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Song You Need to Know: Isaiah Rashad Featuring Duke Deuce, 'Lay Wit Ya'

After a hiatus of nearly five years, the TDE rapper resurfaces with an uncharacteristically booming single ahead of his third album

By **MANKAPRR CONTEH** 



SONG YOU

NEED TO KNOW

It's rare to hear someone say "Play that new Isaiah Rashad!" in a turnt setting. Rashad has been an introspective rapper signed to hip-hop powerhouse [Top Dawg Entertainment](#) since 2013; he's got the immense skill and vulnerability of his labelmate Kendrick Lamar, but none of the

party songs. His 2014 debut on TDE, *Cilvia Demo* and its follow-up, 2016's *The Sun's Tirade*, are critically acclaimed for Rashad's dexterous lyricism and poignant tussles with parenthood, addiction, and depression. His raps are often pillars of resilience or anxious rubble. It's the kind of music you listen to alone and eagerly DM to attentive friends, not put on while you're together.

It's been four years since Rashad released a body of work, and since then, he's dropped one single, the wordy, urgent "Why Worry." On his long-awaited return, "Lay Wit Ya," he really does chill out and turn up. This is the reemergence that a safer summer after 14 months of suffering deserves — we've earned a season of subwoofers and connection. The Chattanooga native calls on Duke Deuce, an electric rapper from Memphis, five hours west of his city, and Rashad meets him at the intersection of cool and crunk. Powerful bass and tinny drums emerge from a somber, staticky intro sample that feels more familiar from Rashad than the distinct 808s that give "Lay Wit Ya" its bounce.

The real beat is clear and crisp. Rashad leans into its ride, sedately growling, "Last year you was my bitch, now you my baby guuuuuurl," while Duke Deuce taps into the production's energy. "Plenty people used to sleep up on me, now I'm seeking vengeance," he styles in a verse that might have stolen the show if it wasn't so refreshing to hear Isaiah Rashad rap without his self-reflection weighing him down.

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