The Grand Heist

The folk of Alqueria looked in horror at the forlorn spectacle that was once their homes. Broken glass, torn bedding and doors swinging off their hinges, the looting of Alqueria had been complete. The poor had been separated from their valuables quicker and more completely than even a Tory chancellor could manage.

Loco Paco, the only Alquerian not at the picnic and therefore present when the thieves arrived could shed little light on the matter. It appears he was taking his pet Saharan Dung Beetle, 'Benjy' for a walk when they turned-up. Thinking they were on the lookout for unlicensed Scarabs he and his precious beetle went into hiding. He watched as the thieves loaded their fleet of trucks with the portable and semi-portable goods and chattels of the villagers. When asked why he didn't raise the alarm he muttered some gibberish about the licensing requirements of the species Scarabaeidae. The Spanish guards on the Alquerian border were of no help either. In fact they seemed to be suffering from a form of selective blindness which appeared proportional to their sudden affluence.

The heist bore all the hallmarks of Medioladrillo Cid and his gang from Madrid. These unprincipled villains make a habit of plundering small villages while their inhabitants are otherwise engaged. They were also under suspicion of being involved in the Great Merluza Theft of 93. As the people of Alqueria slept on bare stone floors or rather bare marble floors in the case of the Hill People discussions took place on what should be done. Jóse Cabrasilbido, the local policeman was out of his depth. The idea of asking the Spanish National Police to help was mooted. Manuela however was against the suggestion. She was convinced that the last time they were in Alqueria the photographs they took of her were not for training purposes.

Free of their worldly possessions the people of Alqueria knew an equality and comradeship never experienced before. It should have been a golden time of reconciliation and understanding. Unfortunately it was such an alien feeling it worried

and confused them. Perhaps they weren't ready for such a heady ideal. It simply made them more determined to regain their wealth and plans were laid to that end.

The 'Fondo de Ayuda por Alqueria', was put in place. There was a problem though. If everyone in the village was broke who would donate, but wise fiscal policy has never been a feature of the Alquerian establishment.

Manuela and Poyato had another plan. Commandeering several vehicles they drove into Spain and proceeded to loot the village of Pobreville. The population of Pobreville were enjoying their annual Merienda de Campo some kilometres distant.

The status quo was therefore restored and the population of Alqueria could continue their interminable squabbles.