

# Let's talk about Erik Killmonger....

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I can say Black Panther was great, amazing and bunch of other words that belong in that category but it was also real and heartbreaking. Black Panther is Marvel's 19th Superhero movie and at its core, it's Marvel best. This isn't really a review of the movie more so, me writing why Black Panther villain is so great.

Erik Killmonger has been a Black Panther villain since his first appearance in Jungle Action #6, (September 1973). I can't speak on his appearance in the comics since I haven't read them, but in the movie, Michael B. Jordan did something no other Marvel villain has done, and that was to make a villain feel real.

Killmonger grows up in America; Oakland, California to be correct. He was the product of an African father and an American mother. By his father being second in line to the throne Killmonger should have grown up in Wakanda with his family, he should have grown up with love. But due to T'Chaka wanting to keep Wakanda and its people under wraps Killmonger doesn't get any of that. When T'Chaka kills his brother N'Jobu in self-defense he leaves his brother son in America and leaves his brother body in America, not even taking him back home to be buried with their people. This becomes important later. The one flaw we have about Killmonger is that we don't know anything about his mother or what his relationship, if any, did he have with her. We are told Killmonger graduates MIT by 19 and that he joined the Seals and went to Afghanistan "Were he wrapped up an impressive number of kills." This is where Erik received the name Killmonger.

Killmonger grows up a black American boy in the 90's, in a bad neighborhood and then he went on to see nothing but even more violence once he was in the Seals. Killmonger being left by his uncle and his people, left a young boy to be groomed to hate. He knew about Wakanda, his

father had told him he was going to take him to see the sunset. By the time, we see Killmonger ready to take the throne from T'Challa, you can't help but see where his anger comes from. When he takes over Killmonger has a line about Wakanda "sitting on thousands of weapons" while people suffered and even though he doesn't say black we all know that's what he means. Wakanda has had all these weapons for years while black people were the dirt on the bottom of people's foot and Wakanda did nothing.

I think both sides have a point. Can you image the colonizer once they found out about Wakanda? But Killmonger was right also, he just let his anger get the best of him. When it's Killmonger turn to take the heart shape herb and get his Black Panther powers he sees his father just as T'Challa saw his but as T'Challa saw his father in the land of the Panthers, Killmonger sees his back in his old Apartment in Oakland. When his father asks him "No tears for me" and Erik tells him "Everyone dies" we see a man who has come to believe that. We see a man who thinks; Why cry when all everyone you care about does is die? It makes me think maybe he lost someone else he cared about in the Seals, or another time. I would love to get a chance to revisit his character.



Like I said this isn't a full-blown review but (look out for that) T'Challa comes back and him and Killmonger fight. After T'Challa gains the upper hand and he stabs Killmonger with his own spear. Killmonger gets to see the sunset he was told about by his father years ago and T'Challa tells him they could save him but instead of living the rest of his days in chains Killmonger chose's death, telling T'Challa "Just bury me in the ocean with my ancestors that jumped from the ships, because they knew death was better than bondage." That line right there is something that has stuck with me these last few days. It makes you think. Erik Killmonger became human in front of my eyes when he wanted to help other people but he just went about it in the wrong way. Killmonger took the villain way out to get what he wanted done, but at the end of the day, he made the hero think and see the error of his and his people ways and that changed our hero's mind.

Ryan Coogler and Michael B Jordan have done an amazing job at finally making a Marvel villain I feel for. Marvel hasn't had a great villain (to me) since the first Iron Man had Obadiah Stane. I like villain's that have more of connection with the hero and isn't just some random person out to ruin the lives of others. I can't wait to once again return to Wakanda when Avengers: Infinity

Wars drops in \*May\* and I can't wait until we get another full-blown movie whenever Marvel finishing counting the coins Black Panther has made them.

\*Update: Avengers: Infinity Wars now drops April 27<sup>th</sup> \*

