



Queen and Country: The Definitive Edition, Vol. 2

Greg Rucka , Carla Speed McNeil , Jason Alexander

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Queen and Country: The Definitive Edition, Vol. 2 Greg Rucka , Carla Speed McNeil , Jason Alexander Queen & Country, the Eisner Award-winning and critically lauded espionage series from acclaimed novelist and comic book author Greg Rucka, is back in a new series of definitive editions collecting the entire classic series in just four affordable soft covers. In this second collection, SIS field agent Tara Chase is put through the ringer as she must contend with espionage of the industrial kind, ghosts from her director's past, and politicians eager to use the service to their own ends

Queen and Country: The Definitive Edition, Vol. 2 Details

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From Reader Review Queen and Country: The Definitive Edition, Vol. 2 for online ebook

The_Mad_Swede says

I really enjoyed the first Definitive Edition volume of Greg Rucka's *Queen and Country*, and this second one really ups the ante.

The volume opens with the three-parter *Operation: Blackwall*, illustrated by Jason Shawn Alexander, whose art I found interesting and suitable. The plot brings the minders into a blackmailing scheme, the victim of which turns out to be an old friend of Tara Chace.

In the five-parter *Operation: Stormfront*, the art duties have fallen on Carla Speed McNeil who does an amazing job. In fact, while I have long been interested in getting and reading her own comic *Finder*, her work on this arc had me immediately ordering the first two volume of that series. This is the best arc of the entire volume; not only because of McNeil's work, but also because Rucka's plot here is absolutely fantastic in its many levels of complication and emotional depth (without losing a single action beat either).

Finally, Mike Hawthorne draws *Operation: Dandelion*, a four-parter which signals further important changes in the set-up of the series. Again, Rucka's plotting and writing is top notch, and seems to use the qualities of the artist he is working with eminent.

Overall, the plots are really good and well executed both in narrative and visual terms, which I think motivates the five stars I have given the volume.

RavenT says

Hard hitting action and a compelling main character--two factors that make this series a favorite of mine. Dark in tone, grimdark at times, it isn't for kids. Rather, a mature reader will appreciate the complexities of politics, corporate executives playing god, and grey morals of survivors.

Meran says

There are two volumes, and 3 "operations" in this volume: Operation: Blackwall and Operation: Stormfront and Operation: Dandelion (The definitive editions are comprised of two 'regular' volumes, and issues 13-24 of the monthly issues.)

Operation: Blackwall

The first 3 pages, of agents watching two people have sex, which is shown, is in FRENCH. Both the agents and the lovers... The scenes are in translation at the very end of the book, NOT the segment, btw. Tara Chace is on the case again; this time a very rich man is being "blackmailed by the French Government". The sex scene mentioned is his daughter caught in a honey trap. It's up to tara to clean up the crime, stop it. The daughter, Rachel, and Tara were friends in college, as it happens. (There's more French but it's not translated.) This one is personal.

The art is excellent. Fits the events, dark, moody, efficient.

5 stars

Operation: Stormfront

Ed Kittering, Tara Chace's most recent lover, and recently jilted by her, is found in a hotel bed after a finished operation, dead of a possible aneurysm. She's found a new #3 for her team. Soon, Tara (#2) and her new #3 are sent on a job that goes horribly wrong. Tara, however, find a very simple solution. That is, if you really believe "the Ends justifies the Means".

The art is great!

5 stars

Operation: Dandelion

The character of Tara Chace is developing well, becoming more human, someone who can be identified with. This mission is "in-house", actually in London, plenty of sleight of hand, with the actual mission not revealed until the last page.

Good job!

5 stars

Marianne Robin-Tani says

I liked the stories- they were exciting and well written. But the way the style of the illustrations kept changing from book to book and story to story, felt schizophrenic. The main character, Tara, went from a normal-looking woman, to a super-sexy one with a completely unrealistic body, to someone not good-looking, and so on. Same with the other characters. Made it hard to know who was who and kept me from fully enjoying the stories.

Matt Smith says

One of the big selling points of James Bond is how much every James Bond movie can be your first James Bond movie. There isn't (for the most part) overarching continuity. You can pick one, jump in. It'll follow the same basic structure just about every time. The Bond girl will always be there, but different. I mean, Austin Powers referenced its first movie in its first sequel and it was honestly more lip service than you see in most James Bond movies.

But I digress.

Queen & Country is the "no let's make it real" answer to James Bond. It's one of my favourite spy stories ever by one of my favourite comic writers. The selling point is that it's "real", that Greg Rucka has done his

research, that this is how it actually works in the real world what with spies having to deal with not just real world footwork, but the people controlling the spies having to deal with actual bureaucracy, political entanglements, and real world consequences.

That's what's gripping about the first volume of Queen & Country, anyways. The first volume is so much about the politics and the establishing of what sorts of stories Queen & Country is interested in telling. Now that we're out of the scene setting, this book pushes the limits of what Queen & Country can do by telling three utterly phenomenal Queen & Country stories (established in the books as "Operations", e.g. "Operation: Stormfront" or "Operation: Dandelion") that all build on not only what the first volume of Queen & Country established, but also where Queen & Country is going.

Because the selling point of Queen & Country is that this story never ends. It cannot end. It will not be over until everyone in this intelligence community is either dead or retired, because there is work as needs doing. Tara Chase should probably not be in this profession. She deals with it exceptionally poorly (as we saw in the first volume). But she's incredibly good at what she does and there's a line in here that makes me SO desperate for Rucka to keep telling this story beyond the most recently released novel (which, I'll admit, I haven't read, but I have heard Rucka give interviews where he establishes what post-Last Run Queen & Country novels look like and I just want it).

And that's the compelling thing. Really fucked up shit happens in these books and Rucka is not afraid of having the story go into unexpected directions that are incredibly compelling. And I don't mean with like... insane action bits. There is a distinct lack of action in these books. Hell, some of the most exciting bits of this novel (and all Queen & Country novels) are the bits that's just stuffy British people sitting around dealing with politics and/or emotions of their particular situations and each major climax (in terms of actual SPY ACTION) is always quiet and subdued and almost anti-climactic in its scope. And yet you never feel it, because in the real world, spies don't end in massive Jack Bauer blowouts or in some James Bond villain secret base. They happen in a room, with one person watching another sleep.

Really, these books are just tremendously special. This is about as far as I made it the last (and first) time I read it. I think I made it halfway through the next volume before I stopped because I didn't have time to read the interstitial novel Rucka wrote. That won't be the case this time, though. Because I need to see all the things that Rucka does with this world and these characters because I've never read a spy story like this. That I'm not sure I will again makes me sad, but makes this special. So maybe that's a fair trade, I guess.

Neil says

This was a revelation to me. As a book I stumbled on and impulsively purchased, I came with no particular expectations. In the end I loved it and read it in one sitting, enjoying the mix of illustrators, and how this added different shades and nuances to the characters. Greg Rucka's style is taut, pacy and has enough procedural detail to feel authentic. I'll be hunting out all the other Queen & Country collections and novels.

Koen Claeys says

Five stars! Even better than volume 1. Compelling!

Sesana says

A good deal more personal and political than the first volume had been. This is on point for me, but I imagine more than a few people would rather have the more action-fueled first volume back. I'm very grateful that, this time around, none of the artists felt the need to overly sexualize Chace.

Michael says

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Courtney says

This book collects comics 13-26 of Greg Rucka's "Queen & Country" series.

Like the first volume in the series, it centers around an elite operations group in Britain's intelligence service, especially the exploits of Tara Chace, one of several people sent abroad to tackle covert assignments when official channels won't do.

Whereas the first volume focused heavily on international Islamic terrorism, which interludes to dwell on domestic political pressures in London, this book takes a different tack. There's relatively little about terrorism beyond an aside suggesting that our main characters are sick of U.S. pressure to focus on Osama Bin Ladin. Intrigues are more political, and in several cases involve the interactions between British businesses and foreign governments. More of the action seems to take place in London, as well, as the team we're following faces budget cuts and leadership changes that -- author Greg Rucka hints -- could ultimately transform the service. Paul Crocker, director of operations for the team, comes into sharper profile in these stories as he fights for funding and even to keep his job.

People who loved the action of volume one may be disappointed in the second "Queen & Country" collection, but I enjoyed the political games at least as much as I liked the fighting and killing of the earlier book. And there's still a decent share of fighting and killing.

For the most part, I also like the illustrations better in this book. Different artists drew each of the three story lines it's divided up into, and were given fairly free reign to interpret Rucka's characters and the worlds they inhabit. My only complaint -- and it's a small one -- is that Carla Speed McNeil seemed to draw many white male characters with very similar strokes. In several of the scenes she illustrated I had a hard time knowing who was who.

Michael says

Tense thrillers, I love this series. I've read most of it, except only the last Tara book (Red Panda) and the last

two Declassifieds, but I liked this format better and I wanted to finish reading it. Anyway, it's really smartly written and mixes politics with the personal, emotional turmoil incredibly effectively. Most of the art is solid to good. The only series I was indifferent to was Declassified 3, by Antony Johnston and Chris Mitten. Mitten's art was too rough in comparison to the other artists, and the script was good (though more than a bit cliché in the delivery of the ending), but clearly not up to Rucka's standards. I didn't need a story about Nick Poole, a character I like quite a bit, so much that I couldn't have waited for Rucka to write it himself.

David Dalton says

Another fine collection of Spy adventures. Still reminds me a bit of Strikeback, and now maybe even Atomic Blonde. Not action all the time, good plots and story developments. Looking forward to Queen and Country: The Definitive Edition, Vol. 3.

Eric says

This book taught me to never have sex with strange french men.

Lorraine says

I quite like this series, but the one frustrating thing is the change of illustrator from operation to operation. I like the idea in general since you get a nice showcase of each illustrator's interpretation of the same brilliant work by writer Greg Rucka, but it always takes a few panels to acclimate to the new illustrator's style and recognize the characters you were familiar with in the previous story. Thank goodness there is a roster before each operation.

Jose says

Absolutely enjoyable. No more to say.
