

Naoko Takeuchi

Codename: Sailor V [コドネム wa セーラ Bui] (Kōdonēmu wa Sērā Bui)]

Japan (1991)

TAGS: [Acropolis](#) [Adonis](#) [Aphrodite](#) [Artemis](#) [Narcissus](#) [Pandora](#) [Parthenon](#) [Venus](#)



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General information	
<i>Title of the work</i>	Codename: Sailor V [コドネム wa セーラ Bui] (Kōdonēmu wa Sērā Bui)]
<i>Country of the First Edition</i>	Japan
<i>Country/countries of popularity</i>	Japan, Worldwide
<i>Original Language</i>	Japanese
<i>First Edition Date</i>	1991
<i>First Edition Details</i>	Originally serialised in <i>RunRun Magazine</i> : August 3, 1991 - July 3, 1997. First Japanese compilation of 2 volumes: Naoko Takeuchi, <i>Codename: Sailor V 1-2</i> , Kodansha Comics, 1992-1997.
<i>ISBN</i>	9781935429777 / 9781935429784 (2014 edition)
<i>Genre</i>	Comics (Graphic works), Shōjo Manga / Girls' Manga*, Urban fiction
<i>Target Audience</i>	Crossover (Teenage Girls, Young Adults)
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Creators



Naoko Takeuchi (Author, Illustrator)

Naoko Takeuchi is the creator of numerous successful manga series for teenage girls; most notably the globally-renowned *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon* and its prequel series, *Codename: Sailor V*. As a manga artist, she both authors and illustrates all her works. She has won numerous awards, and *Sailor Moon* is considered the archetype of the “magical girl” character and genre. Nonetheless, Takeuchi has frequently discussed the publisher and editorial interference in the *Sailor Moon* manga, and criticised the 1990s anime adaptation for having “a slight male perspective” due to the mostly-male creator team, compared to her manga which was “written by a girl (me) for girls...” (quoted in MTV). She originally trained to be a licensed pharmacist at Kyoritsu University of Pharmacy and graduated with a degree in chemistry. Takeuchi is also a songwriter under the pen name “Sumire Shirobara”, and has written many songs to accompany various *Sailor Moon* adaptations.

Sources:

Sailor Moon official [website](#) (accessed: July 26, 2021);

[AnimeNewsNetwork](#) (accessed: July 26, 2021);

Alverson, Brigid, [Sailor Moon 101: Pretty, Powerful, and Pure of Heart](#) available at MTV.com (accessed: July 26, 2021).

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Additional information

Translation English, French, Spanish, German, Italian, Polish.

Summary

Codename: Sailor V follows 13-year-old Minako Aino, a happy-go-lucky girl who receives the power to transform into a magical warrior with the codename Sailor V (short for Sailor Venus), the Soldier of Love and Beauty. Transforming not only changes her clothes, but grants her access to supernatural powers to fight enemies. *Codename: Sailor V* is both the prequel to and inspiration for *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon*, with the positive reception to the first chapter being the catalyst for the development of *Sailor Moon*. *Codename: Sailor V* chapters were published sporadically between 1991–1997. The series draws on Greek and Roman mythology and 1990's Japanese popular culture for the series' worldbuilding, and the characters' interests.

On the day Minako is preparing to confess her love for a senior student named Higashi, she is followed by a white cat with a crescent moon on its forehead. Higashi is constantly surrounded by adoring girls, so when he is assigned as Minako's tutor, to help with her low grades, she is thrilled. That night, as Minako wishes to be more beautiful, the white cat enters her room and assures her that she was born under the protection of the goddess of beauty. The cat introduces himself as Artemis, entrusts her with a magical crescent-shaped compact, and shows her a vision of the planet Venus. He tells Minako she was born to fight enemies in the name of Venus. The next day, believing the vision was a dream, she tries to deliver her love letter to Higashi. However, it is revealed that Higashi is really a monster named Narcissus, and that he is enslaving the girls who fall in love with him to help his leader take over Japan. Overhearing a girl scream as she is enslaved, Minako receives an enchanted pen that helps her transform for the first time into Sailor V. The mirror in her compact reveals Higashi's true form as Narcissus, and she uses it to send a laser at him, destroying him. Though Minako is sad, Artemis promises to stay by her side – and Minako quickly finds another popular boy to fall in love with.

The villains initially operate through an idol agency, which promotes singers and related products to Japanese youth. However, the Dark Agency's idols are really monsters, who seek to steal the "energy" of civilians to help take over Japan. The idol Pandora uses an exclusive



In her past life incarnation as Princess Venus, Minako lived in the Magellan Castle located over Aphrodite Terra on the planet Venus. The castle's name references the Magellan Probe which was sent to Venus in the 1990s, which had been named after the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan (1480-1521). Aphrodite Terra is named after the Greek goddess of love, Aphrodite. Several of Minako's enemies through the Dark Agency are also references to Greek mythology. The monster Narcissus (alias Higashi) attracts the attentions of female students to enslave through his beauty. The mythical Narcissus was enthralled by his own beautiful reflection; ironically, he is the first of the enemies to have his true monstrous form revealed and destroyed by Minako's magical compact mirror. The enemies Pandora and Petite Pandora reference the myth of Pandora's box, which when opened, released all the horrors into the world. Pandora's use of boxy televisions, through which to broadcast her brainwashing powers, allude to this.

The Venus soldier Adonis takes his name from the renowned mortal beauty of whom Aphrodite was particularly fond until his death. In *Codename: Sailor V*, Adonis also has a tragic fate, either going unnoticed by Princess Venus in the past, or doomed to be her enemy when reincarnated as Danburite in the present. As he tells Minako's fortune - that she will never find true love, and will lead a life of battle - he hands her a playing card of the Ace of Hearts. This alludes to his existence as her greatest love who she could never be with, his alternative identities as Ace Saijyo/Phantom Ace, and the cruel games he played with Minako's emotions. Minako's close association with Venus is echoed in her frequent schoolgirl crushes - and occasionally, more serious affections such as her "great loves" of Higashi, Saitou, Maiku, and Ace/Danburite. However, as Danburite predicts, Minako's greatest irony is that she is cursed to never find true romantic love, because her devotion to her duty is greater than that of her girlhood dreams of being in love. Despite Minako's strong alignment with goddesses of love and beauty, *Codename: Sailor V* is ultimately a highly subversive story that reveals that romance, beauty, and popular culture are lesser pursuits in the face of one's destiny.

The references to Greek and Roman mythology throughout the series connect to both the ongoing contemporary interest in such stories among young adult audiences, and broader themes that are typical of Japanese Girls' Manga. In particular, the figure of a self-conscious teenage girl who often longed for a boyfriend that is so commonly depicted in these genres is subverted: Minako grows to become wholly committed to her life's goal, and becomes highly confident in her



appearance and dreams without the approval of boys or her peers. In contrast, figures from Classical mythology are depicted as fixated on dating or appearance (such as Adonis, or Narcissus); and they are routinely defeated by the increasingly self-assured Minako. Through these allusions, common teenage feelings and themes in young adult fiction and Girls' manga can be included for readers, but through a lens of female empowerment.

Classical, Mythological,
Traditional Motifs,
Characters, and
Concepts

[Acropolis](#) [Adonis](#) [Aphrodite](#) [Artemis](#) [Narcissus](#) [Pandora](#) [Parthenon](#) [Venus](#)

Other Motifs, Figures,
and Concepts Relevant
for Children and Youth
Culture

[Adventure](#) [Adversity](#) [Coming of age](#) [Fairy tale references](#) [Fashion](#)
[Femininity](#) [Friendship](#) [Gender, female](#) [Girls](#) [Good vs evil](#) [Heroism](#)
[Intertextuality](#) [Love](#) [Magic](#) [Magic powers](#) [Maturity](#) [Morality](#) [Pop culture](#)
[references](#) [Romance](#) [Transformation](#)

Further Reading

Fujimoto, Yukari, "Sailor Moon! The Treasure Box All Girls Want" in Masami Toku, ed., *International Perspectives on Shōjo Manga*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2015, 32–39.

Nozomi, Masuda, "Shōjo Manga and Its Acceptance: What is the Power of Shōjo Manga?" in Masami Toku, ed., *International Perspectives on Shōjo Manga*, Routledge, New York, NY: Routledge, 2015, 23–31.

Addenda

Originally serialised in RunRun Magazine: August 3, 1991 – July 3, 1997.

First Japanese compilation of 2 volumes: Naoko Takeuchi, Codename: Sailor V 1–2, Kodansha Comics, 1992–1997.

Second Japanese compilation of 2 volumes: Naoko Takeuchi, Codename: Sailor V 1–2, Kodansha Comics, 2003–2004.



Third Japanese compilation of 2 volumes: Naoko Takeuchi, *Codename: Sailor V 1-2*, Kodansha Comics, 2014.

Editions used for entry:

Sailor Moon Volume 1: Naoko Takeuchi, *Codename: Sailor V Volume 1*, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 280 pp.

Sailor Moon Volume 2: Naoko Takeuchi, *Codename: Sailor V Volume 2*, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 296 pp.

