



Red Sonja, Vol. 3: The Forgiving of Monsters

Gail Simone (Writer) , Walter Geovani (Illustrator) , Jenny Frison (Illustrator)

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From the acclaimed creative team of Gail Simone (Birds of Prey, Batgirl) and Walter Geovani comes an all-new Red Sonja epic that will shake the She-Devil to her core! While the Hyrkanian warrior aids a small village against the ravages of a rampant parasite, she picks up the trail of the man she hates and distrusts most in the world: the last survivor of the marauders who murdered her family. In the grip of a vengeful obsession that is all-consuming, the heroine barely recognizes herself. Can even the unconquerable Red Sonja return from a darkness so complete? Includes an extensive cover gallery by talented female artists, hand-picked by Gail Simone, including Jenny Frison, Stephanie Buscema, Renae De Liz, Yasmin Liang, Emma Vieceli, Cat Staggs, Rebecca Isaacs, and Adriana Melo.

Red Sonja, Vol. 3: The Forgiving of Monsters Details

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Author : Gail Simone (Writer) , Walter Geovani (Illustrator) , Jenny Frison (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Red Sonja, Vol. 3: The Forgiving of Monsters for online ebook

Patrick says

3 and a half stars.
Do not mess with Red Sonja.
I haven't read much Red Sonja, but I will.
Solid story telling mixed some good action equals a good trade.

I received an advanced copy of this from NetGalley.com and the publisher.

Ana says

I love Red Sonja with short hair!!!

David says

Hmm. Okay, I'm going to have to downgrade this third and final volume of Gail Simone's *Red Sonja* run. A few things that have bothered me about her writing from the beginning really gnawed at me here, culminating in the final pages in which she seems to be attempting to assuage the feminist guilt she's been feeling for writing a swords & sorcery adventure about a red-headed pin-up who runs around fighting battles in a chainmail bikini.

Sonja's character development, it must be said, has been pretty consistent, and while there's still a touch of "Conan with tits" in her bawdy barbarian revelry, as Simone has made it a running gag throughout the series that Sonja's first priority after skewering bad guys is to find a tavern, get drunk, and get laid, in that order (and from the illustrations, it's implied she's not too particular about gender), there have also been several storylines in which Sonja has to get in touch with... well, her feminine side. Or at least the non-bloodletting side who occasionally contemplates what it would have been like to be a girl who didn't grow up killing everything that tried to touch her.

In this volume, the story starts with Sonja killing yet another evil sorcerer. Because in Hyborea, sorcerers gonna evil, and sword-wielding barbarians gonna kill them. Of course the sorcerer has a brother, who is also an evil sorcerer, so he goes around terrorizing hapless villagers until Sonja kills him too. In between, there's a curse in which Sonja acts like a violent psychopath before deciding she doesn't believe in curses, which actually turns out to be a nice little story about the power of forgiveness.

Then, there's Sonja defending a library defended by a bunch of nuns against an evil Queen Bathory type, which dredges up some more of Sonja's childhood issues like being only semi-literate and not quite getting the whole "books" thing.

So yes, there were touching moments, but I remain somewhat unimpressed by how Simone borrows the names of Robert E. Howard's Hyborean cultures, but not much else - this is basically a D&D world where Egyptian pharaohs coexist with feudal lords and Dark Ages knights, barbarians, and priests and nuns.

Also, Sonja becomes *such* a bad-ass that after going through the obligatory paces of hacking down intermediate bosses before reaching the Big Boss, the Big Boss, having spent his wad, is generally left wailing "No! No! No!" and pleading for his life and otherwise just kind of haplessly lying there waiting for Sonja to finish him off. As opposed to, I dunno, running or fighting or throwing another curse? It happens repeatedly, whether it's an archer or a sorcerer or another swordsman. Like Sonja is some kind of unstoppable Michael Meyers and once she's stalking you, all you can do is face your doom.

The bottom line is, Red Sonja, love her or hate her, is 100% cheesecake designed by and for the so-called "Male Gaze." She is a bad-ass warrior woman and so just like other superheroines, she can be inspiring and a figure of female empowerment, but just like those melon-breasted super-babes in their painted-on spandex costumes, you cannot escape the fact that Sonja's pulchritude is deliberately on display, because even if Simone puts a few lines in Sonja's mouth to hang a lampshade on her choice of lightly armored lingerie, she's still *wearing a damn chainmail bikini*. And it was evident by the end of this series that Simone was never quite able to make peace with that, which is, in my opinion, why she has Sonja hack her hair short to ride off in the last few panels wearing a pixie bob, almost like a masculine defeminizing of her infamous red locks. Or, one suspects, just a teeny tiny middle finger raised to all those fanboys who are reading Red Sonja 'cause they like hot chicks in chainmail bikinis.

Red Sonja: a guilty pleasure who's far more pleasurable without the guilt.

Sam Quixote says

The Forgiving of Monsters is the third and final volume in Gail Simone and Walter Geovani's wonderful Red Sonja run. Unfortunately, they close out with an uninspired last gasp.

Sonja kills an evil sorcerer who curses her with the inability to forgive. To me, something that vague doesn't mean that if someone asks you to forgive them, you stomp them half to death, but then I suppose there's no story if Sonja just shrugged and ignored whoever was asking her forgiveness; it's necessary but still a contrivance. She's also tested when she happens across the last survivor of the group who murdered her family when she was a lass. In the second and final story she defends a library run by nuns from a trio of assassins and a generically evil queen. Ho hum.

Unlike the last two books, I can't say I was ever interested in the least by the stories in this volume. I mean, will Sonja ever learn to forgive again – really? She also fights Death, which is very metal, but even so, she's been unstoppable thus far, it's hardly tense to see her go up against a force of nature. Of course she's going to win! Of course she's going to overcome the curse, save everyone, and learn a lesson, etc. etc.

I liked the small touch of Sonja curling up on the lap of the surprised nun as she begins to read her a story – it says so much about her character in that one panel. Besides Sonja though, every other character is one-dimensional and boring. The villains are pantomime-level bad, while everyone else is utterly forgettable.

Though Simone's script is poor, Walter Geovani's art is as high quality as it's been throughout the three books. The sorcerer brothers' designs were over the top and amazing and I loved his Death. Sonja's self-inflicted injury on her hands though was ridiculous; if you burned your flesh off so you had nothing but bone, there's no way you could live without the infection killing you, let alone still being able to use your hands! Jenny Frison's covers continue to be a highlight and I love Sonja's awesome new haircut.

Gail Simone and Walter Geovani's Red Sonja has been a brilliant title but ends on a bit of an unimpressive note. The third volume may be lacking but the first two books are really something – I recommend fantasy

comics fans check those out instead.

Geniece says

A great continuation of the Red Sonja that I have been reading. I love how bad ass she is!

Brandon says

The end of Gail Simone's run on this series was not here strongest. The writing was a little preachy and heavy-handed and lacked the fun of the previous installments. The book is still a fun read involving wizards and giant snakes and evil empresses but they lacked the energy of the previous books. The artwork was the best thing about this book. It has good throughout but in this volume, it saves the day. The sequence where Sonja fights with Death is particularly memorable as are the new characters. The artwork stands out in a cinematic style with some great coloring - if only the writing was as strong.

Jana says

I love Gail Simone's run with Red Sonja. In Simone's hands, she's terrifying, lethal, kind, and best of all, completely willing to own up to her mistakes and missteps. And Walter Geovani's artwork is just chef-kiss perfect in every single panel. While I'm sad that this pair only worked together for eighteen issues (I would have happily read another hundred or more), I can't recommend their Red Sonja run highly enough.

Sesana says

(Received from Netgalley for review.)

Sadly, the least of Gail Simone's run on Red Sonja. The biggest storyline is just kind of ok. The message of forgiveness is kind of heavy handed. But it isn't actually terrible, and I liked the story with the library. Sure, it was a little cheesy, but it was fun, and it actually said a lot about Sonja as a character. I guess what I'm taking away from Simone's whole run on this book is that I like Sonja as a character, as Simone writes her, but I'm still not terribly into the whole swords and sorcery thing.

David Turko says

This is the end of Gail Simone's run of Red Sonja. It was still great to see Gail Simone keep up the pace with the character and story. Also this volume has one of the most grizzly/gnarly scenes I've seen in a comic book for quite some time. So props to Simone for making this book go metal, which it does a handful of times. I think the biggest complaint I have with this book is that the story essentially ends midway through the book and Gail decides to tack on another story that is two or three issues. But that's okay, because this still was a great book.

Burgoo says

A very satisfying run to Simone's run on the character.

<http://fedpeaches.blogspot.com/2016/0...>

Gianfranco Mancini says

I hated a lot this Red Sonja reboot: the radical origin story change, her new Conan the Barbarian "Fight, drink, bed" attitude, almost no references to the Hyborian setting but for a few names and villains and creatures seeming more out from a D&D fantasy campaign... but the storyline of Sonja battling a chainmail bikini clad Death and using that too-much-open-armour to win was just 100% heavy metal! Loved it.

Final vote: 3,5

Kate says

3.5*

Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book through Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

This is the final volume in the Simone/Geovani Sonja collaboration and whilst it's enjoyable it does end the short series quite abruptly. In this volume Sonja is cursed with not being able to forgive and finally meets the man who was responsible for her families demise.

The second story sees her going up against an evil empress to protect a library and the nuns who live there.

I do love Sonja, especially her bawdiness and humour but whilst I liked it a lot it didn't come close to the other volumes. I thought the stories were a lot weaker in this volume and it felt like it had been done before in the series. I found it difficult to connect with any of the other characters, none of them were fleshed out enough.

I also thought the art was a bit inconsistent in quality with some panels being really well detailed but other almost being a bit out of focus and there was a problem with font colour which was mostly black but occasionally was a very light yellow making it almost impossible to read. Hopefully the publishers will sort this out before publication and perhaps the lack of clarity in the illustrations could be put down to the pdf transfer.

Not the best volume to go out on but still a worthwhile read.

Wayne McCoy says

'Red Sonja Volume 3: The Forging of Monsters' end the run by Gail Simone. I've been able to read most of

it, and it's been some of the better comics I've read, and certainly the best I've read of this character.

When a village hires Sonja to do a job, she ends up with a strange curse. She is cursed never to forgive. She doesn't believe in curses, but when she sees the results of such a life, it frightens her. This is also complicated by someone from her past that she runs into. She sees a man who helped kill her family. Sonja has hunted all of the people responsible for her family's death down except this man. She can't forgive him, curse or no. He evades her again as the village is threatened. Will Sonja pursue her revenge or save the village.

There is a back up story in which Sonja has to help a religious order save their library. She thinks this is a stupid job because they are just books, but when one of the stories speaks to her, it gives her the courage to fight back.

I will miss this writer with this character. I feel like the character got taken to a new level under Gail Simone and I hope whoever takes over next builds on that. The writing is smart and the art is also good.

I received a review copy of this graphic novel from Dynamite, Diamond Book Distributors, and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you for allowing me to review this graphic novel.

Kelly W. says

I very much enjoyed this series as a whole, and I'm glad my intro into Red Sonja comics was at the hands of Gail Simone. But despite the fun I had reading these volumes, this last one left me wanting. Perhaps it's due to the length of the run, or perhaps it's just the way the creative team wanted to produce everything, but I was hoping for more of a bang to end the series. Don't get me wrong - it was still fun. It just didn't feel like an ending.

Things I Liked

1. Storyline Focused on Books and Education: Always assume that if the story is about protecting books, valuing books, or valuing girls' education, I'll be all over it. I loved that this story was a detour from Sonja's usual adventures, and despite the character not valuing books and reading at all, she finally came around to it and learned to appreciate stories. She even uses a story from a book as inspiration to defeat her enemy!
2. Sonja's Selflessness: The storyline with the wizard's curse was one that I wished I could see more of. Sonja is cursed with the inability to forgive, and though it has the potential to destroy everyone around her, she elects to destroy herself rather than hurt innocent people. A bit dark, but I found it a touching story about Sonja's big heart. Despite her rugged appearance and barbarian behavior, she really does care about people under it all.
3. Havan: What a loyal sweetheart! Havan is Sonja's apprentice/companion for the length of the wizard arc, and I found him to be one of the most delightful characters in the whole series. He's loyal and truly cares for Sonja, not just the image she represents. He also gets to be a badass and burn a dragon thing.

Things I Didn't Like

1. Organization: Honestly, this series might have ended better for me if the stories were flipped - if the story about the books came first and then the story about the wizard's curse. At the end of the wizard's curse arc, Sonja is reunited with her friends, and there's much made about her connection to people. I think that's a way more exciting ending to tie the series together than what we got.

2. Pace: To really make the curse arc feel more serious and weighted, I would have liked to see it play out a little more.

Recommendations: I would recommend this book if you're interested in barbarians (characters), sword maidens, warrior women, magic, wizards, sorcery, books, reading, and the power of stories.

The Sapphic Nerd says

"Hello Death. They call me the Devil."

In the first arc, Sonja kills a wizard who's been terrorizing a village and ends up cursed never to forgive. Somehow she's able to break the curse out of sheer will, but has to battle death from an infection. The outpouring of love and support for Sonia and her stubborn will to live got me a little emotional. And the return of an old friend had me gasp!

The second arc has Sonja defending a library against an evil empress and learning the value of written words. It also brings the story to a close with the penning of her own story and a hot new haircut!

While I'm sad Gail Simone's run of Red Sonja is over, I'm glad we got this much from her! Simone writes the character like she deserves, and I hope future writers follow her lead.
