Los Gitanos and the crystal ball

The Gypsies of Andalucía belong to the Romani Iberian Kale group and it was a column of their caravans that entered Alqueria on that chilly day in February. Attracted by the near anarchy which reigns daily they hoped to settle in the Village Republic. The true freedom which can only be experienced by total chaos became an irresistible lure for these nomadic people.

The ramshackle procession crossed the old stone bridge and took up residence on the waste ground east of the Río Verde. Leading the group was the matriarch La Adivina. The most gifted mystic and teller of fortunes alive today on the Iberian Peninsular.

A delegation from the Alquerian Town Hall paid the new arrivals an official visit. Temporary visas had to be arranged and Antonio Poyato wanted the great La Adivina to tell him what was going to win the three-thirty at Zarzuela. Manuela being Minister of Culture and an inquisitive girl insisted that the great prophetess demonstrated her abilities.

That evening in the confines of La Adivina's foul smelling caravan sat Manuela, Rodriquez and the great woman herself. They spoke in hushed tones, an act of great self-control for anyone of Spanish descent. Most Gypsy caravans are spotlessly clean this one however was an exception. The smell of stale cooking odours and human sweat was overpowering. Rodriquez, the most hated man in the village was now apparently despised on the 'other side' as well. When a ghostly voice drifted down asking “Is there anybody there” and Rodriquez answered in the affirmative. The voice immediately replied “Is there anybody else there”

The lights were dimmed and La Adivina began her preparations. She produced an impressive crystal ball and started to caress her globe, for what purpose it was impossible to say. She started to chant. Manuela was unsure whether she was casting a spell or singing a flamenco cante. The object of the exercise was for the fortune

teller to evoke images in her crystal ball which would lay open the very soul of Manuela.

It appeared to have worked, La Adivina took one look into her shiny orb and ran screaming from the caravan, eyes wide and tearing at her hair. Manuela's soul is not a place for the unwary to play.

The remainder of the gypsies after seeing their leader so affected believed it to be the result of a curse either on them or Alqueria. They piled into any transport available. Arms and legs protruding from windows and doors as they headed for the high sierra. Here they underwent penance to rid themselves of any curse. Refraining from alcohol, tobacco and pleasures of the flesh for thirty days and presumably nights as well. A tough penance indeed.

The people of Alqueria don't believe their village to be cursed. If it is however it would certainly explain a great deal.