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# Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet Book 1



## Synopsis

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

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Black Panther has been making waves in the past year since he's going to be the first major black superhero to get his own movie. Having a general idea of his history and knowing he was going to be written by famed political writer Ta-Nehisi Coates. I decided this comic would be worth a shot. So far, I'm not sold. Black Panther's real name is T'challa, and he is the King of the fictional African country Wakanda. This country is home to a Vibranium mine, making it one of the wealthiest and most technologically advanced countries in the world. But Panther faces a massive political revolt from his people, with two different factions leading the way. One group called 'the People' is lead by a mystic, and is not afraid to use violence to achieve it's ends. The other is composed of some deserters from the royal guard, who are making an effort to take out Wakanda's warlords. So, the

good points of this series are obvious. The comic has good artwork, and Coates excels at capturing the voice of his characters. I'm legitimately impressed how easily Coates is transitioned from political analysis to comics, because this doesn't read in anyway different from your standard marvel fair. And I mean that in a good way. But the series has one major problem, and unfortunately it's the comics basic premise. The whole plot of these first four issues revolves around Panther's attempts to be a good king, and I can only conclude that he isn't cut out for it. Wakanda, despite it's wealth, appears to have the same problems as the rest of Africa, IE warlords raping women and poor working conditions for it's people. While one of the rebel factions has been making good progress on these issues, T'Challa struggles to even talk to his own subjects. If he doesn't change quickly, I'm going to end up rooting for the 'villains' of the story, and that is never a good sign.

Ever since this year's release of *Captain America: Civil War*, we finally got to see the first introduction of the Black Panther in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Fans were impressed with his badass prowess on screen and has his own film coming out some time in 2017. I've been reading the fabulous Black Panther run from Christopher Priest for the character, so I had high hopes for the character and it also it means a new solo comic series and written by Ta-Nehisi Coates, a current writer/journalist in the field of politics that make for a perfect choice with veteran artist Brian Stelfreeze. While I think this is a promising creative team and opening book, I feel it still needs time to improve. **BLACK PANTHER VOLUME 1: A NATION UNDER OUR FEET BOOK 1** collects issues #1-4 and Black Panther's first appearance in **FANTASTIC FOUR #52**. The people of Wakanda are restless. They've been stirred up by a group called The People and some of them have become dangerous due to the upheavals across the land, which Black Panther tries to quell the uprising but it blows up in his face. Meanwhile one of the Black Panther's Dora Milaje (his personal/elite guards) 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. Too many factors are pulling Panther apart for him to focus on restoring Wakanda. Desperate times call for desperate measures. Writer and journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates is a current writer for good reason as to give a more political savvy to match the characters backgrounds and gives a whole new audience for those geared in his writing, those who like/want to know more about Black Panther, or both. The story that Wakanda has problems that need to be solved immediately is reasonably well done as it shows the many factors Panther has to do as reigning king of Wakanda. He's taking information from his mother, his generals, his people, and people responsible for this uprising. This all happens with a great amount of metaphors

on politics and philosophy to make things somber. The other story plot revolving around the Dora Milaje who escaped from Wakanda with experimental Midnight Angel armor is, to me, the better part of the book as it pushes the narrative forward. It's just two wanted lovers on the run from their problems, but they are building blocks to a larger narrative that I hope to see more of in the following volumes. I have no complaints regarding artist Brian Stelfreeze. It's lush, detailed, and just cartoony enough to not make this series too dark in its tone. Because of the small amount of issues collected here, Marvel at least included some decent array of extras including an entire map and layout of Wakanda, seven pages of sketches, artboards, and even some commentary by artist Brian Stelfreeze; numerous variant covers, and finally three pages of Black Panther chronology for those who want to know more about the character in comics. So why am I giving this a 3-star rating, deeming it fair by ? I feel as if it had a few flaws in itself. This being Coates first foray into comics so he's not familiar with it just yet, as some of his character dialogues come off clunky and pacing is rough transitioning from one place to another. I get it that Coates is making his anagram for conflict a wide-spread ordeal and confusing thing, yet it felt too much jumping around. Another aspect is I also could not connect with T'Challa himself, as this comic hits the ground running and we never get any alone time to T'Challa as he is scared and frustrated regarding what's happening, but little of his persona is shown or his long history of trying to deal with Wakanda history (which confusingly comes off here and there). This makes it so new readers will be lost of those connections. There is also a great deal of philosophy and political undertones here that give a smart and in-depth insight for some readers, but I felt it too much of it and not propelling the story forward. Lastly, I thought it was a bit underwhelming having only four issues here and the first appearance to pad things out. Even if I am giving this 3-star rating, BLACK PANTHER VOLUME 1: A NATION UNDER OUR FEET BOOK 1 is a decent start under writer Ta-Nehisi Coates. I think it is reasonably smart and he does have the makings of a strong story being told down the line, but it's a slow and rough start with Coates limited comic writing and overindulgence in heavy speeches. I am truly looking forward to the next volume to see things pick up and start coming together as I have high hopes for the creative team and this comic series.

Amazing. More Wakanda, more difficult political decisions for Panther (many of his opponents have valid points). Lots to love here.

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