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We Were Eight Years in Power: An American Tragedy

By: Ta-Nehisi Coates

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In thisurgently relevant* collection featuring the landmark essayThe Case for Reparations, theNational Book Awardwinning author ofBetween the World and Mereffects on race, Barack Obamas presidency and its jarring aftermath*including the election of Donald Trump. New York Times Bestseller Finalist for the PEN/Jean Stein Book Award, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize Named One of the Best Books of the Year by The New York Times USA Today Time Los Angeles Times San Francisco Chronicle Essence O The Oprah Magazine The Week Kirkus Reviews *Kirkus Reviews (starred review)We were eight years in power was the lament of Reconstruction-era black politicians as the American experiment in multiracial democracy ended with the return of white supremacist rule in the South. In this sweeping collection of new and selected essays, Ta-Nehisi Coates explores the tragic echoes of that history in our own time the unprecedented election of a black president followed by a vicious backlash that fueled the election of the man Coates argues is Americasfirst white president. But the story of these present-day eight years is not just about presidential politics. This book also examines the new voices, ideas, and movements for justice that emerged over this periodand the effects of the persistent, haunting shadow of our nations old and unreconciled history. Coates powerfully examines the events of the Obama era from his intimate and revealing perspectivethe point of view of a young writer who begins the journey in an unemployment office in Harlem and ends it in the Oval Office, interviewing a president. We Were Eight Years in Power features Coates iconic essays first published in The Atlantic, includingFear of a Black President,The Case for Reparations, andThe Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration, along with eight fresh essays that revisit each year of the Obama administration through Coates own experiences, observations, and intellectual development, capped by a bracingly original assessment of the election that fully illuminated the tragedy of the Obama era. We Were Eight Years in Power is a vital account of modern America, from one of the definitive voices of this historic moment.

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