

It Will Happen Again

By

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Don't let the past catch up

Logline

A working-class thief with schizophrenia kidnaps a woman and goes on the run, but is hunted down by the woman's girlfriend, who is an unstable police detective.

Synopsis

ETHAN HOLT is a harrowed 28 year old, haunted by his abusive past and riddled with paranoia and delusions. When a botched robbery leaves him with a dead partner and a bullet wound, his only hope is grab a hostage and get out of the country – that hostage is ABI CLARKE (26). Abi's lived a boring life up to now, cutting hair in a run-down parlour, always wishing for something more, so when Ethan staggers through a café door and puts a gun on her, she really doesn't have a choice.

The two of them run from the law, hiding in motels and stolen cars, but their pursuer is quite familiar: SOPHIA BARNES is a 31 year old detective with a violent history, who will do anything to find Abi, her secret girlfriend. Sophia and Ethan grew up in the same rough neighbourhood, and as she hunts him down, she is forced to delve into her own past – one she wishes she could forget. Meanwhile, Abi gets under Ethan's skin, but is she playing him, or has she finally found the one thing to bring excitement to her dull life?

It Will Happen Again is a psychological crime-thriller, crawling with twisted memories and dark secrets that are destined to shatter all expectations. A bad-boy, good-girl, flick that breaks all the rules: **True Romance** meets **The Girl with A Dragon Tattoo**, set in broken Britain. Invoking themes of class struggle, LGBT issues and mental health; everyone is trapped in their own cycles, but what does it take to break free?

Production Notes

Cycles is a tight, fast, small-scale thriller, with a cast of 4 main characters and a focus on acting rather than action. Set against the backdrop of run-down England, the locations are sparse and decrepit, meaning this can be shot for under £1 million.

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Outline

In a café, ETHAN HOLT, 28, scruffy but charming, argues with ABI CLARKE, 26, patient, a good listener. It looks like a typical boyfriend-girlfriend dispute, but they are actually strangers, and Ethan is holding a gun on her, under the table. Ethan takes her hostage and drives out of the city as his torso bleeds from a bullet graze. Ethan patches up his wound and promises he only needs her as a hostage until he can get out of the country. In a hotel room, Abi begins to question Ethan, he reveals that he robbed a jewellery store, killed his partner and ran. Ethan takes medication as he begins to lose his grip on his sanity.

The next morning, we meet SOPHIA BARNES, 31, a laconic, abused, police detective, and MIKE AZAM, 29, an academic rising star in the police force. They find Abi's car at the hotel, but Ethan and Abi are gone. Sophia tries to call Abi, revealing that Sophia is actually Abi's closeted girlfriend. Sophia is forced to keep her personal connection secret or else she'll be removed from the case. Sophia and Azam visit Abi's parents' house and meet her father, BLAKE, a retired police officer who specialised in missing persons. It is revealed that Abi is actually a trained psychologist, and has been hiding this from Ethan, to try and control him.

That night, Ethan and Abi go to a warehouse rave to get a fake passport from Ethan's friend, FROG, but they fail. Sophia uses her old connections, having grown up in the same area as Ethan, and finds the warehouse rave. Sophia hunts Ethan through the rave, but Ethan threatens to kill Abi unless Sophia backs off. She is forced to handcuff herself to a door as Ethan and Abi escape. Ethan has a psychotic break while escaping, Abi tries to run away from him, but he kills her.

The next morning, Sophia finds Abi's body, along with a diary she had been keeping detailing Ethan's psychological state. In the diary, Frog is mentioned, so Sophia disobeys police protocol, infiltrates a party Frog is hosting and interrogates him about Ethan. Frog says that Ethan used to run away as a kid, but no one knew where, and that Ethan can get a fake passport within 48 hours.

Sophia returns to Azam and comes clean about her relationship with Abi. They use Frog's information and Abi's notes to determine that Ethan is having a psychotic break due to something that happened in his past, and he is still obsessed with that incident in the present. The next morning, Sophia and Azam discover that someone has kidnapped Chloe, Ethan's little sister. Sophia begins to trail Frog, suspecting it is him, but soon discovers it is actually Blake who kidnapped Chloe. Sophia saves Chloe, who reveals that Ethan ran away to an old warehouse.

Meanwhile, Azam interviews Ethan's old school councillor, who reveals that Ethan first ran away in Spring 2006, after a horrifying incident which he wouldn't talk about. The councillor also tells Azam to look into the history of Jack Barnes, Sophia's brother. Azam investigates Jack Barnes and finds out that he was killed in Spring '06 at a warehouse rave. Azam realises that it was Ethan who killed Jack in 2006 and that's the incident that broke him.

Azam rushes to the old warehouse where the murder took place, but Sophia is already one step ahead of him. She finds Ethan inside and chases him through the warehouse. When Sophia and Ethan finally meet face to face, Ethan reveals that it was actually Sophia that killed Jack, after years of Jack abusing Sophia – Ethan saw the whole thing and has been traumatised ever since. Ethan begs Sophia for understanding, saying that they both had no choice in doing what they did; Sophia says she always had a choice, just like now, and then she shoots Ethan, ending the cycle of abuse.

Characters

Sophia Barnes

Sophia Barnes is a 31 year old, laconic, abused, homicide detective. She hides everything from herself and others, even unwilling to reveal her homosexuality. When her secret girlfriend, Abi Clarke, is kidnapped by a former classmate of Sophia's, she is forced to return to her old neighbourhood to confront her past. After years of therapy and trying to forget, all she wants to do is move on with her life and be happy, but she is stuck in a cycle of regret and denial, the only way to break it is to save Abi and confront her past.

Ethan Holt

Ethan Holt, 28, emotional, desperate, has spent his whole life living in the dirt. Forever in the shadow of his older brother and always looked down on by society, he finally wants to break free of the cycle of mistreatment. After a traumatic childhood incident, Ethan has struggled with mental health problems, paranoia, obsession and delusions. After a robbery goes wrong, he is backed into a corner and forced down a dark path of kidnapping and murder.

Abi Clarke

Abi Clarke, 26, at first, she seems meek, naïve and innocent, trying to get Ethan to take pity on her. But really, she is a cerebral psychologist who wants to get Ethan to give himself up before anyone else dies, no matter the cost to herself. As Ethan drags her through the underworld, she finds her resolve tested, but her principles remain true.

Mike Azam

Azam, 29, a rising star in the police department, gets his first homicide case as a detective when Ethan's robbery goes wrong. He is desperate to prove himself, both to the police and Sophia, who he is infatuated with. Over the course of the film, Azam learns how to really conduct a police investigation, when to bend the rules, and how to use his academic skill to his advantage.

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Moodboard Below

