



The Kitchen

Ollie Masters , Ming Doyle (Illustrations)

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New York City, late 1970s. Times Square is a haven for sex and drugs. The city teeters on the verge of bankruptcy, while blackouts can strike at any moment. This is the world of THE KITCHEN.

The Irish gangs of Hell's Kitchen rule the neighborhood, bringing terror to the streets and doing the dirty work for the Italian Mafia. Jimmy Brennan and his crew were the hardest bastards in the Kitchen, but after they're all put in prison, their wives—Kath, Raven and Angie—decide to keep running their rackets. And once they get a taste of the fast life and easy money, it won't be easy to stop.

THE KITCHEN takes one of the most popular genres in entertainment and, like *The Sopranos*, reimagines it for a new generation to present a classic gangster story told from a fresh point of view.

Written by talented newcomer Ollie Masters with stunning art by Ming Doyle (*Mara*) and killer covers by Becky Cloonan (GOTHAM ACADEMY, *Killjoys*, DEMO), THE KITCHEN is not to be missed.

Collects THE KITCHEN #1-8.

The Kitchen Details

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From Reader Review The Kitchen for online ebook

Ksenia says

Got a bit confused at one moment but it was interesting to read about women trying to rule the streets.

Anne says

I'm not sure how many of you ~~abuse~~ use your library like I do, but I'm in mine quite a bit. Enough that some my librarians feel comfortable checking books out to me.

Books that I didn't actually walk up to the desk to get.

Yeah.

Oh, hey! I just finished this one! You'll love it! Here ya go.

BEEP. <---that was the sound of this graphic novel going on my card

Thanks, Danielle!

waves

I hate to admit it, but she was right. I *did* end up enjoying **The Kitchen**.

It's a story about 3 ladies who take over running the family business for their mob(ish) husbands, when the men get sent to the pokey. As criminals do...

Now, it's not exactly a heartwarming tale of love and redemption, but fans of those gritty crime stories might enjoy this one. Normally, I wouldn't lump myself into that group, but I'll make an exception for this story because

A) it's a story told with pictures

and

B) it's a SHORT story told with pictures

Are you noticing a theme here?

Right.

Anyhoo, it starts off with our gals just trying to make ends meet while their fellas are in jail, but quickly turns into...more.

It seems that the three of them are kinda good at this sort of thing. Maybe even better than their boys. So, what happens when the men come home? Do they go back to grocery shopping & doing laundry?

Um. No.

Claire says

This is a comic that I've been looking forward to reading for months. Overall I'm not disappointed, but I'm only giving it four instead of five stars because the ending was predictable. Yawwwwn.

Chad says

This book is fantastic. It could easily have been storyboards for Scorsese's next movie. Set in 1970's era Hell's Kitchen, back when New York was still dirty and crime-ridden. Three wives are left to their own devices when their connected husbands are sent to the pokey. They decide to continue the family protection racket and discover they are quite good at it. When their husbands get out of prison the last thing they want to do is go back to being housewives.

Katie McGuire says

Most of these stars are coming from my love of any media set in the 1970s. I'm not sure why that has become my favorite decade of American history to explore, but I find it absolutely fascinating — and a story about three housewives-turned-gangsters in Hell's Kitchen in the 70s is exactly the story I want to read. It was a quick read without too much depth and a fairly hasty resolution, but worth the read if only for the gorgeously drawn Farrah hair and bell bottoms.

47Time says

The tension of the story seems legit. The main characters try to continue business as usual for their incarcerated husbands' turf in Hell's Kitchen, but solving each problem brings a greater obstacle. You just know something is going to blow up in their face eventually, but the trip is still entertaining. Spoiler: pretty much everybody dies at the end. It's beautiful how the author didn't leave any loose threads, so there likely won't be a sequel.

With her gangster husband behind bars, Kath gets Raven and Angie, also wives with imprisoned gangster husbands, to collect the protection money. While most businesses simply cut off some money off the top, one of them run by Franky refuses to pay altogether. Kath applies what she has learned from her husband and puts the owner in the hospital. What she doesn't know is that Franky is the brother of a made man. This causes all sorts of complications.

(view spoiler)

Jes says

This is a really interesting character study, but I think I expected it to be more dense? I feel like it would have benefited from having a couple more issues. The covers, though. Becky Cloonan is the best.

Abi (The Knights Who Say Book) says

(3.5) When Kath, Raven and Angie's husbands are sent to jail, the three women take it upon themselves to take over their business, owning all the violence and danger that comes with it. And if the rest of the city, the rival gangs, and their own husbands can't accept that, they'll all have to find out just how ruthless the new planner, dealmaker, and hitter can be.

I really enjoyed this. Three women figuring out their strengths and goals in life, combined with the things I loved about The Godfather (without all the things I hated about The Godfather)? Yes, yes, please yes. It's not my favorite comic ever (the ending wasn't where I would have preferred for it to go) but it was a good read.

James DeSantis says

This is the story about three wives who take over for their mobster boyfriends. Funny enough there's a movie out now called "Widows" that has a similar idea but more about robbing banks. This is basically Irish/Italian mobster storylines.

So when these wives all team up they begin to take over their husbands business. Collecting, putting the fear in advisories, and building a empire. However, the deeper they get into the mob life the worse it gets. They drift apart, some becoming more evil than others, till the point where everyone is out for themselves.

Good: The storyline is actually pretty good despite doing similar stories of the past. The way each character changes is pretty neat, and the body count is super high so lots of surprise deaths. I also enjoyed the ending as it was as dark as expected.

Bad: The art is okayish. Some moments are great but the sketchy art sometimes makes action moments hard to follow. I also thought it felt a bit rushed in the last issue, probably needed one extra issue.

Overall enjoyable, a surprise actually, and something a bit different. A 3.5 out of 5.

Sam Quixote says

Hell's Kitchen, the 1970s: Irish and Italian mobsters, dirty streets, crime, money, power (you can practically hear Gimme Shelter fading in)... now imagine the mobsters have vaginas! Whaaaaaaaaaa... Mind. Blown.

Yup, The Kitchen (and its tagline - A Woman's Work Is Never Done - both flippin' the script on patriarchy!) is all about lady gangsters. And that's the whole concept. Besides that it's a competent, if generic, mob story with little in the way of originality going for it.

Our trio start out as hopeless debt collectors, nervously making cash pickups while their husbands are in the slammer, eventually becoming crime lynchpins themselves. It's the standard rise and fall arc that's a staple of gangster stories though I will say I wasn't bored reading it – the female angle works to hold the interest up to an extent.

There's some decent character work on at least one of the women (Raven) while the other two remain more or less forgettable wallflowers. The other characters though? The very definition of cookie cutter characters: the hooker with a heart of gold; the male love interest (who at least isn't a cop, working that star-crossed lovers angle); the fat Italian mob boss who's actually introduced eating a plate of pasta. Gee. Neric. No cop characters at all though - where the hell were the cops anyway? Were there just none in Noo Yawk City in the '70s? It felt lazy of writer Ollie Masters to leave out/ignore this element entirely in a crime story.

Artist Ming Doyle draws some good pages that Jordie Bellaire colours well. Becky Cloonan's covers are pretty good too. If I don't sound too enthused about the art it's because, like Master's script, it's just not doing anything very exciting, but, also like the script, it wasn't bad.

I'd recommend The Kitchen if all you're after is a perfectly acceptable, if unmemorable, '70s mob story, but what would've been better is if the creative team had done something more original with the concept than simply substituting male protagonists for female.

Zedsdead says

Rosie the Riveter joins the mob.

When three Hell's Kitchen mobsters go to prison, their wives take over their collection racket. Initially exhilarating, the life soon becomes complicated, bleak, and treacherous. Do they return to the kitchen when their husbands are released? Or should they fight to hang on to the lives they've carved out for themselves?

It's a great story, and Masters pulls no punches. The women adopt a necessarily violent lifestyle and they each respond differently to the everyday duplicity and barbarity of their new profession.

It's a shame that the storytelling doesn't live up to the story. The narration is monotonous and obvious, telling the reader what we're seeing depicted in the panels. I don't like it when a book assumes I'm dumb (even if I am).

The visual design of the 70s setting is detailed and marvelous, but beyond that the illustration is pedestrian. Action sequences are disjointed. The male mobsters are all kind of a confusing blur...Johnny, Jimmy, Tommy, Tony, even their names kind of sound the same.

It's a solid read but it could have been better.

||Swaroop|| says

How long can you live on **someone else's** name?

Set in the 1970s New York, The Kitchen is the story of the wives of three gangsters. The wives take over the Irish mob and, as it turns out, they do very well at it!

A well-illustrated and interesting graphic novel.

Gina says

This graphic novel follows 3 mob wives in 1970's Hell's Kitchen, NY whose husbands are sent to prison. They decide to take over their husbands' protection racket, first using their husbands' violent reputations to collect but quickly realizing they have to build their own.

There's a lot to unpack in here given the time period, feminism, and female rage. The subtle allegory on top of violent imagery is well done. The ending goes somewhere I didn't expect at all, and I'm still not sure how I feel about it. Beautiful artwork, but as the storyline devolves into more violence it becomes harder to tell the characters apart. While I think this was intentional, it made the plot a little hard to follow.

Dave says

It's definitely the Seventies, all style and flash, and Charlie's Angels are running a crew out of Hell's Kitchen. But, those Angels were never this hard and tough and ruthless. It's a twisted Mafia story with three ladies taking over their husbands' loan sharing and protection rackets. Tough, nasty, and vicious.

Logan says

Okay. So the premise, is pretty good, mafia men are in jail, and their wives, take over. Sounds like a female progressive, Sopranos. Well its good premise, but this book falls short of that. The story does have good moments, but the dialogue and story feels more like desperate housewives then Sopranos. One pro is the artwork, I really enjoyed it, looked a lot like a tell tale game series. But ya in the ends this an okay read, it fell short when reaching for a gold and got a bronze.
