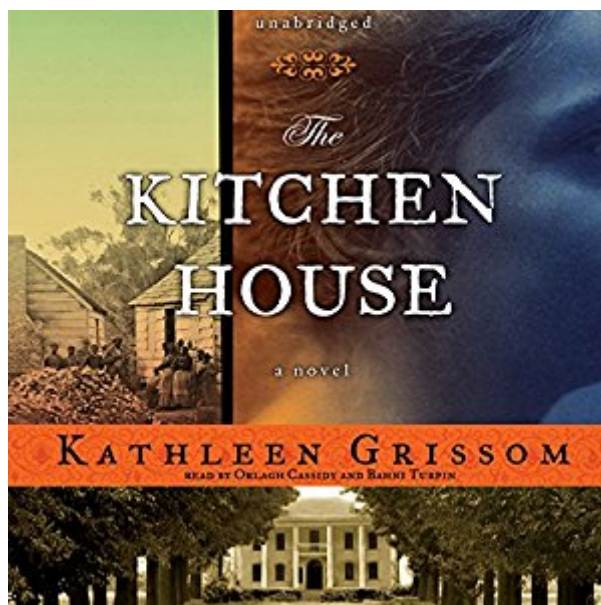


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# The Kitchen House: A Novel



## Synopsis

[This is the Audiobook CD Library Edition in vinyl case] This stunning debut novel set in the antebellum South, is a tragic story of page-turning suspense, exploring the meaning of family, where love and loyalty prevail. Orphaned while onboard a ship from Ireland, seven-year-old Lavinia arrives on the steps of a tobacco plantation where she is to live and work with the slaves of the kitchen house. Under the care of Belle, the master's illegitimate daughter, Lavinia deeply bonds with her adopted family, though she is set apart from them by her white skin. Eventually, Lavinia is accepted into the world of the big house and she finds herself perilously straddling two very different worlds. When she is forced to make a choice, loyalties are brought into question, dangerous truths are laid bare, and lives are put at risk. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 12 hours 55 minutes

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Version: Unabridged

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Whispersync for Voice: Ready

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Best Sellers Rank: #109 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Historical Fiction #381 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Coming of Age #394 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Family Saga

## Customer Reviews

This historical fiction touches on slavery in the south in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This is the period usually undocumented in novels. Not only does it touch on the use of Irish indentured servants in the south, but also the complicated and shockingly brutal and tragic treatment of many of the slaves on the southern plantations in what became the acceptable way of southern plantation life before the Civil War. The extensive research done by the author is evident in the details, characters, and plot development of this novel. I found it well written and well developed in content, character, and plot.

A well researched, historically accurate and heartbreaking story of survival and the boundless love of a mother, even for children not biologically her own. The story redefines the concept of family, showing how love can transcend traditional expectations. This is a book that grabs you by the heart and doesn't let go, even when you have finished reading. The characters feel very real in their flaws, failures, and tenacity to survive unbearable circumstances. The story is written from the perspective of two different women, which succeeds as a great device to make the story rich, full of life and terror, sorrow and love. Don't expect to be able to easily put this book down. The reader becomes so entrenched in the story, and so hopeful for a positive outcome for the characters, that it becomes a story that is hard to break away from, because you become part of their world.

I started this book and couldn't put it down. I really enjoyed the sophisticated simple way of writing the authors style displayed. The characters were instantly relatable and I connected with all of them. There are some heavy and sad themes in the shadow of America's original sin of slavery. Child abuse, sadistic behaviors, mental illness and alcoholism just to name a few. My favorite concept is the reminder that human beings can have and always will make deep connections with people they identify and feel safe with regardless of race.

I don't know what the critic Tina means with her comments as I think Kathleen Grissom is a fabulous writer & her extensive research must be evident! I loved this book from beginning to end and connected totally with the characters. It's one of those novels you just hate to put down, let alone end! Fortunately, for her new fans, she followed it up with, *Glory Over Everything*. I have now just finished the 2nd novel which picks up on some characters from the 1st novel and follows their stories! I lost a lot of sleep over these 2 novels but it was worth it! I loved Kathleen's writing style and it is hard to believe that *The Kitchen House* was her very first novel. Also making me happy is the fact she is now engrossed in writing another book about a Native American, which I can't wait to read. Thank you, Kathleen, for sharing your beautiful talent!

Hands down one of the best books EVER! Since purchasing my Kindle three and a half years ago I've read more than 150 books. This book ranks in the top five. Try as I might, I never could figure out each character's thoughts or actions. I've read "The Help," "Crooked Letter Crooked Letter," and "Mudbound" each dealing with race relations in the South. As good as these books were they pale in comparison to this book. No spoiler here but the last 40 or 50 pages were such that I skimmed through them merely to finish the book, returning to read it more slowly after finding out how the

book ended. I'm not in a book club but this is one that should appeal to all ages and readers.

This is the story of a young girl, Lavinia, who while seven years old, onboard a ship from Ireland, loses her family. In the first pages of the book, she is being taken by the master of a plantation to work at his home as a servant. She is placed with the slaves, grows up with strong, Black women who, while battling their own demons, teach her about life and love. I have found that long after I read this, the characters stayed with me. It's not a happy, feel-good book, but is historically accurate, as far as I know, for the times. It reminds me very much of "The Help" but goes more into the heart and mind of the oppressed. I found myself very vested in what would become of Lavinia, Papa, Belle, and Mama. Plenty of action to keep the story moving along. Well worth the read.

Highly recommended read. Bought a few and gave as gifts. Everyone else loved it too. One person stopped reading it fearing it would be too dark of a read. When I encouraged her to read on, she was glad she did. You start out thinking you know the plight of one of the characters, yet you are wrong. It's not a predictable outcome. Characters are beautifully developed. I found myself looking forward to finding out more about them every night (when I read) and was sad to miss them when the book was over. It's story of grief, suffering and terrible atrocities, dysfunctional and functional families, acceptance, strong bonds of love and hope. It has characters who are born into power and privilege who abuse it and those who use it for good. It has characters born into oppression who crumble, fight or calmly stand tall. The two main characters fall somewhere between the two areas with each placed more into each side ~ a white orphaned female being raised by black slaves, and a black female who is denied her birthright to privilege... Again ~ I say it is not predictable ;-) Read it - you'll be very glad you did.

This is an intense and interesting story of slavery in Virginia. The characters have depth and I became attached to Lavinia and Belle. I learned about the Irish immigrants who became white slaves. The last half of the book is riveting, a true page turner!

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