La Feria del Corsé. Part 2

The scene in the square was one of complete desolation. Broken glass, rocks and debris of all kinds littered the plaza. Upturned trestle tables had strewn their loads over the cobbles. Rodriguez had regained consciousness, at least as far as anyone could tell he was conscious. The Guadia Civil had cordoned off the area to all but the authorised. Their official cordon tape at odds with the festive bunting strung around the square. A Capitán of the Guadia Civil struck a heroic pose. Alone among the ruins of the Feria, he shaded his eyes from the low sun and addressed the tower, Manuela and her followers.

Old man Matas was watching events from his cave overlooking the village. He focused his battered Russian field glasses on the square. Still believing the Civil War to be in progress the sight of the hated Guardia intimidating the semi clad Manuela inflamed the old man. He believed she was fighting for her honour. Whether or not Manuela ever fought for her honour, was much debated in Alqueria. Matas raised his old smooth-bore Mauser took aim and fired. The old projectile didn't fly true. It hit the castle stone-work ricocheted off with a dull thud. A low 'dong' from the church bell as the itinerant bullet hit and bounced off. These detours didn't ultimately affect the accuracy of Matas's shot. The rebounded bullet removed the gallant capitán's hat neatly parting his hair.

If pandemonium didn't reign, it was certainly a contender. People ran in all directions, some oscillated to and fro. Others by an immense feat of muscular control did both simultaneously. A Guardia helicopter arrived to join in the fun and generally make a nuisance of itself. The downdraught from its rotors churned up the lighter debris causing it to swirl in endless circles captive within the plaza. This obscured everyone’s view of the castle tower and allowed Manuela and her supporters a chance to slip away.

Properly dressed Manuela made her way through the rear door of the Bar La Casa

Devante and into the bar. Horacio Stranglardeganso the landlord knew the authorities would soon arrive for the lovely Manuela, he acted quickly and decisively. After dusting off and opening his precious bottles of Remitroot liquor he offered them free to all who entered. This included the Guardia officer and Rodriguez. With bandaged head the mill owner gratefully drank the wonderful fluid. At midnight the scene would not have disgraced Bacchus himself. All was bonhomie and accord.

There is an old Alquerian saying. 'Everyone remembers where they were when they first drank Remitroot liquor. After the second drink they can't remember why they were there'.