

MOVIES

The Fantastic Four: First Steps

finally does justice to Marvel's first family

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After multiple failed adaptations over the past few decades, Marvel's *The Fantastic Four: First Steps* gives the iconic superhero team a long-overdue chance to shine on the big screen. The film tells a heartfelt and passionate family-focused story that draws inspiration from the early Fantastic Four comics from the 1960s. The film stands out as perhaps the most unique and accessible Marvel movie in recent times, both in its narrative and visual style.

Despite starting a new phase of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), the film is set in an alternate, retro-futuristic 1960s timeline and tells a standalone story where the titular team, comprising Mr Fantastic, Invisible Woman, Human Torch, and The Thing, must save the Earth from being devoured by an all-powerful cosmic being known as Galactus. The team's origin story and encounters with other minor villains are also told within a quick expository flashback early on, and the movie dives right into the conflict with Galactus.

Two things in particular make this movie really good: the aesthetics and the interpersonal relationships of the characters. It brings to life the idea of futurism that was envisioned during the 60s, blending



elements of technology from that time with more advanced science fiction gadgets. The world of the *Fantastic Four* is more vibrant and optimistic than the main MCU timeline, displaying how the team has genuinely changed the status quo of society in effective ways. It might be the first Marvel movie to truly embrace the source material, rather than try to reinvent or modernise it.

The villains, however, are not as nuanced as the heroes, but this issue may be

attributed to the film's other problem: its runtime. The film attempts to provide some emotional depth to the villains, Galactus and his herald, the Silver Surfer, but it is told through expository dialogue and not explored enough.

Overall, though, *The Fantastic Four: First Steps* is a unique Marvel film. It's visually distinct and crafted with genuine respect for the source material, and just as the title suggests, it truly is fantastic.

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