

THE DELACOURT AFFAIR

Screenplay Guy de Beaujeu & Simon Reade

Based on an original screenplay by Guy de Beaujeu

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Poonamallee Productions

FADE IN

EXT. CITYSCAPE OF ROOFTOPS. NIGHT

A well-to-do residential part of town. Calm. Leafy.  
Prosperous. Surveillance cameras.

INT. TAXI -- CONTINUOUS.

A taxi driving through the streets. A WOMAN passenger, her eyes in rear-view mirror. Guilty.

EXT. ANNIE'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS.

The taxi pulls up outside a smart tall, Georgian house.

ESTONIAN MAN OS  
Kägu on naasnud koju pesa.

(subtitled)  
Cuckoo has come home to roost.

The Woman pays the DRIVER.

INT. ANNIE'S HALLWAY. NIGHT

The woman, ANNIE DELACOURT, quietly and carefully locks her front door from the inside. She is 30s, pretty and business-like.

OS a TV is on.

ANNIE  
(loud - questioning)  
Paddy?

She drops her overnight bag and removes her coat. She studies herself in a mirror and makes some adjustments. She inhales deeply, gathers herself. She walks up the stairs.

ANNIE CONT'D  
Paddy?

INT. CORRIDOR -- CONTINUOUS

Annie hears the sound of the TV. On the move, determined, she brushes lint from her suit with the back of her hand.

INT. ANNIE'S KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

It's a neat-looking kitchen.

The TV is on. PATRICK DELACOURT lies face down on the table, with food and a half-drunk bottle of wine in front of him. An unopened packet of salad on the table.

Annie steps into the kitchen. There's blood splattered on the TV and up the wall.

SLOW MOTION. Suddenly Annie falls, feet slipping through acres of blood. She smacks right into the middle of the blood, her face splashing into it, her eyes widening in deep shock.

CREDITS OVER

EXT. CITY. NIGHT -- 30 MINS EARLIER

The taxi drives Annie through the city.

INT. TAXI -- CONTINUOUS

The taxi stops at traffic lights. Beside it some WIDEBOYS and GIRL GANG types draw up in their motor, music blaring, making sexist motions at Annie, filming themselves on their smartphones. She tries to ignore them.

Suddenly she snaps.

ANNIE

Tossers!

There's a look of surprise on the taxi Driver's face; and glee from the Wide Boys in the other car, goading her. The lights turn green, cars hoot and the Wide Boys screech off cackling.

TAXI DRIVER

Bloody students.

POV SURVEILLANCE CAMERA

EXT. CITY -- CONTINUOUS

The taxi drives down a street, turns down the next.

INT. TAXI -- CONTINUOUS

Annie listens to her mobile phone.

PHONE VOICE OS  
You have no new messages.

Annie looks anxious.

EXT. CITY -- CONTINUOUS

The taxi pulls up outside a smart, tall Georgian house.  
There is one light on.

INT. TAXI -- CONTINUOUS

Annie fumbles for her wallet. The taxi driver waits  
patiently.

EXT/INT. COTTAGE. NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

Through a candlelit window: a WOMAN and a MAN are having sex  
inside a cottage, really going for it.

The sound is muffled, coming through a speaker of some sort.

POV of someone watching furtively from behind bushes  
outside.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. TAXI. NIGHT -- 30 MINS EARLIER

Annie touches her face, feeling stubble rash. She gets out  
of the taxi.

EXT/INT. COTTAGE. NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

Through the candlelit window: the Man has his face buried in  
the Woman. She is ecstatic.

POV furtive observation from outside.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. TAXI. NIGHT -- 30 MINS EARLIER

Annie pays the driver. The taxi drives off. Annie smells herself, looking down her front.

EXT/INT. COTTAGE. NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

Through the candlelit window: the Man's hands are all over the Woman, her breasts.

POV furtive observation from outside

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. STREET. NIGHT -- 30 MINS EARLIER

Annie adjusts her business skirt. Taking deep breaths she removes a brochure from her briefcase entitled 'The State of the Nation State - Barcelona 25-27 November'.

She drops the brochure and walks over it, picking it up and bending it about a bit, tearing a page. Too much; too obvious.

Then she chews some gum, chewing hard and then she chucks the gum into a bin.

She approaches the front door and reaches for the lock.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. ANNIE'S SITTING ROOM. DAY -- WEEKS LATER

The sun streams in. Annie sits smoking with her back to us. We do not see her face. Her clothes are simple, unadorned and unflattering. She's listening to an iPod.

She rubs, annoyed, at an electronic tag around her ankle.

OS a door bell. It's faint. We can hear Annie's music on her iPod more. She ignores the doorbell, puffing away. The doorbell rings again and again. Then the phone goes. The music stops - Annie's ripped off the headphones.

EXT. STREET. DAY -- CONTINUOUS

JAMES OGILVY stands in the street carrying a briefcase, looking anxious.

POV Spy-hole on front door looking out at James through the fish-eye lens.

He's late 20s, fresh-faced, serious-minded, chinos and professional jacket, not flash. He is wearing an office-style plastic identity card, which he takes off and sticks in a pocket.

OS The noise of a well-locked door finally being unlocked.

Annie peers around the door. We see her now: she looks shattered; her hair is much shorter and it looks like she's had the life-blood sucked out of her.

JAMES

(friendly)

Annie? James Ogilvy, Office of Pre-trial Admissions.

He looks at her expectantly, sympathetically, professionally. Annie just stares back at him and then wordlessly disappears back inside. He hesitates and follows.

INT. ANNIE'S KITCHEN. NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

Annie lies in Patrick's blood with her eyes tight shut. They shoot open in surprise and confusion. Then painfully she climbs up, almost falling back into the blood.

ANNIE

(horrified)

Oh my God, oh dear God no! Oh Christ.  
Not like this.

She sees a kitchen knife thrust deep into Patrick's neck. She doesn't know what to do. She cradles Patrick's head. It's seriously messy and she's covered in blood.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. ANNIE'S SITTING ROOM. DAY

Annie enters, stares out the window, lights another cigarette as James follows her in. The ashtray is overflowing.

He smiles broadly and warmly at her and looks around for a chair. He spies one with a pile of unopened post on it, which he gingerly removes, and sits carefully on the chair. There's a heavy silence as she ignores him.

James busies himself getting case notes from his briefcase.

INT. COTTAGE BATHROOM. DAY -- FLASHBACK

CHARLIE, mid thirties, and Annie sit in the bath, drinking bubbly, indulging in chocolate, not a care in the world.

ANNIE

(smiling)

So come on, tell me!

CHARLIE

(laughing)

I can't. Stop interrogating me!

Annie smiles wittingly, thwarted.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. ANNIE'S SITTING ROOM. DAY

James watches her as she absentmindedly scratches at the tag. He smiles again.

JAMES

It could save your life.

ANNIE

I beg your pardon?

JAMES

It's good, no?

ANNIE

What?

JAMES

Better to be at home, than formally arrested, on remand.

ANNIE

It's as 'good' as being arrested. It's as 'good' as being locked up.

JAMES

It's innovative. Statistically, remand prisoners suicide and self-harm more than the average.

ANNIE

Average what?

Heavy pause. James smiles.

JAMES

Part of this new programme...

ANNIE

What happened to a presumption of innocence? What happened to civil liberties?

James chooses to ignore her.

He opens up his lap-top: it whirrs into action.

POV laptop camera on James, sound distorts.

JAMES

The Pre-Tad programme allows you easy and immediate access to all analysts concerned in its prosecution. In a safe environment.

ANNIE

'Allows'?

JAMES

(looking up)  
Requires.

Beat.

ANNIE

What are you talking about?

JAMES

(squirming a bit)  
The benefits are two-way: to the authorities; to the client.

Annie winces at the schmarketing-speak.

JAMES CONT'D

So, good, no?



INT. INTERVIEW ROOM -- FLASHBACK

Annie seems flustered as she is interviewed by Detective Sergeant ANGELA GRAHAM, late 30s.

A young policewoman, WPC MAUDE is with them, very attentive.

POV high surveillance camera

DS GRAHAM

And there was no sign of any breaking  
and entering that you could see?

ANNIE

(quiet)

No, no there was nothing.

DS GRAHAM

The front door was locked?

ANNIE

(confused)

Well, no. It was shut.

DS GRAHAM

Shut? Closed?

ANNIE

Yes. Paddy was in, you see...

DS GRAHAM

Patrick.

ANNIE

Patrick.

DS GRAHAM

And where had you been, Mrs Delacourt?

ANNIE

Been?

DS GRAHAM

(helpfully)

This weekend? Away?

Beat.

ANNIE

I, um...I was away at a politics  
conference. In Barcelona.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT/EXT. ANNIE'S SITTING ROOM/GARDEN. DAY

James looks at his notes.

JAMES

Annie I need to tell you a few procedural things. Ok?

Annie ignores him. James remains calm.

JAMES CONT'D

Considering the gravity of the crime you could be accused of, you're very lucky to be on the Pre-Tad programme.

Annie looks up. 'Lucky'?

JAMES CONT'D

Under the old regime there wouldn't even have been bail, let alone the luxury of being tagged in your own home.

Annie stands and looks out of the window.

ANNIE

'Luxury'? You git. Under the old regime you would have arrested me, charged me, if you thought I did it...released me, since you have nothing on me. This way you get the best of both worlds. At worst, I'm a suspect, but because there's no proof, I'm not even that. So why...

JAMES

The tag gives you peace of mind. We don't rush to conclusions.

Annie's POV of forensic police finger-tip searching the small lawn outside.

ANNIE

What do they think they'll find out there? It's all crap.

JAMES

(ignoring her)

There are substantive benefits if we see a positive outcome from clients.

There's silence as this ridiculous corporate-speak sits between them.

INT. TAG HQ. NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

The Contract Security Surveillance Officers survey the tag monitors which gently purr, indicating that the 'clients' are where they should be.

INT. ANNIE'S SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Annie continues to stare at the forensic police outside; one of them puts something into a plastic forensic bag.

JAMES CONT'D

I also need to remind you that if you leave the confines of your home without express written permission, the tag will notify the authorities your Pre-Tad terms have been broken and I'm afraid because we're all on trial here...

Annie looks up. James realises his error.

JAMES CONT'D

(quiet)

I, I mean, because this is a new scheme, experimental, as they say, they, I mean the authorities, the Home Office, can take no risks. So one strike and you're out.

Beat.

ANNIE

In.

JAMES

Out. No. Yes, in.

Beat.

He looks at her for confirmation but gets nothing.

JAMES CONT'D

Annie, I am not here to trick you, I am here to help you. And of course if you help us to help you then you help yourself.