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When Hazel Johnson and Mari McCray met at church bingo in 1963, it was love at first sight. Forced apart by their families and society, Hazel and Mari both married young men and had families. Decades later, now in their mid-'60s, Hazel and Mari reunite again at a church bingo hall. Realizing their love for each other is still alive, what these grandmothers do next takes absolute strength and courage.

From TEE FRANKLIN (NAILBITER's "THE OUTFIT," Love is Love) and JENN ST-ONGE (Jem & the Misfits), BINGO LOVE is a touching story of love, family, and resiliency that spans over 60 years.

## Bingo Love Details

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Author : Tee Franklin , Jenn St-Onge (Artist) , Joy San (Colorist) , Cardinal Rae (Letterer)

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# From Reader Review Bingo Love for online ebook

## ambyr says

The art is the best thing about this book--fluid, colorful, bold, expressive. The writing, I thought, could have used some more work; the dialogue is painfully stilted in places, and the strong opening frame story never closes, leaving the reader awkwardly hanging. But I'm glad the story exists in the world.

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## Claire says

All the stars. My queer little heart wept a river. ♥?

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## Adiba Jaigirdar says

This was so freaking adorable! Plus, the art was absolutely beautiful and so colourful. I loved the two main characters - especially Hazel.

The writing was kind of awkward at times. Thee dialogue wasn't always super realistic and I wish some of the characters were developed a little better. But honestly the book was so cute I will overlook all of that.

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## Sara says

I'm really torn with this one. I'm giving it 2.5 stars. The artwork is absolutely terrific and its wonderful to see such a heartfelt romance with queer characters but the story and supporting characters just don't work for me.

The concept is lovely. We meet Elle, an elderly woman living in the year 2038 who is comforting an unidentified young woman who's parents have just kicked her out of the house for being gay. To comfort this person Elle tells her own story of meeting the love of her life when she was a girl in 1963. She and her "honey glazed goddess" Mari are best friends for years before confessing their love to one another but when their parents discover their relationship they're forcibly separated and basically forced into arranged marriages unless they want to be disowned.

This is where things fall apart narratively for me. I'm totally on board with their situation and the way its portrayed. Watching their friendship grow into the bliss of first love is very sweet. Its heartbreaking and infuriating to see these two lovely women who's only crime is being in love treated so horribly by their families. But everything happens very, very, very fast and the story starts to get sloppy.

Elle marries a man (who she tells us she loves) and has three kids. She decides (without talking to her husband) that he only wants to be intimate with her to have kids so they only have sex three times in their whole marriage. This is his fault. So she lives this lie for decades before abruptly running into Mari at the same bingo game they met at years before. Then in front of her children she abruptly starts making out with Mari. When her daughter (completely justifiably) freaks the hell out Elle pulls the old "you watch who you're

talking to young lady" trope out and suddenly this very nice, sympathetic character becomes very unlikable.

Just from a storytelling perspective I have issues with this. Both Elle and Mari very quickly become totally selfish people under the guise of abandoning all their responsibilities with no apparent remorse in the name of love. All it would have taken was some sense that they have some responsibility in where they've ended up. They married people with feelings and needs of their own who might have rather been married to someone who could actually love them completely rather than lying to them for a lifetime. It makes them richer, more believable and ultimately more sympathetic characters to have them confront that part of their story. Their spouses and children are just kind of universally labeled as "haters" for not immediately jumping for joy when their lives are all completely upended. Neither Mari or Elle are ever responsible for anything. It feels very false.

It all just ends up being kind of trite and like a soap opera. There's also some very, very random science fiction elements kind of shoehorned in that make literally no sense whatsoever.

I really, really wanted to like this more than I did and I greatly admire the artists for working to get a story like this out there. I just wish it wasn't ultimately so disjointed and well silly.

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## **Erica says**

Well.

That's a depressing beginning.

2038 and parents are still kicking kids out of their homes because of whom the kids love.

Is there no hope?

I think that's one of the reasons for this book - there *is* hope!

If that's what you're looking for, you may find it in this book.

As you can see by the cover, this is full of delightful pictures.

You can also tell that it touches on several topics: Women of color in love with each other from childhood on into their retirement years.

This is a necessary story.

And it's obviously a wanted story - it was backed in 5 days on Kickstarter and got nearly 3 times the goal amount.

I am not the intended audience and, as such, my review is based on my readerly reactions, not any emotional attachment to the contents.

The writing is not strong. We follow Hazel Johnson's journey from a love-struck 13-year-old to a grown woman who puts herself aside for her husband and family to her reconnection with the love of her life in her later years. Without the illustrations, though, we would have no idea what Hazel is feeling, despite her mechanical explanations of emotions. It's clunky with herky dialogue and jerky pacing. It's almost clinical in the way it does not allow for character-building. It relies too heavily on clichés - the oppressive 1960's grandmothers, tense mother/daughter relationships, the role of grandchildren in the lives of people who were

repressed by their elders.

Still, I recommend this.

It highlights women of color, same-sex relationships and some of the struggles surrounding people in said relationships, romantic relationships for people in their later years, and, somewhat surprisingly, end of life care. There's even some pictorial commentary on breastfeeding.

The story has a solid premise and the illustrations are worth the price of entry.

NOTE:

Toward the end, there's an editor's note in one of the panels that says *Find out what James was hiding in Bingo Love: Secrets by Shawn Pryor and DJ Kirkland, a digital release.*

When I went looking for it, I found a March 16, 2018 update on the Kickstarter page that says *Howdy folks. I'm very sorry to share with you some news from DJ Kirkland. Unfortunately due to unforeseen scheduling conflicts, he will be unable to continue and complete the free bonus Bingo Love story entitled Secrets.*

*Writer Shawn Pryor, myself, DJ, and the Bingo Love team were extremely excited to share the story of James' secret with you all, but alas DJ won't be able to work his magic. Shawn and I hope it can still be brought to life in the future, as it is a beautiful, touching and caring story written by Shawn.*

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### **Melissa says**

I highly recommend you have some tissues with you while reading this! What a beautiful love story and usually love stories make me roll my eyes(hard) but not this one, this one actually touched my heart and I was pretty sure my heart was dead.

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### **Krista Regester says**

There's a lot of diverse representation in this - I liked the queer love story between the two main characters, Hazel and Mari. Although, I felt that the writing didn't flow as well as it could have. The text felt too scripted and awkward at times.

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### **Chelsea (chelseadolling reads) says**

My heart ?? this was a really sweet story and the art was AMAZING but tbh the writing left something to be desired. It was clunky and awkward at times and ended up taking me out of the story more often than not. It's a fun read and I definitely caught the feels at times, but it wasn't the best thing I've ever read.

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### **Natasha says**

Review also on my blog • Twitter • Bookstagram

**Rep:** f/f romance, black mc, bisexual/pansexual mc

**Trigger warnings:** homophobia

Bingo Love is a book that manages to pack a punch in a short space of time. It uses the comic medium to its advantage and is able to amazingly show the connection between two young women living in the 1960s, and the struggles that come with being in a romantic relationship at the time. It's able to make you root for their relationship as you read it knowing they're going to have struggles. That makes you root for them more because you can see they're going to be pulled apart.

The comic follows the main character Hazel into her old age, where she's married but unhappy, still missing Maria. You're left wishing they could be together after being torn apart from prejudices they're forced to live with, into happiness as they're able to be together when times change. Even if they do things that aren't completely moral, you understand their motivations and we're they're coming from due to being in love for decades. The comic overall portrays a beautiful romance you're left to root for and are happy every moment these two are together.

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### **Kay says**

#RWLChallenge: A book with an elderly main character

My chest :(

The artwork in this is excellent! Everything is so beautiful. Looking forward to the other books in the series.

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**Sara**►[hiatus] (Ink Is My Sword) says

### **3.5 “PoC F/F LOVE” Stars**

► **FULL REVIEW NOW POSTED:**

????Pride Round, GR Inspired Read-a-thon Book #1.

**The story of two lovely women of color, falling in love, with lots of cute scenes and hard hitting realistic problems.**

Let's start with the things I enjoyed. I loved the concept and storyline, the way we follow the relationship through different stages in their lifetimes, being able to see the struggles our characters had to go through. Obviously, the fact that both of our main characters were PoC had me thrilled! The art was also stunning, everything was so colorful that some panels had me drooling. The author touched upon hard-hitting situations, from homophobia to Alzheimer's, which helped to bring realism. **Besides, the message of how**

**people are never too old to carry out what makes them truly happy and to be able to love whoever they want, had me very inspired.** I seriously believe many people are gonna love this graphic novel, and I am so surprised it hasn't gotten more hype.

**I am grateful this graphic novel exists because it represents people of color who identify as LGBTQ who we don't see much representation in the media. I hope some girl out there reads this and feels identified and can feel less alone.**

**Sadly, I couldn't love it. There were somethings that had me feeling unsatisfied.** For example, I got to connect a lot with Hazel but not as much with Mari. I would have loved to see the life Mari has in the years in between. Although I was a fan of the relationship I felt I needed more moments of them together, I just couldn't buy it 100%. Which it could have been affected by the dialogues, they felt too written/unnatural, if that makes sense. I also think it should have started the way it finished, there was no explanation whatsoever of who was the little girl at the start and when did that happen. Perhaps a solution would have been making it longer and give more development to different scenes, instead of making it so rushed.

**I do 100% recommend everyone to read it, the concept and art style is worth it. Also, it's very quick and it's on hoopla, so check it out.**

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### **Carol Tilley says**

Is it perfect? Nope. It's got a big heart though and that's all that matters.

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### **Lois says**

This was truly sweet. I'm not really a fan of comics, graphic novels or anime but I was truly surprised how much I loved everything about this. I fully intend to purchase and read the other installments in this series. What a sweet and beautiful love story?

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### **Laura (bbliophile) says**

This was so good and cute but also so heart-wrenching. I definitely didn't expect to cry this much while reading it.

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### **Rachel (TheShadesofOrange) says**

#### **4.0 Stars**

This is a bittersweet love story featuring a lifelong relationship between two women of colour. The diverse elements were woven seamlessly into the strong, well developed narrative. This was a very emotional story that addressed themes of friendship, family and romantic love through an inclusive lens. The full colour artwork was absolutely gorgeous with representation of full-figured, real women. I definitely recommend this wonderfully diverse graphic novel.

