

POKER NIGHT

FADE IN:

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

An owl hoots in a tree.

Crickets chirp an annoying melody.

A rat scurries from behind a mausoleum, then disappears into the night.

A van creeps along a small dirt road with its lights off.

LEO and STAN emerge from the vehicle. Two guys who haven't declared any income since the Reagan administration.

LEO
You're crazy. John Elway? How can
you compare John Elway to Brett
Favre?

STAN
Count'em. Not one but two Super
Bowl rings.

LEO
So what.

STAN
Favre only has one. End of story.

Stan hands Leo a key.

STAN
Go unlock that shed. We're gonna
need a flashlight and a shovel.

LEO
A flashlight and a shovel. Got it.

Stan slides the van door open.

He stares intently.

STAN
Leo.

Leo walks to the side of the van and takes a peek.

The two men gawk at one another for a few seconds. Neither shows any initiative.

STAN
Where the hell is he?

LEO
He couldn't have got out. He was
dead. Right?

SUPER: "EARLIER THAT EVENING."

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

KEN WILLOUGHBY takes a damp rag and wipes off his makeshift
poker table.

He pours some stale pretzels into a bowl and rips open a bag
of potato chips with his teeth.

He recently turned thirty but looks closer to forty.

The small one-bedroom apartment is very untidy. A haven for
dust.

The living room wall plays host to "DOGS PLAYING POKER."

A loud knock.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Willoughby shoves a few pretzels in his mouth and darts for
the door.

WILLOUGHBY
Come on in.

GALLAGHER
Thanks.

WILLOUGHBY
You're the first one here.

CHRIS GALLAGHER, always early, never late.

At thirty-one years old, he'd resemble a lifeguard if not
for his glasses.

Gallagher heads for the kitchen and raids the refrigerator.

WILLOUGHBY(O.S.)
You hear from Ferguson?

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gallagher surprised at Willoughby's question.

GALLAGHER
Why would I hear from Ferguson? I
don't believe you invited
him. He's a fucking dick head.

Willoughby lets out a hearty roar.

WILLOUGHBY(O.S.)
Yeah, but he's a lousy poker
player.

Gallagher leans down and inspects the refrigerator.

GALLAGHER
You got any food?

WILLOUGHBY(O.S.)
Just some leftover take-out.

Gallagher closes the refrigerator door and fires a confused
look in his direction.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Willoughby wonders what Gallagher is staring at.

WILLOUGHBY
Do I got something on my face?

GALLAGHER(O.S.)
What the fuck is that?

Behind Willoughby is his new-found pride and joy.

Gallagher is enamored with the picture of the dogs.

GALLAGHER(O.S.)
Why the hell do you have that on
your wall?

Willoughby turns and proudly embraces his masterpiece.

WILLOUGHBY
Are you kidding me? I love it!

GALLAGHER(O.S.)
That's something a college kid
would have in his dorm room. When
did you get it?

WILLOUGHBY
Last week.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gallagher, not amused sits at the table and begins to organize the poker chips.

GALLAGHER
You are a fucking character. You know that?

WILLOUGHBY(O.S.)
You know you love it too.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Willoughby's cell phone rings. He has a hard time finding it in all the mess. He locates it and flips it open.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT

SETH FERGUSON trots down the steps from his apartment, phone in hand.

At thirty-four, he looks and dresses younger than his age.

INTERCUT - TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

FERGUSON
What's up Cochise?

WILLOUGHBY
Hey. You on your way?

FERGUSON
Heading to my car right now. Anyone else there?

WILLOUGHBY
Gallagher so far.

FERGUSON
Gallagher? What an asshole. Why did you invite him?

WILLOUGHBY
Lighten up already. Hurry on over.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Ferguson dashes towards his favorite toy.

A van screeches and comes to a halt behind Ferguson's Porsche.

Leo jumps out and throws a hood over Ferguson's head. He gives him a few hard shots to the gut and tosses him in the back of the van.

LEO

Get the fuck in there you scumbag!

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

ED CROMARTIE barrels through a door with a cell phone in his hand.

Married with two kids and it shows.

His daughter DAHLIA is on the receiving end of his latest tirade.

CROMARTIE

You're gonna tell me everything or
you're out on your ass!

DAHLIA

I don't have to tell you
anything. That's my phone.

CROMARTIE

Which I paid for. I wanna know why
you have his number in your
phone. He's twice your age.

DAHLIA

I hate you!

She storms out of the room, grabs the phone from his hand and slams the door.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gallagher starts to fidget. He has become a little uneasy.

GALLAGHER

Where the fuck is everyone?

WILLOUGHBY
It's only Ferguson and Cromartie.

Gallagher tries to keep his cool.

GALLAGHER
Just four? What the fuck.

WILLOUGHBY
How many were you expecting?

Willoughby jams a pretzel in his mouth and chews slowly.

Gallagher gets up and opens the refrigerator. He snags a soda and feels it to see if it's cold enough. Even though it's not, he opens it anyway.

GALLAGHER
I'm starving. You got any real food in this house.

WILLOUGHBY
Go downstairs and get a pizza.

GALLAGHER
Good idea.

Willoughby opens the refrigerator and reaches way in the back, behind some take-out Chinese and produces a tall can of Colt 45 malt liquor.

Gallagher can't believe his eyes.

GALLAGHER
Colt 45? What are you a gang-banger now?

WILLOUGHBY
This shit gets you drunk and it's cheap. And it's my last one. Shit!

Willoughby receives another call. He shuffles toward the phone.

WILLOUGHBY
Maybe that's Cromartie.

GALLAGHER
Tell him to hurry up.

WILLOUGHBY
What's the name of that shit you drink?

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