

There was something classic about the first year of Ms. Marvel. I was neither the first nor, by any means, the last to compare her to Peter Parker. For me and, I think, pretty much every person I've spoken to about the series, there's something about Ms. Marvel that feels like coming home. However, in perhaps the boldest and most heartening move of the series' short lifespan, in Ms. Marvel #13 G. Willow Wilson starts to change up the formula. While anyone fearful of losing the wonderful title we've received for the last twelve months has little to worry about, something feels different from the minute we open this story. It's the start of our second true story arc, but it kind of feels more like the first issue of a book spun off from a wildly successful mini-series, which I suppose Ms. Marvel #1-11 could easily have been if Marvel had had just a little less faith in the property. Regardless, there's a freshness about this issue that makes me think that Wilson is consciously attempting to keep innovating on this book now that she's passed the test of her first mega-story. Older elements are reintroduced with new twists and previously unexplored areas of Kamala's personality get a spotlight shone on them. One thing that no one has claimed of Kamala Khan is that she's lacking in personality. In fact, she's won over the comic world with the sheer force of her personality. Nonetheless, this issue reminds us how much of that was based purely on G. Willow Wilson's incredibly honest writing by giving us a glimpse at some of Kamala's hobbies and philosophies. Up until this point, we've known Kamala largely through expertly padded vagueries, our own experience helping to fill in the gaps, but this issue changes the game by really nailing down who Kamala is without taking away from her everyman charm. Over the past year I've heard and spoken with a lot of people - women, Desis, nerds - who have expressed truly powerful emotions about Kamala Khan. There's a sense of longing answered in their voices that is really quite beautiful. With this issue, Wilson gives Kamala a taste of that same recognition. Hearing her talk about her experience as a second generation immigrant is evocative yet brief and a dramatic fight near the book's end unearths some serious issues. Ever since issue #1, I've griped that Ms. Marvel's singular failing has been its obviousness, it's apparent desire to lecture and educate even when the flow of the story would have been enough. With this issue, Wilson takes some major steps to answer that critique. Admittedly, there are still a couple of places where I wonder if we really needed to throw a spotlight on that point, and worry a little about the readers that insistence implies exist, but it's very much like reaching the point in a friendship where explanation suddenly becomes unnecessary. It's super cool to see more of the Khan family's interactions or to examine how Jusuf and Disha Khan's insistence on a respectable Pakistani dating life for their daughter seems to have set her up for precisely the opposite. Likewise, the presence of the Inhumans has always been a looming cloud over the title, but Wilson does a great job of not only avoiding that but integrating the Inhumans into Kamala's story in ways that may defuse that situation in the long run. Of course it's not a perfect issue, most obviously Kamala's new friend is a little too perfect and, given Queen Medusa's ominous predictions of bad influences entering Kamala's life, it seems like the story is setting us up for a rote and familiar conclusion. Likewise, fitting all of that character work doesn't leave much room for a grander plot. This is a rather mundane issue for Ms. Marvel. Nonetheless, I think readers will find it plenty entertaining. I could probably go on for a loooong time about Wilson's writing choices in this issue, but we need to move on because Takeshi Miyazawa's work on this issue deserves to be discussed. Miyazawa's artwork kind of feels like you threw all the previous artists on this series into a blender with some classic manga, and the results are impressive. Miyazawa's always done lovely work, but his large eyes and youthful faces are a particularly good fit for Ms. Marvel. The meeting of eastern and western comics influences is actually a beautiful metaphor for the themes of this issue, but it's

far more than merely the style Miyazawa employs. Miyazawa is great at capturing the energy between characters, whether that means the one-sided barrage from Disha or the little sparkies between Kamala and Kamran. Just looking at almost any of the book's compositions you get an immediate sense of who feels what about what. Particularly as combined with Ian Herring and Irma Kniivila's beautiful colors, Miyazawa's art fits perfectly into the tapestry that is Ms. Marvel. Admittedly, one panel of Kamala changing into her costume sees her looking a little cross-eyed, but it's also beautiful, iconic, and distinct. Especially with a greener looking blue used on her costume, or at least appearing so on the bright yellow background, the colors are striking and Miyazawa's bold inking helps transform a basic panel into an image more than worthy of posters. The post Ms. Marvel #13 appeared first on Weekly Comic Book Review.

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