



LPJ9972



DEVIL'S WORKSHOP

TEMPLATE: COMIC FORCE INFUSED

The chosen agents of ancient alien races, mythological gods, or nigh-omnipotent cosmic entities; mighty champions gone wrong who -literally, in some cases- sacrificed their souls to obtain still greater powers; mortal heroes transformed by contact with irresistible, unearthly energies that should have utterly annihilated them. All of these have been touched by cosmic forces, their already super-human abilities augmented still further by energies beyond human understanding. Some such individuals may have been driven to wrest control of such titanic forces because of desperate needs or burning obsessions. Others seem to have been selected by fate, seemingly at random, to receive abilities that set them apart even from their superhuman peers. Regardless, all have emerged from their encounter with cosmic forces as something...more. Even those who began as demigods, immortals, or extra-dimensional sorcerers have evolved past their former states.

***Note:** The power source for the template's abilities is listed as Cosmic; this is used as a catch all for any and all forces that are beyond the ken of human understanding.*

BECOMING COSMIC FORCE INFUSED

Becoming cosmically-enhanced usually requires a character to perform noble-or heinous-deed on a grand scale, a scale sufficient to alter the destiny of worlds or attract the presence of incredibly powerful personages. A time-traveling hero who prevented the timeline from being perverted by a mad demigod is selected by the Temporal Lords, over-seers of the timeline, to serve as their regent, guarding the modern era from any further such attempts. Conversely, a celestial warrior, sent to Earth from one of the higher planes, might rebel, deciding her masters are not

doing enough to battle evil in the material world. After acquiring some dire mystic artifact and performing an obscene ritual, she drains the energies she needs away from her original plane, transforming it into a wasteland.

Alternately, a character might become imparted with Cosmic Forces by surviving exposure to cataclysmic events-cosmic ray storms, a partial collapse of the space-time continuum, a clash between the armies of Heaven and Hell-that should have meant certain death.

Usually, the character was willing to die, braving these deadly forces in an attempt to save others or prevent some terrible tragedy. The universe chooses to reward the character's efforts, granting power instead of oblivion.

Those touched by Cosmic Forces now bear both greater powers and heavier burdens. A character so imbued may use the bestowed energies to augment any previously existing powers. Cosmic energy now sustains the character's body, replacing many of the basic biological needs. The range of the character's senses expands to accommodate a cosmic perspective. The character assumes an unearthly demeanor, becoming more impressive, even frightening. In addition, entirely new abilities may be called upon, though these are always consistent with the character's basic nature:

For example, a speedster might find she can suddenly cause generate shockwaves or share her speed with others with but a touch, while a psychic could suddenly discover that he can now use his telekinesis to fly and create force fields, but neither would gain the ability to hurl fireballs or teleport from place to place.

At the same time, the primal forces of the universe are often too overwhelming for any mortal-or even immortal-to bear. The character risks becoming a mere puppet, serving as a vessel for the power contained within his frame.



PL ADJUSTMENT: 0

Feats: Immunities (*choose any four*), Detect Cosmic Forces, Startle.

Powers: Boost +5 [*Source: Variable; Extra: All Attributes (all powers) Flaw: Obvious; Cost: 2 pp; Total 10pp*], Combat Sense +3 [*Source: -; Cost: 1 pp; Total 3 pp*], Super-Charisma +5 [*Source: -; Extra: Intimidating Presence; Flaws: Limited (No bonus to Cha skill rolls or checks, no bonus to Loyalty score) Cost: 5 pp*], Variable Effect +10 [*Source: -; Extra: Expanded Powers (3 pp/rank) ; Flaw: Obvious; Cost: 2 pp; Total 10 pp*],

Weaknesses: Overconfident, Quirk (*Compulsion*), Transformation, Unlucky.

WEAKNESSES

Quirk (power with a purpose): As the cliché goes, with great power comes great responsibility. In almost all cases, some higher purpose was actually being served when the character was granted access to cosmic might. Perhaps an individual was driven to seize cosmic power in an effort to avert or undo some tragic event. The power may have been granted because was deemed worthy of one day facing a menace of even greater power. Perhaps the power is itself a living thing, using the character's body as a host to better understand the lives of mortals. Whatever the case, the character is compelled to use his powers for a particular purpose when the opportunity presents itself. Some possibilities include: Either protecting or destroying all mystical artifacts on Earth, altering history so that some terrible event never occurred, or banishing certain superhuman beings (*heroes, villains, or otherwise*) from the character's home dimension, to ensure that some dreadful possible future will never come to pass. The GM should determine the exact nature of this weakness. The character's player may spend a Hero point to ignore the effects of this weakness for one

encounter, but the compulsion to act will always return.

Overconfident: Those touched by cosmic forces understandably tend to become overly impressed with their own abilities-and to underestimate those who have been similarly enhanced. Even if only on an unconscious level, the character comes to disregard the possibility of being deceived or harmed by "lesser" beings. The character suffers penalties identical to those imposed by the Naïve weakness: a -5 penalty to Sense Motive skill rolls and to checks made to avoid being surprised in combat.

Transformation (alternate persona): Cosmic forces are extraordinarily difficult for even the strongest-willed to control; a character may well end up as a slave to the cosmic energies rather than a master of them. Whenever the character pushes himself to the brink, or has been rendered vulnerable in some way, the cosmic forces well up and threaten to seize control. If this happens, the character assumes a new persona, an unearthly persona. This new persona may be coldly logical, megalomaniacal, or unrelentingly fierce and passionate. The new persona views ordinary humans (*and most super-powered humans as well*) as beneath consideration; it is indifferent to their well-being at best, contemptuously cruel at worst. It will pursue its' own agenda, usually actively seeking to fulfill it's purpose (see above), regardless of any consequences. A character afflicted with the Cosmic Vampire template (*see below*) will feed ruthlessly, preferably on intelligent beings.

The transformation could be triggered by any number of events. Some possibilities include: Whenever the character uses extra effort to increase power rank or gain a power extra or stunt, whenever the character suffers 2 or more lethal hits, or whenever the character is subjected to mind control (*immediately allows a new saving throw at +5 to shrug off such control.*) The character can resist the transformation by succeeding at a DC 15 Will save, but must continue to save every round the triggering condition persists. The character suffers a cumula-

tive -1 penalty to the saving throw each round. The change lasts for 24 hours.

Unlucky: No one is ever truly prepared to wield cosmic forces-not a human, a superhuman, or even a demigod can make such forces perform as commanded without fail. At least once per game session, the character's cosmic powers will go awry in some way; they may fail him at a critical moment, he might suddenly find that he cannot restrain from lashing out at full power, or they may manifest themselves while he is in his secret identity. The character may spend a Hero Point to prevent a particular incident from occurring, but this only postpones the problem. Eventually such an event will occur, regardless of the character's actions.

LEAVING THE TEMPLATE

Often, the effects of the cosmic forces vanish once the purpose for which they were granted (*see above*) has been served, either because the character has fulfilled his mission, or has found some alternate solution to the problem the cosmic powers were granted to deal with. The character then loses all benefits and drawbacks of the template.

Alternately, the character may seek out a way to purge the cosmic forces, or others may be forced to do so because the character has become an out-of-control menace. The GM must determine if any means exist to do so. Finding such should entail several game sessions of adventuring, and might involve petitioning ultra-powerful beings, performing a difficult mystical ritual, or retrieving advanced alien technology.

CUSTOMIZATION

connected to the godhead:

Sometimes, cosmically enhanced individuals are able to call upon some unknown source of wisdom. They can now answer questions and solve problems that

were utterly beyond their previous intellectual abilities. Their minds also become more resistant to unwanted intrusion, as their spirits, as well as their bodies, have been fortified. The character gains the Indomitable Will feat and the following powers: Comprehend +2 [*Source: Cosmic; Flaw: Obvious; Cost: 1 pp; Total: 1 pp*], Super-Wisdom +3 [*Source: Cosmic; Extra: +1 rank of Super Intelligence; Flaw: Obvious; Cost: 3 pp; Total: 7 pp*]. Increase the PL adjustment to +1. **Optional:** If the Gamemaster wishes to balance out the PL, assign the character the Cosmic Perspective weakness, described in the following.

WEAKNESS

Cosmic Perspective: Cosmic awareness is not always a boon; being aware of universal concepts and events sometimes makes the events going on around oneself look boring and unimportant. The character must make a roll each round before he can act. On a result of 1-5 on a d20, the character becomes apathetic and loses interest in all around him. He can do nothing that round, though he may defend normally if attacked. This is identical to the Quirk (*malfunction*) weakness, save that the character can maintain any defensive powers he had previously activated.

cosmic vampire:

The power granted comes with a price; the cosmic energies stoke a burning hunger, a hunger that may only be satisfied by feeding either on the life essence or the mental energy of living beings. Most heroes afflicted with this condition will find the situation abhorrent, but any attempts to refrain from "feeding" when necessary provoke Will saving throws to avoid transforming into the alternate persona, as described above under the Transformation weakness. The character gains the power Drain +5 (*Source: Cosmic; Extra: all physical attributes or all mental attributes;*

Flaw: Limited: May only be used when "feeding" is necessary, and can drain no more than 20 total ranks.) *Cost: 2 pp; Total: 10 pp*) and the Susceptible (*hunger*) weakness.

WEAKNESS

Susceptible (*hunger*): The character can remain active for periods of up to one hour per point of Constitution bonus, or up to two hours, whichever is greater, before needing to feed. After this, he must replenish his energies by absorbing 10 ranks of physical (*Str, Dex, Con*) or mental (*Int, Wis, Cha*) attributes from a living victim or victims. If he fails to do so, he begins to suffer the effects of the Susceptible weakness.

unbridled power:

The very nature of the template makes it appropriate for GMs who wish to tinker with a character's power level, or introduce a mix of power levels within a group of heroes. A GM who believes he and the character's player can handle the situation should feel free to adjust the template's abilities to result in an overall PL adjustment of +1 to +3. Thereafter, the player must devote all future power points earned by the character to "paying off" any power levels acquired in this fashion. If the character loses the template, the GM should allow the player to redistribute the power points.

PL +1: Add +5 ranks of the Variable Effects power, +2 ranks of Amazing Save (*Damage, Fortitude, Will*), and two more Immunities. All previously described Extras and Flaws apply.

PL +2: Add +5 ranks of Boost and +5 ranks of Super-Charisma.

PL +3: Add four more Immunities, +3 ranks of Combat Sense, and +3 ranks of Super-Senses.

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