The New Bridge
(Part two)

After the destruction of the northern bridge by old man Matas, life became decidedly difficult for the people of Alqueria. The southerly bridge is on the Camino de Alqueria, a busy road with many prying eyes. Contraband in the form of illicit Remitroot alcohol, banned by a United Nation's resolution needed to be moved by a more covert route. Rodriquez was also having problems moving waste from his olive mill. To do it openly would mean paying the exorbitant fees charged by industrial waste management companies.

A crisis meeting was held. A new bridge had to be built quickly. The money was forthcoming in the form of a European Union Infrastructure Redevelopment Grant. Certain officials in the finance department at Brussels had a weakness for Remitroot liquor. It was only necessary to interrupt their supply and minds became suitably concentrated. It was to be a joint project, with the Newcomer's half starting on the west bank of the Río Verde and the Hill People's on the east.

The half built by El Gente del Cerro was an elegant affair. Structurally sound and aesthetically pleasing. The Art Nouveau façade veneered with the best Albamiel sandstone. Its foundations sunk deep into the mud of the Río Verde. This eastern section successfully completed on time and well before construction had even started on the western half.

The half built by Los Recién Llegados consisted of a surplus pontoon bridge purchased from a crooked storeman at the Army Engineer's depot in Castrillo del Val. It was erected in the dead of night by a group of itinerant knife grinders from Guadix. Rodriquez handled this part of the operation and had complete control of the finances. The cash residue from the western half of the project has never been traced. Rodriquez however, has ordered another new gleaming white Mercedes S-Class Roadster.

When knife grinders turn their hand to bridge construction, they don't always take it for granted that the two halves should meet in the middle.

Rodriquez was in jovial mood. He was returning from Alicante where he had just collected his gleaming new white Mercedes S-Class Roadster. He decided to take the northerly route into Alqueria. The new bridge came into view. The car's suspension gently yielded as he drove onto the structure. Rodriquez then noticed that the bridge's other half was twenty metres down steam. He tried desperately to stop. The car skidded and toppled into the green oily water of the Río Verde. The River's flow took him and his gleaming new white Mercedes S-Class Roadster down stream and into the Mediterranean.

For the second time Rodriquez found himself the illegal immigrant. A guest of the *Servicio Marítimo de la Guardia Civil* arguing his nationality and discussing his rights of abode on Spanish soil.