The search

Alqueria was stunned into silence. When one considers that silence for any Alquerian is an act of great self-control so for the whole Pueblo to be silent must suggest the enormity of the crime.

Manuela apparently kidnapped.

The Hill People blamed the Newcomers who denied any knowledge of the disappearance. One helpful individual suggested she may have been kidnapped by intelligent beings from another world. This argument doesn't hold water however as these beings would have to have visited Alqueria in order to do the body snatching and anyone visiting Alqueria of their own free will and on purpose doesn't demonstrate much in the way of intelligence.

The menfolk of Alqueria began a systematic and painstaking search of the Village. The women however didn't show anything like the enthusiasm of their male counterparts and adopted a wait and see policy as an alternative. In order for the Newcomers to prove that they had no hand in the disappearance they allowed their homes to be searched. When the womenfolk heard of this they changed their minds instantly. They weren't going to pass up the chance of snooping around the private possessions and the intimate places of their enemy and took part with gusto.

All this searching and counter searching meant that the conflict and civil unrest was put on hold with the mutual consent of both barrios, one of the few times Alqueria has been truly united. The Village was searched from the top of the castle battlements to the depths of the Bar La Golondrina's cellar. Frederico Alkraapo was given the task of searching Loco Paco's property, he is still receiving counselling and is in such a state of mental confusion he even considered joining the Tory party.

During the evening, when house searching had been mixed with liberal quantities of Remitroot wine and whisky the Town was in uproar. Some of the more personal items were paraded through the streets for all to see. One lady of advancing years was seen holding one of Manuela's 'appliances' with a look of woman who has recognised a long lost friend but forgotten their name.

It was when these proceeding were in full swing that an apparition appeared, or seemingly an apparition. Manuela calmly sauntered through the stunned, silent crowd quietly wondering what all the fuss was about. When questioned she refused to answer any questions and failed to offer any reason for her disappearance. An enigmatic smile and dishevelled hair gave some clue and also fuelled many theories ranging from the improbable to the physically impossible.