

MARVELS SERIAL—CHAPTER FIVE
ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
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Based on Marvel Comics' Golden-Age Heroes

Written in 2012.
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VILLAIN TWO (V.O.)
Binder's been writing too many
comic books.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
So was this a vampire mongoose?

OTTO
Okay, so it's not my best work.
You have any suggestions?

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
Why don't you tell your readers
that he found a meteorite, and
it gave him super-speed? Maybe
that will inspire some of them
to become astronomers.

OTTO
I'll do that. And now here is
your secret origin.

He hands her another set of papers. She reads some of the pages.

ALL-AMERICA GIRL
I got struck by lightning?

OTTO
Mr. Lieber thought if we used
the magic lightning angle, we
might get a lot more readers of
Captain Marvel.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
Perfectly understandable.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL (V.O.)
And very ironic.

EXTREME LONG SHOT - AN ART DECO BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

The building has a radio tower on it. Dark clouds are in the
sky. Slight thunder is heard off in the distance.

SUPER: BENNETT RADIO COMPANY, NEW YORK CITY, FALL 1943

INT. AN OUTER OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON

MADELINE JOYCE is the well-dressed secretary putting some files into the cabinet. She is also All-American Girl's real identity. The phone rings. She quickly sits down and answers it.

MADELINE

Good afternoon. Bennett Radio Company. Madeline Joyce speaking.

LAWSON (V.O.)

Hello, Miss Joyce. This is Professor Lawson.

MADELINE

Oh, hello, Professor. How are you doing?

LAWSON (V.O.)

Things couldn't be better. Is James . . . uh, Mr. Bennett available?

MADELINE

I'm sorry, but Mr. Bennett has just left for a business trip. He won't be back until the day after tomorrow.

LAWSON (V.O.)

What? But he must see what I did with the gravium.

MADELINE

Gravium? What's that?

LAWSON (V.O.)

Uh. I wasn't supposed to tell anyone about that.

(a beat, realizes)

Hey, wait a minute? Aren't you James's niece?

MADELINE

Why, yes, I am.

LAWSON (V.O.)

Then I guess it's all right to talk to you.

Madeline beams because she will learn something juicy. She holds the receiver with both hands and closer to her ear.

MADELINE

So what's going on, Professor?

LAWSON (V.O.)

I don't think you'll believe me if I tell you over the phone.

Madeline scowls and looks at the receiver. Then she puts it back to her ear.

LAWSON (V.O. CONT'D)

I'll tell you what. Come out to the lighthouse and see what I've done.

MADELINE

Lighthouse? Professor, what are you talking about?

LAWSON (V.O.)

Jason bought the abandoned lighthouse on Empire Beach.

MADELINE

He did? But why?

LAWSON (V.O.)

It's my secret laboratory. So I could conduct my experiments on the gravium without being disturbed. Now be sure to bring a camera with you. James will want photographs of what I've done.

Madeline's interest is now piqued. She grabs her notepad and a pencil. She gets ready to write.

MADELINE

How do I get there from the
radio station?

EXT. A LIGHTHOUSE - EARLY EVENING

A car and a truck are parked next to it. The giant light is not turned on, but a light is on in the window on the bottom floor. The dark clouds crackle with lightning and boom with slight thunder.

MADELINE (V.O.)

Oh, my goodness!

INT. THE LIGHTHOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Madeline and PROFESSOR LAWSON look upward. He is a middle-aged, handsome man with glasses. He smirks while she gapes and holds a camera. Behind them is various laboratory equipment on a table.

MADELINE

This can't be happening! It's
just incredible!

LAWSON

Go on. Take a picture.

She awkwardly aims the camera upward. She steadies herself to take the picture.

THEIR POV

A rounded piece of metal floats against the ceiling. Next to the metal is the stairway leading to the trapdoor. The camera flash briefly shines on them.

MADELINE (V.O.)

I see it, but I don't believe
it!

LAWSON (V.O.)

Now you know why I needed you
as a witness. Surely James
would believe his own niece.

MADELINE AND LAWSON

She sets the camera next to her purse on the table. Then she faces him.

MADELINE

I'm so nervous that I almost dropped the camera. I'll have to let you take the pictures from now on.

(looks upward)

So where did you find it?

LAWSON

Actually, James found it. It was floating off the side of the road. Then he remembered that I was interviewed for one of his shows.

MADELINE

So that's why he had me look up your phone number.

LAWSON

Apparently I was the only scientist that he knew.

THE PIECE OF GRAVIUM

It slowly descends while they talk.

LAWSON (V.O.)

He didn't want anyone to know about the gravium until I could discover why it floats.

MADELINE (V.O.)

And since Uncle James is very . . . thrifty, he set you up on this cheap piece of land.

LAWSON (V.O.)

Cheap and private. You're the only person who's ever been here.

RESUME MADELINE AND LAWSON

MADELINE

I don't understand something.
The gravium was floating when
Uncle James found it, right?

LAWSON

It was just a few feet off of
the ground.

MADELINE

That explains how he got it
into his car. But how did you
make it float up to the ceiling?

LAWSON

I exposed it to electricity.
With just the right amount of
voltage, the gravium recharges
itself. But the anti-gravity
effect is only temporary.

The gravium slowly floats down between them. He grabs it.

LAWSON (CONT'D)

As you can see for yourself.

MADELINE

Amazing. But where did it come
from?

LAWSON

Personally I believe that it
broke off of a spaceship.

MADELINE

A spaceship? Really, Professor.

He hands her the gravium. Then he points to its smooth side.

LAWSON

Here's the proof. See how round
and smooth it is on this side?

She nods her head. Then he points at its other side.

LAWSON (CONT'D)

Now see how sharp and uneven
it is on the other side. That
proves that it broke off of
something round and smooth.

MADELINE

Well, you've got a point there.
But a spaceship? That sounds
like something out of those
science-fiction magazines.

LAWSON

Then you explain how a piece
of metal can defy gravity.

She ponders it for a few seconds. Then she frowns.

MADELINE

I can't. But surely there must
be some logical explanation.

Lightning then flashes outside the window, and they hear loud
thunder. She still looks at the gravium. He walks quickly to the
window. He sees the dark clouds in the horizon.

LAWSON

It looks you'll be staying
here awhile, Miss Joyce.

MADELINE

I don't mind. And please. Call
me Madeline.

Lightning flashes outside the window, which is followed by a
very loud thunderclap. Madeline jumps. Then the window and the
table shake.

MADELINE (CONT'D)

That was a close one. Are you
sure we're safe in here?

He chuckles.

LAWSON

Relax, Miss Jo--Madeline. The lighthouse has several lightning rods. I examined them myself.

MADELINE

That's good to know. Speaking of electricity, why don't you show me how you charge this thing up.

LAWSON

I'd be glad to. Come over here.

EXT. MADELINE'S CAR - EARLY EVENING

A thin stream of gasoline runs from under the car to the asphalt road behind it. Obviously it has been leaking for some time. A small puddle of gasoline forms underneath the car.

RESUME MADELINE AND LAWSON

They stand in front of the laboratory table. Lawson clamps the gravium onto an electrical device. It has a flip switch on its side. The gravium's sharp edge is facing the ceiling.

LAWSON

Let me check that the gravium is securely in place.

He pulls at the gravium, but he is careful not to cut himself.

LAWSON (CONT'D)

Perfect. Now we may proceed.

He plugs in the electrical device.

LAWSON

Now stand clear.

She backs up. Then he turns the device on. It buzzes loudly. She covers her ears.

MADELINE

(yells)

How do you stand that racket?

LAWSON
(yells back)
I can stand anything in the name
of science!

LAWSON (V.O.)
Even working in this dump!

MADELINE
Oh, this is so exciting! Hey!
Look!

The gravium and device float up. Madeline smiles at them.

MADELINE (CONT'D)
It's working!

She quickly reaches for the gravium, much to Lawson's horror.

LAWSON
Madeline, no!

The gravium's sharp edge cuts into her hand. As blood comes out of her wound, she receives a mild shock. Lawson yanks on the device's cord, which pulls it out of the socket.

She stops shaking, and he pulls the gravium and device away from her. He sees only her blood, not the fact that the gravium and device no longer float. They fall on the table.

LAWSON (CONT'D)
Oh, my God! First-aid kit!

Lawson runs to the low shelf on the other side of the wall. As he takes the kit from the shelf, Madeline rises off the floor. She yells loudly in surprise. He turns around and gapes at her.

LAWSON (CONT'D)
Good Lord!

MADELINE
W-What's happening to me?

He sees the gravium and device on the table. He runs to the table and holds them up.

LAWSON
The gravium isn't floating
anymore!

He looks up at her.

LAWSON (CONT'D)
Its anti-gravity force must have
been transferred to you!

MADELINE
Then it should wear off soon!

LAWSON
Maybe!
(a beat, ponders)
Then again, maybe not!

MADELINE
What do you mean?

LAWSON
Well, theoretically speaking,
your bioelectrical system could
keep the force active for the
rest of your life!

MADELINE
You mean I'll be like this
forever?

LAWSON
It's possible! Of course, I'll
have to run some tests on you!

EXT. MADELINE'S CAR - EARLY EVENING

Lightning strikes the gasoline, and the car explodes. The driver door is propelled through the lighthouse window.

INT. THE LIGHTHOUSE - EARLY EVENING

The car door smashes through the window. The shards of glass and then the door strike Lawson from behind. As he falls face first, Madeline screams from above. The door lands on his back.

MADELINE

Lawson!

She suddenly, and awkwardly, lands next to the prone Lawson. She recoils from the bloody shards in the back of his body. Then she forces herself to remove the door.

She grabs the handle and grunts as she tries to move the door. Then she easily lifts the door, much to her surprise. She holds it up over her head in her stupor.

LAWSON

Mad-Madel . . .

She drops the door behind her and reaches for his head. He looks at her very weakly.

LAWSON (CONT'D)

Keep . . . 'em . . . flying!

He dies with his eyes open. Tears run down her cheeks.

MADELINE

Lawson? Lawson! Oh, no! Wake up! You can't die like this! Lawson! LAWSON!

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

She flies high over the landmarks of Washington, D.C. at the break of dawn.

MADELINE (V.O.)

And that's how he died, officer.

POLICEMAN (V.O.)

I believe you, Miss Joyce. You sure were lucky you weren't in your car when it blew up.

MADELINE (V.O.)

Uh, I guess I was lucky at that.

She heads for the White House off in the distance.

EXT. THE WHITE HOUSE LAWN - DAWN

TWO ARMY SOLDIERS fire their rifles into the air in slow motion. The bullets fly at the descending All-American Girl. Then they suddenly move upward before they hit her body. Everyone then moves at normal speed.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
Gentlemen, please! You're just
wasting the taxpayer's bullets!
They can't hit me because of my
anti-gravity power!

They stop shooting at her. She lands and puts her hands up.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL (CONT'D)
But I do officially surrender
myself to the President of the
United States of America.

INT. THE OVAL OFFICE - EARLY MORNING

FDR sits at his desk while the soldiers stand next to him. They look at All-American Girl and TWO WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS hovering in the air. FDR smiles while the other men gape in astonishment.

FDR
You're amazing! I wish I had
your strength!

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
Actually, Mr. President, I am
not super-strong. My anti-gravity
power lets me lift heavy objects.
(to the officials)
No offense.

OFFICIAL ONE
None taken.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL
So I can't bend iron bars or
break down doors like Wonder
Woman.

FDR

But you can fly while she can't.
And you are bulletproof. In a
way.

(a pause)

Uh, you may set them down now,
Miss Joyce.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

Oh. Yes. Sorry, sir.

She and the officials land. She lets go of them.

OFFICIAL TWO

Thank you, Miss Joyce. That was
. . . very unique.

OFFICIAL ONE

Yes, it was.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

You are very welcome, gentlemen.

Official One pulls out the chair in front of FDR's desk. Then
Official Two motions for her to sit down.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL (CONT'D)

Oh. Thank you.

She sits down and looks at FDR.

FDR

Now all we have to do is wait
for your background report from
the FBI. Once you pass, I shall
assign you to the same people
who trained the Marvels in the
use of their powers.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

Wow. I wasn't expecting that.
Will I be joining the Marvels
in Europe?

FDR shakes his head.

FDR

No. I have plans for you on the
home front . . .

(with a smirk)

Miss America.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

Miss America?

FDR

That will be your codename.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

Uh, actually, sir . . . I don't
like it.

FDR

You don't?

OTHER MEN

You don't?

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

I don't want to be confused with
a beauty contest winner. But I
do want America to be in my
codename.

(a beat, ponders)

So how about calling me . . .

EXT. A WAR RALLY - DAY

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE are at the rally. Some give bits of metal and
rubber to the scrap heaps. Others buy from the VENDERS while the
REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS cover the news.

EXT. A PLATFORM - DAY

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT stands at the podium, which has a microphone
on it. SOCIETY LADIES sit behind her. TWO ARMY SOLDIERS stand at
the ends of the platform and hold their rifles.

ELEANOR

Ladies and gentlemen, your
attention please!

The crowd eventually quiets down.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Thank you! It is my pleasure to present to you America's latest super-hero!

The crowd quickly reacts with gasps and some ad-lib questions. Eleanor smiles.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Correction! That should be America's first super-heroine!

A society lady stands up. She takes off her hat and long coat. She is All-American Girl. The crowd responds with more gasps, more questions, and a few wolf whistles. All-American Girl struggles to keep on smiling as she approaches Eleanor.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you . . . The All-American Girl!

All-American Girl rises up into the air. The ladies react, but the soldiers do not. The crowd responds with oohs and aahs. All-American Girl's shoes are close to Eleanor's face.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

If I can ask the First Lady to hold onto my shoes.

ELEANOR

Certainly, dear.

Eleanor takes off the heroine's shoes. Then the First Lady sets them on the platform floor. She stands back up and speaks into the microphone.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

The All-American Girl is going to demonstrate how your buying war bonds will . . .

(much louder)

Keep 'em flying!

The heroine flies out of the scene, much to the surprise of the ladies and crowd.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL IN FLIGHT

She performs many aerial maneuvers. She does several loop-the-loops. Then she whirls in the air. Then she holds onto her cape and hovers upside-down. Then she flies parallel to the ground. Finally she zooms down.

THE WAR RALLY CROWD

They look up and scream. All-American Girl flies rapidly over them. She turns just over them and zooms out of the scene. The people first feel relief. Then they applaud.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

She looks up and beams with much pride. Then All-American Girl lands next to her. Eleanor motions for the heroine to use the microphone. All-American Girl approaches the podium.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

My fellow Americans! Please give
generously to the war effort!
As powerful as they are, my
fellow Marvels still need your
help in defeating the Axis forces!
Help us to help them bring back
our boys safe and sound! Thank
you all very much!

Eleanor applauds the heroine. The society ladies stand and also applaud All-American Girl. She blushes.

OTTO AND ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

She sets down the script. She frowns.

OTTO

You don't like it.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

Oh, it's not that. But I am
(MORE)

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL (CONT'D)

worried that some child might run out in a lightning storm with a metal rod in his hands. I don't want a kid dying in an attempt to get my super-powers.

OTTO

I seriously doubt that's going to happen. Captain Marvel has been around for seven years, and we haven't had a report of a kid doing that yet.

ALL-AMERICAN GIRL

Still, maybe you can have me find a piece of a flying saucer. Its anti-gravity field can give me my super-powers.

VILLAINESS (V.O.)

How vain can you be?

OTTO

Flying saucers are all the rage now. Okay, I'll go with that.

They continue to talk but MOS. The villains' voiceovers are spoken while Otto and All-American Girl interact.

VILLAIN TWO (V.O.)

Just need to probe her mind a little more--Yes! She knows where the Marvels will be going tomorrow morning. Only Namor and the Human Torch will be doing charity drives. Mercury will be on monitor duty at the Oracle Incorporated Building. As usual. And the others will be at work in their secret identities.

VILLAIN FIVE (V.O.)

Hiding themselves from prying eyes, huh? Just like me.

EXT. THE COMIC-BOOK COMPANY'S ROOFTOP - NIGHT

All-American Girl hugs Otto.

VILLAIN ONE (V.O.)
Can we ambush them in their
sleep tonight?

She lets go of him. Then she steps away from him.

VILLAIN TWO (V.O.)
Highly unlikely. They sleep in
Namor's high-rise building. They
have individual apartments over
the Oracle Incorporated offices.
So when an emergency occurs, the
team is ready to go.

She flies off the roof. She waves to him.

VILLAIN THREE (V.O.)
Damn that Namor. Finding all
those treasure chests.

He waves back to her.

VILLAIN TWO (V.O.)
Naturally, the place is crawling
with guards. We would have to
overcome them before we could
attack the Marvels. But if one
of them should sound the alarm,
Mercury alone could knock us
out before we did anything else.

She flies out of the scene.

VILLAIN FOUR (V.O.)
He wouldn't get his hands on
me.

He heads for the stairway entrance.

VILLAIN ONE (V.O.)
Wait! That's it!

VILLAIN FOUR (V.O.)

What's it?

VILLAIN ONE (V.O.)

Only you will attack the Marvels
tonight!

To be continued in THE NEPTUNE ADVENTURE.