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Gerraputa

Astronomy 2

2/6/19

Radio Show (Tentative) Script

*\*Pre-show fumbling around\**

Host: Guys, we go live in a few minutes, why isn't my mic working!?

Guest: *\*gratuitous Russian, making same movements as American host, implying same commotion is happening in Russian station\**

Host: \**tapping mic\** Who's doing the sound? Where's my script? Where's my coffee?

Guest: \**same commotion in Russian\**

Host: Why doesn't anything ever get done right in this station? Someone’s getting fired after this! Ok, we go live in 3-

Guest: \**in Russian\** 3

Host: 2-

Guest: 2

Host: 1

Guest: 1…

Host: Aaaand welcome back, ladies and gentlemen. Today we have a great surprise for you. We have invited the man who played a crucial role in the Sputnik launch to tune in to our radio show. Sir, can you hear me on your end?

Guest: I hear you fine, thank you for having me today.

Host: So, please introduce yourself and describe your role in the Sputnik project.

Guest: My name is Sergei Korolev, I am a former Gulag prisoner, and I was the main engineer behind the Sputnik project which launched oct 4 1957. Of course, I still haven’t been credited for that, and I’m pretty mad about it!

Host: Huh. That explains why you agreed to speak on an American radio show. Ok. Well, can you describe Sputnik itself to our viewers? I’ll bet it’s a super complex and mysterious structure.

Guest: No, not really. Basically, the Sputnik missile is a sphere, about the size of a beach ball and about 184 pounds, with radio antennas coming out of it. That's basically it.

Host: Wow. That actually sounds quite simple. Why didn’t we come up with that? How did YOU come up with it, anyway?
Guest: Well, we actually took some inspiration from German missiles that we discovered after WW2.

Host: Great, but I heard the launch of Sputnik sparked a sort of race. Is that true?

Guest: Indeed. The launch of Sputnik sparked a space race between the Soviets and the Americans. I also hear America established the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on July 29, 1958 because of our launch.

Host: Alright, let's go back to the actual technology involved. Can you explain what went into the satellite.

Guest: Well, The Sputnik contained a beeping radio transmitter and batteries, between semi-spheres which were pressurized with nitrogen. The radio antennas stick out from the sphere.

Host: How did you feel when it finally launched?

Guest: Every citizen in the Soviet Union was in awe. But honestly? I was mad that I wasn't given credit for my work on the project.

Host: I would be furious as well. Can you give us some information on the duration of the mission?

Guest: Of course, the mission lasted 21 days in total, but the launch came very close to failure. The Blok G strap-on had not attained full power at ignition and caused the booster to pitch over about 2° six seconds after liftoff. This was not according to our plan. Two seconds later though, the flight control system compensated the shift by rapidly moving the vernier engines and stabilizer fins. The Blok G strap-on reached 100% power just 1 seconds before it was too late.

Host: Were any of you worried?

Guest: Of course! All of us wanted this mission to succeed. We spent so much time working on this project, failure was not an option for us.

Host: Who do you think had the most riding on the success of this project? I'll bet it was crucial to many scientists’ careers.

Guest: I think Khrushchev, the leader of the Soviet Union, had the most stake in the project, rather than any individual scientist. The success of breaking into space was crucial to maintaining his legitimacy. That's what I would like American viewers to keep in mind: scientific progress is a wonderful part of humanity, but it is often used as a red herring to distract from failures of the people in charge of the country. So stay wary.

Host: That was...mildly disconcerting, thank you. Uhmmm- on that foreboding note, we are running out of time, so unfortunately we must bid our guest a good night. Thank you for chatting with us, Sergei. What's “good night” in Russian?

Guest: спокойной ночи (spokoinoi nochi)

Host: That’s it. Spokoinoi nochi, ladies and gentlemen!

Work Cited

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