Gruntmore, El Alcalde
Part one

The five worthies who make up the local council of Alqueria all owe allegiance to the Newcomers, Los Recién Llegados. It has always been that way. Apathy on the part of the Hill People, El Gente del Cerro, vote rigging and bribery have always assured the status quo remains the status quo. Hard decisions had to be made however. Alqueria is not immune from the present economic climate and cuts had to be made.

Fernando Rodriquez had the council in his pocket. Running for office was too much like hard work, he preferred to use his lackeys. Puppets elected by the good people of Alqueria under questionable circumstances. However, Rodriguez had a problem. Unpopular spending cuts had to be made and he needed a scapegoat. Someone he could both control and blame, someone who was outside the normal partisan divisions of the village.

The resident Englishman Blythe Gruntmore was duly seconded to the council. Unable to speak the language and never really assimilating with the people of the village he was an inspired choice. Unable to communicate and generally in a state of confused panic he suited the task admirably. A Geordie speaking English is a daunting experience even if you are ready for it. A simple 'Good morning' can sound like a declaration of war. When mixed with extremely bad Spanish the linguistic effect is breathtaking.

Gruntmore attended the council meetings promptly. This meant of course that he was alone in the chamber for the first twenty minutes or so. He still hadn't fully grasped the Spanish concept of timekeeping. He would nod wisely and vote when the others did so. Blythe drifted through the meetings with vacuous staring eyes as if someone had forgotten to plug him in. They could be electing Rasputin responsible for the morale upbringing of the village girls for all he knew.

By this means all of the unpopular cuts were introduced. A leak was then engineered

suggesting that Blythe Gruntmore was responsible for the drafting the proposals.

Blythe didn't notice the hostility as no one spoke to him at the best of times. He continued to drink at the Casa Devante but wallowed in his newly found importance. Blythe now disposed himself like a Japanese warlord, instead of in his usual hunched shouldered reticent attitude.

What were the cuts?
How did they affect the village?
We shall see!