

SKHANDA MARA མུང་པོ་འཇམ་མེད་འཇམ་མེད་

“The years passed like the steps of a staircase leading lower and lower. I did not walk any more in the sun or hear the songs of larks like crystal fountains playing against the sky. No hand enfolded mine in the warm clasp of love. My thoughts were again solitary, disintegrate, disharmonious – the music gone. I lived alone in a few pleasant rooms, feeling my life run out aimlessly with the tedious hours: the life of an old maid ran out of my fingertips.”

Asylum Piece— Anna Kavan

Quote: Don't knock it. Maintaining a quiet household is tough work, and well worth the tedium. It can be a glorious existence if you let it. It's a shame that the rest of the world is too busy to appreciate it.

“This is all of Reality” - The Mara who is the aggregate factors of experience.

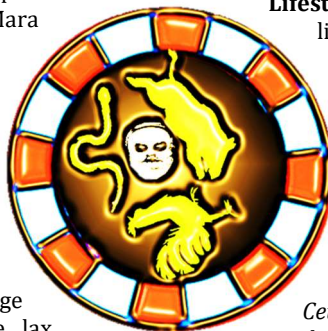
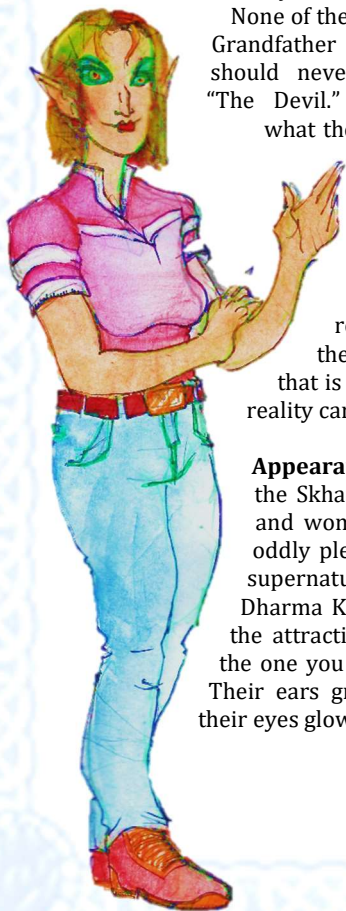
When the Buddha Siddhartha sat under the tree, himself not yet quite the Buddha, Mara the Distractor -Godfather of Demons, offered temptations and distractions to shake him from the path. Though the Buddha saw through them all, they still exist in and of themselves. Four Tribes arose – the Mara Zo-dor, named for the Grandfather God. Each of the four Tribes oversees, and IS, a principle distraction that prevents ascension in mortals, Fae, or other.

The Skhanda Mara are the children of the perceived entirety of experience, the obstacles of self-image, the illusion of permanence of self, the aggregate factors of life. In *layman's terms, the illusion that this is all there is*. These Mara are the Lords of the limited reality, but this should never be misconstrued as Banality or Dukha. It is important to realize that this life matters, and that which makes a person a person should be treasured – so the Skhanda Mara will remind you time and time again.

None of the Mara are evil, and the Grandfather God Mara himself should never be mistaken for “The Devil.” The Skhanda see what they do as a service to the World, maintaining the status quo, and presenting a challenge that strengthens the lax.

For all the bad publicity their Tribes receive, the Skhanda understand that they are an integral part of reality – one that is all too easy to forget – and forgetting reality can be dangerous.

Appearance: In Nirmana Kya (Mortal Mien), the Skhanda Mara are unassuming local men and women. They are pleasant enough, with oddly pleasing features, though nothing quite supernatural, and have soft soothing voices. In Dharma Kya (Fae Mien) their features take on the attractiveness of the boy or girl next door, the one you had a crush on – you know the one. Their ears grow longer both up and down, and their eyes glow with a warmth that is hard to forget.



Daughters of Mara - AUNTIE LUST

The first temptations sent by Mara to harass the Budding Buddha (not a pun) were his three daughters. There are many interpretations of these beauties– but for the sake of simplicity the 4 Mara Zo-dor call their beloved *Aunties Lust, Regret, & Forgetfulness*. Each of the Aunts has a particular Zo-dor that they shower their Favor upon – though anybody that chooses them gains the favor-

- ❖ Aunt Lust favors the Skhanda, as it easy to get caught up in the tedium of it all, if there is something that feels good in between.
- ❖ Those that choose Aunt Lust gain a free dot in any one Physical Attribute the Mara wishes – all the better to maintain virility. She costs 2 Background Points at Character Creation and is akin to a Totem.
- ❖ Aunt Lust requires that her favorites get a kiss from every pretty face (at least an appearance of 4)– a way to seal the deal, as it were. Even from their enemies.

Lifestyle: All Mara survive in the in-between places, living hidden amongst the mortals and unseen by the Werma (Seelie) Zo-dor. They rarely interact with others at all excepting other Mara (Unseelie)– of their own families or not. They have their Favorite Mortals, of course, who receive much of their attention. Ultimately, however, there is little to distract them. It is their purview to divert, not to be diverted themselves...

Cetana Skhanda Mara are the best little helpers any household could ask for. They plunge themselves into simple and mindless chores with a happy zeal unparalleled in other Childers. Some find it creepy...

Chonyil Skhanda Mara could be thought of as boring by those who don't know what to look for, the skill at which they dance through the day-to-day humdrum of existence should be banal – but to them it is an Art unto itself.

Nyinmo Skhanda Mara are veritable gurus of the inconsequential. They hold dominion over “Life-hacks,” and guide their mortal constituents into a reality worth fighting for, a *really real one*.

Glamour Ways: Skhanda Mara regain Sog from those who put full Faith in the self and focus on the self to the exclusion of all else. Health-Nuts, outspoken Atheists, and busy Soccer-Moms

are the usual clientele, but so too are those tired souls caught up in the tediousness of it all.

Unleashing: Phowa cast by the Skhanda Mara are accompanied by the monotonous day to day existence, and a heavy-hearted feeling that such existence is important. If the Skhanda isn't careful, this can turn into Dukha against their wishes...

Affinity: Prop

Birthrights:

Attractive: Each of the Mara have a particular flavor of beauty that endears them to their mortal populace. At Character Creation, each of them gains a +2 to Appearance for Free. In addition, Skhanda Mara gain a +1 to Empathy and Law for free and can never botch any such rolls.

Frailties:

Dark Energy: What the Mara Tribes are, they do. Sometimes, however, they do it too well. When casting Phowa, they must be extra careful that the Dark Energy of their Unleashings doesn't overtake those present. Any extra 10's on any Art roll (not including the first one) creates an Aura of misery. All mortals

present (and sometimes others as well – be it Fae or otherwise) must roll their willpower difficulty 8. If they fail the roll, then they are subject to the worst aspects of the Mara – for the Skhanda, this means a temporary point of Dukha for every extra 10 – such afflicted cannot refuel the Mara's Sog rating until they heal from it. Any Mara present are immune...

Chimi "Karen" Gyurme, washing her mini-van, exchanges her opinions for a little kiss on the cheek.

Btsan: So much pride and anger, it's a wonder that they aren't with us.

Deva Putra: Godhood? Eternity? Oh my. That does sound like a long time.

Gyalpos: Half the time they talk too much. Half the time they aren't worth looking at it. I wish I could mix and match.

Klesha: Anger? Rage? Despair? I'd rather not. But I do send a nice card every New Year.

Mrtya: Eventually, I'm sure. Until then, I want to get the laundry folded and put away nicely.

Yetis: Abominable Snow-Men? Why that is a clever conceit, but it's all a fabrication, dear. There's no such thing as monsters of that sort.