

ANYTHING



Film Treatment
By Aleksandr Beaudoin

LOGLINE: ANYTHING is a *coming-of-age* drama for both Jacob, a young college student, and Mason, an aging father-of-two. Each with their own hidden agenda, the two strangers embark on a temporarily satisfying relationship. Hidden from the outside world, both men find peace in the presence of each other, living in a dream neither thought possible: one man benefiting from the wisdom of a more experienced figure; the other living through youth that was once denied to him. However, as emotions threaten to become stronger and the reality of their situation becomes apparent, the outside world comes crashing in, ultimately requiring difficult decisions to be made.



TONE: Comparative to their relationship, this short film is subtle and honest. Beginning in late-fall, the story captures the feeling of a serene but fleeting moment. Like witnessing the colors of foliage. Appreciating a vibrant red Maple Leaf but knowing it will soon wither and drop with the approach of winter, eventually losing its alluring color. Above all, this film examines the small things that bring people joy but also sadness in the everyday.



THEMES:

- Generational love
- Shared manipulation
- Romantic outlets
- Desperation
- Experience
- LGBTQ
- Youth



STORY:

It's end of Fall...the final threat of winter around the corner. Any surviving withering leaves fall from dying trees around Jacob, our 22-year-old protagonist, as he sits on a park bench in Astoria, Queens. Above him, a dominating iron bridge leads into Manhattan.

Despite sitting alone on the bench, there is a strange tension in the air. This is solidified as Jacob suddenly becomes anxious and perhaps sad. Whipping his head in one direction, a middle-aged man unexpectedly enters frame, sitting beside Jacob on the park bench.

The two men sit in the chilly breeze. Statues. Waiting. The atmosphere feeling blue. Until eventually the older gentleman, Mason, mentions, "Even you're old enough to know what this is about."

And with that, we are taken back several months *prior*...

The emotional tone flips and becomes serene. All is peaceful as Jacob reads while listening to 80s tunes in his tiny quaint bedroom. Early Fall sunlight shines through a single tiny window, bathing the room in an orange-ish glow.

All remains calm until suddenly his door SLAMS open, revealing his roommate, Kevin. A phone bounces on the bed as Kevin asks Jacob's opinion about a woman's Tinder profile. In an awkward encounter that Jacob clearly finds uncomfortable, they discuss women. Prior to leaving, Kevin mentions he'll be gone with his girlfriend Rachel for the weekend, inferring that Jacob should get laid to help out with his recent and noticeable "stress." Slightly irritated by Kevin's manner and tone, Jacob becomes uneasy and exits the apartment.

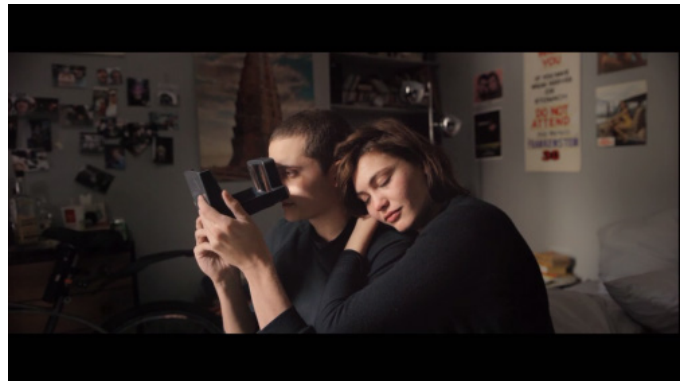
Walking along suburban streets, Jacob eventually finds himself in Astoria Park. The trees, though starting to become bare, are mostly painted in orange, yellow, and red. Various families and couples go about their weekend walks. If it weren't for the massive bridge and extended view of Manhattan, you'd think you were in a small country town. However, the view does capture Jacob's attention, prompting him to stand on the river's edge, gazing.

He hears the sounds of the waves and passing families until he gets the strange feeling someone is watching him. Turning, he notices as a sharp looking older gentleman observing him from a distance. Returning to the view, we notice as Jacob becomes nervous. His hands begin to shake and his breathing intensifies. Yet, he finds himself turning back, this time locking eyes with the stranger, prompting him to approach.

Only terrifying Jacob more, he avoids the man's gaze. If the air wasn't so crisp, he would be sweating. But before Jacob can believe it, the stranger is directly behind him, questioning why he was looking at him.

In a bizarre first encounter that exhibits Jacob's shyness in speaking to other men and Mason's contrasted sense of confidence, it ends with Mason's hand gently resting on Jacob's shoulder, sending confused energy between the two.

Next thing we realize, they are both in Jacob's apartment. Clearly tense himself, Jacob watches as Mason examines his room. Unsure where this will lead, the two are smart to initially keep their distance.



Later that same evening, Jacob and Mason finish a meal together in the living space of Jacob's small apartment. In the relatively dim light, Jacob can't avoid staring at the exposed sections of Mason's skin. His upper chest, collar-bones, forearms, lips...

And of course, with his sense of self-confidence, Mason is aware. In return, he faintly teases the young-adult sitting across from him. Studying him.

Posing questions that undeniably provoke Jacob, he begins to develop physical signs of anxiety. He can't concentrate; his hands play with each other, his feet tap etc. However, in a moment that will decide their future actions, Mason places his rough hand atop Jacob's soft ones, holding them still. Both men study each other, waiting for a sign...until Jacob ever so slightly pushes his hands closer to Mason.

We cut to the bedroom, where Mason explores Jacob's body as they begin foreplay. Briefly discussing Jacob's lack of experience, we discover this is exactly what he's looking for in Mason. And though nervous, doesn't want him to shy away.

Mason's hands running through Jacob's hair, he suddenly pulls Mason in closer to fully commence their foreplay.

The very next morning, he sleeps, noticing subtle pushes the thought out goes to prepare a bowl of

Sometime later, both on Jacob's bed, slightly of modern day hook-discover Jacob's hesitant-most people his age.

Prior to parting, Mason effective outlets for



Jacob examines Mason as signs of his true age. He of his head and instead cereal.

men are sitting together entangled. A discussion up apps arises where we cy in using them despite

explains they can be exploring sexuality.

As he abruptly exits, Mason states that he tends to go for walks on *Fridays in the park*.

Later the same day, Kevin returns home, noticing slight signs of Jacob's improved mood. Guessing it's from a hook-up, we realize Kevin still believes Jacob to be straight, implying he had a woman over. As Kevin exits, we end with Jacob looking to where Mason sat the night before.

A week later at the same park location, Jacob once again takes in the view of Manhattan. Mason's voice comes from behind as he questions about Kevin's whereabouts. With him upstate for a few weeks, it will provide them essential private time.

Jump to that evening as both men are drunk on cheap wine, dancing to modern club music in the apartment. Something in Mason seems more alive and nostalgic, something we haven't quite seen before. Both of them dance like fools until they eventually sway in each other's arms. The moment is tender as the two imagine they are in a loud club lit up by colorful strobes lights. The tone then becomes sensual...

Post-sex, the two sit in bed, leaning on each other. Mason is ecstatic as Jacob is more refined. In a gentle conversation revolving around youth and not ignoring these years of self-discovery, Jacob eventually asks Mason his actual age for the first time. However, both men agree it's best not to know, and end the dialogue implying they'll meet again the following week.

Next, in a series of montages, we explore their growing relationship as they partake in activities together. Throughout, we notice how Mason begins to take note of Jacob's age and potentially even starts to question his own actions. Jacob too picks up on this and does his best to distract Mason from the subject matter. However, little events or objects start to trigger Mason, reminding him more and more of his own family not too far away at home.



Finally, the two enter the apartment again sometime later, ready for another evening together. Unsure what to do, Jacob infers he wants a calm evening, which sort of disappoints Mason who has been enjoying feeling youthful and energetic.

Watching a movie, Mason seems sad as Jacob shows signs of comfort and happiness. After some uncomfortable interactions between the two and Mason's sudden timidity, we come to realize the film they're watching is his wife's favorite. Per tradition, he and his wife watch it every year. Jacob seems hurt for the first time, as he's forced to recognize their situation. The night ends with them gently hugging.

The next morning, Jacob wakes up to a gloomy day. Mason has already left. The room is colder and blue, as winter nears with every passing second.

Perhaps *a week later*, we watch as Jacob trudges through the streets of Astoria in solitude. Passing numerous couples and families, he becomes irritated. Approaching the sign for Astoria Park, he temporarily pauses before deciding to walk away.

That evening, Jacob sits alone in his bed, staring into space; the separation clearly beginning to affect him. He momentarily rests a hand where Mason would have been. Refusing to let any emotions get the better of him, he then jumps under the covers and turns off his light. We SLAM into black.

Time passes and we assume their relationship has all but ended.

Then one afternoon, Jacob reads in the kitchen as Kevin enters, mentioning he's heading to the grocery store. Jacob decides to tag along.

As the roommates walk, we learn that things are getting serious with Kevin and his girlfriend. So naturally, he wants to leave her, forcing Jacob to imply he should take things more seriously. In the heat of their debate, Jacob abruptly STOPS - DEAD STILL. He stares ahead in genuine shock.

In the distance, we see Mason laughing with his wife and two children. They seem to glow with life through the joy of being together, despite frigid temperatures. Mason looks up and also notices Jacob. A look of pure terror rapidly flashes across his face before Mason cleverly directs his family in the opposite direction. This simple action is a bullet straight through Jacob's heart, causing him to rush back home, leaving Kevin by himself.

Hours later, Jacob sits in bed with wet eyes, staring out his small window.

Yet another week later, Jacob waits at the ever so familiar meeting spot by the river. The trees are mostly dead and winter is truly around the corner. Repeatedly looking in different directions for a hopeless hour, we see Jacob's resulting disappointment as he meanders away.

Sitting in bed, Jacob's bedroom door randomly slams open. Kevin walks in with his phone asking for Jacob's opinion, yet again. If not before, we now realize that Kevin never takes relationships seriously. This fact pushes Jacob to lash out, stating just how lucky Kevin is to have options and be with someone who is smart, kind, and his age.

Promptly leaving, Jacob is left in familiar solitude. Sticking out from under the bed, Jacob randomly notices Mason's shirt from the very first night. Enraged, he catapults it across the room.

Their history now revealed, we cut back to the *very first scene* of the two men on the park bench.

As Jacob does his best to hold back tears, Mason gives him some words of advice having come to terms with his age and responsibilities. Though, with every word and sound of Mason's voice, Jacob's eyes grow wetter.

In a final act, Mason stands, stating that Jacob *will* find someone and he doesn't need to feel alone.

Mason walks away for the last time as Jacob is about to say something.

But it's too late. He's one too many steps away for Jacob to follow.

Instead, Jacob quietly utters, "*thank you.*"

The bare trees sway in the wintery breeze as Jacob reflects and observes the bridge one last time.



Something lost, something gained.

