 3rd year. I got my schedule this morning and went to find my classes with Melody."  
Kurapika explained. Killua looked over to Melody.

"Is that what happened with you, baby girl?" Killua asked.

"Not exactly." She hummed. "I was already well enough to go up to the next grade level, but I
wanted to stay back in the second grade level for as long as Kurapika was to be. I wanted to
accompany him and be his strength and help find his answer, and luckily Gon came around and
helped him in the best way-- helped us both. We'll be forever thankful." Melody said. "I only told
Kurapika of this after we met up this morning and he told me he had graduated."

"Wow, that's amazing!" Gon said. "But you really don't have to thank me! I was just helping you see
what was inside you all along." Gon said, sheepishly rubbing the back of his neck.

"So cheesy! You don't have to be so modest Gon." Killua smirked at him. Gon looked over at
Killua, blanking for a moment before looking at Melody.

"You can do something like ask to be kept in your grade?" Gon asked. Killua raised an eyebrow at
the confusing and weird reaction from Gon.

"Yes. If someone is talented enough they can graduate all 4 years in one year, probably including
summer classes. But also, they can request or get held back in a year for multiple years if they're just
not learning. And it's based on their tuition money how long they hold out on trying again and
again." She said.

"Is that what your doing, Killua?" Gon asked, turning to him again.

"Yea? What, did you think I wasn't talented enough to be out of here already? My mother calls
every year to remind and tell them to keep me in the grade I'm suppose to be."  
Gon nodded. Killua was pretty cool...

"Ok! Well, this call for a celebration!" Gon said. "We should go out today!"

"Gon, training!" Killua reminded.

"Ack... that's true..." Gon furrowed his eyebrows.

"Gon, it's quite alright, you don't have to--"

"I know! I'll buy us a pizza for the table!" He said jumping up. "What do you want?" Gon asked
Kurapika.

"Gon." Killua said pointedly. Gon huffed a bit but just waited for Kurapika's answer. Killua sulked
then, looking off away from Gon. Kurapika raised an eyebrow at the curious exchange.

"Flatbread spinach should be fine."
"Great choice." Melody agreed.

"Great! I'll be back!" Gon said, running off.

"Whatever, I wanted to ask you the events happening this week." Killua asked, turning to Melody.

"Oh? Oh! Well, today, we have a open mic, cafe music. We rented a space at a coffee shop not too far from here." She said. Killua nodded, and took out his notepad, writing it down. Melody's eyebrow twitched in irritation.

"You know this stuff is on the school website, right?" She asked.

"I'm too lazy for that! C'mon." He nudged her softly to encourage her to keep going. She laughed a bit but continued to tell her friend about it anyways.

"You know you don't have the money to be buying whole pizzas from the school cafeteria of all places." Killua scolded, sitting cross legged on the floor. Gon scrunched his lips into moue, his eyebrows furrowing stubbornly. Killua grit his teeth seeing Gon's defenses forming right in front of him.

"Don't be like this, stupid!" Killua grunted, shoving a knuckle to Gon's temple, causing Gon to cry out. They had just finished going over the music genres sitting in the Zoldyck's recreation room. Gon had actually showed he's like some aspect of classical or orchestra in his piece, so Killua added it to the list when the genre reminded him of Kurapika and Melody.

"You don't need to be spending money all over the place to have friends. You have to understand that they won't blame you if you don't buy them something." Killua scolded, sitting back from punishing Gon. But it was so stupid, he still had that stubborn pout on his face.

"I don't want money to limit me from doing what I want for my friends."

"But you have to come to terms, you don't have the money to spoil them like you want. I think they'll understand if you just tell them--""

"NO!" Gon cried out. Killua huffed and fell over onto his back. Gon crawled over and looked down at Killua's face, although Killua's eyes were closed.

"I know I don't have to buy them anything. But if I want to, shouldn't I? They're not forcing me or anything--"

"There are other things, free things, that you could do to show your appreciation instead. There's no reason to put yourself in a tight spot just for a fleeting moment with friends." Killua interrupted, his electrifying eyes opening and locking eyes with Gon with pinpoint precision.

"But those moments are priceless." Gon replied simply. Killua gave him a deadpan look then shook his head and rolled his eyes.

"Fine, fine." Killua gave up. It didn't even mattered. Once Gon passed this semester and was able to get some jobs, money won't even be a problem. He sat up with ease, Gon moving his head out the way before he got hit.

"Ok, so..." Killua sighed through his nose as he review the list in front of him. "We'll be going over
EDM tomorrow, and rapping afterwards, we need to squeeze classical and orchestral somewhere in there and oh! performance readiness..." Killua listed off, mostly to himself, "and we have these events in the week to help with that... and I got some connections for the performance ready... and a capella can take place in our acoustics room..." Killua said, jotting down like lightning.

"Oh ya, acoustics! More singing in the shower!" Gon replied cheerily, showing he was listening intently. Killua paused mid word and looked over at Gon curiously.

"What?" Killua asked. Gon wondered if he said something wrong.

"S-sing... singing in the shower? You know? Acoustics a capella?" He said. "I can do that for practice before we even get to that topic." Killua squinted at him.

"Are you making this up? Who the hell sings in the shower?" Killua asked. Gon let his jaw drop.

"Killua, tell me you're kidding! You've sung in the shower before, right? In the tub when you three? Whistled while you peed?!"

"Ew, Gon, please." Killua made a face and went back to finish the sentences on the page.

"Aow, Killua, nooo..." Gons said. Killua really never tried to magic of singing in the shower...?

"Mhhh..." Gon hummed, studying the profile of Killua's face. "Killua!" Gon cried out, hopping onto his feet, jolting Killua in surprise.

"W-what--?"

"Follow me!" He said, "It's too much of a shame that you've never experienced singing in the bathroom. How can you be my teacher and never experienced anything this simple before in your life yet?" He said, reaching down and jerking Killua to his feet. "Where's your bathroom?" He asked moving out the room into the hallway.

"W-what, wait- Gon you're breaking all the rules." Killua said, but directed Gon to the bathroom. "This is stupid, I doubt anyone actually goes in the bathroom with the thoughts in mind to sing!" Killua said.

"The acoustics are great in there! I'm sure a lot of people developed their dreams of being world stars right in the shower. You sound amazing and feel like a star under the water like a spotlight and your voice carrying as though for the world to hear. I love singing in the shower." Gon said, finally getting to the bath. He was surprised at how big the place was, but then he saw it was actually just a bathroom-- a counter spanning on side of the room with one sink, a mirror following the counter, and then large sections of warm baths ready for bath time. But the ceiling was tall and perfect for the sounds. Killua furrowed his eyebrows, unnerved at being in here for any reason than necessary.

"Umm..." Gon hummed, his voice already bouncing off the walls and creating discordance of noise. Killua stared deadpan at Gon as he waited for the teen's next move, Gon keeping him captive by their locked hands.

"What's the hold-up?!" Killua cried out, his voice making sharp vibrations on the walls. Gon chuckled out of sheepishness and Killua had to admit that was a nice sound to have coming at him from every corner of the bathroom- never mind that just sounded weird.

"I'm just trying to think of a good song we could sing!" He said. Killua scoffed, already thinking of a perfect song to describe what he's feeling.
"What am I doing here..." Killua started. Gon lit up as he recognized it immediately and joined in with harmonization.

"Oooh, here? Oooh, here... I ask myself what am I doing here...? Oooh, here, ooh, here?" They held the last note in harmony, the sound swirling and playing around them like fall leaves in the breeze, and it was pretty, and beautiful, and Killua seriously thinks he'll never get over singing with Gon. He makes him feel so much, and it's so amazing, and now here he was singing with Gon in a bathroom of all places and it's still as amazing and beautiful as if they weren't in this gross place. Gon was amazing. Singing in the acoustics of the bathroom was almost like recording yourself and playing it back to yourself in real time. Any sharp or missing notes were sharply bounced back at you to listen to. Any mistakes were instantly heard and amplified through a series of soundwaves. Killua approved it as good practice space… for Gon anyway, he'll still have to get used to it himself. Gon gave Killua a beaming smile and Killua returned a shy one.

"Please remember to stick to the dress code of the spirit week when deciding your outfit. Any violation will be dealt with swiftly." Katsuo spoke over the speakers in that nonthreatening peppy voice of his. Tuesday was Music Through the Decades-- music appreciation. Students were encouraged to wear an outfit inspired by a song or an outfit that was pretty staple to a time of music.

Gon watched people walk by with the strangest outfits, but it helped when some of them had the song that inspired them playing on some sort of speaker to be heard by those around them. His favorite was someone playing O Fortuna and wearing lamenation rags, black fake spikes stick out the outfit. Gon couldn’t help but laugh when he was brought aside by teachers to be investigated for his outfit choice. It was really fun to see what decade people decided to choose.

"I think I like this idea of trying everything." Gon heard Killua say behind him. Gon turned and dropped his jaw when he saw what Killua was wearing. He was wearing a light purple v neck button up, dark purple bell bottom slacks, hoop earrings and fade sunglasses with platform shoes, his headphones ever present around his neck and playing loud enough that Gon could hear “Feel it still” by Portugal. The Man on the speakers.

“K-Killua… what are you wearing?!” Gon asked appalled. Gon himself was wearing 90's inspired clothes, a bandana around his forehead, an oversized jean jacket on and teared jeans with a large belt and large shoes.

“What do you mean? I'm wearing 60s… ish, 80s ish inspired clothing. Like those old timely spy movies.” Killua pointed out. Gon sputtered and shook his head.

“Th-this isn- you’re not- Killua! This is why I don’t trust you with fashion.” Gon finally let out. Killua let his jaw drop in astonishment and smacked Gon’s arm.

“Shuddap, this is 10 out of 10 perfection right here.” He gestured to himself. Gon rolled his eyes, laughter bubbling at his lips.

“Alright, let’s go, Goldfinger.” Gon teased.

“After you, James dean.” Killua chirped right back. They were heading to class when they spotted Melody and Kurapika. Melody was wearing flower child stuff, a crown of pastel pink flowers over her silvery hair and circle shades and a jumper with flower pastels and a cardigan over it. But Kurapika...
"Kurapika! Why aren't you dressed up?" Gon asked as they made their way over.

"I don't really want to join in the festivities. I don't think I'd be able to participate properly, and any attempt would be insincere. I just cannot see myself doing this." He said, although he even looked apologetic to Melody, the vice chair to the spirit committee.

"Oh, Kurapika, it's fine." Melody assured him. Gon mouth formed an o and then he was nodding understandingly.

"Yea, don't even worry about it." Gon said, waving his hands in the air. Killua's jaw hung open and then he swung his arm to hit Gon's bicep.

"What the hell, man, you gave me crap- a whole song number about how I should participate in spirit week and mister prissy pants here says no and you drop it like its hot."

"Nice one." Melody said.

"Thank you." Killua said shortly, taking his eyes off Gon for a second to exchange a quick fist bump.

"I resent that prissy pants stuff." Kurapika said with a deadpan look directed at Killua.

"Sorry, but c'mon, you can't deny you act like your some prince or higher being." Killua shrugged.

"Killua, I can't make Kurapika do it if he doesn't want to. He has better things to do anyway. He's busy now that he's a third year. And I just really wanted you to do it because... well, I wanted to do it with you."

"Well..." Killua stuttered, a bit embarrassed. "Don't you want to do it with Kurapika?"

"Well, I do, but its ok if I don't do it with him. I don't think I'd be very happy if I couldn't do it with you. It has to be you, Killua."

Killua's pretty sure he swallowed his tongue and his mouth clicked shut as he stared at Gon with wide eyes and a blush he's sure his shades won't hide.

"Ooooh..." Melody hummed to one side and moved to leave with Kurapika.

"3, 2, 1." Kurapika muttered under his breath to Melody as they walked away.

"YOU'RE SO EMBARRASSING, GON!"

The two upperclassmen snickered to themselves.

-o000o0o-

It was a great atmosphere the whole day with everyone giving and receiving compliments on people’s costumes if they decided to partake. It really was a spirited day, and teachers were getting more engaged participation from the kids because of it. More volunteers for examples and loud voices and effort. Gon got plenty of waves and people trying to talk to him, and Killua was getting a bit grumpy.

“Well, aren’t you Mr. Popular?” Killua muttered under his breath, but Gon’s ears picked it up.

“Hmm? You are too, Killua.” Gon said turning from his latest conversation to talk to Killua. Killua furrowed his eyebrows.
“No, I’m no-”

“Yes, you are so popular. Just because you scorn people talking to you and block yourself from interactions doesn’t mean people don’t want to talk to you. I’m sure you’re as popular or even more popular than me. If you’re feeling out of it, try talking to people. They’ll happily talk back.” Gon said. Killua pouted, feeling socially uncomfortable with that suggestion, and that wasn’t the root problem…

“I… fine. Later, though, ok. Can we just get to lunch already?” Killua asked. Gon smiled helplessly at Killua. What will he do with his dummy?

“Alright.”

Zushi decided to go for the futuristic 80s, metallic silver jackets and pointy shades and abstract triangles on his sneakers. Pokkle and Ponzu decided to match and wear 90s inspired clothes as well.

“You all look great!” Gon said, and they repaid the compliment. He noticed then, Melody was on stage.

“Hello, everyone! We’re going to start our Lip sync concert! Sign ups are down front!” She said.

“Ah! That sounds so fun! We have to do one, Killua!” Gon cried, grabbing Killua’s arm. Killua rolled his eyes, but a smile came over his features.

“I guess it won’t be terrible, painful at best.” He said. They jumped up and ran to sign ins before it got too long. It was a fun time for the hour of lunch, people going up in groups or performing solo. Gon and Killua ended up Lip syncing a Michael Jackson song, and people were going crazy up there. Anyone would agree they looked great up there together. Everyone was fawning over Gon’s killer smile, and Killua’s performing aura. If it was a contest, Killua would be sure they’d win by popular vote.

“What the hell are you supposed to be?” Illumi asked Hisoka.

“The terminator…” Hisoka said a bit offended it wasn’t obviously.

“That doesn't make any sense. What music decade is that?” Illumi furrowed his eyebrow.

“Whatever.” Hisoka said rolling his Rs and lowering his shades.

“I didn’t really want to change out of my 90s clothes… I missed it in a lot of ways.” Gon said.

“Can’t relate.” Killua shrugged as he led Gon down the second floor hallway. Gon watched them walk past Killua’s room, the farthest they’ve ever gone on the second floor before.

“Neh, Killua, where are we going?” Gon asked, peeking over his friend’s shoulder.

“Well…” Killua said, scratching his cheek. “We’re learning about Electronic Dance Music today, and while I know enough to remix a song at its basic level, it… should be easier for you to learn from who I learned from.”

Gon’s eyes widened. One of Killua’s brothers?

“It’s not Illumi, is it?” Gon asked.
“No! Does Illumi look like he can remix anything?” He asked exasperated. Gon let out a breath he didn’t know he was holding. “It’s Milluki. He’s the best DJ I know. I think he’s even better at EDM than classical music composing, but he doesn’t think so and often gets frustrated when the music doesn’t come out like he wanted it to. So he’s sticking with composing. But I love all his music, I keep every single one he sends me. I’m like his editor, all of his EDM comes through me first. Except… he says I’m useless if I just keep saying they’re all good. But it’s true! You’ll see when we get there.” Killua bragged. Gon watched Killua talk about his brother and he felt like he was suddenly hit with clarity.

“Oh.” He said. He smiled widely. “Ok!” He was excited for today.

They reached a door and they could just barely hear the music from behind it, but they could hear it was foreign music. Killua knocked on the door, and a loud “What?!” was responded almost immediately. Gon jumped a bit in surprise but Killua just rolled his eyes.

“Open up, piggy! I got something to ask you!” He raised his voice to be heard from outside the door and over the music that was playing in his room. They heard the music get lowered as Gon kept looking between the door and Killua’s cat like expression.

“Just ask from out there!” The man’s voice came again, clearer with the music lowered.

“It’s a favor! C’mon, piggy, I don’t really feel like screaming just to talk to you. Illu would hate it if I lost my voice because of you!” Sputtering and indignant cursing followed and Killua looked smug and victorious. Gon blinked. So this was how siblings worked?

The door swung open much too suddenly and Gon flinched, although Killua just crossed his arm. Milluki only considered Gon for a second through squinted eye before they landed on Killua again.

“What is it?” He asked.

“I want you to show my friend about EDM today.” He said. Milluki looked at Killua with surprise then bursted into laughter.

“Hahaha, and why should I help you or do what you say?” He sneered at him. Killua’s expression changed into one of frustrated contemplation.

“You know your stuff. I can’t teach him as well as you could. And you know if he just learns from radio noise, his EDM will come out like crap…” Killua said, lowering his head like it was a shame, sliding his hands in his pockets. But Gon could see from where he stood that Killua looked like a cat that laid the bait for its mouse. Apparently Milluki took it as he puffed up.

“Darn right, that radio noise is crap! What they call remixes suck! They just add horn noises and laser zaps and scratch a record too close to a microphone and they think that’s music. They speed it up and slow it down to a disgusting warped version. Remixes should add to the original piece without taking away from it. It could be its own song if it wasn’t so closely tied to the original song. Remixes should pull and push, and drop and catch you when you least expect it, beats and bass where the artist was too dumb not to do it themselves—!” He cut himself short, catching the admiring looks on both of the kid’s faces. He blushed furiously and turned around to slam the door.

“Shut up! Got me ranting for no reason, you’re so annoying, Killu!”

“Wait!” Gon cried out, speaking out for the first time since they got there. “That was really amazing, all you were talking about!” Gon said. “I think that’s the kind of EDM I want. You sound so impressive and that you really know what you’re talking about, I’d love to learn from you. Killua
spoke so highly of you, you must be a great teacher.” Gon said. Killua’s mouth opened in surprise and he blushed a bit before hitting Gon on the back.

“What the hell, Gon, don’t go telling him stuff like that! That’s embarrassing!” He muttered. Milluki blushed too and his eyes landed on the silver headphones he made for Killua all those years ago and he turned back into his darkened room.

“... Whatever, I can teach you some simple basics.” He muttered walking in. Both Gon and Killua lit up before exchanging looks and running inside.

“Yay! Thanks, piggy!” Killua cried, running past Milluki and into his swivel chair, sliding past his electric keyboard and desk.

“Ya, thanks piggy!” Gon parroted Killua.

“Don’t call me that! The name’s Milluki! Get off my chair, brat! Geez, what the hell did I get into?” He grumbled, Killua darting out of his chair before Milluki could sit on him.

“Mh! I’m Gon, by the way!” Gon said, coming to stand by Milluki’s desk. It was crazy, he had maybe 5 monitors spaced out in front of his desk, and 3 different keyboards, and an electric sound board installed directly into the face of the desk. It looked very complicated and confusing.

“Don’t look down, you’ll overwhelm yourself.” Milluki stated, sliding up to the desk. Gon promptly looked up instead, staring straight at the screen. Milluki clicked up a program to show on the biggest and central computer screen.

“This is what’s usually used to compose EDM music, to warp voices and crap. C’mere, brat.” Milluki said while pulling up a small custom microphone from a small compartment somewhere beneath his desk. Killua stepped up to his other side where the microphone was. “Sing something.” He pointed. Killua huffed and rolled his eyes but bent over and sang into it “Party”-- breaking the word up into 3 simple note inflection. The soundwaves of the the call structured out onto the program on the screen.

“Wow!” Gon said.

“Then you can layer beats like cymbals, metronome, or stuff like that over it.” Milluki commenced showing them the ways of remix and EDM, having much too fun with the speeding up and slowing down functions. Before they left, Killua played a couple of remixes Milluki had made for Gon to hear examples of most things they learnt that day. An AMV labeled Magi- The Dayman contained his music, a great beat and bottoming out beats and unexpected twists and turns.

“Wow, amazing! Can’t you do the EMD for me in my piece, Milky?” Gon asked.

“No! Brat…” Milluki huffed. “That’s not even a good piece.” He huffed.

“See? What’d I tell you?” Killua said, nomming on a chocolate bar Killua found under Milluki’s pillows. “Oh! There’s this one song he helped me make, I love that one too…” Killua said, pulling up Idols EDM. Gon gasped.

“Wow! This is amazing. I definitely want to put EDM in my final piece, Killua!” Gon said, flopping on the bed.

“EDM, and classical orchestra? It sounds a mess, Gon.” Killua laughed at him.

“Ah? Classical?” Milluki said with a smile. “That’s my expertise. When you’re learning how to do
that, you have to come to me for that.” He said, rolling his swivel chair away from the bed and back to the desk. Gon and Killua beamed, exchanging looks.

“Allright, piggy!”

“Stop calling me piggy!”

“Hey, can I try to make my own piece?”

“No!”

“You’re so freakin’ cute!—”

“Gon, I swear to gawd, if you don’t stop!” Killua gritted out. Wednesday was Furry Day, which many people honorably decided to bow out from. But Gon being Gon couldn’t let anything slip through his fingers. He bought them matching dog and cat felt ears to wear around for the day. There was corresponding collars with a bone and paw tags but Killua was calling it there. Gon wore his, and Killua’s pretty sure he was going to explode from embarrassment. It wasn’t even that bad that those that decided to not dress up looked at those that did looked on like judges, or those that did decide to dress up looked on like they found their people.

It was mostly Gon and his stray comments on how good he looked in his white fluff ears.

“Your hair hides where it connects and it looks like it really is your ears!” Gon gushed again. Killua rubbed his face, a perpetual blush on his face for that day.

“Gon, please… I’m now begging you to stop or else I’ll take them off!” Killua said with finality. Gon sucked his lips into his mouth in silence. Killua let out a breath in relief. Then a sound of a picture being taken had Killua’s eyes flying open to see Gon trying to take as many pictures as he could.

“Gon! I swear- o my- I hate you!” He cried out in outrage as he fought Gon for his phone. Gon just laughed and took a couple close ups.

“Nice, guys.” Zushi said, crossing his arms. They both stopped in the struggled and separated, Killua in defeat and Gon in triumph.

“Whatever, it’s not even worth it.” Killua huffed. Zushi nodded, his raccoon ears flopping a bit with the motion.

“Well, are you excited for after school today?” Zushi asked.

“Yea! Sounds fun!” Killua said, his eyes lighting up. That day, the school was setting up Spirit Fair. Rock climbing, bouncy house, giant inflatable ball games, and plenty of food. And since it was early day, Gon and Killua can stay afterwards for an hour before they have to go and train.

“MH! I think it was a great idea on the MSSC’s part to have a midweek celebration to help students get through the rest of the week. It can get ruff after Wednesday.” Gon proceeded to show off his troll face in Killua’s direction, waiting for Killua to get his pun. Killua’s face scrunched into a sour look once he got it and was so proud of himself when he refrained himself from punching Gon in the face and just punched him in the gut. Gon bent over laughing and wheezing.
Killua was happy to be able to scrub himself clean at the end of the day. Both literally and mentally. He doesn’t think he’ll ever be able to wear furry things ever again. He was pretty neutral about it before but Gon ruined it for him today. But he was also filthy after running and playing hard with Gon at the Fair. They had a competition to see who could win more of the games, but it turned out as a tie. Kurapika and Melody, who was dressed as a bunny, had kept score for them so none of them could claim they had actually won. He was tired now, but today’s training should be pretty chill. He just needed to shower first, but then he was heading to Gon’s place to practice their rapping and such.

Killua let out a loaded sigh. Showers were so therapeutic, warmth dripping and caressing down his skin never failed to roll the tension out his limbs that anxiety always seem to wind tight through the day. He sighed out as his mind went blank and he just let the waves of water roll over him, but then he heard his sigh skip around on the walls. Killua blinked against the water pelleting his face then remembered what Gon had told him earlier in the week...

C’mon Killua you can do it... apparently people do it all the time. Sing in the shower... Killua thought as he let out a brief exhale.

"I don't know, it's just something about ya." Killua started hesitantly. "Got me feeling like I can't be without ya. Anytime someone mention your name, I be feeling as if I'm around ya."

He had to admit, he did sound great. He always knew him and his family was blessed with vocals, but he never was one to enjoy it himself. Hearing himself like this… with no one else. It was like giving himself a personal concert. He started to get more into it.

“Ain't no words to describe you baby, All I know is that you take me high. Can you tell that you drive me crazy? 'Cause I can’t get you out my mind! Thinkin' of ya when I'm goin' to bed, When I wake up think of ya again! You are my homie, lover and friend, Exactly why…” Gon easily came to his mind as he sang, letting that fuel the emotions in his voice as he sang, enjoying the result in his singing.

“You light me up inside, Like the 4th of July! Whenever you’re around, I always seem to smile! And people ask me how, Well your the reason why I'm dancing in the mirror and singing in the shower! Ladade ladada ladada!”

Illumi was walking past the bathroom when he heard noises. Illumi huffed a bit and started walking more briskly, he doesn't desire to hear Milluki going at it in the shower with himself today. But then he realized the noises were on a recognizable meter... and words.

He paused in front of the bathroom and leaned a bit towards the door, only to hear...

"Killu's singing in the bathroom?" Illumi asked himself.

“Singing in the shower! Ladade ladada ladada! Singing in the shower!"

Killua never sings in the bathroom, he usually resigns himself to not needing to sing unless necessary. And Illumi always supported that ideal, the smaller the supply, the greater the demand. Illumi is happy to hear his little brother in ways he haven't been able to in awhile, but change is not always good.

-o0o0o0-
“And rapping is a good way to sharpen your wit, reaction time, and can help you come up with lyrics when writing songs because freestyle rapping is on the fly. You have to be good at rhyme, meter, and innovation.” Killua explained, pacing the small of Gon’s room.

“Mh!” Gon listened intently trying to take in all the notes.

“What we’ll do is bounce ideas, lines, and snippets back and forth, and hopefully by this way, we can get you used to it. This might need more than one day, but the practice will help. There’s a Rap Battle tomorrow between passing, and we’re joining. It should be quick and the time before class is the timer to vote for a winner. It’s a cover version, you can add your own lyrics if you want or if you need to connect two seemingly disconnected lines of songs. So we’ll listen to other rap songs first then, we’ll have 10 minutes to gather some thoughts or lines, and bounce back and forth. Tomorrow will be your practice with mostly rhyme and quick wit since it won’t be freestyle. Ok?” Killua explained. Killua cried out in surprise when he saw Gon’s ears smoking and his eyes swirling.

(“No, no, I got it!”

“Are you sure?”)

The following roast battle that lasted into the night was hilarious and fun for the both of them.

“Cute pajamas.” Kurapika hummed, smiling at his younger friend. Thursday was Pajamas day, which Gon’s pretty sure the whole school did. Well, who doesn’t wish to never change out of their pajamas? But Gon’s pretty sure some of these pajamas weren’t the ones they sleep in but ones they brought to look fashionable in. In contrast, Gon really did look like he was asleep when he decided just to wear his camo Pj pants and a white tank, plus his green jacket to keep the fall weather from making his teeth chatter.

“Thanks Kurapika.” Gon stuck his tongue out and rubbed the back of his head.

“Well, you always look like you’re in pajamas, what the hell even is your outfit?” Killua’s voice rang out from behind Gon and he sighed.

“I’m sure this is my fault. We were roasting each other last night and I think Killua still has some fire in him, so he’s just fiery today.” Gon explained to Kurapika as he looked over Gon’s shoulder to see the situation. Killua was head butting with Ponzu as they glared at each other.

“My outfit is classy!” She defended.

Killua was wearing a silk blue pajama with little doodled clouds on it and a sleep mask up in his hair, matching his outfit except the smiling moon on each side. Ponzu wore a satin night gown, and a matching draping coat over her shoulder. Pokkle, wearing simple cotton pants and long sleeve shirt, was shaking his head as his girlfriend fought with Gon’s best friend.

“What are they even fighting about?” Kurapika asked.

“I don’t know anymore. Ponzu said something about Killua’s pajamas and I think it exploded from there.” Gon shrugged feeling a bit tired. Kurapika laughed behind his hand.

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“Go, go, go!” Killua snickered and laughed as the bell for first period rang. They rushed out to get to the courtyard quick so they have plenty of time for the rap battle, they only had about 15 minutes in passing-- extended after Gon spoke with Netero about it.
They got there as other students reached the courtyard and he recognized the rap referee who would call low blows or credit good verses where they come, and even Todo, the man who bullied Zushi earlier that year, was there.

“Aight!” The ref called. “We got until minute bell to spit out the sickest raps you remember, its cover songs, not original, so if you remember anything, jump on it. Anything you can use to roast, boast, or generally coast goes! The crowds’ cheers determine the winners. I’ll start us off and lay down the meter.” The crowd let out their cheers as the ref began puffing a beat and the rap participants started bouncing to catch the beat. Killua clasped a hand on Gon’s shoulder to help reassure him.

Ref:

"Look! If you had one shot, or one opportunity to seize everything you ever wanted in one moment, would you capture it or just let it slip? Yo!

“His palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy, There's vomit on his sweater already: Mom's spaghetti! He's nervous, but on the surface he looks calm and ready, To drop bombs, but he keeps on forgetting What he wrote down, the whole crowd goes so loud, He opens his mouth, but the words won't come out He's choking, how? Everybody's joking now, The clock's run out, time's up, over—blaow!

“Snap back to reality, oh, there goes gravity, oh, There goes Rabbit, he choked, he's so mad, but he won't Give up that easy, no!

“You better lose yourself in the music, The moment, you own it, you better never let it go! You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow! This opportunity comes once in a lifetime, You better lose yourself in the music, The moment, you own it, you better never let it go! You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow! This opportunity comes once in a lifetime,

You better…!”

Killua jumped in first to start it off.

Killua:

“I fly with the stars in the skies
I am no longer trying to survive
I believe that life is a prize
But to live doesn't mean you're alive--”

Todo:

“--They say I'm crazy, well I'm 'bout to go dumb again
They ain't see me cause I pulled up in my other Benz
Last week I was in my other other Benz

Throw your diamonds up cause we in this -- another 'gain!” Todo countered. Killua started with his counter first.

Killua:
“Don't worry 'bout me and who I fire
I get what I desire, it's my empire
And yes I call the shots, I am the umpire
I sprinkle holy water upon the vampire
In this very moment I'm king
In this very moment I slay Goliath with a sling
In this very moment I bring, put it on everything
That I will retire with the ring” The crowd responded to his verse and cheered over what Todo would say next. Gon jumped in next with the verses he knew.

Gon:
“Yeah, photo shoot fresh, lookin like wealth
I'm 'bout to call the paparazzi on myself
Uh, live from the Mercer
Run up on Yeezy the wrong way I might murk ya
Flee in the G-450 I might surface
Political refugee asylum can be purchased
Uh, everything's for sale
I got five passports, I'm never goin to jail”

Most of the participants didn’t want to go up against Gon, but some admiring student stepped up for the chance to sing with the Gon Freecss. Win or lose, it was for the fun of the music.

RndStudent1:
“I walk through the valley of the shadow of death is
Top floor the view alone will leave you breathless (gasp)!
Try to catch it (gasp)! It's kinda hard
Getting choked by the detectives yeah yeah now check the method”

Gon:
“Shout out to my haters,” Gon sang counter lyrics.

“Sorry that you couldn't faze me
Ain't being cocky, we just vindicated
Best believe that what we done this moment
Will be syndicated, I don't know
This night just remind me of
Everything they deprived me of
Put your drinks up
It's a celebration everytime we link up
We done did everything they could think of
Greatness is what we on the brink of!” The crowds cheers were obviously in Gon’s favor so the student stepped down but not before he exchanged a hand slapping handshake with Gon. The lull in lyrics flow caused the ref to step back up to keep the songs going.

Ref:

“You better lose yourself in the music, The moment, you own it, you better never let it go! You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow! This opportunity comes once in a lifetime, You better lose yourself in the music, The moment, you own it, you better never let it go! You only get one shot, do not miss your chance to blow! This opportunity comes once in a lifetime,

You better…”!

Another soul came up to try and spit out some fire,

RndStudent2:

“Couture level flow, it's never goin on sale
Luxury rap, the Hermes of verses
Sophisticated ignorance, write my curses in cursive
I get it custom, you a customer
You ain't 'custommed to goin through customs, you ain't been nowhere, huh?’”

Killua cut in, having much too much fun to let it go, and went to to shut it down.

Killua:

“Hold up, before we end this campaign
As you can see we done bodied the damn lanes
Lord, please let them accept the things they can't change
And pray that all of their pain be champagne” Cheers erupted at the verse, and the student pretended to die, everyone hopping with the beat excited. Todo tried for rhyming again.

Todo:

“I was playing in the beginning, the mood all changed
I've been chewed up and spit out and booed off stage
But I kept rhyming and stepped right into the next cypher

Best believe somebody's paying the Pied Piper!” Gon jumped in to counter.

Gon:

“This is ten percent luck, twenty percent skill
Fifteen percent concentrated power of will
Five percent pleasure, fifty percent pain
And a hundred percent reason to remember the name!

Mike! - He doesn't need his name up in lights
He just wants to be heard whether it's the beat or the mic!” The crowd was eating up the beats and battle. By the end of the battle, the crowd was cheering much too much.

“Alright, Alright! Then it’s a tie! Good job everyone, remember to love ya music!” The ref said, dismissing the group. Everyone was cheering and happy.

“That was amazing! If we can, can we put rapping in the piece?” Gon asked. Killua laughed, rubbing his face.

“Should I have expected anything else?” Killua asked himself. “Yea.”

"Whoo!” Gon cried out. He was having a great time this week.

-o0o0o0o-

“Tonight’s a real interesting theme…” Killua hummed from the passenger seat of Gon’s car. He was wearing a side barratt, white tank top with a loose knit sweater over it, a sleek black choker and black skinny jeans overlapped by his ankle boots. They were on their way to a speakeasy, places that used to be the only safe way to enjoy music and other people’s company in the olden days. The school had rented out the space under a bar to use for a very chill and secretive aura.

“I know, it sounded really cool. Plus, who doesn't love just hanging out in a chill environment and listening to slow jams?” Gon asked, one hand on the wheel, the other propped on the open window. He was wearing a black short sleeve turtleneck, with faded jeans. It looked too good, in Killua's opinion. It formed so nicely to his chest muscles, and showed off his arms. Killua just generally tried not to look over at him.

“Mh… It's right around here.” Killua said, pointing at the building coming up on their right. There was a small line coming around the building and down some steps. They parked and got out and joined the line, some students greeting them as they noticed them, all half lidded eyes and round glasses. They looked like they were ready for a poetry reading.

"This is really cool..." Killua said as they got to the speakeasy entrance, a small line outside the door like some real, lowkey, conspiracy stuff. Everyone low lit in street light gold.

"Yea, I really feel like I'm back in the time of prohibition, back when music was outlawed, along with happiness, puppies, and babies." Gon chuckled, looking over at Killua. Killua raised an eyebrow at him.

"You think you're funny, huh?"
"Uh-huh."

"Welcome to rhythm and blues, slow jams singing..." Melody welcomes, wearing round shades and a barret, a long flowing jumper that looks like a dress. She was welcomed with snapping, the ambiguous audience barely lit up to be seen by the intimate small lamp décor in the middle of every table. Melody kept speaking as Killua turned to Gon. Gon caught the movement out the corner of his eye and turned to him to, only for his breath to catch in his throat.

The light underneath them gave a positive golden spark in his eye while it also softly lit up his features. His hair easily adopted the characteristic of the light in front of them.

"It looks like it's gonna be song covers all night. I don't mind staying and listening. Did you want something to drink from the bar?" Killua asked.

"Uuuh..." Gon said, his brain refusing to restart backup and give a reply in proper time.

"It's ok, it's all alcohol free, this is still a school organized event, after all." Killua chuckled, getting up from his seat. Others began getting up as well as Melody said it was a sign up style event.

"I'll just get 2 cranberry apples then?" Killua asked Gon. "Neat or on the rocks?" Killua asked with a teasing smirk on his features, the light making it seem even more feline.

"Wow..." Gon breathed. "I mean, the-the- rocks one..." Gon stumbled through his sentence. Killua laughed and walked off. Gon watched him go, a little too long, too satisfied with just watching that figure go, when he jumped up. He wanted to sing tonight too!

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Shock couldn't describe what Killua felt when Gon got up after the latest number they just listened to. It was a cool chill atmosphere, listening to people sing to a tempo that was 50 beats per minute or slower. Some people's Hatsu shone tonight with their trilling tones caressing notes longer than needed, and purring into the microphones to give off the classy sleazy feel.

Killua was surprised Gon got up to go next, when did he sign up? He was right here at the table to whole time! Killua watched Gon's figure walk up the stage and to the microphone in the center of the circular spotlight.

"Hey, everyone..." Gon let out in a low voice, his mouth covered by the mic. He was met with snaps, a few whistling cheers and a couple claps. He chuckled into the microphone, ducking his head a bit bashfully at that. Killua couldn't help but chuckle from his spot at the table he was now at by himself. He didn't know what Gon was doing, but he wouldn't mind 3 to 4 minutes of listening to Gon's soothing and deep voice sing some slow jams.

"The song I'm going to sing is an oldie but a goldie... I hope you like it..." Gon said. More snapping and calls were made and he closed his eyes as the music started. When some people recognized it, they gave out a couple cheers. When Gon began humming vocalizations, most everyone reacted with cheers before quieting down to listen for his start. When Gon opened his bright liquid gold eyes, they were pinned right to Killua.

It took Killua's breath away. Then he started singing.

“I must have rehearsed my lines a thousand times, Until I had them memorized.” He vocalized, deep and smooth, and a blush was on Killua’s face soon after. It didn’t help that Gon wouldn’t stop staring
at him. He had to look elsewhere eventually right?

“But when I get up the nerve to tell you The words just never seem to come out right! If only you knew how much I do, Do love you... If only you knew, How much I do, I do need you…” Gon sang, only breaking eye contact with Killua to close his eyes in the passion of the song.

“I dream of moments we share but your not there, I'm living in a fantasy. Cause you don't even suspect, Could probably care less, About the changes I been going through.

“If only you knew how much I do, Do love you. If only you knew, How much I do, I do need you…”!

Why wouldn’t Gon just look elsewhere? Unless… this song was for him? No, it had to be coincident. He was nervous and looking at him helps, or… Gon met his eyes again and electricity zapped around his stomach, making it difficult for him to breathe. It had to be coincident…

“No, you don't even suspect, Could probably care less, About the changes I been going through!

If only you knew how much I do, Do love you. If only you knew, How much I do, I do need you… If only you knew how much I do, Do love you. If only you knew, How much I do, I do need you!”

The crowd started snapping and letting out quiet whoops as the song winded down and Gon vocalized, straight to Killua’s heart.

“Oh, if, if… In my… Love you… life... You don't know, I say you don't know, How much I need you sugar… If only you knew, How much I do, I say you don't know that I love you, And I'm so fond of you... I love you baby…” Gon ended with a wink then broke the spell with a bashful laugh.

“Thank you.” He said as the audience clapped and he hopped off the stage. Killua gulped as Gon approached, still looking amazing.

Killua felt too warm…

Friday was World Star day. To encourage students to think about their future as a world star and develop their concept. It was the day Gon was most excited about. He knew he wanted his image as a World Star to be something a little less flashy and idealistic, but a more refined version of himself. He wants to think that when he goes on to become a world star, he'll still be himself. He won't let his label change or control him and he'll always sing what’s true to himself. And he was excited to show this to the rest of the school.

Plus, today was the day that they announced which school grade was the winner of the spirit week with the most spirit points. They would announce it after the End of the Spirit week Spirit Party. A Lot of spirit, but who minded? Throughout the week, even more students were converted to see the joys of music for the sake of music.

Gon checked his phone and bit his lip. He felt a wave of regret hit him again although it ebbed away soon after. Gon tries really hard never to regret anything in his life, every choice brings him to the him he is now. But it was hard not to regret singing the song he did or at least so intently at Killua last night. After he returned to his seat, he was pretty happy with the flustered responses he was getting, at least some of his feelings reached Killua. But then he was avoiding eye contact, keeping himself closed in so there was no chance in contact and the talking was minimal. Gon was the one who ended up trying to fill up the awkward silence in the car on the way home by himself. And then when Killua got out his car to go through the gate to his house, he didn't even turn around when he
said good night. It left a terrible feeling sitting in the pit of his gut, that he might have messed up. Rushed things too fast and now he scared Killua off.

He had texted him that morning but he hadn't gotten any reply back. Gon was mostly just waiting to see Killua again. He doesn't think the rock in his gut will leave until he sees those adorable baby blues again.

He was actually wearing the leather jacket outfit he had picked out last with Killua from last Friday to show the kind of World Star he'd be, and his Gibson accompanied him today on his back. Simple but fashionable, and still a bit of rustic. He stood by his and Killua's locker, looking down and lost in thought.

"Gon?"

Gon looked up way too fast, nearly giving himself whiplash, but saw it was only Ponzu.

"Oh, hey... wow, you look amazing." He complimented, gesturing to her. She blushed, fiddling with her over skirt. She wore Persian inspired clothing, crop top covered with sheer draping, puffy pants and curled toed shoes, her hair up with shiny jewel hair accessories.

"Thank you Gon. You too. Real simple, but a real looker." She said. Gon ducked his head a bit in thanks. "Um, so what's up? You looked so broody, it was kinda scary." She said. Gon blinked with an o face then shook his head, laughing sheepishly.

"Sorry if I scared you, I just got lost in thought." He hummed. She nodded.

"Um... this whole week was amazing, and it was thanks to you. You really did a lot for everyone at this school, whether they'd think so or not. You shouldn't look so regretful." She said, leaning on the locker next to him.

"Oh! Nonononono! I don't, no I would never regret doing this! There's nothing I'm sorry for that happened this week. Except that I couldn't do absolutely everything. Um, I was just thinking about..." Gon trailed off, not knowing if he should confide in her what happened last night. Was she even there? He looked up and felt like he could breathe in the first time since last night.

"Killua..." He breath, pushing off the lockers and walking over to the starlit teen walking with his head down.

"...Oh." She said, coming to a realization.

Killua heard his name being called and looked up. His eyes widened when he saw it was Gon. Gon saw that moment of hesitation and stalls in his approach. He didn't want to scare Killua off anymore than he already did.

"H-hey..." Gon gave a small side smile. Killua pressed his lips together in a tight line before giving a small nod and said, "Hey." Gon gave a gulp, the rock in his gut seeming to grow 3 times in size. Still one worded answers from last night, huh?

"Um..." He trailed, looking over Killua. He was... actually wearing nothing much different than usual. "You're World Star concept?" He asked, punching himself in the face mentally for that segmented sentence. Killua looked down at himself and sighed.

"Yea, I... was already wearing what I would as a World Star, and... it's not like I know what concept I want as World Star if I was able to think of one myself." He shrugged, looking down by Gon's shoes. It wasn't a good sign Killua hasn't even moved in his direction since he spotted Gon.
"Killua, if I upset you in anyway-" Gon started, the wave of regret coming down like a crushing tsunami. When he stepped forward, Killua took a step back and Gon didn't think anything hurt more than that moment, watching Killua shrink from him.

"No, you didn't... Gon..." Killua said, a blush on his face, looking down.

"I-I..." Gon croaked, a loss for words.

"Geez, Killua, your fashion is even worse than usual today!" Ponzu laughed out as she came over. "Or maybe its because even Gon took the time to look good today that you look shabby in comparison." She threw an arm over his shoulders. Both Gon and Killua looked at her with owlish eyes.

"That's not true, I think Killua looks great!" Gon chirped in, his heart beating way too loudly in his ears, but he kept a smile on his face. He hoped it would help with the mood. Killua took the turn to look at Gon with owlish eyes, feeling left out of something or like he was sent to another dimension.

"W-y-I- you...!" He sputtered, lost for words.

"What? You can't complement your best friend back?" She asked, flicking his nose to snap him out of it. He scoffed at that and threw her arms off his shoulders.

"I can! I will! Gon, you look great! My favorite outfit!" He cried, a couple students around them looking at them. Killua blushed at that, realizing what he just shouted.

"I-I mean!" Gon laughed out, maybe a little too loudly, but the relief was too real. He went over to let Killua hide his burning face in his chest.

"It's ok, Killua! Thanks for the compliment!" It means the world to me...

-o0o0o0o0o-

The party was after school.

"Yea, I have a late photo shoot tonight, so I’m not looking to do training today anyways. We can stay for the party." Killua said with a smile as the last bell rang.

"Aw, I’m kinda sad, this party marks the end of Spirit Week. It was so much fun, I’ll miss the events."

"Come on, it’s not like the MSSC is getting disbanded. The spirit week was their launch, but they'll be doing events like this to help students remember the reason to sing." Killua said.

"That's true." Gon said after a pause. "But this week long party was fun anyway." Killua nodded.

"I don't think I'd want it every so often though, too much socializing for me. I'll stick with once a year." Gon laughed, nudging Killua. They met up with Zushi and started heading towards the cafeteria where the party was being held. They heard the music even before the doors opened.

~ I rock to the beat till I'm tired (tired) ~

Walk n the club it's fiya (fiya)

Get it krunk and wired

Wave your hands scream louder!
"Wah! It's so loud!" Gon said looking around at the food tables set up and the open mic on the cafeteria stage. He looked over to Killua. "Will you be ok?" Gon asked.

"Of course, Idiot. Don't worry about me, you just enjoy the culmination of your spirit week..."

"Of course I'll always worry about you." Gon shrugged. "But I promise not to dote on you." He nodded.

~ If you smoke den fiya it up

Bring the roof down

Then holla

If you tipsy stand up

DJ turn it louder

Take sumbody by the waist then uh

Now tho it in they face like uh

Hypnotic robotic

This here will rock your bodies

They met up with their friends, Kurapika, Pokkle, Ponzu, and they congratulated Melody on a week well done. Most students knew Melody as the face of MSSC more so than the actual president of the MSSC since they never see him. Who even was it? Gon can't remember from the meetings. They danced together, having fun for the last event of the week, because next week they'll have to go back on focusing on school with all they have.

~ Take sumbody by the waist then uh

Now tho it in they face like uh

Systematica static

This hit be automatic

Work wait

Work work work wait

Work work work wait

Work work work wait

Do it right

Killua went to get himself and Gon some punch when he came back to see a group of girls talking with-- no, flirting with Gon. Killua bit his bottom lip, stalling at seeing that. He let out a short breath and finished the walk over to Gon.

"Hey, who are these girls?" Killua asked trying to go for breezy. Gon looked back at Killua, surprised at seeing him so suddenly.
"O-oh! Do you remember the girl group from the first week of school-?"

"Hey, Killua! We were just trying to get Gon to dance with us! He is giving such weak excuses though!" The leader said.

*How about he just doesn't want to, you--*

"Gon! You should go dance." Killua said, leaning a bit closer to Gon's ear so he could hear.

"Wh-what?" Gon asked with slightly wide eyes. It took everything in Killua's power to not just break down and cry or scream or retract the offer right there. He smiled and nodded.

"Go, I've been hogging you all night. Dance with someone else. I'll hold your drink until you come back." He said. Gon furrowed his eyebrows as the girls cried their cheers.

"Whoo! Yay, c'mon Gon, you heard him, you have permission to come dance, let's go!" They proceeded to drag him off, but Gon kept looking back.

*Stop looking back, you idiot...* Killua thought, clutching Gon’s drink.

*But I don't want to dance with anyone else but you...*

/~ Hit the floor hit the floor

*Hit the floor hit the floor*

*Hit the floor hit the floor*

*Hit the floor*

"It can be frustrating..." Illumi's voice rang from his left, and Killua wanted to say he was surprised but this sick joke was repeated so many times, he can't say he was. "...To see your so called friends leave you all alone so easily."

"I told him to go, Illumi." Killua informed him.

"And so easily he went. You did the right thing, playing close to the vest and keeping him at arm's length. Any closer and it starts to cut."

"Thank you, Illumi, for your insightful words."

"I'm telling you, Killu. You don't need friends, they'll just distract you from your ultimate goal. Let them go, it's better this way."

Killua grit his teeth so hard it hurt.

"What are you even doing here anyway, il-!?!" Killua whipped around to yell at him only to see there was no one behind him. He looked left and right but didn't see any sign of him. He was starting to wonder if Illumi was ever there to begin with. He turned back around to watch Gon, dancing in the midst of girls pretty modestly.

Killua wished he wasn't like this all the time. He turned to leave.

/~Everybody here

*Get it outta control*
Get your backs off the wall
Cause misdemeanor said so
Everybody
Everybody
Everybody....!

Chapter End Notes

So that was chapter 9, finished the day of it was suppose to go up, which is why I had to edit later! So tell me what you think of my first writing style, it’s not that different, but I tried not to over explain things too much and let your guy’s minds figure it out.

It’s also really summarized because of the lack of time, and I plan on going back to expand certain parts I originally had longer anyways, but tell me if you guys prefer the summarized versions. Sorry for anything I repeat or drive home constantly. I don’t remember things I explicitly wrote or things I just tease at, so I just tend to repeat things.

So do any of you guys know any beautiful orchestral pieces? I mainly listen to piano instrumentals if listening to classical at all, and I need something for Kurapika. Kudos if there is violins in there!

Who let me write a rap scene? It was terrible. A lot of you guys were confused, and I tried to go back and fix it, at the cost of format? Hopefully it makes more sense?

Guu, Guu, Guu and Smiling Equation suggested by Ao3 commenter @Power9987
Try Everything- Shakira suggested by Ao3 commenter @ctumblr413

Spanish translation! (Courtesy of Google Translate)

**You are so enticing, little one. I can’t wait to find out all that you do…

**Back off Hisoka, leave your perverted comments for some illegal website

And because speakeasys had a different function in the world history, I changed it for the purpose of this story:

**A speakeasy is a place during the prohibition that you went to to drink alcohol- in this alternate world, it was the speakeasy where people could enjoy music when it was attempted to be censored by the government long ago.

=EDIT= (12/21/2017)

I added the music list, minor story edits, Rap Scene edited, Author notes edited, Character Card added
Chapter Notes

Hahahahaha, everyone was so mad about Killua not catching a hint, lol.
He caught it, he was just scared of it. He didn’t know what would happen if he let Gon close. Years of mind games from Illumi is traumatizing. The other thing, everyone was so upset at the feels at the end of the chapter. I’ll tell you a secret, I had no idea that was coming either. I had up til Thursday night planned, Friday was a wild card, and the fact it decided to do that, lol I’m as surprised as you guys, It wasn’t supposed to end like that, it was supposed to be as fluffy and cute as the rest of it. So I’ll try to make up for it here :) 
So I don't know what what I'm doing with this story anymore, this chapter is so filled with songs and unnecessary scenes, I don't even know, lol
Also, sorry if this version of Killua and Gon I'm writing doesn't please you, it's a little bit for plot pushing and it's my aesthetic for the boys. But I'm having fun, this is fun for me!
Are you guys having fun?! That's great... yea, I almost done with these author notes up here lol anyways, moving on.
ALSO DONT UNDERAGE DRINK!! ITS BAD TO DO unsupervised. Thx
Also HAPPY NEW YEARSSSS!!! Year of the dog, lets hope Gon brings happiness for another year.

Here’s writing style number 2

- Featured Music:
Time of Our Lives- Pitbull ft Ne-Yo
Roar- Katy Perry [suggested by @Dragonbooks249]
Birth (Acoustics Version)- Dardust
Sweet Apocalypse- Lambert [suggested by @Wutup-snow7]
I Won't Say (I'm in Love)- Walt Disney Records
Bad Apple (English)- English vocals by Cristina Vee [suggested by @EnJaberwocky]
Here It Goes Again- OK Go [suggested by @hahayourenotfunnyatall]
Sober up- AJR
Can I Have This Dance- High School Musical Cast

- Warning: anxiety/panic attack, Umm abuse indication??? Hetero- relationship building lol? Stress stuff

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chapter 10: Lip science

Gon jogged off the dance floor to the edge of the food table where he left Killua after he gave the girls a satisfying number of 3 dances with them. He looked left and right when he didn’t see Killua, feeling his heart sinking.

“Where did he…?” Gon muttered to himself, but then, from the corner of his vision, he saw the cafeteria doors that led outside open. Killua had his eyes on the ground, looking deep in thought as he came in through the doors.
“Killua!” Gon breathed out in relief. For a second there, Gon thought he’d lost him again. Killua looked up and caught his eyes, a surprised look melting into a soft smile. Gon closed the distance between them in a few strides, meeting Killua halfway.

“Hey! Where’d you go?” Gon asked, tucking a piece of pillowy hair behind Killua’s ear. Killua blushed a bit at the gentle attention.

“I just went out to get some cool air, it gets a bit hot in here with all this dancing. You look like you could use some air yourself.” Killua indicated to Gon’s body, a sheen layer of sweat on his face and forearms. “You didn’t think I’d leave, right? I said I’d hold your drink.” Killua said, holding up the aforementioned drink higher into Gon’s vision.

“Ah..., Right.” Gon smiled, taking the drink and downing half. He looked down at it then back over at Killua who was looking out at the party. “Hey, you said you have a late photo shoot today, right? You wanna just go?” Gon asked. Killua’s attention was back on Gon, but he was surprised Gon suggested leaving.

“But… it’s the last event? Don’t you want to-?” He asked, gesturing over to where Gon last left the other girls.

“No!” Gon cried out, maybe too loudly, but he really didn’t want to be pawned off to the girls again, but even more importantly, he didn’t want to spend even more time away from Killua. At least this way, he could walk him home and have some alone time with his friend. “It’s fine, this was fun, but I’m sure there will be other parties.”

Killua considered Gon’s suggestion, his eyes darting around Gon’s face as he thought. Gon smiled reassuringly as Killua thought it over so he didn’t feel as though he was pressuring Gon to wanting to leave.

“...Ok.” He sighed, a reluctant smile on his face. Gon’s smile widened.

“Whoo, ok, let get out of here.” He said, hooking arms with Killua and striding out the doors, downing the rest of his drink and tossing it to the trash by the exit.

When Gon gave Killua a dazzling smile from over his shoulder, Killua tried his best to return it past the squeeze seizing his chest. Then they were walking side by side down the sidewalk, and Gon easily filled the space between them. And Killua replied back just as easily in the spaces he was suppose to and following the social cues he was suppose to— laugh at this joke, and show appall at that punchline. But he was a little lost in thought at the moment. He felt it was a bit mean and insincere to use his ingrained social skills on Gon, but was still a little lost in thoughts from when he was outside the cafeteria. After Thursday, Killua was left feeling confused and too timid to ask for more details. Gon was more than obviously singing the song to him. But should Killua take in the song’s meaning, or should he take it superficially? Take the song as a confession, or a song dedicated as a gift?

But the problem was Killua wouldn't even know what he would do if Gon was saying something more to him.

Gon was attractive, no doubt, and Killua couldn't say he wasn't attracted to him. He had a magnetic personality that quickly pulls you in to his pace, and there's no doubt multiple people have their eye on him for the ideal partner. Plus, he was sculpted for the heavens. His facial features and jaw lines promised to be a looker when he gets older, and everyone with a social media has already seen Gon's physique showcased by the tailor made gym uniform. One would have to be blind or asexual not to have at least a daydream starring Gon.
But what about more than that?

Killua was Gon's best friend, and he loved being there for Gon. Being his best friend was the best thing that ever happened to Killua, and he wouldn't want to lose it for anything in the world.

And he knows Gon can be affectionate, but he says all the embarrassing things to his other friends too, not just Killua. He can't take that as a telltale that there's something more. And Killua has fallen and messed up past relationships for less. He has too much to lose if he brings it up and messes everything up.

Killua has learned so much from Gon, maybe more than Killua has taught Gon, but if there was one thing he knew was that he learned he would do anything for Gon. Killua was a flight risk with flaky and fickle emotions, and Gon doesn't deserve whatever emotional pain he might put Gon through if he brought him closer. Killua might be able to understand his feelings for Gon better if he let Gon closer, but Killua doesn't think he'd be willing to pay the price for the consequences. He tried to get Gon to go run around and enjoy time with the girls, hoping he could realize he doesn't actually like Killua, but he only came back with a brighter, more attentive smile. But Killua will pretend he doesn't see, and doesn't know what it means.

Illumi was wrong, Killua doesn't think friends would distract him from his career, if anything, his friends advance his career and knowledge and experience.

But he can't allow Gon any closer.

He'll stay like this. He'll be happy.

As Gon's best friend.

_Breathe,_ His aching chest reminded him as he smiled in Gon’s face.

"Performance readiness." Killua said, a long sleeve over-the-shoulder shirt adorning his lithe milky white frame. Gon tried his best to keep his eyes up and locked with Killua's, but the curve sloping gently from his neck into his shoulder was... distracting to say the least.

"You have some degree of performance readiness, since you have performed before. But you have also performed under less stressful circumstance, right?" Killua asked, jarring Gon out of his straying thoughts.

"R-right!" He affirmed with a nod, his snapback hiding his view of Killua for a moment. Gon wore a hoodie with accessory chains and black skinny jeans. Killua nodded.

"R-right!" He affirmed with a nod, his snapback hiding his view of Killua for a moment. Gon wore a hoodie with accessory chains and black skinny jeans. Killua nodded.

"Now, this won't be nearly as stressful as the actual concert, but hopefully placing you in front of a wider variety of audiences that aren't your fans. You'll have to work harder to get your audience to like you. So that's when you do your final piece at the Showcase, you won't be as nervous to perform because you know all the tricks to win over your audience." Killua nodded, turning around to face the person in front of them. "Which is what brings us here."

The words 'Greed Island' were lit up in bright green neon lights, a chain bar and restaurant with open mics every Saturday nights at 9. The club usually didn't let minors in after 10 since that's when they open the bar, but Killua's hoping that if they get in before 10 and just... stay inside, his planned evening will go without a hitch.
They reached the front doors where the bouncer rested against the side of the entrance around 9:30 when Killua last checked. The bouncer checked the time as well and slightly twisted his face at the teenagers before him.

"Sorry kids, it's too close to open bar time to let you in." He said in his gruff voice.

"Whaat? Lame, it's not even 10 yet." Killua complained. The bodyguard shrugged.

"Not my problem."

Killua scrunched his lips to one side before he tried again.

"Well, it's a good thing it's no problem, since we're of legal drinking age." Killua nodded.

"You're telling me you're 21?" He asked.

"Uh, yea." Killua scoffed.

"You can't act this bratty and expect me to think you're an adult."

"You can't say you haven't actually met older adults that's been brattier?" Killua asked, hands on his hips. The bodyguard looked up in thought then shrugged.

"True, but they also didn't have baby faces that gave away their ages."

Killua groaned and was about to open his mouth to rebuttal again.

"Killua, it's ok. I'm not sure exactly what you wanted to do, but..."

"Wait, Killua? As in Killua Zoldyck?" The bouncer asked as Killua was just about to try to coerce Gon to let him handle this. He turned back to the bouncer slowly.

"...Yes..." He said with slight hesitation. Was this going to work?

"Wow, I recognize you now! My daughter loves you. I'll tell you what, you give me an autograph and a selfie for her, I'll let you in." He said.

"Seriously? Deal!" He said, stepping forward.

-o0o0o0o-

"I didn't think that would work!" Killua huffed, pulling up his collar a bit.

"Wow! To think one day I'll be famous enough to trade my autographs for favors is so cool!" Gon smiled, keeping pace with Killua. "But seriously, why was it so important to come in here specifically?"

"Well, Gon, as someone with world star experience, you'll be invited to parties and after parties. You'll need experience with..." Killua smacked his hand on the bar they made their way over to. "Alcohol."

Gon's mouth opened wide at the very implication.

-o0o0o0o-

Killua hid his smile behind a hand as he looked on at Gon. After they went in, they enjoyed the party
scene and atmosphere, dancing plenty and ordering appetizers. Killua insisted on paying, but Gon assured him he could pay for himself that night to the protest of his wallet. Gon could be so stubborn sometimes. When 10 o'clock struck, Killua tried the famous card again at the open bar, and it worked pretty well. Idols usually are exposed to the chance of having alcohol all the time. Killua's been to Zoldyck after-parties and client galas before where they served wine and alcohol. And that's where the problem lied, wasn't it?

Since Killua's had alcohol before, he wasn't affected as quickly by a glass or two. But that was a different situation for Gon, and Killua had forgotten about that little detail. Killua's plan was to have them have a couple drinks since a World Star is expected to be able to imbibe a couple drinks. Then they sing the open mic with a good buzz since Gon will have to know how to act even with some alcohol in his veins. It was going to be informative for Killua on how Gon drinks and performs on short notice in front of a little less than welcoming audience. but now Killua was watching Gon be adorable in front of him at the table.

"Yea, and I'm pretty sure the fish I caught was twice my size, and as wide as I am long." Gon said, miming his hands like he was bringing the fish around with his fishing pole.

"Uh-huh..." Killua hummed, bringing his non alcoholic drink to his lips to sip. Once he figured out how influenced Gon was getting so quickly, the next rounds were alcohol free, although, Killua's not sure Gon knows that.

"You'd be impressed. I wish I could show you a picture... but I could always show you something else, big and lon-"

"OK!" Killua cut off, feeling his face heat up quickly. Ok, so a drunk Gon was a flirty one, good to know. "I think it's time to sign up for our turn on the open mic." Killua said standing up. Gon had a half pout on his face once Killua interrupted him but lit back up at the suggestion.

"Ya! Whoo, this is gonna be fun!" He hopped onto his feet, feeling light and energized. Killua moved over to the wings to sign up, the last performance running out of the stage's spotlight.

"You're up, go, go, go!" The stage manager said, ushering Killua's hands off the sign up to the stage stairs.

"Wait- what?" Killua blinked, stumbling up the steps. "We didn't even sign up-

"No else did, if you wanna go, you're up." She said.

"Fine, Gon, choose whatever song you want, we'll do it." Killua said, pushing back on the manager long enough to talk to Gon who barely kept up with the manager's quick feet.

"Oh! Yay, I know exactly which one I want!" He gushed, cheeks red, before turning to the machine to key in the song.

Killua skipped on stage, keeping himself from tripping when the managers shoved him up there. He was gonna let Gon lead, but he supposed he'll warm up the crowd while he waits for Gon.

"Whoo, are y'all ready?" Killua winked out to the crowd, catching everyone's attention with his loud intro. "We about to light this place on fire..." He hummed as he heard the song intro Gon choose come onto the speakers. He loved this song!

"Ye, you ready for this!?" Gon cheered, a mic being shoved into his hand right before he jumped onto the stage with a giant commanding presence. Killua was actually taken aback, never having been up on stage with Gon before. His stage presence was so big, Killua was actually worried about
being washed out and pushed to the back by him. He could steal a whole stage by himself, even if there were maybe 5 others on stage with him. He really was amazing. Lucky for him, Killua already knew how to extend his own stage presence as not to fall to the wayside when performing.

"Let's go!" Killua skipped across stage with a smile, raising his hands in a 'get hype' motion and brought some attention off Gon. The crowd watching them was eating this all up, happy with the promising start of the performance.

"This for everyone up in here looking for a good time...!" Gon sung, his words mashing together a bit from the alcohol in his system. "And may we make your time better..." He delivered with a low voice, and many single girls in the club squealed their praise and approval.

"I knew my rent was gon' be late about a week ago, I worked my a$$ off, but I still can't pay it though… But I got just enough To get off in this club. Hand me a good time, before my time is up! Hey, let's get it now!" They jumped into a dance number as they sang the words, a rhythmic motion to their movements. Killua forward and around Gon as he took on the next verse, their chemistry working well with each other, picking up subtle cues so they know where to move next or whose singing what without so much as a quick rehearsal.

“Oooh I want the time of my life…” Killua vocalized the notes in the song as Gon sang backup vocals. “(Mr. World star!) Oh baby, Oooh give me the time of my life… (Killua, let's get it!) Let's get it now!”

“This is the last $20 I got, But I'm a have a good time ballin' on that” Killua took away from the spotlight to let Gon take on the first verse, his charisma overflowing with his quick speaking skills improved from rap practice, and his dancing with the words fueling the crowds cheers. Killua did back up dancing for Gon.

“Tell the bartender line up some shots, Cause I'm a get loose tonight! She's on fire, she's so hot, I'm no liar, she burned the spot! Looked like Mariah, I took another shot, Told her drop, drop, drop, drop it like it's hot!” The two star teens' movements were playful and played off the words of the songs. They were having as much fun as the crowd was. And it was definitely a surprise to Killua. He was challenged to keep up with Gon’s energy at every turn and dance, but besides that, he was having fun performing. How could Gon be this amazing?

“Dirty talk, dirty dance, She a freaky girl and I'm a freaky man! She on the rebound, broke up with her ex, And I'm like Rodman, ready on deck… I told her I wanna ride out, and she said yes. We didn't go to church, but I got blessed.” Gon and Killua lined up next to each other as they read each other's mind. They put their hands together as though in prayer at the word 'blessed' before going back into dancing.

“I knew my rent was gon' be late about a week ago! I worked my a$$ off, but I still can't pay it though…” Killua sang. They turned their back to the audience and put a hand on their jean clad butts in their dance number, rhythmically shaking of their hips. “But I got just enough To get up in this club. Hand me a good time, before my time is up! Hey, let's get it now!”

“Oooh I want the time of my life, yeah…” Gon picked up where Killua stopped. “Ohh baby, Oooh give me the time of my life… Hey, hey, hey, Let's get it now!” Killua jumped forward past Gon to take up the rapping part, his dance actions mimicking the words.

“Tonight I'm a lose my mind, Better get yours cause I'm gonna get mine! Party every night like my last, Momma know the drill, shake that a$$! Go ahead baby let me see what you got. You know you got the biggest booty in this spot-- And I just wanna see that thing drop! From the back to the front to the top!" The stage was so much fun with Gon, and his personality was so addicting and enticing,
Killua was drowning in it. Killua could practically forget they were on stage and they were just playing with each other with singing. Killua could forget his stage anxiety and the pressure of being watched and perfect, all to focus on singing and laughing with Gon on stage.

“You know me I'm off in the cut! Always like a Squirrel, looking for a nut.” Killua rubbed his hands together as well as he could with the mic in his hands and went cross the stage playing to the crowd. They loved it, dancing and whooping to their music. Gon smiled from behind, watching Killua perform ahead of him. He felt a bit bad because he was supposed to be doing backup vocals and dancing for Killua while he did his part of the song, but he felt a bit in awe from performing with Killua for the first time. Watching and admiring from the audience was one thing, but performing on stage was like a whole new experience. It was an honor and it was amazing that Gon could perform with someone that easily matched his pace and energy step for step. Killua was so amazing.

“This isn't for show I'm not talking 'bout luck, I'm not talkin 'bout love, I'm talking 'bout lust…!” Gon's jaw dropped as he watched, on stage, in real life, before his eyes, Killua do the pelvis drop and roll, barely registering the roaring, want-filled cheers of the girls in the audience. Gon bit his lip and remembered to keep dancing with Killua.

“Now let's get loose, have some fun, Forget about bills and the first of the month. It's my night, your night, our night, let's turn it up!” The smile on Killua's face made Gon want to smile wider. His energy made him want to do better and play up to the crowd more. He was so engaging and playful, Gon fed off Killua's energy and Killua fed off his. Gon wants to say this was his best stage he could remember. He still loves performing with Killua and this was off the cuff. They sang together, “I knew my rent was gon' be late about a week ago, I worked my a$$ off, but I still can't pay it though. But I got just enough To get up in this club! Hand me a good time, before my time is up! Hey, let's get it now.”

“Oooh I want the time of my life, yeah…” Killua sang himself, putting himself out in the middle of the stage, arms out to his side and his eyes closed. Gon got goosebumps at the sound of Killua’s voice, the delivery was gorgeous and perfectly pitched and tuned. “Ohh baby, Oooh give me the time of my life… Hey, hey, hey! Let's get it now!”

Killua ducked out the spotlight for Gon to walk up the spot and sing the bridge, Killua singing backup vocals behind him. “Everybody going through something (Everybody going through something)... I said, everybody going through something! (Everybody going through something)! So you might as well roll it up, Pour it up, drink it up, throw it up tonight... ohhh, yeah...

“I said, everybody going through something! (Everybody going through something)! Said, everybody going through something! (Everybody going through something)! So you might as well roll it up, Pour it up, drink it up, throw it up tonight... ohhh, yeah!”

“This for anybody going through tough times, Believe me, been there, done that…” Gon said, breaking from singing to talk into the mic. “But everyday above ground is a great day, remember that!” He said, tapping his head before falling back into line to sing and dance with Killua, rhythmically following the lyrics and words.

“I knew my rent was gon' be late about a week ago… I worked my a$$ off, but I still can't pay it though! But I got just enough To get up in this club. Hand me a good time, before my time is up. Hey, let's get it now!

“Oooh I want the time of my life, yeah…! Ooh baby, Oooh give me the time of my life, Hey, hey, hey, Let's get it now!” Killua and Gon ended the number with raised fists holding the mics and only slightly panting while the club raised their voices in appreciation. Gon and Killua looked over at each other, beaming.
"I can't believe you two!" Mito fumed.

"It was only a couple of drinks!"

"I'm sorry, Mito!"

This was why Killua tried to tell Gon not to let slip where they had gone for that Saturday night, but Mito seems to have some sort of hypnosis in her scolding, pressuring stare and Gon gave in pretty quick.

Killua gave a side glance to Gon real quick, his apology making it seem like they did something bad. They didn't really!

"Underaged drinking is wrong! You don't know the consequences of being under the influence at this age!"

"Mito, as a World Star, Gon is bound to drink. He'll be invited to after parties where there will be drinks!"

"Gon's won't be invited to those afterparties, they know his age!"

"His label company will likely have parties for their clients, and it'll look bad for him to refuse. I have been to plenty of label company parties where I have drunk alcohol before! it's not even that bad." Killua said. Mito narrowed her eyes at the starlit teen, and he couldn't help but swallow at the intensity.

"Killua, don't make me rethink what your influence is on Gon!"

"No!" He said a bit too loudly, he couldn't be separated from Gon this quickly. He cleared his throat and tried again.

"No, I mean, -sigh- Mito, I wasn't taking Gon out just to drink, or anything. It was apart of preparing him for being an idol. He'll be at these parties where there will be alcohol, and even if he tries his best, he'll probably drink an alcoholic beverage before he's 21 anyway. I was just trying to make sure he had some experience with alcohol in his system before then so he is used to it and does it in a controlled environment, instead of somewhere damage control will have to be done if he does it for the first time himself." He explained calmly. Mito raised one eyebrow, her narrowed eyes opening a bit.

"...And I can trust you to know what you're doing?" She asked. Killua nodded his head, keeping eye contact with her to show he was being genuine. She sighed.

"Then I'll leave you to take care of Gon and get him ready for bed. And maybe before you guys do this again, tell me? You guys are older than children, but not adults yet. I want to know you guys are safe. Killua, I trust you, but you're gonna have to work on showing me I can from now on. Act like you are an adult, hmm?" She scolded. Killua let his head drop at that.

"Yes, Mito. Sorry, Mito."

"Yea, sorry, aunt Mito." Gon murmured again. Mito smiled at their bowed heads and moved forward to put them both in a hug.

"Its ok, my boys. I just worry... I still love you both. Go get ready for bed." She pushed them off
towards Gon's bedroom. Killua blinked owlishly at her for a second before Gon had his hand and pulled him along.

"She said she... loves us both...!" Killua muttered to Gon from behind us.

"What? Of course she does! I'm sure she looks at you like another son." Gon smiled back at Killua and he blushed, a warm feeling in the center of his chest. Wow, Mito was amazing to him when he first met him, and thought Gon was so lucky to have someone who could love him like that... and now that love was his too? Wow...

They got to the room and Killua worked to get Gon to bed. They dressed in their usual nightwear, Killua having left some of his clothes at Gon's from coming over so often. Killua ordered Gon into bed and he left the room, coming back with some heated leftover pizza, water, and a painkiller.

"I'm pretty sure I didn't have you drink enough to be hung over in the morning, but this is just in case." Killua said, climbing on Gon's bed to give him the plate and drink.

"Wow, thanks Killua. You were so amazing, convincing Mito not to kill us for what we did. I usually just apologize until she lets me off with a relatively soft punishment. But you argued with her until she practically let us off the hook! How'd you do it? Isn't she intimidating?"

"Well, yea, she's got a glare that can rival my mother's, but I'm used to dealing with enraged women." Killua shrugged with a cat smile. Gon gaped at him before taking a bite of pizza.

"And at the club too! The way you sang gave me goosebumps, I only heard you sing like that a couple of times before."

"Sing like that...? But I wasn't even doing anything, I was just having fun..." Killua shrugged.

"Hm? Don't you always have fun when you perform?" Gon asked with a crooked eyebrow. Killua shrugged, pouty.

"It's... been rough the past couple of years. I haven't had fun performing for a while." Killua said, picking at his sweatpants. Gon frowned.

"Do you think about anything when you perform?"

"No... Just focus on the notes and deliver them how we did in practice."

"Well, what you were thinking about up on the club stage that you could have that much fun?" Gon asked. Killua looked up at Gon, golden hues meeting blue, and Killua almost felt embarrassed to admit.

"I was... you were so amazing up there... I wanted to show you I was having fun too."

"Mmmh, so... you usually don't sing with any emotion on a normal stage, but when you did at the club, you sounded amazing! So maybe you should try singing with emotion to sound better?" Gon asked. Killua bit his lip before turning to Gon.

"Excuse me?" He asked, a slight bite in his voice. Gon made an o face.

"That's not how I wanted that to sound-!"

"You think I'm not a good singer and performer already?"

"No, Killua, you know I think you're amazing! I just mean..."
"You think I'm lacking in my performances?"

"No, no, Killua! Hold on, wait, you're putting words in my mouth!" Gon said, taking Killua's hands to stop his puffing rant. Gon forgot how sensitive Killua could be when it came to critiquing his professionalism and perfection. Gon couldn't blame him, the defensiveness probably came from his family always trying to perfect him, but if he could convince them he was already at peak, no more punishment would come his way. Killua's blue eyes flashed as he met Gon's gaze again.

"I'm not saying you're bad or anything! If you make no improvements, no one would complain."

"You keep saying like I could improve!"

"You can! Obviously, tonight showed that! Everyone can always improve!" Gon said, trying to keep his voice leveled although Killua kept yelling at him.

"Not me. I've been trained since I could take instructions how to be the best, they have already optimized my performance, delivery, and music. I-"

"But you aren't happy!" Gon said. Killua closed his mouth as Gon's words sunk in. "You say they made you the best you can be, but you've told me countless times it doesn't make you happy. There is a way to get better, because there is a way to be good at all that and be happy too. You're not the best you can be right now, because you're not happy. If you can find how to get both, then I'll believe that you really can't improve anymore." Gon said, pulling Killua closer by his hands. Killua tried his best to glare at Gon, but he knew there was truth in his words. He understood what he was saying and Gon was suppose to be his coach in terms of finding out how to love music again.

"Alright, Gon, I'm... sorry, I shouldn't have snapped at you, you're just trying to help."

"Yea! The next time you forget how amazing I think you already are, I'll just shout your praises whenever they pop into my head."

"What? You already do that!"

"No, I've been pretty mild about it..." Gon said, thinking back. Killua's mouth dropped before he felt his cheeks warming up. Gon thought so highly of him-- Killua should know Gon’s thoughts about him. Gon would happily spout them out if Killua forgot how much Gon adores him. Anything Gon says is to help.

"Alright, so what do you suggest...?" Killua asked, rubbing a thumb in a gentle circle on the back of Gon's hand that was holding his. Gon beamed, a slight blush on his cheeks from the small but appreciated motions Killua was doing.

"Well, you sang with more feeling and emotion at the club, determined to let the audience feel the fun we were having on stage... So next time you sing, try to channel that emotion. Or whichever emotion you can. What I like to do best is think of how the song you're singing is suppose to make you feel and really embody that to portray it to the audience." Killua nodded.

"I mean, I don't know how that will make my performance any different..." He muttered. "But I can try the next concert..." Killua felt a cold sweat break over him. "Right! Crap, I got one tomorrow. Gon, I gotta go." Killua said, getting up and taking up a jacket to cover his thin clothings. Gon scrambled to get up after him.

"W-wait, no! No! Why are you leaving now though? Isn't it tomorrow?"

"But it's really early morning, we're prepping all day. I wouldn't even be surprised if I accidently
missed some stuff tonight already."

"Aw, b-but, wait, at least let me drive you--"

"No way, you've still got alcohol in your system, so no way in hell you're driving. It's fine, it's not a far walk." Killua said, picking up his phone and headphones. Gon pouted. He didn't want Killua to leave, his chest felt heavy from just the thought. And they just had an argument on a touchy subject, Gon wanted Killua to leave in a bit of a better mood, not like this.

"I... call me, alright? Tell me how things are going, you know you can text me... and... have a good night, Killua." Gon said, following Killua around like a puppy as Killua made his way to the exit.

"You're leaving, Killua?" Mito asked from the couch, watching the television.

"Yea, I totally forgot I got practice real early morning tomorrow, and it's just simpler to be there already." He said, putting his shoes on at the door, Gon at his side as he watched on helplessly.

"Ah, I see. Have a good night then, and have fun at your concert."

"Thanks." He said, getting up and to the door.

"You have a lot of concerts on Sundays, huh?" Gon muttered as he followed Killua to the door and into the night fall air.

"Yea, that's when most of them are. It's more convenient for all our VIPs and whatever..." Killua said, turning back to Gon. He looked at him in the eyes, then his eyes darted about Gon's body, feeling at loss of what to do. He felt like he should do something. Gon also hesitated, the feeling mutual.

"Killua-"

"Gon-"

They paused after that and let out a laugh, feeling the weird air dissipates. Gon opened his arms and Killua's laugh cut off, recognizing the motion. He blushed. Geez, Gon was so embarrassing, making him go into the hug instead of just hugging him himself. Killua stepped into it as coolly as he could, but Gon just swooped him up as he entered his personal space and shook him with vigor. Killua couldn't help but laugh and Gon joined him.

"I'll miss you. See you monday."

"Right. See ya." He hummed, stepping out the hug and sending one last wave over his shoulder and leaving the small apartment complex.

"Don't say it." Gon said as he strode back across the apartment to his room, Mito putting her hand in front of her smile before she could comment. Gon's door closed but she could still hear his large dramatic groan. She giggled to herself as she continued watching her television.

Gon couldn't really get good sleep that night.

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"You're huh?" Killua asked, turning his head away from the stage hand putting blush on his cheeks.

"I'm overseeing the concert tonight." Kikyo said, adjusting the head stage manager headphones over her head, looking quite inexperienced. Killua could have laughed.
"But why?" He asked. Where was their usual stage manager?

"I recently talked to your father," She started, and Killua blinked surprised. Father called recently? How surprising... "And he was talking to me about being more involved with the kids, and I completely agreed! So I started the initiative to personally see how my wonderful kids were performing!" She said. "And I do expect nothing but perfection from our little Zoldyck proteges! Especially my star pupil who will no doubt be the best of all his siblings...!" Kikyo said, pinching Killua's cheek. Killua was about to slap the hand off his cheek when it was removed and and cold clammy hand clamped onto his shoulder. Killua shivered, immediately recognizing it as Illumi.

"Of course, mother. We trained him well enough to do nothing less than perfect." Illumi's harmonious voice said. Killua's face scrunched in annoyance as he turned back to his dressing room mirror, knowing well enough not to act out with both his mother and older brother breathing down his neck. His right arm throbbed with phantom pain as his chest constricted.

"Very well!" She said, and turned around. "Let's make sure all the instruments are tuned and get Milluki ready for the opening number!" She said into the headset as she walked off backstage. Killua was suddenly turned in his chair and met with the intense stare of his brother's void black eyes, and he felt he couldn't breath.

"Since mother is here, I am going to personally make sure you do absolutely flawless. We can't go around showing her that all her training was for naught. Our whole life we just train to perform for concerts like this. All of that is waste if we can't even do that. So smiling faces, and let's be perfect, yes?"

"Yes brother..." He managed to strain out, and his voice even sounded stable, score!

"Good," he said, then got up to leave the way mother went, probably to go show mother what a good wind-up doll he is. Killua could finally breathe again, and he rubbed his arm, throbbing with phantom pains caused by his stress.

"It's ok, Killu..." He muttered to himself, looking himself in the eyes of his reflection. "You're fine. Just don't let them get to your head, perform and you're fine until next Sunday." He said, calming himself down. He barely saw himself as he looked in the mirror which he assumed was a good sign, he won't get in his own head either.

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Killua grumbled and frowned as he looked up at Illumi, prompting him to do his speed through with him.

"I'm just here to help, Killu. I trained you, I'll know if you messed up or forgot anything if you run your performance through me."

He said. Killua sighed dramatically before mumbling through the song speedily, moving minimally just to indicate how he'd move on stage. Illumi gave him micro managing notes, but Killua would also be ok without them. Illumi could be so overbearing.

"Break a leg, Killu." Illumi gave in his emotionless tone of his as Killua went out to the stage. The audience’s roaring welcomed him to the stage, all fading into white noise. He took the microphone into his fingerless gloved hand, staring out into the crowd nowhere in specific. It helped him perform if he didn’t focus on the now.

The music started and Killua began the blocked out number across the stage, first stage left and give face.
I used to bite my tongue and hold my breath. Scared to rock the boat and make a mess-- So I sit quietly, agree politely.” Stage right, keys and chords like in practice. “I guess that I forgot I had a choice… I let you push me past the breaking point. I stood for nothing, so I fell for everything… You held me down, but I got up (HEY!) Already brushing off the dust!” Killua remembered what Gon told him, to bring his emotion into his voice. That somehow that makes a difference in his singing ability. Well, he was already trained to the utmost by his parents, he doesn’t think there is much else he can do to improve, but he already promised Gon he would try.

“You hear my voice, you hear that sound! Like thunder gonna shake the ground. You held me down, but I got up (HEY!) Get ready 'cause I've had enough! I see it all, I see it now…” Killua inhaled, trying to embody the power, the self-confidence, the raw self righteous rath in the words of the song. It was easy thinking about just how much this song was such mood. He felt it build in his chest until he really felt like he had to roar to get it out.

“I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter, dancing through the fire, 'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar!!” His voice raised a fever pitch, sound waves flashing over the crowd with intensity they weren’t expecting. They all fell silent momentarily before raising together in one voice, a giant roar in their approval. He was surprised, his smile widening past what his stage smile required. He was… enjoying himself? The reaction from the crowd? Like they liked what he was giving, not what they were paying for.

“Louder, louder than a lion! 'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar! Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh,” He was surprised the crowd joined him in his singing unprompted. “Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh! Oh oh oh oh oh oh! You're gonna hear me roar!”

He never thought he’d enjoy the stage this much. The way he dreamt the stage would be like when he was little. Was this it? And Gon could give it? Killua… was so thankful for Gon. The delivery was emotional for everyone, goosebumps broke out on their skin. It electrified them and thrilled them to the core. A carthathism they didn’t know they were getting.

“Now I'm floating like a butterfly, Stinging like a bee I earned my stripes!” He decided to even break rehearsed formation a bit to dance improvised to the words like he did at the club with Gon. It was just as fun and the reaction from the crowd fueled Killua on.

“I went from zero, to my own hero! You held me down, but I got up (HEY!) Already brushing off the dust! You hear my voice, you hear that sound! Like thunder gonna shake the ground! You held me down, but I got up (HEY!) Get ready 'cause I've had enough! I see it all, I see it now…”

“Oh my baby Killu! I knew he'd be the best of us all!” The mother said, moving her stage manager mic off her face to express her happiness better. Illumi looked on critically.

“Yes… we’re so proud.”

Illumi has an inkling that Killua change in demeanor had to do with that hoodlum that Killua won’t tell him anything about. This was getting weird, his precious perfect Killua was changing in ways he couldn’t monitor or control. If this got out of hand, Gon wouldn’t even have to worry about backing out of the music industry himself, Illumi would crush it before it starts.

“I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter, dancing through the fire 'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar! Louder, louder than a lion! 'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar! Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh! Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh, Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh! (You're gonna hear me roar)! Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh! Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh, (You'll hear me roar) Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh! You're gonna hear me roar…!”
Killua was having a great time, and it conveyed in the emotions he poured into the song. He felt his body tingling and fuzzy with the delivery. The crowd was jumping with the music, having fun and honestly finding a new favorite Zoldyck. They'll have to sponsor more money to them to get more concerts featuring him.

"Ro-oar, ro-oar, ro-oar, ro-oar! I got the eye of the tiger, a fighter, dancing through the fire! 'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar! Louder, louder than a lion! 'Cause I am a champion and you're gonna hear me roar!

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

(You're gonna hear me roar)

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh

(You'll hear me roar)

Oh oh oh oh oh oh oh
You're gonna hear me roar…" His note echoed into the open night sky as he let his head fall back and the crowd roared back its pleasure.

"Yes, yes, great job on yesterday!" Kikyo shrilled, following her kids around as they prepared for the day. She was so satisfied with how involved she was yesterday she felt inclined to play house and try to dote on the children. It's not like they haven’t been taking care of themselves and getting themselves out the door since they entered high school.

"How annoying..." Killua muttered under his breath before raising the noise cancelling headphones up over his ears and playing the music.

"Thank you mother. We'll be taking our leave now." Illumi said herding his two younger brothers out the door. Milluki was practically snorting with a please smile. He's happy he made his mother happy. But Killua couldn't care less as he grabbed his bento off the table and left the kitchen to the main hallway that led out the house.

"Oh! As you pass the closet door, take your umbrellas! I heard a nasty downpour will come in the middle of your school day and stay raining until tonight!" She called out after them.

"Yes mother!"

"Yes mama!"

"..."

Killua didn't hear as he kept his music volume at a nice drowning noise volume. He trucked past the closet and out the house before Illumi could even double check.
Killua looked up at the sky painted various shades of gray, the downpour not letting up for a second. He let his head fall with a small bounce.

"Cripes..." He muttered. It's raining? How was he supposed to know it was gonna rain today? From now he was keeping an umbrella in his locker.

"Killua?" Gon's decadent voice rang out behind him and before he knew it, his broad frame was by his side. He held a half opened Umbrella in his hands and a half smile directed at Killua. "What's wrong?"

"I didn't..." Killua muttered, feeling his cheeks burn in embarrassment. He just motioned his hands helplessly at the rain. Gon followed his motion then his mouth formed a shape of an o, realizing.

"Well, then, Killua," Gon said, opening the umbrella fully and holding it over them. "Want to share an umbrella with me?"

Killua looked back at the bright boy with wide eyes and he's sure his blush didn't fade. Share an umbrella, that close to Gon, for so long? His heartbeat sped up at the thought and he flushed further. He wasn't expecting his body to react like that...

"Er..." He looked back out at the rain. It wasn't like he had a choice unless he wanted to ask the house to bring a car. And that's just awkward. "Alright."

Gon's smile widened further before he pulled Killua closer by the forearm. Killua tried to appear helpful by stepping closer to Gon when all he wanted to do was flinch away. He was satisfied his body listened to him to this extent.

"Ready?" He asked, his voice lowered in volume. There was no point in regular volume when they were literally two breaths apart. Killua swallowed and forced himself not to look at Gon's lips.

"Y-yea." He cursed himself for stuttering, but they moved into the rain nonetheless.

"So..." Gon started after they walked away from the school, nothing to distract them but the constant drumming on the top of Gon's black umbrella. Killua didn't want to say anything about his shoulder to his left getting soaked from the rain and dripping of the umbrella side since it wasn't wide enough for two. He nearly jumped when Gon suddenly spoke-- he was too busy concentrating on putting on foot in front of the either and keeping a constant distance to Gon, a preferable occasional brushing of shoulders when they fall out of step with each other.

"Yes, Gon?" Killua asked, his voice too loud for their small private space under the dome.

"When does your concerts come out? The ones you do Sundays?" He asked, turning his gaze to Killua. Killua could swear the sun came out from behind the clouds.

"U-um, The-the concerts... that come out on DVD are Zoldyck specials, er, the ones we do mostly every Sunday are ones our Zoldyck VIPs ask for. Since it's a service to the client, it wouldn't do very well to sell the recording to anyone outside who attended." Killua nodded. He faced forward, looking ahead at the rain hitting the pavement so hard that gray mist rose up as well and hindered the view so one couldn't see 3 feet ahead. He peaked to the side and saw that Gon's other shoulder farthest from him was also getting wet. He bit his lip to keep his smile from growing too large. Gon also didn't mind getting a little wet for him...

"Ah... Makes sense." Gon chirped also looking forward.
"Yea..." Killua hummed. ". . . But I can probably get you a recording? Sometime? If you wanted?" Killua's face was surely completely red, he felt his face burning up. The cool mist and wind brushing past his cheeks and bangs were a grateful welcome. Killua didn't even have to look over at Gon to see his beaming smile.

"Wow! That'd be really nice! Especially since I know your DVDs are crazy expensive. . . But I'd rather see one personally. Can I come backstage to a concert one of these days?"

Killua's face lost color as his mind fast tracked through every single possibility that could go wrong.

"No," he answered after a pause. He could also see Gon's pout without looking.

"Aw! Killua, too mean. I'd just want to experience a real concert. Like a World Star scale!"

"Answer is still no." He even let a smirk on his features to hide his stress properly and make it seem like he was just being stingy. Gon pouted and much too soon they reached the corner where they needed to part.

"Ah... well, I didn't think about this..." Gon chuckled nervously.

"A-ah, erm..." Killua stuttered, stepping back a bit, leaving Gon with the umbrella. It was his after all, he should walk home with it. Gon saw Killua's movement's and quickly slipped the handle into Killua's hands, the foam still warm from Gon's hold.

"I know you live a bit farther from home than me," Gon explained while Killua's mind whirled with what Gon was about to do. "And mine is just down this way. If I run, it'll be like the rain didn't even touch me!" Gon backed out the ring of the umbrella dryness.

"Wo-wait! Gon-!" Killua lunged forward to try and get Gon back under.

"Return it tomorrow! Or don't! Whatever!" Gon said skipping further back and his hair starting to droop. "Bye Killua! Stay dry!" He turned and sprinted down his usual street.

"A-ah..." Killua choked out, reaching a useless hand after him. "Gon!" He shouted after him. He sighed, there was no point now, he was already wet and probably halfway home. He turned to walk home.

"Wait... We could have just walked to my place then he could have walked with his own umbrella home..." Killua thought. He smacked his forehead. This is what they get for acting too suddenly instead of thinking about it. He chuckled. "Gon's so..." His mind didn't supply anything useful. Just things like amazing, thoughtful, and the best.

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"You go straight to the bath, you! Off with your clothes! I thought you took your umbrella to school?" Mito cried out, pushing the soaking Gon to the bathroom.

"I did!" Gon sniffed and rubbed his nose pleased with himself. He sneezed and Mito thwapt him on the head.

"If you get sick, no TV for a month!"

"Mito, noooo!"
"You got sick?!" Killua cried out looking Gon over, his reddened cheeks and nose. Because of me? he decided not to voice.

"Ehaha, there must've been something in the air." Gon chuckled, rubbing the back of head. "I usually don't get sick that easily. Especially with just a few minutes in the rain." He sniffed. "But I'm already starting to feel better, so that sounds more like me. I should be better by tomorrow." Gon smiled at Killua before sniffig again. Although he made the most adorable face while sniffing, it pulled at the guilt sitting like a rock in Killua's gut.

"Stop sniffing, you big idiot, you've got to blow!" He whipped out his handkerchief and stuffed it to Gon's face, catching his nose between his fingers.

"A-ah! Killua, you're pinching too hard! I can't blow even if I wanted to!" Gon cried out, his voice nasally and his eyes screwed shut. Killua huffed, taking his hands away from his nose and crossing his arms. Gon chuckled, rubbing his reddening nose from the abuse. Killua could sure use some lessons in displaying affection properly. Gon knows he's just worried. He looked at the handkerchief more closely, and he saw it was Killua's personal one, a silky K-Z embroidered in a corner.

"ah, oh no, Killua, this is your nice one, I shouldn't-" Gon said, giving it back.


"Thanks Killua... I'm not sniffing that badly... I'll try not to ruin it before the end of the day." He blew in it, albeit a little apologetically. Killua doted on Gon a little more before it was time for first period. Perfect Pitch with Knov.

"Hello class, I hope you've been studying and practicing diligently."

"Yes, Knov." Most students answered. Some others looked nervous.

"Great, we're having a pop quiz." He said and most groaned, the louder ones being the ones who looked nervous before. "The pop quiz will be a test of range, note recognition and pitch. I'll give you what song you’re to sing when it is your turn to go. I’ll be calling you up alphabet order.” It was Killua's turn to be nervous. If Gon went up to sing when he's sick like this, his voice won't get to all the notes properly and it'll crack and stuff. And Killua will be responsible for his failing grade since Gon got sick in the first place because of him... He had to do something. The way Gon fidgeted in the seat in front of him let him know he was also nervous about this.

People went ahead of Gon, his name starting with F. Knov gave everyone musical numbers, usually with sharps and flats hard to hit without accurate pitch. Killua wasn't worried about that, Gon's pretty good at that- especially since he has an inclination towards musicals, he picked it up easier. but with that sickness, he'll only be as good as the worst person in here.

"Gon Freecs." Knov called, pushing his calculating cold glasses up further his nose. The two stiffed, nervous looks on his face. Everyone else lit up in excitement.

"Wow, we get to hear Gon sing! Yay!"

"I wonder what performance we'll get from him!"

"I love watching him sing."

"Everyone settle down, you all are being way too disoderly for my classroom!" Knov grinded his teeth together as he tried to calm the kids that were getting up to move closer to the front. Gon got up, trying to clear his throat and failing obviously. But he didn't notice Killua get up and follow him
to the front. Gon got up next to the board and Killua stopped when he got to the front row of students.

"Geez, you all are so unprofessional. He's a fellow student like all of you and you guys are acting like he's a world star come to visit." Knov said going forward to the front of the classroom with Gon to get away from the suddenly unruly kids.

**Good,** Killua thought. **Makes it easier for me.** When Knov gave Gon his song to sing and he started warming up his voice, Killua began muttering under his voice. He began matching his voice to Gon's, practicing Gon's warm ups after Gon did it to see if it sounded the same.

Then Gon began singing, and as per usual he was giving his all, giving a bit of twirls and large motioning to the audience. But Killua could hear the coming cracks in Gon's voice after hours of listening to Gon singing and knowing his voice like his own. He sang under Gon's voice to make sure he sounded exactly the same.

He raised his voice when he heard Gon's about to crack and threw his voice over to Gon so that when his faded out from his affected throat, no one heard the difference. Gon kept singing and Killua lowered his voice mimicking Gon's, preventing the sound of double voice from occurring, and just making sure to patch the holes Gon's voice left. Gon's eyebrows furrowed when he heard it but kept going. He had already decided that even though he wouldn't get the best grade since his voice isn't in the best shape, he would try his best and deliver the most on what he has to work with. But Gon was certain that his voice cracked and faded just now, but he heard his voice keep singing?

When it happened again, he had an inkling on what was going on. So he turned to find Killua in the crowd, and it wasn't hard to find him, he was right in front. and as he thought, his mouth was moving along with Gon, and he's sure it'd still be moving in sync with the words Gon should have been singing when his voice cracks. Gon's eyebrows furrowed down briefly before he remembered he was putting on a stage and he's not suppose to break face before he finishes. He tried his best so that his voice didn't crack and not let Killua sing for him, but he couldn't help it. If he could make his voice not crack, this wouldn't be an issue right now.

Gon finally finished and gave a bow while everyone clapped. The stage wasn't as explosive as they thought it'd be but it can't be big everytime, right? Killua lightly clapped while he looked over at Knov, trying to make sure he didn't notice Killua had mimicked Gon's voice then threw his voice over to cover Gon's. He let a small breath when Knov just wrote down his grade like he did everyone else. Undetected.

"Now everyone, back to your SEATS!" Knov bit out, and everyone shuffled while murmuring, waiting for the next person.

"Hey, Gon, you did-" Killua started as Gon came back. But Gon didn't even look at him and just sat in the seat in front of him, turning to the front rigidly. Killua blinked, feeling something in his chest sink.

"Gon? Gon, what-?"

"Shh, Killua." Gon whispered sharply, only turning his head slightly, then pointed towards Knov who was talking. Killua's eyes widened then sat back.

Gon just... told him to shh? He opened his mouth but he didn't think there was anything he could say or do right now that would put him in the right. He closed his mouth and waited for the end of class to come.
By the end of class, Knov, of course, didn't need Killua Zoldyck to sing, and class let out soon after that. Killua looked down to zip up his book bag and when he looked up, Gon was already booking it out the door. Killua's eyes widened and that sharp feeling in his grew.

"G-Gon?" Killua choked out, swiping up his book bag and jogging a bit to catch up. "Gon, what the he--"

"You cheated!" Gon turned to Killua fully, stopping his tracks to finally address Killua face to face. Killua stumbled to a stop from Gon's sudden stop, surprise all over his face. But then it melded into one of relief.

"What? Gon, is that what this is about? Who cares, I--"

"I care! Killua! Cheating is bad! And besides, I never asked you to cheat for me. I didn't want you to cheat for me. Everything I do at this school, all the grades I earn at this school, I want it to be of my own strength, of my own abilities. If my voice is messed up right when a teacher decides to give a pop quiz, then my grade should reflect that! And besides, what about what you were saying, that you didn't like being asked for your voice specifically to help others! I think this is the most literal sense of what you don't like." Gon said. Killua stood and listened, his mouth opening and closing occasionally as he thought of things to say only to realize they were petty and unnecessary. Everything Gon was saying was true, but gosh darn it, he wasn't about to swallow this bitter pill easily.

"Geez, Gon, a thank you, would be nice! I was just trying to help!--"

"I didn't ask for it!"

"But it's my fault your voice is messed up to begin with!" Killua stomped his foot. Gon's mouth opened to retort before he actually realized what Killua said then his eyes widened.

"Ki-"

"You think after I caused your voice to be messed up I'm gonna let your grade suffer because of it? You want that sort of thing to be on my conscious forever? You think I want to see my only frien--!"

Killua was growing more hysterical by the moment and Gon finally put his hands on Killua's arms to calm and quiet him.

"Killua, Killua, kil, no, no no, shh, listen, it's ok..." Gon said in a soothing low voice. "This isn't your fault. My voice being messed up right now is not your fault." Gon assured as Killua took deep breaths in his arms. "I went out into the rain of my own decision."

"But if I hadn't forgotten my umbrella at all--" Killua tried, his voice weak and guilt ridden.

"Mh-mh, you didn't shove me out in the rain-- it wasn't even your idea. You tried to get me back under my umbrella. In fact, if I listen to you and we waited a moment longer, we could have figured out that I could have just walked you home."

Killua chuckled, his shoulder bouncing with lighter care.

"You figured that out too? Ya, it was too late, you were already gone, but I would have--"

"I know you would. If anything, you would be the reason I wasn't sick. You're not the reason I am sick or that my voice is messed up. Ok?" Gon asked. Killua looked down to the floor and then back up at Gon through his bangs.
"... ok." He muttered. Gon smiled.

"And no more cheating, ok?" Gon asked, ducking his head a bit to look at Killua's face more fully. Killua laughed, tilting his head back. Gon could sure make him feel like a child. And that wasn't always a bad thing.

"Yes, yes, no more cheating."

"Good." Gon pulled Killua to his chest in a warm hug. Killua would never get used to Gon suddenly pulling him into hugs. He doesn't think he'll ever know when it was gonna happen until he felt those muscular arms around him. He let out a satisfied sigh and wrapped his arms around Gon back, closing his eyes in the pleasure. The minute bell rang and they parted.

"Ooops! Gotta get to class, c'mon." Gon smiled, taking his hand and pulling him along.

"I-idiot! I can walk!" Killua scolded, but didn't make a move to take his hand back. If today showed anything, Killua found out he gets a bit selfish when it comes to Gon. But he would also do anything for him... He'll ignore the warm feeling in his chest a little longer even though he already knows what it is.

"How'd you do the voice thing anyway? I thought there was 2 of me!" Gon asked. Killua laughed.

"I perfected the art of mimicking voices when I was younger to mess with my brothers! And then I learned how to throw my voice for even more fun!" Killua explained.

"Wow! you're so cool! Killua!"

It was just one of those days.

Killua woke up feeling like crap. He felt jumpy and itchy, moody and not in the mood. He slapped a cap over his head so he didn't have to worry about his hair and sweatpants to keep comfortable. He nearly forgot he needed a shirt besides what he slept in, so he slipped on a 3 quarter sleeve two tone shirt. He scratched at his neck, feeling his tendons stretch under his nails, his anxious feeling in the pit of his stomach made him shiver. He rose and fell in waves and it made him moodier and jumper.

Killua's eyes were distracted and distant as he made his way to his locker, barely noticing Gon waiting for him by the locker. When Gon looked up from his phone, the smile on his face fell once he saw how distracted Killua looked.

"Killua..." Gon said, walking over. He was only slightly surprised when Killua didn't stop and just walked past him to his locker. "Killua?" Gon asked, turning and grabbing his shoulder. Killua blinked to life, his eyes finally showing some focus as he turned to Gon.

"Oh, sorry, Gon, I was-"

"Spacing out, I know, you ok?"

"Yea, just..." He breathed out, running a hand through his hair. "I'm fine." He said. Gon scrunched his nose unbelievingly as Killua turned to the locker to get his books.

"Oh! I wouldn't worry about books right now." Gon informed him. Killua raised on eyebrow and squinted at Gon to explain further. Gon opened his mouth but then the intercom system squacked to
"Hello, Musica Academy. This is your principle, Netero, speaking. There is a mandatory, school wide assembly taking place this morning in lieu of your first three morning classes." There was a pause as the hallway filled with happy cheers and curious murmurs. "It will take place in the school auditorium. Please do try your best to attend, important information will be discussed there. Thank you." It hung up with the clacking of a phone. Killua looked from the ceiling to Gon.

"...Just how close to Netero are you?"

Gon chuckled before shrugging. Gon knew Killua would probably need space to just get through this funk, and in turn wouldn't be much company, so Gon decided it would be ok to bring others along with him to the assembly. He met up with Zushi and Ponzu and whoever else they were hanging out with to talk to. Killua was just a quiet presence next to Gon, which he was fine with. Killua didn't mind just being next to Gon even if he was essentially being ignored. He just needed to disappear for a bit and his mood will improve.

"What do you think the announcements will be about, Gon?" A girl that Gon thinks was one of Ponzu's friends asked.

"I don't know! But I'm excited! It's all mysterious and it's making me curious!" He practically buzzed with excitement. Everyone chirped in with what they think that the assembly will be about as they followed along the mass of the school assembly going into the auditorium, all a clattering loud mess. Killua walked by Gon’s elbow, numbly listening to him mindlessly chatter about what the assembly was about. A numb pulsing gnawed at the edge of his consciousness and he felt himself checking out, but it wasn't that bad yet. Gon's voice was a nice anchor to keep him in the present.

_Breathe_

His burning chest reminded him he was taking too many shallow breaths, his lungs deprived of the oxygen it needs to keep his body moving. Killua inhaled deeply and his chest ached like joints moving for the first time in ages.

Gon picked a seat, somewhere in the sea of audience chairs and Killua followed. Killua didn't even know where they were in relation to the stage or exit, he just followed Gon without thought. The first thing he noticed was the stage and it's red curtains drawn shut, all the lights off and a big spot light in the center. It drew the eyes sight very easily and it was almost hypnotizing. He drifted off in thoughtless gaze until he flinched, suddenly hit by the combined voices of the school talking all at once. It didn't help that it was all amplified by the voices bouncing off the walls and high ceiling and the music being played out over the speakers made the students talk louder to be heard. It scrambled his thoughts and that unhinged Killua. He wanted-- needed to hear himself think. The music being played while everyone waited for the assembly to start wasn't even that good. It was harsh and grated against Killua's ears. It annoyed him and he wasn't even sure why.

Walking in, they were also hit with how cold it was in the auditorium, and artificial cold made Killua shiver and he wished he was wearing something more than a thin collar shirt.

Killua didn't even know he was clenching his jaw until a grinding pain pinched at the edge of his subconscious. By the pain of it, he's been clenching for a while. He tried to calm himself down, and he was able to temporarily untense himself, but his panic was growing and getting worse. The combinations of the loudness, the dark where he was easily losing himself, the cold-- Killua was freaking out. He tried to get his headphones out to try and calm himself down, but he was shaking more than he thought and it was a challenge to get his phone out with steady hands.
He considered leaving, but Gon was here. Gon would probably come, but he'd have to get his attention from his friends and over the music. Besides he'll be fine if he could just get his music up! His hands weren't cooperating with him. He was getting increasingly worried about how fast his panic was growing, and that wasn't helping the problem.

Killua fumbled to get his music out, struggling with shaking hands to pull his noise cancelling headphones over his ears. His eyebrows furrowed in frustration, *Why am I even panicking, there's nothing happening...!*

Then he suddenly heard it, smacked him over the head like it was the most obvious thing ever. The undernotes of the song, the backbone of the melody was a ticking.

Killua's pretty sure his panic was less intense before he made the realization.

Tunnel vision hindered his vision as it began to swim, the only red light focus seeming to grow smothering larger. He knows his eyes are constricted as his panic attack mounted. Blood roared in his ears and his chest ached--

*breathe breathe breathe*--

--he forgot to breathe. The music wasn't helping and the kids had to talk even louder to be heard over it, the noise was too much, accumulating into a symphony of clashing senseless noise--!

"Killua!"

Killua jumped out of his skin and looked over at Gon. Gon looked vaguely concerned, but Killua couldn't really see since there was such little light, just the stage and the lights lining the aisles. He struggled to suck in a shuddering breath.

"Are you ok?" Gon asked, shifting to turn away from his others friends and face Killua a bit more.

"I-I..." Killua said with a shiver in his voice. His chest hurt so bad and all he wanted to do was listen to his music, something with deep bass and slow tempo.

"Are you cold?" Gon asked. He didn't wait for an answer before he was taking off his jacket.

"G-Gon..." Killua was able to choke out in protest past his tightening wind pipe, but then Gon's jacket was placed over his shoulders. Killua blinked in surprise as Gon's scent assaulted his senses. It was everywhere suddenly and Killua was drowning in it. His eyes fluttered as he took in a steady deep breath filled with *Gon*. He smiled unsteadily as he clutched at its borders to bring it closer. He didn't realize Gon had a scent until then, like clean linen and and outdoor nature and trees, breathing in morning dew. A warm shiver went down his spine and he sank deeper in his seat, the tension in his limbs dying out. The smell was warm comfort and unknowingly familiar, it's what he's always been around the past few months, but concentrated around him. He breathed deeply to get a good whiff of Gon's scene that was becoming apart of his own clothes. He knew he was being weird but he didn't care, it was *Gon*.

*Gon Gon Gon Gon...*

His heartbeat steadied out to a slow pulsing thump as he practically nuzzled into the jacket. Gon smiled pleased at how much warmer Killua looked then turned back to his friends to talk.

The smell helped anchor Killua to reality and not lose himself, and it wrapped around him with a warm, fuzzy feel, like he was surrounded in safety.
"Gon..." He purred out, feeling a better and relieved. The lights in the auditorium dimmed down even further as the announcements were about to begin.

"Welcome students!" The principal cried out, sounding like he was trying to be youthful or cheerful. "It's your president, Netero here! Retired World Idol of 80s POP ROCK!"

Everyone gave polite respectful applause to their principal, but multiple of his fans gave more roaring applause. He nodded until the clapping died down.

"Alright, well, I decided, along with the new image we're creating here at Musica Academy, what with the revealing of the new Spirit Committee--" Some appreciatory cheers rose up cutting him off--"That we should keep up with the involved and engaged events. So I'm here to personally update the school on all that is happening for the next half of the school semester! And give you guys an excuse to be out of classes..." He added the last bit like he was a scandalous teen skipping class himself. The classes let out laughter.

"Alright, first thing's first! The MSSC have tallied up the spirit points of every grade class that they accumulated during the spirit events during the spirit week. It was a tight race, but..." Everyone held their breath waiting, even some of the seniors who weren't even for the spirit events were excited to see who won.

"The sophomores took it! Great job!" There was a giant rise in cries and cheers, before it melded back down to murmurs between friends.

"Awesome! I knew we'd win!" Gon cheered in his seat.

"How could we lose? We had the guy who initiated it all on our side!" Pokkle smiled. Gon smiled back widely.

"Thanks!"

"That means we'll win spirit week every year!" Ponzu gasped with sparkling eyes.

"Ah, I think you guys are overestimating me a little bit...!" Gon chuckled. The friends started putting in their two cents of why he's the best and probably better than they think when Netero brought his voice up over the chattering students again.

"Don't you guys want to know what the prize is?" He asked. Surprised and recalling shouts raised briefly and then they quieted down to listen.

"As you all know, the middle of the fall semester is coming up, and while that does mean midterms for you all, it also means the Fall Dance and Fall Showcase is coming up." The crowd cheered their excitement. "So, me and the spirit committee have decided to reward the sophomore class wit the chance to audition to perform and be the main entertainment at the Fall Dance."

Excited calls from the sophomores and outraged cries from the other classes ensued.

"What? I don't get it." Gon said. Why was everyone so upset or happy about it.

"Usually, the school gets professional performances for the dances, graduated world stars, popular celebrities, stuff like that. But this is our chance to show our skills as prospective idols! There will be alumni there that may want to sign the person performing up for a contract or maybe put up good words to other people if we can make an impression. This is an amazing opportunity!" Pokkle explained.
"Woah!" Gon crooned. Other seniors grumbled about how they should have tried harder to win.

"Me and my band is so gonna try for that!" Pokkle said with determination in his eyes. "Even if nothing comes out of it but more recognition by the people in school, it's still a great gig."

"Good for you, Pokkle." Gon encouraged, smacking his shoulder.

"Yes, and with that in mind, I want to tell everyone the theme of the Fall Dance this year."

They all quieted and shushed again, to hear, excited. Netero paused for dramatic effect.

"... It's going to be the Fall Dance: Night of the Stars!"

People whooped and cheered at that, excited with the thought. "Yes, yes, your very own Music School Spirit Committee will be in charge of handing out promotion posters, giving updates on the status of the dance and putting it all together. I'm sure they'll be roaming around to find help, so keep them in mind if you ever find you have free time. But also make sure that when you come to the dance, you stars outshine the very stars in the sky." He winked at them goodnaturedly.

"Heh, corny." Killua chuckled under the cheers of the other students, but Gon heard him. He turned his head to his friend and was happy to see he looked a bit better. He smiled and sat in a way to face Killua more than he was before.

"Alright, so," Netero said, raising his voice again. "The Fall Showcase is in 2 weeks from this Friday, Saturday before Fall break, and as you know we have the Dance the Friday before any Showcase as a sort of before-party, mood-booster in preparation and celebration of those performing. So the auditions are next Friday and then the Dance would be the following Friday. You all should be aware of this before you audition, so that you know the tight window of preparation you'll have for the Fall Dance if you want to perform.

"Yes, so after the Saturday of the Fall Showcase, we have Fall break during the first week of October. And with the Fall Showcase over, sign ups for Winter Showcase will then be open. You technically won't be able to sign up for them until you come back the second week of October, but the sign ups will be open. So all those planning on performing this winter, keep that in mind."

Gon gulped and clenched his fists. He has to be ready... He could do this. The timer was counting down, soon, he'll be on stage to perform in the night of Winter, the fate of his future hinging on everything that happens that night…

Killua looks over at Gon's face to see the determined glint in his eyes from this silhouette. His eyes flicked down to Gon's hands clenched at his side, and swallowed the impulse to hold it comfortingly.

"Alright, I believe those are all of my announcements..." Netero said over the murmuring that washed over the crowd when he mentioned the Winter Showcase. Everyone already knows about the bet that has entangled their favorite student star in it, so with it coming that much closer, the excitement and anticipation was rising.

What was Gon to do?

Will he win?

Is this going to be Gon's first and last semester here?

All the whispered questions whirled around Gon in the air, it infected his focus.
"Just remember, just because spirit week is over, doesn't mean your spirits should go down. The committee is still around, they're still making events to remind all of you to love what you sing, and keep your spirits up. Ok! You're all dismissed to lunch!"

People began getting up, forming massive blocks in the aisle.

"Ugh, how annoying..." Killua said, standing. His legs felt a little wobbly, but the weight on it helped. "I hate crowds, I just want to get up to the roof..." Wide open space, nothing above him, instead of this claustrophobic place.

"I get you..." Gon agreed, shifting to the side trying to get out to the aisle too. Killua barely heard him over the student's shouting talk, animated about everything that was told in the announcements.

"Omg, Gon! What are you going to do?" A male student cried out, pressing himself into the aisle with Gon to talk to him. Everyone in the vicinity, pinpointing where Gon was then, turned to mob him with questions.

"A-ah! One at a time?!" Gon cried, confused at why so many people were suddenly invested in his progress and how confident he was to win the Showcase. Killua was basically shoved and pushed out the way as Gon was engulfed in a mob.

"Ah! Oi, Gon! Get out of there!" Killua shouted over the crowd, but it looked kinda funny and couldn't keep the laughter out his voice.

"Killua! Don't you think if I could have, I would have already?" Killua was barely able to make out over the voices. Killua laughed, but when he looked over at the doors, he saw the way out was pretty clear. He could leave!

"Yike- um, Gon, meet me at our usual place, yea?" He cried.

"You're leaving me?!" Gon squeaked, and Killua laughed again.

"Bye!" He waved, and felt the sleeves of Gon's jacket flap against his fingers and he remembered he was, in fact, wearing his jacket. "Oh yea..." Killua murmured, looking down at the worn green jacket sleeves falling over his palm and a warm feeling swirled and bloomed from the center of his chest, rising up to rest on his cheeks in a blush. He shivered slightly at the overwhelming emotion, and shook his head. "I have to remember to give this back..." He muttered, heading out the auditorium. He breathed in once more to engrave the scent of Gon in his mind.

-o0o0o0o0-

What plagued Gon's mind the most-- more than the foreboding Winter showcase-- was when Netero announced the Fall Dance. As soon as he announced it, Gon's mind went into overdrive on how to ask Killua-- when to ask Killua. He considered just turning to him and asking him right on the spot. Something like, 'we're going together, right?' and he would reply with his sharp smile a 'you know it' or something equally as Killua. But the problem would be Killua would say something like that because he would think they were just going as friends, as company to each other as they go to a party. Gon wanted to make sure if he asks Killua, he wanted to make sure Killua knew it was as his date. This was it, this was gonna be a pretty gutsy move that lays all his cards on the table. It will show Killua just how he really feels about him. But he had to do it right!

He was in the middle of that thought when the assembly ended and he was mobbed by all these people that wanted to get the juicy gossip on how he planned on staying in the music industry. Then Killua left, and Gon felt like kicking the ground and shouting to the sky. He never felt so frustrated
with circumstances he couldn’t control. But this was ok, Killua said he was waiting for him on the roof, so... he just had to escape these hordes of gossip zombies.

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"You’re what?" Gon pouted, his eyes rounding out for maximum pitifulness.

"Yea, I won’t be coming to school tomorrow. I’m suppose to be guest starring on some World Star’s cooking show." He sighed out through his nose as he brushed a hand through his hair. "It won’t be fun, TV appearances never are..."

"They’re suppose to be." Gon said. "Just... once you’re able to go on shows you actually have the freedom to choose." He shrugged. "Anyway, can I come?" He asked. He felt hopeful when he saw Killua’s face light up, but then it slumped and Gon mimicked it.

"No, you can’t come. My mother still doesn’t know about you, and Illumi will be there. It will just be uncomfortable for me, you, everyone involved. It'll be better if you don't go. Besides, you'll probably be super bored."

"Well, I could entertain you!"

"I'll be in dressing room all day and then on stage. Wouldn't work."

"Aw, I'll miss you..." Gon pouted. And he had this great plan on asking him too... Well, alright, he didn't really have anything, but if he thought of something, he would have preferred if Killua was there. "When is it? I want to record it to watch it."

"It airs at 11 am, goes for the hour. It’s those cooking shows where they talk to the audience about kitchen problems, and then pulls out something pre-made and tells them instructions on how to make it, and we, as hosts, tastes it. We're supposed to make faces and noises like it's the best thing in the world even if it's not, like 'Uuuwaaaaahhh!'" Killua squealed, cupping his cheeks in his acting. Gon threw his head back in laughter, watching Killua suddenly switch to his stage personality was like a slap to the face.

"Hold on, I wanna practice, I'm gonna be doing that stuff in the future too!" Gon cried. "Waaah!" He cried in a wispy voice. Killua laughed.

"What was that? You sounded like a smoker on a roller coaster!" He said through his laughter.

"No, I was trying to capture the sound of a crowd, but like, within me--"

"Like every Gon of your split personalities like it?" Killua laughed.

"Killua!" Gon protested, pushing him on his shoulder, which only made Killua laugh more. Gon's smile widened at hearing his chiming, twinkling laugh. It was like diamond rain, or wind chime symphonies. It made Gon's chest twist, squeeze, and expand all at once. He loved the sound of his laugh and he'll take every opportunity to get him to laugh. Killua recovered soon, sitting up to face Gon.

"Oh, yea, you're jacket--" Killua started, shrugging one side off his shoulder. Gon looked him over, and he noted he really... really liked the look of Killua wearing his stuff, so he stopped him.

"You can keep it." He chirped. Killua stopped, wide eyes and a blush on his face.

"Uhh..." He stammered.
"It's fine, really. It looks good on you." He winked before he could help it. Killua turned a deeper red, but he shrugged the jacket back on, which Gon took as a good sign.

"Ah... alright." Killua hummed, turning his head to one side, and Gon could swear he saw a hint of a smile.

Gon rushed into his room, throwing his book bag to one side after coming home alone. He turned on his television to find the recording of Big Belly Cooking show that Killua guest stars in. He turned it on, excited to see his friend on actual national television.

"Welcome!" A woman with teal hair tied up in a star crown about her head shouted into the screen. "Today we'll be talking about how to curb your sweet tooth with sugar substitute desserts and the perfect drink to make with certain meal palates! But first, we have a very special guest star on today! Please help me welcome... Killua Zoldyck!"

Gon clapped as animatedly as the audience members did as Killua walked on stage from off screen. Obviously some of them knew Killua with the way they cheered and clapped. Killua waved amicably and with a perfect smile on his features. He looked cute, but Gon knew immediately that wasn't his real smile.

His real smile was a little crooked, and cat like, curving at the edges. It crinkled his eyes and scrunched up his nose in the cutest way... and usually his cheeks redden from laughing so much. Gon loves his smile and studied it almost every time Killua smiled, so he knew that much... but Gon missed him so much today, he was just happy to see his best friend anyway he knew how.

"Hi Menchi, I'm so happy you invited me to the show! Especially for this episode, I love sweet things. But maybe I like too many of them?" Killua gave a stage laugh. "So finding new sweet things that have substitutes in them will definitely be healthier for me in the long run." He nodded.

"You thanking me? I should be thanking you for coming and gracing my show with your cute face." She reached to ruffle his bangs, and he reflexively flinched away from her hand, but then naturally fell into a laugh to cover it up as she mused his hair. But Gon could tell he didn't like it. Killua was really good at acting, but Gon didn't like that he had to... Gon hoped he could make him really happy one day. But the rest of the show was pretty cute and happy, Killua got to eat sweet things the whole time and his smile was genuine a couple times. Gon was pretty happy with what was aired.

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But apparently Killua wasn't. He was in such a bad mood the following day, Gon was sure that Friday was not a good day to ask him out.

"I mean who does that?" Killua griped as Gon idly scrolled his media feed. 10 new followers! "It was completely unscripted, I was in no way prepared. I mean, there's impromptu but you have to take into consideration people's personal space."

"Mhm..." Gon hummed absentmindedly. "I knew you didn't look happy as soon as she did it."

"Nu-uh, Gon, I was able to perfectly cover my discontent. You're just saying that because I'm already complaining to you." Killua huffed. "There's no way it showed on my face that it bothered me."

"No, you didn't-- yea, you're right." Gon sighed through his nose before continuing his scrolling.
There was no point in trying to argue with Killua, he was just venting right now.

"And then no one wanted to tell her afterwards that she shouldn't have done that! Next time I meet her and she tries to pet me, I'll sock her!" He cried.

"Sock who?" A soft silky voice asked from their side. They both jumped then turned to the voice with a smile.

"Kurapika!" They greeted.

"Hey, what's up?"

"Yea, it's been a while, how are the upper classes?" Gon asked, sitting up from the lockers.

"It's been very well, Gon. Everything seems to be clicking a lot better. My grades are only going up because of you. Thank you." He smiled. Gon rubbed the back of his head, a blush on his cheeks.

"Aw, it wasn't all that." Gon chuckled, ducking his head. "It was something you had all along, just missing." Gon said. Kurapika inclined his head.

"No matter what you say, I never would have advanced any further if it wasn't for you. And that's sort of the reason I've come over. Gon, do you remember how I was working on those songs during History class? On the music scores?" He asked.

"Oh! Ya, and I couldn't read them..." Gon laughed sheepishly.

"But he probably could now. And hear it in his head... if you give him a couple minutes." Killua chuckled, his arms crossed as he listened to their conversation in front of him.

"That's good. But that's not where I'm going with it. I finished it." Kurapika smiled. Gon's smile widened into an open mouth smile.

"What? Wow, Kurapika that's great! That's really fast, are you sure you're happy the way it came out?" Gon asked. Kurapika nodded.

"It was easy, it was like it was in me the whole time, it just needed editing on the way to paper." He explained. Gon nodded.

"That's great!"

"So, the class I'm in has this opportunity done through the school to put on a concert showcasing the talents and songs finished by those in the class. I have a couple pieces in it, and I would like you there to hear the finished product at its debut." He said. Gon's jaw dropped.

"W-wow! That'd be amazing Kurapika. I'm honored, thanks... when is it?" Gon asked.

"Tomorrow night at 6. Here at school in the auditorium." He said. "Formal attire. Melody has a piece, too."

"Ah, sounds great. So, we'll train for half the day, and the last half we go see Kurapika and Melody conduct, right?" Killua said, asking Kurapika for clarification if they were indeed conducting and not playing.

"That's right, we get a whole orchestra to conduct for ourselves." He smiled, and they could feel how happy he was about it. "I can't wait for you to hear my piece, Gon. I hope you understand how amazing classical really is once you hear and experience it in person."
"Hah, sounds funny. You sound just like my brother actually." Killua snickered.

"Come off it, Killua. You're probably not inclined towards the classicals simply because your brother is specializing in it, and it's your personal goal to not like anything associated with your brothers." Kurapika gave him a side look. Killua opened his mouth to retort before looking up in thought and letting out a laugh.

"That's probably true." He chuckled. "But don't worry, we'll be there."

"That's right! I can't wait to hear your piece." Gon smiled. He was hoping to find a way to ask Killua to the dance sometime tomorrow, but their schedule seems a bit too full for a nice romantic moment to ask him during. But it didn't matter, Kurapika wanted them there for support and appreciation. Kurapika nodded his thanks.

"I'll see you both then."

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"I didn't remember the suit being this itchy..." Killua said, pulling at his bow tie.

"You didn't have to wear a suit. He said formal." Gon said. Gon was wearing a long sleeved purple button up with a sleek black tie down the middle and the sleeves rolled up to his elbow. Black dress pants and dress shoes. Killua wore a white button up and suit jacket with a bow tie and dress pants with dress shoes, traditional black and white.

"Ugh, whatever, this was short notice and I didn't have time to plan my outfit, so I put on tried and true. Sue me." He huffed, frustrated. He yanked at the bowtie, pulling it off to a loose piece of clothing around his neck. Gon swallowed at the pale exposed piece of skin at his neck and the sexy ruffled look to his collar and forced himself to look away before Killua or anyone else noticed.

"That's..." His mind scrambled to remember the last thing Killua said to say something relevant. "True." He supplied after a pause. Geez, he didn't know how much longer he could keep from Killua. He hopes they get together soon, as he plans. The chatter in the auditorium died down as the lights dimmed and the announcer over the speakers to turn off the cells phones. The curtains opened and Knov stood there. People applauded as he bowed to start to the show.

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Gon and Killua stood up with obnoxious cheers and shouts from their seat in the audience once Kurapika came on stage wearing his conductor uniform, the long coat elegantly following his steps. They snickered as they sat down after shushed because they saw Kurapika's face was a little red. He bowed once he reached the center of the stage, and went over to the small mic to announce how many songs he would be playing and their names. The first piece, he called Sweet Apocalypse, was so cool. It revved and sounded disjointed right before it came back onto a melody again. The concept was so cool, and everyone played it so expertly, it deserved the elongated applause. It was genius. Kurapika turned and bowed, and indicated a person in the orchestra, but then instead of turning towards his orchestra to start the next song, he stepped up to the small mic they had set to the side.

"This piece I will be playing is called Birth. I want to dedicate this piece to a personal friend of mine, Gon Freecs, for helping me find my passion in music and helped give birth to the real me." He said and then stepped towards the orchestra.

Gon's jaw dropped at the dedication. He wasn't expecting that, that's too much!

"Nice, Gon. This song's for you." Killua snickered, nudging him with his shoulder. He won't think
about how tight his chest feels at the public display of affection Kurapika just showed. It's just friendly stuff...

Kurapika raised his hand and baton and waved his hands to start the piece. The two boys listened to the song slowly swell up, watching Kurapika's back move with purpose and grace.

"Kurapika's amazing..." Gon murmured, some time into the song. Killua nodded, feeling admiration for his upperclassmen friend. Not that he'd ever tell him that directly.

"Yea..."

It swelled and dropped and swirled around them, the violins playing an amazing part in leading the melody. Gon had to close his eyes to fully appreciate it. The piece suddenly dropped off and Gon opened his eyes, curious as to what happened. It was just reaching a climax! Then the whole orchestra moved to life, swaying as every piece was in motion, playing the climax that Gon waited for a beat ago, having left everyone with bated breath. It took the breath from Gon's lung. It was absolutely gorgeous. Classical was gorgeous! Soon the piece wound down to a finish and Gon was the first to bounce up and give him a standing ovation. Everyone was in pieces and tears over it, and Gon was so proud his friend Kurapika produced it. Amazing...

He sat down next to Killua and let out a sigh. He looked over to him and in turn, Killua looked at him. But one look and Killua sighed.

"Killua, I want--!

"To put an orchestra in your song, I know."

Gon looked on at Killua with his mouth left open from being interrupted in a middle of sentence before laughing.

"Right!" He agreed.

The weekend came to an end fairly quickly, and Monday came around. Everyone was buzzing with delight and excitement. The Fall dance was coming, and the posters all around and promo stickers were getting everyone pumped.

But Gon couldn't get into the festivities as much as everyone else around. He walked into school with his earphones on, a frown on his face. The whole weekend, there never seemed to be a proper way, time, or moment that presented itself perfectly to ask Killua. Gon was still worried Killua wouldn't take the request properly if he doesn't, but at this rate, he'll never ask Killua out before the dance comes!

Gon brought his fist down in the palm of his other hand. It's decided! Gon's sure he's over thinking this way too much and he should just ask Killua. There are no such thing as the magic moment or good opportunities, just chances you take. And what comes out of it depends on how hard you worked at making it work.. It's why he's at the school afterall. He didn't wait for a chance or perfect moment. He just went for it. It worked then, it'll work now...

Right?

The point was he just gonna ask him. Straight out and ask him and show him his feelings by the end of the night either way. He pulled his headphones out of his ears and started strutting to where he
knows Killua should be waiting for him. His limbs vibrated with the anticipation, and his heart was beating faster. He was nervous about what will happen, but he's ready this time.

He turned the corner and saw his white haired beauty waiting for him, leaning against the lockers. His headphones were fit snugly on his ears, his tufts of hair curling around the handle of the headphones like a halo and he was glancing down at his phone with an aloof like look. He was so cool and amazing, and Gon just wanted to hold him, and hold his hand, and kiss his cheeks-! But first he had to ask him out to the dance! The thrill of asking ran up and down his spine and he broke out in a nervous sweat as he began strutting his way towards Killua. Killua looked up at him with those blue eyes that stuns him every time they shot his way. Gon smiled widely, opening his mouth to greet him,

"Hey, Gon!" Melody quipped, stepping into his way, her hand up in both a greeting and a way to stop Gon in his tracks. Gon blinked once at her before looking over her at the waiting Killua. His legs moved on its own, ready to get to his target especially when he was so close and ready.

"Hi, Mel." Gon said, scooting left. But she matched his step.

"Gon, are you free right now? I need your help." She asked. Gon scrunched his lips up. Well obviously he was, he just tried to move past her.

"I, uh, yea, a little busy right now." Gon smiled down at her.

"Aw, I was hoping to get your help with the dance promo. Since the music committee is so small and we have so much to do... We can only depend on help from volunteers and the students to get everything we need to get done, done. And since you started the committee, maybe others seeing you help will get us more volunteers."

As she spoke, Gon's face fell. What a trap...

"I get it, Melody... yea, sure, what do you need?" He asked.

"We need help hanging the banners across some hallways. Going up some ladders and nailing and holding the ladders and stuff." She said, taking his hand and pulling him off in the other direction from Killua.

"Wa-ah, wait! Can't I have, like, a minute-?"

"Class is gonna start soon, we need all the time we can get." She said, pulling him off. Gon pouted and looked backwards at Killua, who was snicking into the hand having witnessed the scene himself.

"Bring Killua!"

"We don't have enough blackmail to bring him." She said and Gon let out a whine. "Thanks for helping! The Committee really appreciates it!" She added to try and make him feel better.

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Gon rubbed his hands together. Well, there was no time like the present.

He was constantly asked by the committee to help with organizing and promoting the dance. He was kept so busy, he didn't even have time to train with Killua the past two days. But this time, it was perfect. It was Wednesday, and even though they just had mid term exams in their academy classes, it was now their last period-- free period. And they went to where they usually did-- the stone lunch tables out back. The fall weather was perfect and the orange leaves in the trees were not only a
perfect backdrop to Killua, but the perfect situation to ask. It was the romantic situation Gon wanted.

"And we'll be able to start working on the song during the Fall break... I just hope it comes faster..." Killua sighed, running a hand through his hair.

"Yea..." Gon rubbed his palms together for a moment. "Were you planning on going to the Fall dance, though? Before the break?" Gon asked. Killua turned towards him with an arched eyebrow.

"Um... no. I haven't been to one before. I never had a reason to." He said. After a beat, his cheeks flushed red and he looked away. Gon briefly panicked at that, wondering if he was doing something weird with his face or something. "Er, were you planning on going?" Killua asked.

"Um, yea, actually, but uh... I was asking you, because I wanted to ask you to come to the dance with me..." Gon asked. Killua stared at him with wide eyes before looking off.

"Er... I mean, sure, if you wanted to--"

"Like, as my date. Like, formally. Like I'd get you a corsage and whatever else is proper... date stuff." Gon stuttered, his cheeks burning in embarrassment. He wasn't use to not being able to get his ideas across smoothly. Killua's face slowly morphed from that of stunned but curious to unbelieving but happy, a smile growing on his face.

"Y-you're... ye-yea, sure Gon. That sounds... yea. Sure." He quipped, looking down at his hands. Gon beamed at that.

"That's great! Great, Killua..." Gon hummed Killua's name like it was a blessing. Killua blushed, ducking his head further. They sat there for a beat, thinking back to what just happened, both left feeling tingly and happy. They buzzed with happiness, the person that makes them the happiest right by their side, and as their date to the dance.

"Great." Gon said under his breath past his smile. They chatted idly, although distractedly. They kept thinking about how they were going to the dance with each other but didn't want to bring it up and talk about it awkwardly. It was a nice time, but ended soon after.

"So, I'm gonna be at tutoring. What about you?" Killua asked, walking side by side with Gon back into the school. Gon scrunched his nose up. He was pretty tired from doing a lot of heavy work for the dance and not getting much sleep from being nervous to ask Killua.

"I think I'm going to head home... but text me if anything, ok?" Gon asked, walking backwards as Killua stopped by the library doors. Killua smiled.

"Alright. See ya tomorrow, Gon!"

"Bye, Killua!"

Gon went off and Killua entered the library, happy to see no one at his tutoring table. He went over and set up to be ready for anyone coming and then took out his own homework and notes to review. It was easier to distract himself from how Gon asked him to the prom if it was like this. Soon, Kurapika was pushing his rolling chair over to Killua's table, his tutoring table empty as well.

"Hello, Killua..." He hummed. Killua looked up for a second at him before looking back down and humming a greeting back. "So. anything new? I'm pretty bored." He placed his elbows on the table.

"Well..." Killua bit his lip. He was excited about this, but he didn't want to make a big deal out of it. Gon was pretty weird, so this might not be what he thinks it is and reading it wrong. But it was
something new. "Gon... asked me to go to the dance with him. At free period."

Kurapika sat up with wide eyes over at Killua.

"Seriously? No way." He gasped, putting a hand to his cheeks. He felt his chest tighten a bit and he sneered a bit at Kurapika's surprised reaction.

"What, did you think he'd ask you?" He bit out. He didn't like the ugly tone to his voice, but he couldn't help it. Kurapika looked surprised a second time.

"What? Oh, no, Killua. I'm just surprised he finally made a move."

"Hah? What are you talking about 'finally'?" Killua snapped, his cheeks reddening. "Were you expecting this? Made a move to what?"

"Well, Killua... since apparently it wasn't so obvious to you... Gon likes you!" Kurapika shared. It was Killua's turn to look surprised. His brain considered the option that Gon might like him, and Killua might like him back, and they could start dating with affection, and holding hands—His face flushed further and he shook his head.

"No, you're wrong!" Killua shook his head. His fragile, carefully made guard to protect himself from getting hurt by something like this wasn't very thick, and he didn't need Kurapika's well placed attacks to take it down right now. "He just asked me because we're friends. Or something else weird going through his mind." Killua insisted. "Don't make it weird."

"Killua." Kurapika said sharply to get his friend's attention. He saw he was losing him to his complex mind and maze of a thought process. "Gon has a lot of friends, and yet he asked you."

Killua opened his mouth to retort but Kurapika put his hand up to stop him. "I have never seen Gon act around his friends the way he acts around you. He is always smiling, always reaching out for your touch, and wanting your attention. The way he looks at you... and now he's asked you to the fall dance. He really likes you and I'm sure he sees you as more than a friend. If you overthink it, you'll lose something precious, and you'll end up hurting Gon."

"I..." Killua muttered, his eyebrows furrowed as he thought about everything Kurapika just said. But he didn't know how to finish his thoughts. Kurapika sat back satisfied when Killua didn't have a counterargument in sight. He let out a sigh and slide back to his table. He did his part, now they just have to get together.

After tutoring, Killua began walking home, left with nothing but his own thoughts to accompany him. His eyebrows furrowed as he looked down at the sidewalk in front of him. He was so happy when Gon asked him to the dance. He has been before, with friends the first time around, with his old boyfriend, the second time, but now both of those were gone and left a scar. Killua scrunched his nose. Like hell if he'll voluntarily put himself through more crap.

"If there's a prize for rotten judgment... I guess I've already won that." Killua sang, scoffing and rolling his eyes. Those on the streets turned as he passed them by, mesmerized by his singing.

"No man is worth the aggravation," Killua's convinced himself over time, "That's ancient history; been there, done that...!"

But as he sang those lines, he couldn't help the nagging voices in the back of his head, the part of him that wanted the love to be true, real, and most importantly, different with Gon... It was like the angel half of him was following him around, all ethereally looking and disgustingly optimistic, singing back to him.
“(Who d'you think you're kiddin'? He's the earth and heaven to ya! Try to keep it hidden, Honey, I can see right through ya!”) The light Killua insisted by Killua's side. Killua tried to wave it off, a scoff in its direction. The illusion just moved to the other side.

“(Boy, you can't conceal it, I know how you feel And who you're thinking of…!)”

“No chance, no way! I won't say it, no, no…” Killua sang sharply, crossing his arms and turning away from the optimistic Killua. It didn't bother trying to get his attention, it knew he was listening—It was his mind and thoughts after all.

“(You swoon, you sigh, Why deny it? Uh-oh)?”

“It's too cliché, I won't say I'm in love…”

Killua realized he was arguing with a phantom in the middle of the street, and he quickly moved on, his cheeks red with embarrassment.

He's been trying to push down all these thoughts since the spirit week party. He knew it could be very possible he's falling for Gon, but they're from two different worlds. They're on two different tracks that just momentarily lined up. There's no point in putting energy into something that just won't last!

“I thought my heart had learned its lesson. It feels so good when you start out…” He looked up at a chocolate store he was passing on his way to home. He remembered when Gon had gotten him his favorite chocolates, setting his heart aflame even before Killua knew to put a name to it. He blushed and moved on, although light Killua swooned past it. “My head is screaming "Get a grip, boy! Unless you're dying to cry your heart out," He sang, fisting his hair in frustration. His phantom wasn't going to stay quiet through that.

“(You keep on denying! Who you are and how you're feeling!)

“Baby, I'm not buying, Hon, I saw you hit the ceiling!”

“Oh, no!” Killua sang out in denial, but the light Killua wasn't deterred.

“(Face it like a grown-up, When you gonna own up That you got, got, got it bad?)”

But he also feels that Gon is different. Different from anyone or anything he's ever experienced before. He felt he was different from the first time he heard him running into the school from the roof. He feels realer, bigger than life. He grabs fate and bends it to his will, it was amazing to witness and Killua was happy to be by his side so closely to witness. He wanted to believe it... but he was still nervous.

“No chance, no way! I won't say it, no, no!”

“(Give up, give in, Check the grin; you're in love)!”

He turned to shout out his phantom, but it did nothing. It was useless to run from your own thoughts. He ran up the driveway to his house.

“This scene won't play, I won't say I'm in love!”

“(You're doin' flips, Read my lips: "You're in love…!")

If he goes for this, there are two thing that could happen... he'll be happy. He'll be with someone that he knows won't fall through as easily or feebly as anyone else he's had in his life. If it gets ruined or
broken, it would have been his own fault and incompetence to be a good partner. But if it doesn't go well... then he's sure Gon will leave the biggest scar. Gon means so much to him... too much. It scared him sometimes. He just wanted to be sure if he went for it... would the pain be worth it...?

"You're way off base, I won't say it! Get off my case, I won't say it!

"(Boy, don't be proud! It's okay, you're in love...)

Killua decided that the pay-off would be too amazing. He's sure the alternate to not acting on it would result in greater dissatisfaction than if he tried and fell along the way. They could make it work... it was Gon... He opened the door to his bedroom, seeing Gon's jacket hanging on his headboard. His chest bloomed with warmth and tight feelings and he couldn't help the wobbling smile on his face.

"Oooh... At least out loud..." He took the jacket down, and onto the bed with him. This must be love... He held the jacket close to his chest, letting the scent of Gon consume him again. "I won't say I'm in love..."

His pesky, optimistic, love struck singing thoughts shimmied around him before just rejoining Killua, as they were in sync with their thoughts now.

"(Shoo do, shoo do, shoo do, shoo do, Sha-la-la-la la la, ahh...~)"

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Next Monday, Pokkle rushed to the lunch table.

"We got it!" He cried out, jumping around with a rush of energy. Everyone was shocked, not expecting him to rush at them like a bat out of hell when he texted them to be at the lunch table today. "The Cantabile's got the gig! We're gonna be performing at the Fall dance!" Pokkle cheered.

"What?! Pokkle, that's amazing!" Gon cheered, before everyone else was congratulating him. Well, everyone but one.

"Yea! Well, we won't be able to perform strictly acapella, but we got plenty of songs we got to play for the dance. Aw, man, we got to start now if we're gonna be ready by this Friday!"

"But what about me?" Ponzu asked, crossing her arms. Pokkle stopped and turned to her.

"What? What about you, Ponz?"

"Well, I'm your date to the dance. What am I supposed to be doing if you're up on stage performing the whole time?" She asked, crossing her arms.

"Ah, no, no, baby..." He said, moving to her side, pulling her into a side hug as she turned her head away. "I'm sure it will be fine. We won't be playing the whole time. They'll still be playing normal party music over the speakers, and we'll have breaks and rotate. You and me will have plenty of time to enjoy each other at the dance. Alright?"

"You promise?" She asked, batting her eyelashes at him. Killua tried not to gag and Gon elbowed him to behave.

"Promise." He planted a kiss on the top of her head and she smiled happily.

"Ok!"
"Well, that reminds me, since the dance is this Friday, maybe we can go shopping to get ready for it? Tuxes and stuff?" Gon asked. Killua lit up.

"Oh yea! I wanted to propose to you we go with non traditional suits. That way we stand out a little bit more in the crowd of everyone else trying to stand out." Killua said, touching Gon's arm. Kurapika noticed it, and hid his smile behind his hand. Looks like Killua got the message and it was only a matter of time. Gon beamed, happy to receive the touch.

"Mh! Sounds like a great idea! As per usual of Killua." Gon flattered. Killua blushed in return, looking away.

"Geez, shut up, Gon. You're so embarrassing..." He muttered. But Illumi was also watching Killua from afar with a watchful eye.

"Looks like they're only getting closer." Hisoka purred.

"I know." Illumi said. "And I'm going to use it to my advantage. If Gon lets Killua into his head, and gets muddled up with a weakness such as emotions, then once Killua breaks his heart, he won't be much competition for the Winter Showcase. He won't even want to compete."

Hisoka raised an eyebrow. So he allowed Gon and Killua to get closer just for the moment when he could break them up. But, "What about your brother? He'll get hurt too, won't he?" Hisoka asked.

"Necessary. Besides, it will be his lesson in never letting anyone close like I taught him. I'm sure this one will last much longer." He said.

"Ruthless..." Hisoka hummed, turning back to the smiling kids.

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Killua smiled, looking down at his suit as he entered his house. He hopes Gon is super surprised, they decided at the end that they wouldn't show each other the suit they ended up choosing so that it was a surprise when Friday comes. Killua's heart beats a little harder every time he thinks about Friday, and his hand shakes with nervous jitters. He was so excited about that day, he's sure it will be amazing.

He opened his room door.

His smile fell to the floor and all the color drained from his face.

"Illumi." He breathed, and he sounded hallow even to himself. He was standing there with Gon's jacket in his hand. His eyes were as large and black as ever. Killua could hear the ticking in the back of his head, and he put all his focus into pushing that away, although his breathing already sped up. He swallowed once.

"What are you doing here?" He asked, eyeing the jacket once more before turning his gaze to Illumi's feet. He could never meet Illumi's eyes properly, it was too intense for him when Illumi was intimidating him.

"Would you mind telling me what this is?" Illumi asked, shaking the jacket, once, twice. Killua flicked his eyes up at it before returning his gaze to the floor. He hated the way Illumi talked. He knew Illumi listened to that metronome pace all the time, so all his syllables and words fell into rhythm with it.

"It's Gon's." He answered shortly.
"What is it doing here?"

"I was borrowing it, and I forgot to return it."

"Make sure it gets returned." He said, walking forward. Killua kept himself from flinching, hoping Illumi would just walk out, although his body was trembling slightly. Killua's head lowered completely when Illumi came to a stop in front of him. He had his headphones around his neck, but thankfully, there was no ticking come from it. but there was a music box-esque song coming from it. Tinkling instead of ticking and Killua could almost recognize it. He felt himself relaxing with the sound, the familiar an anchor from the anxiety that was creeping up his limbs.

"I noticed you and Gon have been growing ever closer." Illumi said, just his lower body in Killua's line of sight. Killua stiffened at that, but his body wasn't finding it in him to panic. What was this song? "I thought I taught you better... not to let others in."

Killua's eyes widened.

"What are you going to do to Go-?"

"I'm not going to do anything. I've done my part. I've taught you all my lessons, I can't do anything else much if you don't listen except remind you ever so often what I've told you. You should remember everyone will betray you one day... They are only using you for your voice. Even someone with an elaborate ruse such as Gon's, it's just for his own gain in the end. You don't need anyone else but me... your family. Remember there is no breaking free from family, Killu."

Killua's eyes widened as he remembered the song coming from Illumi's headphones. But he hasn't heard it in so long, since he was a child... He wanted to move, to react, but his body was already too far to recover. It was sedated without having any warning, relaxed in the worst way. He still remembers every word...

~ Ever on and on I continue circling
With nothing but my hate in a carousel of agony
Till slowly I forget and my heart starts vanishing
And suddenly I see that I can't break free—
I'm

~ Slipping through the cracks of a dark eternity
With nothing but my pain and the paralyzing agony
To tell me who I am, who I was
Uncertainty enveloping my mind
Till I can't break free
And

"You're still young, you know nothing of the real world. How deceptive and cruel they could be to anyone they want. You'll be shocked at how extensively their plans to corrupt you can go. The only allies you have are with family, Killu. With me. you don't need anyone else."
"You're wrong..." Killua whispered. A hand was under his chin and lifting his gaze to Illumi's large hypnotic eyes faster than he could register.

"Wrong? I could be wrong. Have I been wrong in the past?" He asked, and Killua visibly flinched. He wished he had Gon's jacket right now, maybe if he couldn't move, it could at least help him right now.

~ Maybe it's a dream; maybe nothing else is real

But it wouldn't mean a thing if I told you how I feel

So I'm tired of all the pain, all the misery inside

And I wish that I could live feeling nothing but the night

You can tell me what to say; you can tell me where to go

But I doubt that I would care, and my heart would never know

If I make another move there'll be no more turning back

Because everything will change and it all will fade to black

Killua thought about telling Illumi how he tried to listen to him, maybe it would appease Illumi and he'd leave him alone. But Killua knows Gon is different. It wouldn't mean a thing if he told Illumi, he knows Illumi only knows heartbreak and misery, and misery loves company. He wanted to listen to his heart, to what he knows about Gon. But he can't help but give Illumi his credit. Everything he told him had happened in his experience at school. Is it possible Gon is his next downfall?

"You can do what you want, Kill. And I'll always be waiting for you here, at the end, when your heart is broken. And I'll always help you pick up the pieces. But know I'll have told you so. You need to stop trying to same foolish things all the time. That's called insanity. I'm the only constant in your life. All you'll ever need. Just listen to me and my words..." He rhythmically spoke, closer to Killua's ear.

~ Will tomorrow ever come? Will I make it through the night?

Will there ever be a place for the broken in the light?

Am I hurting? Am I sad? Should I stay, or should I go?

I've forgotten how to tell. Did I ever even know?

Can I take another step? I've done everything I can

All the people that I see I will never understand

If I find a way to change, if I step into the light

Then I'll never be the same and it all will fade to white

Killua's eyes dulled, and he felt himself less so relaxing, but numbing under the words and songs. The familiarity cradling him to listen. The comfort of the known preferred over the jittery nerves that comes with the unknown. It was easier this way, and his mind and body wasn't resisting. He doesn't even know what he's feeling right now. He just wanted to be held but didn't want anyone to touch him right now. He wanted to lie down and run a thousand miles. He wanted to fall into the void and
feel anything at all. He missed Gon.

~ Ever on and on I continue circling

With nothing but my hate in a carousel of agony

Till slowly I forget and my heart starts vanishing

And suddenly I see that I can't break free—

I'm

Slipping through the cracks of a dark eternity

With nothing but my pain and the paralyzing agony

To tell me who I am, who I was

Uncertainty enveloping my mind

Till I can't break free

And

This was it.

"This is all your good for."

Killua is just to listen to instruction from mother, father, and big brother.

"You sing the songs you're supposed to, and we'll make sure your life comes out perfectly. You're carrying the Zoldyck name for us all. You'll come out the most perfect."

He can't be free. It was nice to delude himself for a while with Gon.

"You had your fun while it lasted."

But this way, everything hurts less.

"You can go to the dance with him, but after that..."

It will be easier,

"To just end it."

~ Maybe it's a dream; maybe nothing else is real

But it wouldn't mean a thing if I told you how I feel

So I'm tired of all the pain, all the misery inside

And I wish that I could live feeling nothing but the night

You can tell me what to say; you can tell me where to go

But I doubt that I would care, and my heart would never know
If I make another move there'll be no more turning back
Because everything will change and it all will fade to black
If I make another move, if I take another step
Then it all would fall apart. There'd be nothing of me left
If I'm crying in the wind, if I'm crying in the night
Will there ever be a way? Will my heart return to white?
Can you tell me who you are? Can you tell me where I am?
I've forgotten how to see; I've forgotten if I can
If I opened up my eyes there'd be no more going back
'Cause I'd throw it all away and it all would fade to black

Every other move he makes will be a mistake. Don't move on your own, Killu.

"Good boy." Illumi said, and patted through his hair. Killua just stood there quietly. "I'm sure you'll make the right choice. Return the jacket tomorrow. Lay down, you look a little pale." Illumi brushed past him. Killua stood there for a couple seconds before jerked to life, moving no better than a puppet on strings to the bed, laying down.

Gon rubbed his palms together nervously, ready to go the the Fall dance. He's parked up by the steps of Killua's house and he already texted Killua that he was outside ready for him. Killua texted back that he just needs a couple more minutes. Gon was a bit more nervous about tonight because Killua was acting a bit more weird and distant this week since Tuesday. Based on the way he was acting, he was worried tonight's advances wouldn't work... but Gon's determined not to let tonight end without Killua's hand in his and his lips on Gon's. Gon shivered in excitement at the thought. Hopefully. Killua was so amazing and out of his league, it would make sense if he turned him down tonight. But Gon would keep going and pushing to show Killua that he could treat him right even if he's not as fancy as others in his caliber. Even if it ruins their friendship...

Gon's eyebrows furrowed. He was worried he was being too selfish and in trying to get what he can in greed, he'll end up with nothing, but he wants to try. He doesn't want to just let it be and it be something that could have been because he didn't try.

so even though Killua returned his jacket Tuesday and was very distant in thought that he wouldn't share with him, Gon was here for him, ready to proceed as planned. He was wearing a long sleeve button up with oxford elbow patches and a thin black scarf in place of a tie. Looped belt resting on his hips and ripped jeans at his thighs and knees. He wore his usual green boots underneath at Killua's suggestion to be worn at signature 'Gon' moments. He hopes tonight will be one. He began pacing the front porch of the house, filled with excess excited energy from waiting. He was startled when the door finally opened, but was pleasantly surprised at what he saw.

Killua was wearing a white button up shirt with a blue bowtie. He wore a vest that faded from black on top to blue at the bottom, and he also had arm sleeves with the design, the sleeves coming up his arm until his forearm. He wore nearly skin tight dress pants that looked stretchy, and knee high
sneaker boots over the fabric. But Gon was drawn to the makeup on Killua's face, blue and black eyeshadow with sparkles, making it look like the night sky was captures behind his eyes. And it drew the attention to his already heartstopping blue eyes. His hair curled and fluffed to perfection.

"W-woah..." Gon breathed, then realized he's been staring for too long without saying anything and Killua was starting to blush and shift awkwardly. "Y-You look amazing! Beautiful... breathtaking..." Gon listed, openly gazing. He opened his mouth to say more, but Killua would explode if he let Gon keep going.

"Thanks! Thank you, Gon, that's... enough." He said, rubbing the back of his head. "You look, really good too." He said, looking Gon over. Gon beamed happily.

"Thank you, Killua! Oh! Um," He reached behind him to get the corsage out. "This is for you. Can I...?" He asked, motioning towards Killua's chest.

"O-oh, yea..." Killua stepped closer to Gon, feeling his whole face heat up. Gon smiled, his own face feeling warm. He attached it to his vest pocket well, he practiced this with Mito many times so that he wouldn't mess up in front of Killua.

"Nice..." Gon hummed looking at the small bouquet of blue and white flowers on his chest and then took in all of Killua again. "Um, shall we go?" He asked, holding out his hand. Killua smiled at Gon's hand.

"Sure." He moved past it to Gon's car down the steps. Gon's eyebrows furrowed, a pang in his chest that faded quickly enough. He let out a sharp breath and turned on his heel to get in the driver seat.

-o0o0o0o-

"It could be ten, but then again I can't remember Half an hour since a quarter to four!" Pokkle sang out into the microphone on stage while strumming his guitar charismatically. The other two of his friends were on the drums and keyboard. The party was already in full swing by the time Killua and Gon got there. Of course, being the most prestigious Musica Academy, the school wouldn't restrict their dance to the school's gym or anything. They rented out a party space a couple of streets away from the school, a little further towards the city. It was decked out, the stage set, balloons and streamers everywhere. Plastic shiny stars hung from the ceiling at various lengths, and a large cardboard cutout of a moon with clouds were on one end. Photos were set up with large cardboard cutout of more detailed stars as the backdrop and drinks and food were in more than one corner. People were dancing in the center dance floor, talking and flirting with friends and other students on the sidelines, or sitting and resting at the tables on the outer edge of the it all.

"This looks great. The spirit committee really outdid themselves this time," Killua said, looking around.

"Don't I know it?" Gon laughed. "I had to carry in three of those speakers." He pointed and Killua joined him in his laughter.

"Throw on your clothes, the second side of Surfer Rosa, And you leave me with my jaw on the floor. Hey!"

"Hey, you guys made it!" Zushi said, walking up to them. He was wearing the traditional suit, as were most people. Gon was happy Killua had them stand out.

"Hey, Zushi, it's been a while, how you been?" Killua asked, crossing his arms.

"I've been great... and you look..." Zushi said, looking over Killua. Gon won't dwell on the stifling
feeling in his chest from the look. "Well, you look like the bright star here at the night of the stars."

"Aw, Zushi, you flatter me." Killua laughed breezily, and Gon sighed happily at the sound. He just wished he was the one that caused it. Zushi was kinda cramping his style right now. He's gotta get them some alone time.

"Um, I was wondering if you guys wanted to dance?" Zushi asked.

"Um, Zushi, me and Killua are kinda-" Gon started.

"Sure!" Killua cut off and moved to follow him. Gon's jaw dropped. What? Killua glanced back at him when he didn't feel him at his side.

"What? We gotta dance with friends." He smirked. Gon furrowed his eyebrows. Not this again... he can't deal with distant Killua! He did it last time at the spirit week party too!

"Oh, just when you think you're in control, Just when you think you've got a hold, Just when you get on a roll, Oh here it goes, here it goes, here it goes again! Oh here it goes again, I should've known, should've known, should've known again, But here it goes again!"

Gon followed and got ready for one hell of a stars night.

"Oh, oh here it goes again."

-Gon's sure that they danced with every single one their friends at least once that night. Yet, none of them had been him and Killua dancing alone. Gon followed Killua to the drinks, he said he was parched after dancing for so long and laughing so much. He blew a sagging strand of hair out of his face. Just remember the goal of tonight, Freecs, don't get too impatient!-

Killua picked up a drink and turned to hand one to Gon. Gon lit up at that, happy to receive any kind of individual attention from Killua at last. Gon leaned against the table as Killua sipped his drink.

"So..." He started, putting the flirting notes in his tone. Killua's eyes flashed towards him then darted out at the crowd.

"Oi! Kurapika! Melody!" He cried, moving towards the two standing to the side of the dancing. Gon frowned, his shoulders slumping.

"Right." He huffed out, annoyed. He followed him regardless.

"hey guys, did you guys come here together?" Killua asked. "Like, together together?" He wiggled his eyebrows.

"Killua!" Kurapika scolded softly, a light blush on his cheeks while Melody giggled.

"No. As you know, we've been talking since Kurapika gave me a chance. And maybe at one point in my life I would have loved to, but we both agreed we don't like each other like that. We're just really close friends." She bowed her head modestly.

"Aw, good for you, baby girl." Killua smiled to one side. "And you look amazing! Plus, what you did to the place." He said. Her make-up and dress fit her figure great. "Did you want a dance?" He asked. Gon scoffed maybe too loudly behind Killua. But Killua decided to pretend he didn't hear. Both Kurapika and Melody seemed surprised too at Killua offer.
"Sure, Killua." She said, taking his hand while giving a weighted look over at Kurapika. He nodded as he watched them go.

"I can't believe it..." Gon muttered but moved to follow them.

"Wait, Gon. Do you have a second?" He asked. Gon whined slightly under his breath as he watched them go. He supposed Killua won't disappear if he looks away for a second.

"Yea. Shoot." He said before taking another swig of his drink.

"How's seducing Killua going?" He asked. Gon nearly choked on his drink and Kurapika moved a bit in anticipation of a spit take.

"Wh-you-I- How'd you know?" He asked, wiping his lips. Kurapika smiled. "I've known how much you liked Killua since the first time I've seen you two interact. And first off, that's very brave and ambitious of you to go after someone like Killua." He said.

"Yea, well, I know I'm not much and he's so amazing, but--"

"But Killua also needs you more than you think." Kurapika said. Gon stopped and looked over at Kurapika, wondering if he said what he thought he said.

"huh?" He squeaked.

"Killua is... very reserved. You remember all the rumors you heard about him when you first came to school, right? He had problems, and no one ever thought he'd get any better. But you came and helped him. He became more open and bright because of you. He was able to smile easier, especially around you. And maybe it was too much change all at once, but there was bound to be some push back. But it's progress. I know it's a little discouraging when he gets like this but don't give up on him. He likes you too."

Gon listened seriously, although he knew he was never going to give up on Killua no matter how discouraging it gets already. At the last bit of information, Gon lit up.

"He does?" He chirped. Kurapika nodded.

"Alot." He smiled. Gon beamed and looked back out over at the dance floor where his best friend was and his stomach flipped like he was free falling.

"Just assure him a little more that everything will be ok even if he takes a big step like this. Alright?" Kurapika asked. Gon nodded.

"I can do that!" He cried. Killua likes him? Killua likes him! This was great. "Thanks Kurapika! Bye, have a good night of the stars!" He maneuvered his way to his date.

-o0o0o0o-

"Hello, hello, I'm not where I'm supposed to be. I hope that you're missing me 'Cause it makes me feel young. Hello, hello, Last time that I saw your face Was recess in second grade And it made me feel young."

"I can't believe it, I knew this would happen." Ponzu fumed, arms crossed by Killua.

"Then why'd you let it happen?" Killua shrugged, eating a brownie from the dessert table. Ponzu shot him a glare.
"You think I wouldn't have stopped it if I could have? This is huge to him, he wouldn't listen to me!"
She said, bringing her arms down to her side. She was wearing a flowing gown, pinched right beneath her breasts and her sleeves connected to her middle fingers for the most ethereal effect. Her hair was swept to one side like a flowing wave. She looked gorgeous, but she also looked without a date.

"Just... get his attention from the front of the stage and get him to come down." Killua said. "If they stop playing, the school will put on the music track."

"He doesn't want to miss any alumni or record producers. He wants to play most of the songs of every hour." She said. "He'll come down for 15 minutes, but when he does that, he's taking to his friends about how great their doing, or what they could be doing better, or what song they'll do next! I don't have time to dance with him or have any alone time with him!" She complained.

"Must really suck." Gon supplied flatly, staring straight at Killua although he wasn't looking back.

"My Fall dance is gonna be ruined and it's all his fault!" She said growing more hysterical.

"Wow, calm down there, bessie." Killua chuckled, taking her shoulders in his hands. "Just... then, tell him you're out of here if he doesn't start paying attention to you." He suggested. Her tense shoulders slowly relaxed.

"Mhh... I like that. I don't want to waste my time here anymore if I don't have a good time. I could be in my pajamas instead or something! Thanks Killua! I'm on my way." She said, moving towards the stage Pokkle and his friends were performing on.

"Won't you help me sober up? Growing up, it made me numb, And I want to feel something again! Won't you help me sober up? All the big kids, they got drunk, And I want to feel something again! Won't you help me feel something again?...How's it go again?!"

Gon perked up as Ponzu ran off. He did a double take around them. There was no one else-- no other distraction for Killua to use as an excuse. This was it, their alone time. Gon turned to Killua with his best smile.

"Killua?" He asked, bringing Killua's attention on him. "Can I have this dance?" He asked. Killua blinked once, glanced over Gon's shoulder then shrugged.

"Naw, I think I'm ready to just sit for a while, really."

Gon's jaw dropped again for the umptenth time that night, and the pang returned with a vengeance. He's not sure how many more of those strikes he can take. Gon's hand reached out to grab Killua's arm as Killua moved to walk past him to the table. Killua looked down at the hand first then up at Gon.

"Killua..." He started, searching for the words. "Are you ok?" He asked. He remembered Kurapika's words in these trying times and tried to put on his most reassuring face. Killua pressed his lips together in a line, searching Gon's face for something.

"Yea. I'm fine. Just... want to sit." He said, and moved towards the table again. Gon winced himself when he only tightened his grip on Killua. He can't let him run just yet.

"Killua, please. I want to be there for you, but you have to let me in... you have to tell me what you're thinking. Remember? We have each other's back? That night in your room?" Gon asked. He knew he finally broke through with something when Killua's eyes widened, his eyes shining like shattered stars.
"I... I, Gon, please, just..." He said, trying to move backwards again. Gon hated how cornered Killua looked, so he finally him go. Killua kept his gaze on Gon for a couple more seconds while walking backwards before finally moving to the tables on the other side of the dance floor. Gon sighed and looked down, feeling defeated... Then he thought that maybe Killua wasn't actually asking him to let go but never let go. Gon looked up determined, remembering what Kurapika told him. Killua likes him too, and he won't let Killua go, not tonight. He went after him.

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"Ponzu, wait!" Pokkle said. He was chasing her retreating figure onto the dance floor.

"No! You care about your career way more than me. I have been trying to be supportive, but at this point, why am I here? You can play your band and ignore me without me having to be here." She said, turning to him.

"No, no, that's not true! you know it's not true, Ponz. You mean so much to me, and... this is all my fault. I haven't been giving you nearly as much attention as I should have been. I've been taking you for granted, I want to make it up to you..." He said, stepping closer, taking her hands. She regarded him with distrusting eyes.

"How are you going to do that?" She asked. His eyes darted about the ground as his mind raced of ways to make it up. The music changed to a slower song and it clicked in his head.

"I'll be your date, starting now. Ponzu, may I have this dance?" He asked. Others on the dance floor were already clearing for them. She gasped lightly, looking around at the lighting changing to fit the mood and they were the center of attention like they were the stars that night. She smiled with little restrained happiness and nodded. He pulled her close as he sang with the music playing.

"Take my hand, take a breath," He sang to her personally. "Pull me close and take one step. Keep your eyes locked on mine, And let the music be your guide." He began swaying with her into ballroom motions. She kept her eyes closed in happiness and being the center of attention. She joined in his song as they continued,

"Won't you promise me " He started, and she joined, "Now won't you promise me, that you'll never forget ~"

"We'll keep dancing (to keep dancing) Wherever we go next!"

Their ballroom steps grew larger as they glided along the dancefloor, keeping their eyes on each other. She felt so much affection for the boy in her arms, and she felt beautiful, like a shooting star in the night. Everything else faded away as they sang to each other.

"It's like catching lightning, the chances of finding someone like you! It's one in a million, the chances of feeling the way we do! And with every step together, we just keep on getting better

So can I have this dance? (Can I have this dance?) Can I have this dance...? "

"Killua, wait!" Gon cried, catch Killua's arm on the edge of the dance floor cleared out as Pokkle and Ponzu dance. "Please, I'm right here."

"But will you always be?" Killua finally said, turning to Gon, ice cold blue. Gon felt hurt Killua even had to ask.

"Of course." He said with conviction and no hesitation. Killua's eyes widened, the blue splashing back to that brilliant hue. He pulled Killua closer. "I am always going to be here for you Killua. I
don't think there's a thing on this Earth that could part me from you. I just want you to believe me. I want you to understand just how much you mean to me…” He pulled one of Killua's hands up to plant a kiss on it. Killua blushed, his mouth opening and closing uselessly.

"You can push me away, but I'll always be here waiting for you..." Gon said. Killua's eyes lidded slightly, looking over Gon.

"...Do you see me pushing?" He asked softly. A corner of Gon's lips raised into a smile and he pulled him onto the dance floor.

“Take my hand, I'll take the lead...! And every turn we'll be safe with me.” Gon sang, bringing Killua into proper ballroom position. Killua looked pleasantly surprised at Gon’s knowledge.

“Don't be afraid, afraid to fall…” Gon dipped Killua but he only smiled up at Gon. “You know I'll catch you through it all…” Gon took a step back and Killua matched it without hesitation.

“And you can't keep us apart (even a thousand miles can't keep us apart)” Killua with Gon, their harmony a beautiful thing to hear. “Cause my heart is (cause my heart is) wherever you are…”

“It's like catching lightning the chances of finding someone like you! It's one in a million, the chances of feeling the way we do! And with every step together, we just keep on getting better! So can I have this dance? (Can I have this dance?) Can I have this dance?” They sang, looking at each other like it was the first time they saw each other. They had their bodies pressed together with no indication of parting any time soon.

“Oh no mountains too high and no oceans too wide Cause together or not, our dance won't stop!” The only four on the dance floor entered a four part harmony, singing as they danced with their partner. They twirled in mesmerizing circles, dancing beautifully with each other while singing beautiful harmony.

“Let it rain, let it pour What we have is worth fighting for! You know I believe, that we were meant to be... Oh!”

Their emotions fueling their moves and voices, raising it with no abandon. Gon has never met anyone as amazing as his lightening, ice cold, soft, beautiful kitten Killua. He wants to let him know how much he cares.

Pokkle would never want to make Ponzu thinks he put her lower than anything else in his life. He's only been treating her this way because he thought she was his most constant rock in his life. That he wouldn't have to worry because she'd always be right there, but he'd fall apart without her. Never again, he'll never leave her guessing.

“It's like catching lightning, the chances of finding someone like you (like you)
It's one in a million, the chances of feeling the way we do (way we do)
And with every step together, we just keep on getting better
So can I have this dance? (Can I have this dance?)
Can I have this dance?
Can I have this dance?
Can I have this dance?’’

They slowed to a stop, holding their partner in their arms. The audience around them applauded their appreciation. However, the four on the dance floor could care less, it was for the other they were singing and dancing. To show their appreciation for their date.

“No one knows you as well as I do… No one knows you better. You don’t have to be scared…” Gon muttered, keeping his eyes locked on Killua’s. “You don’t have to be scared about that fact. I’m not here to hurt you with what I find out. I only ever want to use it to take care of you… and make you happy. I just want you to let me… I’m ready… Killua.”

“G-Gon..” Killua gasped softly, his eyes pooling as he gazed up at Gon like he was his light. He must have been a fool to wait this long to give in to Gon.

And then he was pushing forward, his hands caressing the back of Gon’s neck and in his hair, and his lips -- oh god, Gon’s been dreaming of how those lips feel on his own for too long and now -- they formed onto Gon’s, opening slightly to slot his lips with Gon’s. Gon did not hesitate to bring his arms around Killua, letting his hands roam his back, leaving trails of fire down his arms and resting on the small of Killua’s back. Gon’s chest clenched and released almost painfully -- this felt so right, Killua fit perfectly in his arms and on his lips.

Much too soon for Gon’s liking, Killua separate, letting in a deep breath and resting his forehead in the crook of Gon’s neck.

“Why are you laughing?” Killua asked, slightly muffled from the angle. Gon didn’t even realize he was laughing until Killua asked.

“I’m just really happy!”

And then Killua was laughing along with him. Killua’s chest has never felt so light and he hasn’t been this happy in a long time. He just hoped he would be able to keep it that way; he’ll fight for this, and he knows Gon would fight right by him. Killua put him through so much just to get him tonight, he knows almost nothing will turn him away now.

“Will you tell me what’s been bothering you all week? That it even bothered you tonight?” Gon asked.

"I'm... I'm really sorry about this, Gon. It's just... Monday afternoon, Illumi--” Killua started, not removing his head from Gon's neck.

"Illumi." Gon growled out, tightening his hold protectively around Killua. Killua let out a small happy chuckle. What an idiot.

"I know, I'm sorry, he just got into my head again, and I..."

"Killua." Gon said, seriously, pulling at him so Killua looked at him in the eyes. "This can't keep going on like this. You need to tell Illumi about what this is doing to you." Gon said. Killua's eyes widened at that, and Gon could see the fear in his eyes.

"I understand that might be terrifying to you, to try to stand up to someone who's taught you how to break, but... you can do it. You don't even have to do it directly. We can work on it together, through song or something. To tell him how you feel. I don't think this is healthy, the next step is that I take you out that house and away from him. He's your brother, he shouldn't be treating you this way.” Gon ranted. Killua looked on, taking in all of Gon's features as he spoke, and Killua felt so much affection for him, he was absolutely thankful someone like Gon in his life. Such a positive, bright
presence. How did he ever believe Illumi?

"You're right... I'll... work on it. I'll do it. I've got a plan. But that's for later. We need to enjoy the rest of the night while we can... I want to show you a good time." He smirked playfully, a mischievous twinkle in his eyes and Gon shivered in excitement.

"Yea!" He beamed, squeezing his hand.

Chapter End Notes

Tell me what you thought of Writing Style number 2!

Honorable Mentions:
I Can't Help Falling in Love with You by A-Teens- just... c'mon! [suggested by @Dragonbooks249]
Shine by RWBY- when Killua realizes he's in love with Gon [suggested by @anotherguestbleh]
Hand Over Feet by Alanis Morissette- Killua in love with Gon of course

Gon: Wait! Killua, I keep forgetting to ask you questions about you and your established idol career!
Killua: I don’t think it’s that big of a deal...
Gon: No! What if the readers want to know something too?
Killua: Then they can ask themselves! And I’ll do my best to answer it...
Gon: Ok! If you guys have any questions for Killua or myself, please ask it in the comments or reviews and we’ll try to get back to you! Thanks! Have a great day and remember to sing with heart!
Chapter Notes

Ok, this one is my favorite chapter so far! And I wrote it so quickly…
Well, we’re nearing the end of this arc. It’s been fun, and I’m happy you all joined me through it. Yup, I think I’m pretty much done with notes up here. Bai!

Featured Songs:
Next to You- Chris Brown ft. Justin Beiber
Indiana Rose- Daniela Kadewatha [indie pop] suggested by @Happinessxhunter
King of Anything- Sara Bareilles
Human- Christina Perri suggested by @hahayourenotfunnyatall
Lalala- Naughty Boy
Sundial- Who cares? Suggested by@Sockbootoo

Thanks to my Editor: canzie-gumm/ whats-wrong-aniki (check her out on tumblr, she’s great)

Chapter 11: Hummingbird Wings

Killua did not even change out of his clothes when he returned home from the Night of the Stars Fall dance before he marched straight to Milluki's room. His palms were clammy and he felt like he couldn't take in a proper full breath, but Killua just thought of what Gon had told him before to gather the strength to go through with this.

"Call me if you need anything..." Gon said, brushing Killua's bangs out of his face. Killua bit his lip, nodding and looking over every part of Gon's face. "You can do it, ok? I believe in you. Everything will work out fine."

He knows that Gon was being overly optimistic and there was no saying everything will turn out great when he finishes his plan, but Killua just thought of what Gon had told him before to gather the strength to go through with this.

"Oi, you awake piggy?" He called out. He checked the time to see if there was a chance he was asleep. It was only 11, Milluki would be up playing video games since tomorrow is Saturday. There was a pause, then a "What do you want?" sounding completely exasperated and annoyed.

"Open up, I need to talk to you." Killua said. He looked left and right to make sure Illumi wouldn't pop around the corner.

"Why should I talk to you? I'm having a perfectly good night!"

"It's about the next concert. I need your help with something..." He lowered his voice as not to broadcast it into the walls. "I'd really prefer this conversation inside." He muttered impatiently. There was debating grumbling inside and Killua sighed.

"I'll owe you another favor."
There was maybe another 2 second pause before Milluki's frame filled the opened doorway, making a smug squinted face.

"Great, welcome, valued customer." He snickered. Killua rolled his eyes but pushed past him into the room. He stood by Milluki's swivel chair, waiting for him to return to the seat before he started.

"You're in charge of the concert composition and arrangement in a couple weeks, right?" Killua asked. Milluki let out a tired sigh at the thought of it, but nodded.

"Yea, and?"

"I need your help... I need the last hour of the concert to myself."

"What? What for?" He asked. "What if I want the last hour?" He snorted indignant.

"Except you don't. Can you stop being difficult for, like, a second? I'm trying to get this thing done." Killua crossed his arms at Milluki. Milluki blinked with wide eyes at seeing his little brother so serious when he's usually so childish and annoying. He decided to stop being so flippant and listened to Killua seriously.

"Alright, fine. What the heck do you need the last hour for?" He asked.

"I... I want to use it to show Illumi how I feel. I need to tell him what everything he's done to me and is still doing is not ok, and it makes me feel terrible." Killua said. Milluki lowered his head in regret, remembering all that Killua had to grow up with, and how Milluki even partook in it. But he knew Illumi had it the hardest, he probably loved- loves Killua the most but put him through the most suffering. Milluki's sure Illumi hated doing it to Killua more than anyone. He hated it so much that he convinced and brainwashed himself into thinking that Killua likes it, and even if Killua didn't, it was best for him and he'll thank Illumi one day. It was sort of like he was disassociating his feelings from his actions so that he can still say he loves Killua honestly while still doing nothing to accommodate Killua during training.

"Why don't you just tell him like this, like you told me?" Milluki asked, but he pretty much knew the answer before the question fully left his mouth.

"If I did that, he wouldn't believe me. He'd brush me off as being childish or not being able to take my training. I need to express myself properly."

"And we both know you can't do that with words." Milluki couldn't help but slip that tease in. Killua rolled his eyes, but Milluki was relieved to see the corners of Killua's lips twitch up. It was unnerving to see his little brother so serious and upset for so long. It made him uncomfortable to be confronted by that when he didn't know how to deal with it besides teases and taunts.

"Right. So I'm going to do it through song. I'm good at that, making lyrics and singing well. So I can at least get up and sing my thoughts after I put it down." He nodded. And I'll add emotion behind it, like Gon taught me. He added as a thought. Milluki sighed and ran a hand through his hair before turning in his chair to pull up his constructed schedule for the night of the concert on one of his monitors.

"And what do you need the hour for? How many songs are you singing?" Milluki asked, checking what he had originally planned for that last hour.

"I don't know how many songs I'll sing... but I know I'll have a lot to say, it'll just be better to have the whole hour blocked." Killua said, leaning on the computer counter to look over at the computer screen.
"So demanding, brat..." Milluki muttered under his breath as he cleared up the schedule. "I can't believe you'll be singing your feelings. I guess your boyfriend finally got to you." He teased. Even Milluki knew what that brush head did to the school about expressing and passion, even if he doesn’t completely agree. It was obvious if you went to school even for just one day the past couple months. Killua couldn't help the smile at that word ‘boyfriend.’

"Yea, he did." He grinned. Milluki looked up at him for a second.

"I can't believe you admitted it." Milluki huffed before going back to his schedule. He figured his little brother liked Gon, but didn’t think he’d admit it anytime soon.

"Also... will you help me compose them? If we work together, it'll be faster." He asked.

Milluki remembered when they were younger, Killua used to compose songs with Milluki all the time, sitting right in this room on his floor. The songs were terrible and easily forgotten, but the memories always stayed with him. He agreed before he even knew it, a light blush on his cheeks.

"Thanks." Killua sighed, relieved. He was happy he wouldn't have to try and sort his thoughts himself; that sounded like a panic attack. He was happy he had a confidant in Milluki.

"Alright, so you'll have the last hour, but I'm not removing you from any previously arranged songs. You'll still be doing your regulars on top of this." He said.

"That's fine. I can do it." Killua said, standing up to his full height. "Um... one more thing?" He asked.

"UGH, What?!" He heaved, overdramatically exasperated. Killua winced a bit.

"Can you... not let Illumi find out about the last hour?" He asked. Milluki’s eyes bugged out.

"What!? What am I gonna do when I give out the schedule, and it's an hour short?"

"I don't know? Make it up, I just can't have him catching wind of any of it. He might try to do something to counter it if he finds out, please?" Killua begged, putting his hands together. Milluki looked away from his puppy dog pout.

"Geez! No need to beg! I'll try, but there's no saying he won't find out some other way. Geez, now get out of my room!"

"Yes! Thanks piggy! Night!" Killua called, running out the room.

"Whatever!" He called back, turning back to his chair. He stared down at the keyboard for a moment before powering it down to go to bed. Hopefully it'll work and Killua really will get through to Illumi. This house hasn't felt like home in a long time because they couldn’t be normal brothers, being raised up as bred idols. Maybe this way, they'll get a little more semblance of home again.

Gon shrugged his jacket further up his shoulders to keep the biting fall wind out this early in the morning as he stood outside the Zoldyck house. He was excited to see Killua again after last night. Killua had already planned for the two of them to go see the Fall Showcase earlier in the week to see the general format, examples of winners, and the grading system of the Showcase. And now, they were going to go as a couple. Gon shivered with excitement and happiness at just remembering that Killua was his now.

His cheeks flushed a bit at remembering what he was planning on doing this morning. He already
texted Killua to come down, so he was expecting him at any moment, Gon being their ride this Saturday morning. But they hadn't actually shared any kisses, lips or otherwise, since the one at the dance. Gon was overjoyed when Killua initiated the first kiss between them, it was more than he could have ever hoped for, because it meant Killua wanted him too. Gon didn't push himself onto Killua, Killua came to him willingly, and that meant the world to Gon.

And because of that reason, Gon didn't want to make any further moves on Killua that night during or after the dance. He didn't want to push onto Killua if Killua was still uncomfortable, or feeling like he just kissed Gon out of the rush of emotions he felt after their dance. Gon was actually worried at any point from after they kissed to right now, that Killua would text him that he made a mistake. But he didn't! So Gon will just assume Killua really does feel the same way, and they can progress with their relationship!

So Gon decided he would make the first move today and give Killua a good morning kiss. On the lips.

Gon's cheeks flushed further.

Or the cheek.

Gon rubbed his hands together nervously.

Or the hand... maybe he'll just go for the hug--

Gon nearly jumped out of his skin when the front door swung open, revealing Killua, all white fluffy halo and fashionable fall wear as always. Gon couldn't keep the wow from his lips, and had to remind himself he was dating him. How did Gon get so lucky to get someone like Killua to like him back?

"Hey Gon, ready to go?" Killua smiled brightly at him and Gon snapped out of it, shaking his head to focus.

"O-oh, yea! Yes, ready, c'mon!" He took Killua's hand to lead down the steps to his car, trying to ignore the awkwardness in his movements and the loud voices in his head that were telling him he didn't do any of the options he thought of. Killua's breezy laughter helped Gon ease out of his nerves.

"Where's the rush? C'mere Gon." Killua hummed, pulling on their joined hands slightly to stop Gon's movements. Gon turned, feeling a bit bashful, but was then embraced in a hug by Killua. Gon was slightly surprised, but Killua was too happy at seeing Gon again, all the memories from last night flooding back, he had to do something. As Killua pulled back from the hug, he gave a light kiss to Gon's cheek.

"Morning." He blushed, not able to bring himself to do more than that. Gon looked at him with saucer eyes for a moment before flashing a blinding smile at Killua.

"Good morning, Killua!" He bellowed, wrapping an arm around Killua’s lower back and pressing him up against his body to give him a deep kiss. Killua let out a surprised squeak against Gon's lips before he melted into it, landing his hands on Gon's shoulders and fluttering his eyes shut.

"I can't believe this." Killua huffed angrily, standing from his seat in the back of the auditorium. He gestured widely at the stage that held the three Amori brothers.
They weren't sure exactly the reason, but there wasn't many student here at the Fall Showcase as there usually are at Showcases, leaving the audience looking like one at a low budget elementary talent show. People were scattered in the seats, some showing little interest in being there or on their phones. Killua told Gon that at least half the auditorium is usually filled at these things, but less than 1/3 was filled.

The only ones that seemed intent on paying attention to the performers are those in the very front and the judges at the judges’ table right up by the stage—Netero, Bisky, and a Musica Academy alumni Killua didn’t know; he wasn’t famous enough. Even Netero looked like he’d rather be doing school paperwork, and that was saying something since he’s always trying to avoid it.

Killua guessed that since everyone was so excited for the Winter Showcase, the Fall Showcase was of little interest in comparison. The line-up wasn’t even that impressive for this Fall Showcase. It was usually really entertaining and well rehearsed, because those that signed up had all summer and then some to practice, but seniors weren’t even in this Showcase and no one had confidence in lowerclassmen to put on a good show. Gon said that was mean to say, but Killua shrugged it off, not really caring especially when it seemed like the most likely case.

The Showcase was going fine when it started, everyone on the production team taking it seriously even if there wasn’t an audience as big as they were used to. The host announced everyone as rehearsed, and the performers gave it their all to impress the judges if no one else. Killua talked Gon through the processes as it happened; where you would wait for the cue to come on stage, how everyone has original music accompaniment pre-recorded, the types of music being played that was going to lose, or in the running to win. Gon tried to keep up with everything Killua was saying, but Killua also looked gorgeous in the dim light coming from the stage lights, and Gon kept getting lost in his sharp features softened in the glow and ended up smiling like an idiot at his boyfriend.

It was around the 5th performance that the Amori brothers were then announced as the next performance they’d see.

"What is this? Really? I can't believe this!" Killua snapped as loudly as he could while trying to be quiet.

"Calm down, Killua." Gon muttered, not really trying to get him back in his seat. "What are you even upset about?" Gon asked as the Amori's three piece harmony started up on stage.

"These idiots..." Killua snarled, nudging his head in the stage's direction. He was pacing now.
"Made you join the Winter Showcase with your career on the line, and they're not even performing in it!" Killua complained.

"Well, maybe they still are...?" Gon said cautiously.

"No! It takes too much preparation for one concert to do 2 in a row. If they're in this one, they're not in the next one."

"What's so wrong with that?" Gon asked again, propping his chin on his palm, staring unashamedly at the starlit teen slowing down by his seat again. He couldn’t help it, Killua was pretty even when he was mad. His anger made his face flush and Gon could see his pale freckles better this way.

"Pathetic!" Killua snapped in a quiet voice, not to bring too much attention to them in the back. "Cowards, they won't even bring themselves to touch the same stage you'll be performing on the same night. If they were gonna force this deal on you, they could have at least been there as a contestant." Killua sat on the edge of his seat, leaning forward as though he could laser eye the Amori brother's as their number reached the climax. "They could all go suck on a lemon." He
muttered at last. He noticed Gon's lack of response after a beat and looked over at him with a slightly sharper glare than he meant. But he stuttered over the wide affection filled smile beaming over in his direction.

"W-what?" He asked, self consciously pulling his coat further up his shoulder.

"You're so pretty when you're angry." Gon answered honestly. Killua's mouth opened in what was suppose to be a response, but his brain had shut down momentarily as it processed what Gon said. His body reacted before his mind did, a blush washing over his features, and Gon's smile only widened.

"I-Wh-" He stuttered as his brain caught up to the present. "Gon! You can't say embarrassing things like that!" He cried.

"But we're dating now! I get to admire you openly when I couldn't before." He said, reaching out and taking Killua's hand. Killua's blush deepened, his heart pounding wildly in his chest and he hoped Gon couldn't feel it in his hand.

"Geez, I was an idiot if I thought your embarrassing comments would die down or at least stay the same after we started dating..." Killua muttered, his past anger completely forgotten as the Amori brothers stepped off stage. Gon tried to squash his smile down into puckered lips as he leaned forward and gave a big smacking kiss to Killua's reddened cheek.

“I can’t believe it’s finally Fall Break!” Gon hummed in approval as he drove him and Killua back to his apartment. "We'll get to do so much during our time off from school! We can go to amusement parks, or get with our friends and catch a movie, or I'll bring you out to a proper date, I can see this is gonna be the best week ever!" Gon said, smacking the driving wheel for emphasis. Killua rolled his eyes, although there was a slight smile there. Who let this excitable idiot drive?

"Um, I don't know where you'll find any time to do all that between our training." Killua said. Gon pouted.

"More training? C'mon, it's Fall Break, we should be on break! We should be doing relaxing things like having a picnic in the park with our friends--"

"Our friends will be just as busy. Anyone that goes to Musica Academy knows the time off from school is the best promotion time. They're all gonna be working on resume building, concerts, interviews, and special guest appearances. And we have a song to make."

Gon sunk a little lower in his seat, an uneasy feelings settling in his gut from being reminded of his tight timeline again. Everyday was just another day closer to when he has to make it or break it.

"When the day finally comes, you'll end up wishing you spent more time practicing or preparing." Killua insisted, seeing Gon's dejected state from the passenger seat. "We'll need to make the song, compose the score of everything you want in there-- orchestra, EDM, harmony-- and get into a studio to record your accompanying music. You can go up there a cappella, but I think that's not something you want to do..." Killua bit the tip of his thumb nail as he looked off a bit in thought. Gon raised an eyebrow at the pause in Killua's voice. Killua shook his head to come out of it and then looked back at Gon. "And after we record everything, we'll need to copyright the song, people there won't be above stealing good pieces from the showcases-- they're all original, and smart performers will copyright it before they perform it. And the dance and everything? We got 9 weeks, Freecrs. We're making the most out of this break." Killua crossed his arms. Gon pouted.
"Yessir..." They reached the parking lot for the apartment and disembarked the vehicle.

Killua slept over at Gon’s place as it was already late and Gon wanted Killua out of his own house as often as he could get him. Gon hadn’t told Mito of Killua’s and Illumi’s relationship because he doesn’t want her to worry and Killua assures Gon it’s fine, he’s got it under control.

The next day, Sunday, they woke up and had breakfast and pleasant conversation with Mito and then it was back to Gon’s room for practice. Gon sat on the bed, one leg up and the other dangling over the edge as he faced Killua and tuned his guitar. Killua sat next to Gon, both legs folded under him, facing out from the bed, a notebook and pen in his hands. He chewed the tip of the pen as he looked down at the blank page in thought. Gon pouted as he tuned the last of his guitar and strummed a perfect stroke over the strings. Killua’s dazing out again. Killua's been doing that often since they came back from the Fall Showcase. He seems more concerned with getting this song done than Gon does sometimes, and Gon's concerned for how stressed he really is about it. He doesn't want Killua to feel this is his burden to carry, it'll only add to his list of problems that stresses him out.

"Alright, so we’ll start with... lyrics... yea." He muttered to himself. "At least the theme." He took the pen out from between his teeth and looked down on the page to start writing. Gon leaned over, only half interested in what he was writing when a smile started to grow on his lips. He began strumming away on his guitar before he started singing.

"You've got that smile..." Gon's smile widened when he saw Killua's writing stop, and he knew he caught his attention. "That only heaven can make. I'll pray to God everyday, you keep that sm- errh" Killua's notebook fell out of his hands in shock as a fierce blush covered his features and he slapped his hands over Gon's mouth to quiet him.

"We're not singing that!" He cried out, face red and voices raised a couple octaves. Gon smiled against his hand, his eyes turning into joyful crescents. He kissed the hand over his mouth and Killua removed them.

"I know, originals only..." I just wanted you to relax... "But how about love for a theme? There was plenty of love songs sung at the Showcase?" Gon asked, plucking at dreamy sounding chords. Killua scoffed, brushing his hair away from his face as his blush subsided.

"Did any of those songs win?" Killua asked, facing Gon with a raised eyebrow. Gon squished his mouth up to a point as he thought back to yesterday evening. A junior had won with...

"Err... Well, technically it was about his love of music." Gon nodded. Killua rolled his eyes.

"Everyone does love songs, love songs don't stick out." Gon's eyebrows scrunched a bit, although his smile never faded.

"But none of them were about you. There are a million and one love songs, but mine would be different and special, because it's about you." Gon smiled, tilting his head to one side. Killua lit up, as Gon predicted, and sputtered a very weak argument.

"Gon!" He finally was able to get out. "You're trying to win the Showcase, not make me burst into flames!" Killua shouted. Gon tried really hard not to break out into a wide smile or laughter as he said with a innocent yet serious face, “Why can’t I do both?”

Killua let out a cry as he jumped on Gon and Gon finally let out his deep laughter.
"M-my guitar!" He laughed out. Now it's gonna be all out of tune again!

---

Killua's head hit the pillow, a frustrated and sad feeling growing in his chest. He felt like it could crush him. He needs Gon to win this... he doesn't think he'd be able to handle one day at that stupid school without Gon. Gon practically remade that school to his image, and it's way better than it once was. Killua doesn't want to think about what it will look like if their leader isn't there to keep the wheel moving. Not to mention without Gon there, Killua will feel such a vacuum next to him where Gon usually is, he thinks he'll just fall into the void without him. Not saying Killua wouldn't follow wherever Gon went afterwards willingly, but that would be hard to do while living under his parent's roof... well, that's solved by moving in with Gon... his face heated up at the thought of that. But then, even after all that, Gon wouldn't be able to pursue music at all. Killua wouldn't be concerned about that usually, but after knowing Gon for this long, Killua knows Gon will keep that promise even if it kills him. Killua doesn't even know what Gon would be like without music in his life...

But this was difficult, trying to make a song while keeping in mind how skilled Illumi was, while trying to keep intact what Gon wants in the song, while trying to keep it simple enough to finish within the weeks they've got left. Killua's head spun and Gon didn't seem to be that worried about it, which made Killua stress more, because doesn't Gon want to stay with him too? Killua shook his head, he already knew the answer to that. He's just... stressed.

They've already got some possible themes down, some lyrics that hit both of them that could fit within those themes... some chords they like in succession. But the oranging sky wasn't encouraging their progress, especially when it took them this long to get this small amount done. It wasn't commendable. Killua closed his eyes slowly, and breathed out once through his nose.

He technically knew what to do to give Gon a higher chance of winning... and he doesn't know why he hasn't suggested it yet. He already knew at this point, he'd do anything for Gon... and anything for a greater chance of beating Illumi.

"Hey... Gon." Killua muttered, letting his eyes slide open.

"Hmm?" Came his tired, humming response. Killua's lips twitched a bit, happy just to hear him even if he couldn't see him.

"I've got an idea." He said, sitting up, taking in the view of Gon laying down by the foot of the bed, his arm thrown over his eyes in exhaustion. Gon moved his arm away from his face to peek at Killua from under his arm. "I know that it might be hard to beat Illumi, because as a Zoldyck he's got popularity and elite training under his belt. So, it may increase your chances if you perform with another Zoldyck... I could sing with you--"

"Killua..." Gon started with a huff as he pushed himself into a sitting position.

"In the Showcase, you can sing with as many people as you want or can get to sing with you, it's not too late to compose a duet--" Killua said, scooting closer to Gon.

"Killua." Gon said seriously, taking Killua's shoulders in his hands. Killua's mouth was left open as the rest of his words died on his lips. "I want... I need to do this myself. I said this before but if I can't defeat Illumi with my own power, I'll never be able to become the World Star I dream of being. I can't depend on you to win, because then I won't feel like I won anything. And you need to think of yourself a little more. I don't want you to do something you don't want to, like use your own abilities for someone else..." Killua had to let out a soft scoff at that. It wasn't that a big a deal! Not anymore, not for Gon.
"I really appreciate your help. And you admitting this showed me just how anxious you are for me to win, and I'm happy you trusted me with that much of your insecurities. I'll work harder, we'll get more progress done, and you won't have anything to worry about anymore. Alright, baby?" Gon asked, caressing Killua's cheek with his thumb. Killua blushed at the pet name, but tried to seem put-off. He leaned into the touch and looked down at the space on the bed between them instead.

"You're an idiot if you think you'll be able to stop me from worrying. You are the epitome of worrisome." He muttered. Gon laughed harder than Killua was expecting him to, and he watched with a half smile as Gon finally stopped laughing enough to talk.

"And you stay with me anyway!" Gon laughed, taking his hand. "You make me happy, Killua!" He beamed and Killua couldn't breath. He opened his mouth uselessly before just smiling back like an idiot.

_You make me happy too. Gon._

-o0o0o0o-

Mito worked to mash the potatoes in the bowl in front of her before her eyes wandered over to Gon's closed door. She felt proud, surprised and concerned for Gon as she blew a strand of orange hair out of her face, turning her attention back to the food.

She's been hearing Gon and Killua work on their music all through this Fall break. She still had work herself, but it was nice coming home and hearing her son's voice flow through from behind closed doors into the living room, lightening the atmosphere with the song he sang. And when Killua's voice joined, it was like something was right with the world. They really did sound great together, but Mito figured they weren't making the song together because Killua doesn't sing along with Gon often, mostly some notes for Gon to repeat. She knows they're working hard, so she makes dinner for them before she makes herself known, so they can eat all together and catch up on how their day went over dinner.

However, she's been surprised and concerned because as many times as she's come home, Gon's been home as well. He's never come home after her. And whenever they speak of their day during dinner, based on Gon and Killua's compiled story, it doesn't sound like they went out much, if at all.

"A whole week spent indoors, huh...?" Mito muttered, adding the butter to the mash. She knows Gon isn’t the type to stay indoors. He loves the outdoors, and going out, and doing activities. Even if it's just going to the park to do something he could easily do in the living room. He must be showing a large amount of restraint. It was Friday, their Fall break was almost over, and if Gon doesn't go out at all... Mito will be really surprised. Was pushing down such a large part of him really healthy?

-o0o0o0o-

Gon scrunched his nose, and his leg bounced ceaselessly against the bed. He felt super restless and chanced a glance over at Killua for the 27th time in the past 15 minutes. Killua had moved to the floor instead of sitting next to Gon on the bed once he realized Gon couldn't keep his leg from bouncing. He held a notebook with scrambled and quick jotted lyrics down in front of him, the words blurring in Gon's vision from how his leg was shaking all of him. He was supposed to be thinking of lyrics to put down, to go along with the skeleton of a melody they created throughout the week, but he couldn't focus. He had all this pent up energy he didn't know what to do with- and another glance at Killua- and he couldn't focus when his body wanted to move, wanted to react. This thinking stuff wasn't what he wanted to do right now, he wanted to be acting on reflex, impulse. Push off the ground, fly through the air to land with a thump. Try a hand spring even though he’s never did one successfully. Strain his arms to pull his body up on a ledge or something- another
glance at Killua.

He just needed something to tire him out... a longer glance at Killua.

Where his mind kept trying to wander wasn't the best of ideas right now. They've been moving slowly with showing affection for Killua's sake. Gon didn't want to scare Killua with moving in on him just because he's restless. He usually does push-ups when he's this restless, but he does them when he's alone. Plus, he just wanted to go out! He couldn't believe the Fall Break was over and they haven't done anything that remotely resembles a break... Maybe Killua can concentrate for weeks on end like this, but Gon's at the end of his rope. He can't take much more. He jumped up, and Killua dragged his eyes up to Gon's as though expecting this for a while.

"What's up, Gon?" He asked.

"We've been working super hard all week, and I think we should do something fun now!" He said, fists gripped in determination. Killua's eyes darted over to the notebook on the ground that fell off Gon's lap when he stood so fast. The generally empty page.

"That's working hard, Gon?" Killua asked with a raised eyebrow. Gon blushed a bit out of embarrassment.

"You can't shame me that easily, Killua! I can't concentrate like this! I need to go out and move to get ideas! This isn't how I write music. Besides, there's no way I'm letting the weekend pass without taking you out on at least one proper date!" He cried. Killua's face flushed at that.

"Wh-Gon, we don't-!

"I want to have at least one date with you! If I lose the showcase, and I can't see you again--" Gon's chest squeezed impossibly tight, making talking impossible. He swallowed once to push it down, "If that somehow happens, I want to remember the amazing moments I made and spent with you, not how we stayed couped up in my room to try and make a song." Gon said, his fists clenched again. Killua's eyebrows drew together, his eyes softening like the clear afternoon sky. Expansive and absorbing. He looked down at his own notebook, filled with many lines of lyrics, but Gon could tell he was as unhappy with them as Gon was with the lyrics that never even made it to the page.

Gon took it as a good sign when Killua put the notebook down and stood up.

"You're right, Gon. Let's go somewhere." He smiled lopsidedly and Gon's heart started pounding with excitement. "Maybe some movement will help our thought process."

"Yea! C'mon!" He said, taking Killua's hand in one hand and both of their jackets with the other hand. He ran out his room, dragging Killua behind him. Killua struggled to keep his feet beneath him with how fast Gon was moving him.

"Woah- Gon, cool it-!" He cried.

"Sorry, Mito we're going out, we might be a little late for dinner!" He smiled, his cheeks like round plums. He stopped at the front door, Killua nearly tripping over Gon's knelt figure that was putting on his boots. Mito blinked, less in surprise than in knowing.

"Ah, of course. I'll keep dinner warm for you."

"Thanks, Mito. But don't feel like you have to wait up!" Gon said, jogging in one place as he waited for Killua to put on his shoes. "Don't know when we're coming back!"
"Mh. Be careful on the roads." Mito said, not feeling any rush to finish dinner anymore.

"Mh! C'mon Killua!" Gon said once Killua stood up to his full height. He took his arm and yanked him out the door and Killua let out a yelp.

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Gon was so amazing. Killua's never met anyone more amazing then Gon. When Gon talked about the probability of not winning the showcase, Killua's mouth went dry and he didn't know what to say. How could he? The possibility that Gon would fail was mind boggling to Killua. Improbable and impossible. How could anyone who shakes the earth and moves the currents whenever and wherever he wants lose something as simple as an over-glorified talent show? It wasn't a possibility in Killua's mind.

Killua looked over at Gon from the passenger side of the car that Gon was driving much too quickly to be comfortable for normal people. He let his foot go and drove with as much freedom as he liked. Like everything else he does.

He was smiling at the open road they were on. Killua's never been this way before, seemed a lot more rural and sparse, like they were heading away from the city, but Killua didn't mind. He didn't care, he would follow Gon anywhere he allowed him. The song on the radio hummed quietly, barely audible above the engine,

~Lost in the sight of you alone

here I stay till dawn

the breeze in the sky sings me a song

here I stay till dawn

Stay till dawn

As Killua looked on at Gon's profile, Killua could see in his honey eyes, ablaze like a blossoming ember with determination and focus, darting over the road as he obviously thought of the steps he would take next when they got to wherever they were going. Gon could be so simple yet so difficult to read sometimes. Just by looking, Killua couldn't tell what he was thinking, but he knew he was thinking hard about it.

Gon's ease as he handled the wheel with a reclined posture made Killua feel as relaxed and off guard as Gon looked. When he was with someone who seemed so capable, how could anyone be worried and strung? Well, ok, sometimes Gon made Killua monumentally worried, but not on down times like these. Not when Gon was oozing leisure and good times in waves.

Killua let his eyes roam up to the open sky, the roof of the convertible maneuvered down. Gon started putting the roof down for him before they hit the road whenever they drove together. The billowing clouds were painted a raging red orange like something out of a watercolor painting as the sun was barely visible over the rolling hills and pastures they were driving by. He closed his eyes to remember the feel of the window rolling over his skin and through his hair as he felt Gon's constant presence at his side. Gon was right, back in the room.

In Killua's mind, there was no chance in hell of Gon's losing. But when he thinks back on these times when he was with Gon, he didn't want to remember walls, and music scores, and practice. He has enough of those memories that comes from his childhood to last a lifetime. He wants to remember things like this, the touch and feel, the music barely audible on the radio... he wants to
remember how Gon breathes at night, how he smiles at the stupidest things. Or the way the light reflects in his eyes and make them look like they were on fire from the inside out. Killua's eyes opened and he looked over at Gon. His face heated up when he saw Gon look away with a caught smile on his face.

"Gon!"

"What?" He replied with a laugh chiming his tone. Killua's eyebrows relaxed and his own smile returned. He didn't mind. He settled back into his seat, the tension leaving his muscles.

"Stupid..." He mumbled under his breath instead.

The clouds rolled in as the sun set further and they finally got to their destination. Gon brought them to a plain with emerald green grass rolling in the breeze the storm clouds brought in, and a thin forest on the east side. Killua was a bit concerned about the color of the clouds, a light grey mixing with dark grey like colored cotton balls. But his worries were soon forgotten as Gon took his hand and brought his attention to the trees they were approaching. They took a small nature walk with Gon showing Killua all the amazing plants or animals found in the cut of forest. The moss that only grows in the best air quality, or the plant that curls when you touch it. Bright flowers that looked like they were glowing in the overwashing grey light and insects that glowed from the inside out. Killua was captivated by it all, only seeing these kinds of things on nature documentaries. To see them in real life was amazing. And it was so like Gon for their first date to be an awe experience. As they stepped out of the forest and onto the plain, Killua became more concerned about the color of the sky, looking like the sea billowing above them in reverse waves. Then a bolt of purple striked through the different layers of gray and black and the two teens gasped.

"That was gorgeous!" Gon exclaimed. Killua found a smile worked its way on his face.

"Y-!" Killua began.

"It looked as beautiful as you!" Gon expressed, turning to Killua with an honest smile. Killua's breath caught in his throat as his face became red hot and- what was he supposed to say to stuff like that?!

"Stupid! Don't compare me to natural phenomenon!"

"Why not!? Now that I think about it, you're much prettier than it!" Gon said, having to talk a bit louder when the thunder rang out after it. Killua looked at Gon like he was crazy then rubbed his face frustrated. There was no way that was true. Before he could form an argument in his head, Gon cried out for his attention again.

"Killua!" Killua peaked from behind his fingers. He saw an excited smile on Gon's face. "Let's race the lightning!" Gon cried out, pointing up at the lightening storm as another one bolted across the sky.

Killua's mouth opened faster than words could come out. A lot of thoughts ran through his head. Why? That didn't make any sense? There was no way they could be faster than lightning.

But looking at Gon's face, he realized that didn't matter. His smile matched Gon's and he nodded.

"Yea!" Killua cried out. "Even if I don't beat the lightning, I could definitely beat you!" He laughed as he ran back towards the forest to start.

"Nu-uh!" Gon protested, happiness tinting his words. "We start when we see the lightning!" Gon said. Killua rolled his eyes, not even bothering to ask how they would know if they beat the
lightning. They ran when they saw flashes in the air, startled into a sprint. They jumped and ran circles in the large spread of green, laughing up into the darkening sky. As it got darker, the purple, blue, and white hot lightning strikes only grew more sharper and brighter in contrast and they had to stop to gape up in wonder and awe more times than they remembered to chase it. Then the misting rains started, less raindrops and more like a fog was settling in heavily. Killua gasped in surprise but looked at Gon for his next move. His smile grew as he saw Gon look up with happiness in his eyes and tilted his head backwards, then opened his mouth to try and catch some rain. Killua laughed, pushing his bangs away from his face that were starting to become saturated with water. They spun and jumped in the rain, and danced. The lightning their spotlight and the thunder their music, their laughter ringing out over the empty place. Killua came out of a spin, and looked over at Gon who was attempting a cartwheel on the wet slippery grass. He burst out laughing when Gon indeed slipped but only looked up at Killua laughing, embarrassed. Something bubbled up in Killua's chest, and he didn't know what it was until it was spilling out his mouth.

"Gon, you're so amazing!" He cried to be heard over the rustling forest by their side. He blushed as he realized what he said but he didn't regret it, and his smile didn't die down. Gon blinked in surprise, caught off guard as he stood from the ground.

"W-wha..." He gasped, not expecting to hear that from Killua at the moment, but he was filled with great happiness hearing it. He didn't think anyone's opinion on him would influence him as much as Killua's did. He smiled brightly in return, flopping his hair away from his face that fell to his shoulders, damp with water.

"You're amazing!" He called back! "You're the most amazing person I know!" He called out, running to grab Killua’s hands and circle him around in a wide waltz. Killua laughed, trying to keep up with Gon. Killua didn't know how anyone could be more amazing than Gon, but he's already used his bravery card to say something as embarrassing as 'you’re amazing’. He'll just take Gon's compliment for now.

Gon felt amazing, this was the best day ever. Spending it with Killua. Gon wanted to try to keep this memory with him forever. If he could, he wanted to make his song about it. That's right, Gon doesn't want to just try and win the showcase, he wants to make memories while he still has the chance. He wants his song to be about his journey and his way up, and everyone he met and who helped him along the way. And tonight. He looked at Killua in his arms, his wet silver hair clinging to the side of his face and his cheeks flushed from exertion. Gon pulled him in without second thought and pressed their bodies together and their lips followed. Killua let out a small squeak in surprised but then his body relaxed in the embrace, wrapping his arms around Gon's neck.

This was what he wanted to capture in his song too.

The lightning when he kisses Killua.

"The break wasn't long enough..." Zushi complained. "And it wasn't much of a break when your dad is a teacher here and wants to make sure you don't slack..." Zushi muttered the last part. Killua laughed freely and ruffled the younger kid's hair.

"I don't think you get to complain about working on break to a Zoldyck." He smirked. Zushi's mouth formed an 'o' and gave an apologetic smile. Before he could verbally apologize, Gon spoke up, hand firmly in Killua's.

"No, Zushi's right. But I can bet my break was more busy! I was with a Zoldyck for my break. We almost did nothing but song work!" Gon said. Killua yanked downward on Gon's arm.
"Ungrateful..." He muttered with a playful smile on his face while Gon rubbed his shoulder.

"Oh right!" Zushi brightened up. "How has your song development been going? Did you get alot done during the Fall break?" Zushi asked. Gon brightened.

"Yes! After Friday, and I got my blood pumping, lyrics were able to come to me alot easier than just sitting in one place and waiting for it to hit me. I think I've got half the song written." Gon nodded.

"And we have a couple melodies we've cranked out that we could possibly use. If Gon would just pick one." Killua gave a side glance to him. Gon smiled sheepishly.

"They all sound so good! How am I supposed to pick?" He chuckled.

"Anyway, today’s the Monday after Fall Break. We can now go sign up for the Winter Showcase. You ready for this?" Killua asked. Gon exhaled and nodded.

"Can't you take your name off the Showcase even if you sign up now?" Zushi asked, sensing the nerves and finality of their words.

"Well, yea, if you remove your name from the list before the first rehearsal about 3 weeks before the actual Showcase, you can back out fine. But Gon won't have any reason to back out. If he doesn't perform, that's the same as losing to those dumb Amori brothers, who aren't even performing-- which is stupid in my opinion, it's their stupid bet, they should at least be--!"

"Killua! Killua, it's ok!" Gon laughed, rubbing his thumb on Killua's hand. Killua blushed briefly before he saw people in the hall looking at them and their clasped hand and he let get of Gon's hand, embarrassed. Gon didn't mind, he knew Killua wasn't good at public displays of affection. He just put his hand in his pocket so that he didn't lose the warmth he got from holding Killua's hand.

"Anyway, yea. I'm ready to sign up and follow through. I know I'm gonna win! I have to!" Gon gripped his fist. "My whole career is resting on this!" He said. Zushi nodded.

"Alot of people became your fans in a short amount of time. They'd hate if you lost and had to leave the music industry so early before you could show your true potential." Zushi nodded. "Plus you're so entertaining, this school would be alot more boring without you."

"What? Gon isn't some drama for the school to watch." Killua sneered.

"Well... I guess it's mean to put it like that, but technically it's what's happening. Gon has a couple fan clubs and stuff, and they gather sometimes in the week to talk about the new things Gon has done. The biggest thing that happened was that you two finally got together, which everyone has been debating for weeks." Zushi said.

"Finally? " Killua muttered to himself with a blush. Gon tilted his head to one side curiously.

"Zushi, how would you know this without going to the meetings?" Gon asked. Zushi blushed a bit and looked off.

"W-well, I have this friend that goes and they tell me about it..." He said.

"Uh-huh." Killua smirked knowingly. They walked up to the announcement board in the hallway and posted there with snowflake decals was a poster with sign-ups available. Winter Showcase in loopy cursive writing was right at the top and Illumi Zoldyck was already written in the first slot. Gon let out a brief breath and picked up the pen to sign his name.
"Yea, this chord came to me while I was showering after gym the other day..." Gon said, pointing at the notes on his sheet of paper as Killua looked over his shoulder, leaning on Gon's desk. Killua nodded looking at the notes, a smile on his face growing as he figured where those notes could go effectively.

"That's good, Gon, after school, we can--" He said before Bisky came over.

"Hello, boys. How has been your Wednesday so far?" She asked pleasantly, looking between the two of them. Before Killua could respond, Gon did.

"It's been great, although it makes me sad knowing I don't have every class with Killua, because then we have to be apart when I much rather have him by my side the whole day. And now, I'm in math, which, no offense, I rather not be in right now." Gon rubbed his head with woe and Killua stifled a laugh.

"I think she was just looking for a 'pretty good,' Gon." Killua told his boyfriend with a cat grin.

"Oh." Gon said without much regret in the tone. Bisky smiled at the exchange.

"Well, that's ok. I'm happy you feel open to sharing your thoughts. Some things make more sense now. But I came over to tell you that Netero wants to see you in his office now."

"Now? What about class? It hasn't even started yet?" Gon asked as Killua straightened at the news. Gon was being called to the principal's office? That didn't sound good.

"Oh, don't fret so much. Killua will catch you up on anything you need." Bisky said, looking over at the lean teen by Gon.

"What? No, I'm going to with Gon." Killua said.

"Only Gon was called. If you go, you'd technically be skipping." Bisky shook her head.

"You think I care? You think I haven't skipped classes before? I can do one more." Killua sneered, but Gon formed an 'o' with his mouth.

"No, Killua, I don't want you to get in trouble. I'll tell you everything that happens when I get back, ok?" Gon reassured, taking Killua's hand and rubbing circles on the back of his hand. Killua didn't like having to stay, but it seemed neither of them was intent on letting him go, so there wasn't much he could do.

"Fine." He said grumpily.

"Ok." Gon said, getting out the seat which Killua immediately took. "Um, do I need my things?" Gon asked Bisky.

"Sure. Whatever he needs, it might take several class periods." She granted.

"Ok..." He said, packing his stuff and slinging his bookbag over his shoulder. "Alright, I'll see you later, Killua. I'll tell you everything." He bent over and kissed Killua on a cheek with a smacking noise. Killua's whole face went red as he flicked his eyes over at the rest of the class, some of which were watching.

"G-Gon!" He squeaked a bit before he fit his face between his folded arms to hide his embarrassment. Gon just let out a hearty laugh. The only thing Gon really got Killua ok with doing in public so far was holding hands, and sometimes if people were looking too long, he wouldn't even
want to do that. So, Gon will just have to get him used to it the hard way. He can't keep getting embarrassed forever, right? Well, even if he did, it was cute on Killua.

"I'm heading out." Gon said. As he left, he heard Bisky start class with saying she'll be passing back math exams.

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"What!?" Killua gasped at Gon, sitting across from him cross legged on the roof. They both had their lunches by their side but neither wanted to open it without talking first, since Gon seemed so urgent to tell Killua what happened with Netero. Now with this news, Killua really didn't feel like eating.

"Yea..." Gon muttered rubbing his head. He felt his anxiety, stress, frustration pushing down on him and mounting to a breaking point. What can he do? "The Showcase is in 8 weeks. 7, not counting the rest of this one." Gon said.

"That's..." Killua's eyes scanned the sky above them for a second, seeming to calculate something. "That's plenty of time. We just need to change our training schedule a bit. Gon! Why didn't you tell me you were having this much trouble with academia?" Killua asked, smacking Gon's knees.

"Ow! I didn't know if I failed my classes I couldn't do the showcase!" Gon pouted, rubbing his knee.

"I could have told you that if you told me you weren't doing so hot in classes! You could have at least told me you thought you failed that last math exam!" Killua scolded. Gon turned his eyes downcasted and Killua felt his heart waver a bit. Killua softened his tone a bit, putting his hand on Gon's knee.

"It's fine, Gon. We'll get through this together like everything else we do. Ok?" He asked, with a smile. Gon met his eyes and Gon couldn't help but smile widely at his assurance.

"Ok. What's the plan? I can't just study, I need to bring my academia grades up." Gon said. Killua nodded.

"Which were the classes below a D?" Killua asked with a small wince. He hated having Gon tell him his failing grades, they should be personal only for the student, but this was an emergency. Plus, he was technically a tutor for the school, and he learned people's grades all the time. He's just not suppose to go around and tell other people's confidential grades.

"Math and History, but I should probably brush up on Science, since I only really passed that test because of the biology sections." Gon rubbed the back of his head.

"Brush up on Science on your own time. You technically passed it, so you don't need to focus on it. You bring up the other two grades and you win the showcase, then you'll have all the time to improve your science since you'll still be coming here." Killua said. Gon nodded, listening seriously.

"Alright," Killua sighed. "So first of all, you're coming to the tutoring sessions after school today." Killua said. "You'll need tutoring more often than just on Wednesday, so luckily for us, I'm the tutor for Math and Kurapika's the tutor for History. You know both of us, so you can get instructing from either of us any time you're free." Killua said. Gon nodded.

"Then, we need you to retake those exams." Killua said, and Gon groaned.

"Again? I already failed it, can't I just take the next?" He asked.

"Don't worry, you'll take the next too. But you need to raise the average. If you ace the next one, but
you past exams suck, your grade average is not gonna raise by much. We need you to pass both." Killua said.

"Oh, is that how averaging works…?" Gon muttered to himself.

"Focus!" Killua clapped, gaining Gon's attention again. "You pass the retake with at least a C and pass the next one with something higher, you should be able to partake in the Showcase again." Killua nodded. He sighed and shook his head, it was just unbelievable; Gon almost had any chance of him winning at all ripped from him over something as stupid as this. "I'm saying you'll need to pass the retake with at least a C because you won't have much time to study for that, so you might not be able to do as well as you could for the next exam." Killua nodded.

"Mhh..." Gon nodded, looking at Killua with a thoughtful expression and Killua could almost swear he wasn't listening to a word he was saying. "You're so cool, Killua!" He exclaimed. Killua sputtered, his face getting hot and prickly.

"S-shut up, stupid!" Killua barked. "Did you hear a word I said?!"

"Of course, Killua!" Gon smiled. "I'm always hanging on your every word!" Killua gave him a deadpan look, the sentence too flattering to be true.

"Then what did I say?" He asked. Gon hesitated a bit before a wider smile graced his face.

"It doesn't matter, I'm amazed and I feel so lucky all over again that I have someone like you in my life working so hard with me... I don't think I'd have been able to do anything like this with anyone else..." He hummed. "You'll take care of it for me, and I don't even have to worry anymore. You take away all my worries, Killua, you're amazing!"

Killua blushed and shoved his hand in his hair to have something to do.

"G-geez, you're so hopeless...?" Gon let out a carefree laugh before lunging forward to hug Killua.

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"His retakes are next week?" Kurapika asked with surprise in his voice. Killua shrugged.

"I wanted it to be a bit later, but they were worried about him cheating or getting too much extra time when no one else is being offered a retake or something." Killua shrugged again.

"It's fine, guys! I'll work really hard to be ready for the tests!" Gon said. "It's not like I'm learning from scratch! I just need to build what I already know."


The next couple days was a little overwhelming for Gon, between school assignments, studying for the exams, and preparing for the showcase.

"We're gonna have to start preparing the dance at this stage in training. You'll need to develop and rehearse it in time for dress rehearsal in case you need to change some moves to accommodate for the larger performing space." Killua had said on the following Saturday. He instructed Gon that the dance moves didn't have to be interpretive of the words directly, and it didn't have to be as mindless as simple crowd-pumping jumps.

"Really listen to the music and the beat. They'll lend ideas to how your body should move." He said
as they laid on the ground of the Zoldyck dance room, a light sheen of sweat on their bodies from warm-up. Learning new dance options from the pro was fun for Gon, almost turning into a game during their dance practice with Killua showing simple generic dance movements for Gon to copy as close as he can. Killua found it fun too as Gon was a quick study that was ready to make his own spin on it all the time and incorporate it into his song.

Kurapika's history lessons started to make more sense, or at least Gon could remember them easier when Kurapika told it more like an adventure story than some old history Gon didn't care about. But with math, it was harder for Gon. And it didn’t really seem like Killua had the patience for it and other times he just bulldozed through the bulk of the information like it should’ve be known already.

“Alright…” Killua let out a long sigh, running a hand through his hair, and Gon felt like that sigh was the embodiment of his own feelings. “Let’s try it another way, you like music, and you can read notes now or whatever.” He got up to stand behind Gon and they both looked down at the formula sheet in front of Gon. It wasn’t looking good as the retake was in 2 days from that Monday.

“Music is a bunch of counting, and the notes are a visible representation of that.” Killua drew a bunch of notes on the paper. “What’s this one?” Killua asked.

“Half note.” Gon answered, trying to simultaneous not piss off Killua and keep from getting frustrated himself from not understanding.

“Ok, and what’s this one?”

“Whole note.”

“And this one?”

“Quarter note.”

“Ok, what’s 1 half note plus 1 half note?”

“A… whole note!” Gon answered, a smile breaking out on his face at knowing he was already correct before Killua even said anything.

“Good! 2 quarter notes plus… a half note?”

“Another whole note!” Gon beamed up at Killua.

“Great! A whole note plus a half note?”

“That’s equivalent to a dotted whole note.” Gon nodded.

“Awesome, Gon!” Killua cheered. “Alright, so taking that information, we have a quarter note squared plus a half note squared, that can equal--”

“Woah, woah-- Killuuuuuu!!” Gon whined. How’d that simple math escalate that quickly?! Killua threw his hands up in the air, turning around in frustration. Gon rubbed his head, the notes just made it more confusing!

But something must have sunk in during their lessons, or maybe Bisky had mercy on Gon and changed the questions so that they were easier, but Gon got a solid ‘C minus’ for the exam retake in math and a ‘B’ in History. Killua and Kurapika was so happy for Gon.

“But the work isn’t over. Exam 3 is in a couple weeks. We gotta keep you studied until then to pass
with even better grades, ok? We’ll know if your grades are good enough to actually perform in the Showcase 4 weeks before it, a week before rehearsal.” Killua said, walking home with Gon. “But for now, we can slow it down and work more on the song! You’ll need to record your song if you want music accompaniment while you perform. Remember, other performers in the crowd could try to rip you off. So now we need… a studio.” Killua huffed, running a hand through his hair. Gon pouted a bit, he didn’t like Killua getting so stressed, especially with so many things on his own plate. Gon took his hand.

“Everything will be fine.”

Killua smiled at Gon. He was starting to believe it, especially with Milluki helping him with the concert at home. It takes off some workload he would have had to do on top of Gon’s stuff. Also, Illumi’s seen some suspicious behavior around, but the piggy wasn’t squealing.

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“What’s that?” Illumi inquired Milluki as he walked past the younger Zoldyck who was sitting at the table in the kitchen, eating while coming up with a harmony composition for one of Killua’s songs for the concert.

“What? What’s what?” Milluki asked, putting some chips over the work. Illumi looked Milluki in the eye and the chubby male started to sweat a bit at the pressure Illumi was exuding.

“I gotta go!” He cried, pulling everything up with him and running to go to his room. That was the last time he worked on secret stuff outside his room. Illumi found him suspicious and decided to take extra notice of what he was doing. He ended up finding out that Milluki and Killua were spending a lot more time together, exchanging pieces of papers, going in and out of the recording room, and exchanging hushed words. Illumi wondered what was going on between them, especially seeing as Illumi was Killua’s favorite brother. It was weird that he was hanging with Milluki so much more instead.

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But Killua was generally leaving the compilation of the music to Milluki. Killua had the words he wanted to say, the emotions he wanted to convey, and often gave Milluki the skeleton and planning for the rest of the music concept. Killua knew he could rely on Milluki, as he is the family’s composer and is the fastest at busting out songs ready for recording. Killua would often go to Milluki’s room to discuss music topics and concepts so Milluki knows which direction to go, he’d leave for 2 days, come back, and Milluki has melody and 1 harmony ready for Killua to review and clean up. It was amazing, and really helped the process move along since the day of the concert was coming up quick. The Sunday after the next exams Gon needed to pass, actually.

The two teens were working extremely hard within their own lives to get what they needed to under the time constraints, Gon with his studies, and Killua trying to compose his mini concert to express himself. But they were also working hard together to get ready for the Showcase at the same time.

Gon liked it, it gave him the feeling as though he really were a highly booked, busy World Star. Between the dance practice that they now have daily, ranging from 5 minutes to an hour depending on how busy they are, finishing up the composition of the song, and sneaking into the Zoldyck recording booths nearly in the middle of the night just to use it undetected by the family. It was wild and exciting and out of control and Gon loved it. He gave Killua a thumbs up from behind the plexiglass, positioned ready in front of the microphone and stand in the freezing cold booth, having to pull his hand out of his hoodie sleeve, telling Killua he was ready to record the last music accompaniment of the song. Killua nodded and counted him off through the booth headphones to
They had been to both Kurapika and Milluki to get his orchestra piece in his song, and Milluki for the electronic music aspect. Gon even wanted a different language in his song, but Killua wasn't having it.

"Won't you teach me a different language?" Gon asked one afternoon, trying to distract Killua from tutoring him. His mind was drifting from the lesson and it had wandered onto the fact that Killua knew so many languages!

"What? What for?" Killua said, looking up from the textbook, completely puzzled, but (luckily for Gon) curious.

"Well, what if I wanted to put another language in my song?"

Killua squinted at the tan teen in disbelief. Gon sure was going gung ho for this one song.

"You know, Gon, sometimes less is more." He said, looking back down at the book. Gon panicked a bit, not wanting to go back to studying yet.

"W-well, is that a no?" He asked.

"No, not for your song. If you need another language or phrase in mind for your song, just tell me what you want to say and I'll teach you how to say it." He said. Gon tried to hold down his smile. That's sweet.

"So you'll teach me one day without this time crunch? I really want to learn another language." Gon smiled. Gon counted it as a success to see the red on Killua's cheeks.

"...Yea." How could Killua say no?

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Soon, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving break came, and it was time for the 3rd exams and the exams Gon needed to pass to be able to partake in the Winter Showcase.

Killua exhaled sharply as he walked next to Gon on their way to math class. Gon's hand in his helped him calm him down and he hoped he did the same for Gon. Geez, it was Gon's test and Killua felt he was more nervous than Gon. Gon squeezed their hands and Killua looked up to him.

"Unclench your jaw..." Gon smiled softly, touching Killua's cheek. Killua blushed but complied, feeling the tension in his body leak out of him. Gon was always trying to keep Killua from feeling too wound and anxious. And Gon did a fabulous job, he felt the most like himself and the most relaxed whenever he was around Gon anyways. They stopped before the door, and the only way Killua could finally see Gon's nerves was the way his mouth pressed into a thin line.

"Gon... we prepared well for this... I know you'll do good." He said. He reached back into his bookbag as he faced Gon.

"But... Kitto katsu." Killua said with a blush, handing a Kit Kat to Gon. Gon blinked and smiled widely at him.

"Wow! Thank you, Killua!" Gon swooped him into his arms and gave him a deep kiss. Killua made a small surprised moan. Gon separated and looked into Killua's eyes.

"But why did you get me a Kitkat?"
"Wh- Gon! You don't even know that? That ruins my whole gesture." Killua complained, balling Gon’s shirt into his fists where his hands rested.

"Mooah, Killua, I'm sorry, but you're giving me more credit than I'm due. Please explain it to me?" Gon asked sweetly, tilting his head. Killua blushed. As if he could say no to Gon.

"In Japan, they say Kitkat like Kitto-katto, which sounds like kitto katsu which means ‘win without fail’ in japanese. So the Japanese students will often give these to each other right before a major test or exam for good luck." Killua said. Gon's smile grew as Killua explained, feeling more touched as the gesture made more sense.

"Thanks Killua, I'll surely do well now." He said, taking the Kitkat, snapping it open and biting the corner off. He gave a wink to Killua before going into the gloomy testing room, his bright smile making everyone's mood better easily.

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“How do you think you did?” Killua asked. It was their last class of their Wednesday, free period. Gon and Killua sat on the stone circular table outside the cafeteria as they usually do every Wednesday. It was a relaxing atmosphere they both enjoyed after a full day of academic classes, and now they couldn’t think of a better place to keep calm as they waited for teachers to grade Gon’s test. The teachers knew they need to grade Gon’s first so that they can determine if he can participate in the Showcase and so he doesn’t continue to waste his time preparing for the Showcase if not. The two teens sat with their hands interlocked, their eyes on the bond, squeezing the other every so often. It was something that helped both of them stay anchored and not go off in their own head to overthink one thing or another.

Gon’s eyebrows furrowed as he thought back to the tests and he squeezed Killua’s hands in response, to which the silver haired teen squeezed back.

“I… definitely understood more this time when I took the test. I had to keep myself from laughing a couple of times, because when I remembered how to do something, it was connected to one of your funny freakouts from trying to help me sometimes.”

They both shared a chuckle, feeling the tension seep out of them. Well, Gon felt a bit good about it, right? So it couldn’t be too bad.

“How about you? How’s your concert going?” Gon said, lifting his eyes from their hands to connect their eye contact. Killua looked up as well and rolled his lips into his mouth.

“Um…” He mumbled, his eyes darting up. He gave a squeeze to Gon’s hands and Gon squeezed back readily, wanting to give Killua strength. A small smile graced his face and it made Gon feel happy to see maybe he was helping afterall.

“I think… it’s going well.” Killua said, picking his words carefully. “It’s actually all prepared to be performed this Sunday. The start of Thanksgiving break.”

“Wow, that’s amazing! You created how many songs in the same time I was trying to prepare one?” Gon asked, in awe of his amazing boyfriend. Killua blushed but did look a bit proud of his experience and professionalism.

“About 5. More or less, I don’t remember. But it was really thanks to piggy, he really took on most of the composing. He can make 10 sample songs in a week, and 8 of them will go on to be big hits.” Killua practically bragged.
“Mmmh! That’s amazing! He makes most of the original songs for the Zoldycks, right?” Gon asked. Killua nodded, a cat smile on his face.

“Our own family composer. If he doesn’t inherit the Zoldyck Records, he could go on and create his own record company that will be a big hit and top competitor!”

“Wow, you really admire him…” Gon idly observed. Killua’s face flushed as his mouth opened in a shock gasp.

“W-what? Not true, I hate that guy, he’s the most annoying brother ever, and he would tell you the same thing about me!” Killua turned his head away in a huff. Gon chuckled under his breath and shook his head. Why was Killua so bad with emotions and portraying them? It wasn’t terrible to like your big brother.

“Oook! So you think you’re ready to stick it to Illumi and tell him to back off?” Gon said, a bit more somber. Killua looked back to Gon, giving another squeeze to their bound hands. “He can’t keep trying to control you and telling you what to do. It’s not healthy for your mental state and he’s not you. Only you know how to make your life the best, ok? Don’t let him keep doing it, cause I was serious about taking you out of that house-”

“I get it, Gon.” Killua let his head fall back slightly in a laugh, and Gon’s sure it was the most beautiful thing ever, seeing him laugh freely under the streaming sunlight coming in from the trees and leaves. He brought his head forward to look at Gon with a smile. “I get it, and thank you, really. But I can’t leave yet… I have to do this. Thank you…” Killua let his eyes drop back down to their hands. Gon took one of his hands from the bind and caressed Killua’s cheek to make him look at him again.

“You’ll do great, baby…” Gon hummed softly. “You’re more amazing than you think, and you have more power over him than you know. Just.. keep that in mind and power through, ok?”

Killua swallowed once before nodding. Gon didn't like to see his cutie so stressed, so he scoured his mind for another, lighter topic.

"So, what foreign language can you teach me right now? You said you’d teach me another language outside of the showcase prep... " Gon hummed, tilting his head cutely. Killua's eyes seem to snap back to focus on Gon before snorting a small laugh.

"That's true..." Killua hummed happily and looked about in thought. "Let's try French, oui?" Killua asked, turning to Gon. Gon's mouth opened in surprise as Killua looked like he transformed before him into a native french speaker. How could be so cool, and amazing, and... sexy?

"U-uh, yea!" Gon blinked, remembering to reply. His chest squeezed uncomfortably in a familiarly unknown way watching Killua flip his hair out of his eyes, both hands still arrested in Gon's.

"Mh... let's see... oh, this could be a verb to use in some future songs if you like." Killua said, sitting a bit straighter and looking at Gon. Gon bit his lip in anticipation, watching Killua.

"Ronronner..." Killua purred out the r's in a french accent, keeping eye contact with Gon. Heat washed over him and Gon's mouth slacked open uselessly. Killua's amused, slow growing smile just had Gon’s face heating up further.

"R-r-road run-runner..." Gon stuttered an attempt. Killua laughed freely and Gon would have been embarrassed if he didn’t love Killua's laugh so much.

"Non, no." Killua coughed out when he finished laughing. "Not roadrunner. It's not english, Gon.
"Ronronner." Killua repeated slower, which didn't help Gon's brain process the word. Gon's eyes zeroed in on Killua's lips slowly forming around the syllables, a pout on his cute pink lips that looked so kissable...

"R-ronronner..." Gon muttered with no rolled rs. "What does it mean?" He asked, managing to look back up at Killua's eyes.

"The way you said it, nothing." Killua chuckled. "It means 'to purr.'" Killua explained. "Sounds like it, right? When you do it right. You need to roll your r's from the back of your throat, and keep your lips in an 'o'..." Killua said, taking one hand from their held hands and pressing Gon's cheeks together. "Now, rronronner..." He purred again, leaning in closer. Gon felt his body heat up more, blinking and failing to keep his gaze off Killua's lips. His body felt warmer than it usually did when he wants to kiss Killua. He wanted to kiss Killua on more than just his lips, he wanted to kiss Killua all over, he wanted...

"Ronronner..." Gon said with a better accent. Killua started noticing Gon's incessant gaze on his lips with a dark look in his eyes.

"Ronronner..." Killua repeated the purr a bit distracted, letting go of Gon's face and leaning closer, looking at Gon's lips himself. Gon shivered at Killua's purr. It was so sexy. How did Gon not know French was this sexy? He wanted... wanted...

"Ki-killua..." Gon breathed, leaning towards Killua himself. Gon wound his hands around Killua's waist, pulling to bring him closer. Killua brought his hand up to rest on Gon's shoulder, willingly following Gon's motions, their lips coming together--

"Gon! Killua!" A voice called out from across the green. They both jumped apart, their faces a deep red. Gon scratched the back of his head a moment before it registered he should acknowledge the voice that called them. He turned to see Kurapika running over with multiple pieces of papers in his hands.

"You passed!" He called out, happy for his younger friend. "You can participate in the Showcase!"

"Wha-?!" Gon cried out, hopping up out of his seat, a bit dazed for a moment.

"Gon!" Killua cried out happily, jumping up as well, already registering what Kurapika just said.

"Yeeaa!" Gon cheered, turning to Killua and swooping him in a big hug. Killua wheezed a laugh in his hold, squeezing back as well as he could. "Thank you thank you thank you! It's all thanks to both of you, wow, thank you so much! You both are amazing! I'm so lucky to have friends like you guys! Everyone! They all supported me so much! This is amazin- Waahoo!" Gon ran off, too excited and filled with energy to stay in one place, making small laps in the small green area under the tree. Killua laughed, filled with affection and happiness, watching his boyfriend run around like a pup that was let off his leash for the first time in weeks. Which was technically true.

"What'd he pass with?" Killua asked Kurapika, looking over his shoulder at the papers.

"A 'B' in Math, an 'A' in History." Kurapika smiled. "The other courses he wasn't doing too bad in to begin with." Killua smiled at that.

"That's good."

"Also... was I interrupting something important?" Kurapika asked under his breath, a knowing glint in his eyes. Killua's face heated up a bit.
"N-no! You're good." He quipped, but his high pitched voice gave him away.

The three of them gathered their other friends after classes were over, ready to celebrate with Gon with some pizza and milkshakes. Killua was more than happy to give Gon that day off, he's worked hard enough the past couple of weeks.

"So everything is ready?" Zushi asked Gon between bites of his pizza. Gon nodded, his own mouth stuffed with pizza.

"Almost." Gon said, and Killua's almost certain Gon swallowed everything in his mouth without chewing much. "We still need to finish up the dancing stuff, but by the time we get to dress rehearsal after Thanksgiving break, it'll be practically done." He informed. Killua nodded, satisfied with the recap on their progress. Everyone listening was happy to hear it.

"Can we get a preview of the song, Gon?" Melody asked.

"Ah, I dunno, I want it to be a surprise…” He said coyly.

"But we’ll hear it anyways during rehearsal!” Zushi said. “If we come.”

"Technically, he doesn’t have to sing his song, it’s just making sure the prepared music plays well the way you want and tech check. The most you’ll hear is his music accompaniment.” Killua winked. Zushi whined while the others laughed. Everyone enjoyed the mood and atmosphere a little while longer before Killua got up.

“I should go.” Killua said, touching Gon’s shoulder to alert him. Gon was rising up in his seat to follow Killua without hesitation.

“Ya? You need to practice for the concert this Sunday?” Gon asked. The two of them bid their friends farewell before they left. Killua nodded, his eyes on the ground. Gon could see how nervous Killua was again and Gon took his hand.

“Breathe…” he said in the low voice Gon knows Killua likes. Killua visibly relaxed, air leaving through his nose on command and he glanced over at Gon thankfully. Gon wanted to continue giving Killua his strength.

“Will I be able to come? I want to be there for you.”

“No!” Killua said too quickly. “My parents still don’t know about you, and they’re not as lenient as Illumi in letting distractions in my life.” Killua said looking over at Gon with wide eyes. Lenient? Gon thought with a puzzled face. But he got the message through his choice of words.

“I’m not ready to introduce you yet… You’ll be able to come to my things… soon, but not yet. I know you want to be there for me, but I think I’d be too distracted and worried for you off stage while I’m on stage. It’s better if you’re not there.” Killua told Gon. Gon sighed, because he understood.

“Ok, Killua… if you need anything… you can just tell me.” Gon said, placing a strand of hair behind Killua’s pale ears, watching it turn red from the soft affectionate move. Gon smiled as the strand of hair didn’t stay back there, joining the rest of Killua’s fluffy hair in wild disobedience. Killua nodded, a shy smile on his face.
“Thanks, Gon…” he said, with a wide smile in Gon’s direction. The blue of his eyes were as wide and expansive and open as the sky above them and Gon could fly in them. “For everything.” Gon nodded shortly. He wished he could be as brave as Killua. Gon knows Killua will do amazing...

“You did what?” Killua gasped, clutching his sleeve that fell over his fingers.

“I had to tell mama! She wanted to know why the hell the concert ended nearly an hour earlier than usual! She was gonna flip her lid if we didn’t give the guests what they paid for.” Milluki said straightening his bolo tie in the mirror next to Killua.

“You…!” Killua started, but then fell silent and both the siblings acted like they weren’t even talking to each other as Illumi walked across the dressing room behind them. Killua tracked him with his eyes through the mirror and waited until he was out of earshot before directing his attention back to Milluki, his voice lowered.

“You idiot. Well, what did she say about it?” Killua asked.

“I didn’t tell her that much, brat. Just that you were holding a special surprise for the end that we needed to keep off the program. And since it was you, she was over the moon that you were taking such initiatives on your own.” Milluki rolled his eyes at that. Killua bit his lip but it seemed this was fine.

“Oh… thanks. You’ll be ready for after the last performance?” Killua asked turning his eyes up to his big brother. Milluki looked at himself in the mirror a moment longer before turning to Killua.

“Yes, I got you.” He nodded and got up to be ready for his opening act. Killua exhaled through his nose, trying to keep calm and remember what Gon tells him all the time to reduce his anxiety. He looked down at his music sheets of the songs that were for the program tonight, the first songs the ones everyone sees, the last few being Killua’s personal songs for Illumi. This really is Killua last chance for some semblance of sanity in his home life. He’s ready to go with Gon too if this flops…

“Little brother…” The melodious voice eased into his limbs like a cold breeze and made him tense up.

“Illumi.” Killua replied stiffly. He didn’t even have to turn or look up into the mirror know where he was behind him.

“Let’s rehearse with a speed run.” Illumi said stepping back twice to give Killua space to get off his dressing room chair and in front of him. Killua did just that but Illumi’s eyes rested on the music sheet behind Killua, on the counter. Killua’s blood ran cold as he wondered what it was exactly that Illumi saw, but he carefully kept his face cool and collected.

“You’re not going to look at your music as you rehearse?” Illumi knew Killua would rather look at that when rehearsing to focus or something, but Killua shook his head.

“It’s fine. You’ll correct me if I mess up anyway.” Killua said, getting ready to do a quick run through. Illumi nodded and he opened his mouth to count them down.

-o0o0o0-

“Milluki, what is with this composition? We’re ending nearly an hour earlier?” Illumi asked his little brother, catching him by the shoulder to keep him from going. He finally had a chance to look over the program for tonight only to see it was lacking in its usual length. Milluki visibly became nervous and lashed out to try and hide it.
“What? I’m tired this time, I just want to end early!” He huffed. Illumi tightened his hold on Milluki’s shoulder slightly.

“That’s very unprofessional of you. You always give the very best for the audience. This isn’t going to go un-

“Oh please, Illumi dear, you need to go on stage! Your number is about to go on.” Kikyo said, waltzing over before either of them noticed. "Stop bothering my cutie Milky." She said, patting the shorter one’s head.

"... Yes, Mother." Illumi hummed after a moment’s pause. If mother was fine with the weird lapse in the program, what could Illumi do to enforce the rules? "We'll talk about this later." He said anyway and flipped his flowing waterfall of ink black hair over his shoulder.

Milluki let out a breath he was holding as Illumi went out to do the so called 'closing number.' Looks like there was an upside to letting mother know about the secret concert afterall.

"Oh! There he is, my shining star readying to take on his own mini concert all by himself!" She squealed as Killua came by. She swooped his cheeks into her fingers to pinch them adoringly.

"Urgh, mother, you're going to ruin my make-up!" He bit out, only to blush with how embarrassing and whiny that sounded. He gave a bit of a glare to Milluki. Their mother had been doing that since he stepped out of the dressing room for his first number, doting on him and pinching his cheeks ceaselessly and it was no doubt because Milluki let her in on the concert, even though she doesn't know what it is.

"Hey, I don't want any of that, you ungrateful brat! Do you know how hard it has been to balance the concert to give you the usual amounts of songs to sing even though you're taking on 4 more afterwards? Or keeping it from everyone who inquired? And the fact I had to make most of your songs-"

"Fine, fine, I get it. Thanks." He mumbled, fixing out his outfit. He wore a white collared shirt and a black sparkly vest and tight jeans for a tailor service look. "What's the opening block?"

"Illumi walks off stage right, you come on from stage left. The curtains should be lowered by the time he comes off, so I'll be raising the curtains to let the audience know of 'part 2' starting" Milluki said with his fingers curled as air quotes. Killua nodded, letting air out of his nose once again to calm himself.

"C'mon, you can't tell me you're getting stage fright over this stunt? You, of all of us, shouldn't be scared of the stage." He snorted.

"No, I'm not getting stage fright." He snapped at Milluki. Milluki looked a bit put off from Killua's seemingly unprompted shout. Killua rubbed his head.

"I'm... worried about how this will all go down. You know the message I'm saying through the songs. If this doesn't go well... well, let's just say some radical changes will come about before anything ever seems normal again." Killua said. Milluki thought about it a moment longer and understood.

"That's true... I'm sure Illumi won't be upset."

"I'm not worried about Illumi being upset. I'm not..." Killua looked around for their mother's location. It didn't rest easy in Milluki's stomach what Killua was implying. That it wouldn't be Illumi making the drastic moves.
"Kill." Milluki called for his attention again. "Just because tonight doesn't go over well... don't do something stupid, ok?" He said. Killua pressed his lips together and shook his head stiffly.

"You don't get it, Milluki, I can't keep going like this."

They both heard the roar of applause as Illumi’s performance ended and Milluki felt like he was tricked and felt frustrated.

"Whatever, do what you want." He turned and stomped off to the edge of the stage, ready to take his own position. If Killua needs this night to go well to keep everything normal, then nothing will go wrong on his end. Killua felt a bit bad, if the rest of his family was a little more normal, like Milluki, Killua wouldn't have to come to this, but they weren't and he had to. He has to do this.

Killua exhaled one more time before moving around the backstage to the other side of the stage. Illumi came off the stage past Milluki, giving him a slight look, but Milluki didn't meet his eye. Milluki knew he'll go to the dressing room to clean and get ready to go home. But before he even sits in his dressing room chair, he'll hear the concert continuing and come back out to investigate the commotion.

Milluki walked across the stage, watching from the corner of his eye as Killua walked just a little further upstage to the center. Milluki sat at his piano bench just as the curtains raised again, managed by their mother. He poised his fingers over the ivory keys.

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Killua didn't open his eyes until he felt the heat of the spotlight wash over every part of his body, coming like a wave because of the rising curtain. He heard the thundering applause in delay as his brain registered the high stimulus situation of the lights, crowd, and scene. He brought his shaking fingers up to hold the mic to try and keep still and calm. He waited until the crowd died into small cheers and whoops before letting a sideways smile grace his face and they erupted into cheers again. Killua ducked his head to chuckle at the gesture, kicking away all his formal stage training to keep face. The crowd kept up their cheering for a while longer at seeing the idol laugh while Killua waited for them to finish.

"You guys are surprised, right?" He asked, hearing his voice echo off the auditorium walls. The concert was inside as it was too cold outside for an outdoor concert. They cheered their response. "Sorry for tricking you all, but this part of the concert isn't on the program."

Killua closed his eyes briefly and then opened them again with a smile. "This is something I wanted to do as a surprise... it's sort of like my own personal project. But I do have to give my thanks to my big brother." Killua said, turning his body slightly to gesture to the man on the piano seat. Milluki flushed a bit, losing his composure. This wasn't part of the rehearsal! Milluki just tried his best to avoid eye contact and not look embarrassed, turning his head looking pouty, which made the audience laugh.

"So... as you can probably already tell by the unorthodox start, that this isn't going to be the usual format of our concerts. But I can tell you guys can keep up, right? I want to start off the pace a bit quick. But most importantly, I've got to let you know why I'm doing this." Killua looked over the crowd and couldn't even bring himself to look over at the wings of the stage to see if Illumi was there. He just hoped he'd receive the message from the songs.

"This is for my dear big brother Illumi," He said, a slight sarcastic bitter tang to the affectionate words. "You always did what was best for me when I was younger, but now I think you're just
selfishly trying to make me something you want me to be. Something I'm not. So I hope you take
the words in all of my songs to heart, and really understand what I'm saying to you. Because, Illumi..."
Killua hardened his resolve, because after this, there was no turning back. "I'm done putting up with
you." He said. There was a brief pause in the audience as they registered what he said and as the
music started. They gave their cheers, but wondered exactly what was going on? The perfect
Zoldycks? With problems?

"Oh (oh oh oh), Oh (oh oh oh)! Oh (oh oh oh), Oh (oh oh oh)!" Killua started with a perky beat,
tapping the beat against his thigh to keep his nerves in check and to actually realize he's doing it.

“Keep drinking coffee, stare me down across the table While I look outside... So many things I'd say
if only I were able, But I just keep quiet and count the cars that pass by.” Killua sang, doing a small
stroll not too far from center stage, looking nostalgic.

“You've got opinions, man, we're all entitled to 'em, But I never asked... So, let me thank you for
your time and try to not waste any more of mine! Get out of here fast!” He put on a fake smile to
wave at the crowd before pointing off stage. He hugged himself loosely as he feigned an apologetic
air. “I hate to break it to you, babe....” A small pout during the resting beat in the song. “But I'm not
drowning, there's no one here to save...!” He broke out into a small fist bump dance. “Who cares if
you disagree? You are not me! Who made you king of anything? So you dare tell me who to be?
Who died and made you king of anything? Oh (oh oh oh)”

Killua trotted around the stage as he vocalized into the mic. People in the audience finally understood
a bit more about what this part of the concert was about as Killua sang the first part of his song. It
was almost a no brainer that idols would have this problem of having to be controlled by the
entertainment industry, and being told what to do for the sake of face. They understand he wants a
bit of a break or at least more free reign, and many could relate to him. They sang the vocals with
him as they watched with smiles on their face as he trotted around the stage. He returned to center
stage to keep singing.

“You sound so innocent, all full of good intent, You swear you know best! But you expect me to jump
up on board with you, And ride off into your delusional sunset?” Killua made faces and shrugged
his shoulders like the notion was insane. Some people laughed and cheered.

“I'm not the one who's lost with no direction, oh! But you'll never see... You're so busy making maps
with my name on them in all caps! You've got the talking down, just not the listening,” As Killua got
more into it and sang with more umph to his words, his movements came alive. The crowd was
drinking it up, this side of Killua that was more emotional and open gave a lot more bang for their
buck.

“Who cares if you disagree? You are not me! Who made you king of anything? So you dare tell me
who to be? Who died and made you king of anything?” The music slowed suddenly, and the crowd
fell into silent cheers to listen carefully. Killua stood in center stage, and closed his eyes to channel
his feelings completely into his words. Not just for Illumi, but for his mother, his family, this
audience in front of him, everyone at school, just to let the words out, to let them be known. To let
everyone know how he's been feeling.

“All my life I've tried... To make everybody happy while I...” He sang softly, his voice smooth and
silky. Everyone in the audience felt as though his feelings were injected directly into them through a
shot of something. Many people let out cries of encouragement.

“Just hurt and hide... Waiting for someone to tell me it's my turn to decide...!” He opened his eyes and
his striking blues were so full of life and fight and power, the audience rose up in cheers as
though a gladiator got up after a beating.
“Oh (oh oh oh), Oh (oh oh oh)! Oh (oh oh oh)! ”

“I’m not taking it lying down anymore, brother...” Killua said between the music, finally feeling like he has the strength to look over at the wings. He saw the shadowy inky figure in the wings. But for once, it wasn’t something that urged him to keep up perfection for the stage, or frighten him till he shakes. Killua just winked at the scary figure he was breaking down in his mind to be not so big and continued with the song.

“Oh (oh oh oh), Oh (oh oh oh)! And Who cares if you disagree? You are not me! Who made you king of anything? So you dare tell me who to be? Who died and made you king of anything? Oh Who cares if you disagree? You are not me! Who made you king of anything? So you dare tell me who to be? Who died and made you king of anything? ”

Killua went back to center stage after dancing around with empowering strides and air fists. He struck a pose to the music, letting his head hang to one side cockily.

“Let me hold your crown, babe…” He's gonna be king of his own life now. The audience let out their cheers as the song played out.

“Oh (oh oh oh) Ah ahh ah ah ah...!”

The audience cheered as Killua turned to catch his breath. They were ok with him needing a moment, they weren't going to demand perfection from this part of the concert when the whole theme was overcoming crushing weight from expectations like that. Killua went over to Milluki's piano and they whispered some things between the two of them. As Killua walked back over to the mic, the crowd let out more cheers, and Killua had to laugh a little again. This was going way better than he thought it would.

"Alright, this next song is very near and dear to me. It's real personal... um, a dear friend of mine taught me that music can be everything. He told me music is the best way to express yourself and communicate. If you sing, someone's bound to listen. That's what I want to do with my concert tonight. I want to reach out and touch someone with these words, because I think we all go through something like this... we all have that person in our life with such high expectations of us.” Multiple people in the crowd let out understanding whoops. "We try to keep up, but we aren't perfect! We try with what we have, so please... don't keep pushing. We're only human." He closed his eyes to let the start of the song wash over him. The first notes started, and Killua's twinkling voice broke through the night of the auditorium. Everyone lapsed into silence as they listened, the music beautifully sad.

“ I can hold my breath… I can bite my tongue… I can stay awake for days If that's what you want… Be your number one. ” The audience let out whispering cheers, trying carefully not to break the atmosphere. Killua opened his eyes and they've never seen his eyes look so clear and ready.

“I can hold my breath… I can bite my tongue… I can stay awake for days If that's what you want… Be your number one. ”

“I can fake a smile...” Killua sang as he put on his stage smile, and most audience members were shocked to see the fake smile... it was what they were always used to seeing. They wondered just how long this went on, for how long this young one had to endure everything he's pouring out for them. “I can force a laugh... I can dance and play the part If that's what you ask... Give you all I am...” The audience didn't know what to do with this, everything got too real, too fast.

“I can do it... I can do it... I can do it...!” Killua's voice slowly and softly went up in notes, like a carefully sculpted art piece. They heard the emotion coming and bubbling up like a spring ready to break forth. The audience found itself holding it's breath for the song's release.

“But I'm only human...!” Killua sang out with raw emotion, written all over his face, his eyebrows drawn together like the pain of not being heard killed him slowly from the the inside out. “And I
bleed when I fall down! I'm only human! And I crash and I break down!” He sang truthfully, crashing the feels over the audience. Goosebumps rose up over their skin, the emotion washing over everyone listening, tears pricking their eyes. They felt electrocuted to life, their emotions plucked without their command. They felt everything in the raw cry of the young idol in front of them.

“Your words in my head, knives in my heart! You build me up and then I fall apart, 'Cause I'm only human!” Killua imagined Gon and everything he's taught him and how much he believes in him... Killua sang like no one was listening, and he poured all his emotions in the song. The audience was strung along with the ride, feeling every bit of it, shivers going through their body like live wires.

“I can turn it on...Be a good machine...” He looked out at the crowd like an empty doll and it chilled them as they listened attentively. “I can hold the weight of worlds, If that's what you need... Be your everything... I can do it! I can do it... I'll get through it....!” He took up the microphone, his first big movement since the song started, tilting his head up to hit the high note without going into falsetto, his voice rasping a bit from the volume he threw out with the words. It vibrated through the audience as tears came down their face. They let out cheers for Killua as the music crashed around them.

“'Cause I'm only human! And I bleed when I fall down! I'm only human! And I crash and I break down! Your words in my head, knives in my heart! You build me up and then I fall apart! 'Cause I'm only human!” Killua looked defeated as he sang the next couple lyrics and the crowd cried out their cheers in support to keep him up. They know how hard it must be to carry this much for so long. They felt for him and they felt with him, tears in their eyes and on their cheeks.

“I'm only human ...

I'm only human ...

Just a little human...!” Killua's eyes shone with unshed tears as he looked out over the audience. Killua can do alot of things for his brothers. And at a time, he was willing, happy, to do them all for him. He wanted to do that again, but they needed an understanding.

“I can take so much, Til I've had enough…” Killua can do alot, but he can't do everything. They needed to be equals in the discussions they have, not master over slave. He wanted his brother back. A tear fell from his eye as he sang out with his heart.

“'Cause I'm only human! And I bleed when I fall down! I'm only human! And I crash and I break down! Your words in my head, knives in my heart! You build me up and then I fall apart 'Cause I'm only human...!” Killua ended on the high strung note, the story unresolved. The audience gave out sobbing cheers and Killua bowed his head and rubbed at his face. The Zoldycks have always put on this air of perfection, nothing wrong or anything to criticize. Knowing that this young Zoldyck had to courage to make this and share it with the audience present... It made them feel closer to them, like they knew these famous idols more personally. It made them more human. It made them want more stuff like this and to support them because these Zoldycks also have trying times they have to get through. They are indeed people like anyone else.

Killua looked up, looking better although his nose and eyes were a little pink. The audience cheered for Killua having so much strength. He laughed a little.

"A little heavy, right?” He chuckled. They audience cheered back, although Killua couldn't tell if it was because they agreed or was trying to assure him it was fine. "But you guys are great, you guys are real flexible, keeping up with all these crazy turns and twists. Thanks guys.” He sniffed and they cheered loudly again.
"Ok, so now we're gonna bring it up a little. No need to keep you all on such a heavy note. I had fun with this next one, and I think Milluki did too, playing with his soundboard." Killua said, turning to gesture to Milluki behind him again, setting up his soundboard. He was again caught off guard and sputtered before the audience let out a small laugh. He whispered sharply at Killua but Killua just waved him off.

"Alright, the lyrics are a bit repetitive, so you guys can sing along whenever you like."

The music started, the beat smooth and cool.

"Na na, la la la la la na na na na na
La la na na, la la la la la na na na na
La la na na, la la la la la na na na na
La la na na, la la la la la na na na na... !"

A synthesized voice sang, sounding robotic but techno.

"Hush, don't speak...!" Killua's voice matched perfectly with the smooth tone of the song, his beautiful voice rounding the sounds and hypnotizing everyone listening. "When you spit your venom, keep it shut I hate it When you hiss and preach... About your new messiah cause your theories catch fire!" Killua danced around the stage in cool, slick, minimal moves, slowing down where his words sped up, his feet doing gliding work and arm movements were minimal while creating shapes nice to look at.

"I can't find your silver lining, I don't mean to judge! But when you read your speech, it's tiring
Enough is enough! " He came back to center stage to sing and dance, one hand up to his ear, miming the words.

"I'm covering my ears like a kid! When your words mean nothing, I go la la la!
I'm turning up the volume when you speak! Cause if my heart can't stop it, I'll find a way to block it, I go Na na, la la la la la na na na na na! La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na (I'll found a way to block it, I go)! La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na!

It was this song that made the audience realize -- remember that Killua was just a child, still growing to be an adult, and he's been through this much already. The childish, tantrum-like chorus reminding them he deserves to be a kid a little while longer, and if that means at least a little more breaks instead of full schedules like adult world stars, is that too much to ask?

"If our love is running out of time... I won't count the hours, rather be a coward. When our words collide! I'm gonna drown you out before I lose my mind...!" Killua moved about like dizzy and insane, bringing a hand up to roll it by his temple, the move smooth and purposeful, reminding everyone just how skilled and talented he was in performing.

"I can't find your silver lining, I don't mean to judge! But when you read your speech, it's tiring, Enough is enough!

"I'm covering my ears like a kid, When your words mean nothing, I go la la la!" The audience sang with him.

"I'm turning up the volume when you speak! Cause if my heart can't stop it, I'll find a way to block it, I go Na na, la la la la la na na na na na! La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na (I'll found a way to block it, I go)!"
“La la na na, la la la la na na na na na! La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na na na na na na na na (I’ll found a way to block it, oh)! Na na, la la la la la na na na na na La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na na (I’ll found a way to block it, I go)!

“La la na na, la la la la na na na na na! La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na…!” The audience caught on to the music well enough and was able to sing the refrain with Killua.

“I'm covering my ears like a kid, When your words mean nothing, I go la la la! I'm turning up the volume when you speak! Cause if my heart can't stop it, I find a way to block it, I go--! I'm covering my ears like a kid! When your words mean nothing, I go la la la…! I'm turning up the volume when you speak (when you speak)! Cause if my heart can't stop it, I find a way to block it, I go Na na, la la la la na na na na na na, La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na/! La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na na na na na na na na! La la na na, la la la la la na na na na na! ”

The song ended with the audience cheering for Killua, and Killua puffed out his cheeks childishly, keeping up with the deliverance for a bit before laughing out. He cleared his throat before speaking into the mic.

"Now, I know this is a lot to take in. And I've kinda been leading you on in thinking that my big brother is super evil or something. There's a lot that he did that I don't agree with, but..." Killua looked over to the wings, but he couldn't see Illumi. "He's not bad." He said, feeling a bit bad that Illumi wasn't there anymore. Did he listen to his words? Did he care about how Killua was feeling? Did Illumi understand why he did all of this?

"Everything he ever did for me or to me... he was trying his best. He could only work with what he knew. I know he never tried to purposely hurt me, but I know that if I got hurt along the way, he wouldn't mind because it would be what's best for me in the long run. He never had bad intentions. But I never felt like I could talk to him about it. He was super big and intimidating, and my big brother. How do you bring something like that up? This was the only solution I could find and hope he understands. Really, really understands.” Killua paused for a moment in thought, then, “Have you guys ever had someone special in your life?” He asked. They all cheered out, all understanding the feeling. Killua nodded.

"There's someone special in mine right now, and he might leave because of something Illumi is doing. And again, it's because he thinks it's for what's best. But... I need him, he's helped me through a lot of things, and if he goes now, I don't know what I'll do. So this last one, it's for everyone who's had someone special, and wouldn't let anyone stand in their way. Because it's your life and you need to do you.” The audience cheered their approval.

The music began with an EDM like beat, softer than the others. Killua began singing, the song just as in theme as the others he sang.

“I'm just tryna do me, But you don't like that. I dance to my own beat, It's not your style, yeah! I'm just tryna do me, But you always get that last laugh. Yeah, why won't you let me be, I just wanna do me!

“Why can't you see That the rules are up to me? Break down these walls, But the crown belongs to me! I'm living free, Don't owe you apologies! 'Cause I'm doing me And I like that...!” Killua's dancing on stage was free and not trying to be as controlled as the previous song. The audience soaked in the free spirit style, and felt like their spirits were being raised after the other songs. They felt like this would be ok at the end. This story that seems dark could find the light at the end, and it'll come with a free feeling, like the bonds were released and the happy ending was coming.

“Who cares? (I just wanna do me)! Who cares? (I just wanna do me)! I'm just tryna do me, But you
don't like that!

"I sing to my own key, So Imma take that solo! Do you feel less empty When you tell me I'm nobody? Well, I think your talk is cheap, 'Cause I know you wanna be like me, yeah!"

“Why can't you see That the rules are up to me? Break down these walls, But the crown belongs to me! I'm living free, Don't owe you apologies! 'Cause I'm doing me, And I like that!” Killua didn’t want to regret tonight, he refused to regret anything that came out of tonight. He finally felt like he was getting some semblance of control of his life. Whatever came out of this, good or bad, it was his choice.

“Who cares? (I just wanna do me)! Who cares? (I just wanna do me)! No, I'm not perfect, But I know I'm worth it, yeah… “ Killua stopped going about the stage in large bounds to get back to center stage and sing at a bit of a slower pace.

“Your words don't break me, 'Cause I'm not even listening…!” He vocalized freely and the audience cheered their approval.

“No, I'm not perfect, But I know I'm worth it, yeah! Your words don't shake me, 'Cause I'm too busy dancing! No, I'm not perfect, But I know I'm worth it, yeah! Your words don't break me 'Cause I'm not even listening! No, I'm not perfect But I know I'm worth it, yeah! Your words don't shake me, Cause I'm too busy dancing… !” Killua slowly built up into another dance as he sang, and the audience sang out the next 'Who Cares' with him.

“Who cares? (I just wanna do me), I don't care, (I just wanna do me)!

Who cares? No, I'm not perfect, But I know I'm worth it,

No, I'm not perfect, But I know I'm worth it!

No, I'm not perfect, But I know I'm worth it!

No, I'm not perfect, I like that!”

Killua gave a grand performance finishing bow, and the audience stood in standing ovation. Killua waved then moved out the way to gesture to Milluki who bowed as well.

"Thank you guys for coming! And more importantly, thank you for listening! Good night! Bye!"

Killua called before the curtain began falling.

The people leaving the place were very surprised with the turnout of the concert. They got an emotional rollercoaster they didn't know they needed or wanted. Killua was very good at bringing the emotion to life within anyone. His electrifying performance made them feel emotions they never asked for. They felt so much, they feel like their emotional palate was cleansed. It was a great concert and they hope for more like it.

Killua exhaled after the curtain closed and turned back to Milluki who also looked very relieved that the whole thing finished. It was their first real stunt pulled that was outside of protocol for any Zoldyck concert, but they were both willing and ready for any consequences afterward. Killua walked to stage right to get off the stage and gasped as Illumi suddenly came into view from the shadows to stand in front of him, menacing as ever.

"Ah...! Illumi..." Killua gasped.
Illumi liked the metronome ticking.

It was a sign of certainty. It never changed. There was no variability— a constant. A reliable dependent. You knew the next tick to come, it was the same time between each tick. Illumi more than liked the metronome meter, He thrived in it. It lead and influenced every aspect of his life, how he walked, the beat in which he talked, the thoughts in his head.

It was always very careful, calculated, present, persistent and constant.

Perfect.

Illumi never understood why Killua hated the noise. Illumi figured he didn't actually hate it, he just didn't know what to do with it. The anguish on his face when he hears the noise is just his fight to understand it, and it's the fight that hurts. If he would just accept and give in to the beat, it would be much easier.

It's why whenever Illumi purposely made the music loud enough for Killua to hear the beat, Killua's more inclined to listen to what he’s being told. It's his strive to be perfect. Like the meter.

Illumi liked the meter.

And he loved his little brother.

Illumi watched in surprise as he saw Killua take the place on stage that he had stood not 2 minutes ago. It was some sort of conspiracy. Unplanned for.

Unexpected.

Then he heard what Killua was saying. Saying that he was hurting his dear little brother. He would never. He knows Killua is a hard one to crack, but once Killua just listen to everything Illumi says, nothing will hurt anymore. Killua's simply rebelling.

Their mother didn't take it nearly as calmly as Illumi looked like he was taking it. She screeched how she had no idea this was their planning all along and this will soil their Zoldyck reputation. She ran off to put the curtains down, but it never did for some reason. Illumi's almost... happy she didn't go through with it.

Illumi hates being told he's wrong.

Illumi prefers predictability and control.

But more than those two, he loves his little brother. He tried not to think about how Killua didn't like his training in the past, ignored the possibility that he would become a villain in his brother's eyes, to be hated by his beloved little brother, if it meant Killua became the greatest of them all. Who wouldn't wish for that?

But based on Killua's words... it was something Killua didn't want for himself?

'I've tried to make everybody happy while I hurt and hide...'

Killua worked his best to do what was asked. He tried to keep it to himself and do what they wanted. It wasn't for lack of effort, but simply that after putting his all into it, he didn't desire it.

'I'm only human...'

Still putting up with what is asked, Killua hollowed out inside. Which is what his parents, and even
himself wanted. It would have even easier to get him to do what they wanted like that. But hearing what he was saying... that he was still feeling everything while trying to be their perfect doll... Illumi never wanted to hurt Killua. Thinking back to when he was first assigned to train Killua, it was the first thing he was worried about. Now Killua was out here trying to find the strength to be strong again... how can Illumi go on pretending like he doesn't know about it anymore?

'I need him, he's helped me through a lot of things...' Illumi knows Killua's talking about Gon, and Gon most likely kept him from going insane from the pressure. Illumi gets it. After everything that Illumi put Killua through, he knows he won't be a confidant anymore. But it would be ok if Killua still has someone to help him heal.

He's been making himself blind for so long. It was time to let him be.

He loves his brother very much.

And now his brother was standing before him, looking like a meek mortal awaiting judgement.

"Killu..." Illumi said after a moment. Killua gulped and nodded a bit.

"Illumi?"

"You..." He paused to keep himself from choking up. His little brother always made him so emotional. "You've been heard. Loud and clear. I understand, brother. You have a real talent at creating your emotions in others. I will try... to stop being so overbearing. I'll try to stop controlling you. But I will still always try to give you advice and good minding. I won't force them onto you though." He sighed. Killua looked completely surprised before he huffed a relieved sigh.

"Illumi...!" He sighed out with a big smile. He's happy this paid off after all. "I do want your help sometimes. But like a real big brother! Not like some crazy dictator!" He said.

"I wasn't that bad." Illumi commented, but the deadpan look from Killua made him double guess. "Was I?"

"The worst! I developed anxiety because of you!" He said. Illumi sighed, that bad?

"Alright, I understand." He said. Killua smiled. Killua knows this won't be all fixed overnight. Illumi will still have some lingering remains of overbearing Illumi, and he'll lapse back into habits, but Killua finally feels like he can talk to him about it properly. And just him admitting he'll try to change... everything will start to get better from here on out.

"But!" Illumi said suddenly, and Killua jumped with surprise. "About Gon..." He said, folding his hands together. Killua raised an eyebrow.

"I understand he's special to you... and you feel like you need him in your life... but don't expect me to go any easier on him during the Winter Showcase just so he can stay here at school with you." He said.

"What? Illu-!"

"If he can't even beat me in this one concert after everything he's done to the school and on your own personality, then he's not good enough for my little brother. Only the best for you, Killu." He said. Killua frowned and crossed his arms.

"Big brother..." He said warningly. Illumi was doing it again.
"I know. But consider this my last request to try and do something for you." Illumi ruffled his hair and Killua rolled his eyes. Killua feels confident with Gon's abilities though... he's sure he can beat him...

"Fine! But he beats you, you can't complain about Gon. About *anything*!" He said. Illumi mulled this over in his head. Sounded tricky... But if Gon beat him, he'd be impressive enough that Illumi would approve of just about anything Gon did and couldn't find reason to complain about.

"Alright." He said, and they shook hands. "Now, let's go clean up for real." He started to the dressing room, keeping Killua's hand in his.

"H-hey! Let go!" Killua cried, embarrassed.

"No, I want to bring you to the dressing room." Illumi said with that emotionless mask on, starting to swing their arms between them. If Illumi missed Killua's childhood while trying to shape him to be an adult, he'll enjoy Killua as he is now. He considers his job as Killua's coach over.

"Geez! It's right there!" Killua protested.

"Right, it's only right there. You won't even see anyone to embarrass you."

Killua rolled his eyes again but allowed the rest of the short trip. They both stopped in surprise when they entered, however.

"...Father." Killua gasped, squeezing Illumi's hand at the sight. Suddenly, he was happy to have Illumi's had in his. It was the comfort of his older brother.

"Hello, Killua, Illumi. That was a very interesting concert I just saw out there..." Silva said, Kikyo by him in another chair, looking quite disgruntled. "Your mother wasn't very satisfied with the display."

Killua swallowed again but didn't say anything. What could he say? What was their father doing there anyways?

"But based on what was being sung, which, great job by the way, Killua, you have a real talent," Silva off commented, and Killua felt like his attention was being redirected away from the point blank gun at his head. "It was really important to say. A great message, honest. I wish it hadn't had to be sung in front of thousands of strangers, but that's ok. What's done is done." He nodded. The two brothers didn't know what to say in the face of their father. What was the right thing to say? Especially when they haven't seen him for years. They wouldn't know how to properly diffuse the situation.

"I've come because, as your mother has probably already told you, we want to be more involved in your lives. And to make it better to the point where you don't feel like you have to make concerts like this just to function." Silva nodded in Killua's direction. Killua nodded back hesitantly. Silva stood and the mother swiftly stood afterwards.

"I'll leave you and Milluki to clean up with the rest of the Zoldyck staff, Killua. Me and your mother needs to talk to Illumi." He said, no room for argument.

"Yes father." Illumi replied, bowing slightly and moving to follow him. Kikyo made a couple more upset noises before swiftly moving out the room. Illumi followed her and Silva was the last to leave. Killua moved to one side to let them all go without much trouble, but Silva patted his shoulder on the way out and lowered his head to Killua's level. He gazed at Killua's wide eyed stare with a soft smile and affectionate eyes.
"I'm glad you found such a special friend." He smiled before he stood to his full height and moved out the room. Killua blinked once before he smiled.

He couldn't help it. It was the first thing he felt like he's been validated on that he had decided to do on his own, not decided for him.

"Mh!" He had to call Gon and tell him all about tonight! Killua moved further into the dressing room to find his phone.

Chapter End Notes

Honorary mentions:
Little Me by Little Mix- For Killua’s concert to Illumi, in a way? It’s at least empowering in a way! [Suggested by @PrincessFairytales5 on Fanfiction.net]

Somebody to You by The Vamps- This song has very cool lyrics that I think fit pretty well with the lightning scene during Gon and Killua’s date, starting from when they leave the house. [Suggested by @Chimchimugotonjamssss]

Breakaway by Kelly Clarkson- For Killua’s concert, just fell a little out of the range of appropriateness to be put in the chapter by a little.

Frustrated by R. LUMAR - Again for Killua’s concert, but fell out of the range. But I really love this song and it’s lyrics, remember to look it up on the youtube music list for Bells and Whistles or by yourself.

Hey, hey, maybe you guys wanna try to do a thing where you help me make a new summary? Submit what you like and I’ll try to make a better one to bring more people in to read my story that you all assure me is good! Yay.

So new trivia! All the name of the chapters of Bells and Whistles were rejected names of the story. But they were so priceless, I couldn't bring myself to not use them, so they ended up being chapter names instead of the name of the story.

Last chance to suggest songs for Gon’s showcase before it’s too late!

Thanks for reading, and happy Valentine’s day!
HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!
This wasn’t planned, but it turned out my finale chapter is being posted on the one year anniversary of when I first published Bells and Whistles. Time really flies, doesn’t it? Well, I hope you like the chapter and it’s outcomes, I’ve been contemplating and thinking about the turn of events of this chapter for a long time and hopefully it comes out like I want it.
It’s generally very disjointed, but lawl whatcanyoudo?

Thanks so much for reading thus far with me, and get ready for the conclusion of my first arc! Thank you to one of my tumblr friends for the name of this chapter, they referred to my story like this playfully, and I had to add it to my list of Chapter names.

Featured Songs:
Fight for it - Lucy Spraggan
All the Stars- Kendrick Lamar & SZA
Closer- The Chainsmokers
Wouldn’t mean a Thing- Bruno Major
Applause - Lady Gaga [alternative- Circus by Britney Spears]
This is Love- Will. I. Am. feat Eva Simons [suggested by GABBYDAK-NERD on ffnet]

Thanks to my editor: whats-wrong-aniki/canzie-gumm

Chapter 12: Jingle and Tweets

Gon picked up his duffle bag from the floor of his locker before looking over at Killua.

"Seriously?" Gon asked with a big smile, surprised.

The Sunday night of the concert, Killua had called and tried to recount and tell Gon everything that just happened over the phone. It had been the last part Killua told him about that surprised Gon the most.

"Your dad was there?!” Gon had gasped. Killua nodded in affirmation, then realized Gon couldn't see him.

"I have no idea why he's suddenly here but he's insisted that he's going to be involved a lot more. I don't know what to make of it, if it'll be good or bad..."

Gon had assured him it would probably be fine, especially if his dad was happy he was doing the rouge concert, especially for a friend. And now, the next Monday, 2 days before Thanksgiving break, Killua told him he wanted Gon to see the concert.

"Yes, I'm serious." Killua smirked. He looked down a bit to hide a blush coming on, but Gon still caught it. "You were a big inspiration to making the whole thing happen. I got a little emotional in
the middle, but I do want you to see the final product. It's the least I could do since I said you
couldn't come." Killua said. He turned to his locker, bringing out a black unmarked DVD case and
handing it to Gon. Gon blinked down at it.

"Wow, is this really a recording of a Zoldyck concert the day after it was performed? This could sell
for hundreds-!" Gon gasped playfully, making a big deal out of the hand-off.

"Shut up!" Killua laughed, shoving Gon's shoulder a bit. "I had to sneak that away, mind you.
Usually only VIPs can buy recordings the night of, then it's released months later. You're lucky
you're dating the most amazing, most talented, most bestest--"

"That's not a word." Gon chipped in with a smile as they closed up their locker for the day and
moved to leave the school. Gon put his arm around Killua's shoulders, pulling him close. Killua only
gave Gon a quick sharp glance before continuing.

"Most bestest Zoldyck to get you such a rare piece of treasure." Killua sneered, pointing at the case.
Gon bobbed his head side to side thoughtfully before turning to Killua with a sly smile.

"Yea, I guess I am pretty lucky to be dating such an amazing piece of work." He said. He got the
desired effect as Killua's cheeks flushed with color and he elbowed Gon's ribs slightly.

"Stupid... you always do that..." He muttered with an affectionate smile.

"Do what?!" Gon chuckled as Killua became a bristling kitten under his arm.

"Always turn things on me so it could be incomprehensibly embarrassing for me! What am I
supposed to say when you say stuff like that? Puts me in a weird spot."

"You could just say thank you." Gon suggested. Killua pouted up in thought.

"No." He said simply and Gon laughed without restraint at that.

Gon went home and watched the concert afterwards. Killua said he needed to be around the home
front for a bit since his dad is around.

"At least until this weird midlife crisis thing ends and he's nowhere to be seen again. Shouldn't last
long. But while he's there, I have to be too." Killua explained. Gon will miss hogging Killua and his
attention all to himself every day after school, but it should be fine. He'll be staying over for all of
Thanksgiving break.

Gon watched the video and revered in how amazing and professional it was, similar to the first
Zoldyck concert he watched. The Zoldyck concerts were so different than the one-man shows Gon
usually puts on with a much higher budget compared to his nonexistent one and more effects,
equipment, and man power for more variety and general audience enjoyment.

But Gon thinks he's been doing a good job. Gon let out a calming breath. He doesn't want to grow
insecure with his performing abilities, not with the Showcase so close. A fear gripping shiver ran
down his spine briefly but he was soon distracted when it seemed like the concert was ending a lot
earlier than he recalled. He remembered what was happening just as the curtains raised to show
Killua standing there again.

Gon smiled at Killua, so proud of him, even in retrospect. Killua looked so scared but ready, Killua
was so brave. Gon heard Killua's songs to Illumi for the first time-- Gon never had time to help Killua with his songs and process since Gon was studying and practicing himself. But Gon liked the first song, it was peppy and a real 'give it to the man' vibe and so fun. The second song had Gon in tears. He couldn't help it, it was Killua, his best friend. Whenever Killua was sad, Gon felt sad too, and just to hear it in song form and expressed so well... Gon had to house napkins on his lap. The others went by well and with good reception and Gon really believed Killua made his message clear to both his audience and family listening. Gon was especially happy Killua didn't have to do it alone, and had Milluki on the stage with him. They worked great together.

Just as the concert ended, Gon's phone buzzed with an incoming text, and Gon lifted it up to see Killua's name on the screen. Gon opened the message excitedly only to pout at the screen when he read the words.

'Dad wants me in the recording booth all day to get the songs I sang at the Zoldyck concert ready for sale on the next album. Won't be able to go over to your place :( See you at school tomorrow, cutie.'

Gon sighed, but he couldn't help but felt a little better at the cheesy pet name at the end. Gon'll see him tomorrow... Killua might be a little tired from doing consecutive recording sessions for 4 songs all day, but if anyone could do it, it's Killua, so... it'll be fine.

'Ok, try to get your rest after working so hard, ok?' Gon texted back. After he got the ok from Killua, Gon looked around his room, feeling his anxious nerves creeping up on him. They usually come around when he's left alone with his thoughts or when Killua's not with him. It's only been starting recently as the Showcase grew closer, and Gon hasn't felt nerves like this for a performance since he first started his career. But this event was as big as something Gon might consider his last performance. Another stress filled shiver racked his body before his eyes landed on his Gibson and Gon relaxed a bit. Music always made him feel better, just having an outlet keeps the anxiety and stress from building up. He'll dabble on some beats for a while till he feels better.

-o0o0o0o0o-

"You guys are what?" Gon asked, pouting quite childishly, but he didn't care at the moment.

"Yea! Father wants us all to spend Thanksgiving together. It's gonna be terrible, like those disaster family reunion movies." Killua crossed his arms. "He's not letting any of us have our own plans. And Illumi's been acting weird lately, it's like someone's rebooted him and he's slowly powering back up. His observation and socializing is a bit slow, and he's been like that since father came back. Maybe this is all such a shock to him too, he doesn't even know how to act." Killua said, leaning against his locker. The halls were pretty empty, most teens not bothering to go to the last day of classes before Thanksgiving break, not when they could be organizing holiday concerts and specials. Gon groaned, turning around to bang his forehead against the locker. There was no way Gon wouldn't come to school when his favorite starlit teen was here. And now that Killua wasn't coming home with him for the break, he wanted every moment with him. Gon won't think about how restless he'll be without Killua during the break, without Killua telling him what he can do to practice and prepare for the Winter Showcase and keep him busy and occupied.

"Don't worry, Gon." Killua said, seeming to notice his inner turmoil. "I'll still meet you at the school auditorium for the dress rehearsal this Saturday. I technically only need to be home until Thanksgiving. I can't sleep over, but I don't need to be in the Zoldyck house the whole time." Killua smiled, passing one hand over Gon's spikes. Gon smiled over at him.

"Ok... And what time do I need to be there?" He asked.

"Rehearsal starts at 12 pm. I'll meet you at the front at 11 am." Killua said. Gon nodded, and huffed a
breath out through his mouth. It seemed everything was trying to crumble out from under him as the showcase came around the corner... No, it's fine, he'll hold everything together himself if he has to. He has to make sure nothing goes wrong so that he can win. It's already high chance he won't win just by running against a senior, and a Zoldyck no less. Maybe he'll have a good chance anyway? With Illumi acting weird, maybe his performance won't be at his best, and he can slip a win--

"Gon? Gon! You're spacing out on me. C'mon, the bell rang for class." Killua said, looking at Gon weird. Gon swallowed and nodded before moving to follow. He has to be strong... or at least look the part for Killua. He needs to show he can do this so Killua does not freak out and over-worry.

Thanksgiving actually wasn't that bad. Gon relaxed a lot more than he thought he would. He put the Showcase out of his mind and just helped Mito around the house. On Wednesday, he helped her prep the ingredients, but she didn't want him helping with the cooking. So, she sent him off to go shopping for ingredients or cleaning around their small apartment.

When Gon went out to town, he made sure to make the most of it. He helped people around town, the neighboring stores with last day clean up before closing for the break, improv dancing and singing with street performers with ease like he used to. He never realized just how stressful the Academy made singing and performing for him until he was able to go back to his roots and just get down to jamming.

But he also knew no matter how stressful it was, it was what he loved to do. The school was just pushing him to be his best, and the work will be worth it at the end. He doesn’t want to leave the school, or the music industry. He’ll try his best… his best may not be enough, but he’ll work even harder, then…

Dinner was fun even if it was just Mito and himself, they played games and watched television Thanksgiving specials after. He hoped Killua was having some sort of resemblance of a good time too.

Soon enough, Saturday morning came about, Gon wished Mito a good day and went to meet Killua at the school by 11. When Gon got there at about 10:50, Killua was standing there waiting for him already, and he looked upset. Gon frowned as he walked up to his boyfriend.

“Hey, you ok there, Kil?” Gon asked when he was in earshot. Killua looked over with more of a glare than he probably meant to.

“No! Dinner was terrible. You know, you spend all this time avoiding your family, you forget why you started sometimes. Then you’re forced to sit in a room with them for an hour and your smacked with enlightenment once more.” Killua complained, taking Gon’s hand and bringing them inside. Gon listened patiently. “My mother is still a crazy banshee who can’t shut up about my future. Like, shut up, I know, you’re gonna control me until me or my career dies. Whichever happens last. And the obvious fawning over my father, like some attention derived manipulative shrew! She bats her eyes and all her propositions and plans gets the ok.”

“Mh.” Gon hummed, not really knowing what else to say. He still doesn’t like when Killua bad mouths his mother, it’s his mother, but he also knows he probably can’t relate as well and this is mostly just letting off steam. He’ll let him go off.

“My brother just goes along with all of it, like a good doll, but I suppose he’s been better about being overbearing. But he’ll do whatever my parents say, so if they tell him ‘keep him in the booth 2 more
hours,’ nothing I can say will convince him otherwise. Tsk. And everyone else is so combative, I swear we almost had a food fight twice.”

“I have a feeling you were the most combative, and was ready to throw food first.” Gon commented to the side. Killua stopped and looked over at Gon with a quirked eyebrow before laughing.

“You know what, Gon? You’re not wrong. I probably started most of those fights, but I refuse to just sit still and bit my tongue. Not when that’s what they’ve been trying to make me do all my life. I’m sick of it, and I’ll fight it forever.” He let out a cleansing sigh, and Gon was happy he seemed better after venting.

“How was your break?” Killua asked, turning to him. Gon looked up in thought briefly.

“It was fine.” He chirped. Whatever he might think was a problem was small potatoes compared to what Killua was dealing with right now. His larger than life influential father was back in his life, turning Killua’s norm on his head right now, he didn’t need to be saddled further down with whatever Gon had going on. “How was your father?” Gon asked.

“Oh geez, I can’t read him at all. It’s like meeting someone new who you thought you knew. It’s awkward at times, the only one who can really engage in good conversation with him is mother. And he’s just this big intimidating figure I feel is judging me everytime he looks over. I feel like I was mostly on edge and combative because of his presence. I don’t know. I don’t know how this will go.” Killua sighed as they reached the auditorium. Gon nodded. He’ll try to be there for Killua in this time for him, like how Killua’s always been there for him. He can hold it together for the both of them. Yea, he can do it.

Walking in, they weren’t the only ones that were early, Illumi was there. Killua explained he just came with him, and went in without him. Illumi seemed just as eager to leave the house as Killua.

Hisoka trailed after the silky black haired teen as Illumi went around, seeming to do stage check for himself, like this was his stage and sole concert. Everyone else who was early just sat in the audience seats and waited for the Showcase committee to conduct the rehearsal.

“Alright, I’ll do my sound check and be on my way.” Illumi told one of the head stagehands.

“Er, we didn’t start yet. We’re not suppose to…”

“There’s no point in wasting my time and making me wait here any longer. I have more pressing things to do.” Illumi said. The stagehand sighed and muttered something about the Zoldycks thinking they’re above everyone else and led him off to get his music set up.

Hisoka slinked over to where Gon and Killua was sitting, Killua not noticing right away as he had his phone out and was scrolling social media.

“This is so exciting…” Hisoka purred in his smooth voice. “Don’t you think? I think this is the biggest match up of the century.” He chuckled. Killua looked up squinting up at the older male.

“Is there something you need, Hisoka?” Killua asked icily. “Gon doesn’t need you here distracting him.”

“Oh, don’t be so cold, cutie, I’m sure Gon doesn’t mind.” Hisoka said, looking down at Gon. Gon looked between Killua and Hisoka. He didn’t understand what the problem was, if he didn’t let Hisoka bother him with his words, it wasn’t a problem.

“No, I don’t mind, Killua.” Gon told him. Killua tsked while Hisoka smiled smugly.
“Right, and I’m here to hang with my buddy Gon, not you. So you can ignore me.” Hisoka shrugged.

“Fine.” Killua scoffed, looking ahead at the stage and trying to dissect Illumi’s music as it played over the speakers. It seems like he’s gonna do what Killua was going to have Gon do and not actually rehearse his performance, just make sure his music works how he wanted over the speakers.

“So are you nervous?” Hisoka asked, sinking down into the seat next to Gon. Gon bit his lip but tried not to let anything else show.

“I mean, sure, but who wouldn’t be?”

“Well, Illumi’s sure not. And confidence really helps with performance. And there is something huge on the line, I would be nervous of screwing it up.” Hisoka said, ready to have some fun and cause turmoil in his new favorite plaything.

“Well… All I have to do is not mess up.” Gon shrugged. “I can do that. I mean… I mess up a lot sometimes, but with something as big as this, I’m bound to pull it out, right?” Gon asked.

“What are you asking me for?” Hisoka shrugged. “Just realize this is actually happening. It’s time to wake up Gon and make sure you’re ready.” Hisoka said, getting up. That will surely get Gon shaken up unnecessarily and he’ll have fun watching the hi-jinks fall afterwards. It was fun to see what nervous cuties do when shaken. Gon gulped and reached for Killua’s hand. He thought better of it halfway and put the hand back to his side. He can’t worry Killua. He’s got to do this himself. He can do this.

But there was something unsettled in him as he thought about actually performing. Was he really enough? He felt his mind blanking as he thought about it.

Illumi’s sound check ended soon enough and then he was leaving, curiously with Hisoka in close tow.

Gon watched in a daze as contestant after contestant went up and did their rehearsal. All Gon could vaguely remember was that they were all really good. Then Killua was pulling at his sleeve telling him it was their turn to go up.

“Huh? Oh, yea.”

Gon got up and started going down the aisle towards the stage, but Killua was trailing after him and looking at him funny.

Was Gon ok?

Killua went up the stage to the stagehand to give her a copy of the music. She worked to copy it onto the computer so they have it ready and then played it. Killua stayed in the wings, listening to it as Gon practiced his dance moves on the bigger performing space.

“Wider swing of your arms!” Killua called out for Gon to fix as he watched. Killua tried to modify the dance to fit a larger performance space than the one they were practicing in, but it still wasn’t right. That’s what rehearsal was for, wasn’t it? And now that Killua was listening, the bass wasn’t bouncing off the auditorium walls right. It will be pitchy with the distortion if they don’t fix it. Killua took out his phone and began to write this stuff down.

Gon frowned as he looked over at Killua while dancing. He looked unsatisfied. Was this going to be enough?
A fear shiver ran through his body and he bit his lip. It hit him that they didn’t have much time and they probably aren’t ready yet. Is there more he could do? Should he practice more? Should he have done more drills in his free time? Could he change the lyrics to be better?

Gon need to work harder or he won’t have any more time.

After his run through, Killua told Gon what he needed to do to fix music and routine. Mostly coming back to the stage to practice after school and editing with Milluki. Gon nodded, eager to do what he needed to make sure everything is perfect.

By the end of it, Killua was looking at Gon weirdly.

“Gon, you ok?” Killua asked. Gon stiffened, caught by surprise that Killua picked up anything wrong.

“Huh? Yea, Killua! Of course!” He nodded. Everything will be fine. After the Showcase is over, everything will be fine. It has to be. Killua gave him one more sideways look.

“If you say so…” He muttered. “I won’t be able to come over for a couple more days, and then I have a curfew to get home by even when I can. So… I’ll try my best to help you during school time and after school. Ok?” He asked. “But after that, you need to pick up some practicing on your own.”

“Mh.” Gon nodded. He didn’t expect anything less. In the end, this all falls on him to perform and win. If he loses, it will be all his fault.

That night, Gon made sure to run through his dance practice and a white hot panic flashed through him when he couldn’t remember a segment and his dance snagged from it’s fluidity.

“No, no, no… I can’t be forgetting my moves now… not this close…” Gon muttered to himself. He stayed up all night working to run the dance moves and make sure they were burned to his memory. It wasn’t like he would be able to sleep anyways. His pre-game jitters kicked in early this time around.

And that’s how it went for days to follow. Gon practicing endlessly and to the point of exhaustion. The feel and pressure of everything on him pushing him on and dragging him down at the same time. He felt like he could collapse or break down soon.

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Killua’s been starting to worry about Gon. It seems everyday Killua sees him, Gon gets worse with bags under his eyes and jitters flowing through his limbs. The glow Gon usually has about him was seriously faded and dim. Killua knows he hasn’t been able to be with Gon for the past couple days, and it couldn’t have been easy for Gon trying to deal with the stress of the Showcase as it comes closer. And while Killua would love to be there for Gon, Gon hasn’t been talking to Killua about it. Killua could guess all day what’s wrong with Gon, but if he doesn’t say, Gon’s suffering by himself.

Killua didn’t like that, and he figures as Gon’s boyfriend, he had to do something.

After school, Killua asked Gon to go on a walk with him. Killua made sure to go the way they took on their first Saturday out together towards the playground. He knew it was a school day, so there wouldn’t be as many kids out and they could have some alone time.

Killua looked over at Gon from the corner of his eyes, and he was happy to see that Gon was looking a bit better. Moving always did make him feel more at ease, and being outdoors is a plus.
Not too bad... Killua thought, giving himself some relationship points for getting this far. Now, let's see if I can get this talking stuff right... He took a breath as he saw the park coming up.

“So...” Killua started. “You feeling ok?” Gon seemed to tense up and Killua ran what he said through his head over and over to see where he went wrong in asking.

“Sorry, Killua.” Gon sighed, rubbing his head, and Killua never seen him so tired. “I made you worried about me. I don’t want you to be needlessly concerned about me when you have so much on your plate already. Please don’t worry anymore.” Gon turned to smile at Killua, and it broke his heart.

“No, Gon, that’s not what I...!” Killua huffed a small noise of annoyance. Why was he so bad at this? “I don’t...” He started carefully. “Care about the ‘other things’ on my plate. The only thing I’ve been worried about is what is going on with you. Will you... please tell me?” Killua asked. “I can’t read your mind.”

Gon gave him a long look before bringing his downcast gaze back on the ground in front of them.

“I... I’ve been really worried and anxious about the Showcase. I keep feeling like there’s this heavy weight on me, weighing me down and it doesn’t feel good. I try not to think about the Showcase too much, because it’s stressing me out but I can’t help it, if I don’t win it, I... I have to win it, Killua. I haven’t been able to sleep well, and I just feel a lot of pressure. It’s hard... I’m not sure I can do it...” Gon let out to Killua. Putting it into words, it made Gon so frustrated, he could cry. He doesn’t think he’s strong enough. Killua listened carefully and felt a little hurt. He hated that Gon was feeling this much, but felt like he couldn’t tell Killua. Hasn’t he always been by his side? Ready and willing to deal with anything for Gon? Killua knows more than anyone how Gon feels...

Killua looked around the playground as he thought about what to do... Well, might as well speak in Gon’s language. Killua squeezed Gon’s hand as he began to sing.

“I’ve been told that I'm not good enough a million times...” Killua started softly, and Gon looked over, surprised at Killua’s response. But he made sure to listen carefully. “I’ve been trying to kid myself with a million lies. I’ve been saying ‘I’m so strong’ when I’m dying inside. I was engineered that way, I’ve been left behind.” He stepped up the two steps onto the playground platform and turned to face Gon. Gon opened his mouth to say something, anything, to comfort Killua in how he’s been feeling-- Killua’s entrusting Gon with these inner thoughts and feelings. But Killua held up a finger to stop Gon from saying anything. Gon closed his mouth, patient for the next lines. Killua smiled softly.

“Well you are, you are more than you will ever know. You are, you are...! Don't tell me that you're gonna run away from it now; You're gonna stand here and fight for it.” Killua sang, stepping one step down back to Gon. “Don't tell me that you can’t, and that you're gonna back down, You're gonna stand here and fight for it.” Killua stepped the last step and stood directly in front of Gon, on the same level.

“And I know it's been cold in your soul, And you know that I've been there too.” Killua sang, searching Gon’s eyes. Gon nodded earnestly and Killua smiled back, happy with Gon’s attention. “Don't tell me that you're gonna run away from it now...” He let a teasing smile cross his features. “I'm gonna stand here and fight with you.”

Gon’s eyes widened slightly before his smile widened and he cried out happily. “Killua!” He cheered. He scooped Killua in a hug and squeezed tight. He felt so happy! He released the laughing Killua from his hold only to take his hand and run further into the play set. Killua followed happily.
How could Gon forget? Gon doesn’t have to fight this battle alone, but for some reason he’s been trying to carry this load alone. He doesn’t have to worry if he’s not strong enough himself, because Killua’s with him. Gon’s a little dumb, but he knows the smartest thing he’s done is stay with Killua. Gon looked back at Killua as he sang his own words to him.

“I start to unravel ’cause I’m battling the darkest storm.” Gon admitted sheepishly, and Killua gave him a look. “But I’m still here and it’s clear I’ve gotta win this war.” Gon winked and looked back ahead of them before sitting at an overhang. Killua sat right down next to him.

“My tongue’s been tied and my hands been forced.” Gon put his wrists together, pretending they were tied. Killua reached over and took his hands, pulling them apart for him. Gon smiled affectionately at that. “Everything seems much better when I’m holding yours…” He sang softly, and Killua blushed, unable to keep eye contact. Gon squeezed Killua’s hand to get his attention back, singing earnestly, as earnestly as Killua did for him.

“Well you are, you are more than you will ever know…” Killua joined Gon in harmony, “You are, you are…!” They jumped down from the overhang, singing with each other.

“Don’t tell me that you’re gonna run away from it now, You're gonna stand here and fight for it! Don’t tell me that you can’t, and that you're gonna back down! You’re gonna stand here and fight for it. And I know it's been cold in your soul, And you know that I've been there too! Don't tell me that you're gonna run away from it now, I'm gonna stand here and fight with you!” They sang, working their way around the playground equipment feeling more at ease than they have in a while. They’ve both been holding a lot, and they feel lighter than air with the other by their side. They fell next to each other in a giggling fit. They faced each other as they continued singing.

“Someone said 'reach for the stars' but I reach for the clouds, So if I fall, at least I know I'm back on the ground. I float back up and then I swim back down, 'Cause I won't sink, no I won't drown…” They sat up and held each other’s hands but looked up at the sky. They were content just silently feeling the encouragement next to them.

“Don’t tell me that you're gonna run away from it now… You're gonna stand here and fight for it. Don't tell me that you can't, and that you're gonna back down…!” They jumped up, running back towards the front of the playground excitedly.

“Don’t tell me that you're gonna run away from it now! You're gonna stand here and fight for it! Don't tell me that you can't, and that you're gonna back down, You're gonna stand here and fight for it.!”

“And I know…” Gon climbed up one step to the entrance of the playground set, singing. “It's been cold…” Killua continued, going one step further than Gon, smiling back at him teasingly. “In your soul,” Gon laughed, climbing up further than Killua, on the flat platform of the raised structure. “And you know…” Killua sang, standing next to Gon, and he faced him as they sang the next line together, “that I’ve been there too… Don’t tell me that you're gonna run away from it now, I'm gonna stand here and fight with you!”

Gon swooped Killua down into a dipping kiss. How could he have gotten so lucky with someone like Killua? He knew now he won’t fight alone, and he won’t carry his burdens alone, and he won’t let Killua carry his alone either.

“Thank you, Killua” Gon told him after he stood him up straight again. “I needed that.” Killua smiled at seeing the genuine smile on Gon’s face. He felt like he hasn’t seen that in too long.

“Don’t mention it. I’m suppose to do stuff like this…” He shrugged, putting his hands in his pockets.
Of course I’ll always lift you up, Gon. You’re smile is worth it.

The following days entering December, Killua was finally able to go with Gon and stay with him after school, but still had to leave around 6 to get home. But it helped Gon’s mindset and outlook just having Killua around. Killua was like Gon’s stress reliever, he felt at ease with him around and he was pretty addicted.

Killua checked on the progress Gon made when he was practicing himself and congratulated Gon on memorizing the dance so well. But he also gave him pointers on how to make the dance more fun and lively on stage instead of mechanically rehearsed.

“They’ll teach us more about hatsu later, but if I had to guess yours, is that you bring the good time for everyone in the audience, you augment the experience people have at your concerts. It’s your greatest strength, so make sure you have a good time or your audience won’t.”

Gon nodded taking in every word. They finished their final edits on the accompany music and Gon was starting to wonder why he was ever worrying in the first place. Going to school the next day caught him by a bit of surprise.

Gon looked up at the large silky looking banner that announced the Winter dance that hung over one of the corridors of the school.

“Oh yea. I forgot that the Winter Showcase came with the Winter Dance.” Gon said. Killua shrugged looking it over as well. He glanced back down at his phone.

“You don’t have to go if you don’t want to, I know you’ll want to focus on rehearsal and stuff…” Killua said, giving Gon a side glance. Gon smiled appreciatively. He felt so much better knowing he didn’t have to fight this alone but,

“It’s ok, Killua. It’s one night for a couple of hours. It won’t be a huge time taken out of my schedule.” He nodded. “Besides, why would I pass up any opportunity to take you out, or make memories with you?” Gon asked with a flirty smile. Killua scoffed playfully, and rolled his eyes but Gon could see the blush on his cheeks.

“If that’s you asking me to the dance, you’re lucky I like you, cause that was sad.” He smiled, a twinkle in his eye.

“No! I’m going to ask you much better than that!” Gon said, determined now. “And it’s going to be sweet, and a surprise!” Killua’s smile fell a bit.

“It’s not gonna be huge and in front of everyone, right?” He chuckled. Gon looked up like he was thinking about it.

“Maybe…!” He teased and got a shove on his shoulder in return.

“Don’t you dare! I’ll say no!” Killua said over Gon’s laughter.

“Oh, you’re being pretty gross again, aren’t you?” Ponzu laughed as she walked over to them. “It’s a good thing I’ve arrived. Gon, we’d love for your help on Winter Dance set up again!”

“Oooh, really?” Gon whined. He didn’t mind helping but… he didn’t want to right now. He had stuff to do and with how much he’s been doing in the span of a couple short days, he was feeling
lazy in terms of anything else.

“It’s alright, I’ll come and help too. That way, anything you need help with or double checking, I’ll be around. Ok?” Killua suggested. This way, practice never really stopped. Gon smiled at that and nodded.

“Good idea! Alright, let’s help set up this… what’s the theme?” Gon asked Ponzu as she led them away.

“Winter Wonderland!”

“Lame and unoriginal. You sure you want to go, Gon?” Killua teased. Before Gon could say anything, Ponzu looked across Gon to address Killua.

“Wha- how rude! Melody thought of that theme!”

“Really? It’s not so bad.” Killua said, shamelessly. Ponzu fumed while Gon laughed at their antics.

Gon tried to count down the days to the dance rather than the Showcase to keep his nerves at bay. It was better to look forward to a good thing then apprehensively watch an anxious event come closer. They got plenty done between setting up the Dance backdrops like balloons and streamers, and rehearsing the performance that would be the day right after. And Gon had to be ready to properly ask Killua to the dance. But he knows better than to try and do it publically, Killua might really say no if Gon does that and Gon only wants Killua happy when he asks.

It was the Monday before the Winter Dance and Showcase when Gon brought Killua up to the roof. Gon kept Killua’s eyes covered as he led them up the steps, making sure both of their jackets were wound tight around them to keep out the winter winds.

“Gon, I know you’re setting something up to ask me…” Killua couldn’t keep the laugh out of his voice as he let his hands wander aimlessly in front of him.

“I know you know, but you don’t know what I have planned, so this is fine.” Gon said, watching the steps for both of them not to trip. “Ok, last step, and then, can you open the door?” He asked. Killua sighed, and padded his hands on the door before finding the knob and pushing it open. Gon smiled at seeing his step up was still there.

“Perfect, ok… You ready, Killua?” Gon asked. Killua sighed dramatically before nodding with more emphasis than he needed. Gon bit his lip to keep himself from crying out excitedly.

“Ok… surprise!” Gon cried, uncovering Killua’s eyes. Killua blinked a few times to get his vision back but then gasped at the surreal scene before him.

The roof spot where they normally sat was filled with bushes and beds of flowers, all purples and pinks with spots of white and yellow flowers. The cold winter air and wide expanse of blue sky in front of them made the colors pop beautifully as they blew in the wind, a few petals flying off in the breeze, picturesque.

“W-wh… Gon…! What… you… how…?” Killua gasped. Nothing… No one’s ever done something like this for him.

“Well… let’s just say ‘with a lot of help’.” Gon chuckled, putting his hands in his pockets sheepishly. “Um…” He took Killua’s hand and brought him forward to stand in the midst of it all, as Killua was too shocked to move on his own. “These are carnations, and these ones are Chrysanthemums! These two purple and pink ones are Dahlia and Viscaria, and the white ones are
Gardenia…” Gon explained carefully, looking up at Killua every so often to make sure Killua wasn’t confused at any point. Killua just looked awed, so Gon assumed he was picking it up. He hopes he likes it. “They all mean different things, but I really got these colors because they were all really pretty and reminded me of your eyes…” Gon said, taking both of Killua’s hands in his and standing in front of him. Killua bit his lip, completely floored by Gon. He wasn’t expecting anything like this. This scale of gesture was something Killua never even dreamed he’d deserve. Gon was so amazing.

“So… Killua, will you come to the Winter Dance with me as my date?” He asked, actually looking shy at the end. Killua’s eyes widened.

“As if you even have to ask, dummy!” Killua cried before cupping the bronze teen’s face and giving him a deep kiss. Gon’s eyes widened before they closed to enjoy the kiss, wrapping his arms around Killua’s middle. They fell back onto the flowers and made out in the bed of them all.

-o0o0o0o-

The Winter Showcase is tomorrow… Gon thought as he fixed his vest, waiting for Killua to come out. No, the Winter Dance is tonight. Focus on that, or you won’t have a good time and there wouldn’t have been any reason to come tonight. He shook his head out a bit.

Gon wore a dark blue long sleeve with a white vest, which was covered by his large jacket to keep warm during the winter night, and sleek black pants with dress shoes. He was again waiting for Killua to come out so he could drive them to the Dance, his car waiting in the circle drive in front of the front door.

He almost became lost in thought once more when the door opened. Gon looked over and he finally understood the term, Jaw dropping gorgeous. Killua painted his eyelashes like they were frosted over, and he had eyeshadow, gray and blue, fading together beautifully. His hair seemed fluffy and styled, and he wore a suit and tie that was white and gray, covered in sparkle like snow.

“You… Wow, you look… wow…” Gon breathed, unable to form a proper sentence, just staring unashamed at his boyfriend. Killua smiled tightly, a blush on his cheeks.

“Thanks Gon. A little more embarrassing…” He smiled. Gon snapped his mouth shut, not even aware words were coming out of his mouth, let alone that they were embarrassing.


“You look good too, real-” Killua said, but then Gon stopped them on their way down the steps.

“Oh, wait, can I take a picture?” He asked. Killua blinked before throwing his head back to laugh.

“Sure, Gon, but we’re both gonna be in it, then.” Killua said. Gon smiled wider at that.

“Ok!” They put their heads together so they’re both seen in the screen of Gon’s phone. They did smiles, funny faces, and their best cool looks between giggled. Gon loved the funny face one and put that as his phone background.

“This looks really good.” Gon smiled, happy to have made another memory.

“Yea, and your lollygagging will make us late to the dance.” Killua said, leaning against the hood of Gon’s car.

“Oh, please, there’s no such thing. We’ll just be fashionably late.” Gon said, taking advantage of Killua’s position and putting his hands on either side of Killua on the car to box him in. Killua
responded in kind, putting his arms around Gon’s neck, a sly smile on his lips.

“Gon, you watch too many starstruck movies…” Killua giggled as their lips closed together again. But whatever if they were a little late…

-o0o0o0o-

~This may be the night that my dreams might let me know

All the stars approach you, all the stars approach you, all the stars approach you

This may be the night that my dreams might let me know

All the stars are closer, all the stars are closer, all the stars are closer

The night sky was bejeweled with diamond stars as the prospective stars made their way into the decorated recreation building the school rented out for the dance. The roof had a glass section cut out, allowing the attendees to see the stars and moon above them as they danced, especially during the slow dances when they turned the lights down low, the moon was their spotlight.

There was pillowy fabric laid about the perimeter of the event to look like snow, the tables were clothed with flowy cloth and everything seemed like a dream with a winter theme, the words ‘winter wonderland’ painted on the base of the stage holding some live performers and speakers that play ambient music.

The Academy sure knows how to throw a party… Gon thought as he walked up to the double door entrance that welcomed them with the air of an exclusive party. I’m just glad I’m with Killua… Gon thought, looking over at his gorgeous date holding his arm, looking around the final product carefully.

“I’m glad I’m here with you, Killua…” Gon said softly as they came into the main room. Killua looked back over at Gon before a soft smile came onto his face.

“Stupid, I’m happy to be here with you too. Stop sounding so sentimental lately, it’s embarrassing.” He chuckled. Gon’s smile turned affectionate. He couldn’t help it. With the Showcase the day after tonight, he just feels the need to soak up every moment with Killua. He never really thought about it, what would happen to the two of them if he were to lose… So he won’t, at least not tonight.

~ Tell me what you gon’ do to me

Confrontation ain't nothin' new to me

You can bring a bullet, bring a sword, bring a morgue

But you can't bring the truth to me

The first thing the two did was go to the food table. They grabbed some munchies and then went off to find their friends. One of the best things Gon liked about the dances were the celebrity fashion senses, and seeing how their friends dressed for the occasion. It was like dressing for a premier with this school, they didn’t know anything less than the sharpest looks for special nights.

“I think if I never got into being famous, I would go into being a fashion designer.” Killua snickered, nursing a drink in one hand as they sat around the table with Pokkle, Ponzu and Zushi.

“Well, I think you wouldn’t be horrible sometimes…” Gon teased.
“What?” Killua laughed, scandalized.

“I mean you look good today, but sometimes you’re a little too fashion forward…” Gon continued and Killua laughed.

~ Hey, I was doing just fine before I met you

I drink too much and that's an issue but I'm okay

Hey, you tell your friends it was nice to meet them

But I hope I never see them again

“Oh! I love this song. Let’s go dance.” Killua told Gon, taking his hand and bringing him out of the seat. Killua really just wanted Gon to relax tonight, and he didn’t want to point it out to Gon, but he’s been seeing everyone here giving them weird looks. They were obviously thinking of tomorrow, but could they not be so obvious? Gon’s trying to enjoy tonight, not dread tomorrow. Gon didn’t seem to notice it yet as he happily followed Killua out to the floor.

They danced to the songs that came on, and Killua could practically forget they were in public, floating in and out of reality as Gon’s hands roamed on his body.

~So baby pull me closer in the backseat of your Rover

That I know you can't afford

Bite that tattoo on your shoulder

Pull the sheets right off the corner

Of the mattress that you stole

From your roommate back in Boulder

We ain't ever getting older

We ain't ever getting older

We ain't ever getting older

Hips, arms, back, Killua is starting to realize he loves dancing. Then Kurapika was tapping on his shoulder.

Killua looked back at him, Kurapika’s gray tux shimmering in the low purple blue light.

“Sorry for interrupting your dance, but do you mind if I have the next dance with Killua?” He asked. Killua blinked, then quirked an eyebrow in a silent message to Kurapika.

What gives?

Kurapika inclined his head slightly while widening his eyes a bit.

We need to talk.

Killua frowned a bit then looked back at Gon who looked a bit upset that his time was being cut off. Then Gon looked at Killua like he was waiting for him to rudely tell Kurapika off for the both of
them, because they both knew Gon was too nice for that. Oh, his heart.
“Sure. You don’t mind, right, Gon?”

Gon’s face he made in reaction was a little funny.

“Er, well, I guess I can’t stop you. You’re here for a good time too.” Gon shrugged.

“Thank you, Gon. Don’t worry, I’ll return him unscratched.” Kurapika hummed in his silky voice as he led Killua away. Gon pouted, but then Ponzu was tapping at his elbow. He looked back at her.

“Hey. Want to dance?” She asked. Gon huffed. Might as well. Dancing with friends was a good way to pass the time as you wait for the next time you can dance with you boyfriend. He smiled goodnaturedly at her.

“Alright.” He took her hands into his and led the dance. Gon kept looking over at the other two as he danced with Ponzu.

“They don’t like each other, right? That’s what I remember last time I checked.” Gon asked Ponzu, looking at how Kurapika was leaning to whisper in Killua’s ear and Killua was nodding. He couldn’t help the small flare of jealousy and possessiveness in his chest. Ponzu’s patronizing giggle didn’t help his rising frustration.

“Right, they don’t like each other. They’re just good friends.” She said.

“I was Killua’s good friend before we got together.” Gon said although he already knew he was being silly and over jealous.

“Right, but you were his best friend. You have nothing to worry about. Promise.” She hummed. Gon squinted down at her.

“You know something… what do you know?” Gon asked with what he thought was a pretty intimidating tone.

“What? Nothing!” She said, completely unfazed. Gon sighed, putting his head down.

“Fine, that’s fine. I know Killua will tell me.” Gon said, looking back at the two who were smiling and laughing about something. This jealousy thing felt disgusting.

After the song ended, Killua finally came over and tried to act like nothing happened.

“What did Kurapika want?” Gon asked, eager and curious.


“C’mon, Gon, it’s not anything. We were just talking.” Killua stuck to his story, which left Gon pouting. Killua just teased him for it. And sometimes during the night, Killua would turn Gon around towards him or suddenly have them change directions and he was starting to smell something fishy in the air. It wasn’t until the dance was nearing its end that things finally started to make sense.

The lights in the main room dimmed and the lights on stage brightened. Gon looked over as Killua covered his wide smile behind his hands. Most of the students present was around the stage looking over at them.

“What’s going on?” Gon asked. Melody took the stage next to Kurapika, and they took up
“Gon, we know that the Showcase is tomorrow, and you might be nervous about it.” Kurapika said first.

“But we wanted to let you know, the whole school is behind you and they support you.” Melody finished. Gon couldn’t believe what was happening as the crowd before him and around him erupted into applause of appreciation. This was… a surprise for him?

“We don’t think we ever really told you how much we appreciated your presence and influence you’ve had on the school and everyone around you.” Kurapika continued.

“And so, even though these dances don’t elect Kings and Queens of the night, we wanted to let you know everyone here elected you and Killua the honorary Ice Kings of tonight.” Melody smiled.

“What?!” Killua squeaked behind Gon. Gon held in a snicker. Guess they didn’t tell him that much. Kurapika unveiled two aluminum crowns bedazzled like the snow.

“And we wanted to let you know, no matter what happens tomorrow, you’re our king and winner.” Kurapika said. The crowd erupted into cheers again and Gon rubbed the back of his head sheepishly. He had no idea everyone felt so strongly. With everyone supporting him so much, he felt like he didn’t have much to worry about tonight anymore. How can he, when his friends were so amazing. Then the crowd was urging them forward to collect their crowns, and Gon had to pull Killua forward as Killua was covering his red face in mortification. They placed the silver crowns on their heads and everyone cheered again, some people taking pictures. Gon couldn’t get the wide grin off his face and when he looked over at Killua, Killua looked too happy at seeing Gon happy to be embarrassed.

“And what’s a crowing without the special Kings’ Dance?” Melody asked, gesturing back at someone at the soundbooth.

“A solo dance? Oh, nonono, Gon…!” Killua muttered under his breath. “I’m gonna die…!” Everyone watching him dancing? While Gon will most likely do something sappy? He can’t even think about it. But then Gon was holding his hand out in a silent question to dance, and the music’s soft humming was starting. The lights were dimming, and Gon’s gorgeous features were bathed in soft winter tones and Killua found himself getting pulled out to the cleared dance floor for a solo dance.

~ I could climb the Himalayan mountains

Or the pyramids in West Peru

I could travel back in time and hear Al Green sing

It wouldn’t mean a thing without you

Gon let his hand rest on Killua’s hip and took Killua’s other hand, and they makeshifted ballroom dancing. Killua would probably say they swayed more than properly ballroom danced but hey, they weren’t classically trained in it, so he’ll take just swaying softly with Gon.

~I could sail across the Indian Ocean

And bathe in the reflection of the moon

I could find the buried treasure of ancient kings
But it wouldn't mean a thing without you
No, it wouldn't mean a thing without you

Killua’s happy they decided to do this for Gon. They’ve obviously been planning this for a while, and they just needed Killua in on it to get certain things set up on stage without Gon noticing. Although they could have told him he was also going to be apart of the crowning thing. Well, it was probably for the better, he would have put up an unnecessary fight if they told him. And watching Gon dance with him now, with the night sky visible above them as they danced with the moon spotlighting them… it was perfect. He hopes Gon is happy… he shouldn’t have anything to worry about.

~You bring out the best in me
Help me see the world differently
Be a better man than I'd ever be on my own
I'll give you the rest of me
You're the reason I rest easily
It's the love and loyalty you've shown...

“Thank you… Killua. I’m so happy… and thankful for everyone here… I just hope I don’t disappoint tomorrow.” Gon chuckled lowly, his forehead resting against Killua’s.

“No, baby, that’s not why they did this. They wanted you to know there was no pressure. So you can give your all tomorrow. Don’t focus on do’s or dont’s or what you could have done better anymore. Just… leave it all out there on the stage…” Killua breathed against his lips. Gon nodded, already feeling dizzy with how close Killua was. He was feeling warm all over, and his stomach had the free falling feeling again.

“Ok… I promise, Killua.” He murmured, before closing the distance between them and kissing him deeply. Killua shivered from the emotion Gon put in the kiss, putting his hands on the back of Gon’s neck to savor it more. Some people in the crowd had started dancing, but the others watching cooed at the scene.

Gon smiled a bit in the kiss but Killua didn’t seem to notice. Gon parted from the kiss and relished in how Killua opened his eyes all lidded and dreamy, and Gon did that to him.

“Hey, Killua…” Gon said lowly.

“Mhh…?” Killua hummed in reply.

“Will you sleep with me tonight? I won’t sleep well without you…” Gon asked. Especially not on the night before the big Showcase. Killua looked up at Gon, a little more alert.

“Yea, of course, Gon…” Killua smiled. Gon felt his heart clench. How’d he get so lucky? He really doesn’t want to leave Killua or this school.

“Alright, let’s take our leave then.” Gon chuckled, taking Killua’s hand securely into his and getting off the dancefloor.

~ No, it wouldn’t mean a thing without you.
Gon’s never slept so soundly before.

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The next day, Killua assured Gon he’d do his makeup and everything for him. They woke early for a Saturday morning, and Gon washed and got dressed first. They drove to the school and then Killua was doing his makeup for him. Killua worked on keeping Gon calm while slowly and methodically practicing their piece for the last time. It was certainly the chillest practice Gon has had with Killua, but time still flew by quicker than it would on a normal day, and soon the school was opening its doors for the audience.

The crowd’s ambient and static conversation filled the air with excitement as they mulled about the theater’s lobby and aisles, trying to find a seat for the show. The curtains were drawn on the stage that looked larger than ever before, apathetic as it holds fate in the form of performances. The music playing in the meantime, while everyone waited for the concert to start, was a thumping bass creating a cool vibe and making everyone even more hype for the show.

Gon leaned against a wall backstage, breathing slowly through his nose. He opened his eyes to see his beautiful bae standing there, bathed in light from the stage light on one side of his face.

“You ready, Gon?” Killua breathed, giving Gon a slight smile. Gon smiled back, feeling like stretching rubber.

“Yea. As ready as I’ll ever be.” He got off the wall of the backstage hall and wrapped Killua in a hug, putting his face in the crook of his neck, breathing in the scent of Killua to calm and center himself. They parted and Killua lifted a tag from Gon’s back pocket.

“I’ll be in the crowd for most of the Showcase.” He lifted the slip of plastic up that said ‘Backstage Pass’ in green. “When it comes to your turn or if you need me, I’ll be back here for you thanks to this, ok? I’ll be right here.” He slipped it over his neck. Gon smiled again, more genuinely.

“Right. Thanks Killu, I’ll see you.” He leaned forward, bringing Killua towards him by his forearm, and kissed him. When he parted, he noticed a black figure to his right, and the two boys looked over only to see Illumi standing there. Gon froze a bit, while Killua blushed in embarrassment. Illumi didn’t show much of a reaction, just turned to Killua and opened his arms for a hug.

“Where’s my good luck kiss?” He asked with a tilted head. Killua blushed deeper and crossed his arms while looking off.

“As if, Illu. You don’t need luck, and I’m not kissing you. Bye Gon.” He said before parting, moving around Illumi to get down the steps of the stage and sit in the reserved seats in front. Mito was also there, waiting in one of the front row seats, and Killua sat next to her.

“Oooh, I hope Gon does well…” Mito said. She’s not exactly sure the details of what’s happening, but of course she’ll always want the best for her son, and it seemed like the school was in the same boat.

“Me too…” Killua muttered, looking up at the closed curtains with anticipation. Please Gon… Killua earnestly thought in his head. He felt Mito grab his hand and he squeezed back.

Soon the lights of the auditorium flashed to shades of blue, white, and purple for winter colors, and the overhead speakers told everyone to find a seat, and quiet down, recordings and pictures were allowed and a friendly reminder not to plagiarize songs. Killua knew that last part was directed at the students because he knows half of the sleazy songwriters and artists that comes to the showcase can’t
be controlled if they really want to do something nasty like steal a song. Student’s cries increased for a moment as the lack of seats forced people on the ground or on their friends laps and Killua couldn’t remember a time the auditorium was so full.

Killua lifted his head a bit to look at the judges table as they got ready, and he saw the balding head of Netero, Bisoky to his right, and someone that looks familiar to his left… it was definitely an alumni… Oh! That was Satortz! Wow, Gon will be so excited to meet him after! Killua bit his lip. If Gon wins.

“Welcome to the Winter showcase! Without further ado, let’s introduce our first performer and give him a warm welcome!” A stagehand MC said when they came out on stage.

The show started up, and Killua counted the performers that went by in his head to keep track of when Gon would come out. He almost felt bad for anyone else performing in the Showcase. No one was really here to see them except friends or family. They were more like opening acts to the main show they wanted to see, and anything really impressive or enjoyable was an unexpected treat for the others. But everyone knew they weren’t in the running to win with a Zoldyck in the mix. There were some slow beautiful songs, and some fast paced peppy songs, and everyone made sure to give appropriate responses, but sure enough, when Illumi was announced next, the roar was deafening. Killua covered one of his ears with his free hand and Mito did the same.

“That’s who’s Gon’s opponent?” She asked with a wince. Killua nodded.

“I’m sure they’re excited to see some fireworks…” Killua said.

“Maybe Illumi forgot how to sing overnight?” Ponzu said nervously, sitting with the rest of Gon’s friends further in the back since they couldn’t sit in reserved.

“You wish.” Pokkle said. “I just can’t believe we’ll get to see a Zoldyck performance at school admission prices, what a steal! This will be amazing! Like a real Zoldyck concert.” He said.

“Original, too.” Kurapika agreed.

“Guys! We’re supposed to be supporting Gon, not be excited on seeing his opponent!” Melody scolded in her soft voice, nearly lost beneath the screams of the excited crowds.

“Yea!” Ponzu agreed.

“Sorry…” Pokkle chuckled. “We just know, whatever it is, it’ll be good. Let’s hope Gon really did come prepared.”

The curtains opened to Illumi wearing chinese pop inspired clothing, his long silky black hair up with prongs, bangs framing his face, his sleeveless shirt was obviously silk with an intricate design on both the shirt and his long flowing sleeve warmers. The pants fit and showed off the curves of his legs and the power and grace in them. His starting pose showed off all his great lines and shapes, a perfect doll ready to start. The crowd was going crazy with excitement. Killua saw he also had backup dancers to his right and left, 2 on each side wearing similar but severely more simple outfits than Illumi. He obviously wanted to be the main attraction. The music started, EDM, the beat already making people want to dance in their seats. Killua bit his bottom lip. He hopes everyone thinks Gon’s is better.

“I stand here waiting for you to bang the gong, To crash the critics saying, ‘is it right or is it wrong?’” Illumi started, tilting his head attractively, showing just the right emotion he probably rehearsed for each word.
“If only fame had an IV, baby could I bear, Being away from you, I found the vein, put it in here…”
Illumi’s choreography was clean and simple yet captivating. The moves of his backup dancers was
dynamic and they were just walking with normal stage blocking, but the way they crossed was pro.

“I live for the applause, applause, applause. I live for the applause-plause, live for the applause-
plause, Live for the way that you cheer and scream for me! The applause, applause, applause…”
Illumi walked forward on stage, clapping to one side of his head, mimicked by his dancers behind
him. Hisoka watching in the back nodded in time to the music. His friend could sure make some
great noises. He wondered how his precious fruit would do. Is he ripe enough to take on someone as
processed as Illumi?

“Give me that thing that I love (Turn the lights on)! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch (Make
it real loud)! Give me that thing that I love (Turn the lights on)! Put your hands up, make 'em touch,
touch (Make it real loud)! Make it real loud! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch!” Illumi led
the crowd to clapping on beat with him, looking like he was really living off and responding to the
audience.

“(A-P-P-L-A-U-S-E) Make it real loud! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch! I've overheard
your theory… ‘Nostalgia's for geeks.’ I guess sir, if you say so, Some of us just like to read. One
second I'm a kunst, Then suddenly the kunst is me! Pop culture was in art, Now, art's in pop culture
in me!” Killua bit his lip, the song was really good. It was modern, with good bass and beat, easy for
listening weather you wanted to dance or just chill. Killua looked over at the judges table and saw
them bobbing their heads appreciatively or writing quickly.

“I live for the applause, applause, applause. I live for the applause-plause, live for the applause-
plause, Live for the way that you cheer and scream for me. The applause, applause, applause…!
Give me that thing that I love (Turn the lights on)! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch (Make
it real loud)! Give me that thing that I love (Turn the lights on)! Put your hands up, make 'em touch,
touch (Make it real loud)! Make it real loud! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch! (A-P-P-L-A-
U-S-E) Make it real loud! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch! Ooh touch, touch ooh! Touch,
touch now ooh ooh ooh ooh! I live for the applause, applause, applause, I live for the applause-
plause, live for the applause-plause, Live for the way that you cheer and scream for me. The
applause, applause, applause.” Illumi’s dance moves turned more amped as he reached his climax of
music and low fireworks were going off. The audience was eating it up. Illumi vocal and range was
amazing and impressive. Killua could only worry about Gon’s performance after seeing Illumi’s. He
knows Gon’s is good, but he need everyone else to think so too.

“Give me that thing that I love (Turn the lights on)! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch (Make
it real loud)! Give me that thing that I love (Turn the lights on)! Put your hands up, make 'em touch,
touch (Make it real loud)! Make it real loud! Put your hands up, make 'em touch, touch! Ooh touch, touch ooh! Touch,
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knows Gon’s is good, but he need everyone else to think so too.

“A-R-T-P-O-P”

He ended in his ending pose which was like a mirror of his starting pose, not a hair out of place.
Powered off the applause, his performance was as good as any other. The Zoldycks don’t do
anything halfway, that’s for sure. His brother never fails to impress him everytime he does a
performance.

“2 more performances before it’s Gon’s turn…” Killua muttered to himself, but Mito picked it up too
and nodded. Everyone buzzed with Illumi’s performance, and it only made them more excited for
Gon’s. Killua felt bad for the two people in between. Who would want to follow an act like that?
And who would want to be the one that goes before Gon Freecss? But those numbers passed soon
enough. No one would blame them for feeling the lackluster, they were just civilians in the power war.

“I’m off, aunt Mito.” Killua said turning to the lady next to him. “I’m gonna give Gon my support from the wings.”

“Oh, yes, yes, of course.” She nodded, giving his hand one last squeeze before letting go. He kissed her on the cheek and stood, going to jog up the steps. He just had to flash the bodyguard his pass and he was backstage. He looked left and right, but he saw Gon was already on stage, setting up. He was bouncing slightly on his feet as he let out nerves in the form of sharp exhales.

“Gon!” Killua cried out and Gon whipped his head over there in a flash. “You’ve got it! I’m right here! Just give it your all!” The wide smile Gon gave him in response could shame the sun. Killua blushed as he gave a wobbly smile back. How could Gon be so amazing? Gon doesn’t deserve to be this stressed. Gon gave him a determined nod and faced the closed curtains, less shaken than before.

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Gon felt like this was an out of body experience, his nerve endings prickling with constant buzzing before fading out to feel nothing. His vision swam to see everything in vivid detail, and the moves and lyrics of his performance played itself over and over in his head on 100x speed so many times in his head, it’s a wonder he hasn’t already performed it yet.

It was weird to feel and know Killua was standing to the right of him, he felt like he could feel him shift foot to foot, and when he wasn’t looking at him. He was just hyper aware of him right now, but he knows it helps him, knowing Killua was there for him. He heard from under water the speakers announce his name, and he heard the muffled roar of the crowd from behind the curtain. He closed his eyes to focus his energy.

He would do this with no regrets. He’s going to give it his all, and know there was nothing better he could have done to succeed if he does it like this.

The cheers of the crowd got more clear and Gon knew the curtains opened. He opened his eyes with his brightest smile, feeling the lights on him and the energy of the crowd was pumping him up, and he was ready to perform.

In moments like this, he feels the most alive.

The music started and Gon began his performance.

“If you love it like I love it, And you feel what I feel inside! If you want it like I want it, Then baby let's get it tonight! If you feel it, say hell yeah (hell yeah)! Say hell yeah (hell yeah)! And say hell yeah (hell yeah)! This is love, this is love, this is love!” Gon was happy the audience was responding back nicely and was happy he had everyone’s support again.

“Can you feel the love? Can you feel the love? Can you feel the love? This is love, this is love, this is love!” Gon sang out beautifully before launching into the rap.

“This is love for the beats, Feel it in the streets. Love for the melody, notes on a sheet. The dope crusader, Funky terminator. I created me a rocket just so we could rock it later! And the way the beat is knocking, Got me feeling alright, 'Cause the DJ got me walking on the ceiling all night! I got a rocket for the globe, Bomb it, just go! I fill it up with love and then I watch it explode!” Gon hit all his in between dance moves perfectly, even making some up based off how the audience was responding. He knew how to play to the audience if anything.
“If you love it like I love it, And you feel what I feel inside! If you want it like I want it, Then baby let's get it tonight! If you feel it, say hell yeah (hell yeah)! Say hell yeah (hell yeah)! And say hell yeah (hell yeah)! This is love, this is love, this is love!”

“Can you feel the love? Can you feel the love? Can you feel the love? This is love, this is love, this is love!”

People loved the techno in between the song and rap, jumping out their seats to dance like it was a club. People were swept up in Gon, his mood, his music, his play, and his stage. They loved everything about it. Hisoka found he was never disappointed with whatever Gon did, he was proud of this little pup growing up and showing what he can do. This will surely be a tight race, he wonders what will happen.

“This is love for the bass, and love for the treble! Love for the orchestra, violoncello, Love for computer beats, harder than metal! House beats housing, bouncing in the ghetto!” They edited the music to have natural instruments play during the mention of the instruments, and people cheered in appreciation, especially those that major in orchestra. The thing they loved the most was the obvious blatant love Gon had for music, all music, and the music he delivers like individual gifts to everyone.

“We sip 'til we smashed up, feeling alright, And we rock the ghetto blaster, rocking all night. I sent a rocket to the globe, Bomb it, just go, I fill it up with love and then I watch it explode!”

"Yeah, baby, yeah, alright. Can you feel it? Good god, yeah, alright!” Gon’s mouthpiece mic was edited to be like auto tuned, and as he vocalized his words, everyone cheered with love for the whole performance. It returned back to normal audio as Gon delivered his range and vocal.

“Can you feel the love? Can you feel the love? Can you feel the love? This is love, this is love, this is love” The stage lights danced around, making a real party theme and fun vibe. The lights were like apart of his choreography.

“This is love, this is love, this is love
This is love, this is love, this is love
This is love, this is love, this is love
This is love, this is love, this is love

“Can you feel the love?
Can you feel the love?
Can you feel the love?
Can you feel the love?
Can you feel the love?
Can you feel the love?
Can you feel the love?
Can you feel the love?”

He finished off in a wide motion, pumping in the air, a wide smile on his face. The performance was great, Killua was whooping on the side along with everyone in the audience. It was amazing, and
certainly an experience. Gon always knew how to move the audience in with him and take them on a trip. His mood and voice promotes good time and makes everyone enjoy the performance better. Everyone who wasn’t already up jumped to their feet to applause Gon and he bowed while panting, waving at everyone like they were at his own concert and he was thanking them for coming out. Everyone was happy with Gon’s piece, it was truly what Gon stood for, and if anyone even talked to Gon for 5 minutes, they would think it fit him perfectly. His song certainly made everyone feel included.

Killua laughed, putting a hand to his head. He felt delirious with happiness and joy, that was so good! Gon sometimes forgot moves, and made up new ones, or he added new things that weren’t rehearsed, but none of it felt like a slip or mess up, it was natural and flowed into the other. Gon was truly a performer through and through, it takes a lot to be be able to come up with good stuff on the fly too, not just stick to the script.

Gon bounced off stage in giant leaps towards Killua and scooped him up in a circling hug.

“Mh my gosh, Gon, you were amazing! You did so good!” Killua laughed as Gon peppered his face with kisses and nuzzles.

“It felt amazing! I had so much fun! And it’s thanks to you, you helped me so much, and I kept thinking about you while I was out there, thank you, thankyouthankyou!” He gushed, giving a large nuzzle into Killua’s neck, making him laugh.

“Gon, stop!” He laughed. Gon put him down but kept him in his arms.

“The important thing is I did my best, and that’s all that matters.”

“And I think it will be enough.” Killua said in all seriousness, holding Gon’s hands. “You can’t lose.” Gon swallowed.

“I’ll believe you.” He smiled, resting his head on Killua’s shoulder.

“C’mon, let’s rest. The end of show line up is in a couple more performances.” Killua hummed, pulling him along. “You’ve worked hard. Rest now.”

Killua was proud that the performances leading up to the end of the Showcase didn’t give up simply because they knew they wouldn’t win, but they gave it their all and performed for the joy of performing and music. Gon should be happy his teachings really did come to affect the mass of the school.

“Alright, will all performers line up on stage now? In order from 1st performed to last performed, starting on stage left.” The stagehands instructed everyone backstage. Gon pouted up at Killua, who was sitting on his lap, limbs tangled up as they cuddled on one chair.

“You gotta go. And see who won.” Killua said, pushing back Gon’s hair on his head. He mouthed ‘it’s you’ to Gon before he winked with a smile. Gon smiled back as best as he could, but he couldn’t help the nervous pit in his stomach. He did everything he could… what if it wasn’t enough? Killua got off him and Gon got up after, stretching as he moved to the stage once more. Most people were already lined up, including Illumi, and Gon took his spot 2 spaces down from him. He focused on his breathing and calming exercises Killua taught him. A couple minutes later, and Gon could see even Killua was nervously fidgeting in the wings. Why weren’t the curtains opening?

“Excuse me, what is taking so long?” A contestant asked, stepping out of line. The stagehands were
all gathered together to one side, murmuring under their breaths to each other. One parted from the group to address them.

“Sorry, we only open the curtains when the judges have passed us the envelope that tell us the winner. They are still deliberating out there. We know you’re all ansty, but please wait a little longer.” They said. The group let out groan and Gon could feel people looking over sympathetically at him. Gon hardened his gaze on the stage floor in front of him and tried not to focus on anything else. He just won’t think about it.

Soon, the stage hands were moving busy again, and they instructed everyone to stand tall and ready. It must not have been longer than 5 minutes since the end of the last performance of the Showcase, but it might as well have been eternity for Gon. The stage curtains were opening and everyone gave a final applause to everyone who performed and worked so hard during this showcase.

They all bowed as instructed during rehearsal and on cue with the stagehand on the wings in stage right. The main MC came over to the center stage.

“Wow, what a night! Every single act was amazing, but it’s time to declare who was the best tonight!” She said, opening up the envelope. Everyone spoke in hushed whispers or not at all, too excited to know who really won. She pulled out the envelope card, and read it over once and her expression faltered a bit before she read it again.

“And the winner is…!” She said, pulling up her stage presence again. “Illumi Zoldyck!” It sounded like the whole world gasped as one, a couple handfuls of student applauding right away as Illumi’s fans and advocates. Killua held his hands over his open mouth in the wings, as most did. Hisoka was surprised and a little off put. This wasn’t the plan. He never wanted Gon to leave the school… as much as he supported Illumi, Illumi didn’t have a career on the line even if he lost. He hoped Gon would win so he can still see what he could do.

“Naturally.” Illumi commented slightly to walk forward as instructed during rehearsal. Gon felt like he went deaf, or maybe it was just that nobody was making any noise. He might have gone blind too. He has no idea what happened. Did she just say…?

He felt like he had no lungs and there was just a cavity in his chest where they were suppose to be, floating in air. His arms buzzed with numbing electricity in the worst way, and he closed his eyes when he felt his vision swim.

I… lost? He gasped out, unable to really come to terms with it.

“No! Boo!” Killua roared out from his spot. He rushed to move forward on stage to call off the whole thing, call off the bet, grab Gon and and run away or something. This was unfair, this was stupid, Gon should have won! But he was grabbed by the bodyguard from before.

“Don’t make a scene. I’m gonna have to ask you to leave the stage.” He said.

“What?! NO! Boo! I reject this, booo!” He cried, but he was barely heard except for those in the front row.

Mito, in the front row heard him, past her shock of her little boy losing, and the pain she felt at seeing her little boy so crushed, heard Killua. She stood up quick as lightning.

“Booo!! Recall! Bad judgement! Booo!” She cried, cupping her mouth to be heard although it wouldn’t have been hard with how quiet it was in the auditorium. The next to stand up were Kurapika, Melody, Zushi, Ponzu, and Pokkle.
“Booo!” They shouted together. “No good! NG! Do it again! Booo!”

Then the girl group Gon had danced with before in the beginning of the school year stood up, then those in his harmony class, and the other classes, the ones he did rap battle with, anyone who’s met with Gon and interacted with him began jumping up and booing, crying out their dissent with the decision.

Gon opened his eyes with furrowed brows, looking out at the ocean of people booing the results. Illumi quirked an eyebrow but did nothing else. The MC did her best to try and calm the crowd, but they kept on booing. Gon was worried they were gonna start a riot soon or something, but no one on stage really knew what to do. Do they keep standing here, or…?

Then Netero was standing up from the Judges table and making his way up the stairs to the stage. The other two judges had their heads down and shaking them.

Netero gently asked for the mic with a gesture and the MC gave it up, no problem. She didn’t know what to do anyways. Netero lifted his hand for quiet and soon the audience quieted down.

Netero looked left and right at everyone, making sure he had everyone’s full attention.

“Illumi is the winner.” He stated again, like driving home the point on a math equation. More boos erupted and Gon held his head in his hands. Hearing Netero say it made it more real. What will he do?

Netero called for quiet again.

“He performed the best. He had the best dance moves with complexity and grace. His music was clean and his pitch was perfect according to all three judges. Every component of performance wasn’t excess or wasted, but everything was used to perfect space. To our charts and teachings, Illumi scored the highest.”

Everyone quieted down to listen to his reasoning, and when he finished, everyone started up their own arguments, a very audible “Gon” being able to be made out in everyone’s words. Netero called for quiet again.

“Gon did very well! Second place, too.” Gon squeezed his eyes shut. That close? “However, not all his dances were clean, his pitch could use some work, he could have engaged the audience a little more. Illumi just performed better than Gon.”

More outcry and protests from the crowd, and Netero looked like he was looking around attentively. He pointed at someone in the front.

“What do you think, what is it?” Netero asked, and suddenly Cheadle was there giving him a mic. Gon squinted past the stage lights and saw it was actually Todo!

“Illumi did all those things better, but I enjoyed Gon’s performance more! Sure, he might not have been as technically good as Illumi but we didn’t even notice. Gon’s first place to us!” Todo said, and the audience cheered in agreement.

“Mmmhh, interesting. Anyone else? You.” Netero said pointing off to the girl group leader. She received a mic too.

“We don’t care about the technicalities of performing. If anything, this was a textbook case that how much fun you have while performing can make people have a better time than showing off how talented you are.”
More cheers from the crowd. Netero nodded.

“So you guys are saying we shouldn’t value skill above passion to decide who shows best promise of being a performer?” He asked, and the roar of applause in return was amazingly loud. Netero nodded, and Gon bit his lip. He felt his head thumping from the hurricane of emotions that has gone through him in this one minute. What was happening?

“Then let that be a lesson to all of you,” Netero said. “I’ve been principal of this school for a long time, and technicalities and skill set was all that was important to you all. I couldn’t get you to love the music like how the consumers want you to, because that’s what they love, seeing your passion. So, now you know what the people want. Remember to put that in your music. You guys want Gon to be the winner?” Netero asked. The crowd cheered back its agreement. Netero smiled, and nodded.

“Gon is the winner of the Winter Showcase!” He said. Gon gasped, blinking and unbelieving. The whole auditorium stood up in cheers. They were keeping Gon! Gon’s friends hugged one another, and the bodyguard finally let go of Killua so he could run out to Gon. He jumped on him in a hug.

“You did it! You won!” Gon snapped out of it with the weight of Killua on him and he squeezed the hug back.

“Oh my gosh! Killua! I won the Showcase!”

Illumi’s eyebrows twitched downwards and stomped to Netero.

“Excuse me. This is unacceptable. I was truly the winner, you just declared Gon the winner over some outcries of the audience-!” Illumi said. Netero shook his head.

“Everyone at the judges table wanted Gon to be the winner. We all agreed with the points the students made themselves with the technicality being lower but the performance better. But based on the sheet in front of us, you should have won. So I used it as a learning lesson to everyone. Gon truly was the winner, but I needed to show a point.” Illumi looked at Netero with a blank face than said, “You’re mean.”

Netero laughed then shrugged.

“Sorry, but at least you can be confident in your abilities. They’re really impressive and honed.” He patted Illumi on the shoulder.

“I get to stay!” Gon cried bringing Killua down to hug him to his chest. “I get to stay with you…”

“Good job, Gon…” Killua breathed against his lips. Gon smiled and closed the distance. He can’t wait for the rest of his time at Musica Academy.

Lol, it totally slipped my mind to ask you all for Illumi suggestions!

Thanks so much for reading! There has been so many great alternative music suggestions for Gon to sing for the final showcase, I have to put them up for you all to see!

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-Paris in the Rain- Lauv (Cute summer concert type feel, I like the mood it gives!) [suggested by Happinessxhunter]

-DROELOE- Backbone (Lol, it doesn’t have the exact message I wanted Gon to give during the
concert, but the EDM, beat and music is closer I had in mind. Check it out!) [suggested by Sockbootoo]

-Best of me- NEFFEX (PERFECT For Gon concert, the lyrics and everything except for a couple, and it’s a little bit of ranged beat instead of a wide range of beats I’d like) [suggested by GABBYDAK-NERD on FFnet]

-Aint no mountain high enough, Freischwimmer Ft. Dionne Bromfield calvo remix (Super fun and more to the beat of how I wanted the song to sound like for a pumping concert song that could win a showcase by bringing up the energy and being relatable, but it is a remix of a cover song, and originals only in the showcase, but it's a great honorary mention for Gon's concert.) [suggested by GABBYDAK-NERD on FFnet]

-Thunder by Imagine Dragons (The original song I was going to have Gon sing because it has so much of what I wanted the song to be.)

-We Don’t Care- Let’s get it (The original original song I was going to have Gon sing because I was on Chapter two of the story, and needed some sort of guideline in my head for what I wanted to song to sound like when I allude to it in the story. I think the lyrics of winning and not giving up and partying to victory was a nice amped up song for Gon to sing for the win.)

-Hurricane - Forever in Your Mind (It’ just a good song I couldn’t work into getting Gon to sing because it was too much about love).

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So a slightly sad story, I must tell you all I’m going to be entering a hiatus! I’m estimating it to be about 4 months, depending on how fast I work. I LOVE LOVE LOVE this story, and would never abandon it, so I want you all to put that out of your mind! But during this hiatus, I will be going back through the chapters to edit them to my preference, planning my future story arcs with my editor, writing said story chapters as to get my buffer back up again, and generally partaking in other things hxh.

I do love this story, but sometimes I get overwhelmed and bogged down with having to get the next chapter out, so I almost never have time for my other hxh projects like AMVs, pictures, AU development, and other stories in the works. I just want some time to do other stuff other than the music au. And since the hiatus will include my summer, hopefully I will end my hiatus sometime around August!

But while you wait, I would like to shamelessly promote other stories that I love that I have read and have greatly influenced my character development of this story, from story length, Killua characteristic and headcanons, Gon characteristics and headcanons, or general format!

-The Tree of Plenty by Idnis on Ao3
Pretty cute and fluffy, good for all ages I think!

-Guard Dog by Maddylovesyou on ffnet
RATED M, I DO NOT ADVISE KIDS READ! It is a furry story, but a lot of my Gon and Killua characteristics come from this story.

-Heh Killua by dadou on ffnet
RATED M, I DO NOT ADVISE KIDS READ! It is nonconsensual sex story with undertoning lessons about child sex abuse, so if you’re not mature with it, or that’s too intense for you, don’t read, it’s fine if you don’t. I’m in love with their writing style and they inspired my story length.
“And cut!” Director Twila Star shouted from her director’s chair as the dynamic camera zoomed out from the stage and over the audiences’ heads. “That’s a wrap, everybody! The final scene is recorded, we can move to edit and release the finished product. Good job everybody!”

“Whoo!” Everyone started clapping and cheering and hugging each other and telling everyone good job.

“This was the longest project I’ve ever been on…” Melody laughed with her co-workers.

“I just hope they like the movie!” Zushi said and the older members around him just cooed him and patted his cheeks as was the running gag since they came on set day one. He just rolled his eyes and laughed with them. Most people in the audience began going on stage to congratulate and talk to the main stars of the production. That was when an intern turned on music over the loudspeaker.

~ Da da da dum dum da dum dum ~ 

Da da da dum dum da dum dum  

Da da da dum dum da dum dum  

Da da da dum dum  

The actors cheered and started dancing to the music. Killua pulled Gon forward and Gon let out a laugh, knowing what was happening next because it just happened way too often on set. Killua began lip syncing the words as they came out the speakers, facing Gon and miming the words in a dance.
“~Baby you the best cause you worked me out! I keep building walls up but you tear ’em down. I’m fighting; I don’t wanna like it but you know I like it, But you know I like it like it like it!~” Gon, of course, fell into the playful style along with Killua and put on the air of a smooth playboy, crossing his arms loosely and checking out Killua in character.

“~Used to always think I was bulletproof, But you got an AK and your blowing through! Explosive, you don’t even know it, I want you to know it, I want you to know it know it know it!~

Director Star couldn’t help it, this will at least make good bloopers. She instructed the camera director to catch the action on stage with Killua and Gon lip syncing and the other actors dancing and encouraging them on around them.

“~All of them other boys can walk away! They ain't even in the game... ’Cause they know that you own it, You got this swag you got this attitude. Wanna hear you say my name!~” Killua mouthed, walking around Gon with flirtatious movements, and over delivered in a way that showed he wasn’t singing. Gon wrapped Killua up in a hug and took over the lip syncing since Killua was basically butchering it at that point.

“~’Cause you got me Flying with your love, shining with your love, riding with your love! I feel like I'm on top of the world with your love!~

“~One hit with your love can't quit with your love so sick but so what? I feel like I'm on top of the world with your love!~” Illumi came into the center to lip sync and the co-workers cheered, scandalized. Killua and Gon made ‘o’ faces as they danced backwards, ready to watch their co-star too. Hisoka slinked out to dance with his counterpart. Illumi readily took Hisoka as a prop to dance and sing around.

“~Everybody wants what I got with you, ’Cause I’m standing on top with a killer view! Inspired, feeling like a million, I'm one in a million, I'm one in a million million million!~” Illumi showed off some pop and lock skills as he danced around Hisoka and then dropped it low. The crowd still watching rang out in impressed cheers.

“~I ain't even here I'm in outer space, Like I'm Venus, you’re mars in the milky way. It's crazy, what your doing to me, how you do it to me, How you do it to me to me to me! All of them other boys can walk away, They ain't even in the game! ’Cause they know that you own it! You got this swag you got this attitude... Wanna hear you say my name!~”

The camera zoomed out and glided over to where others were dancing and doing their own lip syncing too. Pokkle and Ponzu was dancing with each, miming the song words with airplane arms as they sang and couple dancing.

“~’Cause you got me Flying with your love, shining with your love, riding with your love! I feel like I'm on top of the world with your love!~

Kurapika and Melody were doing their own little classy dance together. Kurapika held Melody’s hand as he led her through spins and twirls, as he lip synced.

“~One hit with your love can't quit with your love so sick but so what? I feel like I'm on top of the world with your love!~”

The camera set up back to center stage where Pokkle, Hisoka, and Gon set up across from their production counter parts and mouthed the wrapping to them.

“~Oh, you got it...~” Hisoka started while the other two danced over to their counterpart in their
character. “~ Yeah, yeah, you got it, I could slow it down, speed it up how you want it, girl…”

“~All night long, And I don't even care if you sing my songs wrong. 1st date, 1st base, 2nd date, 2nd base…” Gon sang next, ghosting his lips over Killua’s neck. Killua giggled while flushing red, pushing Gon’s face and squeezing his cheek to his shoulder to stop the sensation.

“~3rd date (ha ha ha), you're looking at me funny, You got a hard shell but the middle's so yummy! ” Pokkle finished at the end, holding Ponzu close to him.

“~ Cause you got me flying, baby, I'm shining, baby, I'm riding with your love!” Ponzu sang, showing off some belly dancing moves.

“~One hit, baby, I can't quit, baby, I'm so sick but so what?” Killua lip synced back at Gon, poking different parts of Gon’s face playfully.

“~Cause you got me flying, baby, I'm shining, baby, I'm riding with your love!” Illumi lip synced after.

“~One hit, baby, I can't quit, baby, I'm so sick but so what?” Cheering broke out as Leorio came on stage with a box of donuts, lip syncing too. “~'Cause I'm on top of the world!”

“Flying with your love, shining with your love, riding with your love! I feel like I'm on top of the world with your love!” Kurapika lip synced as he came over to Leorio, laughing a bit at seeing their favorite person on set. He couldn’t wait to work with him. Gon and Killua quickly took the box of donuts from his hands and tried to act natural and lip sync while leaving the stage to leave everyone in the middle of what they started in first place to eat the box of donuts by themselves.

“~One hit with your love can't quit with your love so sick but so what? I feel like I'm on top of the world with your love!”

~ Da da da da dum dum dum dum dum dum

Da da da da dum dum dum

Da da da da dum dum dum dum

Da da da da dum dum

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Featured song:

Ur Love- Cher Llyod
Hi! Guys! HELLO Again! Wow, it's been forever, and I missed you guys and I missed this story! It's so positive and uplifting, and whenever I go back and reread these reviews, they really lift my spirits up, so much! This is the prologue I promised you back in May... it was... technically written back then, but I was never satisfied with it, and I thought I'd have more written for it by now... But thank you all for your patience, and sorry to people I made believe this story was finished and over. Next arcs will be up soon!

I am in Grad School now, so my time is limited, but I get saddened out here very easily, so I'm going to try and write more of this story, since this is such a source of joy in my life. Also, update, I am going through some soul searching stuff, and so I won't be replying to all of the reviews anymore like I used to, just the ones that need answering. The future chapters in the future arcs will be NO WHERE near as long as the chapters in the first arc, I just don't have the time for it anymore. And because time is such a factor, there will be no more updating schedule anymore. It will be lots of updates if I find the time to write, and sometimes no update at all for weeks if I'm really busy. But I want to thank everyone for sticking with me, and all the helpful reviews that let me know everyone is still supportive of me. Thanks and don't forget to suggest musics if you know any good ones! I have been listening to spotify and I have new songs to replace in the original outline, lol.

ALSO, if you guys want a spotify playlist of the songs in Bells and Whistles, I can try that too if the YouTube list isn't all that. Thanks again, and please enjoy! I'll put info on the upcoming arc so you guys can think of songs to suggest and EXPECT THE NEXT ARC TO START UPDATING IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER!

(Vote if you're in America!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Prologue: Musics of the heart

Snow fell softly outside in flurries of white and soft blues, landing on trees stripped bare of their foliage and buildings with people holed up inside to stay warm. It looked like the world was covered in a fluffy coat made of soft white fur, glowing a pastel blue since the early morning sun was cowering behind the blanket of clouds, probably as cold as the residents in town.

The snow was undisturbed since it was so early, no one was up yet. It was Christmas break after all, and Gon’s neighborhood wasn’t like the city where business folk still had to be awake before the sun was up to go to work. In the cozy little niche of Gon’s town, most small businesses and stores opened when the people were awake, a little later than 7 am.

But Gon was awake at this time anyway.

He’ll probably never get used to the sight of snow. No matter how many times he’s seen it, it will leave him in awe every time. It sort of reminded him of a certain snow haired cutie that was laying next to him, sound a sleep on his bed.
Gon watched with a smile as another snowflake danced it’s little waltz down towards Gon’s window, press itself against the glass and melt until it was unseen and the snowflake was lost. Maybe that would sadden most people, to see something so beautiful melt away so quickly, and without many noticing it before it faded away in the first place. But he thinks it’s beautiful. It reminded him of a performance-- you practice and train for something for weeks and months, but only to give the performance for a moment, a second, and then it’s over. All that work for entertaining for a couple minutes. There was something satisfying about it. He couldn’t explain it, but it was why people did it even though it was over so quickly.

Gon turned his eyes away from that wonder scene to look back at another. He held in a coo at seeing Killua curled up slightly against one of the extra pillows Gon had gotten when Killua started sleeping over more often, a blue pillowcase on it to indicate it was Killua’s. His mouth was open slightly with soft snoring, and his hair was painted to look like the lights outside, a light blue and white. His hand was half curled into a fist and Gon couldn’t help it, he stuck one finger in the crevice and held back his giggles as Killua tightened his fist sleepily, trying to hold it. His giggles died as Killua’s face scrunched up and his blue eyes began peeking out behind his eyelashes.

“Oops.” Gon muttered, feeling warmth on his cheeks despite the cold setting.

“What are you doing?” Killua asked, getting more awake every moment. In his consciousness, he realized Gon’s one finger was in his grip and he reopened his hands to take all of Gon’s hand into his. “Why are you awake?” He asked, starting to sit up.

“I didn’t mean to wake you, Killua. You can lay back down.” Gon said, admiring how well Killua’s hands fit in his, his pale skin against his darker skin.

“What time is it?” Killua asked, his sleepiness indicating to him it was pretty early, but he didn’t know how early.

“Mmh, I think maybe 6:30.”

“What, Gon, what are you doing waking me up at an ungodly hour like this?” Killua cried, his sleepy eyes widening more in shock.

“I said you can go back to sleep! And don’t act like you don’t wake up at this hour for other stuff like photo shoots.” Gon said, feeling wronged. Killua scoffed, but just scooted closer to Gon, putting his head on Gon’s shoulder, his eyelids drooping.

“What are you doing?” He repeated in a hum. Gon chuckled slightly, amused at Killua. It seems like he’ll be attempting to be staying awake with Gon even though he’s obviously sleepy.

“It started snowing early morning. I’ve been watching the snow fall.” Gon answered, looking back out the window. Killua scrunched his nose in distaste, even though Gon couldn’t see it. Who would wake up early just to see the snow fall?

“It’s just snow.” Killua said, shaking his head, not understanding. Gon was about to shrug, but remembered he’d be bumping his shoulder to Killua’s head.

“I dunno, it’s beautiful to me. Its air and water, softly holding each other, coming down softly, and they look they’re dancing. The bonds are so fragile, they’ll melt if they hit anything warmer than them, but they make a blanket put all together. And they remind me of you.”


“No, beautiful and unique.” Gon answered, looking back at Killua’s face. His face soured but his
cheeks were red.

“You’re so… cheesy.” He rubbed his face once and let out a sigh that sounded like he was about to go to sleep again. Gon shook his head with a laugh and wrapped his opposite arm around Killua’s front and slowly lowered them both back down to the pillows. When their heads settled on the pillows, Killua shifted to properly cuddle into Gon, the top of his head in the crook of Gon’s neck and his arm over Gon’s chest.

Gon smiled affectionately as he held Killua. He likes the snow, but the warmth of Killua was way better.

Mito loves the holidays. It’s a time where she can relax at home, and Gon is home too because of school winter break. They spend quality time together— they cook meals, they watch Christmas specials, they make crafts and cards, go Christmas shopping, and go downtown to see the lights.

She also loves Gon being home because he goes around singing while he does anything and she’s home to hear it, like he’s her little songbird— something she hasn’t called Gon in a while.

But this Christmas is a very special one, because now Gon has a little tweety bird with him. Mito can hear Gon sing anytime from wherever he is in their small apartment, she loves hearing the cheer and happiness in his voice. But now, very often, he’s coupled with another smooth voice, usually mindlessly singing along with him in harmony. Unrehearsed sudden pitch changes would result in giggles, playful scolding, and pretend singing lessons, most of the time from Killua.

Mito remembers when Gon would tell her how Killua wouldn’t sing at all, and after hearing more about Killua’s family bit by bit through tidbits or inference, she could easily guess why. A caged bird won’t sing, and it brings relief and joy to hear Killua around her house, singing idly and freely. She’s happy Gon’s found Killua and freed him so that he could once again sing free.

She watches them put presents together, paper wrinkled pitifully beneath their fingers, and tape on their faces from a wrapping war they had shortly before. The house is alot more cheerful and lively with both of them here for the holidays, and she hopes this places feels as much as home to Killua as much as Killua’s made her holiday feel like home.

Mito just loves the holidays.

Gon bounced excitedly as he waited by the front door of the apartment. Gon wore a large heavy jacket and cargo pants, long underwear underneath, his usual green boots and turtle earmuffs. Killua was taking him on a date! And Killua said he had a surprise for him! Gon was so excited, but Killua was taking forever! And Gon saw Mito laughing at him from behind her hand as she flipped through some TV channels. Killua already told her she didn’t have to make anything for dinner for them tonight, so she was just relaxing for now.

Just before Gon was about to call for Killua, Killua came out, wearing a long sleeved knit sweater with a pastel blue jacket over it, a beanie hat over his head, jeans and ankle boots.

“Alright, let’s go!” He sniffed, shamelessly acting like he wasn’t the one holding them back. Gon could only laugh as Killua took his hand and rushed them out the door.
They walked down to the lakeside, where there were lights strung out across the streetlights and on the storefronts in multiple colors. Snow covered everything like an coat, and people busied about in winter clothes that made them 3 times bigger than they actually were.

They went about window shopping, talking to each other as naturally as it always was, and joking around, keeping each other warm in the cold with just their voices.

Gon’s hand was interlocked with Killua’s and Killua was starting to lose himself in his happiness with Gon so close. Carolers were singing so nicely on the edge of the lake, and everything was decorated so beautifully from head to toe. Killua wanted to surprise Gon with a song, to show him how happy he is that Gon’s in his life, especially during this time of year. How much better everything has been since Gon has been in his life. And how easily he feels he can sing when Gon’s with him, Gon deserves to know...

“ You're here where you should be! Snow is falling as the carolers sing, It just wasn't the same…
Alone on Christmas day. Presents, what a beautiful sight! Don't mean a thing if you ain't holding me tight. You're all that I need Underneath the tree! ” Killua sang, swinging Gon’s arm over his shoulders and snuggling up to Gon’s side. Gon’s eyes widened in delight at hearing Killua sing to him. His words only made him feel good and warm inside. He squeezed Killua to his side, happy he has Killua too.

“ Tonight, I'm gonna hold you close! Make sure that you know I was lost before you…! Christmas was cold and grey. Another holiday alone to celebrate! But then one day everything changed! You're all I need, Underneath the tree!” Killua looked up at Gon through his eyelashes, Gon’s heart doing a weird hiccup in response. Gon wanted to make sure none of Killua’s Christmases were like the last ones, where he had no one or no reason to feel happy, just trapped in his own house.

“ You're here where you should be! Snow is falling as the carolers sing!” Killua sang, stepping away from Gon to spin in a circle while looking up at the sky darkened sky with snow gently falling. He stopped, walking backwards to face Gon, hands behind his back.

“ It just wasn't the same, Alone on Christmas day! Presents, what a beautiful sight! Don't mean a thing if you ain't holding me tight! ” Killua wrapped his arms around himself, shimmying in a small dance, but Gon didn’t want Killua dancing over there by himself, he wanted to be over there holding him, and he moved to do just that. Killua opened his arms and put his forehead’s to Gon’s as he continued singing. “ You're all that I need Underneath the tree…”

Gon opened his mouth to sing with Killua too, but Killua put a finger to Gon’s lips, eliciting a confused eyebrow raise and a quizzical grunt. Killua took Gon’s hands and began walking them towards a Christmas decorated themed stage, people up on the raised platform tuning their guitars and sound checking.

“ I found what I was looking for… A love that's meant for me! A heart that's mine completely!
Knocked me right off my feet, And this year I will fall With no worries at all… 'Cause you are near and everything's clear…!” Killua sang as he walked them backwards to the white crystal lights and frost decorations. Gon gaped at Killua as he let go of his hands and leaped on stage, singing, “ You're all I need Underneath the tree!”

Killua was going to perform? In public? For free? For Gon…? He felt like his chest was swelling up, watching his white haired fairy leap up on the stage and bring about a presence of light and cheer and Christmas mood.

“ You're here where you should be! Snow is falling as the carolers sing!” Killua sang light hearted and free, closing his eyes as he hit the higher notes, and when he opened his eyes to look at Gon, it
was like electricity. Killua looked amazing, and brought about obvious envy and admiration to the crowd quickly forming, but all of it was for Gon. All Killua’s attention, affection, and intentions were for him, and no one else. And Gon’s sure he loves this Christmas present.

“It just wasn't the same Alone on Christmas day! Presents, what a beautiful sight, Don't mean a thing if you ain't holding me tight! You're all that I need Underneath the tree!”

The music slowed as Killua held his eyes with Gon’s, and he just looked glowing. Gon barely registered they were outside in public, or even that anything else existed except for the two of them. Gon felt love bubble in his chest for this beautiful boy that deserved so much.

“And then one day everything changed… You're all I need Underneath the tree! You're here where you should be! Snow is falling as the carolers sing! It just wasn't the same, Alone on Christmas day… Presents, what a beautiful sight! Don't mean a thing if you ain't holding me tight… You're all that I need Underneath the tree… Tonight!” Killua finished singing, the bells being rung musically behind him by the accompanying people. They continued on the instrumental mood music as Killua climbed off the stage, the crowd parting as they realized he wasn’t heading to any of them. He stopped in front of Gon and he didn’t waste a second pulling him in for a perfect kiss under the snowy sky. They parted with barely any space between them and Gon couldn’t help his merry grin.

“Merry Christmas, Gon.”

“Merry Christmas, Killua…” Gon said against Killua’s lips before pulling Killua in for another kiss. Yes, this is exactly where Killua should be. In Gon’s arms, just like this, the most perfect gift and the reason for a perfect holiday.

Killua gave Gon his present, shyly. He was obviously embarrassed, but tried to hide it under a confidence guise, rubbing his nose, teasingly saying Gon better like his gift.

Gon replied by saying he would love whatever it was, because it was Killua’s gift. Mito did what she did every year and recorded the present openings. Killua was a bit embarrassed about it at first, but Gon teased him about having years of experience of being behind the camera and Mito assured no one would see it but family.

Gon opened the present gingerly after having tried to open it and heard a rattle. He gasped at the sight. Killua explained how he noticed Gon never really got good headphones even when Killua told him it would be really beneficial. So this Christmas, he got him the best headphones he could find on market-- wireless, lightweight, crystal clear audio-- and in a dark green to match most of his wardrobe.

Gon hopped on Killua to hug him in an excited and happy flurry. Now Gon was excited but nervous for Killua to open his. When Killua did open it, all he could do was laugh. Gon pouted, actually blushing a bit, barking for Killua to stop laughing. He wanted to know if Killua liked it! Was he laughing because he thought it was so stupid it’s suppose to be joke?

Killua wiped away a tear from laughing, before pulling out the contents of reindeer ears and a red nose along with elf ears with the small green hat, connected to a chocolate Christmas tree. Killua explained to Gon he thought this was so cute, and so very ‘Gon-like’-- and he loved it, every bit of it. Gon was overjoyed, and wanted Killua to put the stuff on. Killua wasn’t about to do that, unless Gon put on the other headgear too. Killua wore the elf ears and hat and Gon wore the reindeer antlers with the nose and they split the Christmas tree. They put on Christmas specials on the TV after they
opened Mito’s gifts (socks and accessories) and chatted with each other in their character. They fell asleep with hot cocoa in the stomachs, the empty cups in front of them on the small table, cuddle up to each other under a thin blanket. They both forgot that Mito did have her camera trained on them for the whole ordeal and took a last commemorative photo of the reindeer and elf sleeping next to each other in front of the couch.

“Why do you still have mistletoes up?” Killua laughed, dodging the greenery hanging over the archway leading from the kitchen to the living room. “Christmas is over.” He shot his playful glare over his shoulder at Pokkle, watching Gon step around it playfully.

“But the Christmas season is not.” Pokkle chuckled, his large green Christmas sweater matching his orange red hair.

“This is what we get for coming to a New Years party. We should have just stayed home.” Killua poked Gon in the chest as Gon came to stand next to Killua. Gon shrugged, in too good a mood to care.

“Pokkle asked, and it’s fun to hang with friends, isn’t it?” Gon asked, leaning closer to Killua even though it was easy for Gon to be heard over the ambient music. Killua rolled his eyes, onto Gon’s mischief, leaning back a bit.

“Yea, yea, let’s find Kurapika.”

“Have fun guys! Remember to kiss each other for the New Years kiss when the clock strikes midnight!” Pokkle called as they went further into the house, people in the midst of the party already enjoying other’s company and talking of New Year’s resolutions they would never keep.

They found Kurapika with Melody, Kurapika already looked ready to leave, however.

“I think I’m going to need a couple of drinks if I’m going to stay at this party.” Kurapika muttered.

“Oh, come on, Kurapika, I know parties like these aren’t your thing, but you get to hang out with all your friends!” Gon said, putting an arm around the slimmer male.

“I prefer a more peaceful atmosphere, perhaps a group reading session, or where we can watch a quiet movie comfortably.” Kurapika said, glancing at Gon through the side of his eyes, but didn’t bother to push him away.

“I promise after the clock strikes midnight, we can go, and we can even pick you up some tea on the way home.” Melody assured in her soft voice that soothed everyone who heard her. It worked on Kurapika at least as he relented and agreed to stay til then.

“Don’t worry, I get what you mean about going to things like this sometimes.” Killua said, coming to Kurapika’s side. “It can get overwhelming to be surrounded by people all the time, and what’s more, they can be butts at times.” He shrugged. “Where did you get the drink, by the way?” Killua chirped, pointing down at Kurapika’s light blue plastic cup. He pointed off over his shoulder and Killua gave Gon a quick glance as his only heads up before making his way away from the group.

“Ah, so anyway, what haven’t you done yet? We can do stuff together so you don’t have such a bad time.” Gon told Kurapika.

“That’s very nice of you, Gon.” Kurapika muttered. How could he expect anything else? Gon’s
always been like this, and Kurapika vaguely wondered how Killua could tolerate Gon being so friendly and affectionate to anyone without being jealous or worry someone might try to steal him away. Gon stuck his elbow out towards Kurapika, and he took it with a light hold. They went further into the party, looking around at the stuff they could do.

Music and accompaniment flitted in the air as the group went into the living room, and Gon lit up at the sight of a karaoke game playing, with many people around to watch or waiting to go. Kurapika explained how nice it was to see one at the party, it showed how far the school have come along from saving their talent as money makers to having their talent be something shared for the passion of music. Gon thought it was only natural that a music school has the best fun when given the opportunity to sing. When Gon was spotted, everyone insisted he skip the line to take a turn to sing.

“Ahaha, no, it wouldn’t be fair…!” Gon chuckled, rubbing the back of his head sheepishly.

“It’s fun! It’s more fun when you’re around anyways!” They insister, pulling him forward.

“Er…” Gon turned his head around the room, looking for Killua. He wouldn’t mind singing if it was with him. He could only spot Kurapika once more and Kurapika shrugged in response. A mic was shoved in his hands unceremoniously, and he fumbled to keep it from falling.

“Ok, ok…” Gon said, a smile growing on his face. He couldn’t help it, he still loved to perform and sing, just as much as the first day of school. He’ll have a good time even if he can’t see Killua.

“Well, I guess I’ll sing that new song released a couple days ago for the new year…”

“What?”

“Huh?”

“Seriously?” People voiced their disbelief. “You know that has crazy high notes, right Gon?”

“It’ll be fun! I won’t know if I can hit them until I try!” Gon said, pulling it up. People were amazed and excited. Others ended up singing along trying to hit the high notes too. Everyone was floored and defeated when Gon sang an explosive high note at the highlight of the song and applauded him. Gon finished the song afterwards and bowed sheepishly. Kurapika ran over to him.

“Gon, are you crazy? You’ll get voice nodules like that!” He scolded. Gon shrugged with a lopsided smile.

“It would get fixed. Hey, now that you’re up here, sing a song with me!” Gon said, pulling him forward and getting him another mic.

“A-ah, no Gon, I wasn’t planning on-”

“It’s fine, it’ll be fun! I promise! I know what song you’ll want to sing!” Gon said, pulling up a song with plenty of instrumentals. “I’m not gonna be the only one forced to sing tonight!” He laughed.

“Ah… alright. You’re lucky I like this song.” Kurapika smiled, and sang with Gon. Everyone had a good time with the karaoke and Gon, and when people at the party heard Gon had arrived and was in the living room, they went there.

At one point, Gon turned around and was surprised at how packed the place was. Even though the temperature outside was below 50, it felt like 80 degrees in there. People waved for Gon’s attention, but Gon scanned the crowd for Killua. He still wasn’t back?

“Hey, Gon, where’s Killua?” Someone asked him.
“That’s what I want to know…” He muttered. “I’m outta here.” Gon moved past the crowds and Kurapika followed the parting in the crowd Gon made easily. Gon decided to check the kitchen first, since that’s where Killua should have went for his drink. He gave a quick glance over, but he didn’t have to look long before he spotted his boyfriend up against the counter talking to some guy who was way too close for Gon’s liking. Gon felt his body heat up as he made his way over, and caught some end of the conversation.

“C’mon, you’re only helping Gon out because he’s banging you. I can give it to you way better if you help me instead.” Killua looked disgusted, and Gon was almost seeing red.

“Hey!” Gon darkly exclaimed, making them jump and anyone else in the kitchen quickly filter out. The guy’s face paled and Killua looked surprised at seeing Gon. “Is this guy bothering you, Kil?”

“Oh, yea, he’s being a pig. He can’t catch a hint that I’m not giving out charity.” Killua said. When Gon was close enough, Killua reached out and held his arm, half comfortingly and half like he’s ready to hold him back. Gon had to admit he did feel calmer.

“Er, sorry man, I must’ve been out of my mind…” He quickly came up with an excuse to run off. Gon glared after the guy’s back, and then Gon was being dragged off by Killua. Gon turned to look at their destination, and it was the porch where most other party goers went to get ready to see New Year’s fireworks.

“Are you ok, Gon?” Killua asked, turning to the tanned teenager. Gon quirked an eyebrow.

“What do you mean? I should be asking you that.” Gon said.

“I can take care of myself, and I was…” Killua said. “I just wanted you to cool off in the cold air, because you seemed really heated in there.” Killua said, folding his arms to keep warm. “I’ve never seen you like that, or heard you like that.” Killua said. Gon furrowed his eyebrows, but put his arms around Killua to help him keep warm.

“Well, I was upset, I don’t like that people are still bothering you about getting ahead in the singing industry. You know you don’t help me unfairly, right?” Gon asked.

“Well, I sort of do to an extent. But most of everything you do, you do yourself. Which is what I was trying to tell him.”

“Mh… well, I’m sorry most of your party was in such unpleasant company.” Gon said with a slight frown, tucking Killua’s head under his chin. Killua chuckled at the gesture but shook his head.

“It’s fine Gon, it’s not like I’m not used to it.” He smiled. Gon pouted at that. He didn’t want Killua to be used to something like that. He wanted Killua to just… live as normally as he could. He glanced around and at the night sky. His eyes caught sight of something and held down a smile.

“Hey… hey, Killua?” Gon whispered. Killua hummed in reply, enjoying the warmth radiating off of Gon and around him. “Look up there.” Killua peaked up at where Gon was looking and spotted the mistletoe nearly hidden in the darkness surrounding them, barely lit up by the city lights around them.

Killua smirked at Gon and Gon wiggled his eyebrows teasingly. Killua laughed before cupping Gon’s face and kissing him fully.

“...4, 3, 2, 1! Happy New Year!” People around them cheered, and the two prospective idols were shocked out of their kiss by fireworks going off around them. They looked up to see the bright fire flowers explode across the sky.
Killua looked back at Gon’s silhouette, his breath caught in his throat at seeing the colors spread over his features and puffs of warm air leaving his parted lips. He then turned to Killua, his eyes bright and reflecting the colors of the new year and Killua smiled softly.


“I think it really will be…” Gon pulled Killua in by the hips and closed his mouth around Killua’s for another kiss.

New Tags: #Killua is actually affectionate and communicative, #dark Gon will come eventually meanwhile enjoy the fluffy #Cheesy dance numbers and flash performances #gayIllumi #flamboyant Illumi #hisoillu

Chapter End Notes

Turnt up Illumi Arc
-Illumi’s next plan in life has him wanting to yolo it up
-Gon's trying to find a proper music company to sign him up
-Gon joins Theater
-Spring Mascarained Dance
-Leorio, Canary, and Amane makes Debut!
Thanks again for reading, and hope to be able to write this more!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!