

Shedu

What does the artist do? He draws connections. He ties the invisible threads between things. He dives into history, be it the history of mankind, the geological history of the Earth or the beginning and end of the manifest cosmos.

- Anselm Kiefer

History is Philosophy teaching by example. - Thucydides

Quote: Alexander? Have you been talking to the Abgal? Alexander was a Greek loving sycophant who got lucky. Now Xerxes, you know, the fourth master of the Achaemenid Empire...? He had the goods.

In the Bible's Old Testament, the Prophet Ezekiel wrote about a fantastic being made up of 4 creatures, combining the best aspects of a human being, a lion, an eagle, and a bull. Later, in the early Christian period, these four creatures become the basis for the four Gospels, which were ascribed to each of these components. When it was depicted in art, this image was known as the Tetramorph. The Shedû don't actually claim credit for this, nor do they claim allegiance to the Judeo-Christian Deity. But it does make them smile.

The Shedû were royal guardians, guides to the Persian Deities and served as the voice of the Deities on the Earth. They were accorded power akin to little Gods in and of themselves, (this also gave them power over earthquakes, a power that few of them ever explore). This all-male Kith functioned as overseers of Temples, and served as ambassadors to the Gods. In many ways they are serve the same function as the Apsasu, but in a far different way. They are the Yang to the Apsasu's Yin, and not only allow for secrets to be discovered, but they also actively encourage it.

While greatly capable of combat (which they enjoy as a refreshing change of pace) they don't seek it out, instead enjoying games of the mind such as riddles and trivia contests. This, along with the guarding of sacred spaces, is a trait shared with their Apsasu sister Apkallu. In fact, they share so many traits, that some think that they may be the same Khânevâde (Kith). This rumor brings laughter to the Shedû, and disgust to the Apsasu.

In modern times, the Shedû serve as ambassadors to all the World's Changelings. They maintain an entourage of all the Apkallu and ensure that the voices of the Desert are heard just as strongly as the more ubiquitous Celtic Fae of the Fertile Crescent. They also manage the day-to-day activities of individual Apkallu. They try to ensure that each of the Khânevâde serves their motley in a way that makes them

happy. Abgal are teachers, Kusirikku are guides, Apsasu security, Shahmaran entertainers, Humawa and Girtablullû? Well, there's always a place for them somewhere. And of course, the Shedû, who serve as humble leaders and generals of this disparate parcel of Persian dreams.



Appearance: In both Qashra (Mien) the Shedû are BIG, even in Qashra Qayd (Mortal Mien) They are big in body, usually well over two meters. They are big in voice, with a deep bellowing timber, which makes it nigh impossible for them to whisper. They are especially big in spirit, with an infectious smile that shows a mouth of full of shining white teeth.

In Qashra Mok (Fae mien) their bigness only grows. They possess the body of an upright lion, but as large as an ox, with the arms and hands that of a muscular man. Their faces are also that of Man. The face is obviously Middle Eastern complete with sharp refined features, and olive-dark-skin.

Despite the Humanity of their faces, the smiling eyes are amber gold, with the vertical slits of a Feline. The hair is a lion's mane all deep red and shiny gold. They often embellishes it with braids (the Shedû are rather proud of their regal tresses).

Some few also sport a pair of Gold or ivory Ox horns (that inflict Str +2 damage). All rock a set of a vultures' wings, all shining brass and gold. While they disdain clothing, they will sport business suits amongst those who require them, and a light caftan when dealing with other Fae (who may be shocked at seeing a sky-clad Shedû).

Lifestyle: The Shedû are only too happy to take the reins of the Desert Dream machine. They see themselves as protectors of the realm (despite what the Apsasu say) and will gladly show the world what that means. Whether through combat (which they relish) lectures (they enjoy that too) or simply a Tete-a-tete over cocktails. Sometimes this makes the Shedû come across as a little bit haughty or affected. Not so, they are a genuinely caring, humble, and sincere Khânevâde.

Bachche Shedu are sometimes mistakenly called obnoxious. They are always present, up in everybody's business, and asking a million questions. OF course once they know the answers, they will tell everybody they can find, whether the others already know or not.

Pedar Shedu are quick to make their mark on the world. They strive to make friends with everybody they meet and will volunteer to serve in roles that are best left to others. Their reasoning for this is simply to explore their own boundaries, and to eventually surpass them.

Pedarbozorg Shedu are ornery and happy old men, with long white manes, and a wisdom born of truly living. All of the Pedarbozorg Shedu have a secret organization, in which they report to the oldest living Pedarbozorg Shedu. This aging Shedu dictates all the goings on and happenings of the Desert Dreaming.

Revelry: Shedu regain Mok (Glamour) whenever engaged in mutual enlightening diatribe with mortals. New ideas, new concepts, or even new likes or dislikes that the mortal was previously unaware of.... These are what refuel the Shedu's magics.

Unleashing: Cantrips cast by the Shedu are accompanied by the smell of hot sands, and exotic spices. There is a soft warm breeze that plays across the scene, and a subtle shifting of colors into something not unlike a desert sunset.

Affinity: Actor

Birthrights;

Gift of the Beautiful Sentry (*Hadiat Jamal Alharis*): A Shedu cannot be diverted from protecting his own. He gains a +2 Willpower to any roll used to resist distraction or misdirection, an additional + 2 dots to strength, and + 1 to intelligence at Character creation to assist him in maintaining his role. In addition, the Shedu are true beaus, and relish in it. They gain +1 to Appearance.

Flight (*Tayaran*): Shedu are creatures of the hot winds and dry desert air and sport great vulture wings that allow them to soar with the Siroccos. Shedu can fly at 10 x their dexterity rating, in yards, per round.

Frailties:

Sworn to Guard (*Yuqasim Ealaa Alhimaya*): If an Apsasu doesn't have a family, temple, or even a person to safe-guard, then they are at +2 difficulty on all their Willpower rolls, until they find something. If they lose that something, then they are at +2 difficulty on all rolls until they find it again. If something is ever lost fully, they are at +3 difficulty to all rolls until they can either seek restitution or find other ways to make it right again.



Riddle (*'Ahjia*): For some reason, probably a geas imparted long ago and forgotten by all (well probably not to the Shedu) the Shedu is subject to riddle contests. Anyone can challenge the Shedu to one of these conflicts. If the Shedu wins, then he is free to deal with the challenger as He pleases with no fear of retaliation. This usually involves another contest to make the loser feel better. However, if the target wins, then the Shedu is bound to the winner, and must now guard him. This is a source of both consternation and joy. They are pleased to go on such

a quest, but they may have to leave something behind unguarded. (Luckily, each Shedu can count on one another - and their stuff won't go unguarded for very long).

Earthquakes (*Alzalzil*): While it doesn't happen very often, the Shedu has links to the Earth that are beyond his control. If for any reason, a Shedu is damaged to the point of being incapacitated (or loses his Fae self because of excessive Qayd [Banaity]), then the Shedu must roll his willpower difficulty 10. IF the roll fails, then everything around him rumbles with the full weight of his Yazata-given ties to the Dreaming.

The damage done to everything around him is his permanent Mok score x 10 die of damage, out to a kilometer around his person. Buildings will crumble, and the shockwaves will harm his allies.

If the roll botches, then that same damage is now 20 x dice worth of damage in Kilometers around his person.

Mr. Shimron gives you a shit-eating grin, and explicates on why the Apkallu are simply the best

Abgal: Our historians, our scholars and our friends. Our world is richer because of them.

Apsasu: Heh, such nimble and snarky minxes. Glad they're on our side. They're not? Of course they are.

Girtablullû: Well, sometimes a person might need to be hurt, and who are you gonna call?

Humawa: We all need enemies; otherwise we'd fight amongst ourselves.

Kusarikku: Strong, Smart, and almost as sexy as we are. The best the Desert has to offer.

Shahmaran: I prefer the Abgal's version.