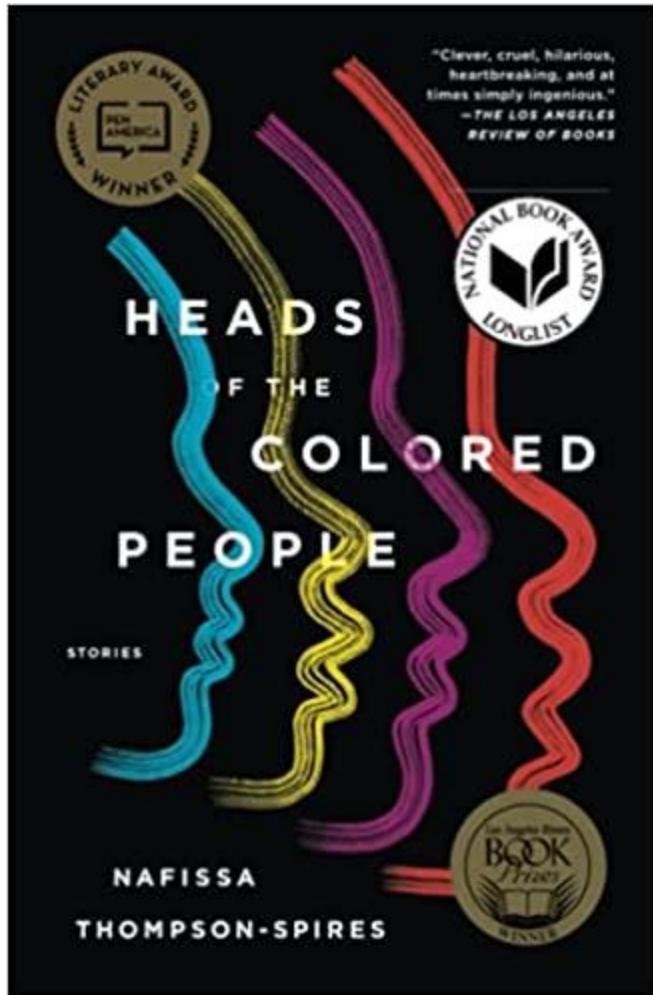


**N**afissa Thompson-Spires grapples with race, identity politics, and the contemporary middle class in this “vivid, fast, funny, way-smart, and verbally inventive” (George Saunders, author of *Lincoln in the Bardo*) collection.



Each captivating story plunges headfirst into the lives of utterly original characters. Some are darkly humorous—two mothers exchanging snide remarks through notes in their kids’ backpacks—while others are devastatingly poignant. In the title story, when a cosplayer, dressed as his favorite anime character, is mistaken for a violent threat the consequences are dire; in another story, a teen struggles between her upper middle class upbringing and her desire to fully connect with so-called black culture.

Thompson-Spires fearlessly shines a light on the simmering tensions and precariousness of black citizenship. Boldly resisting categorization and easy answers, Nafissa Thompson-Spires “has taken the best of what Toni Cade Bambara, Morgan Parker, and Junot Díaz do plus a whole lot of something we’ve never seen in American literature, blended it all together...giving us one of the finest short-story collections”