

**Chapter 2:** *'I guess I'm always hoping that you'll end this reign. But it's my destiny to be the king of pain.'*  
The Police (Gordon Matthew Sumner, 1992)

Quillam's body crashed into a gravestone as he rebounded from the impact of the creature, and then he was flying through the air again as she grabbed both of his arms and swung him around like a tortured dolly. She let go, and this time he landed on a recently dug mound, coming to rest almost comically, arms and legs flayed, head lolling over the head of the small barrow.

He was barely holding onto consciousness, slipping away to where our real selves dwell, until the creature picked him up, holding him by his jacket lapels and staring into his face. Fetid breath, the smell of the damned and the dead, blew into his face, acting like smelling salts and raising his awareness. His feet were perhaps a metre off the earthen tomb beneath him, the shape of his body embedded in it, and he was sensing a warm and soft feeling in the front and back of his underwear. The creature sniffed the air and laughed a powerful, bellowing giggle at his predicament.

'Becks, Becks?', emanated as a weak entreaty to the creature from his half closed mouth. '*Faaatherrrr*,' was the response, again more a fetid whisper than a vocalisation. There was a tickling feeling in his left hand, and in adjusting his vision downwards, he could see the blood caked around it, but also a slight glow, pulsing imperceptibly. He tried to raise his hand, and the embedded silver cross, but Becks looked down, quizzically, raising him even higher to look closer. Her laughter was even stronger, louder, and more mocking than prior, and her right hand shot down so quickly, like an owl on to a rabbit, encircling his and then plucking the crucifix. It elicited a sound like velcro being pulled, as it escaped the wound and the clotted blood.

Becks threw him to the ground, a pathetic heap, whilst she held the cross, a light escaping from the metal, and then kissing it, with a wide smile, before squeezing and crushing it in her hand, the arms folding in. Rejecting it with some disdain and dropping the demolished effigy on his chest, she laughed again. 'Have you *sunk so low* as to think you can hurt me with a cheap christian symbol of repression, *father?*', she asked mockingly, positioned like an inquisitive carrion crow over him, perhaps ready to pluck out his eyes. '*Becks*, we buried you, you died, princess, *the, the car crash....*', was his response, weakening as he finished speaking it. Becks jumped backwards and upwards to land squatting on another raised tombstone block. She eyed her nails, pointed and with earth and dirt underneath them, as if she was contemplating the need to visit a nail bar.

Perched there, she rasped, 'Well, you're entitled to *your* narrative, we all are, but *I* was liberated from *you and my sow of a mother* by the great one. You were *never* my parents, you trapped me until *he rescued me!*' Spittle accompanied the words, arcing the air in a spray of contempt. She looked down on him, her narrowed, golden eyes, and elongated canines gnashing at her lips, both hands spread out, hairy palms outward. An unholy air hug from a dark, fallen angel, to a broken pater in a heap in the graveyard. He lay there, looking up at this abomination that had been his only daughter, now a reaper and harpy, amused by the terror and heartbreak that was just shredding his very soul, as if by those fingernails. There were no words he could muster, none that would make any apparent sense in this bizarre scene from purgatory.

She jumped down, alighting with both feet landing either side of his body, simultaneously and quite unnaturally bending down with her face close to his, as tears flooded from his wide eyes and contorted face. 'You *disgust* me, you're *pathetic*, and it will not be long before you will be *food for our masses*,' and she punched him terribly hard directly into his face. A mini geyser of blood emerged from his nose and unconsciousness finally arrived as a welcomed visitor.