

"MERTACTOR; The Volentine Gambit" is the first episode of the STARCRYSTAL CAMPAIGN, a solitaire computer text adventure based on the TRAVELLER role-playing game system and adventuring universe. Each of the four episodes is playable individually or as part of the campaign. Characters and objects are transportable from one episode into the next. Each episode features over 300 interactive objects, over 200 locations, up to six non-player characters, and a variety of animals. Two-dimensional locations support a combat system which fully represents the performance of ranged weapons operating within a text environment. The entire range of TRAVELLER personal weapons are represented within the system, although not all are available to the player-character within a given adventure.

Two-dimensional locations allow movement within a location as well as movement between locations. Objects and characters within the same location are therefore not necessarily within the player-characters immediate grasp. Range exists. Since a rifle outranges a pistol, a character armed with only a pistol and facing an adversary armed with a rifle must close the range before being able to fire effectively, or must open the range in order to escape.

Within the realistic constraints of weight and displacement, a character may carry objects taken in one episode into the next. Characters and equipment created on the CITIZENS character generator program (available separately) can be entered into any of the adventures and significantly alter the course of play, though not necessarily for the better.

Most importantly, the story is in the finest traditions of TRAVELLER. The Fifth Frontier War ended over a year ago, before most people knew that it had started. Among the first Imperial units to start home were the old Scouts who had managed to survive recall to service. Now all you want to do is get home to Tarsus/District 268 and visit what is left of your family. You've been travelling nearly four months, taking the long way around the Sword Worlds. Your last passage has landed on Mertactor/District 268, a curious world only a month from home. Unfortunately, the transportation backlog created by the war reached Mertactor before you. Without additional funds you'll be bumped off outbound flights for six months by people willing to pay for high passage.

Help arrives in the form of a Baron Volentine, whose brother was killed several weeks ago on a scientific expedition out in the Mertactan jungle. The Baron thinks the local police investigated poorly. He wants somebody to fly out to the site, take a look around, and report back in three days. That's all. In return he'll pay cash plus provide your high passage the rest of the way home. Of course you take the job. No way you can lose, right?

Wrong?

You're dropped into the middle of a culture about to take revenge upon itself, and off on a star spanning romp across District 268 in search of a man who should have died a thousand years ago, and a secret that could unhinge the balance of power in the Spinward Marches.

The adventure begins on Mertactor, and you are invited,

Editions for the Apple IIe and IIc are available for immediate shipment.
The price is \$39.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling.