



Sudden Death: A Novel

Álvaro Enrique

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"**Splendid**" —*New York Times*

"[A] novel without boundaries." —*O, the Oprah Magazine*

"**Mind-bending.**" —*Wall Street Journal*

A daring, kaleidoscopic novel about the clash of empires and ideas, told through a tennis match in the sixteenth century between the radical Italian artist Caravaggio and the Spanish poet Francisco de Quevedo, played with a ball made from the hair of the beheaded Anne Boleyn.

The poet and the painter battle it out in Rome before a crowd that includes Galileo, Mary Magdalene, and a generation of popes who would throw the world into flames. In England, Thomas Cromwell and Henry VIII execute Anne Boleyn, and her crafty executioner transforms her legendary locks into those most-sought-after tennis balls. Across the ocean in Mexico, the last Aztec emperors play their own games, as the conquistador Hernán Cortés and his Mayan translator and lover, La Malinche, scheme and conquer, fight and f**k, not knowing that their domestic comedy will change the course of history. In a remote Mexican colony a bishop reads Thomas More's *Utopia* and thinks that it's a manual instead of a parody. And in today's New York City, a man searches for answers to impossible questions, for a book that is both an archive and an oracle.

Álvaro Enrigue's mind-bending story features assassinations and executions, hallucinogenic mushrooms, bawdy criminals, carnal liaisons and papal schemes, artistic and religious revolutions, love and war. A blazingly original voice and a postmodern visionary, Enrigue tells the grand adventure of the dawn of the modern era, breaking down traditions and upending expectations, in this bold, powerful gut-punch of a novel.

Game, set, match.

"*Sudden Death* is the best kind of puzzle, its elements so esoteric and wildly funny that readers will race through the book, wondering how Álvaro Enrigue will be able to pull a novel out of such an astonishing ball of string. But Enrigue absolutely does; and with brilliance and clarity and emotional warmth all the more powerful for its surreptitiousness."

—**Lauren Groff**, *New York Times*-bestselling author of *Fates and Furies*

"Engrossing... rich with Latin and European history." —*The New Yorker*

"[A] bawdy, often profane, sprawling, ambitious book that is as engaging as it is challenging." —*Vogue*

From the Hardcover edition.

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Howard Depriest:

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Gerard Norman:

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