

Crimson Above

Name	Crimson Above
Title/Role	CEO / Faction Leader
Archetype	Unsettling explorer of the mind
Species	Kotaketa
Sex/Gender	Typically male-presenting. Varies.
Age	Current body: mid-thirties. Essential ego: potentially hundreds of years old.
Personality	Aloof, calculating, sometimes confused
Notable Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Red-skinned and less “organized” than other shapeshifters. Tentacle monster nature is more obvious.• Sometimes lacking fine motor control in mimetic form. Alien movements.
Actor Comps	Mads Mikkelsen - Hannibal, Casino Royale Yahya Abdul-Mateen II - Watchmen (HBO)

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Crimson Above is the leader of a mega corp focused on mind expansion and corporate intelligence gathering. He is a kotaketa (a tentacled alien shapeshifter) capable of invasive, predatory mind-reading. He is soft-spoken and exudes an air of eerie calm. Anyone who spends time with him, however, knows that tranquility hides a quiet menace. Crimson Above’s chief obsession is knowledge and how to acquire/distribute it. He chafes against any attempt to impede learning – even learning that is potentially dangerous. He is cunning enough to avoid direct conflict with the ruling authority, though, opting instead to work around the edges of the law.

In addition to raw knowledge, Crimson Above seems fascinated with the concept of truth, seeing various dimensions of truth that sometimes seem contradictory. He often speaks about “stories” and the “lattice truths” that undergird all cultural narratives. He recognizes that there are truths hidden in fiction, but he hates being lied to. As a result, he prefers to speak through mind-invading encounters where lying is impossible.

Crimson Above struggles to maintain his disguise. Tendrils and tentacles writhe around his core structure, giving him a wispy, inconsistent appearance. His “face” is less distinct, and his true eyes are more active, making his alien nature unmistakable. He rarely wears clothes and has vibrant red skin.

While no one knows exactly how old Crimson Above is, it’s an open secret that his current body is not his *original* body. He has passed through several bodies – overwhelming the mind of the shapeshifter who devours him at the point of death and claiming their body as his own. His many reincarnations have had some effect on his psyche, but he is hesitant to

speaking about it. He sometimes speaks about “voices” – presumably the voices of those he is overwhelmed by. While this does not rise to the point of true schizophrenia, it does give him a unique (sometimes astute and sometimes confused) perspective. Some shapeshifters believe he has achieved true enlightenment. Others think he is slowly going insane. No one can say for sure.

MONOLOGUES

1. I place my hand on your shoulder. You have no reason to fear. In this place, there is no danger save for the danger we carry with us. You do not bring danger to my home, do you? That would not end well.
2. They say your target is a “great mind.” I have gazed into “great minds,” human, and found nothing. Nothing. Nothing of consequence. Nothing save for vanity, and appetite, and anemic curiosity withered by greed. Loosened teeth. Dreams unfulfilled. Plaudits unearned. Sorrow. Jealousy. Terror. Nothing. What is “greatness” after all? An illusion. A vapor. The enemy of wisdom. They say your target is remarkable. Trust me when I say he is anything but.
3. My voices sing in unison: “Do not trust this one.” Your inner voice likely says the same about me. So, you see, we are aligned in our distrust at least. Perhaps that is something to build on.
4. You place an accusation on my table? I shake my head. Our products played no part in the bombing. The bomber learned chemistry from a one of our muses, certainly. But violence? No. Violence is a lesson 400,000 years in the teaching. We teach you the sciences. You learn violence from apes. Apes that still fashion knives out of animal bones deep within your mind.
5. Technology is only a means to an end. Insight. Actualization. Transcendence. These are my organization’s *true* commodities. The people of this city thirst for wisdom, human. Our success in the market is proof enough of that, I think.
6. We do not gather whole datasets--only fragments. Taken alone, these fragments say nothing. But if pieced together, they reveal more than any complete set. Imagine ten thousand vases smashed upon the floor. Restoring them to their original shape would teach you nothing. But taking the fragments and creating *new* vessels ... discovering points of connection, symmetries, unexpected correlations ... that is the route to true understanding.

7. What has my organization done to warrant your distrust? We teach. We empower. Perhaps it is not me you fear, but your fellow citizens. Strong minds will always be a threat to those who speak only the language of violence.

LINES

1. Time. Diverse perspective. These are the prerequisites for wisdom. I have existed for many years and I have taken many forms. Think on that before you lie.
2. I have stalked the jungles of the mind for centuries. There is no cave, or hollow, or shaded place I cannot find.
3. The form that sits across from you is not the true form. It is a simulacrum. A mirror. So, you see, I know something of deceit.
4. We kotaketa grew beyond our appetites millennia ago. Given time and patience, we can help you do the same.
5. People call us information thieves. But if they place their information on the net, it was not so very precious after all.
6. Knowledge. Fulfilment. Authentic connection. We provide these and so much more.
7. Some find my appearance unnerving. I shake my head. Mimicry is more art than science, and I lack the subtlety for art.
8. All creatures have secrets. Things they hide even from themselves. But not from me.