

POKERFACE

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An online poker game has deadly consequences.

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INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JOE, 20s, sits at a desk by a window in the messy living room in his bachelor's apartment.

On Joe's COMPUTER SCREEN is a POKER GAME SITE.

JOE  
Alright, all in, bitch.

Joe hits a key. Hands are shown. Joe loses.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Shit! Asshole!

A WINDOW pops up, indicating Joe has no more chips, and offering to charge his credit card for more.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Sorry boss, no can do. You maxed me out. The well is dry.

A NEW WINDOW pops up. LIFE OR DEATH POKER! HIGH STAKES! WIN BIG! FREE! A button reads PLAY!

JOE (CONT'D)  
I'll just go somewhere my good name is welcome.

Joe clicks on PLAY!

He is taken to a web site with a banner reading POKERFACE'S LIFE OR DEATH POKER, with a NAME text field. Joe types in "JOE", and clicks ENTER. A VIDEO WINDOW opens, revealing...

INT. POKER ROOM - NIGHT

The WEB CAMERA is "seated" at a poker table. The room is dark and empty-- after hours, apparently. Across the table sits another man, BOB, 20s, tied to the chair, duct tape over his mouth. His hands are cuffed to the poker table in front of him. His terrified eyes bug out over the duct tape.

Standing beside Bob, holding a gun to his head, is POKERFACE, wearing a BLANK, STARING MASK. The dead, unreadable expression is unsettling, like a doll or robot face.

INTERCUT BETWEEN JOE'S APARTMENT AND THE POKER ROOM

Joe leans forward.

JOE  
What the fuck?

Pokerface moves to the side of the table, between the players. He puts the gun down on the felt, and picks up a deck of cards. He shuffles.

POKERFACE  
Hello, Joe. I'm Pokerface. Welcome to my table. I've told Bob here the house rules, which are simple. One hand. You win, you live. You lose, you die. Shall we begin?

JOE  
What is this, some kind of staged viral video thing?

POKERFACE  
Oh, it's very real, Joe. Joe clicks on an ACCEPT button.

JOE  
Of course it is. Fuck it, I'll play.

POKERFACE  
Excellent!

JOE  
Kiss your ass goodbye, Bob.

Bob SCREAMS under the duct tape, yanking at his restraints.

Pokerface punches Bob across the face.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Ouch! Very realistic.

Bob collapses in his seat, WEEPING.

Pokerface deals, two cards each, face down.

On Joe's SCREEN, his cards can be seen, as when poker is televised. ACE OF CLUBS and EIGHT OF SPADES.

Bob picks up his cards, hands trembling.

POKERFACE  
Here's the flop, gentlemen.

Pokerface burns a card, then deals three face up in the centre of the table.

POKERFACE (CONT'D)  
 Eight of Clubs. Queen of Diamonds.  
 Ace of Spades.

Joe smiles.

JOE  
 Aw yeah!

Bob's face falls with desperation and terror.

JOE (CONT'D)  
 That's a big tell, Bob! You better  
 dial back the acting a little bit!

POKERFACE  
 The turn...

Pokerface burns another card, then puts down a fourth, face  
 up.

POKERFACE (CONT'D)  
 Ace of Hearts. Pair of aces  
 showing!

JOE  
 Oh, yes! Bob, you are screwed,  
 buddy!

Joe is sitting with a full house, aces over eights.

JOE (CONT'D)  
 Christ, this table hates you, Bob.  
 Hates you!

Bob's bloody face constricts with terror. His eyes plead.

POKERFACE  
 Are you enjoying this, Joe?

JOE  
 Yeah, you guys are great! Bob, if  
 there's an Oscar for best acting in  
 a web video, you own it!

Bob shrinks, wallowing in misery.

POKERFACE  
 Performance of a life time! Last  
 card, gentlemen. The river...

Pokerface turns up the last card.

POKERFACE (CONT'D)  
Queen of Spades. Pair of Queens  
showing!

JOE  
Not going to help you, Bob!

A spastic wave overtakes Bob as he breaks down completely.  
Pokerface stands and goes to Bob's side.

POKERFACE  
It appears Bob has lost  
consciousness. He has also urinated  
himself.

JOE  
Oh, jeez, enough detail!

Pokerface SLAPS Bob's face several times, bringing him back  
to consciousness.

Joe winces, watching the abuse.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Come on, easy on the guy.

POKERFACE  
You feel sympathy for Bob, Joe?

JOE  
I've never been into the torture  
stuff. Not my thing. But I'm  
looking forward to seeing what kind  
of special effects you guys can  
pull off.

Pokerface returns to the side of the table.

POKERFACE  
Alright gentlemen, time to see your  
hands. Joe?

Pokerface flips over Joe's cards.

JOE  
Full house! Aces over eights!

POKERFACE  
Good hand! But what has Bob got?

Cards fall from Bob's trembling hands, the QUEEN OF CLUBS  
and QUEEN OF DIAMONDS.

POKERFACE (CONT'D)

Two Queens! Four of a kind beats a full house! Bob wins!

JOE

What?! God damn it, Bob! You sneaky son of a bitch!

POKERFACE

You lose, Joe.

JOE

I guess I don't get to see old Bob get whacked, huh?

POKERFACE

No, you do not.

Pokerface goes to Bob and rips the duct tape off his mouth, then walks out of frame. Bob GASPS for breath.

BOB

He can see you! He's fucking crazy! Look out, man!

It is revealed that Pokerface and Bob are in an EMPTY APARTMENT. Bob sits at a poker table with a LAPTOP COMPUTER across from him. Behind Bob, a small GREEN SCREEN is set up. The POKER ROOM is being composited in.

Pokerface walks to a nearby window, where a SNIPER RIFLE sits on a tripod. Pokerface leans into the rifle and looks through the scope.

Joe sits up, staring into his computer screen.

JOE

What did you say? Quit fucking around, Bob!

BOB

He can see you! Look out!

Too late. Pokerface FIRES.

The bullet smashes through the window beside Joe and blows apart his head, splattering blood and brains across the computer screen.

THE END.