

## **THE CONQUISTADOR'S WIFE**

### **CHORUS 6: THE MARRIAGE VOW**

He might be El Caudillo to his men, but to the Naturales, Cortés was known only as Lord Malinche—named for the noble slave girl always found at his side. They were inseparable. He owed so much to Malinali. Without her, how could he hope to understand the language, customs, fears and hopes of these native people, he found so different and strange? How could he have devised a victory strategy over the vast Mexica empire? Without her, who would have ever believed he was Quetzalcoatl—a god returning in search of justice?

No wonder, then, that El Caudillo fell in love. She was beautiful, intelligent, and devoted to their cause. We can only imagine how she might have felt about him—a man like none she had ever seen before. He was the answer to her prayer, the prophecy come true. And it was her destiny to be as wife to him.

So it was that Malinali became Dona Marina. This title of respect was all that Cortés could really offer her. He already had a wife in Spain—Catalina—the sister-in-law of the Spanish Governor of Cuba. He had married her not for love, but for rank and privilege, to advance his career. Although Cortés and Malinali would have a child together, and their love was plain to see, she was The Conquistadors' Wife in name only—their marriage was never made legal.