

## **Who, When, Wow! Mystery Edition**

### **The Wow Signal**

**Carly.** Psst! Hey! It's me Carly Q! You ever think about what it would be like to make contact with another species that grew up on another planet? In a different galaxy? With no tablets, no videogames, no key lime pie?! What would that even be like? Well, we haven't made contact with aliens yet but forty years ago, we thought we had! Confused? So was I, but fear not dear listener all will be revealed in this week's intergalactic episode. I'm Carly Q and this is Who, When, Wow Mystery edition.

(THEME SONG)

**Carly.** I got into the office pretty early on Monday morning, 8:59am.

**Linda.** Carly! You're in early.

**Carly in the background.** Sorry Linda, no time to chat!

**Linda.** There's never time to chat.

**Carly.** I wanted to head to the breakroom before getting stuck into my usual event cataloguing. Odie and I had both been watching a new show called 'True Alien Hamsters' and the season finale had just dropped the night before. There was much to discuss, and not much time. I was almost at the break room when all of a sudden I was stopped in my tracks by none other, than Lewis.

**Lewis.** Carly Q! Did you get my email?

**Carly.** What email?

**Lewis.** The one about updating the OS on your desktop.

**Carly.** Sure.

**Lewis.** And have you?

**Carly.** Have I what?

**Lewis.** Updated your OS?

**Carly.** Probably.

**Lewis.** Carly, are you even listening to me?

**Carly.** Yeah yeah yeah. It's just that last night was the season finale of First Contact and I need to,

**Lewis.** Whatever Carly Q, just update your OS. All the details are in the email. Read it carefully.

**Carly.** Can do.

(Soundbite of Carly walking away from the conversation.)

**Lewis.** It's very important!

**Carly.** Yeah. Got it! I raced to the break room but I was too late. Odie had left a note.

**Odie.** Dear Carly Q, I waited for you. But then I left. I had a elevator inspection I could not be late for. We will talk at lunch. With warm regards, Odie.

back to normal

**Carly.** Warm regards? Ah mumblecrust. So I headed down to the basement to get started with my day.

(Soundbite of elevator door closing.)

**Carly.** Okay, username: CarlyQ. Password: sliceofP13. I'm a password genius. I should start a business. Need a password? Take a password. Okay, Email. Subject: Super very ultra important. Huh, wasn't Lewis saying something about an email this morning? Let's see, what does it say?

(Soundbite of typing.)

**Carly.** Blah, make sure that desktop is up to date with OS? What in the name of pie is "OS"? Office Safe? I took the wheels off my desk last week after the downhill desk race, so I am pretty sure it's office safe now. Just as I was trying to dissect Lewis' cryptic email, a Time Sealed event landed on my desk.

(Soundbite of thumbdrive comes down vacuum tube.)

**Carly.** Well well well, what do we have here? I plugged the time sealed event into my computer and waited for it to load.

**Audio File.** Event: First (BEEP) contact with (BEEP) Alien (BEEP) WOW signal - 1977 - Ohio State University-(BEEP)

**Carly.** (big gasp) Alien. Contact?! Alien Contact. Odie is not going to believe this! I couldn't contain my excitement. There were still 2 hours until lunch, but lucky for me I found a another project to keep me occupied until then.

**Carly in the background.** OW! Man, these desk corners are sharp. Maybe that's what Lewis was talking about in his Office Safe email? Hm. Now where did I put my belt sander?

(Soundbite of power tool)

**Carly.** After a good few hours of sanding I was convinced that my desk was now Office Safe, which meant I could finally get onto my investigation into the Wow Signal. It also meant that I finally got a chance to talk to Odie about the series finale of First Contact. Odie!

**Odie.** Basement companion. What happened this morning? I waited for you in the break room for two whole minutes.

**Carly.** Yeah sorry about that. Lewis had some very important information he had to share.

**Odie.** I bet he did.

**Carly.** But I'm here now!

**Odie.** So we can finally talk about the show? True Alien Hamsters?

**Carly.** I've got something even better. Check this out! First Contact IRL!

**Odie.** Carly Q. It seems to me that every second adventure is about proof of alien life and every time you end up being disappointed.

**Carly.** Yes, but this one actually COULD be the real deal Odie. Look it says it right there, First Contact with Aliens.

**Odie.** Actually basement companion it says First (Bleep) contact with aliens.

**Carly.** How did you make that sound with your mouth?

**Odie.** Don't worry about it. Just remember always look close before you leap far.

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

**Carly.** You know I'm actually not that into leaping. Skipping is more my jam.

**Odie.** I'm saying is that if you don't pay attention,

**Carly.** Sorry what? I was distracted by that frog sticker on the time elevator. Is that new? I'm pretty sure that's new.

**Odie.** Case and point.

**Carly.** Don't worry Odie. I have a good feeling about this one.

**Odie.** No Lewis or little rat with you today?

**Carly.** Nope. Lewis is busy enforcing Office Safety, and Nibbles has to study.

**Odie.** What is she studying?

**Carly.** Forensic psychology.

**Odie.** Nice. Now.

**Carly.** Don't change the past. Be back by lunch.

**Odie.** Well it's good to see that you listen SOMETIMES. OK, Hold on tight. May the force be with you.

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises then loud thud.)

**Carly.** So this is THE Ohio State University! 1977. Ooof. Woah. It's very crowded here. Obviously a very busy day on campus.

(Soundbite of crowd and Carly getting bumped by someone.)

**Carly.** Sorry, didn't see you. Hey pal! I am standing here! Oof! Excuse me! Can anyone tell me where I can find the aliens?

**Random person.** Oh, we don't play the Aliens again until next year man!

**Carly.** Not the Aliens the sports team! I meant the aliens as in the,

(Soundbite of Carly being bumped again.)

**Carly.** Gah! Help! I'm being swallowed up in a crowd of college football faaaaaans.

**Ross.** Op, I got yah.

**Carly.** (panting) Thank you stranger.

**Ross.** Not a problem, you gotta be careful round here on game day. You stand to close to the horseshoe there and it'll suck you right in.

**Carly.** The horseshoe?

**Ross.** The football stadium.

**Carly.** Oh right. Sports.

**Ross.** Are you a student here?

**Carly.** Oh yes. I am a student. A fresh woman to be exact. Uh Carly's my name and I'm looking for the astronomy department I guess? You got any telescopes around here?

**Ross.** Oh boy do we! Ross Fenton, Professor of Astronomy. I'm actually on my way over to the big ear telescope now if you'd like to join me.

**Carly.** Well that is extremely convenient for me. I would love to join you.

**Ross.** Great! Follow me.

(Soundbite of crowd noises.)

**Carly.** Honestly this is the real sporting event. How do we get through this crowd? I'm not keeping you from all of the football stuff am I?

**Ross.** Nah. Never really got into it. My eyes have always been transfixed on the night sky.

**Carly.** Ah-ha! A fellow science geek! Hi-five! Assuming that has been invented in 1977.

**Ross.** Nice to know I'm in good company. Look up there. The Big Ear Telescope.

**Carly.** Big Ear Telescope? What is it named after the school elephant or something?

**Ross.** Not exactly, turns out this is a very special kind of telescope, it doesn't look out into the universe taking photos and what not. This telescope listens.

**Carly.** Listens?

**Ross.** Yes, turns out the universe is a very noisy place! Step right through here.

(Soundbite of door opening.)

**Nancy.** Hi Ross! Congrats on the big discovery man!

**Ross.** Thanks Nancy!

**Carly.** Big discovery?

**Ross.** Yeah, Fellow researcher Jerry Ehman and I picked something up on the telescope the other day that has some folks in here excited.

**Sam.** Big R! Good work on that radio signal, dude.

**Ross.** Thanks Sam.

**Carly.** So what is this big discovery professor?

**Ross.** Well we haven't gone public with it yet but, ah, what the heck. Carly, sit down here for minute.

**Carly.** Okay.

**Ross.** We think that we have discovered a radio signal that finally proves something that humankind has been trying to prove for centuries!

**Carly.** That pie is better than cake?

**Ross.** Uh, no. But that's an interesting take!

**Carly.** Tell me I'm wrong.

**Ross.** Um. Maybe later. We're so excited here because we now finally have undeniable proof of alien life!

**Carly.** Undeniable PROOF?! Can I see it!?

**Ross.** Uh, sure. It's just over here on my desk. Somewhere.

(Soundbite of shuffling papers on desk.)

**Carly.** I was so excited, I was afraid I might explode... PROOF of alien life? Could this really be happening?

**Ross.** Ah found it. Here you go!

**Carly.** Uh, what is this?

**Ross.** The proof!

**Carly.** This just looks like a bunch of numbers on a page? Where's the spaceship? Where's the little green men?

**Ross.** Well it's unlikely that we'd get any images from the Big Ear. After all it is a radio telescope.

**Carly.** A radio telescope? You mean like the radio in my car.

**Ross.** Sort of, remember, I was telling you that this telescope LISTENS to the universe.

**Carly.** Oh yeah! Hence the Big Ear Telescope?

**Ross.** Exactly! So just like the radio in your car which picks up waves being sent out by your local radio station. This telescope listens out for radio waves from deep space.

**Carly.** Dang. Talk about being a active listener. But that doesn't explain why I'm juts looking at a bunch of numbers on a piece of paper.

**Ross.** Well, this is that radio wave written out in numbers! And you see these numbers that Jerry circled here.

**Carly.** Yeah?

**Ross.** That is a very weird radio wave. My hypothesis is that this could ONLY have been created by alien technology.

**Carly.** Woooooooooah ... FIRST CONTACT! First contact with ALIENS!

**Ross.** EXACTLY!

**Carly.** This is amazing! What kind of alien did they send? Alien jazz? Alien Hip Hop? Alien Sports Talk?

**Ross.** It's just a wave. But I'm very excited about it. We plan to publish next week.

**Carly.** What's this next to the numbers?

**Ross.** Oh that's Jerry's terrible handwriting, it says WOW. He wrote it down there right after we found the signal. Guess he got a little carried away.

**Carly.** The Wow signal! More like the Who, When, Wow signal. Aye oh.

**Ross.** What?

**Carly.** Nothing.

**Sam.** Hey Ross, can you come take a look at this for a second

**Ross.** Yeah! Excuse me for one second Carly Q.

**Carly.** Wow. Actual proof of alien life, in my hands! Gaaahh!

**H-Dad.** Additional information found!

**Carly.** H-Dad? I didn't even realize you were on.

**H-dad.** I'm always on! Always listening! Always ... listening.

**Carly.** Uh I think it's time for some new batteries.

**H-dad.** Additional information found!

**Carly.** Additional information on The Wow Signal?

**H-dad.** Correct! check-mark emoji, thumbs up emoji, smiling emoji.

**Carly.** Ugh, Ok, fine! You can't let me have one moment of excitement before you come in with your facts and your logic huh? Okay H-Dad, let me have it!

**H-dad.** The radio wave known as - WOW signal was discovered in 1977 was thought to be the strongest evidence for extra terrestrial life until,

**Carly.** Oh no, no, no, don't say until!

**H-dad.** Until 2017 when it was discovered that this radio signal may have been the result of a comet passing in front of the telescope and not actually alien life.

**Carly.** Ugh H-dad if you are going to ruin my life this way, you need to explain yourself.

**H-dad.** Explaining! Book Emoji, glasses emoji, magnifying glass emoji! Background information - Two comets scientifically known as 266P/Christensen and 335P/Gibbs are surrounded by clouds of hydrogen.

**Carly.** So?

**H-dad.** Hydrogen naturally gives off the same radio frequency that was found in the WOW Signal.

**Carly.** Oh no. I see where this is going.

**H-dad.** Those comets were in the vicinity of where the Big Ear telescope was looking back in 1977.

**Carly.** So this Wow signal might not be alien communication? It was probably just the hydrogen gas from these comets?

**H-dad.** Correct! Exclamation emoji!

**Carly.** Ah mummbblecrust. Odie's gonna be so smug about this.

**Ross.** Sorry about that. Sam just wanted to go through a few things on our Wow Signal News announcement. We're all pretty excited around here.

**Carly.** Yeah, uh about that Ross.

**Ross.** What is it?

**H-dad.** Danger Risk of revealing time sensitive information imminent. X-ray on the Up Stay. Okay eh?

**Carly.** Nothing, just wanted to wish you good luck with everything.

**Ross.** Oh thanks. Are you leaving?

**Carly.** Yeah, I just got a text from my friend who's at the game.

**Ross.** What's text?

**Carly.** Uh don't worry about it. It was really nice meeting you!

**Ross.** Very nice to meet you too Carly.

**Carly in the background.** Odie was right. Odie was right. H-dad, I can handle the truth.

(Soundbite of door opening and crowd noises.)

**Carly.** Wow, that was a fast game. I better get outta here before I get stampeded by Ohio State fans again.



(Soundbite of the crowds get louder. )

**Carly.** Here they come. Where did I leave that Time Elevator? Ah here it is! And just in the nick of time. Go Buckkeyess!

(Soundbite of elevator travel noises then Ding.)

**Odie.** Welcome back basement companion. Did you go to any fraternity parties?

**Carly.** Sadly no.

**Odie.** So, what happened?

**Carly.** Well everything seemed to be pointing towards an alien radio signal from outer space.

**Odie.** But then?

**Carly.** But then H-dad informed me that it probably wasn't alien radio signals but just hydrogen gas clouds following a couple of comets that were in the same area at the time.

**Odie.** Ugh. Such an easy mistake to make! If I had a nickel for every time I confused a hydrogen cloud with, actually, nevermind.

**Carly.** Okay. Uh but yeah I am kinda bummed. I got so excited about alien contact at first. Maybe I shouldn't have let myself get so carried away.

(Soundbite of wind chimes.)

**Odie.** Always look close before you leap far.

**Carly.** Oh that's what you meant about listening closely before jumping to conclusions.

**Odie.** Ah you were listening.

**Carly.** And you know what's ironic? The Big Ear Telescope where they made the discovery is probably one of the best listening devices on the planet.

**Odie.** Im sorry did you say something?

**Carly.** Oh, she's got jokes.

**Odie.** That is ironic. See you later basement companion.

**Carly.** See you Odie.

(Soundbite of at her desk typing away.)

**Carly.** Well, it turns out that we STILL haven't made contact with aliens, although I do hold out hope for the future still. But I learned an important lesson today, double check your findings and listen carefully, even if you have one of the greatest listening devices known to man.

(Soundbite of typing.)

**Carly.** Dear Lewis, you'll be happy to know that I have updated my desk to be as safe as can be. No wheels or sharp corners anywhere! You're very welcome! Carly Q.

(Soundbite of email sending Swoosh.)

**Lewis.** Carly Q.

**Carly.** Lewis! Why do you always sneak up on me like that? I just sent you an email.

**Lewis.** I came to find out why you STILL haven't updated the OS on your desktop.

**Carly.** Ex-squeeze me? Look at how smooth these corners are now. It's completely office safe!

**Lewis.** Office safe? What are you talking about?

**Carly.** Uhhhh, the email you sent out? Our conversation this morning? You said my desktop has to be "OS".

**Lewis.** No. I said you had to update your OS, your Operating System! IT has been bugging me for weeks to get everyone upgraded and you're the last one.

**Carly.** Ooooooh. OS. Operating System! That makes a lot more sense. Like I said super important to listen carefully.

**Lewis.** Can you please do it this afternoon?

**Carly.** You got it chief.

**Lewis.** And clean up this sawdust, it's a health hazard.

**Carly.** Lewis, relax. I will clean it up. So, another mystery solved or debunked. Or whatever. It's always satisfying to get to the truth, even if it's disappointing, you know what I mean? It's not always easy, but if you listen carefully, *really* listen, sometimes you can avoid making mistakes or jumping to conclusions. But you know all about being a good listener, don't you listener? I'll have another exciting mystery for you to listen to next week. Until then, I'm Carly Q and remember you never heard this.