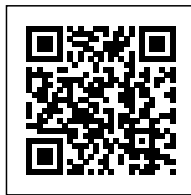


BERSERK

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The Brand of Sacrifice: Berserk's Symbol of Power and Peril

The most recognizable symbol in the dark fantasy manga Berserk is the **Brand of Sacrifice**, a mark burned onto the skin of those deemed worthy (or unlucky) by the God Hand, powerful demonic entities. It grants immense strength and resilience, but at a terrible cost.

Meaning:

- **Sacrifice:** The brand represents a Faustian bargain, granting power but demanding a steep price. Marked individuals are hunted by monstrous Apostles, drawn to their life force.
- **Fate and Struggle:** The brand signifies a marked individual's struggle against a predetermined fate. Guts, the series' protagonist, embodies this defiance, wielding the brand's power while defying its curse.
- **Ambiguity:** The brand's exact meaning remains open to interpretation. It can symbolize hope, defiance, damnation, or even a test of faith.

Significance:

- **Plot Driver:** The brand drives the narrative, shaping Guts' journey and impacting other characters. Apostles, drawn to the brand, pose constant threats, while its protective power fuels Guts' fight for survival.
- **Thematic Core:** The brand embodies Berserk's central themes of struggle, sacrifice, and defying fate. It serves as a constant reminder of the dark forces at play and the characters' perilous choices.
- **Cultural Icon:** The brand has transcended the manga, becoming a popular symbol among fans. Its distinctive design and complex meaning resonate with its dark themes and enduring popularity.

Remember: This summary avoids spoilers for the Berserk manga and anime. The true depths of the Brand of Sacrifice's meaning and significance are best experienced through the story itself.

