

THE CONQUISTADOR'S WIFE

CHORUS 3: PATH TO GLORY

The rumors had been raging for days now throughout Cortés' camp: stories of human sacrifice and other unspeakable acts performed by the native peoples of this savage land. The Conquistadors, all of them hardened professional soldiers, were not afraid to die. But to die with one's heart ripped out, still beating in the hand of a Mexica priest—this was more than any Christian man could be expected to bare. And talk spread of mutiny.

Cortés was filled with despair. How could his small band defeat an entire empire, especially now that the men were on the verge of revolt. Every one of them would be needed if he was to have any hope of success. To turn back now was not an option. He was El Caudillo, after all. Destiny called...as did the gold! But, how could he quell their rebellion? How could he stop them from abandoning his dream? His answer came in a flash—give them no escape. Burn the ships!

So their rugged trek began, 12,000 feet up, over mountain passes, volcanoes on either side. The climb was long and steep, made all the more treacherous with cannons in tow. The air was thin. The horses were hungry. The cold was nearly enough to kill a man. Yet all the while, they could sense the unseen eyes of Moctezuma's scouts following their every step, as the Strangers moved ever closer to the City of Gold.