'Trabajo' is a four letter word

Mentioning work in Alqueria is akin to screening a Ken Loach film at the Conservative Party conference. The Alquerian understanding of the work ethic is just as alien to the Pueblo's inhabitants as Loach's ideas of social equality are to the Tories. But work has to be done in Alqueria, the Village has to be financed. Angela Merkel has suggested that all Europeans should work until they are sixty-seven, you can't get Alquerians to work after Lunch, before is difficult enough but after, no chance.

Apart from the usual retail establishments the only real wealth producers in Alqueria are Poyato's Remitroot plant and Rodriquez's olive mill. The latter was once a thriving concern producing olive oil of the finest quality and richness of flavour. With the demise of its owner, Roque Rodriquez the Mill fell into the hands of Roque's son, known simply as Rodriquez or 'That B******'. Under his careful management the concern is now losing money and its very fabric derelict. Rodriquez has a passion, Abyssinian Goat Shirling. People familiar with the sport will know it is very expensive, a new set of gullion skrunging prongs can cost upwards of thirty-thousand Euros. Rodriquez diverted every penny of the Mill's profits and when these stopped rolling in he disappeared the pension fund and then sold off the assets that were still standing.

The work force, once a conscientious committed group of professionals dissolved into a collection of purloining malcontents. They looting the place. The last large investment made was in a complex computer system. This was taken piecemeal, most of it under coats, jerseys and shirts. Rodriquez couldn't understand why ninety percent of his workforce, female and male appeared pregnant, but he never was one to pry.

Not many Alquerians have worked outside the Pueblo, their services aren't exactly sought after. Loco Paco did once work for a large hotel in Madrid, if only for a very short time. He was engaged to clean the lifts. Now, lifts simply don't exist in Alqueria.

The shoddy method of civil construction won't tolerate buildings above two stories high. Paco wasn't sure what a 'lift' was. He thought they were those convoluted brassieres that enhance the female form. So quite naturally he was looking forward to starting his new job. Poor Paco was to be disappointed and to add insult to injury it took him a whole six days to clean the 'ascensores'. When asked why it took so long he replied that there were two on each floor and sometimes they had completely disappeared, he had to wait ages for them to re-materialise.

Of Poyato's Remitroot plant later.