

Sister Fidelia Baum

Uncertain Watchdog of the Lord

You have been chosen, from among the many faithful, to walk the earth, passing judgments down from on high, and punishing the nonbelievers. At first, you thought that this was a great honor. Then you thought that it was a burden or a challenge the Lord had sent you to test your faith. Now, you are beginning to think that it is simply the wrong thing to do.

You are one of the **Watchdogs of the Lord**, a vigilante group organized by your splinter sect of Christianity. The Watchdogs go to each community with members of your church, and perform religious rites and such. More importantly, they help judge complicated moral situations. And when necessary, they enforce their judgments, even forcing their decisions onto nonbelievers. Sometimes, violent force is required to enforce those judgments.

In your time in the Dogs, you haven't had to use violence... yet. But you have seen how people in every town fear your approach. And you have seen how it is often difficult to parse right from wrong. Your teachings back at the temple made the world seem very clear cut, black and white in morality. But the real world you have seen on your travels is messy, with a variety of shades of gray and alternative ways of looking at things. Judging even minor marital disputes has been difficult. Trying to face tougher issues, or getting guns involved in your decisions... well, you don't think it would end well.

Consequently, you're having a crisis of faith. You are doubting your decision to join God's Watchdogs, and even doubting your faith in the church that you were raised in. You haven't mentioned any of this to **Brother Artemis Cook**, your fellow Watchdog and travelling companion. You don't think he would understand. He might even get angry at you, and you don't want to see him angered. According to church doctrine, the former believer who renounces her faith is the worst kind of sinner, and suffers the worst in Hell.

You asked Brother Artemis once or twice how he came to be a Dog, but he has consistently evaded answering your questions. All you know about him is that he burns with the fiery passion of the true believer. But sometimes, his religious fervor might drive him too far. His punishments sometimes made you wonder if his punishment was a worse sin than the sin it was punishing. Or if his wrath at the sin was worse than the sin it punished.

You wonder what your sister, **Amalia Baum**, would think of you being one of the Watchdogs. She left the church several years ago, claiming that it was unjust for many reasons, especially the actions of the Watchdogs. At the time, her doubts drove you to even greater certainty in your faith. But since she has been gone, your certainty has left you as well. Now you wonder if she was right all along. And

just as these questions boil in your mind, you come across her for the first time in years. Is it some sort of sign? Or just a coincidence? what has she been doing in this time?

You are currently staying in **Bedelia Derrick's Lucky Saloon** because it is the only inn in town. Brother Artemis had a few choice not-quite-swear-words about the gambling happening here, but you don't see how some poker is hurting anyone.