

Chapter 4: *'Help us someone, let us out of here, living here so long undisturbed, dreaming of the time we were free.'* Genesis (Rutherford, Collins & Banks 1983)

The sheets felt clean, crisp, and warm. Unlike Quillam, who felt dirty, tense, and cold. He looked around, there was light filtering through, around the blinds. It was a bedroom he recognised, one of his lets just outside of the village, perhaps ten miles from the church. He slowly rubbed his face and tried to fill in the interval in his internal mind movie since it all went dark in the cemetery. 'You're awake, then, it's been *hours*,' the voice stated, emanating from a young Indian man sitting in a deteriorated wicker chair in the far corner of the room.

'Deepak?', was his croaky response. 'Yes, Mister Quillam, it is good to see you are awake, it was *very* worrying!' Deepak, a student renting this cottage, stood up, advanced, and filled a glass from a small carafe of water for Quillam. He helped the older man to sit up and drink some of it. 'What *time*?' he managed to ask after a few sips. Deepak looked up at the clock on the wall, '5:37pm, sir, you've been asleep all day, that is, after I tended to you. What a mess, they must have really gone over you when you were mugged!'

'It wasn't a mugging,' Quillam quietly said under his breath. 'What is that, sir? It must have been a robbing, no?' Deepak enquired. 'It was Becks, my daughter,' the older man said flatly. '*Pardon*, Mister Quillam?', the younger man exclaimed, stepping back. His sense of concern was rising even higher than when he found Quillam near the front door, in the early hours of the night. Meanwhile, Quillam's brain was filling in more details following the encounter with his daughter. His dead daughter. He recalled waking, pain all over, especially his nose and face, feeling a little concussed. He had stumbled from the east exit of the cemetery onto the country lane, the shit and urine in his underwear drying. He stank of it. Blood was drying around his nose, and his limbs and joints were starting to throb and ache strongly. Somehow, he was not sure how he had made it to here, his mind on emergency autopilot, looking for a safe haven.

'I was late home, seeing my parents up in the city, and I found you, lying in such a state. The one thing you kept on saying was, *no police, no police*, so I did not contact them, though I really think you should see the doctor in the village, *at least*,' Deepak explained, evident worry in his voice, which quavered a little. He went on, 'I cleaned you up and then helped you to bed, keeping an eye on you through the day. It is most worrying, most distressing, Mister Quillam!', and he helped the injured man drink some more water. Quillam felt a little stronger, helped by Deepak. He sat up more resolutely and looked into the student's face, 'My daughter attacked me in the cemetery by the church last night, she could have killed me, or made me like her,' he explained, only causing increasing fear in Deepak's chest. 'But, is she not dead, a car crash, sir?', he replied, a soft expression trying to sweeten the question. He feared for his landlord's sanity.

'You must think me a raving madman, Deepak. I wish I were, I really, *really do*,' Quillam said wearily. 'My daughter, dead a month, has come back, and she attacked me with such strength, so *much* evil. I don't understand why!', and then he coughed, a wracking, painful bout. "But what took you to the place of the dead in the first place, *Mister Quillam*, why would you be looking for your *deceased* daughter?', Deepak asked, confused and scared, feeling himself being sucked into this madness, too. 'Because she came to me the other night, I saw her in the window, those eyes, such sadness, and then she vanished, and with all my heart I knew it was her, it was her and not my imagination, or grief.'

Deepak had helped Quillam downstairs to the small lounge, in front of the fireplace, still half lit and emitting heat. Lying propped up on the sofa, some small amount of food and a medicinal shot of whisky, he felt better, his voice stronger. His headache and muzziness remained, but had reduced, helped by some painkillers. 'I do not understand all of this, sir, but you need to speak to someone, to get some help, I think. Perhaps my parents could come down, or we should go to the police?'

'Suspect highly I need a priest, Deepak. *Or a shrink*,' Quillam replied in a downbeat voice. Deepak just shrugged with that soft expression again. 'Your dead *don't rise again* in India, do they?', the older man asked. 'No, well, we cremate our dead, except for Muslims and Christians,' Deepak replied.