Emily Booth, "Entry on: Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon / Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon [□□□□□□□□□□□□ (Bishōjo Senshi Sērā Mūn)]. Arc 1: The Dark Kingdom Arc by Naoko Takeuchi", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2022). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1401. Entry version as of November 05, 2026.

Naoko Takeuchi

Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon / Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon [□□□□□□□□□□□□ (Bishōjo Senshi Sērā Mūn)]. Arc 1: The Dark Kingdom Arc

Japan (1991)

TAGS: Artemis Constellations Deimos Endymion Phobos Selene Venus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon / Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon [□□□□□□□ □□□□□ (Bishōjo Senshi Sērā Mūn)]. Arc 1: The Dark Kingdom Arc
Country of the First Edition	Japan
Country/countries of popularity	Japan, Worldwide
Original Language	Japanese
First Edition Date	1991
First Edition Details	Originally serialised in Nakayoshi Magazine: December 28, 1991 – February 3, 1997. Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon Volumes 1–18*, vol. 1–3, Kodansha Comics, 1993–1997.
ISBN	9781935429746 / 9781935429753 / 9781935429760
Official Website	Sailormoon-official.com (accessed: January 20, 2022).
Awards	1993 – Kodansha Manga Award – Shōjo Category.
Genre	Comics (Graphic works), Graphic novels, Shōjo Manga / Girls' Manga*, Urban fiction
Target Audience	Crossover (Teenage Girls, Young Adults)
Author of the Entry	Emily Booth, University of Technology, Sydney, Emily.Booth@uts.edu.au

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

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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).

Bio prepared by Emily Booth, University of Technology, Sydney, Emily.Booth@uts.edu.au

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Additional information

Translation	According to the publisher's website the versions of the manga that are currently in print are available in Japanese, English, French, German, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Italian, Thai, and Portuguese.

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Sailor Moon Volume 4: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 4, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 240 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 5: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 5, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 256 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 6: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 6, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 240 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 7: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 7, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 240 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 8: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 8, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 232 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 9: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 9, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 264 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 10: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 10, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 248 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 11: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 11, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 248 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 12: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 12, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 280 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 13: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon Short Stories* Volume 1, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 200 pp. Sailor Moon Volume 14: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon Short Stories* Volume 2, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 208 pp.

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Summary

Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon follows 14-year-old Usagi Tsukino, a klutz and crybaby who receives the power to transform into a magical warrior named Sailor Moon, Soldier of Love and Justice. Transforming not only changes her clothes, but grants her access to supernatural powers to fight enemies. The story is set in Tokyo, Japan. There are five primary arcs to the series, plus several short stories that accompany the core narrative. The arcs reflect the primary antagonists and themes the protagonists face in those chapters. The five story arcs are: The Dark Kingdom Arc, The Black Moon Arc, The Infinity Arc, The Dream Arc, and The Stars Arc. This entry focuses on The Dark Kingdom Arc. The series draws extensively from Classical mythologies, as well as fairytales and other folktales.

Dark Kingdom Arc (Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3):

After rescuing a talking black cat with a strange crescent moon on her forehead named Luna, Usagi receives the power to transform into Sailor Moon. She is tasked with finding her allies and the lost Moon Princess, and defeating the evil Dark Kingdom led by the witch Queen Beryl. Usagi meets her allies, who are all girls of the same age: the genius Ami Mizuno (Sailor Mercury, Soldier of Water and Wisdom), the cold shrine maiden, Rei Hino (Sailor Mars, Soldier of Fire and Passion), the sporty transfer student Makoto Kino (Sailor Jupiter, Soldier of Courage and Wood), and the excitable but mysterious Minako Aino (Sailor Venus, Soldier of Love and Beauty; and formerly, a solitary superheroine under the alias Sailor V), who is accompanied by the male talking cat Artemis. Notably all the sailor soldiers have Japanese names that indicate their association with different metaphysical attributes. As Usagi meets her allies and confronts the Four Heavenly Kings who seek to resurrect the Dark Kingdom, Usagi also develops an affection for the secretive Tuxedo Mask (real name Mamoru Chiba) who occasionally assists the Sailor Soldiers in battle.

During a confrontation with the Dark Kingdom's forces, Tuxedo Mask is severely wounded. This unlocks Usagi's memories of her past life as the Moon Princess of the Silver Millennium: Princess Serenity, and her great love with Prince Endymion of the Kingdom of Earth, who exists in the present as Mamoru. Usagi's tears form the Illusionary Silver Crystal, a magical artefact of supreme power belonging to the Moon Kingdom. However, the Dark Kingdom steals Mamoru's body away. To complete their memories of their past lives, Usagi and her friends travel to the moon and discover a message left in the Moon

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Kingdom's supercomputer from Queen Serenity, Princess Serenity's mother. Usagi and her allies remember how the forces of the Kingdom of Earth attacked the Moon Kingdom under the influence of Queen Beryl and her ruler, Queen Metalia. When Prince Endymion was defeated in battle, the heart-broken Princess Serenity killed herself. Queen Serenity sealed away Queen Beryl and Queen Metalia, but the magic was weak due to her grief. She was able to ensure that her daughter and her daughter's royal guard would be reborn in the future as Usagi and Sailor Soldiers. Yet now that the Dark Kingdom's forces have risen, Usagi and her friends must defeat them.

As the Sailor Soldiers try to locate the Dark Kingdom's base, a brainwashed Mamoru appears in the city using the name "Endo", and taunts Usagi. When the Sailor Soldiers finally confront the Dark Kingdom's forces, Sailor Venus, the leader of the Soldiers, manages to kill Queen Beryl with the Holy Sword of the Moon Kingdom. After an emotional battle, Sailor Moon manages to kill a possessed Mamoru with the Holy Sword; however, just as in her past life, she is overwhelmed with grief and turns the sword on herself. As Queen Metalia begins to consume the earth, Sailor Venus rallies her soldiers, who sacrifice the last of their magic to resurrect Sailor Moon and Tuxedo Mask. The pair awaken, and Usagi unleashes the magic of the Illusionary Silver Crystal, destroying Queen Metalia, resurrecting her friends, and restoring the world to safety.

Analysis

Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon draws on Greek and Roman mythology, Japanese folklore and traditions, and fairytales to establish its worldbuilding. The series has a strong focus on the theme that peace and happiness are always worth fighting for, even though they can never be permanent, because hardship is part of human existence. There are also Arthurian references throughout the series, such as the Holy Moon Sword featured in the Dark Kingdom Arc, which evokes the sword Excalibur. There are also other references throughout the series to myth and folklore. For example, the name Usagi Tsukino translates as "Rabbit of the Moon"; a reference to the Japanese folktale that the moon is inhabited by a large rabbit that is making rice cakes.

The architecture of the destroyed Moon Kingdom, full of crumbling stone columns and intricately decorated walls, recalls the Parthenon;

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and flashbacks to the kingdom of the Silver Millennium reveal beautiful gardens. Princess Serenity was cursed to never ascend to the throne; and the curse was altered by Queen Serenity, who sent her daughter's soul to the future. The relationship between the past life incarnations of Usagi and Mamoru, known as Princess Serenity and Prince Endymion, adapts the Greek myth of the moon goddess Selene and her lover Endymion. Selene begged Zeus to put Endymion into an eternal sleep to preserve his youth so she could gaze on his beauty forever. However, Princess Serenity and Prince Endymion of the Golden Kingdom of Earth met and secretly became lovers, despite Queen Serenity forbidding the relationship.

There are also smaller references to Greek myths throughout the series. The royal advisers in the Moon Kingdom are the cats Luna (a female, whose name references the Latin word for "moon") and Artemis (a male, whose name references the Greek Goddess of the moon and hunt). They were awoken in the 20th century so that they could guide Sailor Moon and Sailor Venus, respectively, to protect the future from Queen Metallia. Sailor Venus is the fifth Sailor Soldier introduced in the series, and formerly fought crime under the alias Sailor V, creating a pun on the fact that the Roman numeral for "five" is the symbol "V". Additionally, in the present, Rei's pet crows at her shrine are named Phobos and Deimos; they protect her and enhance her powers at various times throughout the series, provoking fear in those who distrust her and her powers of premonition.

The original Greek myth is notable for its portrayal of a passive, sleeping Endymion, and the active desire of Selene, subverting stereotypical portrayals of women as the object of male attention. Takeuchi's work incorporates this romantic dynamic, adapting it for a modern audience and integrating it with the series focus on justice. In battle, it is always Sailor Moon who is the active fighter against enemies and protector of innocents, and Tuxedo Mask is alternatively the easily-kidnapped victim in need of rescuing, and the loving but passive supporter of Sailor Moon. In this way, the series uses the myth of Selene and Endymion as the basis of a romantic fantasy, while also expressing contemporary feminist themes and fantasies of female empowerment through the relationship Usagi and Mamoru. As a work of Girl's Manga, *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon* targets girls as the primary readership; and this combination of romance and female empowerment heightens the series appeal to its audience.

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Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Artemis Constellations Deimos Endymion Phobos Selene Venus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Adversity Coming of age Death Disability Fairy tale references Family Fashion Femininity Gender, female Girls Good vs evil Heroism History Intertextuality LGBTQI Magic Magic powers Mental health* Morality Suicide Transformation
Further Reading	Fujimoto, Yukari, "Sailor Moon! The Treasure Box All Girls Want" in Masami Toku, ed., *International Perspectives on Shojo Manga*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2015, 32–39. Nozomi, Masuda, "Shojo Manga and Its Acceptance: What is the Power of Shojo Manga?" in Masami Toku, ed., *International Perspectives on Shojo Manga*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2015, 23–31.
Addenda	Originally serialised in Nakayoshi Magazine: December 28, 1991 – February 3, 1997. First Japanese compilation of 18 volumes: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon Volumes 1–18*, Kodansha Comics, 1993–1997. Second Japanese compilation of 12 volumes: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Soldier Sailor Moon Volumes 1–12*, Kodansha Comics, 2003–2004. Third Japanese compilation: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon Volumes 1–10*, Kodansha Comics, 2013–2014.

Editions used for entry:

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Sailor Moon Volume 1: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 1, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 248 pp.

Sailor Moon Volume 2: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 2, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 244 pp.

Sailor Moon Volume 3: Naoko Takeuchi, *Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon* Volume 3, Kodansha Comics, 2014, 240 pp.

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