

Now: The wedding night

The wedding night is often surrounded by a sense of mystery and anticipation, but in this haunting landscape, it mirrors a darker reality. As the group traverses the bog, they discover a lifeless body half-submerged, claimed by the earth's persistent grasp. The bog, with its dark history of consuming the dead, seems to silently welcome its newest victim, adding to the growing list of those swallowed by its depths. The ground beneath them feels not just like earth but a cemetery, one that holds secrets of countless forgotten souls. As the group draws near, led by the ushers, the realization settles in: the bog has a chilling way of keeping its grim history alive, drawing the dead into its fold while the living are left to confront the horrifying truths it hides.

When the body finally comes into view under the sharp beam of their flashlights, it is a grotesque sight. The body lies sprawled awkwardly, legs askew, the head turned at an unnatural angle, with lifeless eyes staring blankly into the darkness. The partially exposed tongue from the open mouth adds a disturbing touch, emphasizing the violence of the death. A dark, spreading stain on the chest signals the brutal cause of death, a grim reminder that this person's life was taken violently and abruptly, forever altering the course of what should have been a peaceful existence.

The group's shock is palpable when Femi calls out the name "Will" in disbelief, bringing the tragic reality into sharper focus. The man once celebrated as the groom, full of joy and anticipation, is now reduced to an image of suffering, his face contorted in agony and his body a silent testament to the violence that ended his life. The once-celebrated man is now just another victim, stripped of everything that once made him a symbol of happiness. His transformation, from a figure of celebration to one of sorrow, stuns his friends, and the truth hits them with devastating force—Will is no longer among them, and nothing can reverse the damage done.

Angus, usually the composed one, is physically overcome, his hands trembling as he stares at Will's body, unable to comprehend the tragedy that has just unfolded. Duncan, who had always kept his emotions in check, is reduced to tears, his hands gripping Will's body in a desperate attempt to make the reality of the situation disappear. His frantic attempts to revive Will, shaking him with desperate pleas, speak to the deep denial and sorrow that has gripped him. Despite knowing that death has already claimed Will, Duncan clings to the hope that there might be a chance, that somehow the body could be brought back to life, reflecting the universal human desire to deny the finality of death.

The bog, in its relentless indifference, continues to claim Will's body, pulling him deeper into its damp, suffocating embrace. While the living grieve, the earth remains unmoved, showing no sympathy for their sorrow. The bog's ceaseless work underscores the unavoidable truth of death, indifferent to the cries of the living or the agony they feel. It serves as a silent witness to the loss, a reminder that death waits for no one and can claim any life at any time, regardless of the love or the grief left behind.

As the group stands in stunned silence, the realization settles in: Will's life is over, and they are left to face the consequences of what has occurred. The sight of his body serves as a grim marker of how fragile life is, how quickly things can shift from joy to tragedy. What began as a celebration has now become a nightmare, one that will haunt them for years to come. The bog, in its quiet and consuming nature, takes the final claim on Will's body, reminding the living that no one escapes the inevitable pull of death. The tragic scene etched in their memories serves as an eternal reminder that life is fragile, and death can come without warning, changing everything in an instant.