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**Marvel's  
The Defenders**  
ACTION  
**SERIES PREMIERE**  
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@TheDefenders

# MARVELOUS MENACE

Film icon Sigourney Weaver plays a woman so powerful it'll take four superheroes to stop her in the new Netflix series *Marvel's The Defenders*

BY MARISA ROFFMAN

**SHE NEEDED TO** be a worthy opponent. If four Marvel comic book heroes, all with their own shows—Daredevil/Matt Murdock (Charlie Cox), Jessica Jones (Krysten Ritter), Luke Cage (Mike Colter) and Iron Fist/Danny Rand (Finn Jones)—were going to team up for one superseries in *Marvel's The Defenders*, their foe had to be nothing short of legendary. Luckily, the person who plays that antagonist, Sigourney Weaver, knows a thing (or 10!) about bringing a formidable badass to the screen. We talked to Weaver about taking on Marvel newbie Alexandra—and while the actress is mostly sworn to secrecy, she gave us a couple of hints as to what her character does to get under the heroes' tough skins.



From left: Colter, Scott Glenn, Jones, Ritter and Cox

**You've obviously never been the type to stick your nose up at a sci-fi role, but what specifically drew you to playing Alexandra?** They wanted to create a very strong, intelligent, resourceful heroine as the adversary for these young people. So we moved away from the stereotypical ways a powerful woman is viewed, which is often cold, unfeeling—that feels unrealistic. It's really interesting to play someone who, at least in the structure of the story, is not on the "good" team. But that doesn't necessarily mean that she's on the bad team. I've certainly met people like her—mostly men.

She's a woman who has a certain amount of power that she enjoys wielding.

**How familiar were you with the Marvel/Netflix universe prior to this?** I wasn't familiar with these four, but I was delighted to be introduced to them. When we were in talks, they could only send me *Jessica Jones* and *Daredevil*. They're really superheroes with a small "s." They're not running around in capes trying to save the world from the apocalypse; it's all local. As such, it's much juicier, and easier to relate to. And I thought the writing was on a higher level. Jessica Jones is a great character—really the best created in the last few seasons. They write her beautifully, and

Krysten plays the hell out of her. The whole ensemble is amazing and I felt privileged to be a part of it.

**So what does Alexandra do to find herself coming up against not just one but four people with powers?** Alexandra has many interests in New York. At a certain point, these four start to get in her way. And when that happens, Alexandra actually enjoys it, because she does not have adversaries very often who she has trouble dealing with. I think she's been around for a long time and she's very smart, very strategic, very shrewd and very ruthless. But what I enjoyed most about playing Alexandra is that you don't necessarily see any of that. She's a white-gloved character. She's elegant, she's a great patron of the arts. She has put roots down in New York that she wants to keep and these whippersnappers are dancing around in areas where they don't belong. She hopes she can make it clear to them that they're being a bit silly.

**These comic series require a lot of action. Did you get to do any of your own stunts?** I did some fighting. But what I did can't hold a candle to what the four of them did with their extraordinary doubles. The choreography and power of some of these scenes was glorious to watch and be a part of. Alexandra has her own equally impressive way of dealing with things. But she uses those things in a different, less aerobic way. [Laughs] **Are you open to returning to the Marvel television world beyond this?** I did enjoy it so much. I loved shooting in New York and I loved working with everybody. So I think the door is not closed and locked; it might be ajar very slightly. [Laughs]