The space programme
(el lanzamiento)

A large wooden crate measuring some three metres by three metres arrived at Alqueria's border with Spain. Addressed to Antonio Poyato and with a custom's declaration stating 'one pair of dress cufflinks, value £13.50'. The 'From' label read 'East Anglian Aviation Museum, Suffolk, UK'.

Since Poyato accidentally discovered the incredible burn rate of his Remitroot Liquor, losing his eyebrows in the process he had searched for an application. The idea of using it as rocket fuel occurred to him while at the Bar La Casa Devante and partially intoxicated. It's amazing the inspiration one gets while in this state.

The contents of the crate were spread over the floor of Poyato's patio. A bewildering array of tubes, valves, piping and aerodynamic fins. The instructions however were in English. 'Thank you for purchasing the Bristol Bloodhound anti-aircraft missile, correctly assembled it will bring hours of fun and pleasure'. Read Blythe Gruntmore as he thumbed through the manual. It was an old museum exhibit bought cheap by Poyato after the Museum closed. The British MOD had commandeered everything else that could fly to create the impression it was investing heavily in the country's armed forces.

Blythe Gruntmore worked solidly for three days and nights assembling the missile. Eating countless sausage sandwiches and unfortunately consuming gallons of Newcastle Brown Ale he worked on. His first attempt looked rather like a garden shed with wings. Poyato turned the assembly drawings the right way up, confiscated his Brown Ale and set him to work again.

The completed missile pointed skyward at last, finished just as Gruntmore collapsed from exhaustion and Brown Ale withdrawal. It was a splendid contraption all tubes, guidance fins and nose cones. The whole village turned out to see it. Very few comprehended its use however, some thinking it was the new septic tank promised by the sanitary department.

Poyato spent the next week pumping Remitroot Liquor into the missile's boosters. A car battery and a light switch formed the basis of the ignition system. Manuela, being Minister of Culture prepared a scroll with a message addressed to 'Whom it may concern'. This was placed in the nose cone. The actual message was known only to Manuela however.

When launch day arrived and after the usual pompous speeches the count-down began. Rodriquez shouted the diminishing count aloud to all. Poyato who hated the obese Rodriquez launched the missile when the count was still at '5'.

With a tremendous roar the Bloodhound took off covering the whole village with a cloud of Remitroot vapour. Highly intoxicating and as the only true aphrodisiac the population spent the next three days engaged in activities worthy of Tiberius himself.

Where the Bloodhound went is a mystery as is Manuela's message secured in the nose cone. The content of the message and of any alien response is perhaps something we shouldn't ponder on for too long.