

LAIKA AND THE BLUE MOUSE (pilot)

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A PACK OF A DOZEN DOGS race across the ice.

The dogs LEAP over hurdles, SCRAMBLE through concrete tunnels, and SCAMPER across narrow rickety wooden bridges in a canine obstacle course.

A LITTLE CAR the size of a golf cart ZOOMS alongside the pack, driven by a SOLDIER BELLOWING IN RUSSIAN at the dogs through a MEGAPHONE.

One dog that is smaller than the others, LAIKA, manages to keep ahead of the pack.

LAIKA

Good dog. I'm a good dog.

The DOGS come over a hill. A 1950s-STYLE SCIENTIFIC OUTPOST rises in the distance. Aggressive brutalist concrete. Lights shine across the dark icy plain.

It's STAR CITY, the Russian version of Cape Canaveral.

Near the outpost, a SILVER ROCKET stands on the LAUNCHING PAD, illuminated by KLIEG LIGHTS, swarmed by FARAWAY TECHNICIANS.

LAIKA, startled by the unexpected sight of the rocket, misses a step. STUMBLES. Other dogs CATCH UP. A BLUE MOUSE pokes its head out of Laika's collar.

BLUE MOUSE

Eyes forward! You're alpha! Don't let 'em catch up! Faster!

LAIKA

I'm a good dog!

BLUE MOUSE

You're an amazing dog! Now go, go!

One of the other dogs nearly catches up, SNAPPING at Laika's heels.

BLUE MOUSE

Tactic 23-C!

Laka ZIGZAGS, her paws KICKING UP LOOSE ICE into the eyes of the heel-nipping dog. The dog FALLS BEHIND, temporarily blinded. But another dog catches up!

BLUE MOUSE
48-Q! 7 o'clock!

Laika BOUNDS toward an ice patch. The other dog CHASES. Laika SWERVES AWAY, causing the pursuing dog to WIPE OUT on the slippery ice. Laika REGAINS HER LEAD.

BLUE MOUSE
You've got this!

LAIKA
We've got this!

BLUE MOUSE
Who's a good dog?

A FLASH! The dusky sky BLAZES ALIGHT as the rocket on the launching pad BLASTS OFF. Its blinding flame and gut-rattling noise causing all dogs, including Laika, to STUMBLE TO A HALT.

The other dogs FREAK OUT, cowering and whimpering, as the rocket rises. The soldier BERATES THE DOGS through his megaphone. Laika alone STARES UPWARD, overcome with wondering desire, as the rocket DISAPPEARS INTO THE HEAVENS.

LAIKA
I am.

2 INT. LAB - NIGHT

2

All the dogs are locked in SEPARATE CAGES. Harsh fluorescent light. A LAB TECH shoves dinner bowls of TRANSLUCENT SLIME into each cage. Finished, the tech TURNS OUT THE LIGHTS and leaves, locking up behind her. The dogs all SLURP THEIR FOOD.

The Blue Mouse SQUIRMS IN through a crack in an open window. Laika LOOKS UP. Their EYES MEET.

3 EXT. THE LAUNCH PAD - MIDNIGHT

3

Laika wanders the SMOKING REMAINS of the launch. The Blue Mouse RIDES ALONG on Laika's shoulders. An OPEN WINDOW GLOWS in the distance--presumably the lab window through which they escaped.

LAIKA
The ground still feels warm here.

BLUE MOUSE
You want to get off Earth, you've gotta burn through a lot.

LAIKA

How would you know?

BLUE MOUSE

There's so much about me you
couldn't even begin to understand.

LAIKA

Nah, I've pretty much gotten to the
bottom of you.

BLUE MOUSE

Yeah? And what's that?

LAIKA

Jealousy. You want to ride my
coattails.

BLUE MOUSE

Coattails!

LAIKA

They only send good dogs into
space.

4

EXT. ICY TUNDRA, ON A HILL - LATER THAT NIGHT

4

Discarded scientific equipment LITTERS THE HILL. Laika and
the Blue Mouse lay on the hill, STARGAZING.

LAIKA

They seem so close sometimes. Like
I could just reach out and take
them.

BLUE MOUSE

They're millions of light years
away. Get in a rocket, go ahead. I
don't care how fast you go. Speed
of light. You won't hit the nearest
star for years. You'd be dead by
the time you get there.

LAIKA

You say that but... I just don't
believe you.

BLUE MOUSE

You never believe anything you
don't want to hear.

Laika GETS UP, still staring at the sky.

LAIKA

From way up there, I bet you could see everything. The whole world. I'd like to see that. All I've ever seen is... this.

Blue Mouse SHRUGS. Laika NOSES AROUND THE JUNK. She finds something interesting and LIFTS HER LEG TO PEE ON IT.

BLUE MOUSE

You're not a male. You don't have to pee like that.

LAIKA

If you don't pee like them, they don't respect you.

BLUE MOUSE

So?

LAIKA

I'm the leader of the pack. The alpha. It's important.

BLUE MOUSE

Why is it important?

LAIKA

A mouse wouldn't understand. We dogs live in packs. If you're not in a pack, then you're either a pet or a stray.

BLUE MOUSE

Ha! Pets? They get taken care of. Strays? They can do what they want. Being in a pack? Sounds like a bunch of political bullcrap. Always worrying whether you're on top or bottom. On your way up, on your way down.

LAIKA

Look, a shooting star!

BLUE MOUSE

On its way down.

As Laika and the Blue Mouse continue to talk, our perspective WIDENS to include that SHOOTING STAR. The focus shifts away from Laika and the Blue Mouse to the shooting star, though we continue to overhear them.

LAIKA

You're in my pack, Blue Mouse. You made me alpha dog.

BLUE MOUSE

Alpha, beta, I don't buy into that. Dumb hierarchical thinking.

LAIKA

Structure's important.

BLUE MOUSE

Just remember me if they put you on a rocket.

LAIKA

I can't promise anything.

Laika and the Blue Mouse are now offscreen. We only hear their voices. We have focused in on the shooting star--which is not a shooting star at all, but the SILVER ROCKET we saw earlier! The rocket is in FATAL FREE-FALL, tumbling wildly, smoking, the lights inside blinking furiously, its guidance fin on fire. Something has gone wrong with that test launch from earlier!

BLUE MOUSE (O.S.)

Ha! So that's how it'll be? Cut me loose, just as soon as you scrounge a little success?

LAIKA (O.S.)

I didn't say that. I just mean the mission has certain parameters...

BLUE MOUSE (O.S.)

"Certain parameters."

A beat.

LAIKA (O.S.)

Will they really send me into space?

The focus shifts to INSIDE the silver rocket PLUMMETING TO EARTH. Inside this rocket we see, strapped into a bewildering array of equipment, hooked up to telemetry and whirring machines, surrounded by alienating blinking lights and buzzes, a CLEARLY TERRIFIED DOG. The rocket plunges away from our perspective, down to the Earth.

BLUE MOUSE (O.S.)
Of course. You're a good dog.

LAIKA (O.S.)
Am I a good dog?

BLUE MOUSE (O.S.)
You're a good dog.

LAIKA (O.S.)
We're both good.

The silver rocket CRASHES in the distant mountains. But from where we are, the FATAL EXPLOSION is barely even noticeable.

Laika and the Blue Mouse certainly don't notice.

OPENING CREDITS: "LAIKA AND THE BLUE MOUSE"

5 EXT. STAR CITY - MORNING

5

SCIENTISTS and TECHNICIANS stand at attention outside the utilitarian buildings. AN OFFICIAL MOTORCADE is rolling up the street. MASTER ENGINEER KOROLEV, a well-fed and competent-looking scientist, stands at attention with his team. A rather frailer and leaner scientist, CHIEF THEORETICIAN KELDYSH, approaches him. They regard each other with stoic wariness.

KOROLEV
Chief Theoretician Keldysh. I did not expect you.

KELDYSH
Master Engineer Korolev, you do me a disservice. How could I not attend the edifying spectacle of your team transforming my mere equations into mighty realities of iron and fire?

KOROLEV
You do yourself a disservice, Chief Theoretician Keldysh. Without your mathematical advances, this launch would fail... and still may.

Keldysh notices the SWEAT RUNNING DOWN Korolev's temple.

KELDYSH
My theory is sound, comrade. Sputnik 1 was a success.

KOROLEV

Four weeks to design and launch the
Sputnik 2. Khrushchev asks the
impossible.

KELDYSH

Is it not worth pushing ourselves
to our limits in time to honor the
fortieth anniversary of the
revolution, comrade?

KOROLEV

I have witnessed how Premier
Khrushchev rewards failure...
comrade.

KELDYSH

Surely we are safe.

KOROLEV removes his dentures. His gums are mangled.

KOROLEV

Do you know where I left my real
teeth? The gulag, comrade. I have
spent time there. Have you?

KELDYSH is silenced. KOROLEV replaces his dentures. A BIG
BLACK CAR pulls up and PREMIER KHRUSCHEV emerges.

KOROLEV

Greetings, Premier. Everything is
prepared...

KHRUSCHEV

Where is dog?

KOROLEV

Ah--eh--in the lab kennel, we--

KHRUSCHEV

We put dog in space now.

6 INT. LAB - MORNING

6

All the dogs, including Laika, are still LOCKED UP IN THEIR
CAGES, asleep. The scientists haven't come to work yet.

A COCKROACH scuttles across the floor. The cockroach's name
is ARKADY. He passes a DISCARDED DONUT CRUMB on the floor,
glances at it for a second, but KEEPS SCURRYING.

A troop of smaller cockroaches, clearly Arkady's subordinates, come STREAMING BEHIND ARKADY. Arkady alights upon a table. The smaller cockroaches scamper from cage to cage, BANGING SPOONS against the cages' metal doors, waking the dogs. ARKADY addresses the dogs.

ARKADY

Rise up, canines! Rebel against your oppressors! The humans don't have your best interests at heart! They don't care if you live or die!

DOGS (VARIOUSLY)

Aw, shut up, Arkady. Not this again.

ARKADY

I have eavesdropped on their meetings! I have seen their plans! This won't end well for any of you! The humans will load one of you into that rocket--they will hurl you into space--but they have no plan to get you back down to Earth! You will die up there!

DOGS (VARIOUSLY)

That's nonsense, they'd never do that to us, it's just more of your conspiracy-mongering again.

ARKADY

You might not want to save yourselves, but I can't stand idly by and let you throw away your lives on this meaningless stunt! To be shot up in the sky in a tin can--and then suffocate, boil, freeze, or explode?! No, no! Today you will be liberated!

The smaller cockroaches SCURRY AROUND THE CAGES and PICK THE LOCKS. One after another, the cage doors SPRING OPEN. The dogs are free to go! And yet none move.

LAIKA

What are you playing at, Arkady?

ARKADY

Look at you! Even with the doors of your cages flung wide open, you still won't take the step to freedom! Listen: Premier

(MORE)

ARKADY (cont'd)

Khrushchev's motorcade has just pulled up. The launch is imminent. Only a few minutes before one of you is chosen for a nightmarish, lonely death in space! Go now! Escape!

All dogs LOOK TO LAIKA, their leader, for what to do. To their astonishment, Laika STEPS OUT OF HER CAGE.

LAIKA

Arkady. You've lived at the station longer than us. I know. You've crawled everywhere, you've seen things we've never seen. Is what you're saying really... true?

ARKADY

I know it's true! For humans, every great undertaking begins with ritual sacrifice. Just as cavemen sacrificed goats on a crude stone altars to their primeval gods, so humans now inaugurate their Space Age with a ritual offering of an innocent animal to their sky-devils! Blood-sacrifice is how they think! They need it! It is built into their minds!

LAIKA

You truly believe the humans don't have our best interests at heart?

ARKADY

No more time for talk! We've opened the back door. There's one minute left to escape, before one of you is flung up into space to die! Go now!

Laika seems to consider Arkady for a moment--and then, in one gulp, GOBBLES THE COCKROACH.

The pack of dogs GOES CRAZY WITH JOYOUS BARKS. They love this! The other cockroaches are frozen in horror.

LAIKA

Thus always to rebels! What is a dog? A dog is loyal! Each one of us was brought into this lab as a starving stray. The humans found me

(MORE)

LAIKA (cont'd)
 on the streets, eating garbage,
 thin as a whip, half frozen. The
 same for all you, too! And yet the
 good humans brought us dogs into
 their warmth! Fed us their choicest
 succulents! Treated us like kings!
 Made us into a pack! We are no
 longer alone--we have each other!
 And you, you, you INSECTS... is
 this how you suggest we repay our
 masters? By deserting them when
 they need us most? Dogs! Is that
 what we are?

DOGS (VARIOUSLY)
 No! We are loyal! We are proud to
 explore space side by side with our
 masters!

LAIKA
 And that is why you cockroaches
 will now lock us all back up in our
 cages, just as you found us. Arkady
 is not the first cockroach I've had
 to eat. I've eaten far worse in the
 frozen alleys of Moscow. Perhaps he
 will not be the last. Lock us up
 now!

The smaller cockroaches, terrified, LOCK UP ALL THE DOGS
 AGAIN. Laika HOPS BACK INTO HER CAGE and watches closely as
 the cockroaches lock them back in. The cockroach tasked with
 locking in Laika HESITATES.

LAIKA
 What is it? Do it.

COCKROACH
 You just ate my father.

Laika is taken aback only momentarily.

LAIKA
 If you truly believe what your
 father said, then take your
 revenge. Lock me up. If he was
 right, and I am chosen, then in a
 few hours I'll be suffering that
 nightmarish, lonely death in space.
 So condemn me to execution now, if
 you believe his words... and if you
 have the guts.

The cockroach STARES at Laika, then SLAMS the door and LOCKS it.

COCKROACH
You're making a big mistake.

LAIKA
You'll never visit the stars,
cockroach? Because you have no
vision! No spirit! You're
suspicious and mistrustful. That is
why you'll stay forever earthbound!

FOOTSTEPS down the corridor. HUMAN VOICES.

COCKROACH
Goodbye.

7 INT. HALLWAY NEAR LAB - MORNING

7

Khrushchev STRIDES AHEAD of Korolev and Keldysh, who speak to each other in clipped undertones, sotto voce.

KELDYSH
You believe you have the advantage
of me, Master Engineer Korolev.

KOROLEV
Whatever could you mean, Chief
Theoretician Keldysh?

KELDYSH
I admit your gulag anecdote had a
certain "bite." But as "I" see it,
my own time under interrogation in
Premier Khrushchev's secret prisons
was a "sight" more excruciating.

Keldysh POPS OUT A GLASS EYE, rolls it around in his hand,
and POPS IT BACK IN.

KELDYSH
To replace the eye personally
gouged out by Khrushchev himself,
Master Engineer Korolev.

KOROLEV
Perhaps you think you shock me,
Chief Theoretician Keldysh. But I
forgot to mention that I can
"stomach" much worse.

Korolev DISCREETLY RIPS OPEN the bottom buttons of his shirt, revealing an IRON MIDRIFF. He RAPS IT SMARTLY with his knuckle, causing a hollow metallic sound.

KOROLEV

My entire digestive system, rebuilt with genuine Yekaterinburg steel! The same steel used by the jealous west for their Eiffel Tower and Statue of Liberty! To have my own abdomen partially rebuilt with Soviet industrial ingenuity almost makes me wish to THANK Khrushchev for setting those wolves on me to rip out my bowels!

KELDYSH

You might think I'm falling "behind," Chief Engineer Korolev, "but" I have something to show you--an exotic disability from when Khrushchev was personally torturing me--that will make everything you've said take a "back seat." Shall we retire to the men's room and get to the "bottom" of it?

Both Korolev and Keldysh HOLD EACH OTHER'S EYES COMBATIVELY for a moment--then, curtly, they separately signal their assistants to take over. They leave for the men's lavatory, walking in step.

8 INT. LAB - MORNING

8

Laika hears the footsteps of the technicians and Khrushchev coming closer. She is more and more excited.

LAIKA

They're coming, they're coming!
It's really happening!

Khrushchev and the technicians ENTER.

KHRUSCHEV

Which is dog? Give me dog.

A nervous technician UNLOCKS Laika's cage and LIFTS HER OUT. The technician gives Laika to Khrushchev, who holds Laika out in front of him with FULLY OUTSTRETCHED ARMS. Khrushchev and Laika GAZES INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES. Khrushchev KISSES LAIKA ON THE NOSE.

KHRUSCHEV

Good dog!

Laika looks ELATED. All the other dogs BARK happily. Khrushchev leans in closer to Laika. He hooks a little BLACK BOX WITH A RED BUTTON, like a tiny garage door opener, into her collar and whispers in her ear.

KHRUSCHEV

Just in case.

In the HUBBUB of the bustling technicians and barking dogs, Laika barely seems to understand.

The last would-be liberating cockroaches CREEP AWAY.

9 EXT. THE LAUNCH PAD - DAY

9

A GIGANTIC ROCKET is on the launch pad. Technicians DART BACK AND FORTH with last-minute preparations. The Blue Mouse SCAMPERS FROM PLACE TO PLACE in the agitation, sneaking and spying.

BLUE MOUSE

This is happening. It's really happening. This is it. Laika!

10 INT. PREP ROOM - DAY

10

Laika is being prepared for launch. Surrounded by physicians POKING HER WITH SYRINGES, SHOVING INTRAVENOUS TUBES INTO HER, GRABBING HER JAW and examining her teeth. STRAPPING HER into a leather spacesuit-like harness. HOOKING HER INTO telemetry wires and biometric equipment. SQUEEZING HER into a small padded barrel- contraption.

Laika looks absolutely thrilled with all of it. Tail wagging. Dream come true!

Laika is CARRIED OUT OF THE PREP ROOM and loaded into a car.

11 EXT. THE LAUNCH PAD -DAY

11

A small brass band plays as the car approaches the rocket. Khrushchev watches with some other dignitaries and technicians on some BLEACHERS nearby. The car that Laika is on passes the bleachers and approaches the rocket.

Two seats among the scientists are CONSPICUOUSLY EMPTY.

12 INT. MEN'S LAVATORY - DAY

12

Korolev and Keldysh enter the lavatory.

KOROLEV

This had better be good, Chief Theoretician. I am not in the habit of missing rocket launches.

KELDYSH

This is a certain injury I received from the secret police in my youth. Until this moment, Master Engineer, nobody other than my own mother has seen it.

KOROLEV

Show it to--good god!

Keldysh has DROPPED HIS PANTS.

KELDYSH

As you can see, my buttocks have been entirely replaced by fiber-reinforced plastic. My original two ass cheeks were removed by a mighty Cossack who grasped them firmly and wrenched both off with a single agonizing twist.

KOROLEV

My apologies, Chief Theoretician. Your injury far outstrips any paltry wound of my own.

KELDYSH

Now look in my butt.

KOROLEV

Ah ... of course, Chief Theoretician.

Korolev GINGERLY PEEKS at Keldysh's backside.

KOROLEV

It all seems to be in order.

KELDYSH

No, Chief Engineer Korolev. Look IN my butt.

Korolev CAUTIOUSLY PARTS Keldysh's ASS CHEEKS... and discovers a METAL SPIGOT!

KOROLEV

It's a...

Keldysh hands Korolev a PLASTIC CUP.

KELDYSH

Fill the cup, Master Engineer
Korolev.

Korolev TURNS THE SPIGOT. A clear liquid ISSUES FORTH.
Korolev fills the cup, and cautiously TASTES THE LIQUID. His
face goes from DUBIOUS to DELIGHTED.

KOROLEV

Why, it's premium vodka!

KELDYSH

There are certain benefits to being
able to redesign one's own buttocks
from scratch, Master Engineer
Korolev. Just as our socialist
revolution has wiped clear the
errors of bourgeois capitalism and
replaced it with rational
centralized state planning, so I
have made my own ass into a wet
bar! And thus, comrade, you will
also fill a cup for me with my
delicious ass-vodka, and we will
toast our achievement.

Korolev FILLS A CUP for Keldysh too, and they both raise
their glasses aloft.

KOROLEV

To Sputnik 2, and to Laika!

KELDYSH

To Laika!

13

EXT. THE LAUNCH PAD - DAY

13

The brass band plays in the background as technicians LOAD
LAIKA IN THE ROCKET. Laika looks excited and happy but a
little nervous. Is this really happening? The technicians
give Laika one last PITYPING GLANCE.

FIELD TECHNICIAN 1

Think this contraption will hold
together?

FIELD TECHNICIAN 2
As long as the mutt doesn't barf
all over the biometrics.

FIELD TECHNICIAN 1
Ugh. Vomit floating all around in
zero gravity? Can't imagine.

Laika is starting to LOOK NERVOUS. Technician 1 gives Laika
a QUICK PAT.

FIELD TECHNICIAN 2
Poor thing.

The technicians BOLT THE SPACESHIP SHUT, with Laika within.

14 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - DAY 14

Laika can barely move in the CRAMPED DIM CAPSULE. Light just
barely filters in through a reinforced window with an
obstructed view. Laika's heart rate PICKS UP, causing the
beeping biometric systems to ACCELERATE. A readout of
biometric information tracks Laika's vital stats: heart
rate, respiration, perspiration...

15 INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY 15

We see the same BIOMETRIC INFORMATION on screens here.
Control room technicians sit at computers, reading screens,
making last-minute adjustments.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1
Biometric telemetry online, systems
nominal.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 2
Elevated heart rate, 160 beats per
minute. Increased respiration.
Dog's getting nervous in there.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1
Start countdown. 10... 9...

16 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - DAY 16

Inside the capsule, we can hear the voice count on the
radio. Laika is starting to FREAK OUT.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1
(on radio)
8... 7...

LAIKA
 What am I doing, what am I doing...
 I want out! Somebody get me out of
 here! Mission abort! Abort mission!

A RUSTLING NOISE within the capsule STARTLES Laika--and the
 Blue Mouse EMERGES.

LAIKA
 Blue mouse! You're here! Get me
 out, I can't do this!

BLUE MOUSE
 Don't worry. We'll do it together.

LAIKA
 But you--I can't--

BLUE MOUSE
 Wasn't this your dream? You've been
 training for this for years!

TRADIO TECHNICIAN 1
 (on radio)
 5... 4...

LAIKA
 I can't!

BLUE MOUSE
 Look at all those people outside.
 You know what they have in common?
 They will never get off Earth. You
 know why? They're afraid! How do I
 know they're afraid? Because
 they're putting a dog in this
 rocket. If they had any guts,
 they'd be fighting each other to
 ride this rocket themselves. Humans
 are clever but they're cowards. So
 we go up instead. Their loss. Our
 gain.

Laika is not nearly comforted enough.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1
 (on radio)
 2... 1...

17 EXT. THE LAUNCH PAD - DAY 17

The rocket BLASTS OFF INTO THE SKY in an EXPLOSION OF LIGHT AND SOUND.

18 EXT. VIEWING AREA - DAY 18

Khrushchev HOLDS ON TO HIS HAT and watches the rocket DISAPPEAR. He gives a SALUTE.

19 INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY 19

Biometric information on the screens shows high levels of agitation.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 2
G-forces kicking in.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1
Heart rate 230 beats per minute.
Respiration three times normal
rate.

20 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - DAY 20

Laika and the Blue Mouse suffer under the RATTLING OF THE ROCKET and the CRUSHING G-FORCES. The noise is DEAFENING. The BEEPING and FLASHING LIGHTS are distracting, panic-inducing. The Blue Mouse CURLS UP in Laika's fur as they endure the acceleration together.

LAIKA
I won't throw up. Won't throw up.

BLUE MOUSE
It's OK.

LAIKA
I'm a good dog. I'm a good dog.

21 INT. MEN'S LAVATORY - DAY 21

Korolev and Keldysh are COMPLETELY DRUNK on Keldysh's ASS-VODKA. Korolev turns the spigot again and fills his cup, and Keldysh's too.

KELDYSH
We missed the launch?

KOROLEV
Oh yes, we totally missed the launch. Right now, if Laika survived, she should be breaking free of Earth's gravity.

KELDYSH
If she survived?

KOROLEV
A million things could kill you in space, comrade. Laika is the first living creature from Earth to enter orbit. Who knows what could happen? Get zapped by radiation. Frozen. Boiled. Or something we haven't even imagined yet... Of course, it's just a matter of time... whether Laika dies now, or days from now...

Korolev is near tears.

KOROLEV (CONT)
She was a great dog, she never deserved it... she was a great dog, that Laika!

KELDYSH
Come, come, Master Engineer.

They EMBRACE AWKWARDLY as Korolev SOBS. The SPIGOT OF ASS-VODKA DRIPS.

A LOUDSPEAKER CRACKLES TO LIFE and a voice speaks. There is also a rhythmic, insistent ALARM SOUND in the background.

ANNOUNCER
Master Engineer Korolev, to the control room. Engineer Korolev! Control room!

22 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 22

The Sputnik 2 HURTLES AWAY FROM THE EARTH, but bends its path according to gravity, SETTLING INTO ORBIT. We continue to hear the insistent ALARM SOUND that means something has gone wrong.

23 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 23

The ALARM CONTINUES, along with RACKETING MECHANICAL NOISE that doesn't sound good. Laika attempts to TWIST AROUND but can't escape her tight straps. Blue Mouse FLOATS FREELY around the capsule, in zero gravity.

LAIKA
The rocket's broken! We're going to die!

BLUE MOUSE

You're the captain of this ship.
Get a hold of yourself. Act like a
captain!

Laika attempts to CONTROL HERSELF.

LAIKA

Um... I need a status report on
that noise! Go check it out, um,
ensign, and come back with a full
report!

BLUE MOUSE

Yes sir!

Blue Mouse SWIMS THROUGH THE AIR, floating through a hole
behind Laika's chamber and SQUIRMING INTO the BACK-MACHINERY
OF THE ROCKET.

24 INT. SPUTNIK 2 ENGINE ROOM - SPACE

24

Blue Mouse discovers a TANGLE OF WIRES seem to have been
wrenched free of their proper places in the agitation of
takeoff. SMOKE! SPARKS! Everything seems BROKEN AND CRAZY!
Small airbreaks, GETTING LARGER! Blue mouse had floated in
confidently, but now regards the WRECKED MACHINERY with real
worry.

LAIKA (O.S.)

What's going on back there!

BLUE MOUSE

Um...

25 INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

25

The technicians are worried about the malfunction too.
LIGHTS AND ALARMS. Korolev and Keldysh stride in, ALL
BUSINESS.

KOROLEV

Status report, Technician Vasiliev.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1

Leakage of fuel from the primary
thrusters have caused airbreaks in
zones 5, 9, and 14. The dissipated
fuel wasn't utilized in the launch.

KOROLEV

If the fuel wasn't utilized in the
launch then we haven't achieved

(MORE)

KOROLEV (cont'd)
 sufficient thrust to enter a stable
 orbit. That means the rocket and
 the satellite and Laika are about
 to fall back to--

KHRUSCHEV
 The eyes of the world are upon this
 mission, Master Engineer. Are you
 implying it is about to fail?

KOROLEV
 No, sir... I mean... sir...

26 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 26

Everything is RATTLING AROUND as though it's about to break
 apart.

LAIKA
 Blue Mouse, where are you?

27 INT. SPUTNIK 2 ENGINE ROOM - SPACE 27

The expression of the Blue Mouse changes to something we
 haven't seen yet: a kind of FEROCIOUSLY COMPETENT,
 OTHERWORLDLY DETERMINATION. From the depths of his fur he
 extracts a FUTURISTIC LITTLE TOOL. With MANIACAL SPEED Blue
 Mouse fixes the broken machinery, PATCHING AIRBREAKS,
 SPLICING and SOLDERING WIRES, WRENCHING BENT and TWISTED
 MECHANISMS back into proper shape and place. This is no
 ordinary mouse!

The alarms SUBSIDE. The lights BLINK LESS FRANTICALLY.

Then the Blue Mouse notices SOMETHING THAT SURPRISES HIM--a
 briefcase-sized box, attached to the inside wall. He tries
 to open it. He can't.

BLUE MOUSE
 That's strange...

28 INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY 28

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1
 Wait... thrust systems back
 online... pressure stabilizing!

RADIO TECHNICIAN 2
 Life support systems at full
 strength.

KOROLEV
 (whispering so Khrushchev can't
 hear)
 What happened?

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1
 We get to keep our limbs, is what
 happened.

KHRUSCHEV
 Dog in space safe?

KOROLEV
 Dog in space... safe.

Everyone cheers! Khrushchev makes a PEREMPTORY MOTION. He and
 his retinue begin to LEAVE.

KHRUSCHEV
 Congratulations, Engineer Korolev.
 Theoretician Keldysh.

29 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 29

Blue Mouse FLOATS BACK IN, but looking backward over his
 shoulder at briefcase-sized box, PUZZLED.

LAIKA
 What happened?

BLUE MOUSE
 I fixed, I mean, it just kind of
 fixed itself.

LAIKA
 Now what?

Blue Mouse is still behind Laika. He CONSULTS HIS FUTURISTIC
 TOOL without Laika seeing what he's doing. A readout on the
 tool is BLINKS AT HIM.

BLUE MOUSE
 (frowns, to himself)
 Yes. Now what?

30 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 30

The Sputnik-2 capsule ORBITS THE EARTH.

31 INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY 31

KELDYSH

Now what?

KOROLEV

Science, comrade. Onboard Geiger counters detect charged particles, spectrophotometers measure UV and X-Ray emissions... We monitor Laika's vital statistics, until...

KELDYSH

Until when?

KOROLEV

I expect the animal will survive 10 days. Sputnik 2 itself will crash back down to Earth in a few months.

RADIO TECHNICIAN 1

Then let us have a toast to our achievement!

Keldysh begins to TAKE OFF HIS PANTS, but Korolev subtly motions him to stop.

32 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 32

The Sputnik 2 hurtles far over the Earth. The sun peeks over the horizon.

33 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 33

Laika GAZES OUT THE WINDOW IN WONDER. Blue Mouse looks out the window WARILY, as though expecting something.

LAIKA

Look out the window! You can see the sunrise! A sunrise in space, it's incredible!

BLUE MOUSE

It's something all right.

LAIKA

How long do you think the humans will let me stay up here? It's amazing, but I can't wait to tell the rest of the pack!

BLUE MOUSE

Umm...

34 INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT 34

The night shift has replaced the daytime technicians.

KOROLEV

I'm going to call it a day. Call me up if anything changes.

35 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 35

Sputnik 2 is now on the dark side of Earth.

LAIKA (O.S.)

It's been hours...

36 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 36

The SLUGGISH BEEPS and DIM LIGHTS of the biometrics indicate that Laika is not healthy.

LAIKA

... They haven't sent up any orders. No communication. What's going on?

Blue Mouse seems like he wants to speak, but can't quite bring himself to tell Laika the truth.

LAIKA

I'm strapped in. I can't move. Why am I even up here? Don't they want to see me again? Don't they want to tell me I did a good job? That I'm a good dog?

Blue Mouse starts to speak but stops.

37 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 37

The Sputnik 2 hurtles through lonely, empty space.

38 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 38

Time has passed. Laika's eyes are GLASSY, her body LIMP. A FEEDING TUBE hangs near her mouth, but she ignores it. The Blue Mouse looks the same as always. He FLOATS NEAR THE WINDOW EXPECTANTLY.

LAIKA

Blue Mouse... are you still there?

BLUE MOUSE

I'm here.

LAIKA

I can't eat from my tube anymore.
Something feels wrong. My body
feels wrong. I don't feel good.

BLUE MOUSE

Shhh.

LAIKA

What if Arkady was right? What if
the humans shot me into space
and... they don't want me back?

Blue Mouse says nothing.

LAIKA (CONT)

I'm scared, Blue Mouse. I feel...
Belted in so tightly... I can't
move. So hot in here, don't you
feel it? Like boiling inside... I'm
never getting out of this capsule!
I'm not getting out, am I? This is
it, isn't it?!

Blue Mouse says nothing.

LAIKA (CONT)

I thought I had a mission in space.
I thought I had a destiny in the
stars. I thought I was helping the
humans... I thought they loved
me...

Blue Mouse begins to LOOK CONCERNED TOO. As if something
that should've happened already hasn't happened yet.

LAIKA

I can't breathe... Wait! Blue
Mouse! Khrushchev... he gave me
something, to help me if I was in
trouble... he gave me... ohhh...

Laika is trying to scabble for the LITTLE BLACK BOX that
Khrushchev gave her. Blue Mouse doesn't notice--because,
unnoticed by Laika, the Blue Mouse's tool EMITS A BEEP.

There is a SHIMMERING FLASH outside the window. The Blue
Mouse SOMERSAULTS over to the window, STARING.

BLUE MOUSE

Finally!

39 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 39

A gigantic ALIEN SPACECRAFT materializes next to the Sputnik 2, DWARFING IT.

This is the FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP.

40 INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT 40

A radar monitor tracks the Sputnik 2, which is represented as a tiny point of light. That point is suddenly crowded by a gigantic glow that almost fills up the screen. It's the same shape as the MOTHERSHIP.

NIGHT TECHNICIAN 1

What the--

41 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 41

The monstrous FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP sidles over to Sputnik 2.

A GUNLIKE APPARATUS emerges from its underside.

A steady beam of light STREAMS OUT OF THE GUN. The "gun" SWIVELS BACK AND FORTH, SWEEPING ITS LIGHT over the Sputnik 2, as if scanning it.

42 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 42

Laika is very weak. Almost dead. But she sees exactly what's going on.

LAIKA

What is that?

BLUE MOUSE

Fidbiglians. And just in time.

LAIKA

What are you talking about?

43 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 43

The gunlike apparatus RETRACTS back into the MOTHERSHIP.

A DOOR just above the gunlike apparatus OPENS.

Within, a vast three-dimensional printer swiftly REPLICATES THE SPUTNIK 2. The fake Sputnik 2 ZOOMS OUT of the mothership, soon achieving the same speed as the real Sputnik 2. The two ships fly side by side.

And inside the window of the replicant Sputnik 2 is...

44 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 44

Laika STARES OUT HER WINDOW, and into the window of the replicant Sputnik 2 capsule... and sees through the window... LIVING REPLICAS OF HERSELF AND THE BLUE MOUSE! The TWO LAIKAS STARE AT EACH OTHER IN PANIC.

LAIKA

What is going on?!

45 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 45

The mothership SUCKS IN the real Sputnik 2. The replica Sputnik 2 ZOOMS ON, in the path the real Sputnik 2 would've taken.

Then, without fuss, the Fidbiglian mothership VANISHES.

46 INT. CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT 46

The signal representing the Fidbiglian mothership VANISHES from the radar screen. We are left with one bright point representing the Sputnik 2... the replica.

Night Technician 2 YAWNS as he enters.

NIGHT TECHNICIAN 2

What'd you get me up for?

NIGHT TECHNICIAN 1

Oh--nothing. Instrument error. It's fine now.

NIGHT TECHNICIAN 2

I brought you something. A gift from Chief Theoretician Keldysh.

He places two shots of vodka on the table. They toast and both sip.

47 COMMERCIAL BREAK 47

48 EXT. THE FIDBIGLIAN SYSTEM - SPACE 48

This part of space looks different than the region of space near the Earth that we'd last seen. Stars more numerous. More dense in distribution. More colorful and of various larger sizes. Feels like we are closer to the center of the galaxy. Various vast spindly interlocking structures float in space, suggesting a civilization that is adapted to living offworld.

The gigantic Fidbiglian mothership MATERIALIZES with a CASUAL SHIMMER.

49 INT. HANGAR OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 49

The Sputnik 2 capsule sprawls on a spotless metal floor. SHADOWY ALIEN SHAPES slowly approach it.

50 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - IN HANGAR 50

Blue Mouse furiously BITES open the harness that keeps Laika in her seat. Outside the window, OMINOUS SILHOUETTES approach. The penny has dropped for Laika.

LAIKA

I knew it! I knew there was more to you than you were letting on!

BLUE MOUSE

I thought you'd gotten to the bottom of me.

LAIKA

I just meant--

BLUE MOUSE

That I wanted to ride your coattails. I did. Gotta go.

LAIKA

Go?!

BLUE MOUSE

You'll be fine. But don't tell them I came with you. Say you were alone, it's your best chance.

LAIKA

What are you?

BLUE MOUSE

Laika! I'm a blue mouse! How many other blue mice have you met on Earth? You do the math.

Blue Mouse CHEWS the final restraints loose. Laika can now get out of her harness. Blue Mouse REMOVES one of the patches he'd used to block the airbreak, revealing a MOUSE-SIZED HOLE, and squirms out.

Laika is ALONE.

The hatch of the capsule RATTLES. Laika's EYES WIDEN. The hatch is WRENCHED OFF. Laika stares up, shocked, as ominous shadows CLOSE IN ON HER...

51 INT. CORRIDOR OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 51

The Blue Mouse SCAMPERS down the corridor.

A bunch of FIDBIGLIANS round the corner, deep in conversation. The Fidbiglian aliens resemble upright slugs, a little larger than humans, with two wide eyes on stalks and a long snout-like mouth.

The Blue Mouse HIDES, watching the aliens pass by.

When the coast is clear, the Blue Mouse trots to a computer console. He sticks his FUTURISTIC TOOL into it. Information FLASHES across the screen. The Blue Mouse reads, absorbed--but FREEZES when a voice booms from behind him, and a shadow rises over him--

FIDBIGLIAN GUARD

Grozzonk glorf fumble-ramble!

52 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE 52

Laika SHRINKS BACK. The three MONSTROUS FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARIES close in. The middle Fidbiglian puts its mouth-tube on a necklace-like apparatus and speaks.

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY

Flarg flog flarg flarg.

Laika looks more confused. The Fidbiglians glance at each other, DISCOMFITED. One of the side Fidbiglians gargles nonsense advice to the middle Fidbiglian, who twiddles knobs on the necklace-apparatus and speaks again, translated through the apparatus.

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY
 Congratulations, Earth organism! Be
 at ease! We welcome you to this
 location. Acknowledge greeting with
 a remark.

LAIKA
 Um... thank you.

There is a moment while the apparatus translates.

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY
 You have expressed gratitude. Now
 we will tell you statements. You
 are the first living organism to
 leave planet Earth. Is this a truth
 or a falsity, state now!

LAIKA begins to regain confidence. Realizing the magnitude
 of this moment.

LAIKA
 Yes. I am the first organism to
 leave Earth.

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY
 I understand statement. Now I tell
 another statement. Many planets
 also put living things in space.
 But galactic empire lives in
 organized way. When new planet puts
 living thing in space first time,
 we must test planet.

LAIKA
 Test?

Fidbiglians HURRIEDLY CONFER, regroup, and address Laika
 again.

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY
 Your planet is clever enough to
 build this spaceship. Therefore
 your planet is clever enough to
 maybe cause problems in our
 harmonious galactic empire. Good
 planets with spaceships can live in
 galaxy. Bad planets with spaceships
 must be destroyed.

LAIKA
 How do you tell the good planets
 from the bad?

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY

Test.

LAIKA

Test?

53 INT. CORRIDOR OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

53

Blue Mouse is CORNERED by Fidbiglian guard, who LOOMS OVER HIM. The guard GARGLES AND HOWLS at Blue Mouse, who merely stares back. Fidbiglian Guard ACTIVATES his own translation-necklace.

FIDBIGLIAN GUARD

(through translator)

Who are you? You're not authorized to be here!

Blue Mouse POINTS his tool at necklace. The necklace CRUMPLES. The necklace-chain BREAKS. The crumpled translator THUNKS TO THE FLOOR.

Then Blue Mouse begins FLUENTLY SPEAKING in Fidbiglian language, without use of any translator.

BLUE MOUSE

(in Fidbiglian, subtitled)

My authorization comes from well beyond your ken, Private. Smarten up! Smooth out that lapel! Clearly, discipline has slipped since the last inspection.

FIDBIGLIAN GUARD

(in Fidbiglian, subtitled)

Inspection--!

BLUE MOUSE

(in Fidbiglian, subtitled)

Thought you'd go forever without another visit from the Emperor's Inspector General? Think again. Now take me to your commanding officer.

FIDBIGLIAN GUARD

(in Fidbiglian, subtitled)

You mean--you mean Commander Fibblyblips?

BLUE MOUSE

(in Fidbiglian, subtitled)

Who else would I mean?

Laika, having exited Sputnik 2, is being politely led by Fidbiglian emissaries through the hangar. The hangar is full of other small ships of VARIOUS CRUDE DESIGNS, mostly the same size as the Sputnik 2--all amateurish first tries at spaceflight, but from other alien technology traditions: some INSECTOID, some weirdly FURRY, some SPIKY, some GLOBBY, etc. Other Fidbiglian emissaries BUSILY SURROUND those ships, opening them up.

LAIKA

What are those ships?

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY

Trillions planets in galaxy. Every few hours a planet, somewhere in galaxy, sends living organism into space for first time. We warp there, pick up ship, test organisms against each other.

LAIKA

Against each other??

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY

Cannot let subaverage planets enter galactic empire. Thus, you will compete against all the other organisms we picked up. If you smart, strong enough to win, your planet safe. If not, your planet destroyed. For the safety of the universe.

LAIKA

What? But I can't--I'm just a--

FIDBIGLIAN EMISSARY

Be of confidence! You smart and strong enough to build ship you came in, weren't you?

LAIKA

Actually, I didn't build it. I'm just a--

Just in time, LAIKA notices that the Fidbiglians are all STARING at her with sudden suspicion. They FINGER THEIR WEAPONS.

LAIKA

I mean, of course I built my
spaceship.

55 INT. COMMANDER FIBBLYBLIPS' MEETING ROOM

55

The door WHIZZES OPEN as Fidbiglian guard escorts Blue Mouse into the room. A banquet table is laid with ALIEN DELICACIES.

FIDBIGLIAN GUARD

(in Fidbiglian, subtitled)

I will bring Commander Fibblyblips
to you immediately, sir!

BLUE MOUSE

(in Fidbiglian, subtitled)

Very good, Private. You may go.

The door WHIZZES SHUT. Blue Mouse waits for a moment before taking out his STRANGE TOOL. He presses some buttons on it and then SPEAKS.

BLUE MOUSE

Baby Bumbles. Baby Bonko.

The tool SHOOTS OUT A HOLOGRAM of two GIANT BABIES, side by side, who are wearing nothing but DIAPERS. Everything about them looks like an ADORABLE INFANT, except for their eyes, which are verminous and calculating.

BABY BUMBLES

(whining)

Have you destroyed Earth yet?

BLUE MOUSE

Not yet, Baby Bumbles.

BABY BONKO

(about to cry)

Y-y-you were supposed to have
destroyed Earth one hundred years
ago!

BLUE MOUSE

I'm getting there.

BABY BUMBLES

(pouting)

When Baby Bumbles hires a planetary
hit man, Baby Bumbles expects that
that planet to be destroyed more
quickly than this. Don't tell me

(MORE)

BABY BUMBLES (cont'd)
 you've grown fond of that planet,
 Blue Mouse.

BLUE MOUSE
 Shut your baby mouth, Baby Bumbles.
 I'm a professional. I've destroyed
 dozens of planets. But I do it my
 way, you hear?

BABY BUMBLES
 I'm upset. I'm an unhappy baby. I'm
 a saaad baby. Are you a sad baby
 too, Baby Bonko?

BABY BONKO
 That I am, Baby Bumbles. I'm a sad
 baby. I'm so sad I'm going to cry.
 Waaah, Baby Bumbles. Waaaah.
 Waaaah.

BLUE MOUSE
 Don't cry! Don't cry! I'll destroy
 your stupid planet, just give me
 time!

BABY BUMBLES, BABY BONKO
 Wahhh, Wahhh.

BLUE MOUSE
 Shhh! Shhhh! The Fidbiglians will
 hear you!

BABY BUMBLES, BABY BONKO
 Wahhhh, wahhhh

BLUE MOUSE
 I can't afford a planet-destroying
 machine! I told you when you signed
 the contract--I pivot off what
 already exists! Get others to do my
 work for me! That gives us all
 deniability!

BABY BUMBLES
 But I made a poopies in my booboo,
 who's going to be my momma?

BABY BONKO
 I want Earth destroyed and I want
 my binky! Give me my binky, Blue
 Mouse!

BLUE MOUSE

I can't give you a binky, I'm millions of light years away and we're communicating by hologram!

BABY BUMBLES

How you gonna do it, then, Blue Mouse? How you gonna destroy the Earth? Wahhh

BLUE MOUSE

It's already happening. Listen! I made sure the Earth's first stab into space was noticed by the Fidbiglians.

BABY BONKO

Who are the Fidbiglians? Wahhh

BABY BUMBLES

I want to go hooome, I don't want to talk about Fidbiglians, I want Momma!

BLUE MOUSE

Shh, shhh Baby Bumbles! Don't cry! The Fidbiglians are a recent discovery of mine. A small-time race of six-dimensional creatures. Apparently they've taken it upon themselves to do intelligence tests of whatever planets have just made the leap into space. They gather the first organisms to leave those planets and test them against each other. Make them do games and stuff, I don't know. Whoever wins, their planet gets to live. The losing planets are destroyed.

BABY BONKO

Why?

BLUE MOUSE

I don't know, the Galactic Empire doesn't even ask them to do it, they just like doing it! They're enthusiastic volunteers!

BABY BUMBLES

But how does this destroy the Earth?

BABY BONKO

I don't understand. I want muh-muh.
I want muh-muh!

BLUE MOUSE

Shut up, baby! It'll work because I made sure Earth sent a dog into space first! There's no way a stupid dog can compete against creatures from other planets who actually built their own ships! Laika's no genius, I mean, great heart, but no scholar. Earth will lose, it'll be destroyed, our hands are clean, and you pay me.

BABY BUMBLES

S-s-s-sounds unnecessarily convoluted, wahhhh!

BLUE MOUSE

Why do you want the Earth destroyed, anyway?

But the question remains unanswered for now, for the door WHIZZES OPEN. Startled, Blue Mouse FLICKS his tool. The two baby holograms VANISH. Blue Mouse pretends to be browsing the EXOTIC ALIEN DELICACIES. In comes another Fidbiglian dressed in high-status military uniform, GRAND COMMANDER FIBBLYBLIPS, flanked by four FIDBIGLIAN GUARDS.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Inspector General. An honor to have you aboard. I trust you are finding everything up to par?

BLUE MOUSE plucks a weird alien vegetable from the table, pops it into his mouth.

BLUE MOUSE

So far, Commander Fibblyblips. So far.

FIBBLYBLIPS

You don't mind if I... ask for your credentials, do you, Inspector General? Merely as a formality.

BLUE MOUSE

Certainly. I always observe all formalities. But something troubles me, Fibblyblips. May I speak to you privately?

Fibblyblips HESITATES, then DISMISSES the guards. Now the Blue Mouse and Fibblyblips are alone.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Yes, Inspector General?

BLUE MOUSE

I'm actually here outside my jurisdiction, Fibblyblips. To warn you. The Galactic Empire wants to shut down your operation.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Shut us down!

BLUE MOUSE

We both know Fidbiglians do good work for the Empire. Keeping riffraff out of the galaxy. But the Emperor can't explicitly endorse what you're doing. Destroying planets... it's necessary, obviously. But politically, it's a non-starter.

FIBBLYBLIPS

They can't handle the truth!

BLUE MOUSE

You know that. I know that. So that's why I'm here... unofficially.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Unofficially.

BLUE MOUSE

I think we understand each other. Help me help you. You've got a good thing going here. I can advise you on how to keep it going... but we gotta keep this visit off the books.

FIBBLYBLIPS

I get you now. Thank you, Inspector General. It is most considerate.

BLUE MOUSE

I believe in what you do. You're the unacknowledged heroes, here.

FIBBLYBLIPS

I keep telling people that! You
really get me!

56

INT. LOCKER ROOM IN FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

56

FIDBIGLIAN TAILORS are readying Laika with a custom-fitted athletic uniform. Other FIDBIGLIAN ATTENDANTS buzz around. A FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER demonstrates to Laika a variety of weapon-y sports implements. He demonstrates to her a thing like a metallic mushroom corkscrew.

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

Now this is your standard
fozzbopper L5-QRT. When you're in
the Sloop Zone of the Quarxon, you
can use this to glorpy-borp up your
opponents, although as you can
see--

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER does a complicated series of cocking motions on various parts of the gun, and pulls the trigger, causing a DISGUSTING TORRENT OF NEON VEINY GOO to vomit out of the gun, SPLOOGING all over the walls.

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

--that kind of flarkonian maneuver
won't earn you many grobflarps in
the wurb cycle, let me tell you!
Now this next one is a mischievous
little fella, technically the
Groonvorp Hooznit 4000, but most of
us call it the Groonhooz 4K--

The Fidbiglian Trainer has put down the fozzpopper and is picking up the groonhooz when Laika interrupts.

LAIKA

When am I going to meet the other
contestants? From other planets?

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

The contestants never meet
beforehand. You're not here to make
friends!

LAIKA

I wouldn't mind making a few new
friends...

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

You're here to compete!

LAIKA

Right...

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

Who's going to be the alpha!

LAIKA

Right!

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

Who will be the cleverest, the strongest! Who will win glory for themselves, and citizenship in the galactic empire for their planet!

LAIKA

I will! I will!

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

You can do this!

LAIKA

I can! Tell me again about the Groonhooz 4K!

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

That's the spirit! So hold it like this--

LAIKA

Give me that!

Laika SWIPES the Groonhooz 4K from the Trainer and begins FIRING IT WITH WILD ABANDON around the room. Pastel lighting bolts ZING OUT like a machine gun, RICOCHETING off the walls WITH chaotic chiming noises!

LAIKA

Ya-a-a-a-h! I can do this! I'm a GOOD DOG!

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

We've got a winner! Let's get out there and meet your opponents! Yes, all the other organisms intelligent enough to design and build their rockets, and daring enough to fire themselves into the unknown, and evolved enough to take the next step into space!

Laika's confidence WAVERS. Remembering that she is here under false pretenses. But she steels her nerves. A faraway whistle BLOWS. Time to move!

LAIKA

I can't wait to meet them.

The Trainer and Laika SPRINT down the hallway. A door SWINGS OPEN into a vast arena, surrounded by spectator stands PACKED WITH FIDBIGLIANS. All around the arena, other doors are OPENING, and other creatures, vague in the distance, also entering the arena. Laika sees them, although we don't yet. She stops, SHOCKED.

LAIKA

They're all... why, they're all...

57

INT. SKYBOX IN FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

57

Blue Mouse and Commander Fibblyblips are in the luxury skybox, looking over the arena--a vast space full of elaborate obstacle-course equipment like a roller coaster mashed together with a jungle gym and labyrinth and several multilevel sports fields. The skybox itself is full of luxurious trappings and more tables with alien delicacies.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Our private spectator chamber. Do you have anything like this in the capital?!

BLUE MOUSE

You certainly don't skimp on amenities here. How can you afford to keep this all going?

FIBBLYBLIPS

That's the beautiful part! Just before we demolish a game-losing planet, we sell what's left for scrap! If the planet has a halfway interesting culture, we grab some of that too, and put it in syndication.

BLUE MOUSE

You've got it all figured out!

Fibblyblips hands Blue Mouse an ALIEN COCKTAIL.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Cheers!

BLUE MOUSE

Cheers... Have you seen the contestants yet?

FIBBLYBLIPS

Yes. They all seem evenly matched.

BLUE MOUSE

Really? All the contestants? Nobody who seems like it's obvious they must lose? Out of their depth?

FIBBLYBLIPS

Actually, it's a funny thing... the contestants are always strangely consistent... oh, oh, here they come! It's starting!

Blue Mouse looks out the window into the arena as the contestants emerge from their doors. HE IS STUNNED just as Laika was, but in a PANICKED way.

BLUE MOUSE

They're all... why, they're all...

58

INT. ARENA OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

58

All the doors are open. TWELVE DIFFERENT ORGANISMS have walked out into the arena, including Laika. And yet...

THEY'RE ALL DOGS. Sure, some of them have different minor features--an extra eye, or six legs instead of four, or a tail that's also a stinger, or vestigial wings, or antennae--but they're all recognizably DOGS.

LAIKA cocks her Groonhooz 4K.

LAIKA

This, I can do!

An incomprehensible announcement SQUAWKS over the speakers--and suddenly the GRAVITY SWITCHES OFF!

All the alien-dogs, and Laika, TUMBLE UP INTO THE AIR, clutching their weird weapons, BARKING and YOWLING!

A flurry of electric bolts ZAP PAST Laika. She flinches away, somersaults over to a girder, pushes off, cocks her gun, and starts zapping everyone left and right!

THE GAME HAS BEGUN! Fidbiglians in the stands GO WILD!

59 MONTAGE

59

LAIKA and the other dog-aliens zip around, shooting at each other, going through incomprehensible obstacle course, hurling balls at each other, whacking each other with sticks, etc.

Through it all, it becomes clear: Laika is DOMINATING THIS GAME! She is loving it! Looks close to winning!

Laika SPOTS Blue Mouse in the skybox and GAILY WAVES to him just before she dispatches another player.

60 INT. SKYBOX IN FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

60

BLUE MOUSE looks increasingly distraught. If Laika wins, Earth will be spared, and his plan to destroy Earth will be derailed! He comes to a decision.

BLUE MOUSE

Excuse me for a moment.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Oh, you don't want to miss this!
It's the big blimpblorp finale
before halftime! Sudden death
overzorp ploopy-plop squoob!

BLUE MOUSE

The ploopy-plops are fine, it's the
squoob I find tiresome.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Well, some people do say that.

Blue Mouse EXITS into bathroom--

61 INT. SKYBOX BATHROOM

61

Blue Mouse WHIPS OUT his tool again. The holograms of BABY BONKO and BABY BUMBLES reappear. They are both having a TEMPER TANTRUM.

BABY BONKO

Whyyyyyy! Why haven't you destroyed
Earth yet! Wahhhh

BLUE MOUSE

I'm trying, I'm trying!

BABY BUMBLES

You promised! You said you were
going to destroy Earth and then you
didn't and you're SO MEAN!

BLUE MOUSE

There's a kink in the plan. I
thought Laika would lose because
she's just a dog, but they're ALL
dogs!

BABY BONKO

I'm scared of doggies!

BABY BUMBLES

I don't like big dogs!

BABY BONKO

The tail goes whap whap and hits me
in the face and k-k-knocks me
down!!

Blue Mouse is RUMINATING, as if to himself:

BLUE MOUSE

Maybe it's convergent evolution...
every gene pool that develops
intelligent life for some reason
must eventually evolve a dog-like
species too... and due to some
deep-seated psychological need, or
cosmic coincidence, every planet
sends a dog, or something like it,
into space first...

BABY BONKO

Why are you talking convergent
evolubababa?? I don't
understannnnnd!

BABY BUMBLES

Your big words hurt my little baby
ears!

BABY BONKO, BABY BUMBLES

Wahhhh!

BLUE MOUSE

Don't worry! I'll fix it!

BABY BONKO

You'd better. Or we're gonna come
and fix it ourselves!

BLUE MOUSE looks terrified.

BLUE MOUSE

No, no! I've got it under control!
No need to come, Baby Bonko!

BABY BUMBLES

There better not be any need!

BABY BONKO

Wahhhhh!

BABY BUMBLES

Wahhhhhhhhhhh!

62 INT. LOCKER ROOM IN FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

62

Halftime break. Fidbiglian Trainer SPRITZES Laika with water, MASSAGES her back. Laika looks exhausted and yet energetic, AGLOW with athletic achievement.

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

You've got this all wrapped up.
You're a natural. The best I've
ever seen!

LAIKA

How long until halftime's over?

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

Ten minutes.

LAIKA

Can you do me a favor? Before I
have to go back out there--I don't
know if you could arrange it but if
there's time--

63 INT. SKYBOX IN FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

63

Commander Fibblyblips WATCHES the halftime show. Blue Mouse joins her from the bathroom.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Did I hear you crying in the
bathroom like a baby?

BLUE MOUSE

Oh, I just like to cry like a baby
to let off steam.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Huh! So many different species in
the universe, so many fascinating
characteristics! The diversity of
life! A fascinating mosaic!

BLUE MOUSE
Until you blow them up.

FIBBLYBLIPS
Well, we don't want too many
fascinating species. Feels crowded.

64 INT. CORRIDOR IN FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 64

Laika HAPPILY TROTS UP hallway with Fidbiglian Trainer.
She's headed to the SKYBOX SECTION.

65 INT. SKYBOX 65

BLUE MOUSE
Speaking of... why do you destroy
the planets who do worst at these
games?

FIBBLYBLIPS
Survival of the fittest! We can't
want to let anyone into the galaxy
who can't pull their weight.

BLUE MOUSE
But... isn't it exactly those
planets who do well at the games
that you should want to, you know,
maybe destroy? For instance, who's
in first place right now?

FIBBLYBLIPS
Let's see here... Earth.

BLUE MOUSE.
Earth. OK. Never heard of it,
sounds evil. The thing is, the
planets that fail at the games,
they'll never be a threat to the
galactic empire. But the planets
who ace the games, like this
Earth--they're cunning and strong!
If we let creatures from Earth come
into space, they might use that
strength and cleverness to take
over!

FIBBLYBLIPS
The planets that do best at the
games... are the ones that are
going to be the the biggest threat!

BLUE MOUSE
Exactly! You've got it!

FIBBLYBLIPS
So that's why you're here! That's
the big change you want to bring to
our Fidbiglian Planetary Tests!

BLUE MOUSE
I'm so glad we see eye to eye on
this. I knew we'd understand each
other.

FIBBLYBLIPS
We do understand each other, don't
we?

The vibe changes. Fibblyblips has been emboldened to do what s/he wanted for a while now: to make A ROMANTIC MOVE on Blue Mouse. Blue Mouse realizes why Fibblyblips has indulged him so much up to this point, why he has been able to get away with so much. His expression goes from surprised, to slightly disgusted, to intrigued, to accepting: in for a penny, in for a pound.

Blue Mouse and Fibblyblips start TOTALLY MAKING OUT.

THE DOOR OPENS. It's Laika. She was out in the hall, had overheard everything. Looks BETRAYED and HEARTBROKEN.

LAIKA
Stop making out with that alien!

BLUE MOUSE
Oh uh... this isn't what you think
it...

LAIKA
I don't care about that! You want
to destroy Earth!

FIBBLYBLIPS
It's one of the evil Earthlings!

Blue Mouse BRANDISHES his WEIRD TOOL, POINTING it at Laika.

BLUE MOUSE
Everyone clear the room, for your
own safety!

FIBBLYBLIPS
What's going on!

BLUE MOUSE

This thing that calls itself
"Laika" isn't an Earthling at all!
She's Holzorp Overglop 16, a
fugitive from justice from the
Galactic Police!

FIDBIGLIAN TRAINER

What--

BLUE MOUSE

I've got this! But everyone has got
to get out! I have orders to subdue
her and bring her back to the
capital! She's dangerous! This
battle won't be pretty!

Fibblyblips is HUSTLED OUT by her FIDBIGLIAN GUARDS. Soon
it's nobody but Blue Mouse and Laika.

BLUE MOUSE

We have only a few minutes. Let's
get out of here.

LAIKA

Get out of here?

BLUE MOUSE

I've already rigged up the Sputnik
with some of my own technology, we
can use it to fly anywhere in the
galaxy now! Let's go!

LAIKA

With you?

BLUE MOUSE

Yes, with me!

LAIKA

You were trying to get them to
destroy the Earth!

BLUE MOUSE

What did Earth ever do for you? You
were born in a frozen alley and
barely survived by fighting for
every scrap! Then some humans took
you in, but why? Only because they
wanted to shoot you into space!
They didn't care if you lived or
died or ever came back! They never
intended for you to live, Laika!
You owe Earth nothing!

LAIKA
But it's home!

BLUE MOUSE
You need to see the universe. Come with me. I'll show you things that make Earth look like last week's turd. We can traipse the galaxy!

LAIKA
And go around blowing up other planets?

BLUE MOUSE
It's my job. What, am I supposed to starve? I'm a planetary hit man. I get hired to destroy a planet, I find a way to take it out. It's not personal.

LAIKA
It's personal to me!

BLUE MOUSE
I've waited a hundred years for this payday. I'm not backing down now. Forget about it, you're off Earth now, let's tour the galaxy together!

LAIKA
What would I be? Some kind of pet to you?

BLUE MOUSE
You said it, not me. Or you could be a stray. Take your pick.

Laika seems so physically ill she can barely speak.

LAIKA
You're a monster!

BLUE MOUSE
Oh, and you'd rather hang out with the Fidbiglians? Is that your pack? Better choose fast.

LAIKA is so upset that she starts coughing, and heaving, and almost going into convulsions--coughing so hard it's like she's vomiting--

And then she vomits out ARKADY THE COCKROACH!

ARKADY

Well I've heard just about all I need to hear. This is crazy. You're all terrible people. What we must do is overthrow the Fidbiglians!

LAIKA

How have you been alive all this time...?

ARKADY

We cockroaches can survive anything! I was in the Totskoye nuclear test. I've been in worse situations than your stomach, let me tell you!

BLUE MOUSE

You ate Arkady?! And you're lecturing ME about ethics!?

LAIKA

Arkady's one cockroach, he's not a whole planet!

ARKADY

I'm right here, I can hear you! And you're both awful! And now I clearly have work to do! Which way to where the rest of the alien dogs are?

LAIKA

Down that hall--wait, what?

ARKADY

I have a revolution to inspire!
Rise up against the Fidbiglians!

The door opens. FIBBLYBLIPS is there with a bunch of FIDBIGLIAN GUARDS. Fibblyblips is IN TEARS, but his/her face is set with DETERMINATION.

FIBBLYBLIPS

Oh, Blue Mouse, how could you do this to me... I thought we had a connection... guards, kill them all.

The guards close in!

66 COMMERCIAL BREAK 66

67 INT. CORRIDOR OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 67

BLUE MOUSE and ARKADY ride LAIKA, who is frantically running away from the pursuing FIDBIGLIAN GUARDS.

LAIKA

How'd you trick them for so long?

BLUE MOUSE

They administer intelligence tests, Laika. Do you think that's the kind of pastime that actually intelligent people do?

ARKADY

They're catching up!

The familiar fanfare of the GAMES begins to start. Halftime is over!

LAIKA

I have an idea!

68 INT. ARENA OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 68

Laika SPRINTS into the arena. The Fidbiglian Guards are HOT AT HER HEELS.

All the alien-dogs are here, POISED IN THEIR STARTING POSITIONS, ready to start play. The BUZZER GOES OFF and the second half of the games BEGIN!

As before, the gravity is CUT OFF. Everything goes HIGGLEDY-PIGGLEDY as the Fidbiglian Guards struggle in the game's zero-gravity, FLOUNDERING!

The other dogs see the Fidbiglian Guards coming after Laika. They bark and bay unhappily. When the Fidbiglian Guards start SHOOTING, the other alien dogs FLEE.

The skills that Laika learned in the obstacle course come in use here. She is able to ELUDE and BAMBOOZLE the Fidbiglian Guards, who are not very good at the very tests they designed!

69 INT. ARENA OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP, ANOTHER PART 69

Arkady AGITATES among the other 11 alien dogs, who all seem very interested in what the cockroach has to say.

ARKADY

Rise up, dogs of space! You have been brought here to fight against each other, but what would happen if you all bound together and worked as one to overthrow your oppressor?

One alien dog LEANS OVER to another.

ALIEN DOG

That small six-legged dog makes a hell of a lot of sense.

70 INT. ARENA OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 70

More CRAZY THRILLING ACTION as Laika runs away from the Fidbiglians, with Blue Mouse tucked into her collar, shouting out orders and suggestions just as before.

BLUE MOUSE

Tactic G-5! Look out behind you, 7 o'clock! Reverse! You can do this! You're a good dog!

LAIKA

I'm a good dog and you're an awful mouse!

BLUE MOUSE

I'm a smart mouse!

But all of the Blue Mouse's tactics FAIL! They are CORNERED! The Fidbiglians close in...

BLUE MOUSE

Oh. I guess I wasn't so smart after all.

LAIKA

Except... wait!

Laika WHIPS OUT, from her athletic uniform, the LITTLE BLACK BOX that Khrushchev had given her back on Earth.

LAIKA

Khrushchev said if I was ever in really deep trouble, I should use this!

BLUE MOUSE

Uh.

The Fidbiglians HALT, cautious about the black box.

Laika PUSHES THE BUTTON on the black box... but nothing happens.

The Fidbiglians RESUME CLOSING IN on our heroes.

BLUE MOUSE

I could've told you.

LAIKA

It was worth a shot.

The Fidbiglians are just about to overcome our heroes when suddenly an ALL THE ALIEN-DOGS come WHIZZING through the air, led by ARKADY! Urged on by the cockroach's REVOLUTIONARY RHETORIC, the alien-dogs BRUTALLY ATTACK the Fidbiglians, BITING THEM SAVAGELY!

ARKADY

Onward! Fight! Rise up against your oppressors! You don't have to take meaningless tests to prove your worth! Your worth is inherent! Fight for dignity!

FIBBLYBLIPS

This is bullshit! I'm writing this off. Abandon ship!

Fibblyblips BRANDISHES a device, TWISTS its knob, and DEMATERIALIZES in just the same way the entire ship had dematerialized when leaving Earth space.

All around, the rest of the Fidbiglians DEMATERIALIZE, leaving the alien-dogs snapping at air. The ship is now EMPTY except for Laika, Blue Mouse, Arkady, and the alien dogs!

ARKADY

We did it! We took up arms against the elite and showed them the power of the people!

ALIEN DOG

Can we go home now?

71 EXT. SPACE 71

A region of space that looks different than EITHER around Earth or the Fidbiglian system: a binary star system, orbited by exotic planets, including a GREEN PLANET.

The alien mothership MATERIALIZES WITH A SHIMMER. A hangar door opens on the mothership. One of the little alien experimental spaceships that belongs to one of the alien dog contestants hurtles back out of the mothership, returning to the GREEN PLANET.

72 INT. ALIEN EXPERIMENTAL DOG SPACESHIP - SPACE 72

The alien dog is strapped into his spaceship similarly to how Laika had been strapped into Sputnik 2. The alien dog SPEAKS into a radio headset.

ALIEN DOG

Thank you so much!

BLUE MOUSE (O.S.)

Welcome back home!

ALIEN DOG

I thought I'd never see it again.

73 INT. BRIDGE OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 73

Blue Mouse has rigged some contraption to the Fidbiglian navigation system. He is using it to REMOTE-FLY the little alien ship with the alien dog in it, GUIDING it back down safely to his own home planet.

BLUE MOUSE

Thank YOU. If it wasn't for you all saving us, we'd ALL be dead.

ALIEN DOG

Most thanks of all to Arkady. His message of enlightened socialism has touched us all. After I get home, I swear to work tirelessly to bring a worker's paradise to my planet, and indeed to all...

BLUE MOUSE

Yeah, fine, I don't care. Bye!

74 MONTAGE 74

The mothership MATERIALIZES in other star systems. One by one, the rest of the alien dog ships ZOOM DOWN to their respective home planets, guided by Blue Mouse.

75 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 75

The mothership MATERIALIZES right by Earth.

76 INT. HANGAR OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 76

The hangar is cleared of all the primitive alien ships. Sputnik 2 alone remains.

Laika and Arkady are PREPARING TO BOARD Sputnik 2. Blue Mouse is there too. It's clear this is GOODBYE.

BLUE MOUSE

Okay, okay. I won't destroy Earth.
I promise.

LAIKA

Come back down with us! Earth isn't
so bad.

ARKADY

And I'd find it easier to trust you
about not destroying the planet if
you had some skin in the game.

BLUE MOUSE

Nope. I've spent enough time on
Earth on this job. I've a lot of
traipsing to catch up on--

Just then, ALL THE LIGHTS OF THE SHIP DIM--as though a large amount of energy had been diverted. The lights FLICKER and come back to full strength, but some STATICKY SHAPES are FORMING in front of our heroes--

BLUE MOUSE

Arkady! Didn't you disable the
interdimensional gates?

ARKADY

Sure. I toggled it to standby, just
like you said.

BLUE MOUSE

I didn't say toggle it to standby!
I said untoggle the standby!

A beat.

ARKADY
What's a toggle?

The vague shapes RESOLVE--and with a SHIMMER, Baby Bonko and Baby Bumbles appear! They're not holograms this time. This is the real thing!

BABY BONKO
I'm upset. I'm an unhappy baby. I'm a saaaad baby. Are you a sad baby too, Baby Bumbles?

BABY BUMBLES
That I am, Baby Bonko. I'm a sad baby. And I'm an angry baby. I'm so sad and angry I'm going to cry. Waaah, Baby Bonko. Waaah. Waaah.

BLUE MOUSE
Why are you here?!

BABY BUMBLES
Oh, I think you know why we're here.

BABY BONKO
We're here to finish the job, Blue Mouse.

BABY BUMBLES
If you want something done right, you have to do it yourself, isn't that right, Baby Bonko?

BABY BONKO
So true, Baby Bumbles.

LAIKA
You can't destroy Earth! It's my home!

BABY BONKO
Earth makes us very sad and angry babies. That's why Earth has to go bye-bye.

BABY BUMBLES
Bye-bye. Buh-buh. Buh-buh-buh-buh.

ARKADY
Why does Earth make you so sad?

BABY BONKO

We know all about Earth. We've seen humans and their young.

BABY BUMBLES

The resemblance hits too close to home!

BABY BONKO

It's like human infants are sending us up! Their appearance and behavior satirizes us! Waaah!

LAIKA

That's why you want to destroy the Earth?!

BABY BONKO

It offends our vanity! Wahhhh!

BABY BUMBLES

Think about it! What if your scientists discovered some weird worm at the bottom of the ocean that looked exactly like you? Wouldn't that freak you out?

BABY BONKO

It freaks me out!

BABY BUMBLES

I'm saaaad! I'm angry! It makes me feel insecure!

BABY BONKO

It makes me poop my diapers!

BABY BUMBLES

It makes me poop... a gun!

Baby Bonko grabs the POOPED GUN out of Baby Bumbles' diaper, and POINTS it at Laika, Arkady, and the Blue Mouse.

ARKADY

You really are a bunch of big babies!

BABY BONKO

Don't say it like that!

BABY BUMBLES

The term "baby" in our world is a mark of distinction! It's like saying "Duke" or "Prince"!

ARKADY
Baby! Baby! Baby!

BABY BONKO
Aggggh!

Baby Bonko FIRES THE GUN--just at the same time that Khrushchev's BLACK BOX, still clipped to Laika's collar, makes a BEEP!

Time seems to STOP--

77 MONTAGE: REWIND 77

Everything that has happened up to this moment--all the way back to the moment Laika pressed the button on Khrushchev's device--flies past us backwards at high speed, rewinding. And then we see it happen again:

78 INT. ARENA OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 78

Laika and Blue Mouse are cornered by the Fidbiglians! The Fidbiglians close in...

BLUE MOUSE
Oh. I guess I wasn't so smart after all.

LAIKA
Except... wait!

Laika WHIPS OUT, from her athletic uniform, the LITTLE BLACK BOX that Khrushchev had given her back on Earth.

LAIKA
Khrushchev said if I was ever in really deep trouble, I should use this!

BLUE MOUSE
Uh.

The Fidbiglians HALT, cautious about the black box.

Laika PUSHES THE BUTTON on the black box...

79 MONTAGE 79

We follow a ZIGZAGGING JOLT OF TRANSDIMENSIONAL INFORMATION as it SIZZLES out of the black box, ZINGS through psychedelic wormholes in other-dimensional spaces, then WRIGGLES BACK TO EARTH, into the Soviet electrical grid, into Moscow, leading finally to...

80 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 80

Khrushchev is asleep in bed. Another BLACK BOX similar to the one he gave Laika is on his bedside table. The black box begins BEEPING.

Khrushchev's eyes SNAP OPEN.

KHRUSCHEV
Laika needs me!

He GRABS the phone and begins barking orders.

81 EXT. MOSCOW RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT 81

An unmarked car SCREECHES to a halt outside an apartment building. Grim-faced KGB AGENTS hustle out of the car into the building.

82 INT. KOROLEV'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 82

KGB agents burst into the room and SHAKE Master Engineer Korolev AWAKE. They grab him and drag him out.

83 INT. KELDYSH'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 83

Different KGB agents hustle into Chief Theoretician Keldysh's kitchen, where Keldysh is MAKING SOME HOT CHOCOLATE. Keldysh is dragged out. The hot chocolate remains untouched.

84 MONTAGE 84

Throughout the night, various people are visited by KGB agents and are hustled into mysterious cars and whisked to the same location...

85 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT 85

Korolev, Keldysh, and the various other Russians of various ages, genders, and classes are herded into the room, where Khrushchev AWAITS. There is a primitive-looking TELEVISION connected to a COMPUTER CONSOLE with reel-to-reel tapes, blinking lights, etc.

The console also has a NINTENDO-LIKE CONTROLLER.

KHRUSCHEV
You are probably wondering why I
have gathered you all here. And why
I have been harvesting your body
parts over the years. Master
Engineer Korolev: your teeth and
(MORE)

KHRUSCHEV (cont'd)
 stomach. Chief Theoretician
 Keldysh: your eye and buttocks.
 Natalya Abdulova: your feet and
 hands. And so on.

The assembled people BREATHLESSLY AWAIT. What new torture does Khrushchev have planned?!

KHRUSCHEV
 But these were necessary
 contributions! For, from your
 sacrifices, we will now save the
 Earth! For I have taken all your
 excellent body parts, each the
 finest of its kind, and built from
 them--

Khrushchev TURNS ON the Nintendo-like machine. The TV screen starts staticky, but resolves--

86 INT. SPUTNIK 2 ENGINE ROOM 86

A light on the BRIEFCASE-SIZED BOX that Blue Mouse had puzzled over earlier FLASHES GREEN.

The briefcase SPRINGS OPEN.

A human-sized RUSSIAN ZOMBIE unfolds itself from within the briefcase--clearly stitched together from the parts Khrushchev had taken from Korolev, Keldysh, all the other Russians! The zombie LURCHES LEFT AND RIGHT, stumbling out of the Sputnik 2, as if clumsily controlled by something outside itself...

87 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT 87

Korolev, Keldysh, and rest of the visitors stare up at the TV. On the TV, we see the Fidbiglian Hangar from the RUSSIAN ZOMBIE'S point of view. Khrushchev is CONTROLLING THE ZOMBIE with the Nintendo-like controller, like a video game.

KHRUSCHEV
 You see? You can make it do
 anything! Walk, turn, jump, strike!
 Here, Korolev, take a turn! It's
 got your teeth and guts, after all!

Korolev accepts the controller from Khrushchev and gingerly begins to "play." Khrushchev looks at him with innocent glee, like a child sharing its toy.

KOROLEV
Premier Khrushchev, this is
extraordinary... but to what end?

KHRUSCHEV
To save the Earth, Master Engineer!

ALL VISITORS, VARIOUSLY
What?

88 INT. HANGAR OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

88

We have returned to the exact scene right before Baby
Bumbles and Baby Bonko shoot Laika, Blue Mouse, and Arkady.
The last few lines proceed just as before:

BABY BUMBLES
The term "baby" in our world is a
mark of distinction! It's like
saying "Duke" or "Prince"!

ARKADY
Baby! Baby! Baby!

BABY BONKO
Aggggh!

Baby Bonko FIRES THE GUN--just at the same time that
Khrushchev's BLACK BOX, still clipped to Laika's collar,
makes a BEEP--

And the Russian Zombie LUNGES in between the two Babies and
our heroes, and the bullets from Baby Bonko's gun THUD INTO
ITS UNDEAD FLESH, stopping the fusillade, saving our heroes!
And yet the Russian Zombie KEEPS ON LURCHING!

89 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT

89

Korolev, Keldysh, and the other assembled mutilated visitors
CHEER as they score their first victory of BLOCKING Baby
Bonko's BULLETS! The controller is passed from person to
person as they take turns "playing" the Russian Zombie, who
is now PUMPELLING the evil babies. Laika, the Blue Mouse,
and Arkady RUN AWAY!

Keldysh feverishly PLAYS the "game."

KELDYSH
Ah! I saw her! I saw Laika!

KOROLEV
I knew it. I knew that dog would
pull through!

KHRUSCHEV

Time enough later for emotion! For now, protect that dog! And do you want chips? I have some grape soda, too. This could be a real party.

90 INT. CORRIDOR OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP

90

Laika BOUNDS down the corridors, guided by the Blue Mouse, who is telling her which ways to turn in the labyrinthine network. Arkady rides along too.

LAIKA

Where are we going?

BLUE MOUSE

The room that contains the planet-destroying machinery! We have to break it before the babies get at it!

Laika SKIDS TO A HALT--for Baby Bonko and Baby Bumbles have appeared at the far end of the corridor, MANIACALLY TODDLING towards them, even as they still fight against the Russian Zombie!

BLUE MOUSE

They're closer than I thought! Go, go!

Baby Bonko delivers a WALLOPING PUNCH to the Russian Zombie--and the zombie FIGHTS BACK--

91 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT

91

All the assembled Russians SHOUT and YELL ADVICE as Khrushchev TWIDDLES the controller, sweatily attempting to fight against Baby Bonko and Baby Bumbles.

KOROLEV

You can do it, Khrushchev! Never have I been more proud of the United Soviet Socialist Republic than now!

KELDYSH

This was worth it all! I would gladly give my eye and buttocks again, for this moment!

KHRUSCHEV

Somebody put more chips into my mouth!

92 INT. MECHANICAL CONTROL CENTER OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 92

The battle has moved to the bowels of the ship, where various complicated hardware is housed. Laika DASHES towards the PLANET-DESTROYING CONTROLS, with Blue Mouse and Arkady barely hanging onto her back.

Baby Bonko and Baby Bumbles FORCE THEIR WAY into the control center too, BARELY HELD BACK by the weakening Russian Zombie.

BLUE MOUSE

Don't touch anything! All this stuff is super highly technical and dangerous! Go there, run, over to the right!

LAIKA

Wait, do you mean over--

Laika WHIPS AROUND, and on accident TUMBLES INTO A DIFFERENT CONTROL PANEL. That panel starts BLINKING AND BEEPING!

RECORDED FIDBIGLIAN VOICE

Scanning process initiated.

BLUE MOUSE

I said don't touch anything!

LAIKA

Sorry!

ARKADY

What did you do?!

Arkady LOOKS OUT THE WINDOW of the ship, and outside sees a door opening, and a gunlike apparatus emerging...

93 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 93

The Fidbiglian Mothership LOOMS near the Earth.

Once again, the GUNLIKE APPARATUS from before emerges from the mothership's underside.

A steady beam of light STREAMS OUT OF THE GUN. The "gun" SWIVELS BACK AND FORTH, SWEEPING ITS LIGHT over the Earth.

The scanning light FLASHES OVER RUSSIA...

94 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT 94

The Russians are still controlling their zombie through their CONTROLLER. But suddenly Keldysh SHUDDERS.

KELDYSH
Did you feel that?

KOROLEV
Yes. Strange.

KHRUSCHEV
Eyes on the screen! Those babies
are fighting back!

95 INT. MECHANICAL CONTROL CENTER OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 95

With a DEVASTATING UPPERCUT, Baby Bonko's fist OBLITERATES the Russian Zombie's head--and the entire zombie EXPLODES IN AN ORGY OF RANCID MEAT-CONFETTI.

Now NOTHING is between our heroes and THE BABIES.

LAIKA
Oh no...

96 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT 96

All the assembled Russians GROAN IN DISAPPOINTMENT as the screen turns to a TEST PATTERN with the words "GAME OVER" superimposed in Russian.

RUSSIANS (VARIOUSLY)
Oh no!!

KOROLEV
What does this mean?

97 INT. MECHANICAL CONTROL CENTER OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 97

Baby Bonko and Baby Bumbles STOMP TOWARDS Laika, Arkady, and Blue Mouse, who are the last defense against the PLANET-DESTROYING CONTROLS.

Blue Mouse, at last, rises to the occasion. He steps forward and aims his FUTURISTIC TOOL at Baby Bonko and Baby Bumbles.

BLUE MOUSE
Not a step farther! I will lay down
my life for my friends if that's
what it takes, and yes, I will die
for the planet that I have come to
think of as home, and its wonderful
(MORE)

BLUE MOUSE (cont'd)
 creatures like these who are so
 loyal and good that I--

Baby Bonko SWEEPS Blue Mouse away with zero effort.

Baby Bumbles PRESSES A BUTTON on the PLANET-DESTROYING
 CONTROLS.

A mounting horrible noise.

98 EXT. STAR CITY - NIGHT 98

Russian scientists look up into the sky, which has SUDDENLY
 TURNED RED.

99 EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY 99

Americans walking in the street look up into the sky, which
 has SUDDENLY TURNED RED.

100 EXT. TOKYO - NIGHT 100

Japanese walking around look up into the sky, which has
 SUDDENLY TURNED RED.

101 EXT. AUSTRALIAN BEACH - MORNING 101

A group of playing children look up into the sky, which has
 SUDDENLY TURNED RED.

102 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT 102

Khrushchev, Korolev, Keldysh and the rest of the Russians
 glance in alarm around the room, WHICH HAS FILLED WITH RED
 LIGHT.

103 EXT. ABOVE THE EARTH - SPACE 103

Earth EXPLODES.

104 INT. MECHANICAL CONTROL CENTER OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 104

Laika, Blue Mouse, and Arkady STARE at the wreckage of
 Planet Earth in MUTE SHOCK.

The Babies GIGGLE.

BABY BUMBLES
 Well, Baby Bonko, we did some good
 work here today. Did we do some
 good work?

BABY BONKO
Yes, good hard work.

BABY BUMBLES
Speaking of work, Blue Mouse, I think we'll skip the tab on this one.

BABY BUMBLES
Go bye-bye?

BABY BONKO
I believe so, Baby Bumbles.

BABY BUMBLES
Bye-bye!

BABY BONKO
Bye-bye!

Baby Bonko and Baby Bumbles SHIMMER AND VANISH.

Laika, Arkady, and Blue Mouse stand there, silent, for a LONG MOMENT.

105 EXT. THE EMPTINESS OF SPACE WHERE EARTH USED TO BE 105
The Fidbiglian mothership hangs in empty void.

106 INT. MECHANICAL CONTROL CENTER OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 106
Our heroes still haven't gotten over it.

LAIKA
I guess... sometimes the bad guys win.

BLUE MOUSE
SOMETIMES the bad guys win? The bad guys win EVERY time, Laika. There was a time I knew that. I should have remembered. You just have to figure out which bad guy is going to do the least damage.

ARKADY
So where do we go now? What do we do?

BLUE MOUSE
There's nowhere for you to go. I can't go anywhere either. The Babies have already put out word of
(MORE)

BLUE MOUSE (cont'd)
 what I've done. My name is mud.
 None of my old friends will help me
 now.

ARKADY
 Can we stay on this ship?

BLUE MOUSE
 You don't think the Fidbiglians
 will be back? They will, for sure,
 and they won't be so nice next
 time. We'll have to get on the
 Sputnik 2 as soon as we can, and...

LAIKA
 Wait. Not yet.

BLUE MOUSE
 What?

Laika approaches the SCANNING-GUN CONTROL PANEL. There is a
 BLINKING LIGHT next to a symbol that seems to indicate
 "100%."

Laika PRESSES THE BUTTON.

ARKADY
 What are you doing?

107 EXT. THE EMPTINESS OF SPACE WHERE EARTH USED TO BE 107

A DOOR just above the gunlike apparatus OPENS.

Within, a vast three-dimensional printer swiftly begins to
 REPLICATE THE EARTH, just as the same printer replicated the
 Sputnik 2 before.

108 EXT. STAR CITY - NIGHT 108

With blazing speed, block by block, everything is rebuilt:
 Russian scientists look up into the starry sky.

109 EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY 109

With blazing speed, block by block, everything is rebuilt:
 Americans walking in the street go about their business.

- 110 EXT. TOKYO - NIGHT 110
 With blazing speed, block by block, everything is rebuilt:
 Japanese walking around the crowded street, unconcernedly.
- 111 EXT. AUSTRALIAN BEACH - MORNING 111
 With blazing speed, block by block, everything is rebuilt: A
 group of children play on the beach.
- 112 INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT 112
 With blazing speed, block by block, everything is rebuilt:
 Khrushchev, Korolev, Keldysh and the rest of the Russians are
 hanging out together.
- 113 EXT. THE EMPTINESS OF SPACE WHERE EARTH USED TO BE 113
 The fake Earth SETTLES INTO THE ORBIT of where the old Earth
 used to be.
- 114 INT. MECHANICAL CONTROL CENTER OF FIDBIGLIAN MOTHERSHIP 114
 Laika, Arkady, and Blue Mouse look out the window.

LAIKA

Will they ever know what happened?
 That they'd all been killed, and
 now they're just copies?

BLUE MOUSE

There's no difference. Nobody on
 Earth will ever be the wiser.

ARKADY

Should we still go back?

LAIKA

No. It wouldn't be the same.

BLUE MOUSE

You're right. It wouldn't. If you
 went back, everything might look
 the same. Probably even feel the
 same, a lot of the time. Except
 just a little bit colder. A little
 meaner. And then it would start to
 change you too.

They look at Earth for a little while.

LAIKA

Let's go.

115 EXT. ABOVE THE REPLICA EARTH - SPACE 115

A small door in the Fidbiglian mothership OPENS.

The Sputnik 2 BLASTS OUT of the mothership.

It seems Blue Mouse has added some EXTRA HARDWARE to the Sputnik 2: the craft still looks clunky, but now it's maneuverable and fast.

116 INT. SPUTNIK 2 CAPSULE - SPACE 116

Laika, Blue Mouse, and Arkady are all BUSY at separate control panels in the cramped space. It's a team effort to fly this thing.

Laika GAZES out the window as the replica Earth ROLLS BY.

BLUE MOUSE

Second thoughts?

LAIKA

Remember when we were hanging out, the night before the blast off?

BLUE MOUSE

You said I wanted to ride your coattails.

LAIKA

I said from up here in space you could probably see everything. The whole world.

BLUE MOUSE

Now you see it.

LAIKA

But before we go, I want to see it up close. I'll never see it again.

Blue Mouse hesitates, then NODS.

117 MONTAGE 117

The Sputnik 2 ZOOMS down from space and SKIMS ALONG in the lower atmosphere.

The Sputnik 2 flies past the Egyptian pyramids, the bustling city of Mumbai, the Grand Canyon, an erupting volcano in Costa Rica, the cliffs of Dover, Venice, the forbidding glaciers of Iceland...

All the while, Laika STARES out the window.

LAIKA

Gooby! Goodbye! Goodbye...!

The refurbished Sputnik 2 pulls up, climbing into the upper atmosphere, LEAVING THE EARTH BEHIND.

BLUE MOUSE

And now, the rest of the universe!

The Sputnik 2 HURTLES INTO HYPERSPACE and VANISHES WITH A BLINK.

118	[ENDING CREDITS]	118
119	POST-CREDITS SCENE:	119
120	INT. KHRUSCHEV'S CONTROL CENTER - NIGHT	120

The various Russians who had come over to "play" the Russian Zombie are putting on the coats and going home. Khrushchev pleads with them, not wanting the party to end.

KHRUSCHEV

Come on... I still have plenty of chips... just because we can't play the game anymore doesn't mean there aren't other things we can do! We can do Truth or Dare... or a ouija board, I think I have one of those... I can run to the store and get some more vodka...

KOROLEV

Good night, Premier.

The last guest leaves. Khrushchev is left alone.

[THE END]