

HOUSE RULES

Comedy Anthology Series

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(Pilot + Teaser)

OVER BLACK

TITLE: CHAPTER 1: DEUCES WILD

First, over BLACK, we hear the VOICE of someone deep in thought...

TERRELL (V.O.)
Um...Let me get uh...

FADE IN:

INT. LIQUOR STORE - LATE EVENING

We see a pair of eyes scanning left & right, up & down. Camera CUTS to the row of liquor bottles behind a counter. TERRELL (24, looks like he works on computers and watches anime) scanning the options before he gets a TEXT from CUZZO: "Get whateva and a few sodas." He looks at the clerk behind the counter.

TERRELL
I think I'll take a fifth of the
Hennessy.

Terrell winces a little and grabs his stomach while handing over his I.D. and paying the clerk.

CUT TO:

EXT. GAS STATION - LATER

SUPERIMPOSE: CHICAGO

We see a Tesla pull up to a pump.

CUT TO:

INT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Terrell scans the sodas and quickly finds what he's looking for: two liters of Ginger Ale and Coco Cola. He places his hand on the door handle of the cooler when suddenly--

Two black guys (20's, skinny) *wearing ski masks* under their hoodies CHARGE into the gas station. One is wearing a red hoodie with black sweats & black Timberlands. The other wears a gray hoodie with dark blue jeans and black Nike Air Force Ones - *and has a gun*. He points it at the clerk as the other leaps behind the counter.

GRAY HOODIE ROBBER
Give it up Joe!

Clerk is startled but begins emptying the register as fast as he can.

Terrell quickly ducks and mumbles "fuck" under his breath. He looks for anything that could be used for a weapon, or distraction, but sees nothing. He slowly tries to take a peak of where the robbers are, in case he needs to maneuver to stay hidden, when unexpectedly...

SOUND of something like air leaking slowly out of a balloon

...he passes gas. Turns out Terrell has been constipated for hours. He knows he's made a mistake and closes his eyes as if to pause the moment, to rewind the whole thing hoping no one heard that.

QUICK CUT to camera facing GRAY HOODIE ROBBER. He begins to sniff twice. Then sniffs again. QUICK CUT to RED HOODIE ROBBER taking a whiff. QUICK CUT to CLERK as he takes a sniff and starts to cough lightly. QUICK CUT to the robber in gray as he sniffs again. His eyes shifts to his partner...

GRAY HOODIE ROBBER (CONT'D)

Nigga you fart again?

RED HOODIE ROBBER

Nah don't even go there. My shit never stank like that.

GRAY HOODIE ROBBER

(coughs)

What I tell you bout dat shit yo!
You do dis errtime!

RED HOODIE ROBBER

Nigga I told you that ain't me!

GRAY HOODIE ROBBER

(Cortorts head in
disgust)

Folk I'm bout to pass out, lets
roll.

RED HOODIE ROBBER

Aye grab sum honey buns for me real
quick.

GRAY HOODIE ROBBER

Nigga you don't need no more damn
honey buns witcho shit smelling
like White Castle grease!

RED HOODIE ROBBER
 Nigga have you smelled your
 breath?!
 (and)
 I bet you have nightmares of
 toothpaste.

The robbers shuffle out the store as they continually roast each other. CAMERA faces the clerk -- looking stunned.

POV from the COUNTER as three Ginger Ales & Coco Colas are placed down. CAMERA goes back and forth between the faces of Terrell, looking as if he's still trying to pass off the fart, and the clerk, looking puzzled about the entire experience that just happened. After a short silence that feels like an eternity...

TERRELL
 ...and let me get a Pepto Bismol.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHATHAM, CHICAGO - LATE EVENING

MUSIC CUE: "Took Her To The O" by King Von

SUPERIMPOSE: HOUSE RULE(S)

We see snapshots of locals in South Side Chicago talking, hanging on the corner, and getting off the bus - common life. Snapshots also include murals such as *The Wall of Respect*, schools such as *Simeon Academy*, and businesses such as *Harold's Chicken*. If you ain't from here, you're feeling like you're getting a peek inside of a special and tribal place. The last is a still shot of a house in the middle of the block. We hear bass from another song slowly creeping in as...

END MUSIC CUE

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...we're looking inside a plastic red cup with two ice cubes as Ginger Ale pours in. Terrell is alone despite the live party going on around him. We don't know if he's deep in thought or trying to become so invisible that he turns into a ghost. The stillness is interrupted when a slew of smoke attacks his face making him cough furiously.

ADONIS (O.S.)
 You straight cuzzo?!

ADONIS (33, built like a bear. Dresses hood fly) begins pouring himself a drink as he puffs on his blunt. He doesn't realize that its his smoke that's making Terrell cough crazy.

TERRELL

I'm okay.

ADONIS

Bet. Raven told me what happened on your way over here.

SHANICE (O.S.)

Ya ass knew better than to go to a fucking gas station with no bulletproof windows!

SHANICE (Afro-Asian, mildly thick, lots of tattoos) sits at a table littered with swisher wrappers and empty cups next to a guy who's breaking down weed in a backwood. She also takes a hard hit of a blunt as smoke fills the room.

SHANICE (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Clear ass sign a lick gon' happen!

ADONIS

Chill on cuz. He don't be in da hunids like that.

TERRELL

(timidly)

I did grow up here though...

ADONIS

(ignoring him)

He smart savvy not street savvy.
Ain't that right fam.

Terrell agrees reluctantly.

RAVEN (O.S.)

Heeeey baby cuz!

RAVEN (33) joins the conversation hugging Terrell with the warmest smile on her face as if he was a brother. Raven is about seven months pregnant.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

I'm glad you made it! These two ain't givin' ya a hard time are they.

TERRELL

Nah. Just -

SHANICE

Tellin' ya baby cousin to stop
goin' to suspect-ass gas stations
n'shit.

RAVEN

First of all, all these gas
stations are suspect.

KWAME

- like that alley we got this bud
from.

KWAME (early 30's, tall with thick locs that flow to the
base of his spine. Combined with his glasses and smile, he's
eye-catching. He wears an ensemble of clothes picked up from
thifting that makes him accidentally fashionable) sits next to
Shanice working on another blunt

SHANICE

Whatchu mean!? My alleys do not be
suspect!

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK

INT/EXT. KWAME'S CAR - DAY

Kwame at the wheel, Shanice in the passenger seat. Music is
blasting from the stereo as Kwame vibes and Shanice texts on
her phone.

SHANICE

(points over to an alley)
Pull up in here.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

A rusty red Pontiac comes into the alley and pulls up on a
garage door.

CUT TO:

INT. KWAME'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

SHANICE

Right here.

KWAME

You sho?

SHANICE
We good. I copped here before.

KWAME
Aite but I ain't parkin' cuz I
swear if anything pop off I'm gone.

Kwame doesn't park but keeps his foot on the brake.

SHANICE
(chuckles)
Whateva nigga.

Shanice exits the car.

Time passes before a RANDOM DUDE knocks on the passenger-side window.

RANDOM DUDE
Ayo, Shanice told me to wait out
here witcha.

KWAME
(suspicious)
What she look like?

The random dude just suddenly gets in the car. Whether he ignored the question, or just didn't hear it, we're not sure. But he sits comfortably - and silently. Kwame is frozen - staring straight out the front window. An awkward silence envelops the space (well, awkward for Kwame).

Suddenly we hear the SOUND of random dude's phone VIBRATING. He checks it then turns to Kwame.

RANDOM DUDE
She wanna know if you want some
juice...

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SHANICE
(flirty)
Now you know if I'm gonna set you
up its gonna be with handcuffs.

Shanice passes the the blunt to Kwame, flirting with him still. Kwame brushes it off as if this is common routine between them.

ADONIS
 (to Raven)
 Have a seat baby.

As Adonis pulls out a chair for Raven to sit we see the love they have for each other. Adonis is now more teddy than grizzly.

As Raven sits Adonis takes the blunt from Kwame as he sparks the other blunt he just finished rolling. Adonis takes a hard inhale and blows it lightly in Raven's face as he caresses her head. She smiles and takes it all in.

Adonis takes another hard inhale and extends the blunt to Terrell.

TERRELL
 I'm good.

As Terrell rejects the offer another random guy out of nowhere extends another blunt to him.

EXTRA #1
 You hit this yet?

TERRELL
 I'm good.

SHANICE (O.S.)
 Pass that shit over here!

As that happens *another blunt* from *another random person* is extended to Terrell.

EXTRA #2
 Bless up god.

TERRELL
 I'm good...
 (fumbles over words)
 my angel?

EXTRA #2
 Da fuck!?

The guy begins to get hostile with Terrell before SAMUEL (7), runs into the room.

RAVEN
 (with a snarl)
 Boy get yo ass out da damn smoke!

SAMUEL
 Mommy I want some milk!

RAVEN
You know where it is in the fridge.

SAMUEL
Noooo mommy! I want regular milk!

RAVEN
(annoyed)
Almond milk is milk. It just taste different.

TERRELL
Plus cow's milk has blood and puss in it. Almond milk only has almonds.

SAMUEL
(interested)
Blood and puss?

RAVEN
Lawd...

TERRELL
Yeah. You might as well eat the cow's boogers too.

SAMUEL
Eeeeeeeew!

ADONIS
You don't eat meat cuzzo?

TERRELL
Nah I'm vegetarian.

SHANICE
That's why dat boi skinny.

RAVEN
But probably healthier than all of us up in here.

SHANICE
I need a man with meat on his bones.

RAVEN
Bitch stop it you like MEN period.

As Raven and Shanice goes back and forth with quips another arm is outstretched with a blunt that Terrell casually rejects.

ADONIS

So how come you don't smoke? What's the difference between eating a plant and smoking it?

Terrell looks confused and tries not to point out the answer in the very question asked.

ADONIS (CONT'D)

(to Samuel)

Boy didn't ya mama say get out the smoke!?

SAMUEL

I'm waiting on everybody to get off the game.

ADONIS

Boy it's your game - tell'em to get the hell off.

TERRELL

What game you got?

SAMUEL

We're playing Smash Brothers and my daddy also got me Minecraft for my birthday.

TERRELL

I like playing Smash Brothers. I play Kirby. Show me what you got.
(and to Adonis and Raven)
I'll take him to his room.

ADONIS

Bet.

SHANICE

Be careful in there.

RAVEN

And Sammy - it better not be no empty plates laying around in that room.

CUT TO:

INT. SAMUEL'S ROOM

Terrell walks into a room full of kids wrestling, jumping, chasing, playing video games, watching movies - being care-free. The action doesn't stop when Terrell runs into the room either.

TIME CUT:

CONTINUOUS

Terrell and Samuel are engaged in the game but only Samuel looks clearly frustrated. We get a quick view of the game itself as Terrell knocks out Samuel's character off screen.

TERRELL
(with pride)
That's 5-0.

SAMUEL
How come you so good at fighting
games?

TERRELL
Just practice.

RANDOM KID #1
My mom says guys have time for
games because they don't have jobs.

TERRELL
But I do have a j-

RANDOM KID #2
My mom says its because they're
lonely. She says its pathetic.

SAMUEL
(looks at TERRELL but it
feels more like a stare)
Are you lonely?

TERRELL
Well...everyone feels lonely at
some-

RANDOM KID #3
It is because you don't get pu-say?
My daddy says guys who don't get
pu-say always play games.

SAMUEL
(to TERRELL)
What is pu-say?

TERRELL
(stunned)
uh...

RANDOM KID #4
I heard my mommy say the other day
that she loves eating pu-say, but I
couldn't find any in the
refrigerator.

SAMUEL
(to TERRELL)
So if I don't get any pu-say and
practice I can finally beat you?

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM

RAVEN & SHANICE
Next!

Raven and Shanice dap each other from across the table as
another pair of players leave in defeat. ADONIS sits at the
table ready for the challenge but is alone.

ADONIS
(to KWAME)
Aye folk lets get'em off the table.

Kwame is in the living room talking with a sista on his lap.
He brushes Adonis off.

ADONIS (CONT'D)
(disappointed)
Whateva.
(to the party)
Who tryna team up?

Just as the question is asked Terrell enters the living
room.

ADONIS (CONT'D)
Yo cuzzo! Lets squad up and get'em
off the table.

TERRELL
Actually I was about to head out.
Gotta get up early for work
tomorrow.

ADONIS
(kisses teeth)
Nigga we all gotta work tomorrow
come on.

RAVEN

We're not even bidding - just best out of three.

SHANICE

Yeah don't worry we'll sweep dat ass up real quick.

Terrell is feeling the pressure knowing they won't let him go without a game. *Everything goes in SLOW MOTION*: the lips of those asking him to play, blunts being lit, drinks being poured, people talking to each other, smoke rising to the ceiling...

Terrell's eyes shift from one thing to another before he speaks; bringing everything back to normal speed.

TERRELL

I appreciate it but actually...I don't know how to play spades.

Suddenly the SOUND of a vinyl record being cut off.

Silence - blunts stopped being lit, drinks stopped being poured, and people stopped talking to each other as *all attention is on Terrell*. Everything and everyone, including Terrell, is silent & still till suddenly-

There's an COLLECTIVE UPROAR of "You don't know how to play Spades?!" from everyone in the party, then one-by-one.

It starts at normal speed then gets slower as we focus on the mouths of multiple people enunciating the words. There's a CLOSE-UP SHOT of various faces hurling specific insults at Terrell that follows. This whole scene happens very fast to give the feeling of anxiety.

RAVEN

(shocked)

I can't believe we're related.

Kwame just shakes his head.

SHANICE

Goofy. Ass. Nigga.

ADONIS

I knew ya big head-ass couldn't play no spades.

SAMUEL

(where did he come from?)

You don't get no pu-say.

SMASH CUT:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TERRELL

...I don't know how to play spades.

We're back at moment of his confession. Terrell stands pensively after giving it; ready for the barrage of insults as we've just experienced. However after a small silence that feels like an eternity...

ADONIS

(nonchalant)

Well shit I ain't teaching him.

SHANICE

I don't teach adults how to play spades.

Everyone begins murmuring amongst themselves on who's going to teach him. Terrell tries to get out "It's okay" but it's as if no one is giving that any mind. Raven then motions Terrell to sit next to her.

RAVEN

I'll teach you how to play.

(looks to Kwame)

Yo Kwame! Leave that bitch alone and team up with D!

Kwame lets out a sigh before following suit. Apparently Raven is the kind of woman everyone obeys. Terrell is reluctant to join everyone at the table.

TERRELL

It's really cool.

ADONIS

Nigga sit yo ass down. It actually ain't that hard to learn. Can't have my cuzzo out here not knowing how to play spades.

RAVEN

Babe he's my cousin and he's good either way.

(to Terrell)

But he's right - it really ain't that hard to learn. I got you.

Terrell joins them and readies himself at the table.

CUT TO:

CONTINUOUS

RAVEN

(to Terrell)

Spades is about coming out on top.
Everyone throws a card one at a
time and you wanna make sure you,
or your partner, end up with the
highest card on the table.

TERRELL

Highest number in total?

SHANICE

Nah nigga. The highest *card*.
Singular.

ADONIS

(to Terrell)

She just showing off cause this the
first time she actually feels
smarter than somebody.

SHANICE

Nigga shut up!

They go back and forth with quips.

RAVEN

Can ya'll both shut da fuck up!

They immediately quiet down.

RAVEN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

(to Kwame)

And stop sucking ya god damn
fingers you ain't no child! Get a
napkin!

Kwame freezes in the middle devouring chicken and sucking
his fingers, then gets up to get a napkin.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

(turns to Terrell with a
smile)

As I was saying - the goal is to
make sure you, or your partner, end
up with the highest card on the
table. Every time your team wins
its called a book. The first team
to seven books wins.

TERRELL

And what's the highest card?

RAVEN

Well typically, it's the Joker.
There's a big one, and a little
one.

Raven shows Terrell the big & little joker cards.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

But *here*, we play Joker-Joker-
Deuce-Deuce. That means the highest
cards is the Big & Little Joker,
then the two of diamonds, after
that the two of spades, then the
Ace of Spades and so on. Think of
the two of diamonds as an extra
spade. Spades beats everything.
Nothing can beat a spade - except a
higher spade.

ADONIS

(interjecting)

That's why its called spades.

Adonis says this like he's some ivy league professor
finishing an enlightening lecture. It comes off corny.

TERRELL

Right..

(to Raven)

So you're saying even a four of
spades can beat like - a Queen of
hearts.

RAVEN

Yesssss!

TERRELL

What about the other two's? The
club and the heart?

RAVEN

In order to play this way you gotta
take out the other two's, so the
only ones left is the spade and the
diamond, but remember they're high
cards.

Suddenly *another hand holding a blunt* is extended to Terrell
that he casually rejects, but then is picked up by Adonis
all in one smooth motion.

TERRELL

So for every other suit Ace is the
highest.

(MORE)

TERRELL (CONT'D)

But when it comes to the spades
it's the Jokers, the two of
diamonds, and the two of spades.

RAVEN

You got it.

SHANICE

Now ya'll this first game don't
count cause he learning.

ADONIS

Man fuck that ain't nobody ask
ya'll to train the nigga.

RAVEN

That's cuzzo for you. But don't
worry about him.

As Raven picks up the cards a loud CRASH comes from the
kid's room. Simultaneously, but not in sync, all the adults
(even the extras in the room) scream at their kids different
things like *Ya'll better sitcha asses down! Don't make me
come in there!* and *If I hear one mo' thang LaKeisha Alizé
Jenkins!*

There's a short silence...then the party resumes as usual.
Raven grabs the deck and begins shuffling.

CUT TO:

LATER

Shanice, Adonis, Raven, and Terrell scan the spread of cards
in their hands, then at each other.

Adonis throws out eight of hearts. Raven follows with a Jack
of Hearts. Terrell studies his hand. Eyes the King of Hearts
- throws it down. Adonis & the on-lookers GASP, and Raven
smiles as Shanice SLAPS an Ace of Hearts on the table.

ON-LOOKER

What you doing man?!

TERRELL

What I do!? I thought I was suppose
to play the highest card?!

ADONIS

Yeah cuzzo, but you gotta think
about *their* cards too. I only threw
out the eight to fish out the ace.

(MORE)

ADONIS (CONT'D)
 If you didn't have it, you
 should've played a lower card.

Raven scoops up the book as Shanice SLAPS a 5 of clubs on the table. Adonis SLAPS the table with an ace of clubs.

ADONIS (CONT'D)
 Calm down youngin'.

Raven throws a 6 of clubs, and Terrell follows suit.

ADONIS (CONT'D)
 Collect the books.

Terrell obeys, fidgeting the cards as he do. Adonis tosses a diamond card. Raven caves with a lower card, but Terrell throws out the Ace of Diamonds and wins the round. Adonis and the on-lookers congratulate him.

ADONIS (CONT'D)
 Aight now cuzzo, now it's your turn
 to kick off the round.

Terrell scans his hand - eyes the King of Hearts. He tosses it out to the disapproval of Adonis and the on-lookers. Shanice and Raven only smile.

Shanice and Adonis throw out a heart - but Raven throws out a Four of Spades, winning the round.

TERRELL
 What I do now?!

RAVEN
 Look Terrell, earlier I threw out a
 Jack of Hearts.

Raven shows Terrell the book.

TERRELL
 Yeah I remember, but what does that
 mean?

SHANICE
 It means for her to play a high
 card like that early in the game,
 it was her only heart.

KWAME
 So she was gonna cut any hearts
 played.

TERRELL

Cut?

ADONIS

See man this is bullshit. Ya'll
trying win by any means neccesary.
Didn't even explain all the rules
to cuz.

SHANICE

He's your partner.

Adonis and Shanice go back & forth on each other in the b.g.

TERRELL

Look, I should really get going.
This game way too complicated for
me anyways.

RAVEN

(stern)

You ain't going nowhere till you
finish the game.

Terrell looks frozen in fear.

RAVEN (CONT'D)

It's all good cuz, look - remember
when I said Spades are the most
powerful card in the game?

TERRELL

Yeah?

RAVEN

So anytime you have a chance to
play one, you take it. And the best
time is when someone plays a suit,
but you don't have it. Which means
you can play any card you want.

TERRELL

Why didn't you tell me that before?

RAVEN

All these muthafuckers here why I
gotta be the one the explain
everything to you!

Terrell looks frozen in fear.

CUT TO:

LATER

Near the end of the game. Weed smoke fills the room more than actual air. Terrell is starting to get a contact-high.

Everything throws out a Club, waiting on Terrell to close out the round. CLOSE UP ON TERRELL'S HANDS - *everything begins to blur and slightly swirl.*

ADONIS

Ayo cuzzo, it's on you!

Terrell snaps out of the hypnotic daze and cuts the hand with a Spade.

ADONIS (CONT'D)

That's what I'm talking about
cuzzo!

Everyone is excited as Adonis collects the book. Three rounds left.

Raven and Shanice has 5 books.

Adonis and Terrell have four.

Terrell throws out another spade as *another hand with a blunt* is extended to him (Terrell once again casually declines).

Shanice follows suit, but Adonis throws the Big Joker & Little Joker - automatically winning two rounds.

One round left.

ADONIS (CONT'D)

Time to get ya'll asses off the
table.

Adonis throws out his last spade. Raven follows suit. Terrell keeps staring at his card - the image of it blurring and swirling.

KWAME

It's on you Terrell.

Terrell snaps out of his hypnotic trance again and throws out his last card - an Ace of *Clubs*.

Suddenly the SOUND of a vinyl record being cut off.

The entire rooms goes still. Everyone eyes go wide - especially Adonis. SLOW MOTION as Shanice's face lights up as the words slowly form - then at regular speed...

SHANICE
This nigga reneged!

The entire room erupts in shock and disgust. Terrell looks around confused, and startled. He looks over at Raven, who looks back with worry.

ADONIS
Ah hell naw!

SHANICE
Thank you for the books Terrell!

Shanice looks Adonis in the eyes, gleaming as she counts each book she picks up "1, 2, 3 and 4."

ADONIS
What the fuck man!

TERRELL
What! What! What I do!?

RAVEN
You threw out a club, but earlier
you cut a round of clubs.

Terrell looks at the table and realize he actually threw out a Club.

TERRELL
I didn't mean to! Everything was
looking all blurry and I couldn't
tell the difference.

ADONIS
Nigga are you telling me we lost
cause you can't tell the difference
between a club and a spade!?

Suddenly Adonis HURLS himself across the table at Terrell. He begins shaking him wit his hands around his neck as the entire party breaks Adonis away. Simultaneously, Raven pushes Terrell away and rushes him to the back patio.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK PATIO

Raven slings Terrell outside.

RAVEN
Wait here while I straighten things
out.

And before Terrell can say a word, the door is slammed shut. Terrell stands on the patio, bewildered.

TERRELL
(whispers to himself)
What the fuck.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK PATIO - LATER

Terrell looks over the balcony. He wants to leave, but his jacket is still inside. He approaches the door but the SOUND of VIOLENT CLASHES *still carry on* inside. He looks back over the balcony accepting his fate - stuck. Terrell's face registers loneliness, and shame.

The door creaks open and out walks SAMUEL, holding a snack-size bag of chips.

SAMUEL
You good?

TERRELL
Not really.

SAMUEL
You the one that reneged, huh?

TERRELL
You know how to play Spades?

SAMUEL
Nope. But I remember daddy being mad last time someone reneged.

TERRELL
What happened to him?

SAMUEL
Daddy threw him off the back patio.

Long silence.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Wanna come in and play video games?

There's still sounds of a fight coming from inside.

TERRELL
Yeah...I've taken enough L's for today.

Samuel keeps snacking his chips - no care in the world.

TERRELL (CONT'D)
So...what you do today?

SAMUEL
Watch cartoons and help my mama for
the party.

TERRELL
What cartoons?

SAMUEL
Um, I watched some Pokemon and Yu-
Gi-Oh. Oh! And some ninja turtles.
Michelangelo my favorite.

TERRELL
I like Donatello.

SAMUEL
Yeah, makes sense being a nerd.

TERRELL
You shouldn't talk to your elders
like that.

SAMUEL
(nonchalant, eating
chips)
My mama say that all the time.

Beat.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
You know, you should just play like
Yu-Gi-Oh does.

The gears in Terrell's head start to turn.

TERRELL
You mean, feel the heart of the
cards.

SAMUEL
I mean let your dark half play the
game instead of the nerd half.

Terrell is taken aback by the jab, but something sparks in
his head nonetheless. The door suddenly swings open.

RAVEN
Boy get yo ass back in your room!

Samuel scurries off. Raven looks back at Terrell - calm and
smiling.

RAVEN (CONT'D)
Sorry about that cuz. Things can
get heated at Spades.

TERRELL
Clearly.

RAVEN
I understand if you want to leave.
I'm just glad you finally came out.
I haven't seen you since Aunt
Ruth's funeral.

TERRELL
Yeah, I know. I am glad I came.

RAVEN
I am too. We gotta stop only
meeting up at funerals. We family.
I know we're not your usual crowd.

TERRELL
I'm not much of a crowd person.

RAVEN
I can get that.
(beat)
Well everything is cool. Adonis
wants to apologize before you
leave.

TERRELL
(beat)
Do you think I can stay and play
again?

RAVEN
(shocked but happy)
Of course! And don't worry about
the whole reneging thing - everyone
has done it at some point. Well,
not me. Ever. But it happens.
Everyone learns at their own speed.

TERRELL
I think I got the hang of things
now. I definitely will never renege
ever again.

RAVEN
(smiling, but serious)
Make sure you don't. I'll be your
partner.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Music thumps low in the background. Folks are vibing again, drinks poured, smoke curling through the room.

Adonis sits at the table looking sheepish, an ice pack over his eye. Raven stands behind him - clearly the one who gave it to him.

ADONIS
Sorry cuz.

TERRELL
It's cool.

RAVEN
(to Terrell)
You ready?

The camera does a *Quentin Tarantino-style* FAST CLOSE UP on Terrell's eyes - narrowed and focused.

TERRELL
Let's duel.

SHANICE
Nigga what?

KWAME
Ayo - was that a Yu-Gi-Oh
reference?

A few folks bust out laughing, but Terrell just sits down - posture different now. Calm. Confident.

CUT TO:

SPADES REMATCH MONTAGE:

MUSIC CUE: "Hay" by Crucial Conflict

- CLOSE-UP: Terrell SLAPS a Deuce of Diamonds on the table.

- RAVEN (nods): "That's a book."

- ADONIS glares, then smirks.

- SFX: Cards land with hyper-stylized WHOOSHES, as if magical.

- POV SHOT: Terrell sees the table like a battlefield

- cards glowing, bluffs labeled "TRAP CARDS".
- SHANICE throws out a card.
- TERRELL counters with a Joker.
- ONLOOKERS: "Aye yo!" "Cuzzo cooking!" "He activated his Trap Card!"

Smoke swirls around him. The blunt gets passed. This time - *Terrell takes it.*

He hits it.

Eyes glow red.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

The game is mid-peak. Terrell has now fully morphed - hoodie halfway off, hair frizzed, in his bag.

SHANICE

Oh so now you wanna be cool?

TERRELL

Cool? Girl, I was trained by Master Roshi.

(BEAT.) Silence. The room freezes for a split second.

Then -

ACKLING LAUGHTER from EVERYONE.

KWAME

Yo! Master Roshi though?!

RAVEN

I forgot all about that lil freaky man!

ADONIS

Nigga said Master Roshi... I'm dead.

Laughter echoes. Terrell can't believe it - he's in. Not tolerated - embraced.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - POST GAME VIBES

Drinks flowing. Game over. Terrell is leaned back with a red cup. Blunt between fingers. Music playing low.

ONLOOKER #1

Top 5 anime. Let's go.

SHANICE

Sailor Moon.

KWAME

G Gundam. Y'all ain't ready for that conversation.

RAVEN

Inuyasha was my shit. Period.

ADONIS

Berserk.

SHANICE

Your demonic ass would like that shit.

ADONIS

Bitch, a demon would recognize its own.

The conversation continues as they banter.

TERRELL

Dragon Ball Z. Cell saga. Toonami era only.

KWAME

You liked it over the Buu series?

TERRELL

Most definitely. Buu was a pop villain to bring in more audiences. That's why they made him pink & gummy. But Cell represented perfection. A true enemy. Imagine that - fighting something perfectly designed to beat you. In the end no one could do it alone. They had to beat him...

(takes in everyone)

...together as a family.

Everyone, high as hell, nods in agreement. Terrell's stomach starts to rumble a lil - no one hears it but him. He tries to hide his discomfort.

SAMUEL (O.S.)
I beat everybody! I'm ready for
you!

Terrell turns and in SLOW MOTION sees Samuel in his pajamas running towards him. Terrell tries to ward him off but it's too late - Samuel runs and jumps on Terrell.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)
Cousin T! Come play with me! I
think I can beat you now!

SLOW MOTION:

- Samuel hopping on Terrell's lap, bouncing against his stomach.
- Raven yelling at Samuel to get out the smoke.
- Adonis telling him to listen to his mama.
- Samuel pleading his case to everyone.
- Terrell getting more uncomfortable as Samuel bounces off his stomach even more.

SOUND of something like air leaking slowly out of a balloon

Suddenly Samuel stops talking. Turns and locks eyes with Terrell. They stare at each other - for a while.

KWAME (O.S.)
What the fuck is that!?

The smells travels through the room, hitting one nostril at a time.

ADONIS
Boy did you shit on yourself
again!?

RAVEN
Why would you fart on that boy like
that!

ONLOOKER #1
Damn what ya'll feed this boy?

SAMUEL
It wasn't me! It was him!

SHANICE
Just like ya daddy, blaming his
shit on other people.

ADONIS
(to Shanice)
Fuck you.

SHANICE
Fuck you.

KWAME
Damn ya'll chill.

SHANICE
You know I'll fuck you.

RAVEN
(to Samuel)
Boy get yo stankin' ass in the
bathroom and take a bath!

SAMUEL
But it wasn't me!

RAVEN
Now!

Everyone begins to argue and banter as Terrell quietly slips out, grabs his jacket, and heads out the back porch.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK PORCH - NIGHT

Terrell steps out into the cool night. The sound of arguing still echoing from inside. His stomach rumbles again. He reaches in his pocket, pulls out a bottle of Pepto Bismol and takes a swig. He exhales. Looks over the balcony and back to the house - smiles.

He pulls out his phone and starts to text.

TEXT: TO RAVEN
Thanks for the evening cuzzo. Loved
getting to know ya'll better. Look
forward to next time.

He presses send, smiles one more time at the commotion inside, and heads off.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD OVER BLACK - HOUSE RULES

The end.

Credits.

HARD CUT TO:

MUSIC CUE: "Xanny Family" by Future.

EXTREME CLOSE UP of neon-lit booty cheeks in a thong shaking and jiggling in front of us.

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Camera pans out to a man putting money in her g-string, and others throwing bills. Intercut shots of the stripper twerking in every way on the stage, then in the crowd giving a man a lap dance so good he looks like he's going to orgasm, then finally on the pole - twirling & twerking with the core strength of an Olympic gymnast.

Men *litter* the stage around her, cheering and throwing bills.

SUPER: ATLANTA

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

GINA (early 20's, caramel skin, blonde wig) stares at herself in the mirror - locked into her own eyes. The locker room is noisy - strippers getting ready, bantering, and running in&out. Other than a Jeezy record faintly playing in the b.g., Gina doesn't hear anything. She's lost in herself.

XAVIER (O.S.)
Tiger Bunny! Needed you out there
five minutes ago!

Gina aka TIGER BUNNY snaps out of her trance. She looks back down at *an accounting book* in front of her - she's been studying. She stares at the page, going over the formulas, when the book is suddenly snatched away by another stripper, Alysha aka VANILLA SIN.

ALYSHA
Look like we got another girl
hoeing her way to a degree ya'll.

The women cheer as Gina tries to get her book back, but Alysha playfully keeps it out of arm's reach.

ALYSHA (CONT'D)
Lets see what we have here...oh
accounting! A number's bitch!

GINA
Give me my book back.

Alysha acquiesce as Gina snatches her book back, heading back to her locker in shame.

ALYSHA

Relax. Everyone here either has a degree, or getting one.

Gina looks doubtful, so the camera pans as Alysha points to a stripper who smiles and raises her finger "Nursing". She points to another - "Cosmetology". And another - "Nursing". And another "Cosmetology". And another - "Nursing".

ALYSHA (CONT'D)

See, everyone in school.

GINA

Right....

ALYSHA

So let me guess - you getting your degree in business.

GINA

Actually I'm working on my doctorate, in economics.

ALYSHA

What does numbers gotta do with being a doctor?

She turns to another stripper.

ALYSHA (CONT'D)

Aye you have to take accounting to work at a hospital?

STRIPPER 1

I ain't never had to take no accounting. I don't know what what program she in.

STRIPPER 2

What part of the body is economics? I've been thinking I should specialize in something more specific moving forward. Everybody pays for something more rare.

STRIPPER 3

Economics is the study of the brain dummy.

STRIPPER 2
Bitch ain't nobody ask you. I
already knew that.

Gina tries to interject but they talk over her.

CUT TO:

LATER

Gina, now TIGER-BUNNY, steps out scanning the room. She takes in the atmosphere - the entire space colored in blue with streaks of purple, green, and red lights clashing in the sky like a fight between spaceships. She studies the plastered smiles on the girl's faces, the ecstasy in their eyes, and dollar-bill after dollar-bill being stuffed in bras and G-strings.

Gina takes a deep breath and steps out.

CUT TO:

CONTINUOUS

As she walks forward looking desirable, but uncomfortable -

DJ
(hype)
Ah snap! We got Lil'Snappy and the
RMF sqaud in the house!

Gina looks over and sees LIL'SNAPPY (early 20's, dark-skinned, lots of jewelry, platinum locs) and his entourage walking into the club.

In SLOW MOTION Gina eyes Lil'Snappy as he walks. He sees her, eying him. He returns the gaze.

Also eying Lil'Snappy in the club are three men - giving off ill intent.

Gina's and Snappy's eyes stay locked on each other IN SLOW MOTION as he head upstairs to VIP - overlooking the space. Once he's settled as strippers join the crew, he motions at Gina to join him upstairs.

Gina looks back like a sexual lioness waiting to be released from her cage. Lil'Snappy is turned on. Gina starts to head towards him --

SPLAT! Suddenly the SOUND of a vinyl record being cut off.

She trips over her own feet and falls face-first fast to the floor.

But in an *instant* she springs up from the floor and fixes herself like nothing happened. No one reacts. She looks back at Lil'Snappy and gives a plastered smile.

He smiles back.

CUT TO:

LATER

Lil'Snappy banters with his crew, each with a woman on their lap including Alysha. Gina walks up and sits on Lil'Snappy's lap.

LIL'SNAPPY

So what do they call you.

GINA

Tiger-Bunny.

LIL'SNAPPY

Oh. I like that.

TIGER-BUNNY

It means I'm fierce, but soft.

LIL'SNAPPY

I bet.

Snappy palms her ass and tried to run his hand in-between her thighs but Gina stops him. She freezes for a moment, uncomfortable - then looks at Alysha who says with her eyes *Relax and go with the flow*. Gina moves Snappy's hand back to her outer thigh as she unbuttons her top.

Snappy's eyes studies the curvature of her breast, the texture of her nipples - till something catches his attention just beyond them on the main floor -- the three men eying and pointing at this direction. Snappy knows a threat when he sees one.

Snappy signals to a man in his crew. Alysha notices the coded language as she twerks in a man's face-- seeing the men moving below. She then looks at Gina - grinding on Lil'Snappy's lap oblivious to all the hidden movements.

LIL'SNAPPY (CONT'D)

What you doing later?

TIGER-BUNNY

Finishing my paper for school.

LIL'SNAPPY

Well you should roll with us - I
can help you study.

TIGER-BUNNY

(roll eyes)

I'm sure. But I'll be fired if I
met with a patron outside the club.
Policy.

LIL'SNAPPY

(laughs)

Patron?! You really are a smart one
are you. Baby, I am the policy.

Lil'Snappy then puts a bankroll in her hand. Gina's eyes
slightly widen - she's never made that much money in such a
short time, and with little effort. Tiger-Bunny begins
giving Lil'Snappy a real show.

The three men begin making their way to VIP. Snappy and
Alysha notices. Lil'Snappy gestures his crew with just a
look. Gina starts to feel uncomfortable - noticing his eyes
losing more focus on her by the minute.

LIL'SNAPPY (CONT'D)

(to the strippers)

Ladies - can ya'll excuse us we
gotta handle some business real
quick.

Gina is unsure what this means - thinking she gave a poor
performance. The strippers grab their things, but Tiger-
Bunny tries to entice more time (and money) from Lil'Snappy.
Alysha grabs her by the wrist.

ALYSHA

(polite, yet secretive)

Girl, we need to head back.

Alysha's eyes conveys an urgency - which makes Gina give in.
As Alysha leads Gina away, they brush past the three men.
Alysha hurries Gina along.

GINA

What was that all about?

ALYSHA

Girl just keep moving.

Suddenly -- A *PIGEON SNATCHES GINA'S WIG OFF HER HEAD.*

Gina SHRIEKS as the wig flies around in the air.

DJ

Watch out ya'll! A bird got in and
always snatching wigs. Watch ya
heads!

Gina chases the flyin wig around as people look on and laugh hysterically. The bird perches on a table. Gina creeps forward. She's almost there when --

POP! POP! POP!

The wig flies off as gunshots go off. Gina ducks, terrified. Alysha suddenly YANKS her arm and rushes her to the locker room.

Meanwhile, security and by-standers stopped the gunfire - but now it's a full out brawl.

CUT TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The girls rush in, followed last by a bouncer who guards the door. For some reason -- only Gina seems to be shaken.

GINA

(irate)

What the fuck!

A stripper puts a shot glass in her hand.

STRIPPER 1

It's okay girl. My first night a
whole fuckin' raid happened.

Gina chugs the shot. Asks for another. The stripper pours and Gina takes another shot.

GINA

I'm getting the fuck outta here.

Gina starts frantically packing her desk.

STRIPPER 3

But you can't go chica. We gotta
stay here to police let us out.

GINA

(eyes widen)

What the fuck! I'm stuck here?

STRIPPER 2

It's for your own safety mama.

Gina slams her fists on the desk. She takes a moment to calm down. Looks at herself in the mirror - realizes she looks even more cheap with no wig. Sighs.

GINA
(to herself)
Well I suppose I'll just study
since apparently I've got the time.

Gina takes another deep breath when suddenly --

ALYSHA (O.S.)
Alright bitches!

Gina turns and sees Alysha by the lockers - holding a deck of *UNO* cards in her hand.

ALYSHA (CONT'D)
(smug)
Who's ready to get that ass beat.

STRIPPER 2
Draw fours can stack, no mercy!

STRIPPER 1
Reverse and skips count too this
time!

GINA
(to herself)
What. The. Fu...

HARD CUT TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

Chapter 2: STACKS

CREDITS.