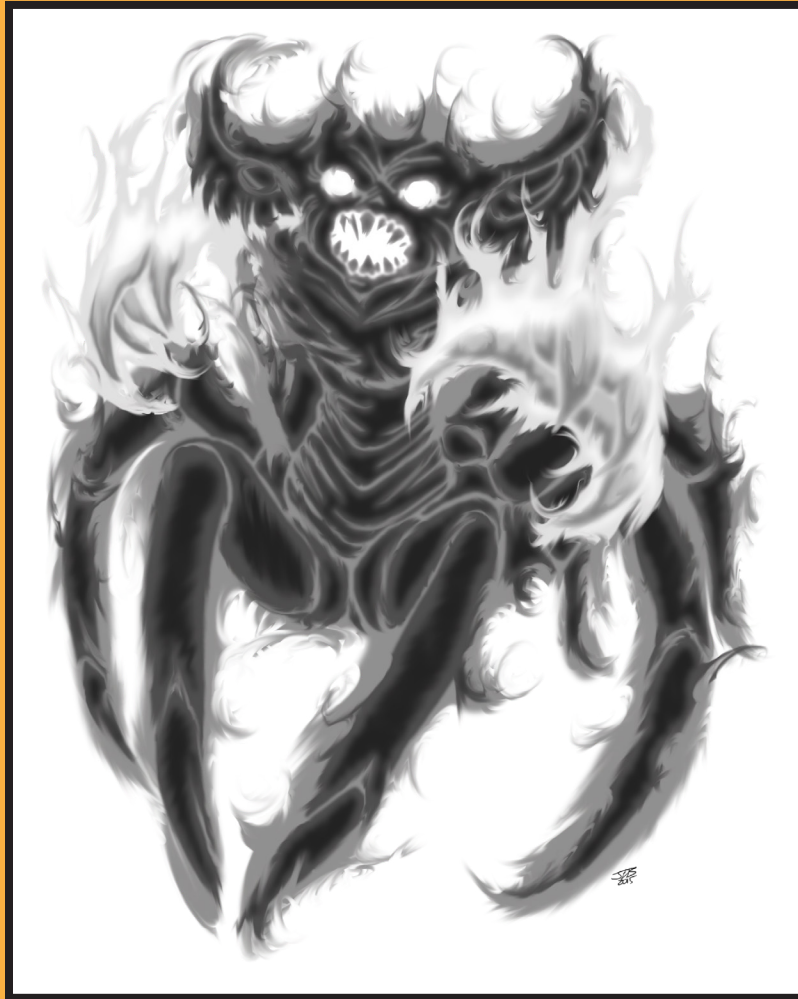


The Crimson Void



Daniel J. Bishop



COMPATIBLE WITH
DCC
RPG

The Crimson Void

A setting element to help create a rich campaign environment for DCC games of all levels.

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Introduction

Any role-playing game session can take a left turn at Albuquerque, leaving the poor Game Master wondering what to do next. This is even more true for the dedicated Dungeon Crawl Classics judge, who discovers that patron quests, divine disapproval, and the requests of gods to pay back divine favor can make the game take incredible new turns with the roll of a few dice.

Add to this the advice urging players to “Quest For It” when they want something unusual for their characters, and you have a potent stew for gaming, but also a situation in which the judge may want strong DCC elements with a minimum of preparation required.

The Campaign Element (CE) series attempts to address these specific areas. Now, when your wizard is looking for a spell, your cleric is sent on a mission from her deity, or your thief simply wants to find a location where stealth and a cunning mind are paramount, you will have an answer at your fingertips. Weave these campaign elements into your world, mesh them into other modules and areas of your own creation, and watch the “Appendix N” vibe of your games grow.

In addition, for various reasons sometimes only a few players were available for a night’s gaming. Each Campaign Element is short enough to be played through by most groups in only a single session. That doesn’t mean that the value of the area is limited to a single session – each adventure includes notes on “squeezing it dry”... effectively getting the maximum re-use from your investment.

Using This Material

CE 6: The Crimson Void describes a unique goddess (Kala Môr), Her cult, temple grounds, as well as the priests and other beings associated with the location. The easiest way to use this material is to allow PC clerics of Kala Môr attached to this temple. Kala Môr may also be used as a template for creating unique deities of the judge’s own devising. Other characters may oppose the temple, come to it for aid, attempt to prevent a sacrifice, or need to leap into the Crimson Void themselves. Robbing the temple of its riches would be a crowning achievement for any thief. A Neutral deity was chosen to allow the judge to easily use Kala Môr as both aid and adversary to any group as he chooses.

Kala Môr

Lady of the Dark Reaches of the Upper Air, Mistress of Dark Clouds, Protectress Over the Crimson Void, Angel of Blood and Darkness

Minor Power

Alignment: Neutral.

Portfolio: Darkness, the Upper Air, Mountaintops, the Balance, Protection, Secrecy.

Symbol: A black circle shot through with crimson threads.

Clerical Raiment: Dark robes, dark masks, and hooded cloaks that are fashioned to appear like a bird’s draped wings. Aspirants have blue “feathers” on their “wings”, lesser priests have green, priests have silver, and the Lady or Lord Protector of the Temple has crimson. Clerics of Kala Môr have no restrictions to the armor they can wear, but armor is seldom worn at the Temple except by the Temple Guards (which are lay persons rather than clergy). Clerics are expected to conceal their civilian identities from each other; a complex series of pass codes and gestures is used to indicate proper rank in the Temple. One result of this is that each member of the Temple has two names: his or her civilian name, and a Temple Name, usually based off of a bird, such as Fledgling Sparrow or Brother Falcon. Nor do they allow anyone outside the Temple to know of their status in the priesthood – the grocer, the magistrate, or the tanner may be clerics of Kala Môr for all any knows!

Organization: The Hidden Temple of the Peaks is said to be the greatest of Kala Môr’s temples. Some of the

goddesses most devoted worshipers seek it throughout their lifetimes, but if it has ever been found, those who have done so remain silent.

An aspirant comes masked and robed to the Temple, where he or she is tried by mysterious means, and either given a Temple Name and admitted into worship, or uncovered and cast out. Aspirant priests are sometimes called “fledglings”. Some of these already have power granted from great Kala Môr; these are called “high fledglings”. In game terms, if a 0-level character chooses to become a cleric at level 1, the character is a high fledgling.

Ascending the hierarchy is a result of both political maneuvering and merit, both complicated by the ease with which any member of the church can assume the role of any other member. Clergy, whether lesser clergy or full clergy members, are called “Brother” or “Sister”. Each place of worship has a Lord or Lady Protector, who is simply called “Lord” or “Lady”.

Wandering clerics, unattached to any temple, are known as “stray ravens” and are addressed as “Uncle” or “Aunt”.



Places of Worship: Simple services to Kala Môr can be performed at any high place, whether open to the sky, within a building, or even within a cave. Important services, such as marriages or blessing the dead, must occur in a dedicated space made holy by a sacrifice worth not less than 50 gp – this holy place may be a shrine, an altar, or even a simple frame for sky burials, but there must be an actual structure as well as a sacrifice. Major services and rituals must always occur within a temple, and that temple must be built in some high place of significance to the cult.

What is a “Minor Power”?

The author ranks supernatural Powers (including all deities and similar beings) in his campaign as Greater, Major, Minor, Lesser, or Least. These rankings can be used to help settle disputes of precedence between Powers with shared portfolios, and it can be used to indicate the relative strength of their magic when clerics (or wizards using those Powers as patrons) vie one against another.

When a Power is called upon in a spell duel, either through the use of divine magic or by the invoke patron spell, the spell check related to the lower-ranked Power is reduced by one step on the dice chain per reduced rank. Thus, a cleric calling upon a Minor Power to defend against a Greater Power would be rolling 1d14 for spell checks (two steps in rank indicate two steps in the dice chain). Against a wizard invoking a Least Power, though, the cleric would roll normally and the wizard would roll 1d14 on his invoke patron spell check.

If the casting relates to one Power’s portfolio, but not to the other’s, assume that the portfolio increases the Power’s rank by one step for these purposes. Thus, a Minor god of lightning is at no disadvantage when hurling thunderbolts at a Major god of agriculture.

At the judge’s discretion, a Least Power cannot fuel 5th level spells, and a Lesser Power can only fuel 5th level spells directly related to his or her portfolio.

Details of Power: Kala Môr is envisioned as a dark woman wrapped in a billowing black hooded cloak, allowing only Her eyes, bright as crimson stars, to be seen. Her skin, where it is depicted on hands or arms, is the deep blue of the night sky, and Her hair, in the rare instances when it is depicted as billowing out from beneath Her hood, is thick and red, seemingly with a life of its own.

It is said that Kala Môr sprang into being when the Crimson Void opened into the Lands We Know, Her body created from the flocks that roosted near at hand. She now watches over the Crimson Void, containing That Which Lies Beyond by both warding against it, and satiating its hunger. It is prophesied that, someday, sacrifices will no longer contain the Void, and Kala Môr Herself will enter it to do battle with That Which Lies Beyond. On that day will Kala Môr be lost, for either the Void will be closed forever, with the goddess trapped within it, or Kala Môr's dark body will be the final sacrifice before That Which Lies Beyond emerges to devour the Lands We Know.

Associations: The judge must determine which deities Kala Môr would be associated with in the judge's own campaign. Keeping in mind the secrecy of Her cult, Kala Môr may be distrusted even by those who would normally be considered allies. Certainly, the priesthood of Kala Môr is not given to trust others with their secrets – and why would they? Trusting the wrong people might allow That Which Lies Beyond the Crimson Void into our world...

Of course, whatever Powers wrought the advent of Kala Môr remain hidden from the knowledge of mortal men. If the gods know, they do not speak of it. Lawful gods have strong reasons to keep That Which Lies Beyond trapped within the Crimson Void, but even those Chaotic gods who wish all to dissolve into Chaos hope for a Disorder in which They can reign.

Allies: Those gods in the Dungeon Crawl Classics core rules that are most likely to be allied to Kala Môr are Daentharr, the Mountain Lord; Amun Tor, the god of mysteries; and Malotoch the crow god.

Foes: Kala Môr and Her priests are most likely to come into conflict with Justicia, goddess of justice and mercy; Amun Tor, the god of mysteries; the Hidden Lord, god of secrets; and Cadistat the chaos titan. Amun Tor is

listed as both an ally and a foe because, as god of mysteries, his clerics may aid those of Kala Môr in keeping the Crimson Void hidden, but as solver of riddles, the same clerics may well wish to investigate that which is best left alone, or may seek to uncover the identities of Kala Môr's priests.

Holy Days: The Day of the Advent marks the coming of Kala Môr, but it also marks the opening of the Crimson Void. It is celebrated on the winter solstice with a wailing midnight service that laments the opening of the Crimson Void, followed by a human sacrifice of three virgin maidens, who are cast into the Crimson Void to keep what lies within it satisfied for another year. Finally, there is a jubilant celebration of Kala Môr's victory in containing the Crimson Void.

The nights of the spring and autumn equinoxes are known as Wraith Nights, for from sunset to sunrise, crimson wraiths are released from the Void to roam the Hidden Temple of the Peaks. These wraiths may slay all they discover, as a further sacrifice to keep the Thing in the Void from emerging. On this night, temple guards remain outside the portico (Area 1), but do not otherwise patrol the temple. A cunning thief or party of adventurers willing to brave the crimson wraiths could rob the temple at this time.

The Quiet Night is the night of the summer solstice, when the Crimson Void is least active. The temple is alive on those nights with common worshipers socializing with the masked clergy. It is expected that any who would wish to enter the temple bring a tribute to its priests, but this is the easiest time for PCs to scout the temple without arousing suspicion. Areas 4 and 5, as well as the secret areas (8 and 9) are off-limits. Sometimes unmasked priests attend as common worshipers, so it is not easy to determine who is, or who is not, a cleric of Kala Môr at this event.

What is Sacred: The precincts of the Hidden Temple of the Peaks is sacred, as are the persons and identities of clerics of Kala Môr. A cleric of Kala Môr must treat knowledge of her own affiliation as sacred, even to other clerics of the goddess. The flesh of birds is also sacred to Kala Môr, and her clerics are forbidden its consumption.

What is a Sin: Trespassing upon the temple. Revealing the identity of a cleric of Kala Môr. Revealing that you are a cleric of Kala Môr. Using magic to harm a bird or

bird-like creatures. Eating the flesh of birds or bird-like creatures. Aiding the agents of That Which Lurks within the Crimson Void, or working towards its release (directly or indirectly).

Omens: Clerics of Kala Môr read omens in the flights of birds. Witnessing a hawk or eagle dive upon its prey is a good omen. Having a bird land upon one is a particular omen of Kala Môr's favor. Finding a dead bird is an omen of disfavor, as is having a bird defecate upon oneself. Being attacked by a bird is a very bad omen, and the less natural the attack seems, the more it shows the disfavor of Kala Môr.

Kala Môr as a Patron: Some wizards and elves are able to call upon the patronage of Mistress of Dark Clouds. See Appendix A for details.

Kala Môr and the Crimson Void

It may not be immediately obvious that Kala Môr Herself comes from the Crimson Void, but it is a truth hidden from even the highest of Her clerics. The nature of Her relationship with the Thing trapped in the Crimson Void is a mystery – is She daughter? Mother? Wife? All of these? The power of these two is entwined. What raises one, diminishes the other, and vice versa. Should the Dweller ever escape the Void, it is He that would command the obedience of a priesthood, and Kala Môr diminish to a mere demi-patron... or less?

The priests of Kala Môr believe that their deity guards the Crimson Void, and She does, because She must. Were the Crimson Void to open, Kala Môr would have to face the Thing She has trapped behind Her. If the Crimson Void were somehow closed (and it is generally believed among the clerics that Kala Môr would wish this, although She does not), either She would be pulled into it as it closed, or She would lose the source of Her power and become something akin to mortals.

Clever players may wonder why Kala Môr is not a Lawful deity. Now, as Judge, you know. The author strongly encourages you to not answer player questions directly, but allow them to Quest For It to answer their questions within the

game. Enforcing the secrecy of Her clerics may also make Kala Môr's secrecy about Herself seem more acceptable.

Details of Clerics

Disguise Self: Clerics of Kala Môr have the ability to disguise themselves as does a Neutral thief of the same level. This ability includes both physical disguise and enough knowledge of dialect, accent, and body language to both pretend to be another, and to conceal one's true identity.

Secret Signs: Clerics of Kala Môr know secret signs and phrases that they use to identify their allegiance and rank within the temple hierarchy. However, because it is a sin to reveal one's true identity as a cleric of Kala Môr, this ability is only used when in disguise or masked in clerical raiment. Because various secret signs are known at all levels of the hierarchy, while others are known only to a few, a cleric of Kala Môr may attempt a disguise check (DC 10 to 20) to pretend to belong to a different temple rank.

Spells of His God

- Level 1 (Roll 1d10): (1) *Animal summoning*^{1,2}, (2) *Darkness*, (3) *Detect magic*, (4) *Feather fall*¹, (5) *Food of the gods*, (6) *Holy sanctuary*, (7) *Protection from evil*, (8) *Second sight*, (9) *Ward portal*¹, or (10) *Word of command*.
- Level 2 (Roll 1d7): (1) *Banish*, (2) *Binding*, (3) *Curse*, (4) *Divine symbol*, (5) *Levitate*¹, (6) *Neutralize poison or disease*, or (7) *Restore vitality*.
- Level 3 (Roll 1d6): (1) *Bolt from the blue*, (2) *Exorcise*, (3) *Fly*¹, (4) *Remove curse*, (5) *Spiritual weapon*, or (6) *True name*.
- Level 4 (Roll 1d4): (1) *Affliction of the gods*, (2) *Cause earthquake*, (3) *Sanctify/desecrate*, or (4) *Vermin blight*³.
- Level 5 (Roll 1d3): (1) *Righteous fire*, (2) *Weather control*, or (3) *Whirling doom*.

1 Treat these spells as the wizard spells of the same name. The cleric does not suffer corruption or patron taint, but gains disapproval as normal on a failed spell check. The cleric has a -2 penalty to all spell checks on these spells.

2 When this spell is cast successfully, it is always treated as one step lower on the spell chart, to a minimum of 12-13. The animal(s) summoned are always birds of some form.

3 This spell creates swarms of avian creatures instead of vermin. The spell effects are otherwise identical.

Turn Unholy: Clerics of Kala Môr are able to use this ability to Turn birds and part-bird creatures. These creatures are not harmed, but are instead either driven away or (on a result of “K”) controlled by the cleric for a number of rounds equal to her cleric level. They are able to Turn creatures from the Crimson Void, and these are turned as normal (being considered unholy to Kala Môr). This is in addition to Turning creatures as a standard Neutral cleric.

Standard Temple NPCs

Common worshiper: Init +0; Atk makeshift weapon +0 melee (1d3); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 3 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +0; AL N.

Common worshipers are normal men and women who enter the temple to offer sacrifices, petition aid, or simply to pray. To them, the Thing in the Crimson Void is a being whose influence is felt in their daily lives; the source of all their woes. Although they may attack as a mob, real resistance breaks their spirit, and they flee from powerful foes. If ever the Thing escapes the void, they flee shrieking from the temple, certain that the end of the world is nigh. Masquerading as a common worshiper requires no check at all.

Temple guard: Init +2; Atk spear +3 melee (1d8+1); AC 15; HD 1d8+2; hp 6 each; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP +4 bonus to saves vs. mind-affecting; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +4; AL N. Chainmail and spear.

Temple guards are masked, wear chainmail, and are armed with spears. They have been trained to resist mind-affecting magic and illusions, and have a +4 bonus to saving throws against these effects. Having experience with the creatures of the Crimson Void, and knowing the danger of the Thing, they cannot usually be bribed (DC 20) and face any mortal threat without needing the check morale. Successfully masquerading as a temple guard requires a DC 5 Disguise check whenever the ruse may be penetrated.

Aspirant (Fledgling): Init +0; Atk staff +0 melee (1d4); AC 10; HD 1d4; hp 3 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +1; AL N.

Aspirant (High Fledgling): Init +0; Atk staff +0 melee (1d4) or harmful spell (1d8, Ref DC 10 half); AC 10; HD 1d8+3; hp 8 each; MV 30'; SP harmful spell 3/day,

healing touch 1/day; Act 1d20; SV Fort +1, Ref +0, Will +2; AL N.

The aspirant is robed and masked, and is typically armed with a wayfarer's staff. It is impossible to distinguish a fledgling from a high fledgling merely by looking at their raiment, so PCs cannot easily determine who has magical abilities and who does not. A high fledgling can typically cast a harmful spell with an avian manifestation three times each day, at a target up to 30' away, doing 1d8 damage (Ref DC 10 for half). A high fledgling can also touch a character to heal 1d4 damage once each day; the aspirant can use this ability to heal himself if needed.

Aspirants of both degree have pledged themselves to Kala Môr, but require morale checks like any other creature. Pretending by a fledgling is only a DC 5 Disguise check; passing oneself off as a high fledgling is DC 10.

Lesser clergy member: Init +1; Atk dagger +1 melee (1d4) or harmful spell (1d8, Ref DC 10 half); AC 10; HD 2d8+4; hp 13 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP harmful spell 3/day, healing touch 3/day, +4 to saves vs. mind-affecting; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4; AL N.

Full clergy member: Init +1; Atk dagger +1 melee (1d4) or harmful spell (1d12, Ref DC 13 half); AC 10; HD 2d8+4; hp 13 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP harmful spell 3/day, healing touch 3/day, +4 to saves vs. mind-affecting; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4; AL N.

Clergy members can cast harmful spells as can high fledglings (although full clergy members' spells do more damage and have a higher save DC). A lesser clergy member can heal 1d6 damage with a healing touch, and a full clergy member can heal 1d8+1. Their training allows them a bonus to resist illusions and other mind-affecting magic. Passing oneself off as a clergy member is DC 10 for a lesser clergy member, and DC 15 for a full clergy member.

Stray raven (lesser): Init +0; Atk dagger +3 melee (1d4+1) or harmful spell (1d8, Ref DC 10 half); AC 13; HD 3d8; hp 13 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP harmful spell 3/day; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +4; AL N.

Stray raven (greater): Init +1; Atk dagger +5 melee (1d4+1) or harmful spell (1d12, Ref DC 15 half); AC 13; HD 5d8; hp 22 each; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP harmful spell 3/day, healing touch 1/day; SV Fort +3, Ref +2,

Will +6; AL N.

Stray ravens are wandering priests of Kala Môr. The healing touch of a lesser raven heals 1 Hit Die; that of a greater raven heals 1d3 Hit Dice. Not being in regular contact with the Crimson Void, they have no special training to resist mind-influencing effects, and thus may offer a “crack” in the armor of the temple which PCs (or enemies) may exploit. Passing oneself off as a stray raven is a DC 10 task.

Lady Protector Osprey of the Hidden Temple of the Peaks:

Init +2; Atk staff +2 melee (1d4) or spell (see below); AC 12; HD 4d8; hp 9; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP spells, +4 bonus to saves vs. mind-influencing effects; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +5; AL N.

Spells (+6 to spell check): Level 1: *Darkness, feather fall¹, food of the gods, protection from evil, second sight, and ward portal¹*. Level 2: *Banish, curse, divine symbol, and restore vitality*.

1 As the wizard spells of the same name; -2 penalty to all spell checks on these spells.

The Lady Protector is the wife of an ordinary cordwainer in the city or town by which the Hidden Temple is located. She understands all too well the dangers of the Crimson Void, and will do all in her power to contain it, dying if necessary.

Table of Names

The following table is supplied to aid the harried judge in quickly determining names for priests and aspirants found in the temple.

D30	Name	D30	Name
1	Ibis	16	Heron
2	Swallow	17	Crane
3	Cormorant	18	Martin
4	Blackbird	19	Parakeet
5	Blue Jay	20	Pigeon
6	Crow	21	Grosbeak
7	Duck	22	Vulture
8	Goose	23	Stork
9	Swan	24	Warbler
10	Killdeer	25	Weaver
11	Golden Eagle	26	Duck
12	Peregrine	27	Oriole

13	Sparrowhawk	28	Woodpecker
14	Plover	29	Hummingbird
15	Gull	30	Quail

Creatures of the Crimson Void

Although the Dweller cannot escape the Crimson Void, so long as the priests of Kala Môr remain vigilant, it can send creatures into the world beyond. Crimson void wraiths may be encountered within the temple itself on Wraith Nights (see Holy Days on page 4), but the remainder of these creatures may manifest themselves anywhere within 50 miles of the Hidden Temple, as noted in their descriptions. The faithful of Kala Môr know that the goddess keeps these creatures in check; others may believe that they are sent by the witch-cult of the mountains!

So long as the Dweller is contained, no creature of the Crimson Void can travel more than 50 miles from the Hidden Temple. This may allow parties to escape even the most implacable of trackers...although, if they return, they may discover that the creature has been waiting for them all along.

Crimson demon (Type I demon of the Crimson Void):

Init +1; Atk hook +2 melee (1d6+2); AC 17; HD 3d12; MV 30' or swim 20'; Act 2d20; SP hook, demon traits, death throes; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

The crimson demon appears as a bipedal fish-like humanoid, covered with thick heavy scales that exude a clear red slime. Instead of hands, it has two great hooks. On a critical hit, in addition to any other effect, the demon hooks its target, automatically hitting on the next round (roll the attack roll anyway; a fumble or additional critical effect may still occur). When a crimson demon is slain, it disappears, leaving a puddle of translucent red slime behind. This slime can continue to attack for 1d5 rounds before it, too, disappears.

Translucent red slime: Init -4; Atk lash +0 melee (1d3); AC 10; HD 5d6; MV 10' or swim 20'; Act 2d20; SV Fort +6, Ref +2, Will +0; AL C.

Type I demons cannot manifest unless summoned. Scarlet succubi (see below) teach Chaotic magicians in the vicinity of the Hidden Temple the secrets needed to summon crimson demons. In addition, they hide scarlet

amulets (see sidebar) in places where others may discover them as “treasure”. Crimson demons are the least of all the demons of the Crimson Void, used as guardians or soldiers.

Scarlet Amulets

Curiously carved red crystals encased with an unknown red metal (similar to silver in its properties), and often found mounted as a brooch or strung upon a thin red metal chain, a scarlet amulet gives its wearer the ability to summon demons of the Crimson Void in exchange for spellburn. Any Chaotic character wearing the amulet automatically understands how it works. Merely touching the amulet burns a Lawful character for 1d3 damage, and actually wearing it causes 1d7 damage each round.

Characters of any class can spellburn to power the amulet. The amount of spellburn required depends upon who is using the amulet, and what type of demon is desired.

The demon appears immediately, and will do one task for the character (which can take no more than 1 hour per level of the summoner) before departing. A departing demon is transported 1d8 miles in a random direction, but is not returned to the Crimson Void. Once freed of its obligation to service, the demon will work to spread animosity towards the followers of Kala Môr in whatever way it can. These amulets are useless if the bearer is more than 50 miles from the Hidden Temple.

Demon Summoned	Cleric	Wizard	Elf	Others
Type I (crimson demon or vermillion rat)	2	1	1	3
Type II (scarlet bones)	3	2	2	5
Type III (void wolf)	4	3	3	7
Type IV (scarlet succubus)	6	5	4	9
Type V (void stalker)	8	7	5	12

Vermillion Rat (Type I demon of the Crimson Void):
Init +1; Atk bite +4 melee (2d4+2); AC 13; HD 3d12; MV 20' or climb 10' or swim 10'; Act 1d20; SP disease, pustules, demon traits, death throes; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +0; AL C.

A vermillion rat is about three feet long, with six legs and dagger-like incisors. Its deep red body is covered with horrid pustules seeping crimson ichor. Characters making a successful melee attack against the creature with a weapon must make a Reflex save (DC 10) or be sprayed by the ichor. Polearms allow a +1d on the dice chain bonus; unarmed attacks allow no save. Anyone sprayed by the ichor or bit by the vermillion rat must make a Fort save (DC 12) or succumb to a wasting sickness called the crimson death.

The character's skin turns reddish 2d4 hours after contact. After 1d3 days, the character suffers 1 point of Strength and Stamina damage per day for 1d3 days, and then 1d3 points of Strength and Stamina damage per day thereafter, until cured or death results. Pustules appear once the ability damage increases to 1d3, and these pustules can spread the disease. Once the character takes damage, she is allowed a second Fort save (DC 15) when pustules appear, and a third Fort save (DC 20) 1d3 days later. If any of these saves succeeds, the disease ebbs. Pustules take 1d6 hours to disappear, and the reddish coloration takes 1d3 days to fade.

When a vermillion rat is slain, its body collapses into an oily red ichor that, if not sealed away from the air, evaporates in 1d3 x 10 minutes. The ichor also carries the crimson death.

Vermillion rats do prefer not to kill their victims outright, but rather use them to spread the crimson death. The demon will usually flee after 1d3 successful bite attacks.

Scarlet Bones (Type II demon of the Crimson Void):
Init +4; Atk hooked spear +8 melee (1d10+4); AC 18; HD 6d12; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP spells, demon traits, death throes; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +6; AL C.

This demon appears to be an 8-foot-tall skeleton made of red metal and armed with a great hooked red metal spear, with which it can reach targets up to 10 feet away. Normal animals will not come within 30' of the scarlet bones willingly, and become savagely feral if forced

within 10'. The demon can cast detect good and paralysis with a +6 bonus to the spell check.

When a scarlet bones is destroyed, it shatters, metal fragments doing 1d6 damage to all within 30' (Reflex DC 15 for half). The fragments which do not hit creatures fade into crimson smoke with the touch of sunlight; creatures that are struck take 1d6 additional damage each day (Will DC 12 for half) as the fragments worm their way towards their victim's heart. These fragments can be removed by clerical healing (3 HD), or a successful banish, exorcise, or remove curse spell cast for that purpose.

Scarlet bones can occasionally escape the Crimson Void on their own, and are sent to assassinate members of the Hidden Temple, or other friends of Kala Môr (this is part of the reason for Kala Môr's insistence that Her priests hide their identities). PCs that have performed some great service for Kala Môr may have a demon sent to dispatch them!

Summoned scarlet bones who are released into the world, though a scarlet amulet or otherwise, value their freedom from the Crimson Void. They seek some hidden place, preferably far underground, that they can rule.

Void Wolf (Type III demon of the Crimson Void): Init +4; Atk bite +10 melee (1d6+6 plus paralysis plus XP loss); AC 15; HD 8d12; MV 40'; Act 2d20; SP howl, bite causes paralysis and XP loss, spell use, demon traits, death throes; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +10; AL C.

A void wolf stands as high as a man, its coat darker than night, with streaks of red that appear like distant strands of throbbing malevolence within the void. A void wolf's howl causes 1d3 rounds of paralysis to all who hear it (Will DC 10 negates), and its bite causes 1d5 rounds of paralysis (Will DC 15 negates). A character paralyzed by the void wolf's bite loses 1d5 XP each round of paralysis (Fort DC 10 each round negates). This lost XP cannot cause the character to lose a level, but it must be "made up" in order to gain the next level.

A void wolf can cast the following spells (+8 to the spell check): chill touch, darkness, and ray of enfeeblement.

When a void wolf is slain, it implodes, creating a vortex that attempts to suck all creatures within 30' into the Crimson Void. Unattended objects weighing less than

500 lbs. are lost automatically. Each creature within range may roll a DC 10 Strength check to resist the drag – the character who struck the final blow must also succeed in a DC 15 Strength check to retain his weapon. Anything pulled into the Crimson Void is lost...unless the Judge desires to run an adventure where the Void is entered to recover the fallen!

A masterless void wolf seeks out 1d3+1 victims per day until slain. Each week, the number of victims a void wolf requires increases by 1.

Scarlet Succubus (Type IV demon of the Crimson Void): Init +6; Atk flaming whip +12 melee (1d4 plus 1d8 fire); AC 18; HD 10d12; MV 30' or fly 50'; Act 2d20; SP flaming whip, spell use, demon traits, death throes; SV Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +12; AL C.

In her natural form, a scarlet succubus appears as a red-skinned demoness with bat-like wings and cloven hooves. She may also take the form of an alluring humanoid female, but her hair and skin are always scarlet-hued.



A scarlet succubus carries a whip – flames run along its length when it is used, causing an additional 1d8 damage on a successful strike (already included in the stat-block). On a critical hit, in addition to any other effect, the whip wraps itself around the target unless a DC 15 Reflex save succeeds, trapping the target until a DC 15 Strength check can be made (requiring an Action Die for each attempt). Trapped characters suffer fire damage automatically each round.

A scarlet succubus can cast the following spells (+8 to spell check): charm person, scorching ray, and sleep.

When a scarlet succubus is slain, she lets out a piercing wail, and her body collapses into red dust. The being who struck the final blow must succeed in a DC 20 Will save or permanently lose 1d4 hit points, representing a permanent longing for death implanted in his mind. Her whip remains, but has no special powers without the succubus to wield it.

Succubi are demons of temptation, and the scarlet succubus is no different, save that she tempts primarily with knowledge. A scarlet succubus is able to teach mortals the wizard spells demon summoning and planar step, but she attempts to seduce her pupil into using these to the benefit of the Dweller in the Crimson Void. They also attempt to ferret out the identities of the clerics of Kala Môr, who may then be targeted by scarlet bones, other demons, or mortals in the service of the Dweller.

Void Stalker (Type V demon of the Crimson Void):

Init +6; Atk bite +18 melee (1d8+4 plus blood drain) or gore +12 melee (2d8+4) or trample +10 melee (4d8+4); AC 24; HD 16d12; MV 20' or leap 10'; Act 2d20; SP stalk, blood drain, breath weapon, consume, demon traits, death throes; SV Fort +10, Ref +12, Will +12; AL C.

The horrible void stalker looks like a cross between a rhinoceros and a toad, plated with thick black iron, streaked red with rust. Once it has scented the psychic



spoor of its prey, it pursues it ceaselessly, as it requires neither sustenance nor sleep upon the material plane.

A void stalker that bites an opponent may latch on with sharp iron teeth, automatically draining blood from its opponent (1d4 Stamina damage each round; each point heals the void stalker 1d6 hp damage). The victim may escape with a DC 20 Strength check (using an Action Die).

Any victim slain by a void stalker is devoured by the creature over a period of 1d5 rounds, during which the void stalker does nothing else. The body of a devoured creature is lost, even if the void stalker is slain and attempts are made to cut it open.

The void stalker may also breathe cold in a 10' diameter cloud, causing damage equal to its current hit points to all within (Fort DC 22 for half). When slain, it exudes an aura of piercing cold, doing 3d6 damage to all within 30' (Fort DC 20 half) as it is drawn back into the Crimson Void over a period of 1d3 rounds.

A void stalker summoned by a scarlet amulet automatically targets its summoner once it has completed its initial task. If it consumes its summoner, it will then target an associate of the summoner on a 1 in 3 chance. Thereafter, there is a 1 in 5 chance that the next creature it chooses to stalk is an associate of the previous creature – in this way, an entire party of adventurers may be destroyed.

Crimson Void Wraith: Init +2; Atk incorporal touch +2 melee (1d4 cold); AC 10; HD 2d12; MV fly 40'; Act 1d20; SP un-dead traits, immune to non-magical weapons; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +6; AL C.

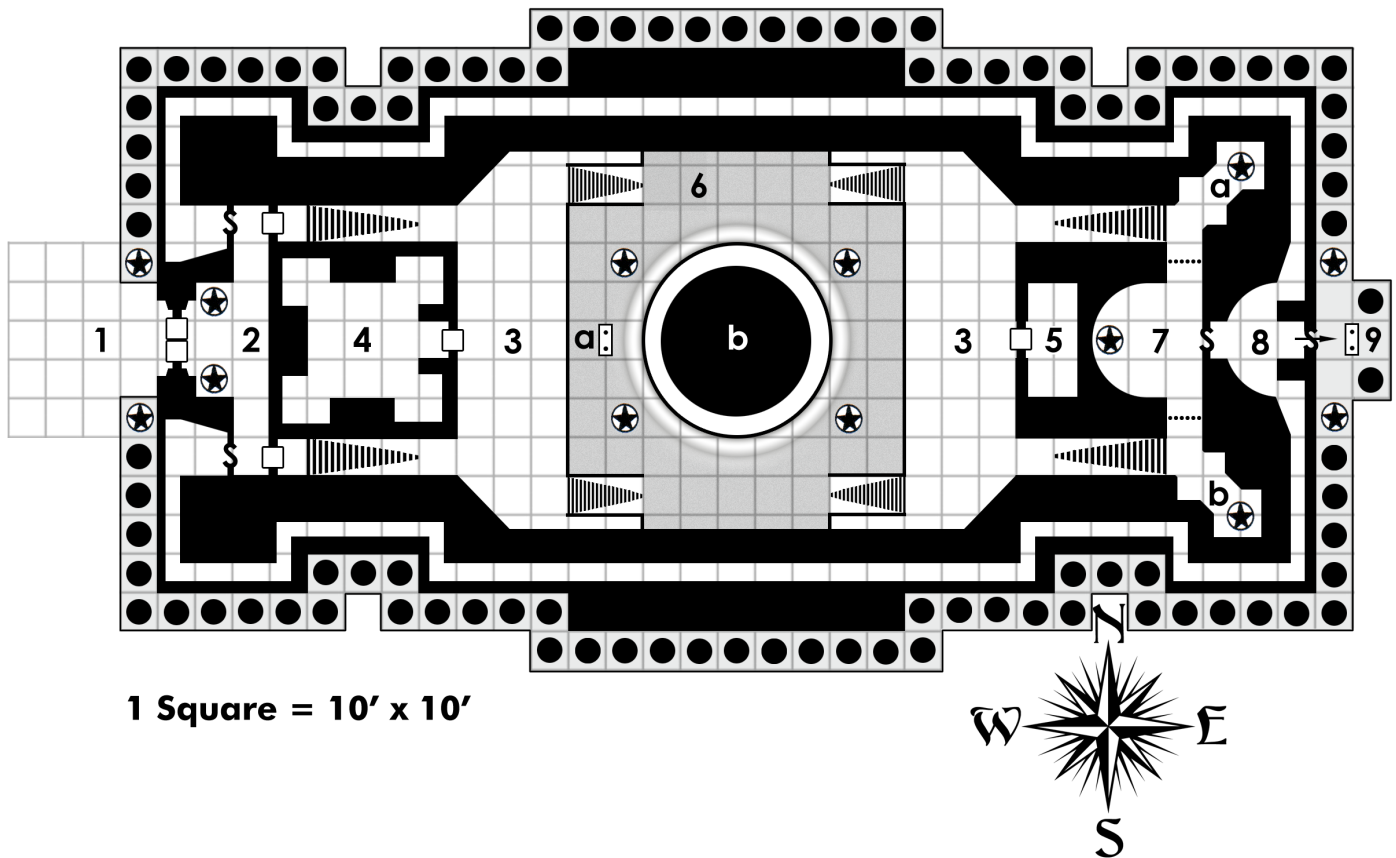
On Wraith Nights, the nights of the spring and autumn equinoxes, crimson wraiths are released from the Void from sunset to sunrise, and roam the Hidden Temple, slaying all they discover. The crimson wraiths are the ghosts of those slain by the creatures of the Crimson Void, and the spirits of those lost to its depths. Fully 2 in 3 are female. They appear as still-living beings, dressed like monks in cowled scarlet robes, but they are non-corporeal and radiate a chilling cold. When slain, or when sunrise occurs following a Wraith Night, they simply fade away.

Whisperer of the Void: Init +4; Atk incorporal claw +4 melee (1d8 cold); AC 14; HD 4d12; MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP oracle, immune to cold and non-magical weapons, cannot be slain; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +12; AL C.

The Whisperer of the Void appears like a goblinoid made of reddish smoke, whose body terminates in eight crab-like legs and whose hands are claws made of freezing vapors. It can speak prophecies and reveal hidden truths – although it doesn't know the secrets of Kala Môr or the identities of Her clerics, so long as they hide them well. It uses this knowledge to create strife and suspicion of the Hidden Temple. It cannot lie, but it can speak many half-truths and veiled truths.

There is only one Whisperer of the Void. It cannot be slain so long as the Crimson Void intersects the material plane. If reduced to 0 hit points, it is drawn back into the Crimson Void, only to reappear 3d30 days later somewhere within 50 miles of the Hidden Temple.





1 Square = 10' x 10'

Encounter Areas

1. Portico: *The mountain trail leads up to a great temple, 150 feet wide, the shallowly slanted roof supported by massive pillars. The sky above the temple is home to thousands of birds, great and small, for the dead are left staked to the roof as a carrion sacrifice. Brazen double doors lead into the temple, each door 5 feet wide and 10 feet high, carved with the images of many birds. On either side of the temple entrance, at the ends of the great pillars, are enormous statues of a hooded woman whose face is concealed behind a bird mask. To the north, the figure wears the face of a huge eagle, and to the south that of a vulture.*

The way into the Hidden Temple is fronted by a wide flat area, upon which 6 temple guards are usually on duty here; this number is doubled on Wraith Nights. During the day, the great doors are usually open and unlocked.

Temple guard: Init +2; Atk spear +3 melee (1d8+1); AC 15; HD 1d8+2; hp 6 each; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP +4 bonus to saves vs. mind-affecting; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +4; AL N. Chainmail and spear. See page 6. The doors pull outward. If locked (Open Locks DC 15),

they require a DC 30 Strength check to force. Up to three characters can contribute to this check.

Examination of the eastern wall discovers niches carved on either side of the doors, allowing one to climb to the roof (DC 5). The roof is set with many hundreds of iron spikes, upon which bodies may be impaled, holding them in place for the gathered flocks. Unauthorized characters travelling this way need to go just over 300 feet to reach Area 9, and can climb down with a DC 10 check. A character can travel at half speed without a check, or at full speed with a DC 5 Reflex save to avoid slipping on the slanted roof. A character who slips (or otherwise falls up here) has a 1 in 5 chance of impaling himself upon a spike (Atk +6, 1d6 damage). Every round spent on the roof has a 1 in 6 chance of attracting a bird swarm, and this chance increases by 1 in 6 per 2 additional characters beyond the first, and 1 in 6 per bird swarm currently attacking.

Bird swarm: Init +5; Atk swarming peck or claws +1 melee (1 plus blindness); AC 11; HD 4d8; hp 16 each; MV fly 50'; Act special; SP attack all targets within 20' x 20' space, half damage from non-area attacks, blindness (DC 5 Reflex save or blinded for 1d4 rounds; DC 5 Fort

save or permanently blinded in one eye); SV Fort +0, Ref +10, Will -2; AL N.

A bird swarm may be of any type of birds the Judge desires. Any creature hit must make a save or be blinded for 1d4 rounds; at the end of this time, another save must be made, or the creature is permanently blinded in one eye.

2. Entry Hall: *Beyond the doors is a dim chamber some 30 feet wide and 20 feet deep. Two tall statues of a hooded woman flank the doorway. In neither statue is any face visible, save two eyes that seem to glimmer in the dim light. There is a passage to the north and south. In the center of the eastern wall, a slot can be seen at about eye height for a human. The slot is about a foot wide and 6 inches high, and seems to slant steeply downward to the east. Common runes above the slot read “donations”.*

Two temple guards are in this area, one at the end of each hallway, except on Wraith Nights.

Temple guard: Init +2; Atk spear +3 melee (1d8+1); AC 15; HD 1d8+2; hp 6 each; MV 25'; Act 1d20; SP +4 bonus to saves vs. mind-affecting; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +4; AL N. Chainmail and spear. See page 6.

The chamber is 20' high, and the statues 15' high. The statues' glimmering eyes are natural – narrow shafts above allow light to shine through the statues' hollow heads and out through their eyes. On dark nights or overcast days, the light is not present, and it can seem to flicker when birds fly overhead.

The secret doors operate on central pivots; opening them requires that the ceiling stones which appear to protrude slightly be depressed, allowing the door to move. The doors can be barred from the western side (1 in 3 chance for each door at any given time) with bronze bars laid there for that purpose. In this event, a DC 20 Strength check is needed to bend the bar and allow the door to move. Only full clergy members are made aware of these doors.

The slot allows donations to be dropped down just over 30' into **Area 4** via a chute.

3. Great Hall of Worship: *The stairs go downward 30 feet, and then enter into a great open space 150 feet across and 100 feet wide. In the center of this space is a sunken*

region, 90 feet across and as wide as the room, with four stairways leading 20 feet downward into it. The central 50 feet of this region is a great circular void surrounded by a lip of scarlet stone. And, although the Void seems to swallow all light, you somehow know that it is the source of the crimson light which illuminates this place. Save where passages or doors exist, the walls and high vaulted ceiling of this vast space are painted with countless birds of all types, their eyes seemingly fixed upon the empty Void.

This is where most public worship is conducted, and rites are performed to contain the Dweller in the Void and the creatures thereof.

4. Priest's Quarters: This door is typically locked (Open Locks DC 5), but a key is held by all lesser clergy members and above.

This chamber is some 30 feet square, and raised to a height of 20 feet, with additional alcoves in each of the corners. Within are comfortable furnishings carved with a bird motif, some marked with the black circle of Kala Môr, shot through with crimson threads. In addition to comfortable sitting chairs and tables, there are a few couches suitable for either sitting or sleeping. The eastern alcoves hold shelves with various books and wooden scroll cases. The western alcoves hold several locked iron boxes. There is a wooden box beneath a slit in the west wall. The slit is about a foot wide by half a foot tall.

This chamber is a resting place for the priests of Kala Môr, and the repository of Her treasures. Donations are sent via the slot from Area 2 into the wooden box – it typically contains 5d12 cp and 3d6–3 sp, with a 25% chance of also containing 2d6 gp from wealthier patrons. These funds are transferred to the iron boxes whenever the full clergy members have the time and inclination.

Only full clergy members and the Lady Protector have keys to the iron boxes (Open Locks DC 15). There are 10 iron boxes in each of the western alcoves. Each contains 30d100 cp, 3d100 sp, and 5d30 gp. There is a 20% chance that any given box will also contain 4d4 gemstones worth 2d20 gp each. If the PCs are attempting to recover a particular item, such as a magic item, there is an equal chance that it is in any given box. The iron boxes are all made of 1-inch-thick metal, and are very hard to break. Note that this is thick enough to foil most attempts at detecting magic. There is a 1 in 6 chance that any box has a poison pin trap (DC 15 to find and

remove; giant wasp venom, 3d6 damage, Fort DC 16 for reduction to 1d6 damage).

The shelves contain mostly religious books and scrolls, although there are philosophical treatises on the planes of existence here, as well as local histories. Some of this material might be of use to a wizard researching *demon summoning*, *planar step*, or similar spells.

The only magical scroll here is an ancient scroll of the following clerical spells: *Animal summoning*, *Ward portal* (x2), and *Word of command*. All of these are cast as a cleric of Kala Môr, using the reader's own spell check. Each spell that is read disappears from the scroll, whether the spell check succeeds or not. This ancient scroll is signed by "Lord Protector Sparrowhawk", and is over 100 years old. Before the text of the spells is written: "Whosoever shall use this scroll, unless he or she be of the Faithful of the Angel of Blood and Darkness, let that one beware. Let that one be clothed in feathers to peck at the Temple roof year after year, until repentant of folly."

Anyone who uses this scroll, unless dedicated to Kala Môr, must roll a DC 16 Will save each time a spell is cast from it. Failure transforms the reader into a bird (1d5) (1) flamingo, (2) chicken, (3) vulture, (4) wren, or (5) wood duck. Transformed characters are allowed a new save annually.

A small wooden box on one of the shelves contains 1d12+2 applications of a thick, greenish-white paste known as *dianis*, as well as a small brush for application. Direct skin contact with *dianis* causes lethargy and compliance – those affected have a –2d penalty on the dice chain to all rolls for a period of 2d6 x 30 minutes and an additional –4 penalty to Will saves. The drugged victim views all things as though they were part of a dream, and the victim merely a dispassionate observer. A Fort save (DC 15) reduces the penalty to –1d, with no additional Will save penalty, and reduces the duration of effect to 2d6 minutes.

When preparing for the Day of Advent, sacrifices are kept drugged in this chamber until needed at the altar.

5. Vestry: *The chamber beyond this door is 30 feet wide and 20 feet deep. Robes hang from the walls, and there are various types of bird masks hanging from pegs or on shelves.*

There are many robes here for aspirants and fledglings

aspirants, as well as 2d4 for lesser clergy and 1d4-1 for full clergy members. 1d6 wooden discs painted with the crimson-streaked Void that Kala Môr uses as Her holy symbol can also be found here.

6. The Crimson Void: *Going down the stairs towards the Void makes the hair on your neck stand on end. Here you can see what was invisible from above – the Void is not empty, but is inhabited by writhing streaks of crimson light. You cannot tell what they are, save that they are somehow alive. And, once you touch the floor of the lower section, you can also feel the regard of the Thing in the Void. You can feel that it is aware of you; that it seeks to know your measure; to exploit you or to destroy you. Four 15-foot-high statues face the Void, each of a robed woman with bird's wings. Her face cannot be seen. To the west is a blood-stained altar of red-veined black stone, polished like glass.*

a. Altar: This is the public altar of Kala Môr, and where the sacrifices on the Day of the Advent (the winter solstice) are consecrated before being thrown into the Void. The blood of the previous year's sacrifice remains upon the altar until the evening before the next winter solstice, when the altar is scrubbed clean. Part of the consecration involves blood-letting, and the Lady Protector drinks the blood of each sacrifice from a ritual cup (otherwise kept in **Area 7**).

Kala Môr pays close attention to her altar here. If a creature aligned to Law or Chaos touches it, that creature receives a shock doing 1d6 damage. If touched by a Lawful or Chaotic cleric, or a Neutral cleric of an unallied god, the cleric takes 2d6 damage. If touched by the cleric of an opposed deity, the cleric takes 3d6 damage and must succeed in a Will save (DC equal to damage done) or die.

b. The Crimson Void: Anything that enters the Crimson Void is held, and cannot be withdrawn. Once within the Void, it is invisible from outside, although a hand (for instance) the Void can still be felt. The Crimson Void is a gateway to another plane of existence, and anything which begins the journey must pass fully into the other plane before it can be withdrawn. In most cases, this means that the thing is forever lost, but magic or careful planning may allow PCs to enter the Void, retrieve a character or object, and leave again.

Lawful characters approaching the Void feel physically ill when within 10', and must succeed in a DC 10 Will save to come closer. Chaotic characters feel strangely attracted, and those who come within 5' must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or leap into the Void! Such a being may be encountered again as a **crimson void wraith** (see page 11).

The Crimson Void itself is an abyss of scarlet and inky darkness, in which there is no up or down, and where beings fall forever unless they should chance to encounter "islands" in the Void. These "islands" have their own gravity, and may have creatures dwelling around, upon, or within them. The Judge is encouraged to develop these areas as she desires!

If the cleric of a deity not allied with Kala Môr manages to cast an exorcise spell with a spell check of 36+ on the Crimson Void, the Void will close, and all within (including the Dweller) will be cut off from this plane forever. Kala Môr will lose much of Her power, becoming the rough equivalent of a 10th level cleric with an 18 Personality, who need not worship another to empower Her spells. Rather than suffer disapproval, a mortal Kala Môr loses the power to cast any spell with a natural "1" on the spell check result, for a period of 1 full week. All spells are otherwise cast as a cleric of Kala Môr.

Kala Môr (Mortal): Init +3; Atk staff +8 melee (1d4+1); AC 13; HD 10d8+10; hp 67; MV 30'; Act 2d20; SP spells; SV Fort +7, Ref +6, Will +11; AL N. Staff.

Spells: Level 1: *Animal summoning, darkness, detect magic, feather fall, food of the gods, holy sanctuary, protection from evil, second sight, ward portal, and word of command.*

Level 2: *banish, binding, curse, divine symbol, levitate, neutralize poison or disease, and restore vitality.*

Level 3: *Bolt from the blue, exorcise, fly, remove curse, spiritual weapon, and true name.*

Level 4: *Affliction of the gods, cause earthquake, sanctify/desecrate, and vermin blight.*

Level 5: *Righteous fire, weather control, and whirlwind doom.*

7. Upper Shrine: Access to this area is restricted by portcullises sectioning off the northern and southern passages. These portcullises can be lifted, or their bars bent, with a DC 25 Strength check. Otherwise, the portcullises can be raised from **Areas 7a** and **7b**, below. The secret door can be opened simply by pushing from Area 8; it can be opened within **Area 7** as described below.

This area is a rounded chamber, with a 20 foot tall statue of a robed woman to the west, clearly an image of the goddess Kala Môr, depicted with the actual head of a mountain vulture beneath her hood. The statue radiates a sense of watchfulness and power. The walls curve up to a half-domed ceiling 25 feet overhead. Walls, floor, and ceiling are adorned with a pattern of ebon and scarlet tiles. Laid upon the statue's hands are a golden cup and a bronze dagger.

The statue is a conduit to the might of Kala Môr. Clerics can cast spells in this chamber at +1d on the dice chain (+2d if they are clerics of Kala Môr; -1d if they are clerics of opposed deities). Destruction or desecration of this statue would weaken the power of the goddess on this plane – all of Her clerics suffer a -2d on the dice chain penalty to all spell checks until the conduit is somehow restored. In addition, roll 1d7 and add the Luck modifiers of all involved: (1 or less) the Dweller is immediately released from the Crimson Void, slaying all within the Temple, (2-3) the Dweller is released in 3d30 days, (4-5) Kala Môr and the Dweller are locked in combat for 3d30 days, during which time no cleric of Kala Môr can cast spells, but the Dweller is prevented from leaving the Crimson Void, (6-7) no additional effect, or (8 or higher) the Crimson Void is closed forever, and neither the Thing in the Void nor Kala Môr is no reachable on this plane thereafter.

The cup and dagger are ritual items used for the annual sacrifices on the Day of Advent. The cup may be sold for 50 gp, but woe to the seller if his theft is traced! The dagger has no intrinsic value. The Temple would pay 300 gp to obtain both if they were stolen.

Examination of the tiles on the east wall can discover a tile out of place (red where it should be black). This can be pressed, causing the secret door to swing silently into this room on oiled hinges.

a. North Statue: This 15-foot-tall statue depicts Kala Môr as a robed woman wearing the mask of a kestrel. Two small levers are set into the

east wall behind the statue. The northern lever operates a winch mechanism, opening or closing the portcullis to the north of **Area 7**; it is down when the portcullis is down. The southern lever floods the small chamber with a poisonous gas (Fort DC 14 or be paralyzed for 1d3 minutes and take 1d3 Agility damage; 1d3 temporary Agility damage on a successful save). Temporary Agility damage heals in 1d5 minutes; normal Agility damage heals normally. The southern lever is normally in the “up” position.

b. South Statue: This statue appears identical to that in **Area 7a**, but the lever functions are reversed. The north lever (normally “up”) releases poison gas, while the south lever (“down” when the portcullis is down) operates the southern portcullis.

8. Secret Way: The secret passages around the periphery of the Temple are not only narrow, but they rise to a height of just under 20’, accentuating their tightness. From **Area 8**, the secret doors to **Areas 7** and **9** may be opened by pushing upon them. The secret door to **Area 9** is one-way only; once it has been allowed to shut, the Temple cannot be accessed without breaking the door down (Strength DC 30). A character could attempt to climb the wall (DC 10) and ascend the roof; see **Area 1** for details.

The secret doors to **Area 2** can be barred from this side (1 in 3 chance for each door at any given time) with bronze bars laid there for that purpose. These doors can easily be opened from this side by pulling on a bronze ring set near the brackets for barring the door.

9. Hidden Altar of Kala Môr: *As you push open the secret door, you can see a small porch beyond, hanging over a sheer drop. The porch has a ceiling, 20 feet high, held aloft by two great pillars. Between the pillars, and a little closer to the door, is a black stone altar shot through with crimson streaks. The altar radiates power, which you can sense even from where you stand.*

To the north and south, out of easy sight, are two 15-foot-tall statues of Kala Môr, Her face hidden within Her hood, facing each other with the palms of their hands upraised. If a character steps out of the secret door without first speaking the name of the goddess aloud, each statue shoots an electric arc (Atk +8, 3d6 damage).

This altar allows anyone in contact with it to establish direct contact with the divine power of Kala Môr. The character must succeed in a DC 12 spell check when coming in contact with the altar. A character that fails this check takes 1d3 damage per point by which the check was failed, as the power of the goddess attempts to consume him. If the spell check succeeds, the character may cast spells with a +2d bonus on the dice chain (max 1d30) so long as he maintains contact with the altar. If the character is a cleric of Kala Môr, or has Kala Môr as a patron, there is no penalty for doing so. Otherwise, the character must make a DC 15 Will save or permanently lose 1 point of Luck for each spell cast.

Who is in the Temple?

The Hidden Temple is a dynamic location that can be visited many times over the course of a campaign. The number of clergy and worshippers in the Temple changes frequently. As a general guide, the Judge can use the following:

Service on the Day of Advent: Lady Protector (100%), Greater Stray Ravens (20% chance of 1d3), Lesser Stray Ravens (40% chance of 2d6), Full Clergy Members (2d4), Lesser Clergy Members (3d3), High Fledglings (3d6), Fledglings (4d6), Temple Guards (3d12), Common Worshipers (4d12).

Otherwise on the Day of Advent: Lady Protector (90%), Greater Stray Ravens (15% chance of 1d3), Lesser Stray Ravens (30% chance of 2d6), Full Clergy Members (2d3), Lesser Clergy Members (2d3), High Fledglings (3d6), Fledglings (4d6), Temple Guards (3d12), Common Worshippers (3d12).

Other Day, Service Occurring: Lady Protector (60%), Greater Stray Ravens (10% chance of 1d3), Lesser Stray Ravens (20% chance of 1d7), Full Clergy Members (1d4+2), Lesser Clergy Members (2d3), High Fledglings (2d6), Fledglings (3d6), Temple Guards (2d12), Common Worshippers (3d12).

Other Day, No Service Occurring: Lady Protector (30%), Greater Stray Ravens (5% chance of 1), Lesser Stray Ravens (15% chance of 1d3), Full Clergy Members (1d4), Lesser Clergy Members (1d5+1), High Fledglings (1d6), Fledglings (2d6), Temple Guards (1d12), Common Worshippers (3d5).

Wraith Night: 5d6 Crimson Void Wraiths.

These numbers do not include the Temple Guards noted in the descriptions of Area 1 and Area 2.

Squeezing it Dry

This Campaign Element offers a template for expanding deity information, as well as a temple that would be at home in many works of Appendix N fiction. The Temple acts as an interactive location that changes with each visit, as the number of inhabitants changes.

You will get the most use out of this product if you allow PC clerics of Kala Môr in your campaign. Even if you do not, the Hidden Temple can be used as either friend or foe, as needed. Moreover, the creatures from the Crimson Void allow a wide range of challenges for characters of different levels.

The Crimson Void offers all of these challenges, and more:

Robbery: Whether the PCs are looking for the treasury, to steal the ceremonial cup and knife (for ransom or for its inherent value), or require a dose of diaini for their own purposes, the Judge is supplied with enough information about the Hidden Temple to determine whether or not their plans succeed.

Pressed Into Service: The Lady Protector may require some escaped denizen from the Crimson Void to be hunted down. If someone has learned her identity, she may wish to have that person assassinated. PC wizards and elves who accept spellburn from the Thing in the Void may discover that they have been pressed into service as well – to assassinate some Stray Raven, for instance, or to expose the identity of a cleric of the Temple.

Spell Knowledge: The clerics of Kala Môr share certain spells with wizards, and they might have information required by a PC among their historical scrolls. The final piece of knowledge required to learn a spell might require contemplating the Crimson Void itself – what would the Temple demand in exchange for such a privilege?

A Void Temptation: A PC wizard is looking for a place to empower some spell, and a scarlet succubus tempts her to violate the hidden altar of Kala Môr (**Area 9**).

Null and Void: A cursed magic item can only be “destroyed” by sending it into the Crimson Void. On a Wraith Night. Or perhaps that doesn’t really destroy it at all, but allows it to be used by the Dweller in the Crimson Void.

Thwarting a Sacrifice: Someone close to the PCs is kidnapped before the Day of Advent, and they fear their friend is a sacrifice. Complications may include the PCs requiring spell support from the Hidden Temple, or even having a Stray Raven secretly amid the group. The PC’s friend may not even be scheduled as a sacrifice to the Crimson Void – it is entirely possible that agents of the Thing in the Void have captured her in order to encourage the PCs to compromise the rite.

The Thing Escapes!: Going up against a god can be the capstone adventure of any adventurer’s career. In *Dungeon Crawl Classics*, it might be a level 0 funnel.



Appendix A: Kala Môr as a Patron

The ceremony to bond a creature to Kala Môr must be performed within the Hidden Temple of the Peaks. When casting *invoke patron*, the caster may select any result equal to the spell check or lower.

Invoke Patron check results:

- 12-13 Kala Môr's concentration is taken up with the Dweller in the Crimson Void, which seeks to escape its bonds. The goddess grants one of the following, as desired by the caster: (1) the ability to **Turn the unholy**, once, as a cleric of Kala Môr of the same level as the caster, (2) the restoration of one spell that has been lost for the day, or (3) a surge of healing that restores all but 1d4 hit points damage taken by the caster (but does not affect Ability score damage or other forms of injury).
- 14-17 Kala Môr heals the caster, or one creature selected by the caster, of all non-permanent injuries and conditions such as paralysis, poison, broken bones, or disease. If the caster selects another creature, that creature must be within 10' per caster level, or the benefit is lost.
- 18-19 The goddess sends one bird swarm per caster level, to aid the caster in a single battle. **Bird swarm:** Init +5; Atk swarming peck or claws +1 melee (1 plus blindness); AC 11; HD 4d8; hp 16 each; MV fly 50'; Act special; SP attack all targets within 20' x 20' space, half damage from non-area attacks, blindness (DC 5 Reflex save or blinded for 1d4 rounds; DC 5 Fort save or permanently blinded in one eye); SV Fort +0, Ref +10, Will -2; AL N.
- 20-23 The goddess sends one bird swarm per caster level, as 18-19, above, but each swarm can fly carrying a single human-sized creature, and will bear the caster and his allies up to 10 minutes per caster level. Each swarm can be sent into battle, but a swarm that fights disperses as soon as the battle is over. These are swarms of larger birds, and each swarm has HD 5d8, 22 hp, and deals 1d6 damage on a successful attack.
- 24-27 An enormous bird appears, snatching up the caster and bearing her directly to wherever she desires, within 100 miles of her current location. If she has companions, up to 2d6 lesser birds appear to carry them as well (but no more than 1 per companion). These birds have AC 20. The enormous bird has 50 hp, and the lesser birds have 35 hp. They do not fight. If reduced to 0 hp, they simply disappear in a whirl of feathers, leaving anyone they are bearing to fall. However, anyone being carried can attempt to grab two feathers, one in each hand, if they drop whatever they are holding and succeed in a DC 10 Reflex save. Success means that the character wafts gently to the ground without being hurt (except, possibly, by whatever slew the birds they were riding!).
- 28-29 The goddess grants the caster the power to transform 3d6 creatures visible to the caster and within 300', into birds. The caster selects who is transformed. Enemies are transformed into starlings (AC 17, hit points equal to their HD or level, MV 5' or fly 80', no effective attacks), while allies are transformed into eagles (AC 15, hit points do not change, MV 5' or fly 60', can attack with beak or claw at normal bonus for 1d3 rounds, can see twice as far in daylight). Each transformation lasts 1 Turn per caster level. The caster can reserve unused transformations for 1 Turn per caster level. A DC 25 Will save can be made by the unwilling to resist transformation.
- 30-31 A cloud of small birds flocks around the caster to a distance of 500', confusing enemies and interfering with their attacks without inconveniencing the caster and her allies in any way. Enemies have their line of sight reduced to 20' and make all attacks at a -1d shift on the dice chain for both attack roll and damage. Enemies with more than one Action Die automatically lose 1 Action Die due to confusion. The caster and her allies gain a +4 bonus to AC. The cloud remains in place until the current battle is over. Area affect attacks clear these effects for 1d3 rounds in their zone of attack.
- 32+ The caster obtains a moment of direct contact with Kala Môr. All wounds, ability damage (including permanent damage), diseases, and poisons are healed. All lost spells are restored. The caster gains 3d10 bonus hit points; these cannot be restored once lost, and are always taken first. In addition, the caster may ask the goddess three questions, and the judge will answer them from the perspective of Kala Môr. Kala Môr has a wealth of knowledge – she knows all that is seen by Her birds – but She may have Her own agenda.

Patron Taint: Kala Môr

The caster who ties himself to Kala Môr discovers himself becoming more secretive and birdlike as time goes on. In addition, he is required to go on quests to further the agenda of his patron. The Thing in the Crimson Void sends creatures to destroy him. Moreover, the Dweller attempts to undo the connection with Kala Môr. When Patron taint is indicated, roll 1d5 and consult the following table. Once all taints from results “1-4” have been gained at all levels, there is no need to roll any further. However, for each roll of “5”, roll 1d4 and remove the most recent patron taint of that level, if any. This represents the Dweller in the Crimson Void’s attempt to sever the connection between caster and patron.

Roll	Result
1	Avian: Roll 1d4: (1) Hollow Bones: The caster’s bones become hollow, reducing her weight by ¼. In addition, Stamina is reduced by 1, and bones are broken from falling damage on a natural roll of 5 or 6. (2) Feathers: The caster’s hair is replaced by feathers of roughly the same length and degree of coverage. Thus, forearms may be covered with a soft down, while heads (and possibly beards) become longer feathers. (3) Bird Speech: The caster can now understand the speech of birds, and respond in kind. This doesn’t increase the bird’s intelligence, however. (4) Wings: Large feathered wings grow from the caster’s back, granting a flying speed of 40’ (50’ if the caster also has hollow bones). Ignore duplicate rolls. If the caster has each of these patron taint levels, further rolls of this taint are ignored.
2	Secretive: Each time this patron taint is rolled, the caster becomes loathe to reveal details about himself. When it is first rolled, he will not reveal his true name. When it is rolled a second time, he seeks to conceal any details about his past. When rolled a third time, he seeks to conceal his plans for the future. Note that the caster can invent false names, false history, and make misleading statements that lead others to do what he wishes them to do without penalty. The caster loses 1 point of Luck whenever he violates his secrecy, as determined by the judge. A caster with all levels of secrecy ignores future rolls of this taint.
3	Against the Crimson Void: Kala Môr communicates a task the caster must complete, targeting a servant of the Dweller in the Crimson Void. The first time this is rolled, the servant has HD equal to the caster’s level minus 1 and is within 1d3 miles. The second time, the servant has HD equal to the caster’s level, and allies equal to the caster’s level +1d3 in HD, and is within 2d5 miles. The third time, the servant has HD equal to the caster’s level +1d3, and allies equal to twice the caster’s level in HD, and is up to 3d7 miles away. Once all quests have been completed, ignore future rolls of this taint. It is possible to have to “redo” one or more quests as a result of the Dweller severing connections between the caster and Kala Môr.
4	Crimson Trial: The Dweller in the Crimson Void sends a creature to destroy the caster. The creature appears 1d4-1 miles away from the caster in a random direction. If the result is greater than “0”, the creature must then begin to move towards the caster, stalking her from afar. A result of “0” means the creature shows up 2d12 feet from the caster. The creatures faced by the caster are, in order of taint results: Vermillion Rat, Crimson Demon, Scarlet Bones, and Void Wolf. Once all creatures have been faced, ignore further rolls on this taint, unless the effects are “rolled back” by the Dweller.

Patron Spells: Kala Môr

Kala Môr grants access to three cleric spells, as follows. These spells are cast at a -2 to the spell check, and a natural “1” results in patron taint + (1d6, modified by Luck): (1 or less) major corruption, (2-3) minor corruption, (4+) generic misfire.

Level 1: *Second sight*

Level 2: *Protection from evil*

Level 3: *Restore vitality*

Spellburn: Kala Môr

When a caster bonded to Kala Môr uses spellburn, roll 1d4 and consult the table below, or build off the suggestions to create an event unique to your home campaign.

Roll	Spellburn Result
1	Feed the Birds: A swarm of small birds whirls around the caster. The effects of the hundreds or thousands of pecks is represented by Strength, Stamina, or Agility loss.
2	Kala Môr draws on the caster's energy to prevent a creature from escaping the Crimson Void, expressed as Strength, Agility, or Stamina loss. Feedback grants an extra +1d5 to the spell check result, and the manifestation of the spell is altered to reflect Void energy – being transformed to (1d3): (1) night black, (2) crimson, or (3) night black shot through with crimson.
3	The Thing in the Crimson Void intercepts the request. The caster may have 5 points of spellburn for free, but one patron taint is “rolled back” as though the caster had gotten a result of “5” on a patron taint roll. If the caster spends more than 5 points, roll a new spellburn result off the table for the Thing in the Crimson Void (page xx).
4	The raw energy of the goddess infuses the caster, powering her spell by causing the normal Strength, Stamina, or Agility loss, but also healing up to 1 hp damage for each point of spellburn utilized.

Appendix B: The Thing in the Crimson Void as a Demi-Patron

The *Dungeon Crawl Classics core rulebook* describes patrons on pages 320-321. Not all supernatural beings willing to lend the PCs aid need be as powerful as this, though. Demi-patrons, first described in *CE 5: Silent Nightfall*, are supernatural beings able to lend some assistance to the beings they sponsor, but are less powerful than full patrons. A demi-patron may, or may not, require a patron bond spell in order to enter into a relationship with a caster. Likewise, it may, or may not, cause patron taint. For other examples of demi-patrons, see *CE 5: Silent Nightfall*.

The Dweller conceals its true nature. Its goals are to escape the Crimson Void and to oppose Kala Môr. Those casters who take the Thing in the Crimson Void as a patron may invoke the Dweller within 100 miles of the Crimson Void. Any may call upon the Dweller for spellburn within 50 miles of the Crimson Void. The Thing in the Crimson Void offers no spells.

Invoke Patron check results:

12-13	The Thing in the Crimson Void is not able to help at this time.
14-17	A lash of Crimson Void energy appears in the caster's hand. This lash can reach targets up to 20' away. A successful attack does 2d6 damage and drops the target to the bottom of the initiative count for the rest of the combat unless the target succeeds in a DC 15 Fort save. The lash remains in existence for 2d6 + Caster Level rounds.
18-19	Suffused with dark energy, the caster can make all foes within 30' suffer 1d5 damage, but he suffers the same damage himself. This ability uses an Action Die, and can be used three times. If not used by midnight, unused dark energy is lost.
20-23	The Thing in the Crimson Void sends a Type I demon to aid the caster. Roll 1d5: (1-3) vermillion rat or (4-5) crimson demon. It remains in service for 13 hours, or until slain.
24-27	The Thing in the Crimson Void sends one or more demons to aid the caster. Roll 1d7: (1-3) 1d3 vermillion rats, (4-5) 1d2 crimson demons, or (6-7) a scarlet bones. The demons remain in service for 24 hours, or until slain.

- 28-29 A demon is sent to aid the caster. Roll 1d5: (1-3) Void wolf, or (4-5) scarlet succubus. The demon serves for a number of days equal to the caster level of its summoner, and is then freed upon the material plane.
- 30-31 As 28-29, above, but the demon summoned is a Void stalker. Further, when released, it will turn upon the caster unless the caster succeeds in a Luck check.
- 32+ The Whisperer of the Void is summoned. It will aid in one battle, perform one task, or answer 1d3 + Caster Level questions, as the caster desires, before being drawn back into the Crimson Void. Roll 1d30 for every full day a task requires; if the result is equal to or less than the number of days the Whisperer has spent on the task, it will seek to pervert its instructions and return to the Void.

Patron Taint: The Thing in the Crimson Void

A caster may gain patron taint from the Dweller in two ways. First, a caster who has used *patron bond* to forge a link with the Thing in the Crimson Void is subject to normal patron taint rules. Second, any caster who calls upon the Thing in the Crimson Void may become subject to patron taint (see the spellburn table, below). When patron taint is indicated, roll 1d6 and consult the following table. When all taints have been gained at all levels, there is no reason to roll further.

Roll	Result
1	Crimson Taint: The first time this is rolled, the character's hair turns red. The second time this is rolled, the character's skin takes on a reddish tinge and his hair turns bright crimson. The third time this is rolled, the character's skin turns crimson. Ignore further rolls of this taint.
2	Void Taint: This taint can affect the character three times, affecting (roll 1d3): (1) eyes, (2) blood, or (3) body. When eyes are affected, the character's eyes become completely black, as though they were one giant pupil, and the character gains the ability to see in complete darkness up to 60'. When the blood is affected, the character's blood becomes a thick black fluid. The character takes half damage from any blood-draining attack (and most creatures will break off such an attack once this blood is sampled), and no damage from any form of continued bleeding. If the body is affected, the character becomes a hollow shell with only a void within. Magical healing no longer aids the character. The void is revealed when the character opens her mouth, or is wounded. Once all three effects have occurred, ignore further rolls of this taint.
3	Blood Requirement: The caster now has a requirement to cast spells. When this is first rolled, the character must consume some small portion of fresh blood each time a spell is cast. When this taint is rolled for the second time, the caster must provide the blood (1 hp damage) himself. When this taint is rolled a third time, the caster must consume 1d3 hp of his own blood each time a spell is cast. Ignore further rolls of this taint.
4	Demonic Servitors: The Dweller in the Void rewards the caster with up to three demonic servitors. Each time this is rolled, roll 1d7, modified by the caster's Luck. (0-3) vermillion rat, (4-5) crimson demon, (6-7) scarlet bones, (8+) scarlet succubus. These demonic servitors obey orders, and are loyal to the caster (so long as it doesn't conflict with their stronger loyalty to the Thing in the Crimson Void). After the caster has gained a third demonic servitor, ignore future rolls of this taint. If a demonic servitor is slain, the caster may make a Luck check. If it succeeds, roll 1d3 for each HD the servitor had; a replacement arrives in that many days.
5	Assassination: The Dweller has identified a servant of Kala Môr and demands that the caster assassinate her. The first time this is rolled, the servant is 1d3 levels or Hit Dice below the caster. The second time, 1d3 levels or Hit Dice above, and the third time 2d5 levels or Hit Dice above the caster. The caster is unable to heal wounds naturally until the target is slain. After three servants are slain, ignore future rolls of this taint.
6	Weakening the Bonds: The caster weakens the bonds of the Thing in the Crimson Void ever so slightly. This can happen three times; ignore rolls of this taint beyond that. Each time this is rolled, the caster gains a +1 bonus to rolls on the spellburn chart for the Thing in the Crimson Void.

Spellburn: The Thing in the Crimson Void

Bonded casters can call upon the Dweller for spellburn within 100 miles of the Crimson Void. Any caster can call upon the Dweller within 50 miles. Roll 1d7 and consult the table below, or build off the suggestions to create an event unique to your home campaign. The table goes up to 10 because of the “Weakening the Bonds” patron taint, above.

Roll	Spellburn Result
1	Contact! The Thing in the Crimson Void immediately takes possession of the caster’s body, and is able to control it for 1d4 turns per point of spellburn granted. All spellburn damage is immediately healed. The spell check is not completed (unless the Thing choses to complete it). The Thing follows its own agenda, as determined by the judge. It has access to the character’s abilities, including spells, but casts each spell with an additional bonus equal to the spellburn used by the caster, and it gains a +20 bonus to Will saves.
2	Void energy courses through the caster’s body, manifesting as Strength, Agility, or Stamina damage, but the caster is ill-prepared to handle the force. The spell check only gains a +1 bonus per 2 full points of spellburn used. Worse, the caster must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or pass out for 1d5 rounds.
3	Void energy courses through the caster’s body, manifesting as Strength, Agility, or Stamina damage. The caster must succeed in a DC 10 Will save or suffer a –1d penalty to his Action Dice for 1d3 rounds.
4	The Dweller grants the spellburn, which can be taken from any ability score except Luck. In addition, the caster must make a roll for patron taint.
5	The Thing in the Crimson Void grants up to 5 points of spellburn at no cost. However, the caster must sacrifice one or more Lawful creatures to the Thing before the next new moon, or suffer twice the normal spellburn damage. The creatures’ total Hit Dice/levels must equal or exceed the spellburn granted.
6	Void energy courses through the caster’s body, manifesting as Strength, Agility, or Stamina damage.
7	Void energy courses through the caster’s body, manifesting as Strength, Agility, or Stamina damage. The caster may attempt a DC 10 Will save to take only half normal spellburn damage, but if the save result is a natural “1”, she instead takes 1d3 additional points of ability damage that gains no bonus to the spell check.
8	Contact! Immediately following the spell check, the Thing in the Crimson Void gains control of the caster’s body for a number of rounds equal to the spellburn granted. The Thing can use this time to further Its own agenda in any way the judge deems fit. However, half the caster’s spellburn from this spell is healed by Dweller at the end of this period.
9	Dark power fuels the caster’s spell. Each point of spellburn grants a +2, rather than a +1, bonus to the spell check.
10	The Dweller grants up to 10 points of spellburn without attribute loss. However, for every three points of spellburn (or portion thereof), the caster gains one roll on the patron taint table. If the caster already has all patron taints at all levels, these 10 points of spellburn are free of cost.

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