

MARIE CURIOUS, GIRL GENIUS

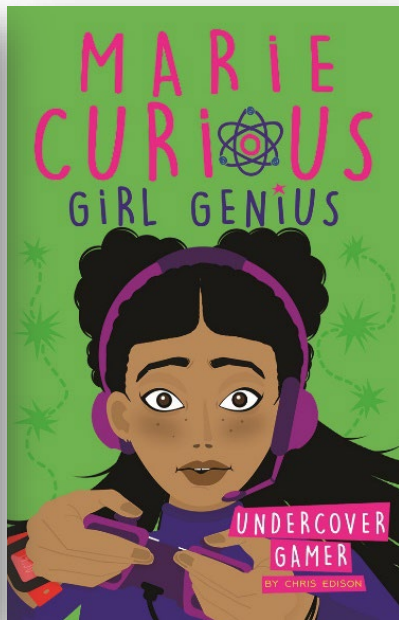
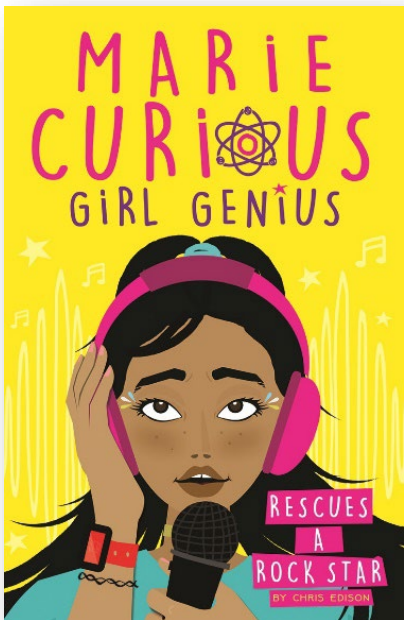
RESCUES A ROCK STAR * UNDERCOVER GAMER

Chris Edison

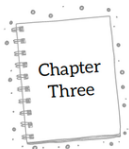
Series Fiction | Ages 8+ | Paperback | 5 x 7 | 240 - 256 pp | \$5.99

Rock Star ISBN: 978-1-68464-353-0 LOC: 2021930340 | Gamer ISBN: 978-1-68464-402-5 LOC: 2021938226

Marie Curious, girl genius, uses her science smarts - and her girl squad - to save the world from evil, one invention at a time.



- Lively, contemporary heroine.
- Action-filled adventure.
- Warm family and friend relationships.
- Positive problem-solving.



The blurry light shining in between the table legs told Marie it was morning. There was a thick, sweet smell in the air and the sound of animated conversation coming from the kitchen. She rubbed her eyes and saw that the other girls' bedding had been tidied neatly away. Two thoughts came into her head, hard on each other's heels:

Mum's making pancakes!

... Wait, am I the last one up?

"Mum?" she called.

"What kind of time do you call this?" came the merry response. "Come and eat breakfast before it goes cold!"



Marie bounded out of the sleeping bag, still in her PJs, and charged through to the kitchen. Her mother was sitting at the kitchen table, with Elisha, Gabby and Sophie alongside her.

As Marie started on her breakfast pancakes, the other girls chatted to her mum. They all seemed to be hitting it off fantastically. Marie felt her anxiety melting away like the chocolate chips in her pancakes. It was just as if they'd all known one another for years.

After breakfast, while Elisha worked on a sudoku puzzle with Dina, and Sophie did the dishes, Gabby started a complete overhaul of the household internet. "Who puts their router at the back of the house, on top of the microwave?" she said in exasperation.

"It's always been there?" Marie said with a shrug. Gabby was the tech genius, not her.

"Oh, honey. We can do so much better than this.



"Wow," she gasped.

Lynn nodded briskly. "Acceptable. Now try passing the crystal around. Get used to the feel of it."

Lynn tossed the crystal to Marie, who caught it easily. A small jolt went through her hands, but that was all. "It feels like holding nothing," she murmured.

"That's because it doesn't exist in the real world! Don't think about it too hard. Just play, and your brain will do the rest!"

Gabby held up her hands for a pass, so Marie threw the crystal to her. Gabby caught it, spun around on the spot, and threw it straight to Sophie, who yelped in surprise but still caught the crystal with both hands.

So far, so good, Marie thought.

"Let's try a goal run!" Lynn led the group through the twisting tunnels until they reached the enemy reactor. As they flew, they passed the crystal back and forth



between themselves, trying to get used to it.

For the next hour, they learned the rules of *Thunderzone Trials*. Marie's head ached from taking in so much new information. It turned out that scoring goals was the easy part. Players could also attack one another with a variety of silly weapons like slime bombs and bubblegum rockets. Marie and Sophie had fun squirting each other with jelly pistols until Lynn sternly told them to keep their minds on their training. The game was a lot of fun, but Marie knew many hours of coding work had gone into creating it.

Then, as if all that wasn't enough, they had character classes to learn about. Each character could choose from one of three possible classes. Strikers were fast-moving and lightly armored. Backers could support the other team members with boosts, and fire the crystal huge distances. Stoppers were a bit like goalies.



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