Hombres y Mujeres

Barrio rivalry isn't the only mechanism of village discord. The eternal struggle between the sexes provides some good sport and forms the basis of regular and very interesting village gossip. The distaste one barrio feels for the other isn't dependent on age unlike the conflict between man and woman where it is fundamental to the see-saw of emotions which fuel the struggle.

The more senior couples, those who regard the application decongestant chest rub as a scandalous act find avoidance to be the best recipe for togetherness. Most mature Alquerian wives believe their men to be totally unreliable at best and a complete waste of rations at worst.

The men are Shooed into the streets every morning before the daily house scouring begins. Most men scuttle to their secret places to think. Alfonso Delgado in the security of the mirador remembers his days with the Ejército Popular during the Civil War. Alone in a hostile environment, living off his wits, danger around every corner, much like being married he muses. Some just wander through the olive groves counting the leaves and watching the world go by. Others walk the high sierra to the north of Alqueria. An uninhabited semi wilderness just a vast expanse with very little in the way of humanity, rather like Rodriquez's wife.

While the older women chase, harass and regulate the older men, so the younger men chase, soften up and lure the younger woman. Using the traditional Alquerian method of communication they carry out the timeless courtship ritual. The young bucks bounce their voices off the cliff face so the echoes reach their lasses in the village below.

Women in church men in the plaza, those with the means drinking beer.

Men truing to keep out of the way of their womenfolk.

Friends and slumber if not in their dreams.