Pokemon Cards

Are they worth it?

[START]

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Presentation Flow
HP
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3. Dashboard
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Continue


LITTLEROOT TOWN
Let's dive deeper into the world of Pokemon cards



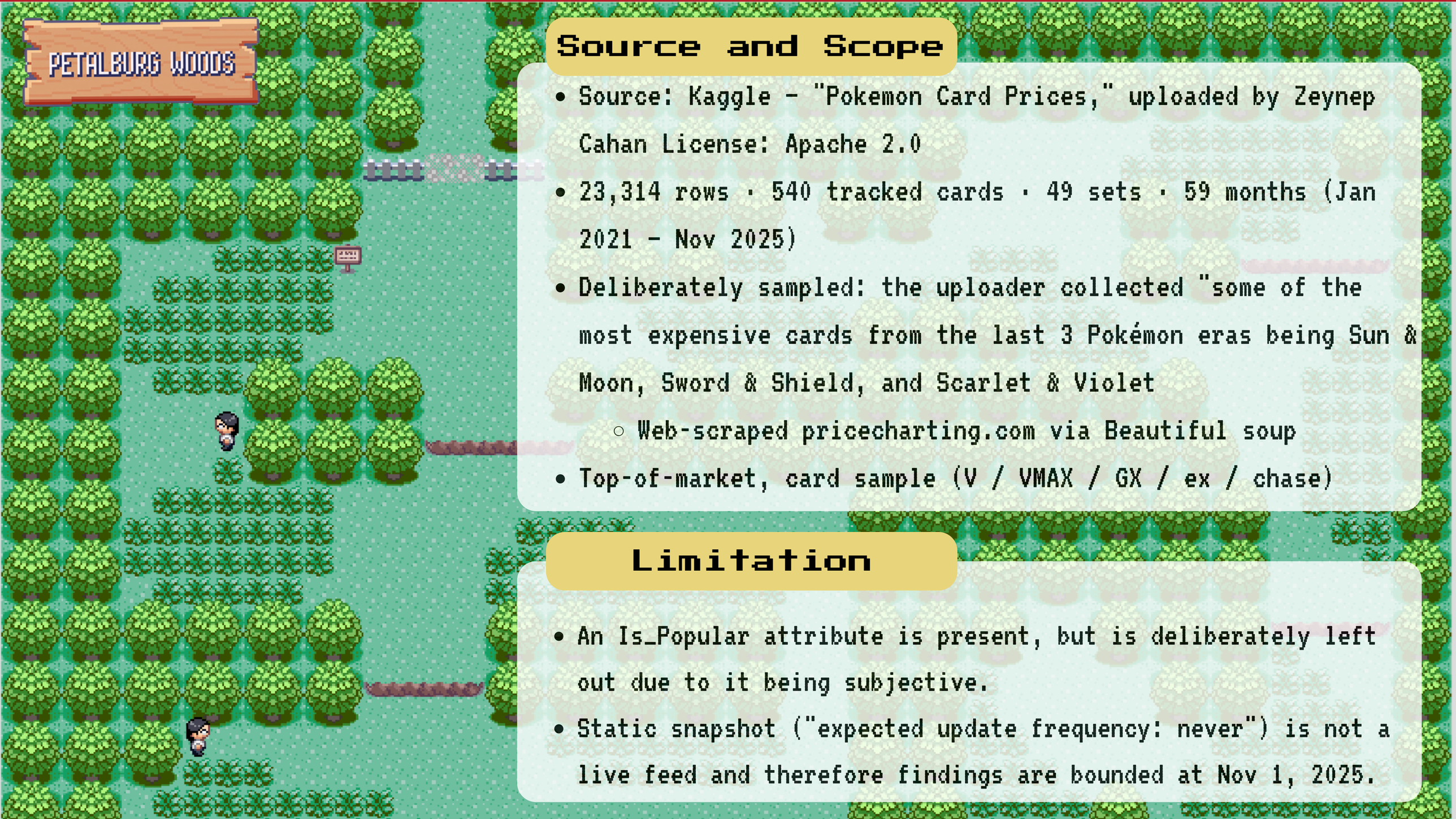
CONTEXT

- Pokémon cards are being treated as an asset class in 2025.
- Prices are spiking; social media hype; people "investing" in cardboard.
- The question our dashboard answers: is buying / grading actually smart, and if so, which cards?

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Poké-Collectors deciding what to buy
- Casual fans wondering if their cards are worth something
- Would-be "investors" chasing the hype





Source and Scope

- Source: Kaggle – "Pokemon Card Prices," uploaded by Zeynep Cahan License: Apache 2.0
- 23,314 rows · 540 tracked cards · 49 sets · 59 months (Jan 2021 – Nov 2025)
- Deliberately sampled: the uploader collected "some of the most expensive cards from the last 3 Pokémon eras being Sun & Moon, Sword & Shield, and Scarlet & Violet
  - Web-scraped pricecharting.com via Beautiful soup
- Top-of-market, card sample (V / VMAX / GX / ex / chase)

Limitation

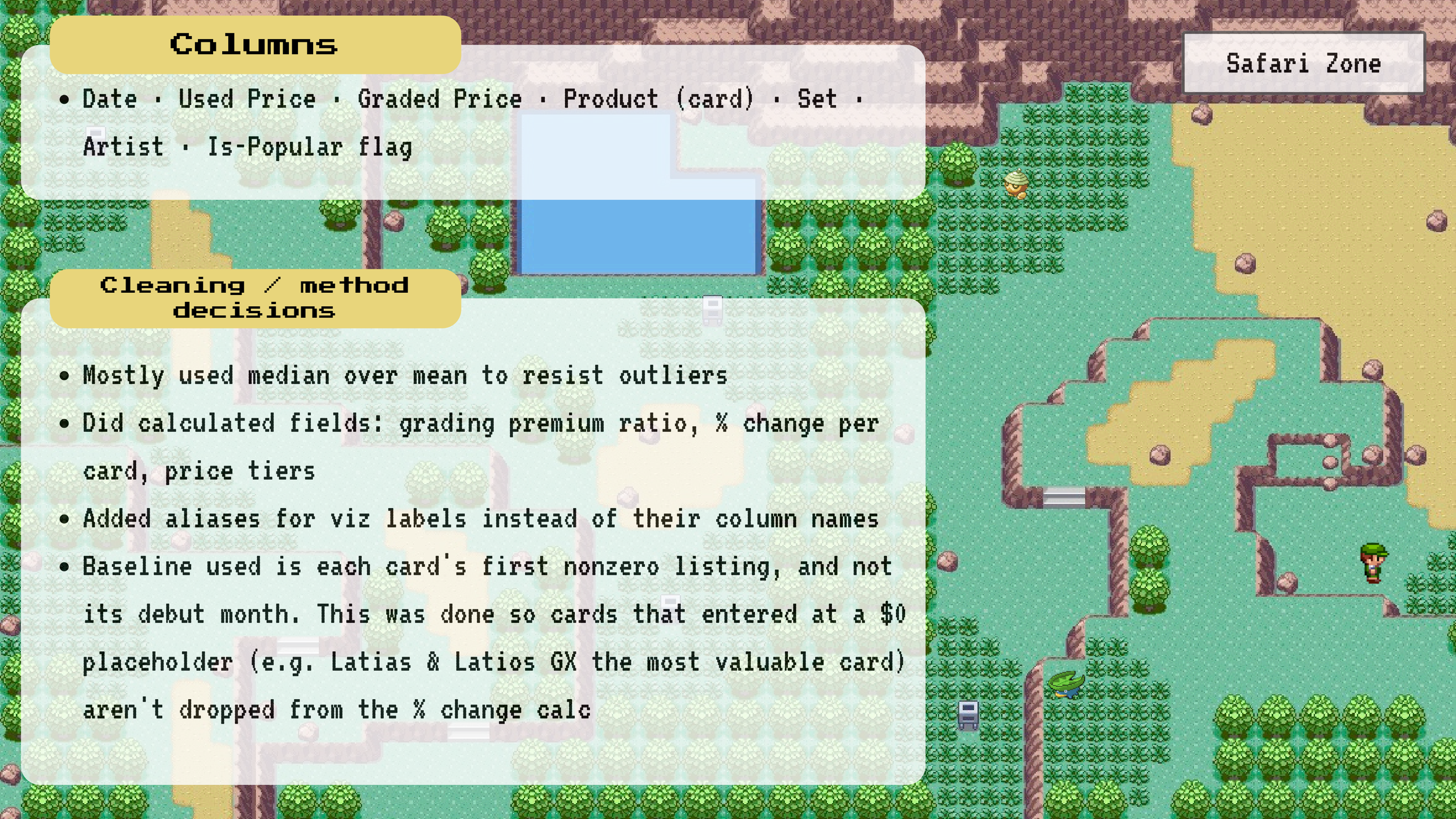
- An Is_Popular attribute is present, but is deliberately left out due to it being subjective.
- Static snapshot ("expected update frequency: never") is not a live feed and therefore findings are bounded at Nov 1, 2025.

Columns

- Date · Used Price · Graded Price · Product (card) · Set · Artist · Is-Popular flag

Cleaning / method decisions

- Mostly used median over mean to resist outliers
- Did calculated fields: grading premium ratio, % change per card, price tiers
- Added aliases for viz labels instead of their column names
- Baseline used is each card's first nonzero listing, and not its debut month. This was done so cards that entered at a $0 placeholder (e.g. Latias & Latios GX the most valuable card) aren't dropped from the % change calc




Live Dashboard Demo


The Boom is Real!

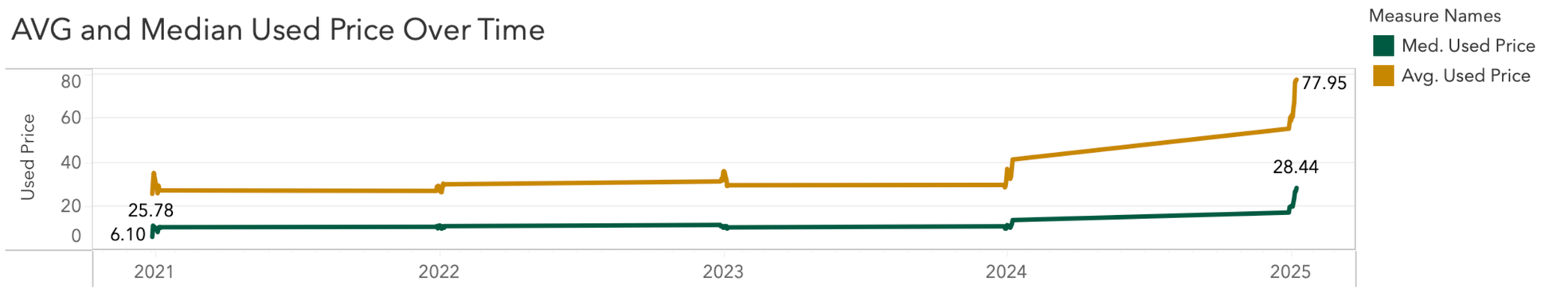
Median Used Price Growth

+37.46%

Cards That Lost Value

41.11%

AVG and Median Used Price Over Time



When looking at data from 2021-2025...

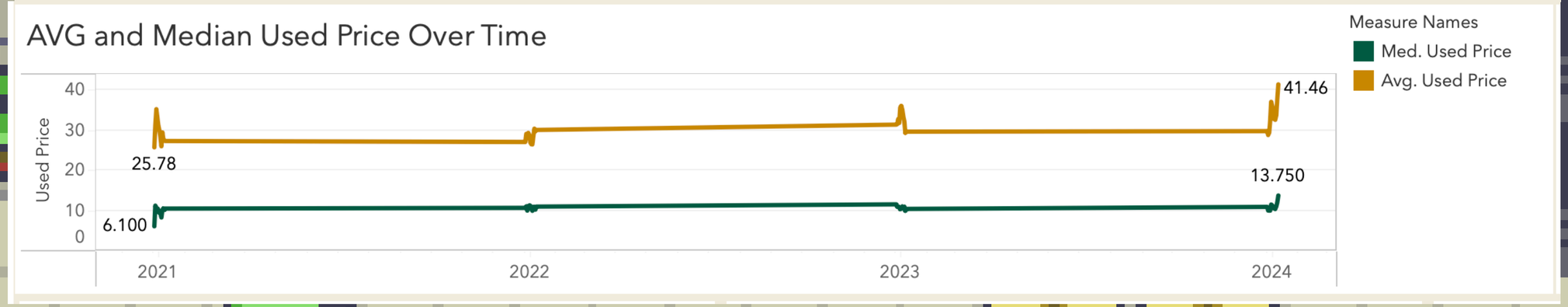

The Boom is Real!... But only in 2025...

Median Used Price Growth

−22.84%

Cards That Lost Value

60.25%



However, the data from 2021-2024...

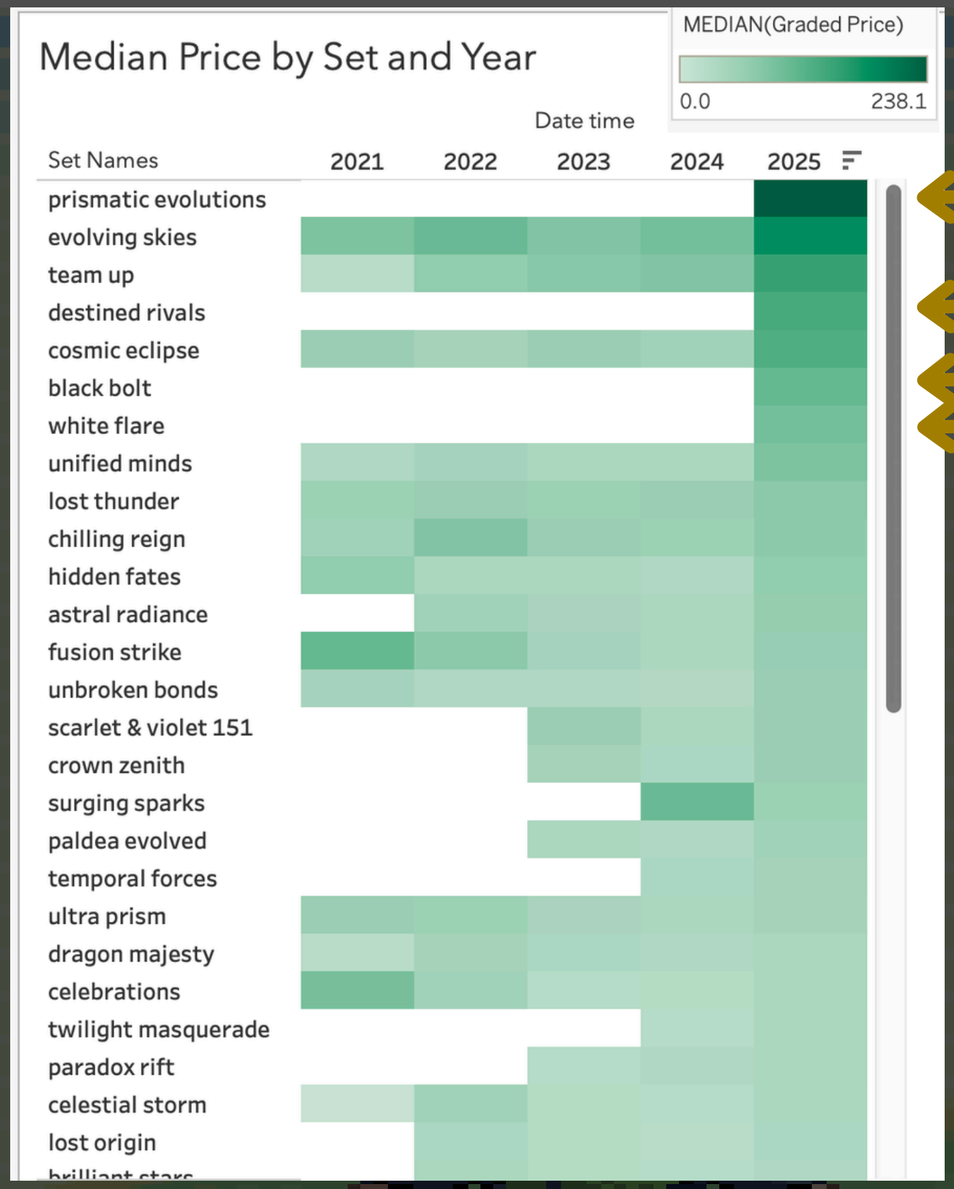
WHAT THIS MEANS!

- Through 2024, the median card price fell ~23%
- The median-price line still rose over those years
  - This is composition, not appreciation
- Only 2025 delivered a real, broad surge
- Even in 2025, 41% of cards remain underwater

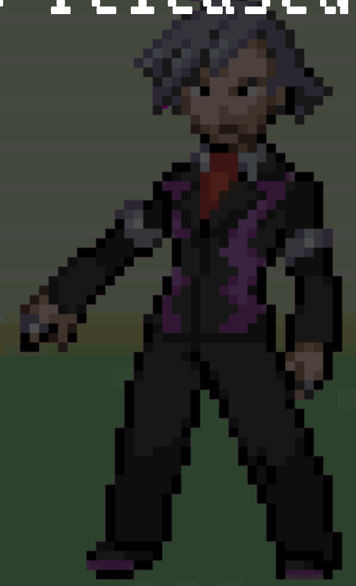
TAKEAWAY

The "boom" was an illusion of what got tracked; real gains are recent, narrow, and far from guaranteed.

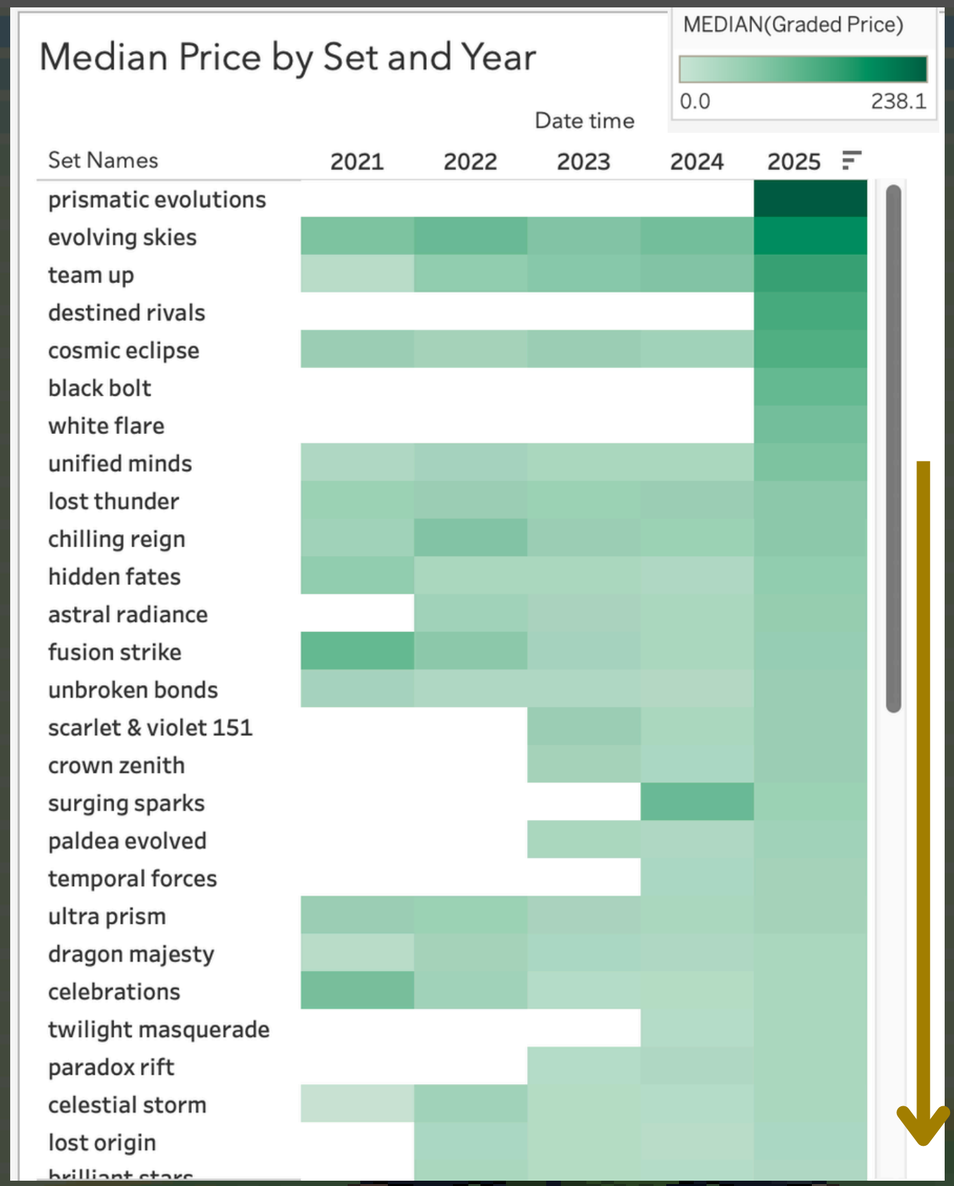

What Looks Broad is Mostly a 2025 Spike in a Few Sets



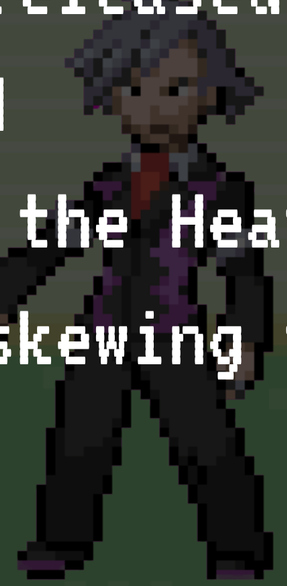
- Recent, not gradual
  - Mostly 2025-released sets



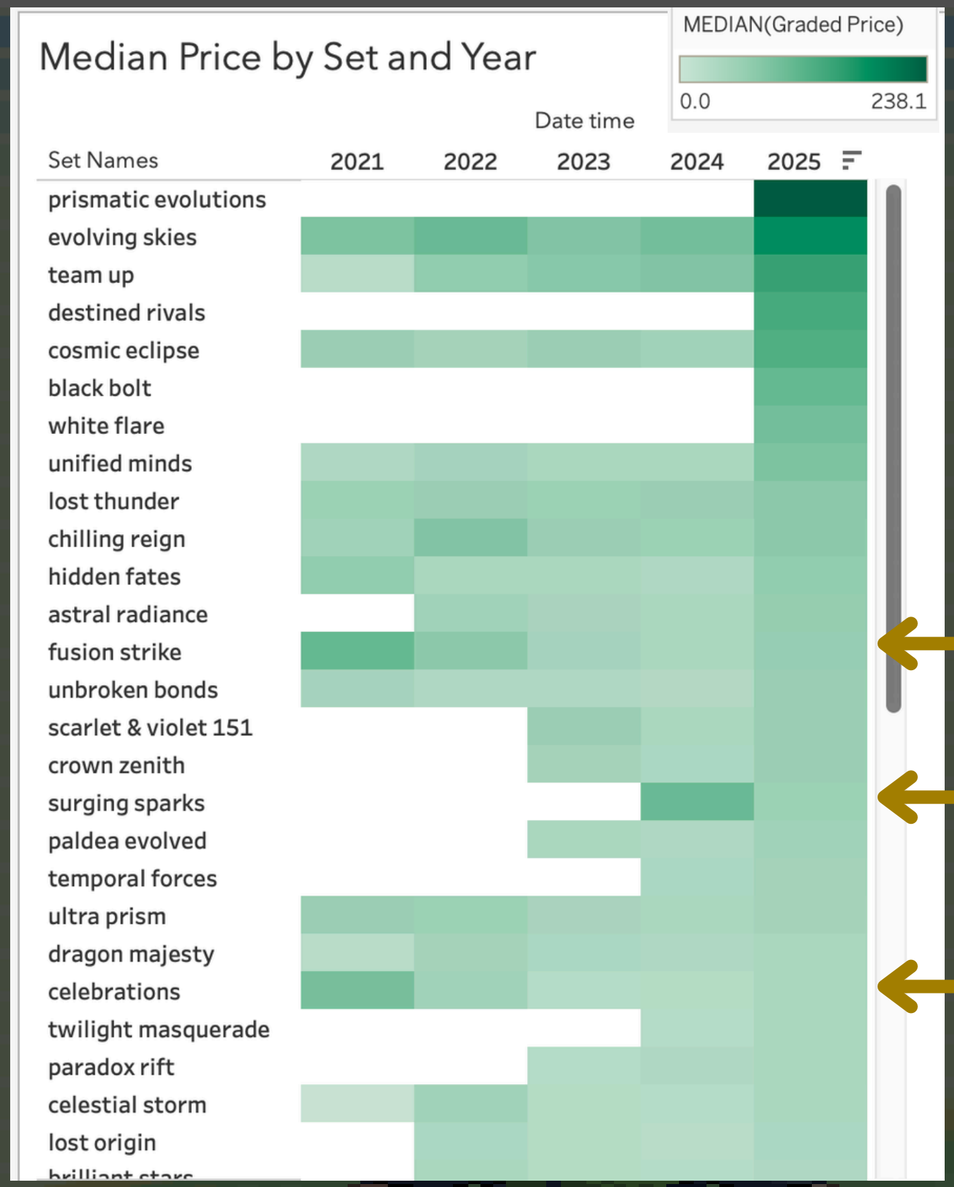
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- Recent, not gradual
  - Mostly 2025-released sets
- Narrow, not broad
  - Lower end of the Heatmap shows stagnation, skewing the average

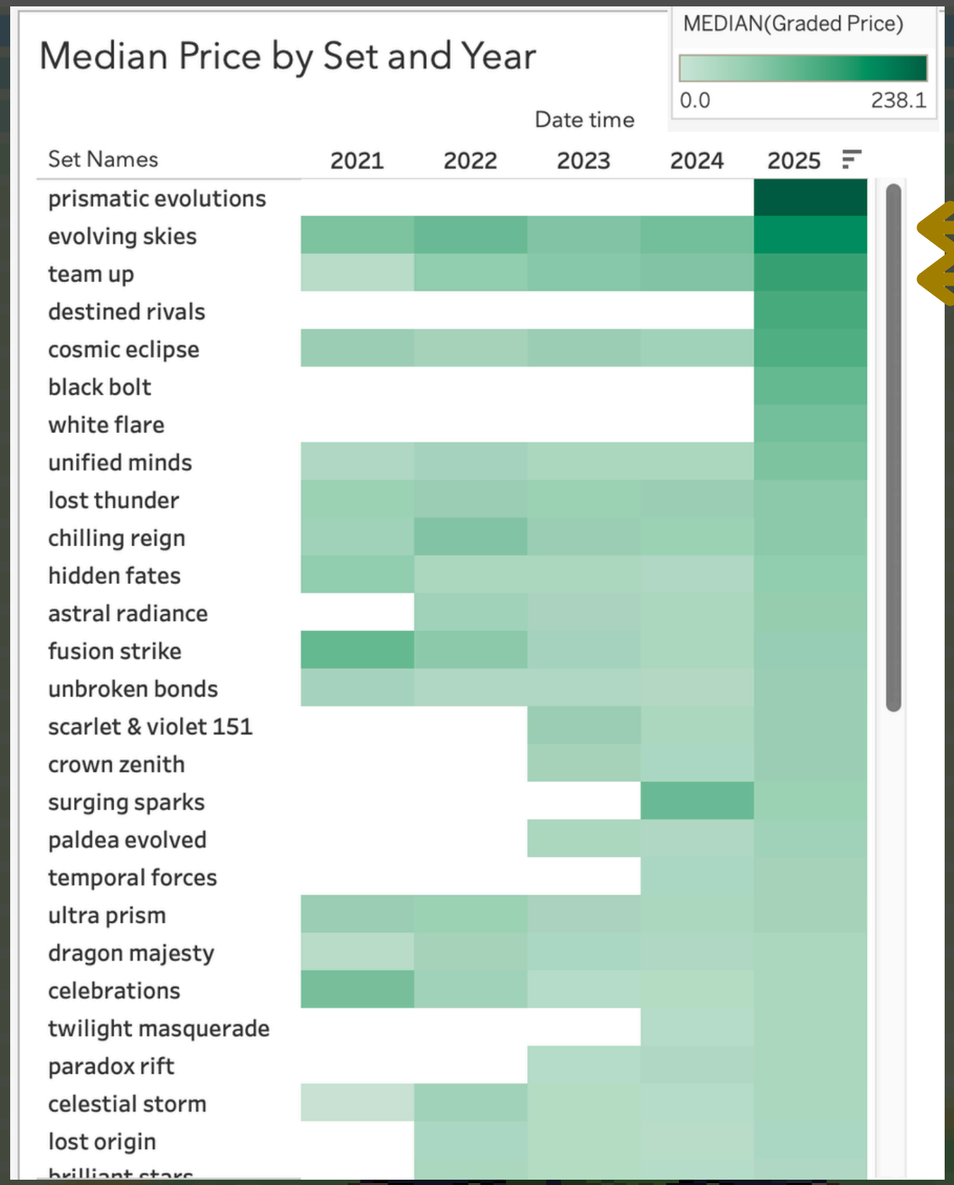


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  - Lower end of the Heatmap shows stagnation, skewing the average
- No Guaranteed Rise
  - Fusion Strike, Surging Sparks, Celebrations

...



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- Narrow, not broad
  - Lower end of the Heatmap shows stagnation, skewing the average
- No Guaranteed Rise
  - Fusion Strike, Surging Sparks, Celebrations
- Few clean "held up over time": Evolving Skies and Team Up

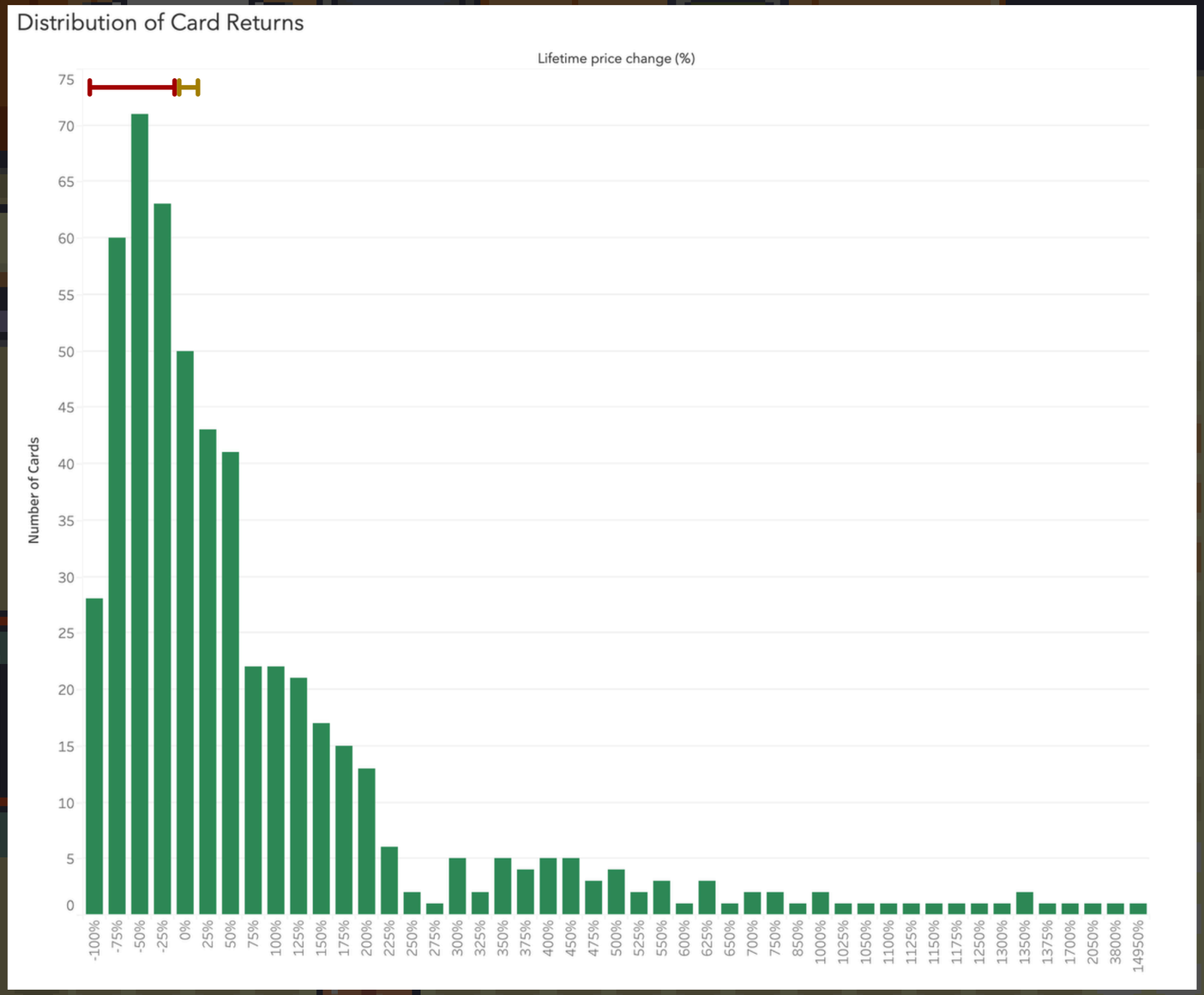
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TAKEAWAY

The 2025 rise is real but recent, narrow, and unearned by most sets, so a rising market doesn't mean any given card is a safe bet

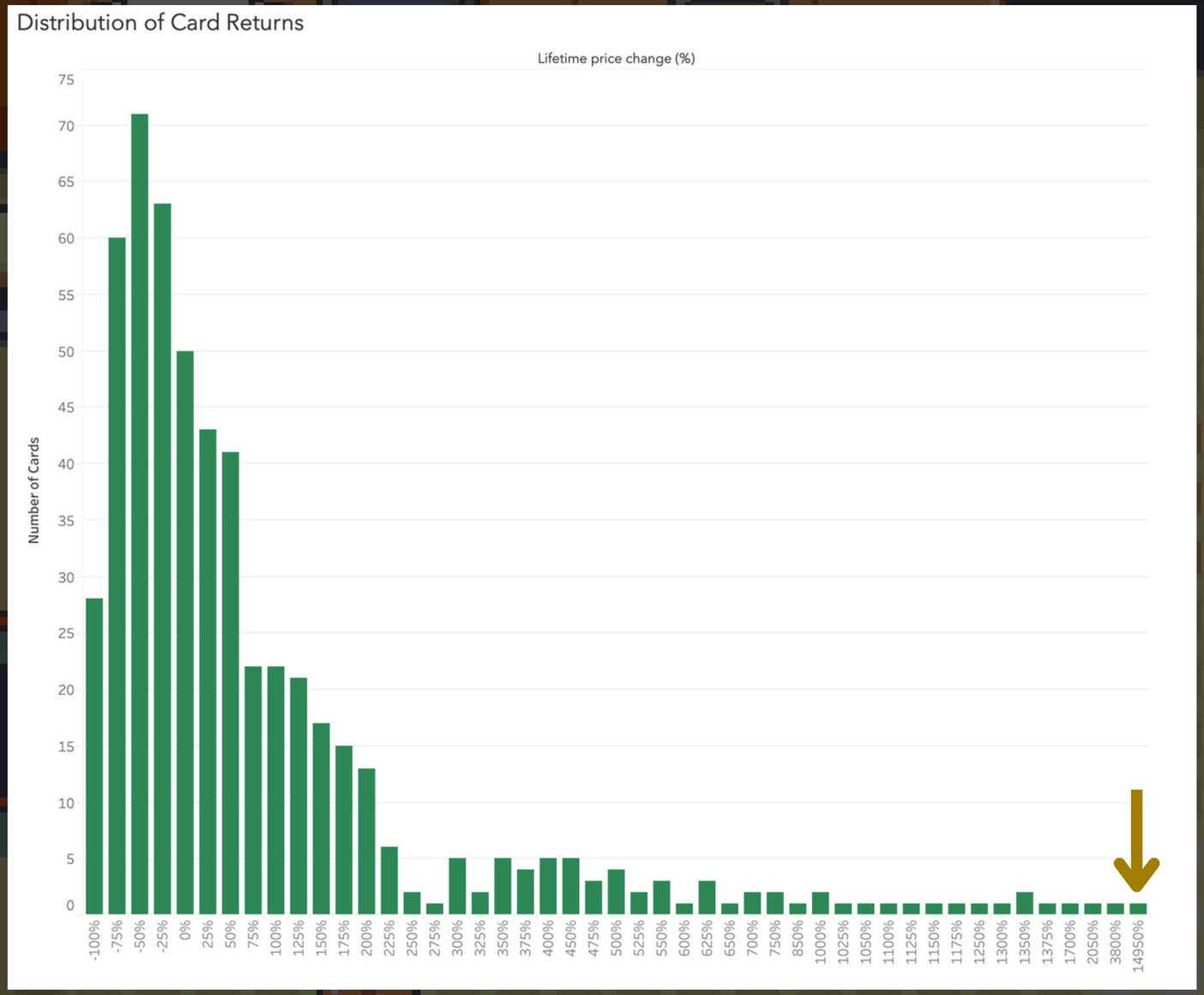
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There are Only a Few Winners, and A lot of Losers



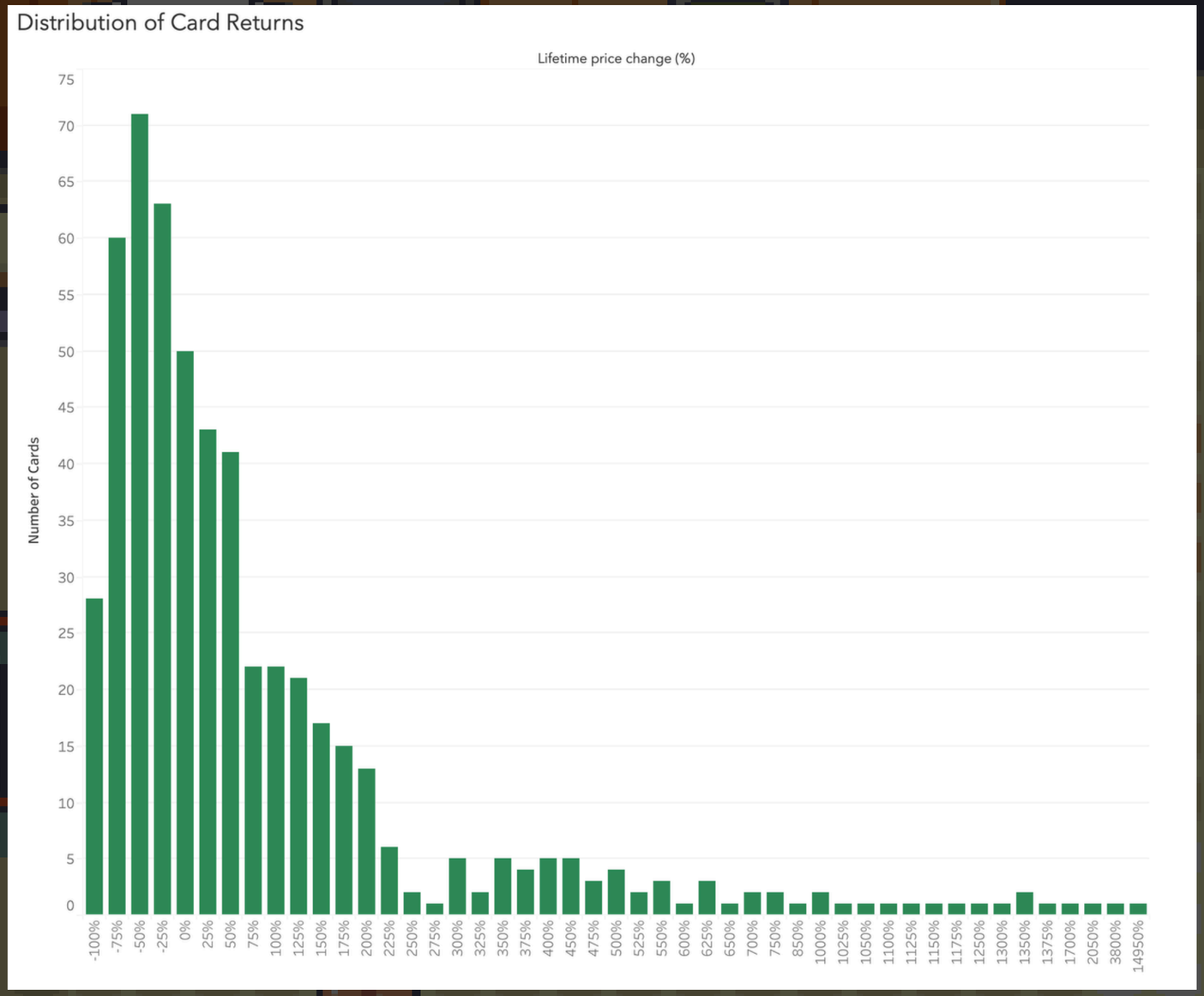
- Nearly half (41%) of cards lost value outright over their tracked life
  - A large share of the rest barely moved (9.3% of cards had an increase within the range of 0-25%)
  - Buy a random card, and your most likely outcome is a loss or a negligible gain - not the moonshot the hype promises

. . .



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- A few big winners carry everything
  - +14,960% Highest with Xerneas-GX

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  - Buy a random card, and your most likely outcome is a loss or a negligible gain - not the moonshot the hype promises
- A few big winners carry everything
  - +14,960% Highest with Xerneas-GX
- Cards are NOT a safe blind investment
  - You're better off with land. (median card ~4% a year versus 8-12% for land)

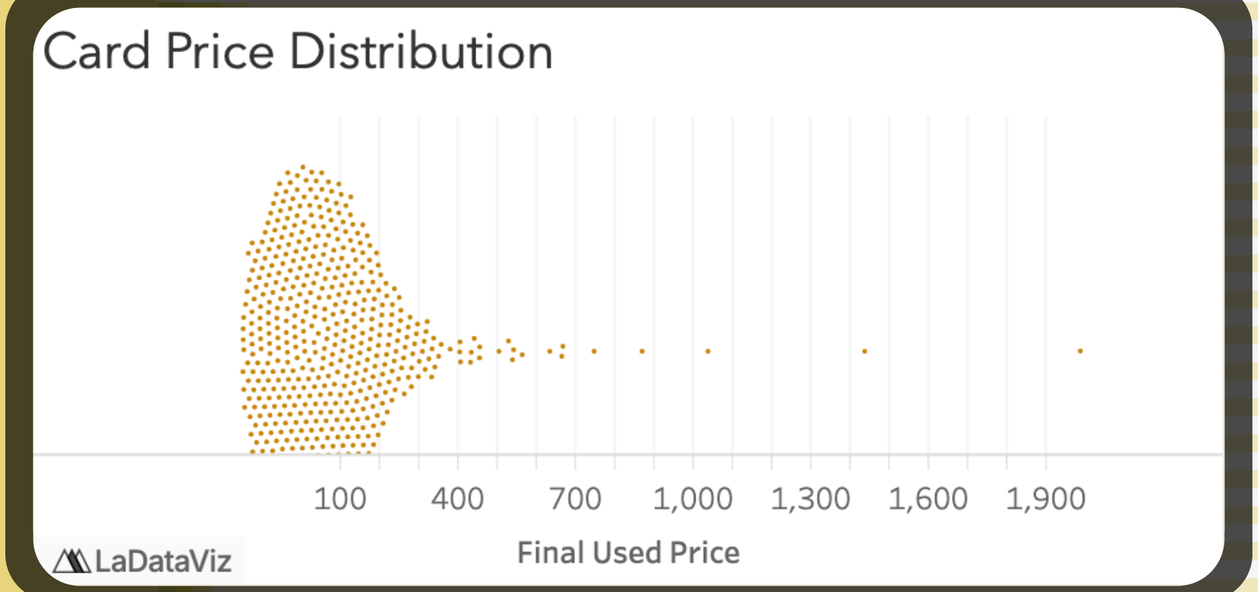
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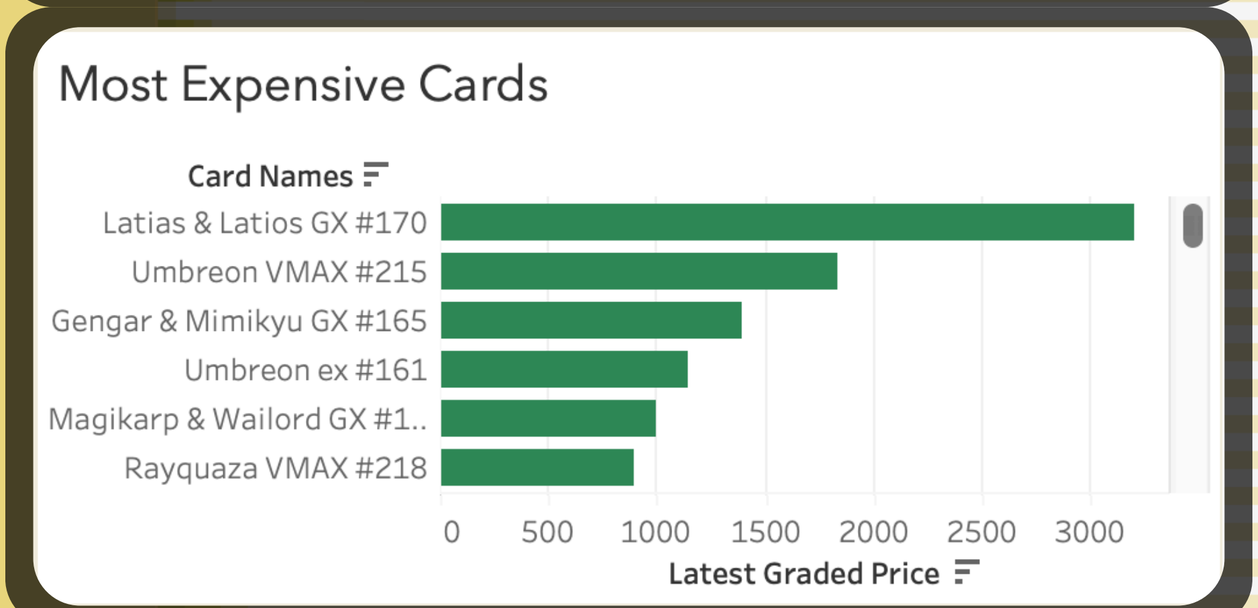
TAKEAWAY

The market went up, but most individual cards didn't; the gains were concentrated in a few winners, not shared

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Most Cards Cheap, A Few Are Treasure





- The vast majority of cards cluster at the low end
  - a dense clump under $100
- A thin tail stretches out to the top of the market
  - ending at $1,988 (used/raw)
- The market is not evenly valuable
  - a handful of chase cards hold most of the worth
- Those top cards (Latias & Latios GX, Umbreon VMAX, etc.) are the "treasure"
  - but they're rare by definition

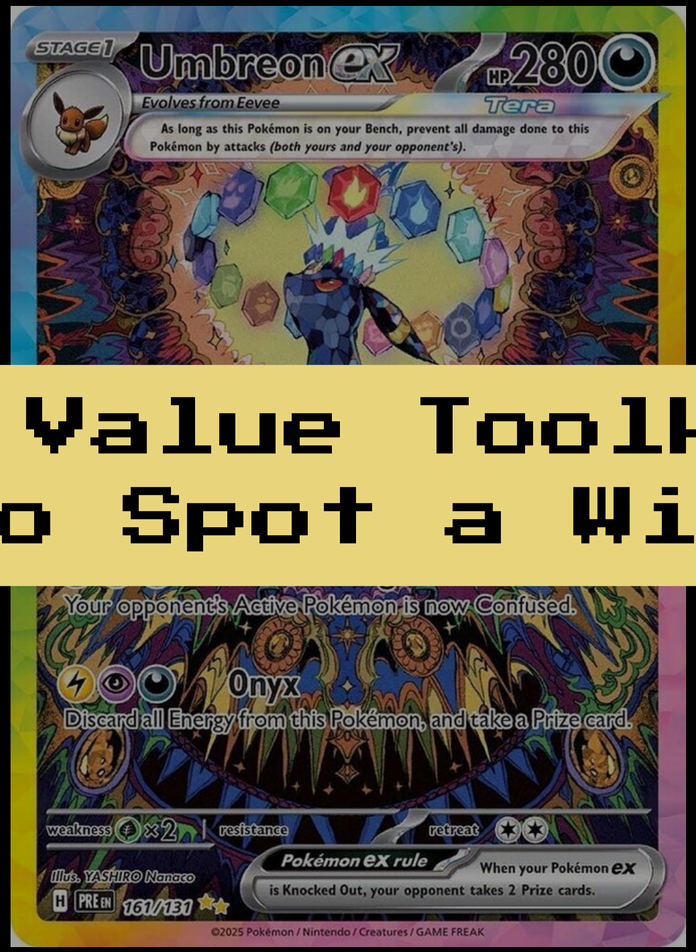


Takeaway!

The average card is cheap and stays cheap; value is the exception, not the rule - so "any Pokémon card is worth something" is false





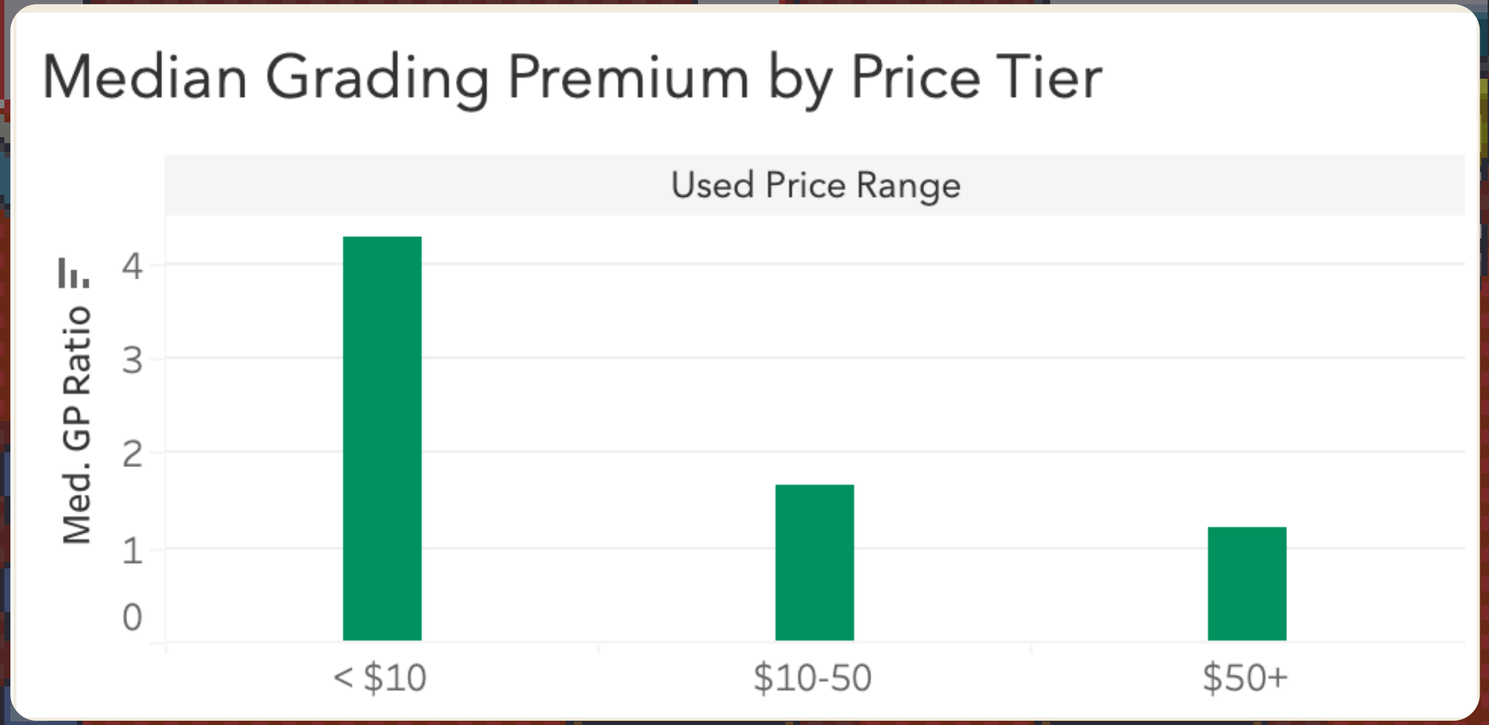


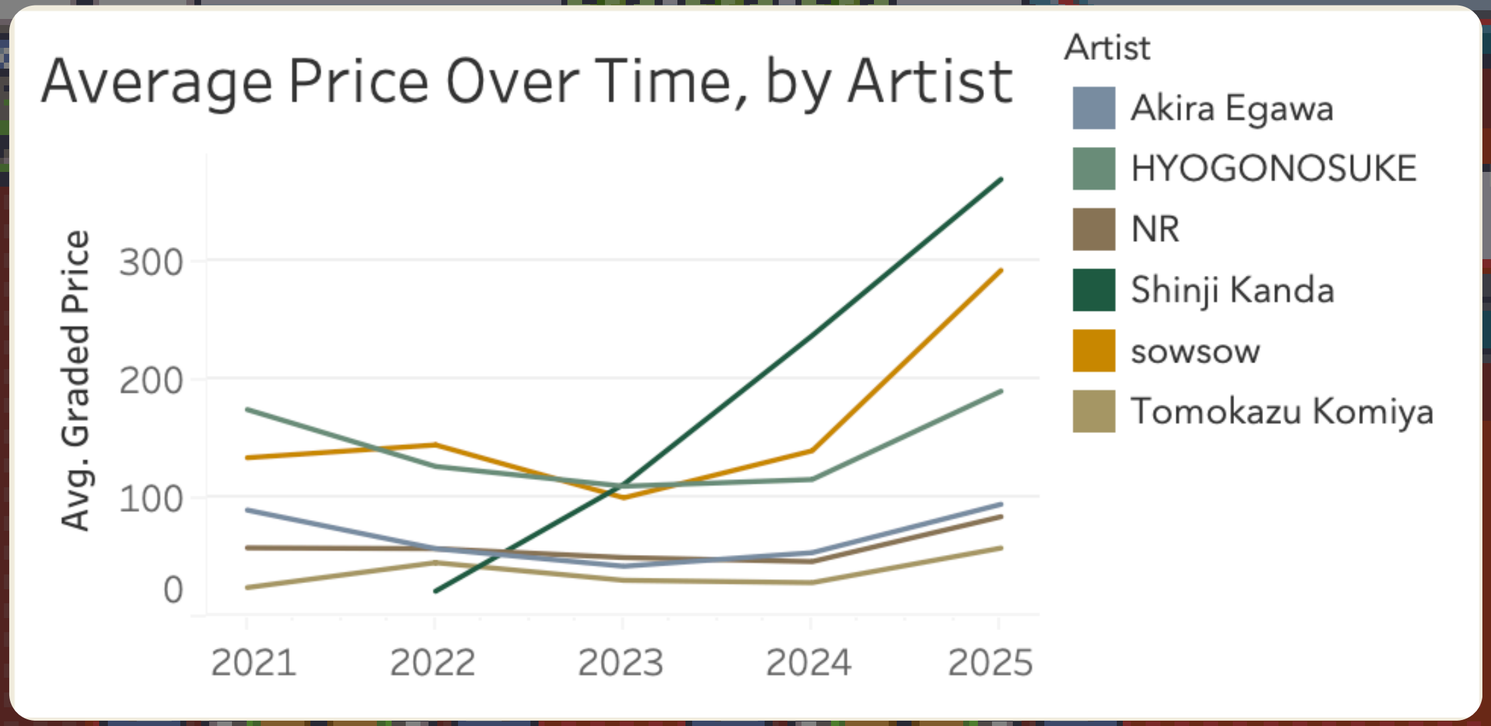


The Value Toolkit: How to Spot a Winner

GRADING

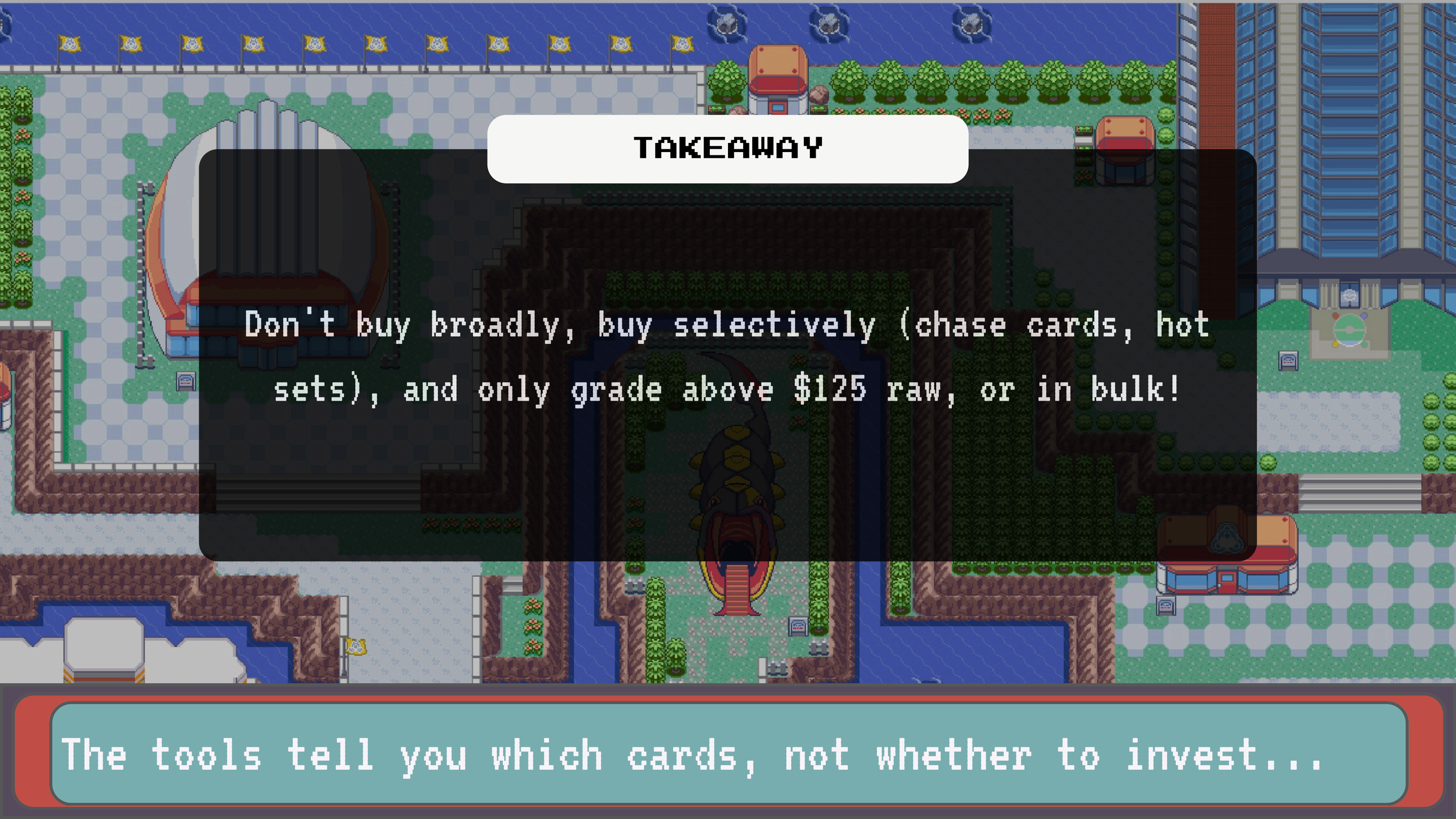
- Grading roughly DOUBLES VALUE (2.13X median premium) - but the premium collapses as price rises
  - ~4.3X on cheap cards, ~1.2X on pricey ones
- However there is a TRAP!
  - 4.3X on a $5 card is only ~$20, and grading costs ~$25-80.
- The RULE:
  - Only grade single cards worth >$125 RAW (at ~1.2X on $50+ cards you keep ~0.2 X price, so you need >$125 raw to clear a $25 fee)
  - Otherwise, grade in bulk for discounts!

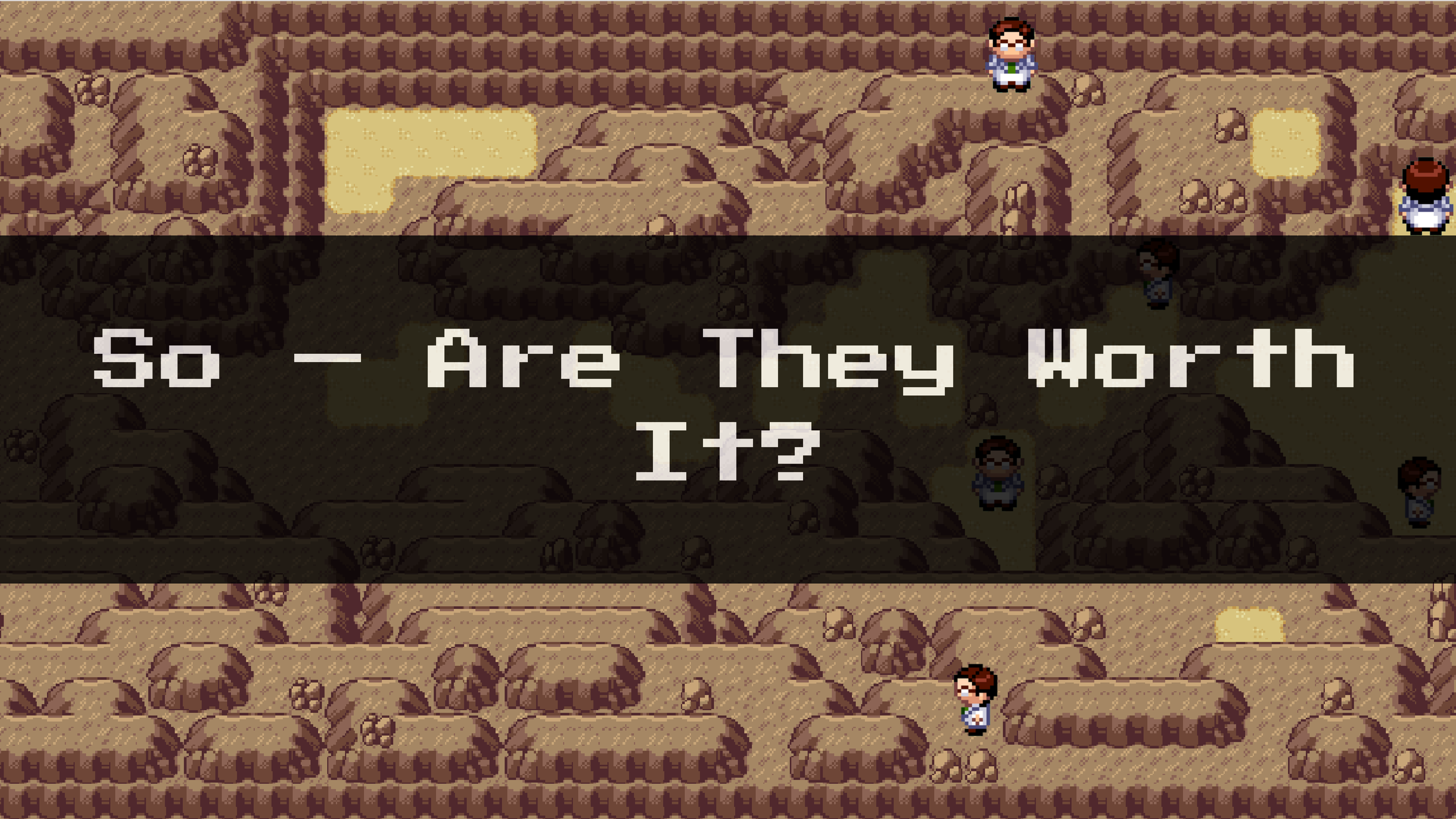




Artist as a signal:

- Certain illustrators (e.g. Shinji Kanda) correlate with STEEPLY RISING PRICES
  - their cards climbed sharply over the period.
- BUT IT'S CORRELATION, NOT CAUSE:
  - star artists get assigned the chase cards, so the artist is a signal the card is desirable, not the reason it's valuable.
- The RULE:
  - treat a high-value or a named artist as a flag to investigate. An underpriced card by a chase-card illustrator may be worth grabbing or grading.


TAKEAWAY
Don't buy broadly, buy selectively (chase cards, hot sets), and only grade above $125 raw, or in bulk!
The tools tell you which cards, not whether to invest...


So — Are They Worth It?

WHAT TO REMEMBER

- A. Don't treat cards as a broad investment. Nearly half (41%) lost value outright, and the median card returned only ~4% a year over the tracked period. Through 2024 the median price was actually down 23%. The "boom" is real but recent, narrow, and uneven; buying broadly is a losing bet.
- B. If you buy, buy selectively, specifically chase cards and hot sets. Value is concentrated in a thin tail, not spread across the market. Gains cluster in chase cards and recent premium sets (as seen in the 2025 heatmap).

WHAT TO REMEMBER

- C. Only grade cards worth ~$125+ raw. Grading roughly doubles value on average, but only ~1.2X on cards already worth $50+. The rule only stops when you find a grade in bulk deal, where the total gain can offset the grading price.

- D. (Optional) Use artist as a signal, not a guarantee. A rising or high-value illustrator flags a card worth investigating whereas an underpriced chase-card artist may be worth grabbing or grading. Though note that it's a lead and not a rule.

THE BOTTOM LINE

"The 2025 boom is real, but it's not what it looks like. Most cards don't moon. If you're buying, be selective; if you're grading cards, stay above $125 or do it in bulk."

Thank you!

[End]

