

Doreen Green makes you feel She's a fun co-ed with a heart so real. As Squirrel Girl, 'long side Tippy Toe, They're a-fightin' and a-bitin any given foe! A-blazing power! That's Squirrel Girl! Amazing armor! That's ... wait a minute. When the Marvel universe is your playground, you might as well have fun inside it. And "fun" is certainly the approach that writer Ryan North and artist Erica Henderson are going for here. After all, it's pretty much why you're coming to a comic titled "Squirrel Girl", isn't it? Simply, the plot is that Doreen Green/Squirrel Girl has to balance her newfound college life while preparing for the potentially earth-shattering arrival of (Spoilers, in case you missed last issue's cliffhanging blurb) Galactus. There's certainly humor in the pairing of these opponents, spawned, no doubt, by the long-standing internet message board joke how Squirrel Girl is literally "unbeatable" against any given villain. (You did get the joke in the title for this series, right?) And it lends a kind of suspense as we are simply along for the ride in order to see just how exactly this encounter will go down. At least, one obstacle is explained-- how Squirrel Girl can get into space in the first place. She spends the majority of this issue in a heist-plot to get some Iron Man armor for herself, harkening back to her very first appearance in an Iron Man backup story. It's too bad that the "Superior Iron Man," his current persona, isn't present to play off of Squirrel Girl's, er, "chipper" personality. That would have been fun to see, but might have sidetracked a plot already content to go at its own pace. (That gets me thinking, though, about one thing that could really enhance the book, and that's the addition of a dour personality to play off of. Sure, Doreen has Nancy her roommate, but she can't follow SG into her superhero exploits. I'm getting a pure "Spongebob Squarepants" vibe from Squirrel Girl, which is a good thing, for sure, but without a Squidward to bear the brunt of a decidedly squirrely Pollyana, it seems unbalanced.) There's more than a few plot elements that really have to be taken for granted. First and foremost is the fact that parkland squirrels can sense universal threats emanating from the far reaches of the solar system, not to mention that Tippy Toe actually knows Galactus by name, in order to effortlessly specify which universal threat the squirrels have been chattering about. Also, the animal can identify Galactus' "Star Sphere" trading card. Which means there's a trading card with the Star Sphere. Right? Apparently, Galactus is well-known enough by the general populace that he deserves at LEAST two trading cards-- I assume there's one for himself as well as his Star Sphere-- and also means that Deadpool has a marketable presence to endorse the cards as well? Oh, and that Tippy Toe can read English? And that Squirrel Girl isn't fangirl enough to have these cards memorized already? (That last one is the most unbelievable, I think.) This is the kind of eye-rollingly cheesy stuff that might turn off some comicbook readers, but others really embrace. They form a kind of Silver Age tone that reminds me of a recent comicbook blog this week that showcased Superman's one-time power to project an independent, miniature version of himself from his hands. It's not too far removed from that to accept a modular Iron Man armor that can recognize Squirrel Girl's login and form an armor around her AND her tail. And also armor for Tippy Toe-- consisting of nary but a helmet and a glove. That last one had me laugh out loud, a perfectly presented and understated visual gag. Hey, the soap opera-y stuff is written just as broadly, overwrought. I mean, OF COURSE the cute boy Doreen ran into would be hoping to speak to her again, and the running footer contains a break in the fourth wall, a kind of self-aware/self-referential/self-deprecating narration that's a feature of much modern-day humor. (It works on an inherently silly and lighthearted concept as Squirrel Girl, but I maintain is out of place when it happens in Secret Avengers or Mighty Avengers.) But I appreciate the humor of the art the most. These touches are often left in the background, literally. The names of the sparsely-attended club fair (was that purposeful or just a victim of time restraints?) are

hilarious, and you have to look closely to catch things like Ditko Blvd. So much of the whimsy comes from the art, some pretty expressive stuff with bold, clean lines that subtly use a thin and thick line brush stroke, something not common in a modern aesthetic. There's some playful timing with sequence, and a LOT of expression and movement. Also not common these days? Movement lines, thought balloons-- if some comics these days are described as "cinematic" and trying to be films, this one is "kinetic" and trying to be an animated series. There is a major weakness, however, and it's major because it's about the main character herself. As I indicated in the Issue #1 review, it's difficult to perceive the character as more than the satire that she was created for, and this issue continues to try to play both sides of an extreme-- is she supposed to be taken seriously, or is she just a caricature? There's too fine a line between being idiosyncratic and just being an idiot. Am I laughing *with* her, or *at* her? She displays great competency in some things, like using misdirection to earn her some armor, but then she descends into cliché melodrama that makes me concerned how low the GPA cutoff must be for Empire State University. How can the comicbook be trying to be something unique, but then continue to tie it to trope-y college freshmen clichés? The post Unbeatable Squirrel-Girl #2 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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