

The Kitchen House: A Novel

Kathleen Grissom

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In this gripping New York Times bestseller, Kathleen Grissom brings to life a thriving plantation in Virginia in the decades before the Civil War, where a dark secret threatens to expose the best and worst in everyone tied to the estate.

Orphaned during her passage from Ireland, young, white Lavinia arrives on the steps of the kitchen house and is placed, as an indentured servant, under the care of Belle, the master's illegitimate slave daughter. Lavinia learns to cook, clean, and serve food, while guided by the quiet strength and love of her new family.

In time, Lavinia is accepted into the world of the big house, caring for the master's opium-addicted wife and befriending his dangerous yet protective son. She attempts to straddle the worlds of the kitchen and big house, but her skin color will forever set her apart from Belle and the other slaves.

Through the unique eyes of Lavinia and Belle, Grissom's debut novel unfolds in a heartbreaking and ultimately hopeful story of class, race, dignity, deep-buried secrets, and familial bonds.



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