A Las Barricadas

The lovely Manuela, of whom we have already heard, was indirectly responsible for events which were to become of international importance. An incident spiralled out of control, as Alquerian incidents often do and brought Alqueria to the attention of the world community. The main protagonists were as we have already said the lovely Manuela and one Alberto Gropo from the opposing barrio. Manuela, with her natural elegance and ability to dress seductively without having to try very hard was the recipient of Gropo's unwelcome attention in the form of his hand on her nether regions. Manuela, who happened to have a pair of rusty sécateurs handy threatened to do to his 'manhood' what she had just done to her roses. Manuela being a determined girl pursued Alberto through the byways and highways of Alqueria while opening and closing her garden pruners in a menacing and eye-watering manner. Alberto headed for the high sierra and was never heard from again apart from a card postmarked Isconahua, Peru asking for his back copies of 'Little Breast, Big Breast, Bigger Breast Monthly', which he gets for the articles to be forwarded care of the local post-office.

The 'handy' Alberto belonged, before his flight to South America to the Newcomer's Barrio, the deadly rivals of Manuela's Hill People's. This rivalry was the driving force in the telling and retelling of the details relating to the incident which became increasing lewd and salacious at each iteration. 'The Incident of Manuela's Bottom, 2015' as it became known, the year was needed as there had been similar incidents although not always related to her bottom, became the sole topic of conversation in the Village.

The Hill People labelled Alberto Gropo a 'Viejo Verde' and the Newcomer's stamped the lovely Manuela as a 'wanton Woman' which may be true but to have it said by one of the Newcomers was tantamount to a declaration of war. That is exactly how it was seen and the battle-lines were drawn. This may seem a trifling cause for civil unrest but the people of Alqueria didn't need a reason only an excuse. Civil unrest had

become known as the 'Alquerian pastime', the neighbouring villages marvelled at the stamina and dedication to all things relating to riots and rioting by the Alquerian people.

There was by now a well rehearsed plan by each barrio for the preparation of such conflicts. It has been said that the cobblestones that pave the Pueblo have two numbers engraved upon them. One number relates to the stone's place in the street and the other its position in the barricade. So it was that Alqueria prepared itself for the destructive yet reassuringly familiar conflict which was surely inevitable.