

Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits

By Laila Lalami

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“A dream of a debut, by turns troubling adn glorious, angry and wise.” —Junot Diaz

Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits evokes the grit and enduring grace that is modern Morocco. As four Moroccans illegally cross the Strait of Gibraltar in an inflatable boat headed for Spain, author Laila Lalami asks, What has driven them to risk their lives? And will the rewards prove to be worth the danger? There’s Murad, a gentle, unemployed man who’s been reduced to hustling tourists around Tangier; Halima, who’s fleeing her drunken husband and the slums of Casablanca; Aziz, who must leave behind his devoted wife in hope of securing work in Spain; and Faten, a student and religious fanatic whose faith is at odds with an influential man determined to destroy her future. Sensitively written with beauty and boldness, this is a gripping book about what propels people to risk their lives in search of a better future.

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Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits By Laila Lalami Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #135733 in eBooks
- Published on: 2005-10-07
- Released on: 2005-10-07
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits, Laila Lalami's poetic debut, begins with the illegal journey of four Moroccans across the Strait of Gibraltar. Moments away from the shores of Spain, the boat capsizes and the passengers are forced to swim for their lives, and their freedom. What follows is an exploration of the pasts that led to this passage, and the futures that emerge from this voyage.

Less a novel than a series of biographical sketches, the book seems at times like a tease; Lalami does such a beautiful job creating her characters that readers will undoubtedly be left wanting more. Still, each portrait gives us a chance to not only engage with the character, but to gain an understanding of the religious, socio-economic, and emotional circumstances that compel each person to leave Morocco. Faten, a student who dons the *hijab*, is forced to flee when her religious beliefs start threatening the lives of influential educators. Murad, a serious, educated young man chances the crossing in search of a better life, where he doesn't have to hustle tourists to make a living. In each scene, Lalami bring Moroccan culture to life, from the tree-lined suburbs of Rabat to the Douar Lhajja slum, "where couscous pots were used as satellite dishes."

With *Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits*, Lalami creates a world that is both modern and traditional, hopeful and desperate, mournful and joyous. Readers can look forward to much more from this talented new voice. --*Gisele Toueg*

From Publishers Weekly
The four main characters of this linked series of fictional profiles are connected by a single goal: the desire to emigrate from Morocco to Spain, where there are jobs. Lalami, author of the literary blog moorishgirl.com, opens her book with the four (along with several others) illegally crossing the Strait of Gibraltar in a tiny inflatable raft; when it capsizes near shore, it is everyone for themselves. The next four chapters flash back to their varying lives in Morocco: Faten, a lower-class, college-aged woman appears only through the eyes of middle-class friend Noura's parents, who are horror-stricken as Noura falls under Faten's influence and begins wearing the hijab; Halima, a financially struggling mother who, with her children, is escaping an abusive marriage; Aziz Ammor, who hopes to support his wife by finding work in Spain; and Murad, a college graduate who makes pocket money by taking Paul Bowles fans on informal tours. The four following chapters detail, with sensitivity and journalistic clarity, their lives after the trip across the Strait. Less a novel than a set of finely detailed portraits, this book gives outsiders a glimpse of some of Moroccan society's strata and the desperation that underlies many ordinary lives.
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From School Library Journal
Adult/High School–This contemporary tale opens with 30 people huddled in an inflatable lifeboat meant to hold 8, attempting illegally to cross the Strait of Gibraltar from Tangier to Spain. Lalami explores the lives of four of these travelers, from the circumstances that led up to their being in that boat, to the lives they make for themselves after their attempted crossing is thwarted by the Spanish border's Guardia Civil. Murad lives with his mother and younger siblings. Although he has a degree in English and speaks fluent Spanish, his life consists of hustling American and British tourists to various points of interest in Morocco. Halima, married with two young sons, works as a janitor to make ends meet while her husband drinks her earnings away and beats her in frustration. She sees the trip as her one chance at escape. Faten, an outspoken university student, crosses paths with an education administrator and finds herself expelled from school. Aziz, tired of seeing his wife go off to work while he cannot find employment, dreams of making a life in Spain and bringing his

wife over once he is established. Two of these four characters avoid the Guardia Civil; two of them do not. Each learns that ultimately success has little to do with location and everything to do with smaller, day-to-day decisions. With a softness and lyricism that belie the fact that this is a first novel, the narrative introduces readers to beautifully drawn characters who make for a gem of a tale.–*Kim Dare, Fairfax County Public Library System, VA*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eleanor Williams:

The book Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits can give more knowledge and information about everything you want. So just why must we leave a good thing like a book Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits? A number of you have a different opinion about e-book. But one aim in which book can give many info for us. It is absolutely proper. Right now, try to closer along with your book. Knowledge or info that you take for that, you are able to give for each other; you may share all of these. Book Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits has simple shape however you know: it has great and massive function for you. You can appearance the enormous world by open up and read a guide. So it is very wonderful.

Joe Bell:

In this 21st one hundred year, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make these survives, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a book your ability to survive increase then having chance to stay than other is high. For you who want to start reading a book, we give you this particular Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits book as starter and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Carrie Porter:

Playing with family in a park, coming to see the marine world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you may have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. One particular activity that make you not experiencing tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition associated with. Even you love Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits, you may enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still would like to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh seriously its mind hangout fellas. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

Debbie Jackson:

A lot of people said that they feel bored when they reading a reserve. They are directly felt that when they get a half regions of the book. You can choose the actual book Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits to make your personal reading is interesting. Your own skill of reading talent is developing when you similar to

reading. Try to choose basic book to make you enjoy you just read it and mingle the idea about book and examining especially. It is to be initially opinion for you to like to wide open a book and learn it. Beside that the reserve Hope and Other Dangerous Pursuits can to be your friend when you're sense alone and confuse in doing what must you're doing of their time.

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