

Aoife: The Wedding Planner

The Wedding Planner had carefully orchestrated every detail, but now, in the eerie quiet of the night, Aoife and Freddy are jolted by an unsettling noise that cuts through the stillness. The sound seems to blur the lines between human and something altogether more otherworldly, reverberating through the darkened landscape of the island. The wedding festivities, which had earlier filled the air with music and laughter, have long since ended, and all the guests have retreated to their quarters, leaving behind only the faint echo of whispers carried on the wind. As the night thickens, Aoife and Freddy are left alone in the house, their senses heightened by the strange, almost unnatural sounds that continue to float in the air. Freddy, ever the rational one, attempts to interpret the noise, translating the Latin words he believes he's heard. However, Aoife feels an icy shiver run down her spine at the eerie familiarity of the sound. It's as though the chanting carries with it a weight of ominous foretelling, something lurking just beyond the veil of the present. Aoife can't help but think back to past experiences, where grand, seemingly flawless events had devolved into chaos. In her mind, the mixture of tightly controlled high society with the island's untamed, almost anarchic energy, seems to create a volatile cocktail, one that invites mischief and danger in equal measure. This unsettling blend sets the stage for the strange events that follow.

Unwilling to ignore the eerie disturbance any longer, Aoife, driven by both a sense of duty and an ingrained sense of curiosity, makes the decision to investigate. Freddy, although concerned, hesitates, content to let her handle it while remaining safely inside. Aoife, on the other hand, is no stranger to adversity. Her years of experience have taught her to face the unknown head-on, even when it means venturing into the blackness of the night without the aid of artificial light. She knows that this kind of darkness will tell her things the light cannot. As she walks through the hushed island

landscape, she senses the quiet is almost too thick, as if the very earth is holding its breath. The sounds of the island, once familiar, now seem alien to her as she moves closer to the source. The sobbing that punctuates the wind-driven silence sharpens her focus, and her every step becomes more deliberate, more cautious. Her senses, finely tuned from years of managing both the mundane and the extraordinary, detect a fleeting shadow near the outbuildings—an odd movement that sparks her instincts. In that moment, Aoife is on high alert, her trained eye picking up on the subtle nuances of the night, something she's done countless times when managing the unpredictable.



Her mind briefly flashes to the island's ghost stories—tales she's heard countless times from locals and visitors alike. For a fleeting moment, Aoife allows herself to entertain the thought that perhaps she's encountered a spirit, something lost in time, drifting through the island. But as she nears the source of the sound, her expectations are shattered. The figure she sees isn't a ghostly apparition, but rather the best man, slumped against the wall, his face streaked with the signs of excessive drinking and emotional turmoil. His disheveled appearance, so stark against the quiet night, makes Aoife pause. The sorrow and intoxication he exudes initially create a feeling of disorientation, but Aoife's pragmatism quickly takes over. This is no myth or legend, but a person in distress, and Aoife's concern shifts from the supernatural to the very real human issues that are unfolding before her. The presence of the best man, in a state of despair, stands in sharp contrast to the eerie, folklore-inspired visions that had briefly gripped her. Her first instinct is to make sure he is safe, knowing well the dangers of wandering the island's outskirts in such a state. The old farm machinery stored in the outbuildings looms as a reminder of the very real physical risks that are just as present as the mythical threats whispered about in the island's past.

Her conversation with the best man centers around his safety, highlighting the stark reality of the situation. Aoife's thoughts shift from the eerie and supernatural to the tangible and present. She reminds him, with a calm but firm tone, that the island is not just steeped in legends, but also fraught with real dangers. As she carefully assesses his state, Aoife feels the weight of the island's reputation as a "place of death," a term locals use when speaking of its mysterious and sometimes dangerous history. This

mixture of folklore and real-world threats creates a tension that Aoife is acutely aware of. The haunting atmosphere of the island, combined with the very real hazards it presents, creates a complex web that Aoife must navigate with both sensitivity and practical action. In the end, her concern for the best man's safety, paired with her pragmatic approach, underscores the theme of finding balance between the mythical and the real.

