Sue Storm

The Invisible Woman (Susan "Sue" Storm-Richards), previously known as the Invisible Girl, is a fictional superheroine appearing in American comic books published by Marvel Comics. The character is a founding member of the Fantastic Four and was the first female superhero created by Marvel during the Silver Age of Comics.

Sue Richards receives her powers by being exposed to a cosmic storm. Her primary power deals with light waves, which allows her to render herself and others invisible. She can also project powerful fields of invisible psionic energy which she uses for a variety of offensive and defensive effects. Richards plays a central role in the lives of her hot-headed younger brother Johnny Storm, her brilliant husband Reed Richards, her close friend Ben Grimm, and her children (Franklin and Valerie). She was also romantically involved with Namor the Sub-Mariner for a time, and they remain close friends.

Invisible Woman

Invisible Woman was portrayed by Rebecca Staab in the 1994 film The Fantastic Four, Jessica Alba in the 2005 film Fantastic Four, and in its 2007 sequel Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer, and Kate Mara in the 2015 film Fantastic Four.

Publication history

Created by writer Stan Lee and artist/co-writer Jack Kirby, the character first appeared in The Fantastic Four #1 (Nov. 1961).

Since Stan Lee wanted The Fantastic Four to be driven by the familial interactions between the teammates rather than by action, the primary impetus for Susan Storm's creation was to be the female lead (with Reed Richards a.k.a. Mister Fantastic being the male lead), but he was also determined that she be a full member of the team. He eventually emphasized this to readers explicitly, with a story in which the Fantastic Four read fan mail denigrating the Invisible Girl's value to the team, and respond by enumerating some of the occasions on which she played a key role in their victories. Teammate Johnny Storm a.k.a. the Human Torch being Sue's little brother became one of several sources of tension within the group, and she also served as the center of a love triangle with Reed and the Fantastic Four's sometime ally, sometime enemy Namor. Sue was initially presented as the sole reason for Ben Grimm, a bad guy, remaining on the group, which was significantly toned down in the published series.

Lee did not want Sue to have super strength, "to be Wonder Woman and punch people", so eventually he came to invisibility, inspired by works such as Universal Pictures' The Invisible Man. His original two-page plot summary for the first issue of The Fantastic Four, reprinted in the Marvel Masterworks and Marvel Epic Collection editions of the first ten issues, handled Susan's powers similarly to The Invisible Man, which required her to take off her clothes, but noting concern that that might be "too sexy" for a comic book. It also noted that she could not turn visible again, and would wear a mask recreating her face when she wanted to be seen. By the time the first issue was written and drawn, both elements had changed: Susan could turn invisible and visible at will, and doing so affected the visibility of whatever clothing she was wearing.

Invisible Woman has primarily appeared in issues of Fantastic Four. In issue 22 (January 1964), the creators expanded Sue's abilities, giving her the powers to render other objects and people invisible and create strong force fields and psionic blasts. Under John Byrne's authorship, Sue became more confident and assertive in her abilities, which became more versatile and impressive. She finds it easier to use her invisible force fields to manipulate clothes, which are ideal for their frequent and often long flights.

Invisible Girl

As the Fantastic Four, the team set up their first headquarters in the Baxter Building in Manhattan. The Fantastic Four encounter many villains in the early part of their career, but none of them contend for Susan's affections more than Namor the Sub-Mariner. Sue feels an amount of attraction to Namor, but her heart belongs with Reed, a situation that has been called the Marvel Universe's first love triangle.

Invisibility

Initially, her powers are limited to making herself invisible. However, before long Sue discovers she can make other things invisible as well as create force fields of invisible energy. After Sue is injured in battle with the Mole Man, her father escapes from prison and operates on her to save her life. Franklin makes amends with his children and the Fantastic Four return to their original lineup. Sue later becomes pregnant with her first child. As a result, she takes time off as an active member of the team. Johnny's girlfriend, the Inhuman elementalist Crystal, joins the team, taking over Susan's role as Captain Marvel.
Powers and abilities

Secret Wars

Future Foundation

Secret Invasion: Fantastic Four

Death

World War Hulk

Anti-registration movement

Invisible Woman

Sue, the Human Torch

The Invisible Woman received her powers after cosmic radiation had triggered mutagenic changes in her body. Originally only able to turn herself invisible, Sue later discovered she could
Invisibility
As the Invisible Woman, Susan can render herself wholly or partially invisible at will. She can also render other people or objects fully or partially invisible too, affecting up to 40,000 cubic feet (1,133 cubic meters) of volume. She achieves these feats by mentally bending all wavelengths of visible, infrared, and ultraviolet light to bend around herself or her target without causing any visible distortion effects. According to the Women of Marvel: Celebrating Seven Decades Handbook, Sue’s retinas don’t function conventionally and instead of just registering objects using reflected light, the retinas in Sue’s eyes also interpose shapes based on reflected cosmic rays, which in the Marvel Universe are always present in the atmosphere, granted usually only in small concentrations. This anomaly apparently allows her to perceive invisible people and objects, though she does not see them in colour since the cosmic-ray reflections bypass her eye’s rods and cones; her vision may also be monochromatic when she herself is invisible since her eyes do not reflect light in that state, though she otherwise seems to possess a full range of vision while she is invisible. She can also sense people or objects made invisible by scientific means, and can restore them to a visible state at will.

Force-field projection
Sue can also mentally generate a psionic field of invisible force apparently drawn from hyperspace, which she is able to manipulate for a variety of effects. For example, Sue can shape her fields into simplistic invisible constructs (e.g. barriers, clamps, columns, cones, cylinders, darts, discs, domes, platforms, ramps, ramps, slides, spheres, etc.) or generate a near-indestructible invisible force field around herself or her target. She can vary the texture and tensile strength of her field to some extent, rendering it rigid as steel or as soft and yielding as foam rubber; softer variants on the field enable her to cushion impacts more gently, and are less likely to result in psionic backlash against Susan herself (in some cases, sufficiently powerful assaults on her more rigid psionic fields can cause her mental or physical pain via psychic feedback). She is also able to make her shields opaque or translucent like milk glass to effectively block variations of light such as laser-beams, or make them semipermeable to filter oxygen from water though the latter is mentally taxing. She can generate solid force constructs as small as a marble or as large as 100 feet (30 m) in diameter, and her hollow projections such as domes can extend up to several miles in area.

By generating additional force behind her psionic constructs, Sue can turn them into offensive weapons, ranging from massive invisible battering rams to small projectiles such as spheres and darts. By forming one of her force fields within an object and expanding the field, Sue can cause her target to explode. She can also travel atop her animated constructs, enabling her to scale a limited approximation of levitation or flight. She can manipulate the energy of her force fields around other objects to simulate telekinetic abilities as well. She is capable of generating and manipulating multiple psionic force fields simultaneously. This power is only limited by her concentration; once she stops concentrating on a psionic force field, it simply ceases to exist.

Sue’s psionic force fields can also counteract or interact with other forces of psychic energy. For instance, when battling against Psi-Lord, an adult version of her own powers are influenced by her emotions, she manages to control her abilities during the team’s climactic battle with Von Doom. Sue accepts Richards’ proposal of marriage at the end of the film. In the sequel, Sue Storm’s wedding to Ben Grimm is interrupted by the arrival of the Skrull, a race of shapeshifting aliens who initially serves as a herald to the planet-consuming Galactus, but later decides to oppose Galactus’ attack upon Earth because Sue reminds him of the woman he loved back on his home world. While attempting to shield the Silver Surfer with a force field, Sue is stabbed through the chest by a spear created by a cosmic-powered Doctor Doom, and she dies in Reed’s arms. However, Silver Surfer uses his cosmic powers to heal her. After the Surfer successfully fends off Galactus, Sue and Reed marry.

Other versions

In other media

Television
- Invisible Woman appears in the 1967 Fantastic Four TV series voiced by Jo Ann Pflug.
- Invisible Woman is in the 1978 Fantastic Four TV series by Ginny Tyler.
- Invisible Woman appeared in the 1994 Fantastic Four animated series, voiced by Lori Alan. Where and where she and Reid Richards are already married before they got their powers.
- Invisible Woman appears toward the end of the 1994 Spider-Man TV series in the “Secret Wars” storyline, voiced by Gail Matthius. She and the Fantastic Four are among the heroes Spider-Man summons to a planet to help him against the villains the Beyonder brought there.
- Invisible Woman appears in Fantastic Four: World’s Greatest Heroes, voiced by Lara Gilchrist. It is the first Fantastic Four cartoon not to have Reed and Susan married at the beginning of the series.
- Invisible Woman appears in The Super Hero Squad Show, voiced by Tara Strong.
- Invisible Woman appears in The Avengers: Earth’s Mightiest Heroes, voiced by Erin Torpey. She appears in a brief cameo appearance in the episode “The Man Who Stole Tomorrow”. She later appears in the episode “The Private War of Doctor Doom” where she is friends with Wasp and both of them were captured by Doctor Doom’s Doombots and taken to Latveria where they were placed in a machine. The Avengers and the other members of the Fantastic Four were able to save both of them. The scans from Doctor Doom’s machine revealed that Invisible Woman is a Skrull in disguise. In the episode “Prisoner of War”, the real Invisible Woman is found by Captain America on the Skrull’s ship. Unlike the other prisoners, she is kept unconscious at all time because she is more powerful than the rest of them combined. After she is freed, she helps the others escape from the ship. In the episode “Secret Invasion,” Invisible Woman saves the Baxter Building from her Skrull counterpart.

Film
Sue Storm is portrayed by Jessica Alba in the 1994 film adaptation The Fantastic Four. This film portrays Sue very much as she was in the original comics; shy, reserved and infatuated with Reed. The film concludes with Reed and Sue’s marriage.

In the 2005 film Fantastic Four, Sue, a brilliant scientist, leads Victor Von Doom’s Department of Genetic Research. She is dating Von Doom at the beginning of the film. Immediately prior to the arrival of the cosmic storm which grants her the ability to manipulate light (allowing her to disappear and generate semi-visible force fields), Victor proposes to her: she turns him down. Unlike in other media, Sue was not able to render her normal clothes invisible which resulted in an embarrassing moment when Sue tried to disrobe to sneak through a crowd, only to reappear while still in her underwear. Although her powers are influenced by her emotions, she manages to control her abilities during the team’s climactic battle with Von Doom. Sue accepts Richards’ proposal of marriage at the end of the film. In the sequel, Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer, Sue Storm’s wedding to Mister Fantastic is interrupted by the arrival of the Silver Surfer, who initially serves as a herald to the planet-consuming Galactus, but later decides to oppose Galactus’ attack upon Earth because Sue reminds him of the woman he loved back on his home world. While attempting to shield the Silver Surfer with a force field, Sue is stabbed through the chest by a spear created by a cosmic-powered Doctor Doom, and she dies in Reed’s arms. However, Silver Surfer uses his cosmic powers to heal her. After the Surfer successfully fends off Galactus, Sue and Reed marry.

Video games
- Invisible Woman has appeared in numerous video games, usually accompanied by her brother and teammates, such as the 1997 video game for the original PlayStation.
- Invisible Woman appears in the Fantastic Four video game voiced by Jessica Alba. Her “classic” form is voiced by Grey DeLisle for bonus levels that can be unlocked in the first game.
- Invisible Woman appears in the Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer video game voiced by Erin Matthews.
- Invisible Woman has a cameo appearance in the Spider-Man game based on his 1990s animated series for Genesis and Super NES. By reaching certain levels of the game, she can be called a limited number of times for assistance. Here she makes Spider-Man temporarily invisible.
- Invisible Woman appears as a playable character in Marvel Ultimate Alliance, voiced by Danica McKellar. She can serve a variety of in-game roles as either a booster or buffer, unseen melee attacker, or a mid-to-long range fighter. Her classic, New Marvel, original and Ultimate costumes are available. She has special dialogue with Jean Grey, Black Bolt, Namor, Vision, and Uatu. A simulation disc has Invisible Woman fighting Radiant Man on the S.H.I.E.L.D. Helicarrier.
- Invisible Woman is a playable character in Marvel Ultimate Alliance 2 with Danica McKellar reprising her role. Her classic design is her default costume and her Ultimate design is her alternate costume.
- Invisible Woman appears as a playable character in the Marvel Super Hero Squad video game and its sequel Marvel Super Hero Squad: The Infinity Gauntlet with Tara Strong reprising her role as Invisible Woman.
In popular culture

In the Wildstorm series Planetary, written by Warren Ellis, the main adversaries of the eponymous team of superpowered investigators are an evil version of Marvel’s Fantastic Four called The Four. The Sue Storm analogue is Kim Suskind, who has exactly the same powers as the original, except that she has to wear a pair of goggles in order to see while invisible. The daughter of a Nazi scientist and lover of The Four’s leader, Randall Dowling, Suskind destroys her opponents by rapidly expanding a force field inside their heads.

Invisible Woman appeared in the Robot Chicken episode “Monstourage” voiced by Emmanuelle Chriqui. In the fight against Doctor Doom, she turned invisible only to be hit and dragged by a car. None of the other Fantastic Four members found out about this.

Rugrats introduced a parody character, Miss Invisible, in the episode “Mega Diaper Babies”; Lil also creates a similar superheroine form in the same episode, calling herself “Dotted-Line Girl”.

In The Simpsons episode “Treehouse of Horror XIV” segment titled “Stop the World, I want to Goof Off!”, there is a moment where the family is turned into members of the Fantastic 4. Maggie is the Invisible Woman.

Pamela Anderson appears as the Invisible Girl in Superhero Movie in which she has an affair with Professor X.

Reception

Invisible Woman was ranked as the 99th greatest comic book character of all time by Wizard magazine. IGN also ranked the Invisible Woman as the 66th greatest comic book hero of all time stating that ‘the Fantastic Four are nothing if not a dysfunctional family, and they need someone to hold that family together. That someone tends to be Susan Richards’.

Invisible Woman was ranked as the 99th greatest comic book character of all time by Wizard magazine.


^ 2.^ Stan Lee (w), Jack Kirby (a). “A Visit with the Fantastic Four” the Fantastic Four 1: 1-11 (February 1962), Marvel Comics.


^ 7.^ Derek “Fantastic Four #1

External links

Susan Storm on the Marvel Universe Character Bio Wiki
Ultimate Susan Storm on the Marvel Universe Character Bio Wiki
MDP: Susan Storm (Marvel Database Project)
Fantastic Four movie featurette - Sue Storm
Invisible Woman at Curlie
Invisible Woman at Don Markstein's Toonopedia, Archived from the original on September 17, 2016.

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Abi Morgan adapted Claire Tomalin’s book for “The Invisible Woman.” Set in Dickens’ era, the film explores the affair through Nelly’s perspective, highlighting her struggles amidst her privileged life. Although visually captivating, the narrative might feel incomplete.

In the Marvel Universe, Invisible Woman (Susan Storm Richards) utilizes her invisibility to protect Earth and serves as the primary maternal figure for the Fantastic Four. Born with the powers of invisibility, she became a protector and maternal figure after gaining additional abilities. Her story spans through multiple comics, and she is a key member of both the Fantastic Four and the Future Foundation. Her character showcases resilience in the face of loss.