

# THE 7 CARD PLAYERS

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Hold 'Em, Fold 'Em, Walk Away, Never Count, Time Enough and Protégé

## The Seven Card Players

In a magnificent jungle clearing, where the air hummed with the buzz of insects and the chatter of birds, seven chimpanzees gathered under the broad canopy of an ancient ceiba tree. Every Tuesday night, without fail, they met to play poker—an unusual sight in the animal kingdom, to be sure. But these weren't ordinary chimps. They were known far and wide as The Seven Card Players, a group renowned not just for their mastery of cards but for their deep wisdom about life.

The clearing had become something of a legend among creatures near and far. The elephants whispered about it. The birds perched in high branches, hoping to catch a glimpse of their game. Even the wind seemed to pause, swirling softly around the circle, eager to carry fragments of their conversation across the jungle.

This week, a new face sat among them: Protégé, the latest addition to the circle. Tonight would be his trial. The group's goal wasn't just to play cards—it was to pass on their wisdom to the next generation. And Protégé, eager yet uncertain, was about to learn what it meant to become a master.

## The Players and Their Roles:

Hold 'Em sat at the head of the circle, his eyes sharp and calculating. His name wasn't just a reference to the poker variant—he was known for his ability to hold onto information until the perfect moment, striking with precision when the odds were in his favor.

Beside him sat Fold 'Em, the quietest of the group. His skill lay not in winning big hands but in knowing when to walk away. "It's not giving up," he often said, "it's knowing what's not worth fighting for."

Walk Away, with his calm gaze, had a knack for sensing when emotions were running high. He could tell when a player was on the edge of losing control and always knew when it was time to take a break. He taught the importance of composure, not just at the table but in every moment of life.

Opposite him sat Run Away, the group's risk assessor. Nervous by nature, his quick mind was always calculating threats, weighing options, and planning escape routes—skills that kept him safe both in the jungle and at the poker table.

Then there was Never Count, whose name seemed ironic given that he was a mathematical genius. His philosophy was simple: enjoy the game for what it is, not for what you might win. "The joy of playing is the real prize," he often said, grinning as he shuffled the cards.

Time Enough, the oldest and wisest among them, sat with a serene expression. His patience was legendary. He believed that every mistake was a lesson and every hand a chance to improve. "There's always time," he would say, "so long as you don't rush."

Finally, there was Protégé, the newcomer. Every member of the group had been in his position once, starting as a novice among masters. Tonight, Protégé would learn not only the rules of poker but also lessons about life, patience, courage, and wisdom.

## The First Hand:

The cards were dealt, and the game began. The jungle seemed to hold its breath, waiting to see how this session would unfold.

Hold 'Em glanced at his hand and smiled slyly. "You know," he began, "poker is a lot like life. You can't control the cards you're dealt, but you can control how you play them."

Protégé nodded, gripping his cards tightly. He scanned the faces around him, trying to read them, but these chimps were experts. No emotion betrayed their intentions.

Fold 'Em laid down his hand. "Sometimes the best move is knowing when to quit. Walking away isn't weakness—it's strength."

Protégé furrowed his brow. "But how do you know when to quit? What if you're just one card away from winning?"

"That," Fold 'Em said softly, "is the art of discernment."

Walk Away leaned forward. “It’s not always about winning, Protégé. Sometimes the smartest thing you can do is step back when things get heated. Losing control—whether in a game or in life—is the surest way to lose everything.”

Run Away shuffled nervously, his sharp eyes darting around the clearing. “And you’ve got to stay alert, too. Trouble doesn’t send a warning—it sneaks up on you. Knowing when to run can save you, on the card table and in the jungle.”

Never Count laughed, his grin wide. “But don’t let all this talk of danger fool you! Being a winner lies in playing for the joy of it. When you love what you do, you’ve already won.”

#### A Moment of Doubt:

The game continued, and as the hands ebbed and flowed, Protégé found himself on the verge of frustration. He had lost more rounds than he had won. His hands trembled slightly as he prepared to play the next hand.

He glanced at his cards, unsure whether to stay in or fold. This was it—the moment he dreaded.

“Come on, Protégé,” said Hold 'Em, a twinkle in his eye. “What’s it going to be? Hold on or fold?”

Protégé’s fingers twitched toward his chips. “What if I make the wrong move?” he whispered. “What if... I’m just not good enough?”

The group fell silent. Time Enough leaned in, his voice calm and steady. “There’s always another hand, another game, another chance. You see, Protégé, mistakes are not failures—they’re lessons. And as long as you’re learning, you’re improving.”

Protégé took a deep breath. Encouraged by Time Enough’s words, he made his choice: he played his hand. It wasn’t a winning one, but the others nodded approvingly, recognizing that the true victory lay in the courage to act despite uncertainty.

#### The Lessons Shared:

As the game progressed, the conversation drifted from poker to life itself. Each member offered a pearl of wisdom:

- “Patience is your ally,” Hold 'Em said. “In poker, in life—timing is everything.”

- “Quitting isn’t failure,” Fold 'Em added. “It’s knowing what’s worth your energy.”

- “Stay calm when things get tough,” Walk Away advised. “Your clearest thoughts will guide you when the world seems chaotic.”

- “Don’t underestimate the value of being cautious,” Run Away warned. “But don’t let fear stop you from living.”

- “Enjoy the process,” Never Count said, smiling. “The stakes don’t matter as much as the moments shared.”

Time Enough gave Protégé a meaningful look. “And always remember: there’s time enough to learn, time enough to grow. Life is not a race.”

A New Dawn:

The sky began to lighten, and the first rays of morning filtered through the trees. As the game drew to a close, Time Enough gathered the group’s attention one final time.

“Before we leave,” he said, “let’s reflect on what we’ve truly gained tonight.”

Hold 'Em spoke first. “We’ve grown stronger by sharing what we know.”

Fold 'Em nodded. “Teaching Protégé reminded me of the value of humility.”

Walk Away smiled. “And we’ve deepened our trust—there’s no room for secrets among friends. Our strength lies in our willingness to share everything, keeping no secrets or tricks hidden, for we’ve learned that knowledge multiplies when shared, deepening our understanding with each lesson taught, and extending beyond poker to life itself, where freely giving what we know builds a network of trust and wisdom, allowing knowledge to flow like a nourishing river rather than stagnating when hoarded.” Run Away, surprisingly relaxed, added, “Together, we’re unbeatable—not because we win, but because we face life’s challenges as one.”

Never Count beamed. “The joy we find in sharing is worth more than any pot.”

Time Enough placed a gentle hand on Protégé’s shoulder. “And with each lesson shared, our wisdom lives on.”

The Final Lesson:

As the chimps dispersed into the jungle, the light of a new day washing over them, Protégé felt a new sense of purpose. He realized that the true prize wasn’t in winning hands—it was in the knowledge shared, the friendships formed, and the growth he experienced along the way.

In the end, The Seven Card Players taught him the most valuable lesson of all:

It’s not the cards you’re dealt, but how you play them—and who you choose to play with—that truly matters.

The End.

## The Seven Card Players

### Verse 1:

In a jungle clearing, where the shadows play,  
Seven chimps gather at the end of the day.  
Under the old tree, with cards in their hands,  
They share their wisdom, like a band of wise men.

### Chorus:

Oh, it's not just the cards that you hold tight,  
It's the lessons learned in the soft moonlight.  
With Hold 'Em and Fold 'Em, they teach and they play,  
From deep in the jungle, they find their way.

### Verse 2:

Protégé watches, with hope in his eyes,  
Learning from masters beneath the starry skies.  
"Patience is key," says Time Enough wise,  
"Every hand's a lesson; don't fear your demise."

### Chorus:

Oh, it's not just the cards that you hold tight,  
It's the lessons learned in the soft moonlight.  
With Walk Away calming and Run Away swift,  
In this circle of trust, they share every gift.

### Bridge:

"Quitting isn't losing," Fold 'Em will say,  
"It's knowing what matters; it's finding your way."  
Never Count laughs, "Enjoy every game,  
The joy is in playing; there is no one to blame."

### Verse 3:

As dawn breaks softly and the night fades away,  
The chimps leave together, ready for a new day.  
Protégé smiles wide; he's found his own place,  
In a world full of wisdom and warm embrace.

### Chorus:

Oh, it's not just the cards that you hold tight,  
It's the lessons learned in the soft moonlight.  
With friends by your side through each rise and fall,  
In this game of life, love conquers all.

### Outro:

So gather your friends under starlit skies bright,  
Play your hand wisely; relax, don't be uptight.  
For it's not just the cards that you're dealt in this game,  
But how you play them together that brings you your fame.