

Closing Time

written by

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This is a copy of the screenplay I hoped to film to be used as part of my mini-portfolio submission, but due to Covid-19 restrictions I wasn't able to get people together to shoot it.

I've added notes to the script to indicate what I was roughly planning on doing with the camera for each section. I hope this can give a reasonable overview of what I was trying to accomplish and the story I wanted to tell.

Added lines are indicated in ***bold and italics***.

INT. FLAT - DAY

ANTHONY sits on a couch in the living room. He's biting his nails and fidgeting nervously. His phone is resting on the couch arm next to him.

A shot directly facing Anthony. The shot is composed so the space on the couch next to him is in frame - we will return to this composition later.

In front of him, a few boxes are piled up, with an assortment of items in them. "Max" is written on the side of one.

A reverse of the previous shot to show the boxes lying in the living room in front of Anthony, before cutting back to Anthony.

An over the shoulder shot.

He picks up his phone, quickly checks it for messages but sees none. He puts back down.

Back to the original angle.

We hold on Anthony for a while, getting increasingly anxious, until an intercom buzz comes from the hallway.

A shot from the direction of the hallway facing Anthony.

Anthony looks towards the buzzer sound, before slowly rising to his feet and walking towards the hallway to answer it.

As Anthony walks towards the hallway, the camera slowly pans following him across the room - capturing the moment of limbo.

An angle facing the intercom from the front. The bathroom, directly next to the intercom, is in the right-side of the frame.

He picks up the receiver and listens for a second.

ANTHONY
Okay, come right up.

Anthony heads into the bathroom next to the receiver, he looks in the mirror and messes with his hair.

We hold the same shot with the bathroom in frame.

There's a knock on the door to the left of the intercom. Anthony comes out the bathroom and goes to answer it.

The camera pans to the door, following Anthony. We hold on the doorway from behind Anthony.

He opens the door.

MAX

Hey.

ANTHONY

Hey.

The embrace, a little awkwardly, and start heading back to the main room.

ANTHONY

I've, eh... I've boxed your stuff
up for you.

MAX

Oh, thanks.

They walk into the living room.

We follow them walking back across the room with a slow pan, a reverse of the one from earlier.

A low-angle shot looking up from the boxes. Max will lean down into frame and the boxes will be visible in foreground corner.

Max leans down and looks into the boxes, flicking through the items on the top uncommittedly. He looks back over at Anthony.

The following interaction will be composed of simple shot-reverse shots. The camera will mostly sit between Anthony and Max, highlighting the disconnect between them. The one exception is the above mentioned low-angle shot from the boxes, which we'll hold on when Max is facing away from Anthony. I'll note when shot changes.

Right now the camera will be placed between them as Max looks up from the boxes.

MAX

So how are you?

ANTHONY

(shrugs)

As good as I can be. And you?

MAX

Yeah, I'm fine, I guess.

Max looks back round at the boxes.

We return to the low-angle shot on Max.

MAX

It's weird to see my entire life
here just packed away like this.

ANTHONY

Surprisingly little stuff for three
years.

MAX

Yeah, well, it was always more your
place than it was mine.

Max stands up and turns around to face Anthony.

New angle on Max to match his new position.

MAX

You going to be okay for rent.

ANTHONY

I'll manage. I lived here by myself
before you remember.

MAX

Yeah of course, I forgot. It's been
so long.

They stand there in silence for a few moments. An awkward air
in the room.

MAX

This is weird, isn't it.

ANTHONY

Yep.

MAX

5 years of our lives. 5 whole
years, just... poof.

ANTHONY

We both know this has been coming
for a while.

MAX

Still.

Max turns back around to the boxes and bends down again,
flicking through the items on the top.

We cut back to the previous low-angle shot.

MAX (CONT'D)
Gonna take some time to adapt.

Max picks up a small ornament from the top of the box and fiddles with it in his fingers. He turns to Anthony.

Back the Max's previous angle facing him on the floor.

MAX (CONT'D)
Remember this?

ANTHONY
Yeah, from that day we went to the fair right? We won it after playing those basketball games for like an hour straight.

MAX
If I recall, I won it for us. You were no help.

ANTHONY
I'm pretty sure I was hungover.

MAX
Yeah, that sounds about right.

Max turns back to face the boxes so they're not looking at each other. He's fiddling with the ornament, moving it around in his fingers.

Back to the low-angle shot on Max from the boxes.

MAX (CONT'D)
How long ago was that?

ANTHONY
Must be going on 4 years now.

A beat.

To a new close-up of Anthony.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)
(quietly)
Think that was the first time you said you loved me.

Anthony looks down at the floor.

A close-up on Max.

MAX

Yeah, I think you're right.

A pause. Both a little lost in thought.

ANTHONY

It's wild to think how different we were back then.

Max stands up and turns around.

Back to the angles for them both standing.

MAX

Yeah, we were, what, just starting university?

ANTHONY

Yup. Feels like a lifetime ago.

MAX

It really does.

Anthony sits down on the couch.

We cut to a new angle of Anthony, directly facing him on the couch, with him in the centre of the frame. The reverse angle is looking up at Max, roughly matching Anthony's eyeline.

ANTHONY

I still remember that day vividly you know? I remember you walking towards me along that peer. I remember noticing the way you looked at me. I remember a bird stealing your food.

MAX

(laughs)

Yeah, I remember that too.

ANTHONY

What I'd give to feel that free again.

There's a pause. Max sits on the couch next to Anthony.

We return to the shot we started on, now with Max filling to the previously empty spot on the couch. The following dialogue plays out in one two-shot.

ANTHONY

What happened to us, man.

MAX

We changed. It happens. We're only being civil now cause we're reminiscing, we've been at each others throats for months, you know that.

ANTHONY

I know but... How? When? How can we possibly go from what we had that day to... this.

Anthony gestures at the boxes.

Cut to the boxes and then back to them.

MAX

It was a gradual process.

ANTHONY

It doesn't feel like it.

MAX

I know.

Another pause.

ANTHONY

It's just weird. This thing, it's been such a constant in my life, our lives - I don't know if I know how to live without it.

MAX

I think that's why it's dragged on too long.

ANTHONY

I know that.

(a pause)

I just wish it made it a little easier.

MAX

We'll be okay.

ANTHONY

I know.

They sit their in silence for several moments.

ANTHONY

For what it's worth, I'm gonna miss you.

MAX

Even with my narcissism, my massive ego.

ANTHONY

Stop it.

MAX

Sorry.

(a pause)

I'll miss you too.

They just sit there, staring at the floor. Eventually, Max stands up.

MAX

Will you help me shift these boxes onto the landing.

ANTHONY

I can help you bring them down to your car.

MAX

No, it's ok. I have someone outside.

ANTHONY

Oh... right.

Anthony stands up. They grab a box each and carry them to the front door, leaving them outside. They come back and repeat the process with the other boxes.

I don't have a solid plan for how to shoot this, would likely try some different things on the day. I want this section to play out in real time to give the sense of time dragging out. I'll likely use a combination of the panning shots across the rooms used earlier, along with the low-angle shot from the boxes to show them lifting the boxes up.

They stand in the doorway looking at each other. Max outside, Anthony inside.

The camera is placed over the shoulder of Anthony and Max, inside the flat and in the corridor, respectively. We shot reverse-shot for this dialogue exchange.

ANTHONY

I guess this is it.

MAX

I guess so.

They hug. There's a pause.

ANTHONY
I'm not sure what to say.

MAX
Me neither.

ANTHONY
It's hard to fit five years of
experience into one goodbye.

MAX
Yeah.

Anthony starts to slowly close the door before:

MAX
I just want you to know... I don't
regret a thing.

ANTHONY
No, me neither. We were great
together weren't we? For a while.

MAX
We really were.

A long pause. They look at each other.

MAX
Well... Goodbye.

ANTHONY
Bye.

Anthony slowly starts to close the door, they lock eyes
briefly before the door blocks their line of sight. The door
clicks shut.

***We cut into a close up of Max and Anthony's faces as the door
slides closed across them.***

Anthony leans his head against the door. On the other side,
we see Max do the same. When we go back to outside, Max is
gone.

***We hold on a shot of Max with his head against the door,
before cutting to a matching shot of Anthony. We then cut
back to the shot outside the flat, but it's just the door.
Max is gone.***

CUT TO BLACK

There would likely be a lot of extra shots not accounted for in here, to ease transitions between blocking and such, that would be captured on the day of filming. Plus extra work in capturing audio (e.g. the door buzzer) that would be captured in a day of on-set planning.

I know the layout of the flat, so it might be a little clearer in my head how these shots would be composed than how I've translated it into text, but I hope I've captured my general intent and what I wanted to do.