**The Hunt**

April marks the opening of the Alquerian bear hunting season. *Ursus arctos arctos*, or the Eurasian Brown Bear or rather the Alquerian Brown Bear a particularity savage and extremely nasty sub species is the hunted. The would-be chinless wonders and 'OK Ya' sect of the Newcomer's barrio the hunters.

The Alquerian Brown Bear was said by ***** * ***** to be the most dangerous unpredictable and inherently evil creature he had come across. The males have huge razor sharp claws of some twelve centimetres in length while the strength of the teeth is phenomenal. The female of the species is far more dangerous as with females of all species, the female Alquerian Brown Bear has a tongue a dangerous weapon in any feminine mouth.

The people who hunt these vicious merciless killers must be brave indeed. Armed only with semi-automatic high power rifles they sit exposed in steel enclosures mounted in the back of a four-wheel drive vehicles. A mystery why as the bears have never shot back. These fearless stalkers set out at dawn, after a 'stirrup cup' of Remitroot Whisky the scour the outlying areas for these dangerous animals. The also scour the bars just on the off chance that one has popped in for a quick half. The atmosphere is tense as five hundred kilos of malevolent flesh could be waiting behind the next tree, there could also be a bear there of course.

Are the hunters afraid, are they apprehensive, not a bit of it they laugh at danger, why mainly because the animals have been extinct for the last twenty-three years. Twenty-three years ago a rather ambitious and over optimistic lemming interbred with an Alquerian Brown Bear. The mental image of this event is perhaps one that shouldn't be conjured up. The Lemming's suicidal gene appeared to the fore and the bear population soon inherited and even enhanced it.

There then followed two decades of danger. Bears would plummet from the cliff faces of the high sierra at regular intervals. They were becoming a public menace. Insurance companies wouldn't supply cover as the carnivorous rained down onto the streets of Alqueria. As the bear population dwindled so did the probability of being flattened by one. Eventually on one fateful Friday afternoon the last bear hurled itself from the heights above the village and a unique life form ceased to exist.

The place from where the animal leaped became known as Bear Pass but as that name led to some confusion as to what was bear it was re-christened 'The Place Where Suicidal Bears Hurl Themselves From Cliff Ledges'. A name still retained to this day, why, well it is Alqueria after all.