

The Watchers

(Treatment for a feature film screenplay)
written by Sean Mahoney
mahoneyseanp@gmail.com

Logline: Dead priests and a blinded orphan may be the key for two Dublin detectives investigating a series of brutal murders attributed to a rumored ancient book of Satan that brings the worst evil out of anyone who reads it.

Genre: Contemporary thriller. The DaVinci Code meets Se7en.

Set on dark, vile laneways of dreary Dublin in lashing rains that drain to antiquated sewer systems and hidden underground rivers. In mysterious archaic tunnels that link a secret chamber below Trinity College with creepy catacombs extending throughout the city. In old Irish churches and musty libraries, depressing hospitals and gloomy community centers.

The Watchers explores the origins of evil, based on the biblical story of the fallen angels, children of God who left heaven to consort with human women and corrupted all creation. As told in the actual Book of Enoch, an ancient Hebrew apocalyptic religious text, their offspring were giants wreaking havoc on earth, devouring men and drinking blood and teaching humanity their evil, supernatural arts. When society cries out for help, God sends His archangel Michael to defeat their leader and cleanse the earth of wickedness with the Great Flood.

Main Characters:

Mick (30s) a cocky and cynical detective with no time for priests and their sneaky religious shyte,

Malachi (60s) a troubled, estranged from his family detective with a warm face but haunted eyes;

Toby (12) a clairvoyant orphan chosen to join a secret religious order safeguarding the book;

Lilith (30s) a posh, English antiquarian occult expert with unique knowledge of the secret order;

Sam (40s) an American CIA agent and friend of Lilith's helping with the investigation;

Groban and Mucker (30s) brutal mercenary thugs hired to obtain the book;

Father Tim (30s) Malachi's parish priest, well meaning but a bit too earnest in his delivery.

Our story starts on the flaming destruction and carnage of a desert village in ancient days. Barbaric rapists and killers, their eyes scratched bloody and red, trek into the mountains with their plunder and prize - captured women and children, chained animals and newfound slaves. A heinous parade.

In a huge underground cavern the spoils of war are reckoned and devoured. A true den of iniquity. An orgy from hell. At the forefront is a great altar adorned with profane paintings of sacrificial suffering showcasing a large, ornately ornamented BOOK. An object of supreme reverence.

A powerful CHIEFTAIN, bedecked in ceremonial garb, ascends the altar, eyes unlike the others, brilliantly clear and cold as ice. He lifts the exalted tome, kisses it, and raises it high above his head. His followers immediately interrupt their depravity and drop to their knees in worship, blood at their mouths.

And the Lord said to the archangel Michael:

“Destroy all the souls addicted to lust, and the offspring of the Watchers, for they have tyrannized over mankind.” - the Book of Enoch

And we HEAR a transcendent Church choir, singing an Irish funeral hymn - "Be Thou My Vision." The open casket of Father O'Hare (90s) his eyes closed but mangled and scarred from long ago. A long line of priests pay their respects, but a Father Monahan furtively removes the dead priests ring.

A Father Brogan visits a bleak orphanage late at night to escort Toby, still in his pajamas, to the long library of Trinity College, past the Book of Kells exhibit, and down a stairwell into the catacombs leading to a secret chamber where Father Monahan prepares for a sacred ritual. It's there they undress him.

The two priests, also scarred and blind, put him in a robe, secure him to a chair and strap a diabolical helmet of strange hinges and ghastly protruding spikes on his head. They take the ancient book from a golden case and reveal it to Toby, who thrashes against his bonds ... and they blind him. A horrid wail of pain. When Father Monahan places the filched ring on Toby's finger, the boy has a vision of the priest's throat getting slashed.

An urgent call disrupts the Sunday mornings of our detectives partners. Malachi during Mass, after which his estranged wife has agreed to speak to him, so long as Father Tim is there. At all times. Mick from sleeping off his night.

They're led to the secret chamber and the bloody bodies of two blind priests. They see the golden case and the helmet and ... a child's pajamas. A flashback shows Mucker and Groban barging in and killing the priests, and Mick suspects the boy was rescued.

Toby, drenched and filthy, eyes mangled, is pulled from a sewer grate, comatose, and taken to hospital, where Mick and Malachi visit him.

Mucker and Groban, meanwhile, kidnap a local Asian woman and hide out in her home with the book. Mucker is falling under its spell, clawing at his eyes, as Groban connects with whoever hired them to get it - and demands more money. It's agreed, if he finishes off the boy. He heads for the hospital.

The mysterious Dublin sewer system - a wild and elaborate network of medieval Victorian tunnels and waterways crisscrossing underneath the city - is explained to Mick and Malachi by a creepy Underground Man as they try to figure out how the boy got away. "Be the backbone of the flood system if it was any kind of fuckin' system at all. But it ain't."

Back at the hospital Mick meets Lilith visiting Toby, hoping to offer a small bit of comfort for his misfortune, which Mick points out hasn't been reported. "Detective Duffy, if I relied on the press for my information, I'd be even more lost than you." She explains that she's a trader in antiquities. "Books, mostly." They agree to meet for a drink.

Disguised as a doctor, Groban goes to Toby's room, but Toby's panic tips off Malachi and there's a shootout. Mick arrives just in time and kills Groban. Frenzied, Toby mutters in an unknown language.

Mick meets Lilith at her fancy hotel. He tries the tough cop routine but she's unflappable.

LILITH

There are stories of an ancient work, lost to history. A very special one.
But so far, it only exists in rumor and lore.

MICK

That's a rare book.

LILITH

The blinding ritual those priests were performing carries an association with it.

MICK

They got a book they don't want to read?

LILITH

They guarded a book they didn't want to read.

MICK

Must be shyte.

Lilith takes a lipstick from her bag and grabs a napkin.

LILITH

(writing on it)

I'm going to write something down, but I don't want you to read what it says.

She slides the napkin in front of him, face up. He looks at her a moment, then glances down at it.

NAPKIN - it reads: DON'T READ THIS!

He looks back at her, a bit annoyed at falling for it.

MICK

What's the point?

LILITH

If you were blind, that wouldn't have been so difficult.

Sam arrives to meet her but she arranges a time to meet Mick at Trinity College.

Mick and Malachi discuss the case with their superior who introduces them to Sam, from "some special division, deals with cults and religious crime, that sort of nonsense." "Ghostbusters?" Mick asks. "Sometimes." He tells them the murdered priests are known as the Wardens of Enoch, a highly secret religious order charged with a very specific, lifelong duty - guarding a book. He also explains that he studied under Lilith's father, an 'archaeologist of sorts' who died tragically.

Mick meets Lilith at the Trinity library and she explains that the book they are looking for is written by fallen angels, Watchers, and holds the secrets of heaven. The book was lost when God sent the Great Flood to destroy the Watchers, whose descendants want to find the book again and rise to power over

mankind. Her passions for the story are obvious. Her explanations are almost sensual, certainly seductive, drawing Mick in.

LILITH

For this they were cursed by God, and damned, never to ascend to Heaven.

MICK

The angels legged it outta Heaven to get laid?

LILITH

Laid and laid often. As Mark Twain said, "Heaven for the climate, but hell for the company."
These weren't your average women.

MICK

You take all this seriously? As in the non-metaphorical sense?

LILITH

These are the fallen angels, the origin of evil itself.

They share a look and Mick melts a bit.

Separately, in a pub, Sam explains to Malachi how an order of Irish priests were rumored to have shepherded the book to Ireland during the Dark Ages.

MALACHI

I've seen some things too. You don't need any book to find evil.

SAM

Well, let me say this, if we don't find that book,
you just might see things you've never seen before.

Mucker has read the book and gone insane, torturing and murdering his hostage and then a Chinese prostitute.

From afar, Malachi watches his wife drop their twin boys at school, then picks up Mick, who voices his skepticism over it all before they meet Lilith and Sam at the hospital. They discover Toby, still in a trance-like state, has scratched numbers into his palm and also decipher the language he's muttering; Enochian, "the language of angels, only decipherable when spoken through and agent of God."

Mucker's carnage is discovered and Mick, Malachi and Sam go to the hostage's townhouse. Mucker's gone, but they find Enochian symbols scrawled in blood on the wall. Mick goes to Lilith's hotel room. He shows her the gruesome murder photos and demands answers.

MICK

You expect me to blame this on the devil's evil storybook?

LILITH

Unspeakable violence has been committed in the name of the Bible,
"the good book" as they say. Consider what the bad book might be
capable of.

They meet Malachi and Sam again and, through drawings Toby made, Mick figures out the boy is 'seeing' the violence perpetrated under the spell of the book.

Suspecting their suspect's evil urges involve Asian women, Mick and Malachi search Dublin's Asian district, Chinese restaurants and massage parlors, but come up empty. Mick suggests a drink but Malachi begs off for his rooming house and calls his wife, hoping to reconnect. Rejected, he heads to the hospital and sits by Toby.

MALACHI

A fine pair we make, lad. All alone and lost in the darkness.

Toby has another vision as Mucker terrorizes a massage parlor and the madame calls Malachi's at the number he gave her. He calls Mick and they track Mucker through the rainy alleyways while Sam and Lilith join in with other cops. When Mucker holds a young girl at knifepoint and fires his shotgun indiscriminately, Mick rushes in and shoots him dead.

Though they're dismayed the book isn't on him (a junkie has discovered it in Mucker's car) Mick and Malachi see the case as closed, even though Sam assures them it's not over. As Malachi's about to bring Toby to Father Tim, a cop at the hospital reports a junkie's gruesome death.

COP

Your man was seen coming out of a Smithfield tenement this morning,
babbling and incoherent. He was dragging his girl by a belt tied off around her neck.
Paramedics say she was spiked in the neck at least a hundred times.
He made it about a block before he collapsed as well.
Enough heroin in him to last a week.

Malachi pulls back the sheet, revealing the dead junkie. His eyes are clawed ragged.

Malachi drops Toby to Father Tim's community center, who takes him by the hand ...

FLASH FRAME, CLOSE-UP - Father Tim, struggling on a floor. And a bullet blasts his head apart.

... but Toby violently yanks it away and reels back from him, trembling again.

FATHER TIM

It's OK, Toby. You're in the house of God now. No one will hurt you here.

Mick meets with Lilith to celebrate and somewhat smugly declares the Watchers story as a lotta bollocks. Shooting his shot with her, he dismisses Sam and his concerns of more violence when he arrives. But Malachi, unnerved by the junkie's eyes, goes off to search the abandoned tenement building on his own.

INT. ABANDONED TENEMENT BUILDING, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Malachi descends the steps into a darkened basement. It's flooded, a few feet of water and climbing. The only light comes from old exit signs casting a red tint about the room.

At the bottom of the stairs is a TEEN'S BODY, face down and floating. He taps it with his foot, but it just rocks a bit. He rolls it over and shines his flashlight -

BLOODY MANGLED EYES - He shines his light around the ...

WALLS - more Enochian symbols, scrawled in blood. He steps down into the water and makes a call.

Mick's with Lilith and doesn't answer, but then checks Malachi's message. "He says he knows where the book is." They call him back but there's no answer. They don't know where he is but Lilith thinks Toby might provide a clue. Mick is worried now, doubting his own skepticism, and they call Sam for help.

INT. MALACHI'S CAR - NIGHT

MALACHI'S EYES - rubbed bloody. He's at them with fists and fingernails, tearing them down. He stops just long enough to gulp from a bottle of booze. He peers through the rain to ...

MALACHI'S HOME - Through the window we can see the flickering light of the TV. And there's Mary, bringing their twins a late night snack.

He takes a call from whoever hired Groban and Mucker, who knows he has the book and wants to meet, but first he has to do something. He wakes Father Tim and thrusts the book at him - "Give it to Toby!"

INT. CHURCH CENTER, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Father Tim walks quietly, pulling the long cloth waistband from his robe, muttering in Enochian. His eyes are destroyed, wretched and ravenous.

Mick, Lilith and Sam arrive at Father Tim's community center to find the priest has locked himself in his office. Mick kicks in the door to find the priest hanging from a ceiling pipe by his waistband, an overturned chair on the floor beneath him. When they cut him down, he springs up and attacks a boy but Sam shoots him in the head, just as Toby envisioned.

But the book isn't there and neither is Toby.

Or Malachi - he's gone home. In the grips of the book, he bursts in and threatens his family, drunk and tearing at his eyes. When Mick, Lilith and Sam arrive, he has his boys headlocked and gasping for air. Mick has no choice, he shoots him. With his dying breath, he says, "Toby."

They take off to find the blind boy, suspecting he'd bring the book back to the secret chamber. It's been sealed shut but they know he can get in the same way he escaped it - the sewers. Their waters are raging out of control, with the relentless pissing rain, the system's failed. They split up into different tunnels, braving the rushing waters to find Toby.

Lilith sees him and he moves toward her - until he sees Sam. He turns and runs and Sam pulls his gun. Lilith blocks him from shooting Toby and Mick tries to stop him. Using Lilith as a shield, Sam shoots him in the shoulder and goes after Toby. Mick chases.

Sam catches up to Toby and speaks softly to him - in Enochian. He snatches the book, fully realizing his evil side - a Watcher - he rejoices that his kind finally have the book again. About to shoot Toby, Mick hits him from behind. Toby runs off and Mick and Sam square off, but Sam is now incredibly powerful. He easily beats Mick back into the control room and tries to make him look at the book. Mick resists, he's a believer now, and Sam turns his attentions to Lilith.

SAM

And you, my sweet, luscious Lily. You would toy with boys when you
can dance with gods? What would your poor father say?

This gets Lilith's attention. Sam flashes an evil smile.

SAM (cont'd)

Oh yes, my dear! Daddy was a Watcher too.

Lilith crawls to him and almost slithers up his body to kiss him, seemingly seduced by the book, though at the last seconds signals Mick to flood the tunnels. He does, sweeping the book away and drowning Sam in a Great Flood that parallels the resolution of the Book of Enoch.