

LIVER PLAY

Written by  
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LIGHTS UP on MARK who lies in a hospital bed, surrounded by the appropriate medical devices to monitor his health. The left side of the stage is concealed behind a large hospital curtain. His mother, ALICE is slumped in the a chair on the right side of Mark's bed.

Mark is sitting wide awake in his bed staring at the doughnut from his previous meal. Contemplating how to get it

Mark licks his lips

Mark finally makes up his mind and reaches for the doughnut, but because he is so wired up to the machines, the doughnut winds up *just* out of reach.

He slumps back into bed, momentarily defeated.

Mark then takes an extra second to gather energy within himself, he stretches out a little bit and makes a seconded attempt.

His seconded attempt is just as unsuccessful as his first, and once again, he falls back into bed, exhausted from what little physical exertion he just performed.

Mark tries one last time to reach for this doughnut, and while he unsuccessfully reaches for his prize, a NURSE walks in and sees him.

Caught red-handed, Mark slowly sits back.

The Nurse, meanwhile, crosses her arms very sternly and shakes her head in disapproval.

The Nurse then walks over and slides the doughnut even farther out of Marks reach, then moves on to the machines around Mark and records various numbers in her notes, and checks Mark's I.V. drip.

All this time, Mark watches The Nurse, the whole time being well-mannered and silent.

Before The Nurse leaves, she points to Mark's torso in warning to Mark.

Mark nods in a begrudging understanding, and settles back in to sleep again.

As his eyes are closed, the doughnut comes back in and onto the plate.

After a moment of closed eyes, one of Mark's eyes slowly opens and begins to stare at the doughnut.

Both eyes open now, Mark intensely stares at the doughnut.

During another attempt at the pastry, Mark over extends himself knocks over a glass of water, shattering it on the ground.

All of this noise has woken Alice mother up.

ALICE  
(whispered)  
And what exactly do you think that  
you are doing?

He sheepishly points to the doughnut and shrugs.

MARK  
I was, uh, hungry?

ALICE  
Oh come on Mark! You *know* that you  
can't be eating right now! Not this  
close to surgery!

Alice grabs napkins off the table and starts cleaning up the spill.

MARK  
I know! I know! Lay off!

ALICE  
Well, clearly you forgot, or else  
you wouldn't grabbing for that  
doughnut!

MARK  
Ok, I get your point. I forgot,  
alright?

ALICE  
The doctors clearly stated that you  
"can not eat 12 hours before  
surgery".

MARK  
ALRIGHT I won't eat the stupid  
doughnut!

ALICE  
I am just going to throw the stupid  
thing out.

MARK  
NO!

ALICE  
OK, yikes Mark.

MARK  
I want to eat it latter.

ALICE  
Or you're gonna try to eat it now.

MARK  
No I won't! I promise I won't eat  
the stupid doughnut! Just lay off!

ALICE  
Why are you being so testy with me?  
Right now of all times? Right  
before this happens?

MARK  
I don't know.

Alice continues to stare at Mark

MARK (CONT'D)  
I don't know, **OK!**?

ALICE  
(softens)  
Sorry for getting on your case. I  
just want you to be safe.  
(A pause to make up her  
mind)  
Fine. I'll leave it out, **ONLY** if  
you promise **not** to eat it before  
the doctors say that its ok.

MARK  
I promise. Mom, I'll be ok mom.

ALICE  
Alright. I know.

Now calmed down and with the mess cleaned up, she goes back  
to her chair to continue to rest, Mark settles down as well.

There are a few moments of silence as both characters settle  
back into their prospective sleep.

After Mark spends some time laying with his eyes closed, one  
of his eyes slowly starts to open again.

Now, with both eyes opened and trained on the doughnut.

He looks around in an attempt, surveying what is around him.

He notices a crutch next to him on his left, and he gets excited.

He quietly reaches for the crutch, watching his mother the whole time.

Mark successfully gets the crutch and looks at it for a second with anticipation.

Mark then uses the crutch to work at edging the table over closer to him, all the while keeping an eye on Alice, so that he won't wake her up

First he attempts to move the whole table closer, but to no success.

Starting to get frustrated, he then starts going just for the doughnut.

The more and more he is unsuccessful, the more and more frustrated he becomes, to the point where he raises the crutch up in anger.

Right before he slams the crutch down on the doughnut, The Nurse walks back into the room.

Mark looks at her, frozen midair and caught red handed.

He then embarrassedly puts the crutch back down.

The Nurse goes about her checks of his vitals, all the while eyeing him suspiciously.

Mark sits patiently as The Nurse finishes her rounds and leaves the room.

After a beat to check that The Nurse is gone, Mark scrambles to grab his crutch again.

As he prepares to once more attack the doughnut, STEVEN, Mark's older brother, slowly opens the door and steps into the room.

STEVEN  
(quietly)  
Hey

Mark puts down the crutch and looks over at Steven

MARK  
Hey.

There is a tense moment in which neither brother knows what to do, both are very tense, and neither looks at one another.

MARK (CONT'D)

Thanks for finally showing up

STEVEN

Yeah well, they've been working me twenty four hours a day for the last week straight. I got off early today though, so thought it'd be a good to stop by.

Slowly, they look up at each other. Steven starts slowly cracking a smile and Mark soon follows.

Steven inches he way out of the doorway and into the room.

As he surveys the room, he notices Alice.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

How's she doing?

MARK

Oh you know, on my case all the time. As usual.

STEVEN

Heh, yeah. Trust me, I know *That*.

MARK

Hey, uh, since you're up, can you snag me that doughnut?

STEVEN

Aren't the two of you not supposed to eat anything this close to surgery?

MARK

What are you, a doctor now?

STEVEN

No, what I AM is concerned for you.

MARK

Well, don't be.

STEVEN

Hey, I just want this thing to go smoothly-

MARK

Yeah, alright

STEVEN

Jeez Mark!

MARK

Come on dude, its just a doughnut.

STEVEN

Sorry Mark, no can do.

MARK

Come on, just this once.

STEVEN

**Sorry Mark.** No. Can. Do.

MARK

I'm dieing of starvation here, and you won't help your **own** brother out this **one** time!?

STEVEN

No I will not.

MARK

(snapping at him in frustration)

God Damn it Steve! God damn it!  
Just hand me that doughnut!

STEVEN

NO! And calm down or else I'll have the nurse sedate you!

MARK

She wouldn't "sedate me"

STEVEN

Fine, then I will wake mom up and tell her about how big of a dick head you're being.

MARK

(taking a moment to consider this)

Fine. I will shut up about the doughnut.

Mark slumps down, in a bad mood, continues to eye the doughnut. Steven, meanwhile, walks over to Alice and gently wakes her up.

STEVEN

Hey mom.

MARK

Dude, I said I'd shut up!

STEVEN  
Not about you Mark.

As soon as Alice recognizes Steven, she stands up to greet him with a long, meaningful hug.

STEVEN (CONT'D)  
Hey.

As the two of them come out of the hug, Steven gestures at the partition in the room.

STEVEN (CONT'D)  
Can I see him?

ALICE  
Sure. He's probably asleep though.  
Mark, stop eyeing that doughnut.

MARK  
OK!

After gaining confidence from his mother, Steven steps behind the partition.

Pausing just a moment, then after glancing over at Mark, Alice joins Steven behind the screen.

Left alone, Mark almost immediately starts back at the doughnut again.

Just then, JEN runs into the room.

JEN  
Mark!

She rushes directly to Mark, wraps her arms around Mark, and starts kissing his face furiously

MARK  
(still staring at the  
doughnut)  
Hey, hey. This is a surprise. Hey  
can you do me a huge favor.

JEN  
Well, I just got out of class, and  
I thought try to squeeze in a visit  
one last time before you go under  
the knife!

MARK  
Uh, thanks. 'Preciate it. Now I  
*really* need a favor right now.

JEN  
Well, yeah sure. Aren't you at  
least glad to-

MARK  
(losing his patients)  
Just shut up for a second. Just  
real quick. Ok-

JEN  
Are you telling me to shut up!?

MARK  
No, that's not important, I just  
want you to-

Hearing the commotion of Jen's entrance, Alice comes from  
behind the screen to greet her.

ALICE  
Hi Jen!

JEN  
Oh hi Mrs. Foster!

MARK  
Shit! No! Come back babe, just for  
a second.

Jen runs over to give and gives a big, comforting hug to  
Alice.

Steven also steps out from behind the screen and also greets  
Jen.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Hey! Come on! Hey, god damn it!

With everyone distracted in the corner, Mark starts looking  
around for the crutch.

Crutch in hand, Mark tries once more with fierce  
determination. He furiously scrambles and flails as a last  
big push to get at this doughnut. The trio in the corner see  
this.

ALICE  
What are you doing?

MARK  
I. Am. Getting. That. Doughnut.

ALICE  
Oh Christ Mark, no you're not!

MARK  
(continuing to work at it)  
Yes. I. Am.

STEVEN  
Hey, come on man, just stop.

MARK  
Shut up!

ALICE  
Hey!

At this, the three people standing up go over to Mark to restrain him. They speak all at once, all ad. lib.

ALICE (CONT'D)  
Stop fight- just stop it Mark!

MARK  
Back off! Back off all of you! Just let me get- I just want this one thing.

STEVEN  
What is the deal!? Stop

JEN  
Mark, stop it mark! Come on!

Finally, with a big yell from Mark, everyone is thrown off. Alice stands back furiously, Steven tensed and prepared to attack again, Jen pouting in the corner, and Mark in the middle.

MARK  
I JUST WANT THE FUCKING DOUGHNUT!

STEVEN  
Jesus Christ Mark! Why do you want the stupid doughnut so badly!?

MARK  
(almost in tears)  
I just want it, ok!? I have been staring at that doughnut for like a fucking hour and it just look so good, and I'm hungry and I'm tired, and just **fuck** it! I just want to stay here and eat it and be left alone!

(MORE)

MARK (CONT'D)

I just want to eat the fucking  
doughnut and their going to come to  
cut me open and I don't want that,  
I just want to sit here and eat  
that STUPID! FUCKING! DOUGHNUT!

There is a long pause.

ALICE

Mark, I-

The nurse steps into the room, and all eyes turn to her

NURSE

The doctor is ready now, its time  
to go and get ready for the  
procedure.

There is a sudden silence as they all stand in shock and let  
the news set in. Suddenly, a number of doctors rush in.

Alice, Steven and Jen are separated from Mark as the doctors  
surround Mark to examine him and start spouting off medical  
jargon ex. "Blood pressure 120 over 80" and "prep 40cc of  
Dixyoribiothall".

ALICE

Mark!

JEN

Everything is going to be OK Mark,  
everything is going to be just  
fine!

STEVEN

You're going to pull through this  
Mark! You're going to be just fine,  
I promise!

A gurney rushes in and Mark is transferred to it.

The doctors cart Mark away with Alice, Steven, and Jen  
following close behind, still shouting encouragements.

The room is suddenly empty and silent, with a single light  
illuminating the doughnut.

BLACKOUT