



# The Moor's Account: A Novel

*Laila Lalami*

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**The Moor's Account: A Novel** Laila Lalami

**\*\*Longlisted for the 2015 Man Booker Prize\*\***

**\*\*Nominated for the 2016 International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award\*\***

**A Pulitzer Prize Finalist**

**A New York Times Notable Book**

**A Wall Street Journal Top 10 Book of the Year**

**An NPR Great Read of 2014**

**A Kirkus Best Fiction Book of the Year**

In this stunning work of historical fiction, Laila Lalami brings us the imagined memoirs of the first black explorer of America—a Moroccan slave whose testimony was left out of the official record.

In 1527, the conquistador Pánfilo de Narváez sailed from the port of Sanlúcar de Barrameda with a crew of six hundred men and nearly a hundred horses. His goal was to claim what is now the Gulf Coast of the United States for the Spanish crown and, in the process, become as wealthy and famous as Hernán Cortés.

But from the moment the Narváez expedition landed in Florida, it faced peril—navigational errors, disease, starvation, as well as resistance from indigenous tribes. Within a year there were only four survivors: the expedition's treasurer, Álvaro Núñez Cabeza de Vaca; a Spanish nobleman named Alonso del Castillo Maldonado; a young explorer named Andrés Dorantes de Carranza; and Dorantes's Moroccan slave, Mustafa al-Zamori, whom the three Spaniards called Estebanico. These four survivors would go on to make a journey across America that would transform them from proud conquistadores to humble servants, from fearful outcasts to faith healers.

*The Moor's Account* brilliantly captures Estebanico's voice and vision, giving us an alternate narrative for this famed expedition. As the dramatic chronicle unfolds, we come to understand that, contrary to popular belief, black men played a significant part in New World exploration and Native American men and women were not merely silent witnesses to it. In Laila Lalami's deft hands, Estebanico's memoir illuminates the ways in which stories can transmute into history, even as storytelling can offer a chance for redemption and survival.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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