

The Assiduous Watchbreed

Goals: these days? Organized crime, both mundane and occult. Members of the Assiduous Watchbreed will do anything illegal, if the money's right; they specialize in drugs, the most unsavory forms of human trafficking, and magical assassinations. The Watchbreed have learned from painful experience that the art of assassinations is best practiced solely against other criminals; there are too many public officials or law enforcement personnel who have secret wards and occult tripwires attached to them, and the Assiduous Watchbreed have no friends.

Resources: Lots of money, and extensive contacts in the mundane organized criminal community. They also have access to various forms of magical knowledge, with a particular concentration in how to kill people and/or break their minds. What the Watchbreed lack is a leadership cadre; the cult is organized on the cell level, and has no real coherence past the idea that cells do not fight each other.

Symbol: None.

The plight of this cult would be piteous, if anyone actually thought that the members of the Assiduous Watchbreed deserved pity. As it stands, however: well, normal people will find the Watchbreed to be vile and depraved nihilists, for good reasons, while other evil cults consider Watchbreed to be pathetic and embarrassing failures, for objectively **bad** reasons. After all, strictly speaking it's not the Watchbreed's fault that the Dark God they were 'created' to serve can **never** actually coalesce out of spite and entropy.

Yes, yes, 'never' is a dangerously overconfident word to use when it comes to supernatural cults. But the public (so to say) record is clear. The would-be Dark God that would have used the Assiduous Watchbreed for fell purposes was *spectacularly* destroyed in the 1920s by the standard group of half-mad adventurers, right at the worst (or best) possible moment in its life cycle. Reality itself crushed the proto-deity into the occult equivalent of glue, and then used the glue to seal up a few inconvenient cracks in space-time. While the humans (and sort-of humans) still remember what happened, the more powerful supernatural creatures **don't**. It's like there's a blank spot there where the proto-deity used to be, and it affects everything above a certain level of power. The phenomenon is a touch unsettling, actually.

But it also explains why the Assiduous Watchbreed survived: all the entities that would have normally realized the need to roll up the cult in the wake of its Dark God's implosion literally could not even remember that the Watchbreed existed. By the time their human minions, subordinates, subjects, associates, and/or partners realized the problem, the Watchbreed had burrowed into mundane organized crime, where the cult flourishes to this day. Sort of. They make a lot of money, at least.

But that's what not they want. What the Watchbreed *want* is their specific actual Dark God; and while the basic magical practices and rituals still work (including the standard dedicatory initiation bindings), all of the workings that would have required the active participation of their stillborn Dark God simply don't function and can't be adapted to any other deity. This can make a Watchbreed cultist an effective spy on supernatural organizations, oddly enough. It's rare for a magical worker to acquire even a little power without being promptly becoming beholden to somebody, but Assiduous Watchbreed cultists *cannot* so bound. Most magical detection methods simply get caught up in the blind spot, and the entities that maintain and adapt such spells still can't comprehend the existence of the Watchbreed, and so forth and so forth.

It'd be more handy if, again, most groups who might use a Watchbreed assassin and/or spy didn't loathe and despise the cult. Even when they have to do so anyway they generally never use the Watchbreed to its full potential. Which is really quite thematically appropriate, no?

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