

Poem VII:
La Malinche

Exercise VII.1:

Carmen Tafolla's poems refer to historical characters in ways not always found in our history books. In "La Malinche" we see how one can interpret certain actions and motivations in different ways so that one person's hero can be another person's traitor. We meet a young Indian girl whom some see as a traitor to her people and others see as the mother of a new race; we meet an Emperor whom some see as a doomed and tragic hero and others see as vain, bloodthirsty and foolish. We meet a invading soldier whom some see as a bringer of civilization and others see as vain, bloodthirsty and greedy. Choose one of these persons and imagine meeting him/her today. Then write a dialog you might have with that person. Choose some other controversial historical figure and do the same thing.

— Exercise provided by Margaret Randall, human rights activist
and author