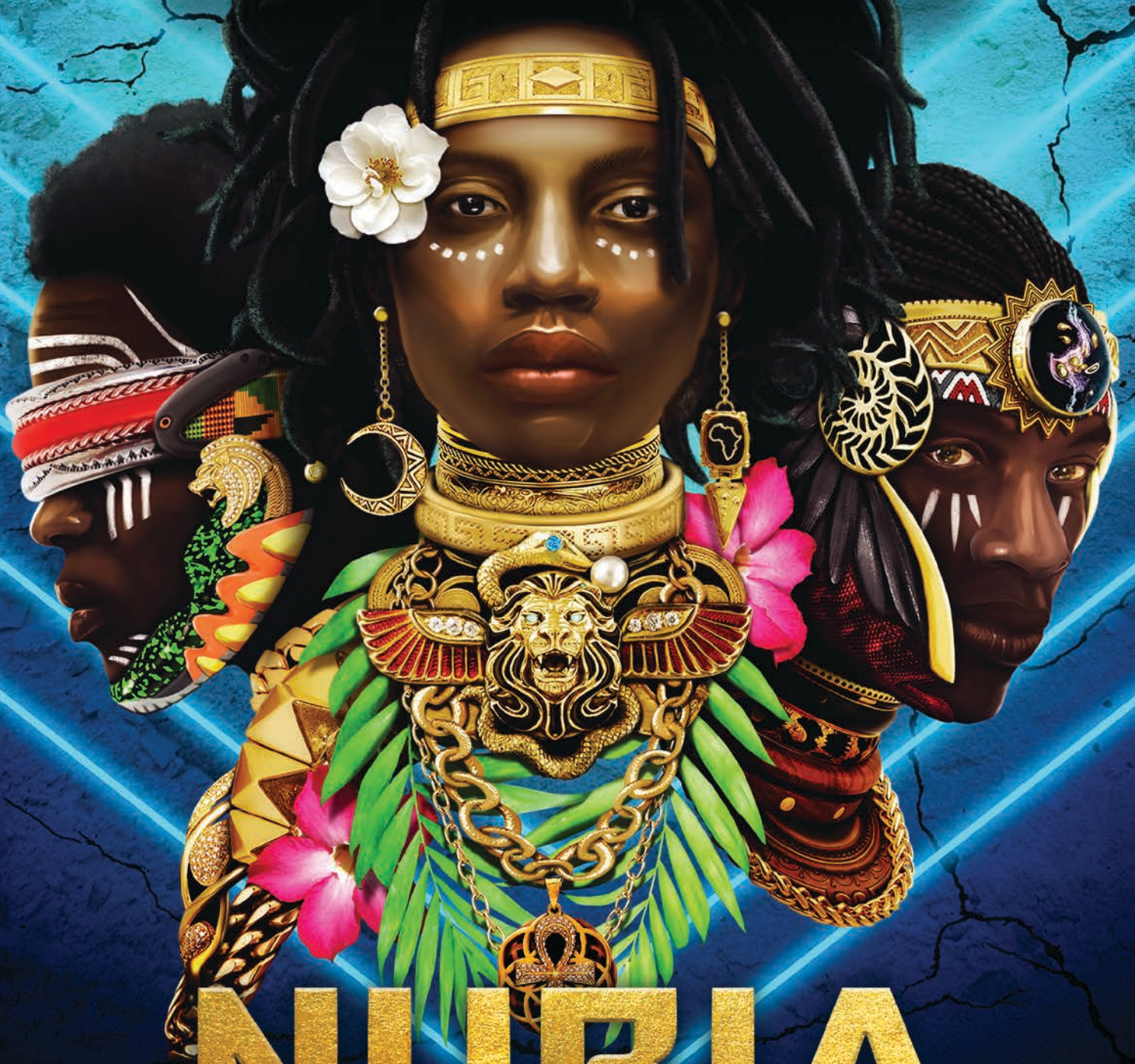


OMAR EPPS  
CLARENCE A. HAYNES



NUBIA  
THE AWAKENING

DISCUSSION GUIDE

RHTeachersLibrarians.com



## ABOUT THE BOOK

For Zuberi, Uzochi, and Lencho, Nubia is a mystery. Before they were born, a massive storm destroyed their ancestral homeland, forcing their families to flee across the ocean to New York City. Nubia, a utopic island nation off the coast of West Africa, was no more, and their parents' sorrow was too deep for them to share much of their history beyond the folklore.

But New York, ravaged by climate change and class division, is far from a safe haven for refugees, and Nubians live as outcasts, struggling to survive in the constantly flooding lower half of Manhattan, while the rich thrive in the tech-driven sky city known as the Up High.

To many, being Nubian means being fated for a life plagued by difficulties and disrespect. But Zuberi, Uzochi, and Lencho are beginning to feel there might be more. Something within them is changing, giving each of them extraordinary powers—extraordinary and terrifying powers that seem to be tied to the secrets their parents have kept from them.

And there are people in the Up High watching, eager to do anything they can to become even more powerful than they already are. Now Zuberi, Uzochi, and Lencho will be faced with the choice—do they use their inheritance to lift their people, or to leave them behind? The fate of their city, and their people, hangs in the balance.



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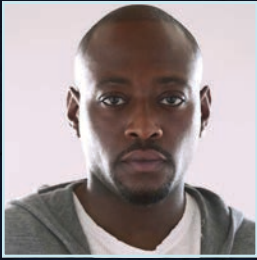
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**Themes:** Fantasy, Adventure, African/  
African American Interest, Heroes & Heroism

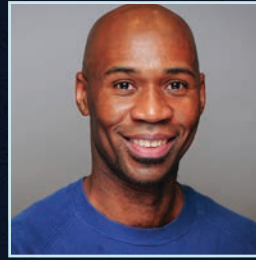


## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Actor and producer **OMAR EPPS** was introduced to audiences as Q in Ernest Dickerson's cult classic *Juice*, opposite Tupac Shakur. He has

gone on to star in the beloved romance *Love & Basketball*, as Dr. Eric Foreman on the massively popular TV show *House*, as Jeff Cole in *In Too Deep*, as Isaac Johnson on *Shooter*, and as Darnell on *This Is Us*. He is the author of the memoir *From Fatherless to Fatherhood*. *Nubia: The Awakening* is his first novel.



**CLARENCE A. HAYNES** has worked as an editor for a variety of publishers that include Penguin Random House and Amazon Publishing, as well as

Legacy Lit, an imprint of Hachette Book Group. He has edited top-selling fiction titles like *The Hundredth Queen*, *Scarlet Odyssey*, *Legacy of Lies*, *These Toxic Things*, and the *Washington Post* and Amazon bestseller *The Vine Witch*, along with its two sequels. He is also the author of the nonfiction work *The Legacy of Jim Crow*.



## PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

- Look at the cover. What do you notice? What stands out? How do you think these three figures are connected? What makes you think that?
- Review the world map and the "Key Moments in New York History" timeline. Based on these sources, describe how climate change has impacted the geography of the city and the people who live there.
- After reading the timeline at the beginning of the book, imagine that you are a resident of New York or a refugee or migrant traveling to New York due to the floods and hurricanes in your homeland. Write a diary entry about your experience.



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

## General Understanding

- Who are the main characters of this book? Describe them. What does each of them want?
- Give a summary of this book. How does the timeline inform your reading?

## Key Details

- What is ascension?
- What are the awakenings? Why were the elders surprised and pleased by them?
- Describe the gifts that the young Nubians—Zuberi, Uzochi, Lencho, Zaire, Vriana—possess.
- Who is Krazen St. John? What does he want with Lencho and the Divine? What is his ultimate plan?
- Describe the attacks at the Carter-Combs Theater and at the sea wall.

## Vocabulary and Text Structure

- What is Elevation? What is its purpose and effect on people? Why did people take it?
- Each chapter is told from a different point of view. How does this structure affect the narrative?

## Author's Purpose

- The science fiction genre allows authors to speculate about the future and explore social issues. What are some of the themes and ideas that Epps and Haynes are examining in their story?
- Why did the authors choose a climate-ravaged New York City as the setting for this story?

## Inferences

- What is Nubia? Discuss what the title means.
- Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe said, "There is that great proverb—that until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter." What does this proverb mean? How does this proverb connect to Uzochi's frustration at school?

## Opinions

- Fathers and father figures or the lack thereof is an important theme throughout the story. Uzochi's father died before he was born. Zuberi has a close bond with her father. Lencho's father is abusive. Sandra has an adversarial relationship with hers. How do these relationships influence the characters' actions throughout the story? Why are these relationships significant?

# AFTER READING

- Create a visual representation of the Swamp and the Up High.
- Write the first chapter of the next story: the rescue of Vriana and the revolution.
- Discuss the ways in which this story connects to climate change, socioeconomic status, political power, and race. What other big ideas are present? Give examples from the story.

*This guide was written by Dr. Shanetia P. Clark, who teaches courses in children's and young adult literature at Salisbury University*