

Given the never-ending nature of comics, it's not unheard of for me to lose sight of certain details, even big ones. But some moments I remember months and months after they happen, by virtue of their sheer power. You can bet I count Kirsten's rejection of being known merely as Daredevil's girlfriend as one of those moments. There was more than a little metafiction in that speech, but it was also a demand for respect and a commitment to always fight the label of romantic interest. That being said, Kirsten hasn't quite lived up to her mission statement since she and Matt got back together. She's been present, helpful, and supportive, everything that a good superhero girlfriend should be, but that's exactly the point. Far from being her own person, Kirsten remains mostly defined by Matt's life and activities. This might be inevitable for a character living in a title called Daredevil, but since Waid went out of his way to address her role in the series head-on, he ought to make good on his implicit promise two years ago. As if to remind himself of that anniversary, Waid has Foggy call back to that moment as he scolds Matt for worrying about the things that "always happens to Daredevil's girlfriends." Foggy means well, but he's also minimizing Matt's concerns, which are not only legitimate, but backed by a lot of tragic precedent. Pointing out that Kirsten's a "smart, brave woman" who's "not made of glass" doesn't really alleviate Matt's fears; if anything, it means Kirsten's even more likely to be at risk. Waid tries something clever to give Matt a new perspective on the problem by having Kirsten threatened by the Lilac Murderer, a defendant she once successfully prosecuted. Unfortunately, both Waid and Kirsten seem to miss the point of this incident as Kirsten teases Matt afterward, "Hey, you're not hurt, are you?" "Of course not." "You're sure?" she asks slyly. "I get so freaked out when my enemies strike at me through my loved ones..." She'd have better reason to gloat if that was what the Lilac Murderer actually did, instead of targeting her and her alone, failing to even take Daredevil into consideration before Matt showed up. All Kirsten's really done is expand the range of enemies that'd go after her by adding her own nemeses on top of Matt's. It's also worth noting that despite a decent struggle, Kirsten does end up in the Murderer's grasp, a knife to her throat, until Matt saves her. But the Murderer does serve as a valuable lesson to Matt: even if he had his rogues to worry about, he can't stop Kirsten from having her own. The only thing he can do is accept his relationship with her for what it is, the sweet and the bitter, just as she does. "Hey, all kidding aside... I'm not going to stop worrying about you," he tells her. "Funny. I was about to say the same thing. You never have to fake a smile around me. I can handle it." The Murderer ends up kind of a wash of a character. The only thing separating him from the average serial killer is his obsession with lilacs,* so you can't imagine Matt would've had a very hard time with him even if Max Coleridge (a.k.a. the Shroud) didn't intercede. Actually, it's Coleridge that Matt should be worried about, once the issue reveals some kind of partnership with Owlsley, who seems to be taking advantage of his new powers from #4 to give Coleridge a bit of an edge in the superhero business. Samnee's work is so clean and clear that you'd be forgiven for missing the amazing amounts of storytelling he accomplishes at the same time. Just look at those panels on the issue's first page. See how he emphasizes Matt and Kirsten's touching hands yet captures their reflections in the window and wine glass; how the next panel shows them still at dinner as the second-to-last customers leave; how they start the panel after dancing and then the panel after that Kirsten is holding her heels in her hand, revealing how long they've danced and their unwillingness to stop. Literally every panel contains that level of thought, and all throughout you have Wilson's smooth colors adding extra warmth or coolness as the scene demands. Some Musings:* Which makes you wonder how much expense he went through to acquire enough lilacs to strew around for Kirsten's murder.- Is it just me, or has Owlsley lost weight? The post Daredevil #13 appeared

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