¡Bomba!
(Part two)

Ten hours to go before the bomb's controlled explosion and the evacuation of Alqueria was in full swing. The order to remove all valuable items to a place of safety was interpreted entirely the wrong way. The result was general outbreak of looting. People were seen to carry off anything and everything of value. One athletic young gentleman was seen to carry off Carmen the camarera from the Bar La Casa Devante.

Blythe Gruntmore didn't know what was going on and took it to be another Feria. He wondered the village full of bonhomie and Newcastle Brown Ale, rambling in his incomprehensible Geordie tongue. Manuela used the opportunity to loot the olive mill's offices. She came away with a laptop computer, two anglepoise desk lamps and a painting depicting Alqueria in 1899. Nestor Clacketo hid behind the bar of La Golondrina Verde and drunk himself into insensibility.

The buses on the Camino de Alqueria hastened away with the village's population, allowing work on the bomb to continue unimpeded. Finally, two innocent looking wires were connected to the detonating box and the disposal team took cover.

The countdown began. Ten...nine...eight.

In 1867 it was discovered that the root system of the Remitroot plant could over time penetrate and eventually fracture concrete. It was decided in that year to encase the town's septic tank in cast iron. Records of this and the location of the now defunct tank were lost in the great boquerone riots of 1910.

Seven...six... five

The explosion was premature. A flash, then a great mound of earth bulged into the air. For a second or so all seemed quiet then a grey cloud of ancient effluent rose, it

reached medium altitude and then the wind took it. It spread over the whole village before falling back to earth. Nestor Clacketo emerged from the Bar La Golondrina Verde and looked up opened mouthed as the cloud descended. As he emerged from the haze he appeared to have gossamer wings.

To say the army disposal team was surprised would be an understatement. They did however realise what was happening and took steps. Very long steps, beating the cloud by a mere fraction of a second as they darted for the safety of the covered Lavandería.

As the people of Alqueria returned, they thought it strange that their once whitewashed village was now a dirty grey. They further thought it strange that all the cars were the same colour. Why it was slippery under foot was yet another mystery. However on the plus side the overall odour of the village had improved greatly. Nestor Clacekto, on the other hand showed no improvement and became strangely but deeply religious.