Armas and the Pit

The first tunnel of the Alquerian Metro was progressing at an acceptable pace. Acceptable for Alqueria that is. It isn't a question of how much progress is being made but why a village of eight hundred souls requires an underground system in the first place. The requirement is tied to European grants designed to overhaul transport infrastructures. After some very creative accounting and downright lies regarding the logistical needs of Alqueria, grants were duly awarded. Unfortunately in these days of financial crises the issuing agency insisted on site visits, they wanted to know exactly where their cash was going.

The elders of the Village had hoped that the sheer unpleasantness of Alqueria would dissuade any potential inspector from putting in an appearance. The ploy had worked in the past. This time however, Alqueria's bluff had been called. This is why Felipe Armas was bravely digging his way to a cardiac arrest while being watched by Loco Paco. Paco looked anything but loco to the exhausted Armas.

The plan submitted with the grant application called for two lines with an intersection and nine stations. The total length of the network was to be 22km. Armas's excavation was to such a depth that an individual of average height could, when standing upright see over the edge of the hole. At the present rate of progress it would take 546 years to complete the digging. One might reasonably expect Alqueria's transport requirements to have changed somewhat during this time. It was however satisfactory progress for Alqueria.

With the inspectors on their way Armas was digging with a will. He was given the job by default as no one else answered the job application. Armas only answered it as he thought he was applying for a subscription to 'Naughty Nun Monthly' which he read purely for the articles. It soon became obvious that the inspectors weren't going to be fooled. Instead of a network of tunnels they were going to find nothing more than a hole in the ground that any self respecting boyscout on latrine duty could have dug.

Many inventive schemes to foil the inspectors were mooted. These ranged from backdrops painted with tunnel scenes to rendering the inspectors unconscious by applying Remitroot Whisky in vast quantities.

The solution came in the form of Antonio Poyato's newly acquired and as yet uninstalled septic tank. By simply glueing on cardboard fins and stencilling the words '1000KG RDX' it was possible to create the illusion of a very large bomb. Lowering it into the semi-darkness of Armas's pit completed the deception.

The inspectors arrived promptly and peered into the void. The sight of Armas about to strike the 'bomb' with a hefty shovel tested their mettle. With remarkable agility for men of their age they clambered into their vehicles and sped away with doors slamming. The whole scene looked like a bungled kidnap attempt.

They were in such haste they reached Murcia before they realised they were out of petrol.