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**Juana La Loca, the Tragic Queen of Castile I**

**Lead: Ignored by her philandering husband, imprisoned by a calculating son, few figures in modern European royalty equal the tragic misery of Juana La Loca, the Mad Queen of Castile.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: Juana or Joanna was the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of the united Spanish kingdoms of Castile and Aragon. She was the third child and surviving heir to the dual kingdom. Her younger sister,**

**Catherine, became the Queen of England, married to and then controversially divorced from King Henry VIII.**

**Born in 1479, just thirteen years before her parents consolidated Catholic rule over Spain and commissioned Christopher Columbus on his voyage west to the New World, Juana was a bright student who conversed fluently in Latin, was a talented dancer and gifted musician. From her early years, however, she demonstrated a neurosis, appearing frequently in her family, a tendency to melancholia and moodiness. Ambitious family members would later use this against her when her condition deepened into episodic**

**dementia.**

**Her family controlled most of Spain and large sections of Italy, and it was determined an advantage to secure a marriage alliance with the Hapsburg Dynasty whose holdings included the Low Countries, Holland and Flanders, Austria and the Holy Roman Empire. By this the united family would control a vast swath of the continent and could challenge the power of France, the pre-imminent European superpower of the time. In 1495, the 16-year-old Juana was betrothed to Prince Philip of Hapsburg. His striking physical appearance gave him the name Philip the Handsome and in that was rooted Juana's greatest pleasure and deepest**

**pain. Next time: Pawn in the hands of father, husband, and son. Research assistance by Jonathan DeShazo.**

**At the University of Richmond,  
this is Dan Roberts.**

**Resources**

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