



# Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet, Book 1

*Ta-Nehisi Coates (Writer) , Brian Stelfreeze (Artist) , Joe Sabino (Letterer) , Manny Mederos (Designer) ,  
Rian Hughes (Logo Designer) , Jack Kirby (Writer, Artist) , Laura Martin*

Download now

Read Online ➞

# Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet, Book 1

*Ta-Nehisi Coates (Writer) , Brian Stelfreeze (Artist) , Joe Sabino (Letterer) , Manny Mederos (Designer) , Rian Hughes (Logo Designer) , Jack Kirby (Writer, Artist) , Laura Martin*

**Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet, Book 1** Ta-Nehisi Coates (Writer) , Brian Stelfreeze (Artist) , Joe Sabino (Letterer) , Manny Mederos (Designer) , Rian Hughes (Logo Designer) , Jack Kirby (Writer, Artist) , Laura Martin

A new era begins for the Black Panther! MacArthur Genius and National Book Award-winning writer T-Nehisi Coates (BETWEEN THE WORLD AND ME) takes the helm, confronting T'Challa with a dramatic upheaval in Wakanda that will make leading the African nation tougher than ever before. When a superhuman terrorist group that calls itself The People sparks a violent uprising, the land famed for its incredible technology and proud warrior traditions will be thrown into turmoil. If Wakanda is to survive, it must adapt--but can its monarch, one in a long line of Black Panthers, survive the necessary change? Heavy lies the head that wears the crown!

**COLLECTING:** Black Panther 1-4, Fantastic Four (1961) 52

## Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet, Book 1 Details

Date : Published September 13th 2016 by Marvel

ISBN : 9781302900533

Author : Ta-Nehisi Coates (Writer) , Brian Stelfreeze (Artist) , Joe Sabino (Letterer) , Manny Mederos (Designer) , Rian Hughes (Logo Designer) , Jack Kirby (Writer, Artist) , Laura Martin

Format : Paperback 144 pages

Genre : Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Comics, Fiction, Superheroes, Marvel, Graphic Novels Comics

 [Download Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet, Book 1 ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet, Book 1 ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet, Book 1** Ta-Nehisi Coates (Writer) , Brian Stelfreeze (Artist) , Joe Sabino (Letterer) , Manny Mederos (Designer) , Rian Hughes (Logo Designer) , Jack Kirby (Writer, Artist) , Laura Martin

---

# From Reader Review **Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet**, Book 1 for online ebook

## Alex says

The headlines were "Ta-Nehisi Coates writes a comic book," but they should have been "Ta-Nehisi Coates writes fiction." Coates is famous for nonfiction. I assume he's working on a novel - who isn't? - so this might be seen as sort of a test run.

Comic books are different from novels, though, and they're harder than they look. They're a team effort, for one thing - the artist is responsible for a lot of the storytelling. By tradition, writers don't interfere much with how the artists choose to tell the story. I don't know if Coates followed the tradition or not, but the artists here - Brian Selfreeze and Chris Sprouse - don't do an awesome job. There's a fight scene around issue 6 where it's literally impossible to tell who's punching what. If you feel hopelessly lost right on page one, yeah, so did I.

And the story has to be tightly packed, too. Compressed. You get like ten sentences per page before things start getting cluttered, so you can't waste a word. Coates hasn't figured out how to do this. He's got a lot going on here, and he fails to communicate it clearly enough.

What he's up to is taking a superhero spin on actual African events. (Black Panther, who's been around since the 60s, has always been African - the king of an imaginary African country.) Black Panther faces a revolution in his country; both sides claim to be for the people, as they do. He asks questions about violence and non-violence, as Ng'g' wa Thiong'o does in *Petals of Blood* and as Mandela did during the South African struggle against apartheid. He tries to pull his sister back from the tribal spirit land she's lost in, raising questions about old beliefs colliding with new ones, which might remind you of *Things Fall Apart*. These themes run throughout African history, and Coates wants to explore all of it.

So that's a lot for an art form where significant space also has to be reserved for punching, and what happens is sometimes I would read the recap of previous events that starts each issue and think oh, so that's what happened.

Also, not enough punching.

---

## Kemper says

Guess why I read this one?

Like the rest of the world I've gone Black Panther crazy after seeing the new movie, but aside from thinking he was pretty cool as a kid in the late '70s reading *Avengers* comics I wasn't all that familiar with T'Challa or Wakanda. So this seemed like a good place to start.

Sadly, it isn't.

Getting an acclaimed writer like Ta-Nehisi Coates to do your funny book shows yet again that comics aren't just for kids any more, and there's a lot of interesting stuff that draws on African history and culture. The art

does a nice job of immersing a reader in the world of Wakanda. So just as a comic book it's pretty good on the surface.

However, the problem is that Marvel has done a piss-poor job at making their comics accessible these days. You'd think with the success of the Marvel Cinematic Universe at this point that someone in charge would have realized that fans want to read more about these characters. Yet despite way too many reboots and retcons in the last ten years since Robert Downey Jr. put on the Iron Man suit they have failed miserably at cleaning up the continuity to the point that readers can pick up a book and know what's going on.

This isn't just limited to creating jumping-on points for new fans either. I've been reading Marvel off-and-on for going on 40 years now, I have the Marvel Unlimited subscription which gives me access to thousands of comics including newer stuff, and I have no clue what's been happening in recent years other than managing to slog my way through *Secret Wars*. (And that didn't exactly help clear things up.)

That's the problem here. This run of comics was released after Panther's film introduction in *Civil War* and should have been a place for readers to start with or get reacquainted with T'Challa before his solo movie. Instead the story picks up after recent huge events have left Wakanda in serious trouble. I've read part of those stories, but even I wasn't entirely sure of what was going on here. What chance would a kid picking up *Black Panther* for the first time have of making sense of it all? Plus, it doesn't help that one of the best characters in the movie was killed before this book started. (But in true comic book fashion she is only mostly dead.)

So even though we've got a title with real potential the demands of continuity of the Marvel universe force all these other recent events into it instead of providing a clean starting point. It's the dilemma of trying to balance all the history of these characters vs. trying to let new readers into the world. It's such a problem that even though the MCU gave the Marvel comics about 14 billion reasons to streamline stuff it's just never happened. I know one of the reasons I like the MCU so much is that it's the only place I get stories about these characters these days where I understand what's going on.

That's the shame of this. I think if they'd have given Coates a mandate to do a soft reboot on *Black Panther* without worrying about fitting it into the aftermaths of countless crossovers that he might have hit it out of the park, but he was handcuffed by the same thing that makes new Marvel comics not a helluva lot of fun to read these days.

But hey! They've promised a new reboot with this Fresh Start thing that sounds like maybe they finally understand what they need to do. I'm sure they'll get it right this time.....\*cough\*

---

### **Jan Philipzig says**

With its critical, abstract, ambitious reflections on the history and ideology of Black Panther comics, *Black Panther: A Nation under Our Feet* might have worked as an academic essay. As the superhero title it is, however, the book makes for a rather difficult, frustrating, slow and ultimately boring read. 1.5 stars, I'd say.

---

### **Anne says**

## T'Challa!

I wanted to like this *so* much, but it was a snooze-fest that took me several days to read. The art was beautiful, lush, and vibrant...which was in stark contrast to the flaky, boring, dried out dialogue. Too much talky, not enough action.

You know what?

I've been sitting here for about 30 minutes, scrolling through Facebook posts (mostly checking out cat videos), looking at Instagram pictures (why do my friends take so many pictures of food?), reading *other* Goodreads reviews (sadly, they're all much better than mine)...because I can't think of *anything* to say about this title.

Even **writing** about it is boring.

\*crickets chirping\*

Yeah. Ok. Well, the gist is that T'Challa is having problems in his kingdom. Several different (*I think*) groups are unhappy with him, and it looks like his people (or at least, *some* of them) might revolt.

And, honestly, I don't blame them. Sounds like there's a lot of assholery going on. Now, I'm not directly blaming *him*, but...

And that's it.

*shrugs*

This is **not** my cuppa when it comes to comic book stories, but I want to read more about Black Panther, so I think I'll just dig around and see if there's anything more my taste in some of the older stuff.

After all, he seems like such a badass...

---

## David Schaafsma says

I read the individual issues of this volume (the best-selling comic of the year?) as they came out. Why? Because I loved *Between the World and Me* and because he had just been awarded a MacArthur and--with the whole world now watching--chose to work on a Marvel comic series about a minor character he wanted to elevate in the Marvel universe.

I haven't been very engaged thus far. It's far too talky and philosophical for the beginning of a comic book series. True, many comics do use the first few issues for background or set up, but most also move the action forward. This moves not very far at all. And the talk is stiff, the pacing slow and magisterial. The story is about Kind T'Challa of Wakanda, who faces a kind of civil war between factions, neither of which wants him as leader anymore. This is a tale of big ideas with the promise of a bit operatic story, but it's not that

interesting to me yet. So he can write memoir-stories, but maybe not comics stories? We'll see, but the evidence so far isn't promising.

I'd say this is about a 2.5 at this point, which usually means I would stop reading, but it's such an event in the comics universe that I will be curious to see if things change for the better.

---

### **James DeSantis says**

Love the character but couldn't get in to this one at all. Normally I'd write a full review but short on time so for now it's a nice looking book, but very very very long dialog boxes that really feel like the author wanted to write a book more than a comic.

---

### **Marta says**

This is not a superhero story - and that's a good thing. We have some of the obligatory butt kicking, but it is mostly about a divided, suffering people and their king. The nation is terrorized, lawless, in pain, people are blaming their king for not being able to protect them. He also blames himself. There is a revolution brewing, fostered by a shaman and a witch using ancient nature magic to flame people's rage. Members of the elite female guard have taken upon themselves to protect suffering women, creating a powerful female army.

I loved that there are no good and bad sides - each party wants to help the nation, but wants it a different way. They all have to make tough decisions in no-win situations, are wary and troubled. The king feels divided from his people, who are torn between loyalty and anger. The "deceiver" turns out to be not evil, but a "revealer" of the truth. Technology is pitted against magic, monarchy against revolution, vile men against the elite female guard.

The art is fantastic. The world is a unique blend of high-tech and traditional society. The characters are beautifully designed based on African traditions, the clothing, hair and accessories create rich personalities. I especially loved the sumptuous white dreadlocks of the queen mother and the old philosopher. The coloring is vibrant and changes based on the mood or theme.

The story starts a bit haphazardly but it gains traction and develops into something forceful by the end. The drama is high - a bit too high, I felt there were too many heavy statements, a bit of levity occasionally would help the dramatic moments stand out. I also felt that the superhero branding did disservice to the story. I understand that this is how they pull in money, but sometimes it was difficult to see the king in that man in spandex (yeah, I know it is vibranium, but it looks like spandex), and his need to go out and punch people himself made him look rather immature.

Overall - great story and arc, but clearly just a setup. Can't wait for more.

---

### **Tori (InToriLex) says**

Find this and other Reviews at In Tori Lex

These four issues introduce us to Wakanda in chaos, while T'challa struggles to be a leader who has to balance the use of his sword with the use of his intellect. Right away in issue one we're introduced to hard choices, T'challa's step-mother decides to punish a fierce warrior for killing despite her having just reasons why. The comic draws parallels to the issues that plague African countries in unrest. **Trigger warning**, this comic does show sexual violence, women are imprisoned and raped as a show of power by village cheiftans. Aneka and Ayo are two warriors who defect, are in love and give rise to their own resistance against factions who are unjustly hurting the people of Wakanda.

T'challa's leadership is questioned because he has returned to Wakanda after it has been ruined by flood, and ravaged by villains. The people are skeptical of his leadership and a psychic preys on that vulnerability causing more division. The plot does explore the detriment of losing touch with our memories and innate power because of mistreatment of the earth. I enjoyed the fantasy/mystic elements that were featured throughout. This comic is fascinating to me because its author is able to weave in significant diversity in sexuality, education and belief system. Women in this comic are also featured in leadership roles and as elite warriors which is a refreshing break from many other superhero comics.

I enjoyed every page of this introduction to who Black Panther is and the many internal and external struggles he has to face to lead Wakanda. I read this because of its author and subject matter, I usually shy away from mainstream superhero comics. I would recommend this comic to Adult readers who are interested in reading a diverse world full of fantasy, challenging obstacles and thoughtful dialogue. I look forward to continuing and reviewing the rest of the series.

---

## Sesana says

Super expositiony, yet largely compelling.

---

## Ran says

*"No one man should have that much power." - Ayo*

My first issue with *Wakanda* has always been monarchy. How is most advanced country on earth governed by **one** individual (and you know, a council of dead monarchs)? How do intelligent Wakandans justify themselves as subjects to a monarch? Ta-Nehisi Coates takes this question and runs with it. How do Wakandans react to their King when it appears he is not serving their best interests, when their nation is wrecked by flood, invaded from outside, and suffered a regime change?

The People are angry about the state of their nation. Former Dora Milaje (King's protective guard) warrior Aneka is condemned to death for her just defense of captives. Her lover, Ayo, steals the Midnight Guard advanced armor to break Aneka out. Together they turn into a force to be reckoned with under the slogan *No One Man*.

Meanwhile, a former student of philosopher Changamire at Shulé (university), shaman Tetu is also fomenting revolution:

*"And the worms of the earth shall devour all wolves, lions, and leopards ... and the era of kings shall end."*

Revolution is upon Wakanda; and I have no sympathy for *haramu-fal*. I'm interested in seeing where the tentative coalition between the former Dora Milaje and Tetu goes, especially considering Tetu's liaisons may not be sound moral characters.

Lastly, as I was reading this trade, I kept thinking, "Man, I need a goddamn map." Low and behold, the process section at the end of the issues 1-4 totally provided that information for me. ~~I ignored the Fantastic Four 52 issue entirely.~~ Thank you, thank you, well done! I'm definitely picking the next one up.

---

## **Terence says**

The people of Wakanda are restless. They've been stirred up by a group called The People and some of them have become dangerous.

T'Challa has been doubting himself and whether he can do the right thing to protect Wakanda.

Meanwhile one of the Black Panther's Dora Milaje is sentenced to death for doing the right thing because of growing corruption in Wakanda. Her fellow Dora Milaje and lover will not allow her to be killed and steals experimental armor to free her.

I was really excited about a new Black Panther comic especially having such a renowned author as Ta-Nehisi Coates on the project. Unfortunately very little happens in this volume. The thread that Wakanda has problems that need to be solved reoccurs, but the rest of the time is spent lamenting those problems and kindly trying to solve them. T'Challa is scared and frustrated regarding what's happening, but little of his persona is shown. The most compelling and forward moving aspect of the story is the Dora Milaje who escaped from Wakanda with experimental Midnight Angel armor. One of the lovers is sentenced to death for actually doing the right thing and the other can't accept her punishment. They embody the trope of wanted lovers on the run from their problems, but they are far from helpless because the armor they wield is powerful.

The writing in *A Nation Under our Feet* feels very amateur. Those bubbles are packed with words mostly philosophical and political in nature. It's clear the story will eventually go somewhere, but right now it's taking the scenic route filled with speeches. It's been disappointing thus far and I think I'm going to wait to read the next issues and volumes at my library or Marvel Unlimited.

---



## Keith says

Depending on how well you know *Black Panther* -- and I mean not just the character, but every run on the character and every time he appears in another Marvel comic and, in fact, every time a reference has been made to any element of the character's world, forever -- *A Nation Under Our Feet* is either subversive and brilliant, or an unfathomable mess.

I know nothing about *Black Panther*. I, like most left-leaning white comics nerds who like Batman, was just super-pumped to get a monthly comic drawn by Brian Stelfreeze -- partially because Stelfreeze is a black artist, but mainly because he's friggin STELFREEZE -- and I was super-pumped to get a book about a black superhero from a black writer. Of course, since I did not actually know anything about Black Panther, I did not know that Black Panther comics have been given to black writers for some time now, but this is part of what I'm saying -- the announcement about the new *Black Panther* had just enough of what I understood to be cool, and enough of what sounded like a socially progressive and exciting thing I didn't know anything about, to make this comic the thing I have been most excited about all year.

If you read, for example, an interview with Coates (like this one at io9), what you will get is that Coates has thought about Black Panther more deeply than you. In fact, I think he's thought about BP more deeply than a lot of writers think about their characters. He has woven together every small inference to the character, along with each of the character's main story arcs, as if they are very, very present for the reader. It's not that Coates is thinking like a "black writer" that is excluding (or not writing for) a wider audience. Coates is thinking like a novelist. There's an assumption in his writing that he's got a lot of room to provide context, backstory, and necessary histories for his characters that will bring the average reader up to speed, but because this is a comic book series and not a novel, he really doesn't.

This is not necessarily a bad thing. There has been something fun about reading a bunch of comics that are really well-researched and deeply developed but that do not spend much time (if any) letting the reader acclimate. Grant Morrison does this all the time -- the difference being, of course, that he does them with properties I know a lot about (X-Men, Batman), and properties whose histories, I would cautiously suggest, are generally more well-known to comics nerds than that of Black Panther.

Which is where it gets interesting. My knee-jerk response to the narrative structure of *Black Panther* is that it doesn't really work. It relies heavily on things you probably do not know, and even its scene-to-scene transitions form a story that's almost too big for what a comic has room for. Imagine the first book of *Game of Thrones* packed into a highlights reel and smashed into four 22-page comic books, without footnotes of any kind. That's sort of how this book reads. As a novel-reader and a comics-reader, it's actually kind of fun to reread the book several times (5 times at this point?), look up references to old characters and old plotlines on Wikipedia, and piece together what Coates is trying to do. But that doesn't mean that the workload placed on the reader in order to make it through this comic feels *intentional* (as it often does with Morrison). It feels more like a very, very smart writer who just can't see the forest for the trees.

But the real interesting-ness here is the fundamental question of whether or not a comic like *Black Panther* even owes me what I'm asking of it. I'm used to reading either A) well-established superhero titles starring characters whose histories are practically a matter of public record or B) esoteric 'alternative' superhero titles resurrecting some long-gone character that do a *lot* of pandering, and/or throw out the rulebook so completely that there's really nothing you need to know, going in. *Black Panther* does neither of these things. It just starts *going* and demands that you sink or swim.

I will maintain that certain elements of the book just aren't explained well -- brand-new characters thrown into the back of a panel that might be important twenty pages later, or they might not, so fuck it -- but I think there's also a larger political question that *Black Panther* raises. White people (specifically white male people) are currently going through a cultural moment in which it is being made abundantly clear that not all culture is "made" for them, that in fact there are whole worlds of media, history and expression that do not, shock-of-shocks, exist solely (or at all) for white (male) people to enjoy.

As a left-leaning white dude, I think that living through this cultural moment is a great thing. That doesn't mean that it's not also a little bit weird to be reminded of when I'm just sitting on my couch in my undies trying to veg out with some comics.

I guess here's a list of the things I'm getting at:

- 1) *Black Panther* is an intensely nerdy, deep-cut comic that has been marketed as a great jumping-on point for new readers. It is, in fact, not.
- 2) UNLESS IT IS. Unless the experience of being totally alienated and finding your way into a world you do not understand is *exactly would should happen*.
- 3) Even if you *are* a total Black Panther historian, I have come to understand that this book will completely trip you out.

WHICH BRINGS ME TO THE POINT THAT I HAVE NOT EVEN REVIEWED THIS BOOK YET.

Black Panther is (apparently) usually written as a brilliant scientist who rules over a perfect city, like if Batman were allowed to build his own version of Gotham. What Coates has done, however, is copiously read through every BP appearance or reference *ever* and realized that, taken together, that is really not the story of Black Panther at all.

In *A Nation Under Our Feet*, Coates takes stock and realizes that if an adventuring mad scientist actually DID ever rule a country, probably that country would fall apart in about five seconds. Then Coates points out that, considering the history of the character -- the number of times his country has been invaded, destroyed, or flat-out neglected because their king was off being an Avenger -- Black Panther is actually a totally shit ruler who's got a lot of things coming to him.

All of which makes me glad I know nothing about Black Panther, because i have a feeling that any reader who actually loves the character enough to be able to follow all this book's threads would be insanely pissed off by what Coates is doing with him.

Because Coates is not, in fact, using his stint on *Black Panther* to write some kind of BLM-Afrocentrist-Afrofuturist-empowerment action feature (which, being real with you, is exactly what I wanted to read). He is, instead, writing a book that questions every structure of power *Black Panther* comics usually champion -- science, masculinity, military 'peace,' and the general ethics of superheroism.

All of which makes TOTAL SENSE in our current cultural moment, and is yet something it never even occurred to me that I would see in this comic.

This book makes me realize that I'm never actually going to know what I'm talking about regarding this book. I'm going to continue to read the shit out of it. The art is gorgeous and super weird-sciencey, and

whether or not Coates actually knows how to write a comic, he sure as hell knows how to write a book. The series is called *Black Panther*, but it's really an ensemble title about a nation of people with clearly-etched motives and desires that feel both connected to a shared history, and completely disparate from one another.

Maybe one could argue that there's too much talking, and not enough punching. Maybe that's the point of what's being challenged here. Either option is possibly true.

I dunno. I don't know whether or not it's even good, but I do know that it's pretty fucking metal, you guys.

---

## **Sam Quixote says**

I've read some Black Panther comics before this but I'm definitely not that familiar with the character and I'm guessing almost 100% of readers coming to this book are gonna be in the same boat. He's a relatively obscure character who occasionally pops up in ensemble stories with bigger readerships than his own books and that's mainly where I know him from.

Following his much-touted and well-received appearance in *Captain America: Civil War* last year, his forthcoming solo movie, and Marvel's tradition of giving movie characters their own titles, here's Black Panther's new ongoing series - and it sucks donkey balls.

This is Volume 1 of a relaunched series that's supposedly aiming to appeal to a new audience - so why the fuck have we been given a Black Panther comic that assumes everyone picking it up are super-mega-fans who know the character's entire history?!

Black Panther is T'Challa, King of Wakanda, a super-advanced country in Africa - but his kingdom is in peril. For some reason his people are rebelling against him and he... is gonna do something about it.

Right from the get-go I was baffled. Black Panther's guards are attacking vibranium miners whose eyes are glowing green - what was that about?! They don't want T'Challa to be King anymore? But he's done well historically hasn't he - what's changed? It feels like you're dropped into the middle of a story rather than the beginning of one.

And then I realised how little I knew about the character when he started using shockwaves, electricity and shit - does he have a version of his own Iron Man armour, does he have superpowers like mutants or is he magic? These are all things you'd hope would be established in a first volume of a little known character.

Apparently Black Panther has a sister called Shuri who's in stasis for some reason and is having a vision quest for no reason to achieve god knows what or why. There are a couple of Dora Milaje ("shield maidens" - woohoo, I picked up some of the complicated lingo, I'm not a total retard!) who're fighting the Man in Midnight Angel armours, whatever they are!

A witch called Zenzi is up to some weird shit, a nearby country called Niganda wants to fight Wakanda for no reason, and someone called Killmonger is to blame for the unrest though why we couldn't see him causing that unrest to start with instead of being told about it in passing towards the end, I don't know. All of this was new to me and extremely badly set up.

It doesn't help that the syntax used is largely unexplained. The fuck is Haramu-Fal? Taifa Ngao, anyone? You know how captions set the forthcoming scene by telling you where, and sometimes when, it's based? There's literally a caption that says "Hekima Shule, Birnin Azzaria" - I have no idea what either phrase means. Is that a place, a person, a time, what? How many new readers are you alienating by taking this insider baseball approach, Marvel?!

Ta-Nehisi Coates may be an award-winning writer of nonfiction but he's a helluva crappy comics writer! He seems to have no idea what he's doing - how to introduce characters, set up storylines, everything is a shoddy disaster. But he's a black guy and artist Brian Stelfreeze is a black guy and they're working on an all-black comic so yay diversity, right? And look, more diversity: the Dora Milaje outlaws are lesbians! Yeesh, sacrificing quality to pander to wretched SJWs? No wonder Marvel's sales are in the toilet these days!

Brian Stelfreeze's art was pretty good as were Laura Martin's colours but I really loved Rian Hughes' logo which is on the title page of every issue - superb work, Rian! Shame that Coates stinks up the book with his incompetent writing.

I would've preferred a ground-up introductory first volume, establishing who Black Panther is and his legacy, what Wakanda's all about and their place within the Marvel Universe. Then, once your audience is familiar with everything, you launch into this country-in-strife storyline and it probably won't be so confusing! Instead we got this load of rubbish which is nothing but incomprehensible garbage from start to merciful finish.

I really wanted to get excited about a new Black Panther ongoing, especially after his spectacular appearance in Captain America: Civil War, and I'm still looking forward to his solo movie, but I'm done with this terrible title.

---

## **Chad says**

Coates may be a celebrated nonfiction author but the only thing I'd celebrate after reading this is when he leaves the book. You would think that this being the first new Black Panther book in a while, this would be a good jumping on point for new readers. You would be wrong. You need to have read all of Black Panther's appearances across the Marvel U in the last 30+ years to know what's going on. I've been reading Marvel books since the 80's and I still didn't get some of the references.

Apparently, T'Challa hasn't been a good king and there are different factions planning revolutions. You'd think that would be interesting, but instead everyone spends all their time philosophizing and this book is a snooze fest. The only reason this book gets 2 stars is because Brian Stelfreeze provides very good art and it's nice to see him do more than just covers.

---

## **Matthew Quann says**

After being highly impressed with *Between the World and Me*, the last thing I expected was Ta-Nehisi Coates to headline a Marvel comic. But *Black Panther* is a great fit as Coates' digs into some headier themes than I am used to in my tights & capes comics. Coates asks an excellent question: why is the most

technologically advanced country in the world ruled as a monarchy? This question forces T'Challa to reconsider his position as king of Wakanada and Black Panther while he is beset on all sides by new and fearsome enemies. The enemies, I have to note, are extremely well thought out and don't have the feel of the "villain of the month" trap that a lot of comics fall into. Coates' is making antagonists that are sympathetic, but also villains whose causes and motivations are understandable.

So, all of this is good. Really good, in fact. But it's also only the opening chapter of a much larger story. This doesn't mean that the comic suffers in quality. Indeed, the opposite is true: this is a stellar setup. The problem lies in the fact that it is all setup and no pay-off. As such, I'll probably revisit this review once I've read the subsequent volumes to make sure that Coates' continues to build tension, and create a captivating story and cast.

I love the way that Coates' really digs into continuity rather than shaking it off, and he obviously has a love for the Marvel universe that comes across through the script. The art is also pretty great. Stelfreeze is doing a great job of establishing Wakanda's unique terrain, technology, and has a great eye for action scenes. Black Pather's suit looks fantastic and I love the way his mask retracts and envelops his face as needed.

My recommendation at this point would be to wait for the second part of *A Nation Under Our Feet* or the eventual hardcover compilation before delving into this comic. It is great stuff, but I felt it was just getting started and it comes to an end. Partially this is due to Marvel's frustrating trade paperback policy. Four issues of a comic is a bit of robbery at \$20, when I would have gladly waited for the subsequent four issues in a single collection.

I'm enjoying Marvel's post-*Secret Wars* lineup so-far. Especially the more intelligent and daring comic book narratives that are present in *Black Panther* and *The Vision*. If Marvel happens to be listening: more like this please.

---