

INNER SANCTUM

The story begins with a SATANIC ritual involving a blood stained guitar (from an animal sacrifice). The reader is not told the source of the blood, so we assume its human. The ritual is performed by a death/satanic/vampirism/metal/goth band INNER SANCTUM.

The band's front man is SOUL CRUSHER (CRUSHER for short), who plays the blood stained guitar, dissatisfied with the quality of the music he plays from it, he demands more sacrifices, thinking it gives him power to master his instrument and playing ability. He is a believer of the occult and satan worship.

Some areas of research for the type of band and its members include:

Marilyn Manson	Carpathian Forest
Mercyful Fate	Midnight
Electric Wizard	Deicide
Twin Temple	Watain
Coven	Belphegor

Scene shifts to the shared bedroom of JACOB(14) and his brother SAMUEL(16) who live in a very small 2 bedroom bungalow somewhere in an English suburb with their parents.

SAMUEL lies in the bottom bunk reading a book for a school test. His brother sits in top bunk, loud music bleeds through large headphones attached to his laptop. Frustrated, SAMUEL leaves the room and tells his dad. Father comes up and scolds JACOB, criticizing his music and threatening to take his laptop and headphones if he doesn't smarten up. His dad leaves and JACOB curses under his breath "fucking rat" when his dad leaves.

The two boys attend the same CATHOLIC school. Jacob in grade 9 and Samuel in grade 12. At his Catholic school, JACOB skips class and has no friends. He smokes at the back of the schoolyard. His older brother SAMUEL, also a student at the school, berates his brother for his bad behavior and tells him to stop being such a punk and burden on his parents. His mother, a deeply religious Christian, worries about her son. At church, the family attends *except* Jacob who refuses to attend. She talks to Father O'Malley and asks if she can help. He offers to speak to the boy if he is willing to attend next week's service.

One afternoon, in class, the boy listens to music on his earbuds, careful not to get caught from Sister Agnes, a nun who teaches the class. Students around him, look over annoyed. A couple of girls look at each other. One of them mouths, "LOSER" to the other girl. The other quietly chuckles. The same girl then speaks out, "Sister Agnes, may I please go to the bathroom"..On her way to the door, she whispers something to Sister Agnes, who peeks over her shoulder at JACOB. She continues to write on the chalkboard. The teacher then walks up and takes his mp3 player and earbuds despite his protest. "Give it back". Another boy takes a jab at him "Better do what he says, he's liable to sacrifice your dog or something". Class erupts in laughter. She places JACOBS items on her desk. The girl returns and sees the player and earphones on the desk. A satisfied smirk on her face as she sits down and quickly glances over at JACOB. Festering moments later, he kicks his desk, grabs his music player and buds from the teacher's desk, "goddamn rat's nest". He storms out of class and goes to his next one, waiting in the hall listening to his music. The bell rings and he enters early.

As the kids are coming in, the principal enters the classroom and escorts JACOB to the office. They have a discussion and we see his total disregard for authority and bad attitude towards the principal who tells him another outburst like that and he will be suspended. He also tells him if he isn't happy here that he wouldn't be missed if he decided to transfer elsewhere. He returns back to his desk and hears snickers all around him. He grabs his things from his desk and again leaves.

At a nearby park, JACOB, alone and teary-eyed, mutters curses and smokes a cigarette. He begins to self-inflict burns on his arm. Scars suggest this isn't the first time. Gritting his teeth he endures the pain, angry at the world. He takes out a notebook, scribbling words into it, wiping his tears. "RATS NEST, Lyrics by Jacob " are scribbled on the page...

Later that night, he is still working away at his song lyrics as he listens to his headphones. His father comes into the room unannounced. Jacob doesn't hear him come in. Dad swipes the paper containing lyrics, tells him that's the last time he embarrasses him, rips up the song. Dad tells him if he doesn't straighten his act at school, he will throw everything away; the posters, the pc, headphones, everything... Dad leaves, the boy picks at his scars, he bleeds.

At class, he again endures snickers from behind him. He ignores them. Bell rings -- end of the day -- He goes to a washroom and dresses in his heavy metal attire, and puts his earphones on walks the hallway. A bigger student and his friend insults him but JACOB ignores them. "I'm talking to you", he pulls out the ear buds, and steps on them, shattering them. They fight. A caretaker sees the whole incident. A teacher and the principal break up the fight. The caretaker tries to tell the principal the other boys started it but he ignores him. He tells the other boys to leave and tells JACOB he has violated dress code, "I was going home, you don't control me" ... "That's it, you're suspended" the principal responds. SAMUEL comes and takes his brother JACOB away.

JACOB and SAMUEL leave, he throws his busted headphones against the wall outside. On his way they visit a record store. The owner there recognizes him. JACOB asks whether he can get a pair of ear buds and he will pay him tomorrow. They talk about the incident at school. The owner sympathizes with him and gives him a cheap pair on the house. JACOB notices a poster of INNER SANCTUM, it is for an autograph session at the shop in two weeks. To celebrate the event and kick off their European tour, the band is offering back stage passes (as a raffle) after their kick off show in London next month. JACOB wishes to enter, but Owner tells him he is too young to go alone. Samuel tells him "forget it, dad won't let you go, especially after all the shit you've caused" Jacob tells him to go to hell, leave him alone. Samuel leaves. A man nearby listens to the whole argument. JACOB fills out the form and leaves. Moments later, the same man asks to fill it out too.

school calls his dad informing him of suspension, having had enough, takes away his pc, headphones mp3 player, and rips his INNER SANCTUM posters. "You want to act like an animal, I'll treat you like one" Suspended for a week, during this time, with no music all alone in his room, he writes furiously. Three days into his suspension, he goes into the garage and takes out box cutters. He fills the bathtub with water and lies in the warm water. He presses the blade against his wrist shaking... He shuts his eyes but cannot go through with it.. Small streaks of blood flow in the tub as he throws the cutters into the tub. He breaks down sobbing.

His mother hears him and asks if he's ok. The next day, she surprises him with a small gift, A Pet hamster, knowing it is easy to take care of and help him to get his mind off of whatever is troubling him. She also asks him for a favor, to come to the church service this Sunday. He looks at the hamster, twisting his wrists..."Whatever..." She thanks her son and leaves ... He stares at his new pet "Fucking rat..."

At church, after the service he meets with Father O'Malley who asks JACOB to see him. JACOB protests but his parents force him ... They speak alone and the priest is somewhat sympathetic to the boy. Strangely enough, he offers him cigarettes and they talk frankly. The father admits to the boy he was rebellious when he was younger. "Guess some habits are hard to break", the priest admits taking out some whiskey and smoking...The boy becomes a bit receptive to the priest. Jacob agrees to come next week after the priest asks him if he will come.

Turns out, the priest will try to sexually abuse JACOB on his third session. The boy will take revenge on the priest later in the story when, after being abducted, he makes a deal with SOUL CRUSHER to offer himself willingly in exchange for exacting revenge against people at school and the priest. [MORE ON THIS LATER]

At the record shop, he begs the owner to rig the raffle contest and make sure he wins. "I can't do that, Jacob, but I will introduce you to Crusher at the autograph session which is the same day as the drawing. We are good friends".

Meanwhile, SOUL CRUSHER seeks the advice of a warlock, high level witch who suggests true power reside with those whose adherents are sacrificed willingly. Animal sacrifices are but small gifts of peasants. "If you want great Lucifer to take notice, offer him sacrifices of those you love or sacrifice yourself. Better still are those who will allow themselves to be sacrificed for you. Doing this will please Lucifer and bestow upon you great power. To demonstrate, the witch calls upon a young woman who takes a dagger and thrusts it between her ribs... That, my friend, is a gift worthy of the gods...

The day of the draw, we find JACOB who is introduced to CRUSHER and members of his band at the autograph session. JACOB shows him his writing. CRUSHER congratulates the boy and asks him the honor of using it for material on his next album. The draw occurs, JACOB loses. The mystery man wins. The band members all leave and the crowd disperses. JACOB sticks around and speaks with the owner. The mystery man comes back and says he wants to sell one of his tickets back to the owner but he refuses. JACOB decides he wants it. Owner tells him he is too young to go alone. "Sorry Kid", the mystery man says. Jacob follows him, and they strike a deal...For 1000.00 bucks he will take the kid as long as it's all kept in secret as he does not want to jeopardize his chances of meeting the band by doing something illegal. Jacob agrees and promises to get the man half the money now, the other half later, and tell no one their plans. They agree to meet back at the shop in a couple of days...alone.

JACOB steals expensive jewelry from his home along with other valuables and pawns it. He meets the man and gives him half the money, the rest will be given at the train station from where they both will depart to London to see the show later that month..

The story will shift to the band INNER SANCTUM, we learn not all band members are hardened occultists. MARTYR, who has been friends with CRUSHER since school, joined the band for the drugs and the chicks. He didn't care much about the esoteric occult stuff but he puts up with it to stay in the band. The others are more hard core, but none as deeply into the occult as CRUSHER.

We see a rift growing between MARTYR and CRUSHER as Martyr suggests they "ease up" on all this animal sacrifice shit. "You're right, we need to step it up" ... When MARTYR appears uneasy,

CRUSHER offers him an ultimatum--either do as he says or he gets dropped from the band. Martyr accepts. They abduct a homeless bum and repeat the same sacrificial ritual they had performed previously with small animals...Incredibly, CRUSHERS guitar playing ability begins to improve.

-- He is hooked. Martyr, reluctantly participates. The drugs help ...

At the train station, the day of the abduction and weeks after he paid the first half of the money, JACOB has decided that he will run away from home after enduring sexual advances from the priest and his family not believing him (he also lied about the theft of the valuables so he is not taken seriously). The only thing that sustains him is meeting CRUSHER who showed interest in his writing so JACOB has thrown himself into his writing. At the station, the man insists JACOB keep his distance from him and to simply follow the man around as to not arouse any suspicions that they are together. JACOB agrees.

JACOB goes missing, his mother goes to his room looking for him. She finds a noted pierced thru a pencil and through the body of the hamster. Scribbled on the bloodied note are the words "DEATH TO RATS". The police assume the boy has run away.

Story transitions at a London train station and JACOB follows the man at a distance, as instructed. Away from a crowd and possible CCTV cameras, the man enters a car but doesn't drive away...he waits for JACOB. They drive away to a secluded area...

This part of the story we have a police detective investigating all the clues and CCTV coverage of the boy, alone at the train station, both at the suburb from where he departed, and the London station where he arrived.

Now abducted after 2 days at the secluded cabin where the man and JACOB stay, they meet CRUSHER and his band who suddenly appears. After some dialogue, Crusher tells the boy he is too young for the sorts of activities expected of him in these so-called back stage events. JACOB reveals that he has run away from home. He will do whatever it takes ... CRUSHER notices the burn marks on JACOBS arms ... "Tell me JACOB, do you enjoy being abused? Or do you wish to abuse other?"

Jacob answers ... "Both..."

Crusher offers him a deal, a chance to exact revenge (against the priest and some kids at school) in exchange for the boy to give himself up willingly in a sacrifice (CRUSHER is told from JACOB that he plans on killing himself after the show anyway)

Suddenly there is a knock on the door. CRUSHER turns to the mystery man ... "Were you followed". The man shakes his head, appears scared. A voice behind the door..."Open up please, this is the police" Crusher instructs the boy to hide under a hidden compartment under the bed. The policeman enters... "Sorry to bother you but we are on the look out for this missing boy. He was last seen around the area, have you seen him?" JACOB remains silent. The cop leaves.

When Martyr and Crusher are alone, again Martyr pleads with him to spare the young kid who is seriously messed up. Crusher informs him they are both caught up too deep in all this and to man up. "This is our chance to realize greatness, don't you see that?" Martyr decides at the point he has to try to save the boy. The band depart to another secluded location where the exact same thing occurs with an older female fan of the group. But her reaction is different than Jacob's, she is terrified. She is offered the same choice but she refuses. Crusher agrees to let her go if she keeps her mouth shut, stating nobody will believe you anyway. She promises to keep quiet. Same drill, cop at the door, under the bed she hides but this one screams, "Help me, he's gonna kill me!" It is a trap, the cop act is just a ruse .. Crusher orders another ritual, the "cop actor" drags her away....Martyr now horrified tells Crusher this has to stop. "Nothing stops" The girl screams ... awimper and then silence..."Bring me my guitar..."

The following scenes we have the detective on a call about a missing priest with evidence of a struggle. A witness saw two men hitting him over the head and dragging him into a cube van at the parking lot of his church as he was going to his car.

Another ritual as the priest is tied around a pentagram, still wearing his bloodied priest attire. Martyr watches as a radicalized JACOB is given a sacrificial dagger by CRUSHER..."Take out his heart..." Crusher's playing ability has improved dramatically with each sacrifice, believing in his own delusional fantasies that they are due to his "gift to Lucifer",

Crusher tells Martyr he will take the boy's life in a couple of days and wants his help to arrange an intricate ritual. Martyr agrees without letting on he plans to free the boy. He tells the boy, in secret that Crusher is secretly planning on killing him, and that Martyr is going to help him escape...

The boy alerts Crusher of Martyr's betrayal. Martyr is held down and sacrificed. The boy's life is spared and becomes a part of the band... his true identity hidden for years until he masters the guitar and also writes the band's lyrics...

The story ends, several years later ... a new band member is introduced, "RAT KILLER"

END