El Supremo

With Antonio Poyato and that other stalwart of democracy Blythe Gruntmore under lock and key, Rodriquez and his obnoxious sidekicks took total control of Alqueria. Manuela had slipped through the net but she was only a girl, hardly a threat to the new totalitarian regime.

The people of Alqueria having taken apathy to new and lofty heights didn't notice the change in government. It soon became apparent however that something was 'up'. Rodriquez, resplendent in new pseudo-military regalia appeared on a hastily built rostrum in the village plaza. As with all dictators and monarchs Rodriquez had immediately dressed himself in the most ridiculous and over-medalled uniform. He then surrounded himself with meaningless protocol putting the widest gap possible between himself and the 'ordinary' people of Alqueria.

Rodriquez's 'pronunciamento' in the square left the villagers in no doubt about the coup d'état. Dozens of emergency controls were put in place. In the best traditions of Spain and the Spanish people these were totally ignored. The Remitroot crop however, and therefore the economy of Alqueria would be directly under Rodriquez's control. To the more astute of the population this was worrying. During the lengthy speech his pomposity knew no bounds as he rambled on. In his attempt to portray himself as a wise and benevolent leader he only appeared as he really is. A megalomaniac with no more sense than a cuckoo. The old adage held true as it holds true with all monarchs and dictators, 'A monkey dressed in silk is still a monkey'.

On the southern slopes of the Sierra Alhamilla overlooking Alqueria is old man Matas's cave. Still believing the Civil War to be on he does what he can for the Second Republic. Manuela had found her way there by navigating the olive groves in total darkness. This was second nature to her, it was during the daylight hours that they presented a problem. Manuela's arrival, breathless and desperate further strengthened the old man's belief in his cause. To have company and female company

in particular threw Matas into confusion. He wasn't sure what was common courtesy and what was pent up but long forgotten desire.

Manuela let Matas believe the Civil War was still raging and set about exploiting his arsenal of old but numerous weapons in the cause of Alquerian freedom. Although in his nineties Matas became besotted with the raven haired Manuela.

He presented Manuela with a small bunch of wild flowers “They're a bit wilted but it's the thought that counts” Matas said with a lascivious grin. “It's the thought that worries me” mused Manuela as she oiled the bolt of an ancient Mauser.