

The Super-Soldier Serum

The name is, of course, highly derivative of a classic comic book concept. So is the idea of the serum itself, which suggests that someone in the military bureaucracy of the time either had a sense of humor, or else no creativity whatsoever. Or possibly both; while odd to contemplate, there's no reason why a person might not demonstrate both traits.

Triple-S (as it is called informally) is not a substance to be ingested casually. It only 'works' on 5 Force humans, and when it does work it only works *once*. When first ingested, the person rolls against their lowest Characteristic, plus whatever Essence he or she currently holds. Failure means instant, irrevocable death (the victim typically explodes). A success, however, results in the dramatic improvement of the target, in one of four ways, depending on the subject's particular configuration of Forces:

1 Corporeal, 2 Ethereal, 2 Celestial (Codename: *Cap*):
The subject immediately gains 2 additional Corporeal Forces and 1 Celestial (minimum Strength and Will of 6). He also acquires Toughness/2, Charisma/1, and both Fighting/1 and Dodge/1 (or adds 1 point each to both

skills, which *can* put total skill above 6).

2 Corporeal, 1 Ethereal, 2 Celestial (Codename: *Xavier*):
The subject immediately gains 2 additional Ethereal Forces and 1 Celestial (minimum Intelligence and Perception of 6). He also acquires Ethereal Connection, Lucid Dreaming/1, and Ethereal Tongues/1.

2 Corporeal, 2 Ethereal, 1 Celestial (Codename: *Bats*):
The subject immediately gains 3 Celestial Forces (minimum Will 8). He also acquires the Blessed advantage and Charisma/1.

1/1/3 Forces, any configuration (Codename: *Whoopi*):
The subject immediately gains 1 Force in each realm (minimum Characteristics of 4). He also gains Sensitive, Spirit Harbor, and Supernatural Charm/2.

Also, a successful use of Triple-S will make the subject Symphonically Aware. The subject may also (but does not have to) take an appropriate Discord/3, which may be used to buy Songs (all usual restrictions apply).

While early batches of Triple-S required regular booster shots to keep it functioning, the modern version of the

serum only requires one shot a year. Failure to take the booster results in the loss of one's powers (and 1d6 Body hits, after any bonuses from higher Strength and Toughness go away), which will return once the booster shot is given. There are no other side-effects from Triple-S.

The secret of Triple-S's creation and distribution is the possession of a remarkably good government conspiracy, and every celestial in the know is quite keen to find out why Eli is behind it. At least, it is assumed that Eli is behind this, given that the situation is fraught with Superior-level ineffability and it seems to fit the Archangel of Creation's style. At any rate, the conspiracy uses the stuff to make heroes for Uncle Sam (not the ethereal spirit by that name, mind you); they aren't exactly aware of the War, so they think that they're creating essentially low-grade superheroes, who they then proceed to train within an inch of their lives, then send off more or less unsupervised to go fight crime and injustice.

The conspiracy gets surprisingly few renegades: the subjects are usually grateful for the boost in abilities, enjoy reasonably good funding and a light hand, and will suffer horrible seizures if they defect or run away permanently. The Host has infiltrated the conspiracy, of course, but the

Jeanites assigned to the facility that makes Triple-S have barely gotten past the head-scratching stage when it comes to figuring out how the stuff is made, or even how it works. The Horde would like to do the same thing, or perhaps just burn down the facility and kill everyone inside of it; they have been notably bad at doing either.

A human successfully treated with Triple-S would make for a decent addition to a party of PCs; the relative lack of Forces would be mitigated by the lack of dissonance conditions, and general ability to operate without worrying overmuch about disturbance. To create a Triple-S character, generate a regular 5 Force human, pick one of the packages, add Discord if desired (to buy Songs) and begin play. Forces will probably not advance past 9 (GM's call), but other rewards are possible.

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