

The Newcomers



The Newcomers by J. Andrew & William H. Keith Jr.

This folio adventure is designed for characters of almost any background attached to the Trade Pioneer Team aboard the Type A2 Far Trader Sootian Huntress. The referee may draw characters from any source desired, including existing campaigns. It is urged that characters have some skill in ground combat.

No specific TRAVELLER books, adventures, or supplements are required to play this adventure; the basic TRAVELLER set (books 1, 2, and 3) is sufficient. However, almost any of the additional materials available for use with TRAVELLER can be of value in enhancing the enjoyment of this situation. For example, deck plans of several ships that appear in this adventure can be obtained from GDW's Supplement 7, *Traders and Gunboats*.

Approved For Use With

TRAVELLER.

Science-Fiction Adventure in
the Far Future

Marschal

Adventures

W.H. Keith Jr.



New Comers

Background: For the trade team stranded on Storm, the passing of weeks has gone almost unnoticed, lost in the intense excitement and hard work of cementing relations with the natives within the enormous refrigerated complex known to the travellers as "the Citadel." The H'Oskhikhil have been thoroughly introduced to the concepts of computer technology, and are most interested. Blessed with an innate ability to do very rapid mental calculations, the race has never been pressed to develop the basic computer technology usually needed for a civilization like theirs; "organic computers" were the rule instead. Now, however, the Scotian Huntress party has been able to show the many advantages of using computers - not only in their functions as sophisticated calculators, but as devices which can regulate equipment, store information, and otherwise improve the basic abilities of the H'Oskhikhil calculators. Dealings had, in fact, progressed to the point where trade - computer components and software exchanged for the radioactive elements so common on Storm - was ready to begin in earnest.

Then came a crisis.

A new market can't be concealed forever. Though knowledge of Storm had been carefully shrouded before the beginning of the voyage of the Scotian Huntress, the facts were bound to leak out eventually. And representatives of other firms were bound to turn up sooner or later, to challenge the Caledon monopoly.

Unfortunately, the firm that came to Storm after the Scotian Huntress consisted of employees of Carillines, Ltd. Carillines was ruthless, aggressive, and well known for its determination to turn a profit, no matter what it cost others. Sometimes little better than legalized pirates, the Carillines thrived in the loose political structure of Reaver's Deep sector. And they found Storm, arriving while the Caledon team was still engaged in negotiations.

Linked by land-line communications, the population at the Citadel received reports from other refuges near other cities on Storm. When the Carillines ship landed near a city 200 km northwest of the Citadel, new reports began to come in on the activities of the newcomers. The new arrivals spread out to explore the ruins of the city; they plainly became convinced that conditions were ripe, in the wake of a catastrophe, to pick up loot and plunder indiscriminately. Their ruthlessness made the depredations of the juvenile H'Oskhikhil look harmless by comparison. When juveniles appeared, they were slaughtered without mercy, and pursued when driven off. It seemed that the leader of the Carillines expedition believed that no civilization remained to trade with. So no efforts were made to study the world, the artifacts which were found, or the native life. Instead, looting and destruction seemed the main task of the entire group of Carillines crewmen.

For a time, the actions of the newcomers could be looked upon as unfortunate, but not really harmful. But when they decided to investigate the local refuge, the plunderers went too far. No entrance was obvious; therefore, they made their own with lasers mounted aboard a launch. The result was a disaster. Many adult H'Oskhikhil perished in the initial invasion, while the rest were doomed by the destruction of the refrigeration units that kept them from suffering the reproduction cycle. Through it all, the humans acted without thought, without apparent understanding of the situation. When the refuge was attacked, the transmissions quit. But everyone in the Citadel knew well enough what had happened. And many couldn't help but become suspicious of the humans they had welcomed into their own midst.

Opinion was split within the Citadel. Many H'Oskhikhil were convinced that the humans from the Scotian Huntress were friends. These individuals gave the team a warning of what could come of the crisis... and a way to avert it. It was quite possible that the humans would be expelled, or worse, killed out of hand as a safeguard, or in reprisal - unless dramatic proof were offered of the humans' good intentions and their lack of connection with the newcomers. If, for instance, the Carillines crew were subdued...

So, thanks to the thoughtlessness of other humans, the Scotian Huntress trade team was caught in an unusual dilemma. Without proof of their goodwill - proof that could only come from an attack on the larger, better-armed party from Carillines - they were in great danger. They could lose the friendship of a freshly contacted race... the new market opened after such hardship and difficulty... and, indeed, their very lives.

Background Briefing

In the folio adventure "*Periastron*," the team of trade pioneers aboard the Far Trader Scotian Huntress was forced by events to seek help from the enigmatic natives of the planet Storm, a dangerous, inhospitable world on which the Huntress had crashed. Fighting the elements and bands of hostile savages, the adventurers ultimately took refuge in an underground complex built by the civilization they sought.

Outside, Storm's violent summer continues unabated. But though it is now over 50°C outside, inside the complex the temperature remains at a cool 10° or less. Thus the adventurers no longer need worry about straining their overworked environmental gear in the grueling heat of the planet's periastron passage. Repairs to the Scotian Huntress have been delayed by the conditions outside, but can be resumed at leisure. In the meantime, the trade team has settled down to the job it came to do in the first place - opening up full commercial relations with the natives.

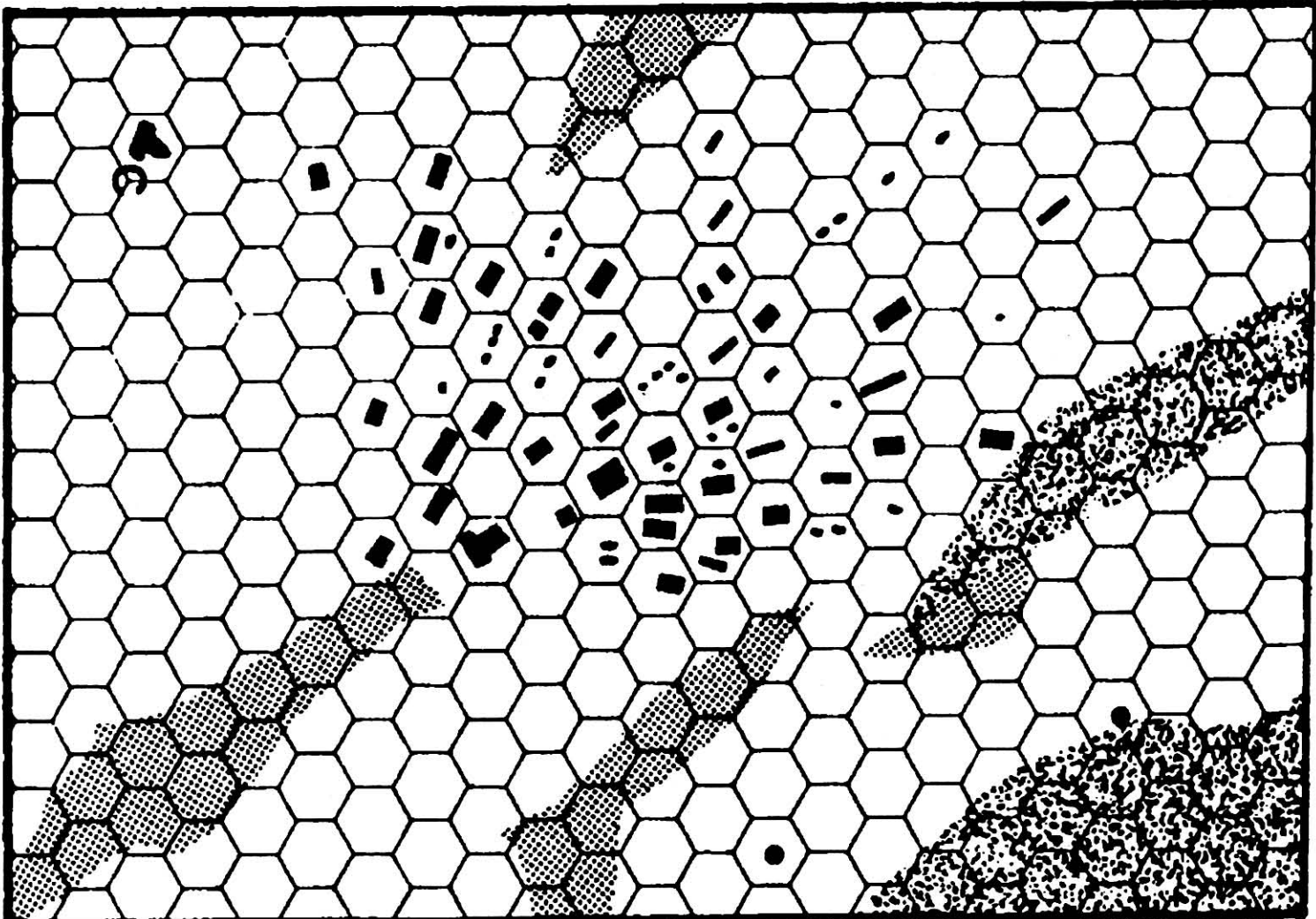
After several days of intensive effort with computer language translators and similar learning aids, communications with Storm's inhabitants began to open up. They are flat, disc-like beings .5 meters tall but nearly 1.5 meters in diameter. They have achieved a fairly sophisticated Tech Level 8 civilization... though it is radically unlike those of the mainstream cultures the Scotian Huntress crew is familiar with. Computers and other microelectronics systems are unknown; even communications technology is far below par, a result of high interference generated by the active star the world circles. But all in all, there are many points of contact between the two cultures, and it is plain to all that the H'Oskhikhil (as they call themselves) seem quite likely to be excellent partners for the team's employers, Caledon Ventures, in future mercantile relations.

The scientists with the team have taken the opportunity to learn a great deal about the life cycle of Storm's inhabitants. With a hot, young star and a wildly eccentric orbit, Storm spends a period of over five hundred years in the cold phase of its long journey in orbit. Conditions are reasonably stable, but bitterly cold; only an unusual amount of volcanism and internal heat keep the temperature warm enough to sustain water-based life, and that only for forms which can adapt readily to underground life for the period of apiastron. At the end of this period, though, comes the short but incredibly violent "summer," when the world passes close to the star and suffers from the massive environmental upheavals of periastron. No life can adapt to both phases of the world's orbit without massive adjustments. Thus the life forms on Storm were forced to change drastically each time the cycle rolled around.

The cycle has brought about an interesting adaptation. The coming of the hot phase triggers the reproductive mechanism in most of the world's life. Several buds are produced in each life form, which consume the parent animal and emerge as a radically different juvenile stage. These offspring then undergo a short period of rapid growth and development - marked primarily by voracious appetites - which ends only as the dropping temperature after periastron triggers a metabolic change. After a metamorphosis period, the adult form is ready to emerge into the cooling world. This life cycle gives rise to great longevity, one of the main attributes of Storm's varied animal life.






Conditions on Storm hampered the development of civilization there, but several factors overcame the influences against it. First, the long lifespans of the H'Oskhikhil and their generally superior intelligence have made each generation capable of quick development and growth. More importantly, though, was the race's discovery of its own cyclic nature. A few individuals could survive periastron by living in cool polar caves, for example, though survival was a hit or miss affair. Eventually, it became possible to transmit knowledge accumulated by one generation to the emerging population of the next one. Gradually, the H'Oskhikhil learned to build places of refuge that could survive from one generation to the next. A few of the most intelligent of the race, together with records of civilization and knowledge, could thus be guaranteed the chance to help the next generation start ahead of the last one.

Long-lived, extremely intelligent, and dedicated to peace and learning, the inhabitants of Storm seem the ideal find for the trade team. But the coming of humans to Storm proves a mixed blessing; the natives are soon given reasons for regretting their hospitality. When this happens, the trade team finds that it stands to lose more than just a new market and a commission check...



Carelline Landing Site

Map Key

-  Impassable Terrain
-  Rough Terrain
-  Buildings
-  Tunnel Exit
-  Carelline Landing Site

Referee's Notes

Resources: The referee may designate the contents of the ship's locker from the Scotian Huntress on hand at the Citadel (in an ongoing campaign, this may already be known). Equipment and weaponry should be limited somewhat, and depend largely on the referee's judgment of the best balance to strike between the difficulty of the situation and the size and abilities of the group. All characters should be armed, though the quality of weapons or the quantity of ammunition may be curtailed somewhat to keep the group from indulging in indiscriminate attacks.

Transport to the area in which the Carillines ship has landed is limited. The Scotian Huntress can fly, but has limited endurance due to breakdowns (still under repair) in the life support systems. The ship's air/raft has been cannibalized for parts; if it is still flying at all, it is very much restricted. The H'Oskhikhil have remote-controlled air/rafts (see: "Periastron"), but these are limited in range by the poor quality of radio signals in the presence of the energetic star... and by the fierce storms that can ground or destroy grav vehicles during the summer season. The same storms make it impractical to handle native air/rafts directly, though a character with grav vehicle-4 can pilot such an alien vehicle as if his skill were grav vehicle-1.

The best means of transportation available is an underground transportation system which connects the refugees with one another. A ground car can carry the party to a point near the destroyed refuge, where a break in the tunnel (made during the attack) disrupts further movement. The party upon their arrival at the new city may use either of the two tunnel exits shown on the map.

The Carillines Party: The opposition is divided into two groups. the smaller of these is on board the main Carillines ship, a 400 ton "far trader" (the subsidized merchant vessel is described in TRAVELLER Book 2). This party consists of four individuals, who will be found either aboard or in the immediate vicinity of the ship. If an alarm is given as a result of the player-character actions or attacks, the ship party will withdraw to the defense of its vessel. It is very unlikely that the adventurers will be able to gain access to the ship with weapons normally available, once the alarm is given. The ship is armed, carrying two dual laser turrets plus sandcasters. The site of the merchant ship is marked on the map; if the ship lifts off, the referee should keep track of any movements it may make.

The larger party crews the launch, an armed auxiliary equipped with a beam laser. The party contains eight people, who may be on board or operating on the ground nearby. The referee may secretly choose a location for the launch at the adventure's start; it may, however, move from this location as a result of event table directions.

Both groups should be armed and equipped as the referee sees fit; on the whole, they will be better outfitted than the Caledon team. Exact equipment should be selected by the referee for maximum balance and playability.

Conditions: The unpleasantly high temperatures and the ozone content of Storm's summertime atmosphere make vacc suits an absolute necessity for humans travelling outside. Violent storms and other natural hazards will be a great danger for adventurers and their opponents; the event table regulates the occurrence of these. The referee should feel free, however, to add further dangers to overcome. On Storm, the elements are the single worst danger to unwary adventurers.

Natives: Native encounters are governed by the event table. Natives are hot-phase juveniles, tall, tubular, with four arms, four legs, and large appetites. They generally carry torches, clubs, spears, and other makeshift, primitive weapons and tools. A total of 1d x 10 may be encountered at any one time. They always attack when encountered, and make no distinction between one side or another. A native attack breaks off when half or more are killed from the ranks of any given group. If a human is captured or killed, he will be eaten as soon as possible. Stats for the natives, for those who have not been following this sequence of folio adventures are:

Weight - 100 kg.

Hits - 20/9.

Armor none.

Wounds & weapons - by weapon type (club, crude spear, or rock). AOF052.

Event Table

Roll Two Dice Once Each Half-Hour

2 Lightning: Fierce flashes of lightning begin. A character caught in the open must roll his dexterity or less to take cover. Failure to make the throw results in 8d damage. No ships may fly during a lightning storm.

3 Natives: See Natives rule.

4 No Event

5 Storm: Visibility drops to medium range. All stats of individuals caught in the open are reduced to one-half original values. They remain this way as long as the character is in the open. Lightning will hit exposed individuals on a roll of 10+, made once per five minutes. Effects are as in 2, above. The storm lasts for 5d minutes.

6 Natives

7 Storm

8 No Event

9 Natives

10 Natives

11 Natives

12 Carillines Launch: The armed launch appears overhead, hovering above the location of one or more player characters. It remains overhead for 2d minutes, before flying off to a destination of the referee's (secret) choice. During the time it is overhead, characters will be spotted any time they move, or on a roll of 10+ made once per minute. The Carillines people, who have been troubled by juveniles, will tend to sweep areas where they spot intruders with laser fire. A hit by laser fire is made on a roll of 9+, and is treated as lightning (see 2, above) if it is made.

The Adventure: The players must attempt to overcome both groups of Carillines crewmen. The exact course of their attack will, of course, depend on the strategy and tactics they choose to adopt. In general, taking the 400-ton trader ensures that none can escape... but the trader may prove almost impossible to take without capturing the laser mounted on board the launch.

By and large, the best possible result from the players' point of view is one that ends in the capture of the senior Carillines people, rather than in outright slaughter of all involved. If the enemy leaders are captured, they can be brought before the H'Oskhikhil in demonstration of the team's support for its new friends. Also, if all the opposition is killed or merely driven off, the H'Oskhikhf may not believe they were enemies of Caledon's people at all, but may suspect collusion of some sort.

Resolution: Final negotiations depend upon the skill of the adventurers, the success of the attack, and similar factors. The referee should roll on the Reaction Table (Book 3). The following DMs apply: If Carillines people were taken captive, DM+3. If the Carillines ship escapes, DM-2. Appropriate skills can also favorably modify the result.

A result of 10+ indicates an overwhelmingly successful voyage, and will result in the award of a special bonus (discussed below) to the group. Results of 8-10 are successful, and provide standard commissions for the team. A result of 5-7 results in a breakdown of negotiations, with no bonus becoming available to the party despite its efforts. A result of less than 5 causes a complete rejection of the humans; referees who so desire may choose to set further adventures around attempts to escape from this disaster.

For successful completion of the mission, the party receives a commission, amounting to Cr 500,000 for each member. If a special bonus is awarded as discussed above, the commission is raised to Cr 750,000 apiece. The referee should feel free to increase or decrease these amounts as appropriate to his campaign.

