
DRAMA

Paper 1

COPY OF PRE-RELEASE MATERIAL

0411/13/T/EX

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2 hours 30 minutes



READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

The questions in Paper 1 will be based on the stimuli and on the extract from Rona Munro's play *Little Eagles* provided in this booklet.

This clean copy of the material is for you to use in your responses.

This document consists of **34** printed pages and **2** blank pages.

STIMULI

Choose **one** of the following three stimuli and devise a piece of drama based on it. You should work in groups of between two and six performers. Your piece should last approximately 15 minutes.

In the Written examination, you will be asked questions about your piece that will cover both practical and theoretical issues.

Stimulus 1

Quotation: '*It is a wise father that knows his own child.*'
From William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* [Act 2, Scene 2]

Stimulus 2

Grimms' Fairy Tales: *Little Red Riding Hood*

Stimulus 3

Photograph: *Family on a trip out in the country*



EXTRACT

Taken from *Little Eagles*, by Rona Munro

These notes are intended to help you understand the context of the drama.

Rona Munro's play *Little Eagles* was commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company and first performed in April 2011 at Hampstead Theatre, London.

The play is set initially in 1938 and then in the 1950s. Following the death of Stalin in 1953, the Soviet Union went through a significant regime change, culminating in the rise to power of Khrushchev, and the acceleration of the Soviet space programme.

It explores the historically true but little-known story of Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov, engineer and Chief Designer of the space programme. Under Korolyov's leadership, the 'little eagles' of the Soviet Union beat the Americans in the early stages of the space race, achieving a series of firsts, including the first manned space flight. The history books have focused on the person who made that first flight, the cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin. However, *Little Eagles* charts the progress of Korolyov from his status as 'enemy of the people' to Chief Designer of the Sputnik programme.

The term 'comrade' was required as a formal mode of address by the Soviet Union.

The play is in three Acts. The extract consists of the whole of Act One, the first scene of Act Two and part of the second scene of Act Two.

Characters in order of appearance. Capitals indicate the name by which the character is identified as a speaker in the text.

STALIN	First Secretary of the Communist Party (the Soviet 'president') Died 1953, and was succeeded by KHRUSHCHEV
Sergei Pavlovich KOROLYOV	Chief Designer of the Soviet Space Programme
OLD MAN	Prisoner in the Gulag (labour camp)
GUARD ONE	
GUARD TWO	
CONDEMNED MAN	
DOCTOR	Female. Works in the Gulag, and later on the space programme
XENIA	Wife of KOROLYOV
NATASHA Kuralyeva	Daughter of KOROLYOV
GLUSHKO	Head of the design team, initially; later sacked by KHRUSHCHEV
Vassily MISHIN	Deputy Chief Designer
IVANOVSKY	Second Designer
Nikita KRUSHCHEV	Incoming First Secretary of the Communist Party (the Soviet 'president'), from 1953 onwards
BREZHNEV	Rising official of the Communist Party
GULAG WORKER	
YURI Gagarin	Trainee cosmonaut ('Little Eagle'), also the first man in space
VALYA	Girlfriend, then wife, of YURI
KOMAROV	Trainee cosmonaut ('Little Eagle')
TITOV	Trainee cosmonaut ('Little Eagle')
LEONOV	Trainee cosmonaut ('Little Eagle')
OFFICER	
GULAG PRISONER	
GENERAL GELADZE	Senior military officer on the space programme

ACT 1

Scene 1

Kolyma Gulag (prison camp) 1938. Sound of wind howling.

STALIN stands high above the frozen steppes.

STALIN: Comrades.

Our country is attacked from within. Only the most naive among you can doubt that our enemies are right in the heart of our great nation, like rats in a barrel of wheat. We all know that the agents of all the bourgeois countries prey upon each other, sowing war and creating discord inside each other's borders. We know too that these same bourgeois countries consider us, the Soviet people, to be their greatest enemy. Of course they have sent their agents, their spies among us. Who can doubt it? 10

And even as we struggle against this foreign disease we still have failed to root out every germ of our own illnesses, Trotskyites and other double-dealers are living amongst us. [Muted applause]

As STALIN speaks, the GULAG WORKERS enter one by one. The Gulag is a frozen wasteland, an icy, open-cast gold mine. It's just after sunset. The GULAG WORKERS are scraping at the icy earth. They are all sick, very weak. 15

Some have accused our loyal agents of using excessive physical pressure against those who have been arrested. Some have even said that these faithful comrades have behaved like criminals themselves. But a party directive, made in 1937, indicated such force could be used in exceptional cases. I ask those who criticise this action to tell us how otherwise we are to defend ourselves against blatant enemies of the people. Enemies who, when interrogated by humane methods, defiantly refuse to turn over the names of co-conspirators. Enemies who refuse for months on end to provide any evidence. Enemies who try to thwart the unmasking of co-conspirators still at large, and who thereby continue, even from prison, to wage a struggle against the Soviet regime. The use of force requires courage but our experience has taught us no other method can produce results. The defence of the Soviet people demands all our strength. 20 25

There is no other case to answer. 30

What is done is done by the will of the people as all their actions demonstrate.

STALIN exits but his presence remains onstage in some visible form.

One by one the GULAG PRISONERS stop working, some collapsing altogether, others struggling to continue. Wind howling, then still.

One of them, KOROLYOV, looks up at the sky. He smiles. The worker beside him, an OLD MAN, sees him. 35

OLD MAN: Who's up there?

KOROLYOV: Venus. The evening star. Close and bright in the blue dusk. You can see the shape of her.

OLD MAN: You got a biscuit, comrade? 40

KOROLYOV: What?

OLD MAN: They fed you, there was none left for an old man, I couldn't reach it in time. Were there biscuits? I'll lick the crumbs off your fingers, comrade, anything.

Something sweet. I'd give my soul for something sweet on my tongue, comrade.

45

KOROLYOV: There's never any biscuits, you old fool.

I've nothing.

Two GUARDS drag on another WORKER; an execution. They position him and then aim their guns. The DOCTOR follows them on.

DOCTOR: Wait ... ! I didn't mean ...

50

The CONDEMNED MAN raises his arms to STALIN.

CONDEMNED MAN: Long live Comrade Stalin!

GUARD ONE: [meaning it] Well said, comrade!

They shoot him.

They turn to the DOCTOR. The DOCTOR is in her late twenties. She has never seen anyone shot before.

55

You were saying.

DOCTOR: I didn't mean ... I didn't mean ...

GUARD TWO: You said he was dead.

DOCTOR: I didn't mean ...

60

GUARD ONE: You said he was as good as dead already.

DOCTOR: I didn't ... !

GUARD TWO: You said,

[Looks at notes.] 'If he's under sentence of death you might as well shoot him now and get it over with ...'

65

GUARD ONE: '... it'd be kinder.'

That's what you said.

GUARD TWO: And he was under sentence of death. So we did.

GUARD ONE: [pushing paperwork at her] Sign.

GUARD TWO: We did your kindness for you.

70

GUARD ONE: Sign.

GUARD TWO: Put your name to it. Put your name to your recommendation, as medical officer in charge.

GUARD ONE: Go on, sign.

They're closing in on the DOCTOR, intimidating her.

75

GUARD TWO: Sign it!

GUARD ONE: Put your name on the paper, comrade!

KOROLYOV: [to the DOCTOR] They can't make you do that.

DOCTOR: What?

KOROLYOV: Someone needs to be responsible, for the paperwork, death must be recorded, execution quotas must be precise, they've acted without paperwork ...

80

GUARD ONE silences him. A vicious blow.

GUARD TWO: Sign.

The DOCTOR signs.

85

DOCTOR: What I said ... What I meant ... there is only enough medicine to treat one person ... I only have enough to save one of them ... but no one should die from this disease, no one deserves that death ... it's too cruel ...

GUARD ONE: So treat them.

DOCTOR: I only have enough for one person!

90

GUARD TWO: So pick one!

DOCTOR: We have to requisition supplies! I need you to contact your superior officers and tell them we need more supplies!

GUARD ONE: [to GUARD TWO] When did she get here?

95

GUARD TWO: I'm guessing yesterday.

GUARD ONE: [to DOCTOR] You are the last new, clean and healthy thing whose feet will break the dirty snow here till next May. No drugs. No daylight. No escape ...

[Moving in on her.] Nothing else sweet and soft and fresh for a thousand miles ...

DOCTOR: Stay away from me! I'll report you, comrade.

100

GUARD ONE: I don't think so, it's a long way to Moscow, sweetheart. Pick one and save his life. Just make sure it's worth saving.

GUARD TWO: Yeah, the vermin have got to be able to work, that's why they're here.

GUARD ONE: [calling out to GULAG WORKERS] Hey! We've got one dose of the stuff that could save your worthless life. One dose for a worker. Who's fit to work?

105

Some of the GULAG WORKERS call out, stumbling to their feet.

Well, will you look at that? It's a medical miracle, they have all made a miraculous recovery!

GUARD TWO: [To GUARD TWO] Move them out to break the new site.
Move.

110

Starts pushing the GULAG WORKERS out, clearing away the dead body.

GUARD ONE: Pick one. Make sure he's worth saving. You're the angel of life and death.
Enjoy.

DOCTOR: You have the fever already.

115

The DOCTOR is left with KOROLYOV, the OLD MAN and another GULAG WORKER. It is bitter cold. Only KOROLYOV is fit to speak, the other two are far gone. The DOCTOR looks at the OLD MAN. Checks his pulse.

You look like my father.

Moves to KOROLYOV. Checks his pulse.

120

What's your name, comrade?

KOROLYOV: Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov.

DOCTOR: What did you do, Sergei? Before they sent you here?

KOROLYOV: I ... made ... I flew ...

I made ... rockets ... rockets.

125

DOCTOR: Fireworks or bombs?

KOROLYOV: To fly ... we flew ... I can't remember ...

Let me live ...

DOCTOR: Your heart's weak. They've cracked your ribs ...

KOROLYOV: Help me, let me live, help me.

130

DOCTOR: Lie still, you're bleeding.

KOROLYOV: Help me see the sky ...

DOCTOR: Careful ... alright ... gently ...

She helps him. He looks up at the sky. Sound of wind.

[Treating his wounds.] I've been posted here indefinitely. What does that mean? How long do doctors work here? 135

KOROLYOV: I don't know. A long time.

DOCTOR: I can't stay here.

KOROLYOV: I could have flown us both out of here.

DOCTOR: On a rocket.

140

KOROLYOV: Beyond the edge of the air, out into the sparkling dark and out of the reach of gravity ... to the other side of the Moon. We would fly on forever.

DOCTOR: Good. Dream of that.

KOROLYOV: It's not a dream. It's not. I could do that.

DOCTOR: Not today you can't.

145

[Starting to crack.] How will I live here?

KOROLYOV: You breathe.

Don't cry.

DOCTOR: I'm not ... I ...

KOROLYOV: No. You have to stop. You have to stop crying if you want to live. One day you'll work somewhere else again. Keep thinking that. You'll escape.

150

DOCTOR: I don't deserve escape.

KOROLYOV: That's got nothing to do with it, comrade.

DOCTOR: No ... No! I'm an idiot. He was a General. He promised me an apartment.

Oh, I so wanted an apartment! I thought I could suffer a few kisses and caresses...

155

I couldn't do it twice! I couldn't bear it when he came back for more. He knew he made me feel sick. I couldn't hide it. I'm here because I'm only half a liar. If I knew how to be properly wicked I'd be safe by a stove in Spiridonovka.

I wanted an apartment! That's all! A window sill with sun on it! A pot of flowers. A cat. My own little bed with fresh sheets and someone pretty lying under them. What's so wrong with that!? Why am I punished for that ... Why am I here? I ... Please ... please ... I didn't do anything wrong. I don't want to be here. I don't ... I can't ... I want to go home ... I want a home ...! I want a yellow painted wall and a kettle!

160

165

She gets herself together. She opens her medical bag and gets a needle ready.

I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. I don't know what to do, Sergei Pavlovich.

KOROLYOV: Give it to him.

DOCTOR: He's old. He's barely breathing.

170

KOROLYOV: [Gestures towards the other worker] Then give it to him.

DOCTOR: The fever's high in him already.

KOROLYOV: Then give it to me! Just do it!

- DOCTOR: Promise me you're not a traitor, comrade.
- KOROLYOV: Promise me you'll do no more harm. 175
I'm a man! If I'm alive I'll do harm!
- DOCTOR: Then say you forgive me!
- KOROLYOV: For what?
- DOCTOR: For choosing who lives and who dies.
- KOROLYOV: You're the one with the fur-lined boots. 180
- The DOCTOR pulls away from him. She goes to inject the OLD MAN but at the last moment turns back and gives KOROLYOV the life-saving vaccine.*
- DOCTOR: You rotting traitor. Live then, for all the good it'll do you. You owe me one, Sergei Pavlovich. 185
- The DOCTOR exits.*
- KOROLYOV: Witch.
- The OLD MAN groans. KOROLYOV struggles to him.*
- OLD MAN: Is it time to go in? Help me in, son, I'll die out here.
- KOROLYOV: I can't. 190
OLD MAN: Oh ...
- KOROLYOV: Oh ... that's it, then.
Here.
- He gives something to the OLD MAN.*
- OLD MAN: Sugar! 195
KOROLYOV: She had a lump in her pocket. I lifted it.
- OLD MAN: The last sweet thing in Kolyma Gulag. You've been a good apprentice, Sergei Pavlovich. My time's not been wasted. You came here an enemy of the people and I've made an honest thief out of you. Did they hurt you?
- KOROLYOV: I'll live. 200
OLD MAN: See that you do. One day you might go south again, eh? Make something of yourself. Live a bit of life for me.
- KOROLYOV: I'll build a rocket ... I'll send your fame all over the sky. 'The last honest thief' – you can steal a piece of the Moon.
- OLD MAN: A rocket? 205
- A rocket is no memorial is it, Sergei?
- Sergei Pavlovich, you know full well all I wanted was another sugar lump.
- Dip it in vodka, melt it on your tongue, then drain the rest and think of me.
- What a waste.
- KOROLYOV: Hold onto me, comrade. Just hold on. 210
OLD MAN: You're right ...
- This isn't the time. I'm feeling lucky.
- I could steal my own soul back from death if I put my mind to it.

But they tell me men have no souls these days.

KOROLYOV: You know who the devil is, Sergei? 215
 Who?
 OLD MAN: [laughing] A bad boy from Smolensk, just like me.

Oh, look at that night ...

KOROLYOV: So much ice in the air even the stars are shivering with it.
 Hold on. You'll be alright. 220
 OLD MAN: If you say so, son. Just don't forget me, eh?
 KOROLYOV: Never.
 OLD MAN: Good. That's good.

The OLD MAN dies.

Time passes. The night passes. Wind stills. The sun is coming up. KOROLYOV 225
still sits with the frozen corpse of the OLD MAN.

GUARD TWO enters. He has some papers in his hand.

GUARD TWO: Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov ...

KOROLYOV says nothing.

They want you in Moscow. 230

Holds up papers.

Official release for reassignment of labour. They want him to stop breaking
 ice and rock and sit by a stove somewhere doing sums ...

I'm not joking.

Alright, I might be joking. I might just be waiting for the poor sod to stick his
 hand up so I can shoot the traitor in the head. We'll never know unless he
 takes a gamble, will we ... 235
 KOROLYOV: [cuts him off] I'm Korolyov.

*The GUARD raises his gun. Then he roars with laughter as KOROLYOV
 flinches and drops the papers beside him.* 240

GUARD TWO: Better get yourself to Moscow, comrade.

KOROLYOV struggles up. He just looks at the GUARD, dazed and confused.

What? You thought they'd send you a car? Better get walking, comrade. Only
 nine thousand kilometres to go.

KOROLYOV turns to face the rising sun. He starts to walk towards it, blinded
 by the light, stumbling, freezing. 245

*Behind him the GULAG WORKERS enter and are labouring again. Some of
 them drag the body of the OLD MAN offstage. Sounds of work fading.*

KOROLYOV keeps walking. He doesn't look back.

Scene 2

The DESIGN ENGINEERS' room. Tables. Large plans. 250

XENIA, NATASHA and GLUSHKO come on, XENIA and NATASHA looking round at their unfamiliar surroundings.

- NATASHA: Why are we here?
 GLUSHKO: This is where your father works, Natasha ...
 XENIA: Why are we here? Why haven't we been taken to the visiting room? 255
 GLUSHKO: I'll explain. In a minute. [glances at clipboard]
- NATASHA: Is it what you imagined, Natasha?
 GLUSHKO: [looking round] No. This bit doesn't look like a prison.
 Natasha Kuralyeva, you know this isn't really a prison, your father is working for his country ... 260
- XENIA: He's still a prisoner: there are guards, he's under lock and key. Why are we in here?
 GLUSHKO: Sergei Pavlovich has a busy day today. It wouldn't be possible for him to stop work and see you today. So. I've brought you to him.
- XENIA: He asked for us to come in here? 265
 GLUSHKO: I'll explain. One of my assistants will give you a tour. We'll show you the living quarters, the kitchens, the dormitories ... there's a very pretty wood ... just beyond the fence ... do you see? I don't suppose you've had time to explore it, Natasha, would you like to?
- XENIA: Comrade Glushko, we've been on a train for three days. Am I to be permitted to see my husband? 270
 GLUSHKO: This is a very important day, for the whole programme. I want you to know that I will do everything I can to ensure Sergei Pavlovich's pardon ... We'll give you a tour. We'll show you the family apartments.
- XENIA: Family apartments? 275
 GLUSHKO: For employees of course, rather than the prisoners but ... Well, I'm certain I can obtain you permission to occupy one. Almost definitely.
- XENIA: What are you talking about?
 GLUSHKO: You could see him ... every day. And in time ... if all goes well, if he's free ... he could live with you. Everything would be as it was. 280
- XENIA: We have an apartment. In Moscow. Why are you offering us an apartment here?
 GLUSHKO: I need you to talk to Sergei. I need you to explain the advantages, to all of us, of success here today. You can see the advantages, Xenia ...
- XENIA: Why can't you talk to him? 285
 GLUSHKO: I don't understand, Comrade Glushko, you've known him since you were students. You've worked together for nearly twenty years ...
 Not quite. No. We weren't able to work together, for many years, and I regret that, I want you ... I want Sergei to understand, at last, how much I regret that ... 290
- Pause.*
- XENIA: [gets it] Ah. This is why he hates you.
 GLUSHKO: Sergei and I have ...
 XENIA: [interrupts] You kept your job.
 GLUSHKO: Yes, but ...
 XENIA: You kept your job. You have an apartment ... You walk around under the sky, free to turn your face up to the sun or the snow, any time you like ... 295

... you denounced him. Didn't you, Comrade Glushko?

Pause [GLUSHKO looks down at clipboard].

GLUSHKO: Look, you don't have much time, Xenia, I thought you would have arrived 300
yesterday ...

XENIA: [interrupts] You denounced him. You sent him to the Gulag.

And now you're his boss.

GLUSHKO: [Laughs.] Yes, I can see why conversation might be difficult. 305
You could be together again. A family! Xenia, we don't have time for this.
Sergei's work today is too important ...

XENIA: Have you asked Sergei if he wants a family?

GLUSHKO: Why wouldn't he want his family! Xenia ...

XENIA: Comrade Glushko. Look at me. Do I look well? Do I look healthy?

GLUSHKO: What? 310

[Floundering.] Of course ... you're a very ... yes ... you look well, you look wonderful! He'll be delighted to ...

XENIA: I kept my job, Comrade Glushko. I kept my apartment. I'm still working in the same medical research department as I was when Sergei was arrested but, like you, I've been promoted.

GLUSHKO: Yes, but ... what are you saying?

XENIA: That I understand why you can't talk freely with Sergei. It's difficult, isn't it? When you've betrayed him. Of course you had to. You had to live. You had to work. I understand ... They keep you so long in the dark, don't they? Shouting, questions, questions, questions ... Is Sergei Pavlovich a traitor? Is he a traitor, comrade? Tell us ... It was so dark. Was it dark where they kept you?

I thought. Natasha wouldn't like the dark. I didn't know what might happen to Natasha. Children need sun to grow straight, don't they. They need it for healthy bones.

NATASHA: [quiet] Mother, please don't ...

GLUSHKO: You denounced him?

XENIA: Of course I did. I called him a traitor. And that word lies between us every time I see him, like a rotting fish. We can hardly bear to be in the same room with it. You didn't know? Well ... why would he confide in you, of all people. I understand. Sergei doesn't talk freely with me either. No. I don't think we can be a family, Comrade Glushko.

GLUSHKO: Oh, but ... surely ... we'll give you the tour ... we ...

XENIA: No.

NATASHA: Mother, we can still visit him! I want to visit him. We can see him today. I'm glad we're here. I'm glad I'm seeing where he works.

Pause.

XENIA: Alright. Alright.

GLUSHKO: Would you like to freshen up? Come with me.

NATASHA, XENIA and GLUSHKO move out of the way as WORKERS and DESIGN ENGINEERS are brought on by GUARD TWO. They take their places at work stations. The convention of the engineers' room is established. A level of intense concentration, of calculations, an impression of endless paperwork, hundreds of blueprints. A work space where all activity centres on one place – the place KOROLYOV will occupy.

340

345

GUARD TWO: Alright! Get working!

The WORKERS/DESIGN ENGINEERS start working, low-level activity. There is a gentle buzz of machinery. They're watching a central point, waiting for some other signal.

KOROLYOV is brought on by GUARD TWO. He takes his place at the centre 350 of activity.

KOROLYOV: Alright! Let's get working!

Instantly all the activity goes into hyperdrive. Everything is fed to KOROLYOV, checked by him and passed out again.

KOROLYOV is completely absorbed in checking the figures. He throws the 355 papers down.

Which diseased piece of mule dung is responsible for this!

Everyone goes still, terrified. His deputy, MISHIN, turns to the second designer, IVANOVSKY.

MISHIN: I told you! I told you it wasn't ready! 360

IVANOVSKY looks at the paperwork.

IVANOVSKY: That would be my work.

KOROLYOV: You're a lying worm,

[Indicating MISHIN.] ... it was this tub of rancid sausage.

MISHIN: [simultaneous] Yes ... but, SP, it wasn't my fault ... we knew the deadline 365 was ...

IVANOVSKY: [simultaneous] No, no, I take responsibility for the initial calculations ...

KOROLYOV: [cutting over both of them] You're both fired! Both of you! Get out of here!

MISHIN and IVANOVSKY look at each other uncertainly then go back to the work stations. 370

I said get out of here! Go on!

IVANOVSKY: But we can't, SP ...

MISHIN: Come on, SP ... it's a big day ...

KOROLYOV: I know what day it is, Mishin! It's the day I finally kick your sorry backside out of my workroom. Get out!

IVANOVSKY: You know you can't fire us, no one can reassign a prisoner's labour except ...

MISHIN: [to IVANOVSKY, warning] Oleg!

IVANOVSKY: [under MISHIN] ... Comrade Glushko ...

GLUSHKO is approaching them. KOROLYOV sees him and beyond him, 380 waiting, XENIA and NATASHA.

KOROLYOV: [quiet] Why's no one working?

[Louder.] Move, you drowsy excuses for engineers! Work!

The WORKERS/DESIGN ENGINEERS get going again.

GLUSHKO:	Comrade Korolyov, is everything ready?	385
KOROLYOV:	No.	
GLUSHKO:	What?	
KOROLYOV:	The figures are wrong. I told you we needed more time.	
GLUSHKO:	Then you'll have to ... you'll have to ...	
	Look, your family is here. You have to present this as a success, you have to tell them we've succeeded already!	390
KOROLYOV:	I know what you want, Glushko.	
XENIA:	What does he want?	
	<i>Pause.</i>	
GLUSHKO:	I'll let you ... I'll let you all ... Natasha, talk to your father ...	395
	We don't have much time, Sergei!	
	<i>GLUSHKO moves off, anxiously checking the work.</i>	
KOROLYOV:	It's a big day for us. This is the day we have been told to present our completed work to the Politburo. Today is the triumphant conclusion to years of expensive labour.	
	400	
XENIA:	[<i>picks up on his tone, looking round</i>] You're not ready.	
KOROLYOV:	A few weeks away.	
XENIA:	The design isn't working?	
KOROLYOV:	My part of the design is working.	
XENIA:	[<i>gets it, indicating GLUSHKO</i>] Ah ... so. The boss needs you to make him look good.	405
KOROLYOV:	Yes.	
	How are you?	
XENIA:	As you see.	
KOROLYOV:	Natasha. Look at you.	410
NATASHA:	I'm so glad, you've got windows.	
KOROLYOV:	What's that?	
NATASHA:	Every time I think of you working here I wonder if you can see the sun. And you can.	
KOROLYOV:	We've got windows. Rather dirty windows of course but ...	415
NATASHA:	I'm glad.	
	<i>IVANOVSKY sidles up, hesitant.</i>	
IVANOVSKY:	Excuse me ... Comrade Korolyov ...	
	<i>He offers papers. KOROLYOV looks at them.</i>	
KOROLYOV:	Well done, well done, good man.	420
	[<i>To XENIA.</i>] Why did they bring you in here?	
	<i>IVANOVSKY moves away.</i>	
XENIA:	You want us to leave?	
KOROLYOV:	No! No of course not. How are you? How was the journey?	
XENIA:	Cold. The train was delayed longer than usual.	
KOROLYOV:	Have you eaten? Did you have enough food for the train?	425

MISHIN's turn to sidle up.

MISHIN: Sergei, I'm so sorry ...
 KOROLYOV: It's alright, Vassily. Show me.
 MISHIN: [offering papers] I think we can suggest a probable solution to determining
 an accurate trajectory if ... 430
 KOROLYOV: [cutting him off; quiet] Vassily, you think the idiots can count their own toes?
 It's fine. You've done well. We're ready for this.

MISHIN moves away.

[To XENIA] It's very good to see you. 435

I didn't expect to see you here.
 XENIA: In the middle of your work. We're disturbing you.
 KOROLYOV: No! It's ... you look well, Xenia. You look ... I'm glad to see you. Natasha,
 you look thin! Are you getting enough to eat?
 XENIA: Comrade Glushko has offered us an apartment here. 440
 KOROLYOV: Here?
 XENIA: Yes. Here. In the middle of your work.
 KOROLYOV: But how ... why?
 XENIA: So you see the advantages of making him look good.
 KOROLYOV: You'd come here? 445
 XENIA: You're asking us to come? That's what you want?

Pause.

KOROLYOV: What about Natasha's studies?
 NATASHA: I'm finished this summer.
 XENIA: Do you want us here? 450
 KOROLYOV: Yes. Would you come?
 XENIA: I don't know.
 GLUSHKO: It's nearly time. We need to be ready.
 KOROLYOV: It's too sudden. We can ... we'll have to talk about this later.

A bell. The GUARDS rush the WORKERS/DESIGN ENGINEERS off apart from MISHIN and IVANOVSKY. 455

XENIA: Glushko says you might be pardoned?
 KOROLYOV: I've another ten years on my sentence. That hasn't changed.
 XENIA: If they released you ... if you were free, would you really come back to
 Moscow? 460
 KOROLYOV: I don't understand you.
 GLUSHKO: They're early! The cars! The cars are arriving!
 XENIA: You didn't have to leave Moscow, Sergei.
 KOROLYOV: I was asleep. We were *asleep!* How could I get away? They dragged me
 downstairs. They threw me in a van, Xenia! 465
 XENIA: Sergei ... you saw what was coming. All your colleagues were being arrested
 ... all their families taken away ...
 KOROLYOV: So I should have denounced them first?
 XENIA: Yes! For us! For our sake.
 KOROLYOV: And our work? I should have just let it all be destroyed? 470
 XENIA: Oh, your work!
 NATASHA: Please. Please. Mother said you asked her to marry you over and over for
 six years.
 XENIA: He did. He never stopped asking.

- NATASHA: And at last you had to say yes. 475
 XENIA: I had to say yes. He'd never have stopped asking. He never stops. Of course I said yes.
- KOROLYOV: I was sure from the moment I saw you that I wanted to share my life with you. I'm still sure.
- GLUSHKO: They have to go. Xenia, you have to go now. 480
- WORKERS and DESIGN ENGINEERS are clearing up, frantically getting ready. A bell.*
- XENIA: I'm glad you asked me, Sergei. I'll always be glad you made me say yes. But you have to understand, I made my choice ten years ago. I won't move here. I won't leave my life. I can't bring Natasha to live under the shadow of a prison wall, with the smell of death and gunpowder in her nose. But your home is still your home, if you're free, if you want it. 485
 GLUSHKO: If it all goes well, if we keep meeting our targets he'll be home with you soon.
- XENIA: If his work can spare him. 490
 GLUSHKO: Yes, yes, yes ... we'll all be on holiday soon. I promise you both. I promise you, Sergei, if today goes well it'll be picnics by the Volga for all of us, now say goodbye.
- XENIA: Goodbye.
 KOROLYOV: Goodbye. 495
- GLUSHKO: Goodbye, Natasha.
 GLUSHKO: Goodbye, goodbye, goodbye! Go! Go!
- He shoos them off. Turns to KOROLYOV.*
- Line up! Line up! Come on.
- KOROLYOV, IVANOVSKY, MISHIN and the other WORKERS/DESIGN ENGINEERS form a welcoming committee. 500
- Are we alright? Do I look alright?
- IVANOVSKY straightens GLUSHKO's tie.
- Thank you. And Sergei, nothing about space today, you understand me? Not a word! 505
- KHRUSHCHEV and BREZHNEV enter, followed by members of the POLITBURO.
- GLUSHKO: Comrade First Secretary, honoured comrades ... welcome ... welcome. You'll take some tea? Vodka?
 KHRUSHCHEV: [looking round] Later, later, show us what we're paying for first. 510
 GLUSHKO: Of course. Of course, as you can see our engineers have prepared for your visit. Everything is on schedule. We have exceeded Comrade Stalin's expectations ...
 KHRUSHCHEV: Comrade Stalin's dead.
 GLUSHKO: Eh ...
 KHRUSHCHEV: Isn't he?
 GLUSHKO: Yes.
 KHRUSHCHEV: You noticed? You heard the news maybe?
 GLUSHKO: Yes. 515

KHRUSHCHEV: So let's see if you can satisfy Comrade Khrushchev's expectations. On you go. 520

GLUSHKO is trying to hand out papers to KHRUSHCHEV and the others.

GLUSHKO: The eh ... the initial work ... the initial planning ... has proceeded as we anticipated ...

KHRUSHCHEV: What work? What planning? 525

[*Re: the papers.*] These are pages of numbers! Why are you showing me your numbers?

Is someone going to tell me what's going on here!?

KOROLYOV: Comrade Khrushchev, if I may ...

KOROLYOV leads them to the base of a rocket. They look up. 530

A beat while they take it in.

KHRUSHCHEV: Why is it so big?

KOROLYOV: What you are looking at is our latest prototype developed to carry liquid fuel. With this missile we hope to increase our range by a factor of ten, allowing us to select targets many thousands of miles away with reasonable accuracy. 535
As you know our deadline for completion was this year ...

KHRUSHCHEV: As you know? As you know? I don't know anything. What is this thing?

KOROLYOV: It is an intercontinental ballistic missile.

KHRUSHCHEV: So what can it do?

KOROLYOV: This is our test model. We hope it can deliver a warhead over a much longer distance than would previously have been possible ... 540

KHRUSHCHEV: How long?

KOROLYOV: It could reach America in just a few minutes.

KHRUSHCHEV: America? America?

KOROLYOV: Yes. 545

KHRUSHCHEV: [*laughing, to the POLITBURO*] You hear that! You hear that? We've just made toy boats of their warships! Those guns of theirs are going to be good for nothing but salutes!

[*To GLUSHKO.*] Is it true!?

GLUSHKO: Yes, Comrade Khrushchev. 550

KHRUSHCHEV: Well, how many of these things do we have?

GLUSHKO: The Politburo, as you know, approved ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [*interrupts*] Look, you seem like a man who can understand plain talking, yes? I don't know what you were expecting today but this is how it is – the old man told me nothing. I don't know a bloody thing. 555

[*pointing at the MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO.*] They don't know a bloody thing.

Tell me again, slowly, so I can understand.

KOROLYOV: Comrade Stalin had a dream.

KHRUSHCHEV: Yes. 560

KOROLYOV: [*as if quoting*] His dream was to plant missiles like saplings of a new forest, bent by the winds of the world to point wherever they were needed.

Their flight paths would be dotted lines of death threatening our enemies even in their own homes, as they threaten us now. He wanted to guard our whole, huge sky with fire and steel.

565

[Turn over]

KHRUSHCHEV: He said that.

KOROLYOV: No. He had that written. But that was the idea.

KHRUSHCHEV: That was his dream.

KOROLYOV: Yes.

KHRUSHCHEV: The old devil never told me he had dreams.

570

Suddenly he bangs on the rocket.

[*To the MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO.*] Look at this! Look at this thing, will you?!

[*To KOROLYOV, suddenly anxious.*] Oh, can I do that? It won't ...?

KOROLYOV: It's quite safe.

575

KHRUSHCHEV *hits the rocket again.*

KHRUSHCHEV: That explains it, that explains the secret smile. You know the one I mean? Just peeking round the edges of his moustache with so much iron behind it. I thought death was the twinkle in the eye, the big punchline to every joke he ever told ... But this is the big joke, isn't it? Ha!

580

KHRUSHCHEV *gives the rocket several more blows, laughing. The hammering reverberates around.*

He turns from examining the rocket to examining KOROLYOV.

Well. Well then.

What's your name?

585

KOROLYOV: Sergei Pavlovich Korolyov.

KHRUSHCHEV: And how are conditions in the missile-builders' prison, Sergei Pavlovich? Food alright is it? Plenty of fresh air?

KOROLYOV: Conditions are ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [*interrupts*] A hell of a lot better than the Gulag. No, no, you're a lucky man, I can see that. And what was your sentence?

590

Pause.

KOROLYOV: Hard labour or death, Comrade Khrushchev.

KHRUSHCHEV: Comrade Stalin's rocket fuel. Got us all leaping forward, didn't it? Did you cry when he died?

595

KOROLYOV: I was ... sad of course I ...

KHRUSHCHEV: I wept like a child. He was our father. Now we're just children running from wolves ...

He was right, of course he was right, the Americans are watching us from every wave of the sea. They're peering down on us from every patch of blue sky, ready to drop death on us whenever they like.

600

MISHIN: [*Suddenly to MISHIN.*] What did you do in the Great Patriotic War, comrade? I ...

I was in Czechoslovakia, Comrade First Secretary. I was a master of horses, in the cavalry ...

605

KHRUSHCHEV: Wounded?

MISHIN: Yes, comrade.

KHRUSHCHEV: Show me.

Hesitant, MISHIN pulls up his shirt to show his scar.

Shrapnel.

610

MISHIN: The shell exploded right beside our position ... I was the only one who survived ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [stopping him] It's alright soldier. We've all got our wounds, eh?

We've given the world enough of our dead. We gave millions to win their war for them while they ate chocolate and chewed gum. The crops in our fields are still rich with the Russian blood that soaked into the earth – the blood of millions of farmers and soldiers who died winning that war. We broke the world's enemy for them and then the world turned round and threatened us?! Well, no more! No more! Ha! We'll show them! You'll show them, Sergei!

615

You've beaten the Americans and their pet Germans? They can't do this?

620

KOROLYOV: They're developing the German V2. But we don't think their design is yet capable of ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [interrupts] Oh, let me tell them! Let me tell them we can see a fly on a grain of wheat on their great plains and kill the fly and the whole plain with it ...

625

KOROLYOV: Our accuracy is not yet ...

KHRUSHCHEV: No! No, let me tell them that! I want to see their faces! Let them try and frighten our mothers and children now!

Do you have family, Sergei?

KOROLYOV: I've got a daughter.

KHRUSHCHEV: Wife and daughter, eh? Lovely. They let you see them?

630

Pause.

KOROLYOV: Yes, Comrade Khrushchev.

KHRUSHCHEV: Good, good, you'll spend days with them soon. Now your work's done.

KOROLYOV: The work is not completed.

GLUSHKO: [simultaneous] Comrade Khrushchev ...

635

KHRUSHCHEV: [simultaneous] What!?

KOROLYOV: We do not have a working mathematical model, as yet. But if the work proceeds to our plan, the missile will fly within the month. I guarantee that.

KHRUSHCHEV: You guarantee that personally?

640

KOROLYOV: Yes, comrade.

KHRUSHCHEV: You know what I think then, Sergei Pavlovich? I think the people are going to pardon you. I think you'd still love Mother Russia even if you weren't staring down the barrel of a gun. Am I right?

KOROLYOV: You're right, comrade.

KHRUSHCHEV: So go and get your wife ... You're a free man!

645

You can go out and buy your daughter a new pair of shoes. Have you got an apartment here for them?

GLUSHKO: Yes, Comrade Khrushchev ...

KOROLYOV: No.

KHRUSHCHEV: What do you mean, 'No'?

650

KOROLYOV: They wouldn't come here.

They won't come, Comrade Khrushchev.

GLUSHKO: Comrade Khrushchev doesn't want to hear ...

KHRUSHCHEV: She told you that?

- KOROLYOV: Yes. 655
- KHRUSHCHEV: Well ... a man needs his family. Go to her.
- GLUSHKO: We do need Sergei Pavlovich if the work is to proceed, Comrade Khrushchev ...
- KHRUSHCHEV: What about these other boys in white coats? They can finish the job without this lad here, can't they? 660
- GLUSHKO: No.
- KOROLYOV: No, Comrade Khrushchev.
- GLUSHKO: Comrade Korolyov is indispensable. At the moment.
- KHRUSHCHEV: [laughs] And you're not?
- Well. 665
- Well, what are we going to do?
- [To KOROLYOV.] All these plans, all these dreams of fire and steel in one little head? Is that wise? Is there room in there, comrade?
- KOROLYOV: One mind can hold a million ideas, a million actions, as many possibilities as specks of light in the night sky. 670
- KHRUSHCHEV: But put a bullet in his brain and you lose the lot. I can see how you managed to stay alive, comrade. Very clever.
- Well, I'm still offering you a choice. You're pardoned. Take your freedom and go home to your wife if you like ...
- GLUSHKO: [cutting in] Comrade Khrushchev ... 675
- KHRUSHCHEV: Shut up! I'm not talking to you!
- [To KOROLYOV.] You decide, comrade. Do you need a holiday?
- Pause.*
- KOROLYOV: No, comrade. I need to finish my work.
- KHRUSHCHEV: Course you do. 680
- KOROLYOV: I need Mishin, I need Ivanovsky. I need my team.
- KHRUSHCHEV: Your team. Your team.
- All enemies of the people?
- No one answers.*
- Well ... well, if a man has given his blood for the people I think that's all we need to know. I think that's all that counts in this new world, in these new days where our enemies want to bring us down while our wounds are still wet. 685
- Let's try another way to fuel the rocket, comrades. The people will give you all their pardon. Do your work. 690
- MISHIN *breaks down abruptly.*
- KOROLYOV: Vassily ...
- KHRUSHCHEV: It's alright. Give him a drink.
- [To MISHIN.] Take a drink, soldier.
- Let's all have a drink. 695

MISHIN *is still weeping.*

That's enough, that's enough now, we're celebrating now. You've done a good job, Sergei Pavlovich.

[*To GLUSHKO.*] He's done a good job for you, hasn't he? He's been a good deputy for your little rocket-building team.

700

[*To KOROLYOV.*] Who do you want as your deputy then?

[*Indicating GLUSHKO.*] Him?

KOROLYOV: [thrown] Eh ... I don't ...

KHRUSHCHEV: You should be running this team, shouldn't you?

GLUSHKO: Comrade First Secretary ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [*cutting him off*] Shut up, we're not talking to you, Sergei and me are making a new plan now.

705

[*Indicating GLUSHKO.*] Do you need him?

Beat. KOROLYOV looks at GLUSHKO.

KOROLYOV: For what?

710

GLUSHKO: Everything we've done was dependent on my design for ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [*interrupts, just speaking to KOROLYOV*] So you can run your team and you have this one, unless you want him for your deputy?

GLUSHKO: No! No, the committee must approve any reorganisation in our working structure and ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [*turns on GLUSHKO*] Oh, must they? Which committee? Do I know them, have they bought me a drink recently, have any of them had their feet up on my chairs?

715

[*To KOROLYOV.*] You don't want him? You don't trust him?

When KOROLYOV says nothing, KHRUSHCHEV indicates BREZHNEV.

720

I trust this man to stand here, you see? Just behind me. He doesn't say much do you, Comrade Brezhnev?

BREZHNEV: No, comrade.

KHRUSHCHEV: He never has. He watches, and he sees it all, don't you?

BREZHNEV: Yes, comrade.

KHRUSHCHEV: And no one sees him. No one saw him until I did. I saw a boy who could learn what I had. I saw a young man who could follow me up the party. I saw a man who could take the trust I offered him and stand at my shoulder, my eyes and ears. Watching and listening until the blood and fire and bullets had passed us both by.

725

We understand each other, don't we? We understand what we must do now, for the people.

BREZHNEV: Yes, comrade.

KHRUSHCHEV: So, who do you want to stand beside you, Sergei?

Pause.

735

KOROLYOV: Vassily ...

Comrade Mishin.

KHRUSHCHEV: The man who can stare down the barrel of a German tank! Yes! Good choice!
GLUSHKO: Am I required here then?
KHRUSHCHEV: Those damn Nazis! Every one of them in bed with Uncle Sam now. But 740
Sergei Pavlovich and the Soviet workers can beat them!
KOROLYOV: That's right, comrade, and we could beat them into space too.
GLUSHKO: Am I still required here?!

Pause.

KHRUSHCHEV: Are you drinking? No. Clear off then. 745

Into space? What are you talking about? Take a drink, man.

GLUSHKO exits.

KOROLYOV: In a moment perhaps, Comrade Khrushchev, thank you. Can I show you something, Nikita Sergeyevich, can I show you my dream?

[Drawing him over to the rocket again.] Look, look, it's nearly touching the sky already. Over five million horsepower thrusting it up into the stars. Five tons of warhead soaring higher than any human thing ever made. We could escape gravity itself! We could send a satellite around the Earth!

KHRUSHCHEV: Why?

Why would we do that?

KOROLYOV: Because we must! It would be a first step, Comrade First Secretary. Before this, the idea of moving off the Earth, travelling beyond our little world has just been a dream. But we could make it real. Here, today, we could take that first step no one has dared to believe was possible. It would change what it means to be human.

No response.

Think of it, to take mankind so high, so high that we can look back and see what we are. look beyond the curve of the Earth to see what we can become!

No response.

For Mother Russia! For the love of our black earth and memory of our dead.

No response.

America will claim the first satellite very soon if we don't ...

KHRUSHCHEV: [cuts him off] You're ready to do this?

KRISOCHKEV: [calls him off] You're ready to do this?
KOROLYOV: Almost immediately. We replace the warhead with a satellite, the plans have been submitted to the committee.

KHRUSHCHEV: Alright. Send everything to my office as well.

[To BREZHNEV.] You'll keep an eye on this?

BBEZHNEV: Yes, comrade

KHRUSHCHEV: You can have your dream, Sergei Pavlovich, as long as I have my missiles.

KHRUSHCHEV and BREZHNEV exit. Once they are clear, KOROLYOV, IVANOVSKY, MISHIN and the others roar with delight, dancing and hugging each other.

MISHIN: A toast! A toast! To the new chief designer!

KOROLYOV: You're excused. You're all excused. No more work today.

The GUARDS exit followed by WORKERS and DESIGN ENGINEERS whooping. MISHIN, IVANOVSKY and KOROLYOV remain. 780

KOROLYOV: [to IVANOVSKY] How come this wet baboon cries with joy at the thought of working with me and you don't even blink?

IVANOVSKY: I've no tears left in me, SP, you know that.

KOROLYOV: Oh, I'll find your tears. The way I'll work you now ... 785

Bring her out. Let's look at her.

From a hiding place, IVANOVSKY produces a scale model of Sputnik. A beautiful shining silver ball.

He holds it up.

We're going to make you real, beautiful. We're going to let you grow and fire you up where you belong. 790

They're passing the Sputnik among them. MISHIN kisses it.

MISHIN: You little darling.

KOROLYOV: Hey! Hey! No marks!

He polishes the model with his sleeve. 795

We're going to polish the skin till it blazes with all the light of the sun, so we can see her pass over us with our own eyes, the star we made.

IVANOVSKY: I have to tell the others, can I tell them, Sergei?

KOROLYOV: Yes! Go on!

IVANOVSKY runs off. 800

MISHIN: That was your daughter?

KOROLYOV: Yes. That was Natasha.

MISHIN: She's lovely. A lovely girl.

KOROLYOV: Yes.

MISHIN: Take a drink, Sergei. 805

MISHIN exits.

KOROLYOV raises his little shining Sputnik.

KOROLYOV: You're lovely. A lovely thing.

Fly up and see who chases you. If the race starts we'll all run to the other side of the Moon. 810

KOROLYOV throws the Sputnik up into the sky.

Lights down.

The silver sound of Sputnik overhead.

A parade ground, Central Russia, An autumn night. October 4th 1957.

SOLDIERS from the local barracks and YOUNG WOMEN from a textile factory dancing together. YURI is dancing with VALYA. KOMAROV, TITOV and LEONOV are dancing with other WOMEN or, in the absence of partners, boisterously with each other. The dance finishes, an OFFICER shouts over the end.

815

OFFICER: Last dance! One more then flying officers report back to barracks! 820

The music begins again, they dance.

YURI is talking to VALYA.

YURI: So I'll see you next week then.

VALYA laughs.

What?

825

VALYA: Every time!

Have you asked me if I want to see you next week?

No.

VALYA: Are you going to?

YURI: No.

830

VALYA: Why not?

YURI: Because I know the answer.

VALYA: You're very sure of yourself.

YURI: No, I'm sure of you.

VALYA: You ...! 835

Words fail her, she starts to pull away.

YURI: [stopping her] No, you don't get it.

If I asked if you wanted to see me next week you'd say you didn't know, wouldn't you?

VALYA hesitates.

840

But I know. I'm sure.

VALYA: Of what?

YURI: That I want to see you.

VALYA: And that's enough, is it?

YURI: Isn't it? You don't trust me?

845

VALYA: Why should I trust you?

YURI: Look at me. I'm so sure I want you, Valya. Look, can't you see it in my eyes?

VALYA: Let me see your hands.

He offers them. She looks at them.

850

My mother taught me how to read a man's hands.

[*Studying them*] If there's dirt under the nails the man will bring his working day home to make your nights a misery.

YURI: I'm clean.

VALYA: If the nails are clean but there are cracks in his skin, his working day will 855

- YURI: break him in the end.
 VALYA: Clean and smooth.
 And those are the hands of a thief who lives off the work of others ...
- [*Seeing something.*] What is this? On your skin?
 YURI: What are you seeing?
 VALYA: It's silver. 860
- YURI: Oh, it's from the engines, little flakes of metal.
 VALYA: You clean the engines of the planes?
 YURI: No, no, I stroke them, before I fly. Like horses.
 VALYA: Horses?
 YURI: A jet engine's a tricky thing. You don't know how it might decide to kill you. A wild horse is an easier beast to tame than a MiG landing on a frozen runway. So I always pat the engines before I throw my life into the sky. I ask them to be sweet one more time. It can't hurt, can it? I'm still here, aren't I? [*Sound of a whistle*]. 865
- OFFICER: That's it, Lieutenant! Time's up!
 VALYA: You have to go.
 YURI: No. We've got a moment.
 VALYA: It's cold. Can you smell it, in the air? Snow. Smells like smoke and sugar. There'll be no more dancing on the parade ground after tonight. Just you squaddies stamping up and down, kicking the ice off your boots.
 YURI: Flying officers don't stamp, we walk on air. 870
- So I'll see you next week.
 VALYA: I don't know. I don't know how to be sure.
 YURI: What did your mother say about men with metal hands?
 VALYA: She doesn't know any.
 YURI: Need to make up your own mind then. 875
- LEONOV runs on, waving a radio over his head. He's shouting over the music.*
- LEONOV: Sputnik! Sputnik! Sputnik!
- The music dies away as LEONOV reaches YURI.* 880
- Yuri, it's Sputnik!
- [*Shouting the noise down.*] Listen! Listen!
- Silence. The silvery sound of Sputnik, faint through the radio, growing louder.*
- VALYA: What is it?
 LEONOV: The world's first satellite!
 TITOV: Good heavens, it's up there now. It's above us!
 KOMAROV: Can you see it?
 TITOV: It's too small. It won't be visible to the naked eye.
 LEONOV: There! Look! Shining!
 VALYA: It's a star, a moving star.
 KOMAROV: [pointing] No it's there!
 VALYA: I'm seeing it everywhere. The whole sky's full of moving stars.
 TITOV: It's snow. It's snowing. 895
- Snow starts to fall on their upturned faces.*
- OFFICER: Fall in, men, fall in, it's time.
 KOMAROV: Everyone else is lined up. 900

LEONOV: Yuri, we have to go.

The others move off, still looking up till only YURI and VALYA are left.

YURI: They'll hear it over all of Russia. Over the whole world. The sky is ours.

VALYA: Is it really true?

YURI: I'll bring you a piece of sky, a star to hang round your neck. I'll pick it next time I fly up there.

VALYA: Listen to you. Next you'll tell me that's stardust on your hands.

YURI: No. It's just oil and metal.

905

[Takes her hands.] But the thing about metal ...

910

The thing about metal is, you make it one shape and that's how it'll be. It's true. The only thing that wears metal out is time and it'll last a whole life before that happens.

So what do you want, Valya Goryacheva?

VALYA kisses him.

915

OFFICER: Lieutenant Gagarin!

YURI: Coming, sir!

YURI exits. VALYA exits slowly in the opposite direction, still looking up at the sky.

The following scenes flow into this one, characters from one entering as the previous actor is still exiting.

920

A park, Moscow, continuous.

The snow is falling a little quicker. NATASHA walks through the park, across the stage, a radio in her hands, listening to the sound of Sputnik, watching the sky.

925

The Gulag, Kolyma, continuous. Strong wind.

As NATASHA exits, a GULAG PRISONER crawls onstage, breath rasping. The snow is falling fast and fierce now. The DOCTOR enters, wrapped up against the weather. She has a radio too, the sound of Sputnik is replaced by a patriotic commentary explaining the triumph of Sputnik, it's in Russian, the commentator rousing and excited, the signal is fading in and out. The DOCTOR is trying to get another channel, banging the radio and muttering. She doesn't see the GULAG PRISONER at first.

930

DOCTOR: Come on! Come on! Some music, not this rubbish! I want music. I'll settle for a military band, come on!

935

She sees the GULAG PRISONER.

Where are you going?

Where are you going, come back to the infirmary, you'll die out here.

GULAG PRISONER: Leave me alone ...

DOCTOR: I want to die ... in the clean air ... I don't want ... your medicine ... poison ...
 I don't have any medicine. I just count the dead. Come on, don't die yet.
 Come inside. 940

She pulls at him.

GULAG PRISONER: Bitch.

DOCTOR: Yeah, yeah ... 945

She tries to heave him up. He cries out in pain.

Come on. Come on, you fool! Fight, damn you ...!

She can't lift him.

GULAG PRISONER: I want ... to die ... under ... the open sky ...

She lets him drop. 950

DOCTOR: I'm so sorry. I'm sorry. Why should you stay alive to make me feel better?
 What's your name? What's your name?

The GULAG PRISONER mumbles something indistinct.

That's your prison number. What's your name?

Never mind. Never mind. Think about ... something happy ... something
 warm. Did you love your mother? 955

GULAG PRISONER: Mum ...

DOCTOR: Yes. Can you see her? Where is she?

GULAG PRISONER: My mother ... My mother sat me on ... a red rug ... in the window ... she
 pulled me close ... 960

DOCTOR: That's right. That's right and nothing's going to hurt any more ...

GULAG PRISONER: I could see ... the reflections of the candle flames in the glass. I could
 see ... the candles above in the dark ... a thousand candles ... stars in the
 sky ...

She's got the dose ready to inject him. 965

DOCTOR: It's alright. It'll be warm, it'll be quiet and I'll hold you till you get there.

GULAG PRISONER: She said ... she said ... you can't touch the stars, Pavel ... they're too
 far away ... you'll have to travel miles through the dark to reach them.

DOCTOR: [rolling up his sleeve] Shhhh ...

GULAG PRISONER: And I said ... then I will ... 970

The DOCTOR injects him. The GULAG WORKER stiffens then goes still.

The patriotic voice on the radio rises to a crescendo.

RADIO: Sputnik! Sputnik!

The silvery sound of Sputnik.

The DOCTOR looks up into the falling snow. 975

DOCTOR: Sputnik.

She spits.

End of Act 1.

ACT 2

Scene 1

The DESIGN ENGINEERS' room.

MISHIN, IVANOVSKY and KOROLYOV are watching a piece of archive film.
Patriotic music, interspersed with voice-over.

980

We don't see the film itself.

- MISHIN: Where is this?
 IVANOVSKY: America.
 MISHIN: Yes but where?
 IVANOVSKY: Oh, like you'd know. 985
 KOROLYOV: Florida.
 MISHIN: Florida? Are you sure? It looks very dry.
 ANNOUNCER: '... in the heart of the Florida desert ...'
 KOROLYOV: This is their most recent unmanned prototype. It's still basically the V2, don't you think?
 IVANOVSKY: I don't know. 990
 MISHIN: Do they farm there? It looks too dry. They have a lot of cattle, don't they ... the Americans. I think that land's too dry for cattle.
 IVANOVSKY: I'd say they've changed the fuel.
 KOROLYOV: That's what the intelligence says, but ... 995
 MISHIN: Maybe a different kind of cow. Do you think that's it?
 IVANOVSKY: I don't understand why they've changed the shape.
 MISHIN: They've only put two engines on the thing, so they must have about 120,000 kilo thrust, kerosene oxygen fuel maybe?
 KOROLYOV: This is why he's second in command. 1000
 IVANOVSKY: Oh, is that why?
 MISHIN: Enough to get them into orbit.
 KOROLYOV: Maybe. Let's see.
 IVANOVSKY: Here she goes.
 KOROLYOV: That is an elegant shape, look at that white slender nose ... 1005
 MISHIN: She's wobbling.
 IVANOVSKY: No, she's going up.
 KOROLYOV: Beautiful aristocratic American nose, sniffing out the Moon ...
 MISHIN: Sergei, you already know if they launched successfully, just tell us.
 IVANOVSKY: She's still going up, steady as a piston ... 1010
 MISHIN: I think there's a tremor ... there ... no?
 IVANOVSKY: No ... Maybe ... Oooh!

They all groan in horror and delight.

- MISHIN: Did you see that?
 ANNOUNCER: '... early days for the space programme ...'
 IVANOVSKY: Boom! Look at her burn!
 MISHIN: They can't do it!
 IVANOVSKY: Boom!
 MISHIN: Forget it, forget it, America, spend your money on new cars. You haven't got the rocket engineers to match Oleg and Vassily! 1020
 KOROLYOV: It's old film.
 ANNOUNCER: '... as AMERICA advances into space ...'
 MISHIN: We've beaten them!
 KOROLYOV: Intelligence kept it for months. It's old.

- IVANOVSKY: But we've beaten them. 1025
 KOROLYOV: They're bound to have made some progress since then ...
 MISHIN: But ... !??"
 KOROLYOV: But right now ... *we've beaten them!*
- IVANOVSKY: America is lying in the dirt staring up at our vapour trail! The first man in space is going to be a good Soviet citizen, no question. 1030
 KOROLYOV: Yes!
 Alright. Run it again. Let's work out what they might have done next.
- GELADZE enters. *He salutes.*
- GELADZE: The cosmonauts are ready for your inspection, Comrade Chief Designer. 1035
 KOROLYOV: Yes, yes ...
- GELADZE: In a minute.
 All good boys. Trained and ready ...
- KOROLYOV, MISHIN and IVANOVSKY are ignoring him, absorbed in the film again.
- KOROLYOV: There is something about that nose. Why make it like that? 1040
 GELADZE: One metre seventy-eight tall, as requested, all trained, you'll see ...
- IVANOVSKY: Though we're all puzzling about that one. One metre seventy ...
 It's just vanity. There's no reason. There can't be an aerodynamic benefit at that thrust.
- GELADZE: As Uncle Joe would say, 'Do the work, comrade, and ask the party for the reason ...' 1045
- They all look at him.*
- KOROLYOV: What?
 GELADZE: Our Uncle Joe Stalin would have got the reason out of you, eh?
 KOROLYOV: What are you talking about?
 GELADZE: Why are all the cosmonauts to be under one metre seventy-eight? 1050
- KOROLYOV: And seventy-five kilos?
 GELADZE: To fit in the capsule.
 Of course. Of course.
- [Laughing.] Stupid of me. 1055
- They ignore him again.*
- MISHIN: [re: the film] You see the tremor starts as soon as it's cleared the gantry ...
 GELADZE: Well, you've got a good bunch. They're the right height and they're ready to die.
- KOROLYOV: That won't be required. 1060
 GELADZE: If it is they're ready. They are heroes. Heroes of the Soviet people.
 KOROLYOV: Good.
- GELADZE: I'll be with you in a moment.
 Of course. 'Scuse me, 'scuse me, comrades, getting in your way. You're busy men. Excuse me. 1065

I'll wait for you outside, Comrade Chief Designer.

GELADZE exits.

KOROLYOV: I better get this over with. Tell me what you think when I get back later. Work it out for me.

MISHIN: Heroes of the Soviet people, eh? Is that what you ordered, Sergei? 1070

KOROLYOV: Of course.

MISHIN: Of course you did. Just what we need. More of those.

IVANOVSKY *shushes him, laughing but shocked. They exit.*

The COSMONAUTS' training room.

The COSMONAUTS, LEONOV, KOMAROV, TITOV and YURI, are standing, 1075 waiting, rigidly at attention.

After a few motionless moments, YURI looks at his fellow COSMONAUTS. He looks round.

There's something really hot and metal right beside them. A heating pipe, a piece of equipment, a samovar. YURI reaches out and touches it briefly, looking at the others. He winces in pain at the heat, blowing on his fingers. He touches it again, checking he's got everyone's attention. Snatches his hand off again. 1080

YURI: Five roubles says I last two minutes.

He waits, hand poised expectantly. An uncertain moment then all the 1085 COSMONAUTS break ranks, slapping one hand on the same bit of metal. They hold the hot metal, wincing and gasping in discomfort.

LEONOV breaks first, dancing away, waving his heated fingers.

KOMAROV follows seconds later. YURI and TITOV are still holding it.

LEONOV: Go on, Yuri! 1090

KOMAROV: Titov's steady.

LEONOV: Go on, Yuri!

KOMAROV: Ten roubles on Titov.

LEONOV: You've got him! You've got him! You ...

YURI *lets go.* 1095

Ugh, comrade, what happened?

YURI: Yeah, like you were still in there.

Nice one, Titov.

TITOV is still holding on.

LEONOV: Titov? 1100

KOMAROV: Titov, you've won.

YURI: Look at him!

KOMAROV: Titov, drop it.

YURI: He's going purple, look.

LEONOV: You've won!

KOMAROV: You've won! 1105

YURI: You beat me, man, come on!

TITOV *lets go.*

TITOV: 'Upon the brink of the wild stream
He stood, and dreamt a mighty dream.'

1110

LEONOV: Who did?

TITOV: Pushkin.

KOMAROV: It's a quote.

LEONOV: Right.

YURI *slaps out his damaged hand.*

1115

YURI: Well done!

TITOV *returns the shake with force.*

Ow! Ow!

[*Laughing.*] Alright, you got me again.

TITOV *lets him go.*

1120

Can you still bend your fingers? Hell, that was stupid, they might have us trying out the instrument panel.

TITOV: I used my left hand.

YURI: [to others] See?

He wins again. Can't get past you, can we, Titov?

1125

TITOV: You can try if you like.

YURI *tries to step past TITOV, TITOV blocks him. They move, block, move, block – faster and faster till they are actually wrestling each other.*

GELADZE *enters with KOROLYOV.*

GELADZE: Cosmonauts!

1130

They quickly get back in line, standing to attention.

KOROLYOV: So, here you all are. My little eagles.

Relax. Come on, I'm just going to explain things to you.

GELADZE: At ease.

The COSMONAUTS relax.

1135

KOROLYOV: This is how it works, boys. We're building you a craft to take you out of the Earth's atmosphere.

You're all top pilots but all you have to do is monitor its performance.

As you know we've tested the rocket with dogs. The dogs that orbited and landed again all lived. Some of them did not land.

1140

The DOCTOR enters and stands, watching and listening.

But if I've done my job this one will. Don't worry, boys. I'm good at my job.

So we've tested our design. You'll get a chance to sit in the capsule in a moment.

YURI *starts to take off his shoes.*

1145

You'll see it is a simple practical structure. I can show you the blueprints so you understand everything. We design the parts. We send the designs to the factory. They send us back the parts. We fit them together. Simple. Like building a tractor or one of your MiGs we ...

Sees YURI.

1150

What are you doing, comrade?

GELADZE:

Lieutenant Gagarin, get up, what are you doing?

YURI:

You said we were going to get in the capsule, comrade. So I thought ...

KOROLYOV:

What?

YURI:

Well ... we've got to take our shoes off, comrade ... it's only polite ...

GELADZE:

You brainless excuse for a flying officer, Gagarin! What do you think you're going to do, fly the designer's machine in your socks?

KOROLYOV:

He's thinking about keeping the farm dirt off the floor.

1155

[*To YURI.*] Is that it?

You'd take your shoes off before you went in your uncle's house, wouldn't you, Gagarin? 1160

YURI:

Of course.

KOROLYOV:

Good for you, farm boy.

The other COSMONAUTS look at each other then drop and start pulling off their boots. KOROLYOV talks to YURI over this.

1165

Where are you from?

YURI:

Smolensk.

KOROLYOV:

A farmer's boy from Smolensk. Of course. I've heard they're all thieves in Smolensk, what do you say?

YURI:

It's a hard life farming that earth. If you're not born into luck maybe you need to steal some.

KOROLYOV:

So you're all thieves?

YURI:

We're all lucky.

KOROLYOV:

And how far do you think your luck will get you here? You'll have to learn something here, Lieutenant.

1170

1175

[*To all of them.*] We can't tell you everything in one day. We're going to prepare classes so you can learn the system thoroughly. You'll attend lectures and then we'll set you some exams.

YURI *has raised his hand.*

Yes?

1180

YURI:

Will you be marking us, Comrade Chief Designer?

KOROLYOV:

Yes and I'll throw you out! Stop smiling! What are you smiling at, you featherless sparrow!?

He waits, face close to YURI. YURI keeps his eyes front. Face blank.

Alright.

1185

Alright, go through, little eagles. My boys and girls will get you ready.

The COSMONAUTS exit carrying their boots.

One of those boys is going to see beyond the edges of the world.

Lieutenant Gagarin is the perfect proletarian candidate.

Is he?

1190

GELADZE: A tractor driver's son ...

[Showing KOROLYOV.] You see I've kept extensive notes on all the cosmonauts ... see here, Gagarin ... honourable proletarian background ... good performance in all tests ... you see? Here and ... here ...

KOROLYOV: He's good but he's not the best, is he?

1195

GELADZE: Well, in a sense, comrade, he is the best because he ...

KOROLYOV: [interrupts, pointing] Here ... and here ... and here ... Titov ... first ... best performance, first, first, best, best ...

Beat.

GELADZE: Titov. Of course. Of course. An able candidate. But Gagarin is my 1200 recommendation.

KOROLYOV: Well ... I'll consider your recommendation.

GELADZE: I am responsible for the military personnel, comrade. As Uncle Joe would say, each man has only one part to play in the revolution so play it well.

KOROLYOV starts to leave.

1205

If I could make another suggestion, comrade?

KOROLYOV: Yes?

GELADZE: Your team ... at their current rate of progress the launch will be delayed.

KOROLYOV: It might.

GELADZE: Then they should sleep less.

1210

KOROLYOV: What?

GELADZE: Men can work quite efficiently with six hours' sleep in every forty-eight. That's been proven in combat.

KOROLYOV: Has it?

GELADZE: I've witnessed it myself.

1215

KOROLYOV: Well. Thank you for sharing your valuable experience, comrade. However, I'm responsible for the timetable my team work to, or I was last time I checked.

GELADZE: Of course, of course, comrade, stupid of me ...

What are the chances of success, Comrade Chief Designer?

Pause.

1220

KOROLYOV: Fifty-fifty.

GELADZE: That's good. Yes.

KOROLYOV: Good enough to try? Yes. I hope so.

KOROLYOV is exiting. He sees the DOCTOR. He stops dead, staring at her.

DOCTOR: Shall I set up the next tests, General?

1225

GELADZE: Yes. They'll be back with you shortly.

KOROLYOV *is still staring at the DOCTOR.*

Comrade Chief Designer?

GELADZE *exits.*

Scene 2 (abridged)

- KOROLYOV: I know you ... don't I? 1230
 DOCTOR: Do you?
 KOROLYOV: Yes. Yes.
- It's you.
 DOCTOR: Is it?
 KOROLYOV: Yes. 1235
 DOCTOR: I doubt it. I doubt I'm who you think I am.
 KOROLYOV: No. No it is you! I'm certain.
 DOCTOR: If you say so. You look well, Sergei Pavlovich.
 KOROLYOV: I am well.
 DOCTOR: You look happy. 1240
 KOROLYOV: I am happy. You on the other hand look as miserable as a toothless cat in a bucket of fish.
 DOCTOR: I did twenty years in the Gulag, Sergei, long years, war years, you only had to suffer five. No. I don't think I'm who you think I am any more.
 KOROLYOV: I'll do what I can. 1245
 DOCTOR: Who for?
 KOROLYOV: For you.
 DOCTOR: I was promised an apartment.
 KOROLYOV: Alright ... Alright, I'll look into it.
 DOCTOR: Three rooms. 1250
 KOROLYOV: No one gets three rooms.
 DOCTOR: Not even if they've saved the life of the chief designer?
 KOROLYOV: And how many did you kill?
 DOCTOR: Don't you talk to me about death. Don't you dare talk to me about death, Sergei Pavlovich! 1255
 I have an army whispering at my back and they're all saying the same thing. 'Why is he breathing when we're not? Why is he sucking our air into his lungs? Who is he? Who is he?'
- KOROLYOV: I'm your boss and you'll be reassigned.
 DOCTOR: I answer to the medical team. They answer to General Geladze. What's the matter, Sergei? You worried I'll kill one of your precious eagle chicks before you do? 1260
 Have you decided who you're sending up first?
 KOROLYOV *doesn't answer.*
- DOCTOR: Well, they're in great condition. They're all superb pilots. They all have regular bowel movements and great shoulders. Flip a coin. 1265
 KOROLYOV: I'm not sending anyone up there to get killed.
 DOCTOR: Can you be certain they won't? Life and death, Comrade Chief Designer.
 How does it feel? How will you choose?
 KOROLYOV: I'll send a lucky man. 1270

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