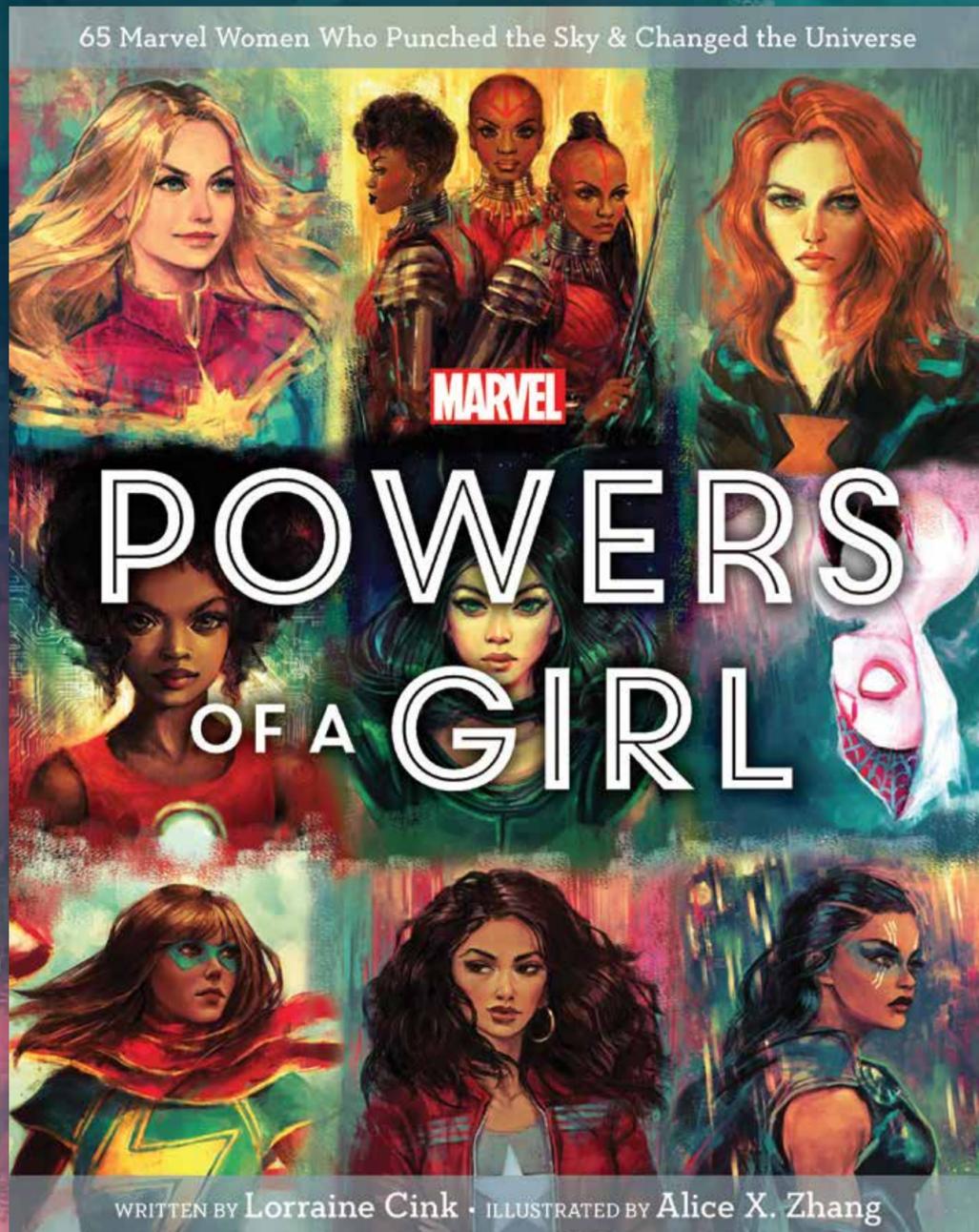


GIRLPOWER

IN *MARVEL POWERS OF A GIRL*, AUTHOR (AND SUPER FAN) LORRAINE CINK DELVES INTO THE INCREDIBLE WORLD OF MARVEL'S TRULY FANTASTIC FEMALES.

By Courtney Potter



Brilliance, in the face of insurmountable odds. Bravery, when confronted by awe-inspiring danger. And, often, the ability to kick some *serious* butt.

For generations, the women of the Marvel Universe have used their powers, and their personalities, to thwart all manner of villains... and teach us a little bit about ourselves in the process. Sure, they may be Super Heroes—adept at everything from photon blasts and super-speed to biochemistry and computer hacking—but they're all exceptional in their relatability. A unique, diverse, fully realized roster of women who, again and again, find strength in both perfection *and* fragility. It's no wonder they've captured the hearts and minds of fans around the globe.

One such admirer is Lorraine Cink, the host and writer of Marvel.com's *The Marvel Minute* and *Earth's Mightiest Show*. Using her in-depth knowledge of all things Marvel, Cink's written *Marvel Powers of a Girl: 65 Marvel Women Who Punched the Sky & Changed the Universe*, a brand-new book filled with the inspirational lessons only these marvelous mademoiselles can provide. Her quirky and clever observations about each character—how they became and how they stay so very super—are accompanied by one-of-a-kind artwork by Alice X. Zhang. It's the perfect all-ages tome for Marvel devotees and newbies alike.

Cink's love of Super Heroes started early. "Like many little ones, I was very drawn to Spider-Man—pun intended," Cink tells *Disney twenty-three*. "He has these large, inviting eyes and those bangin' primary colors that are appealing to kids on a subconscious level—mix in those motor-mouthed comedic chops, and I was hooked!" So you can imagine her excitement when the actress/writer/comedian officially joined the Marvel family in 2014. In addition to hosting for Marvel.com, Cink's also co-authored several other Marvel-related volumes—including *Ultimate Marvel* and *Marvel Absolutely Everything You Need to Know*. *Marvel Powers of a Girl*, however, was particularly special: "[Folks] from Disney reached out to me about my interest in writing a 'Young Adult' book about female Marvel Super Heroes," Cink explains. "[And we all] agreed that this book could be a lot more than rehashing Super Hero history; it could also be delightful and funny and teach some empowering lessons."

That marriage of humor, heart, and heroism is one of *Powers of a Girl's* most exceptional—and memorable—features, and what makes it different from Cink's previous projects. "Besides being a book featuring only female characters, its voice is much more my own," she says. "This isn't just an encyclopedic tome of deep-cut knowledge, though there are plenty of things to learn. There's my own weird sense of humor; life lessons; fun facts [about each character]; and slices of life. Otherwise, how else would you [find out] Captain Marvel's nickname in the Air Force was 'Cheeseburger'?" She chuckles—add-

ing, "People need these hard facts!" And in terms of pure comedy, there's one particularly whimsical detail: first-person commentary from Gwenpool sprinkled in several spots throughout the book. "Writing as Gwenpool was hands down my absolute favorite part," Cink admits. "She is known for breaking the fourth wall, so as soon as we discussed putting her in the book, I knew that I wanted to 'let her loose' to play."

Accompanying every character in the book are stunning illustrations created exclusively for the project by artist Alice X. Zhang. "I wanted all of [these] different bodies, sizes, backgrounds, et cetera to be represented accurately," Cink says. "We were so lucky to bring Alice on board because the women she draws aren't just exquisitely rendered, they are also full of emotion and life... It's been a dream come true seeing Alice's work take shape and getting to know her."

Can Cink herself choose a fave female from the book? "Why would you do this to me?!" she declares, laughing. "OK, it is a fair question... I have to say, I have a very special spot in my heart for Squirrel Girl. She even gave us the name of our book. She has all the powers of a squirrel and all the powers of a girl. And her girl powers are always how she saves the day—with heart, empathy, and a solid punchline."

"*Marvel Powers of a Girl* is really great for anyone in the family," considers Cink. "Little ones will love the art, teens will get empowering lessons, and even adult fans will find surprising and unexpected tidbits." Ultimately, she hopes all readers—especially young women—embrace the book's fundamental message: "Heroes are not defined by their physical strength, or their imperviousness to harm," she concludes. "People—and some aliens—become heroes by choosing to do what is right when *everything* is on the line." 🦊

Marvel Powers of a Girl debuts digitally and in stores on February 5.

