

John Rankine

Synopsis for Four Episodes Space 1999

© John Rankine 1975

Golden Apple Production 2002

Space 1999

Second Series

Four Episodes for 60 thousand word novel. Each in 5 chapters corresponding to Intro.& Acts 1-4 in each case.

20 short chapters. 495 M/S pages.

One The Thinking Mountain

Pelorus & Triops binary planetary system.

As developed in the synopsis.

Two Koenig's Ark

They build a large wheel station as a satellite to the Moon- fall back accommodation? Excursion?

Problems of construction. Finally drifts off or is in some way unsuccessful.

Three The Invaders

Arrival of errant moon seen as providential by survivors on a dying planet. Plan to take over Moonbase Alpha. Project one of their people by a dematerialisation technique. Arrives on the floor of Main Mission to the consternation of Sandra and others.

Four The Mutiny

Koenig challenged by rival group. Main Mission seized. Top brass given an Eagle and turned adrift.

SPACE 1999

Synopsis for Four Episodes

Basis for 40/45 thousand word novel

Episode One (Chapters 1-2)

Chapter One

The moon on its continuing Odyssey approaches the gravisphere of the planet Pelorus. Planet shows as yellow disk on scanners. Computers in Mission Control case it and predict good atmosphere but interference prevents accurate assessment of presence of life forms.

Debate. Koenig decides they should go down and take a look.

Reluctant agreement from Bergman and Helena.

Helena feels that Koenig is getting a little remote and high handed in management of isolated community.

An Eagle is prepared for the mission. Party of 12 prepare to lift off. Mission monitored from Moon Base Alpha but with communication conditions they may well be out of touch.

As they approach for planetfall instruments go into spasm and Koenig takes it on manual making a landing away from where they had planned and with maximum difficulty.

Landing successful but some gear damaged. Repairs essential before they can blast off.

They are in a wilderness of brown lichen. Motors have blasted a clearing. They go out.

A crewman walks to the edge of the lichen to examine it.

Tendrils curl round him in a surge. Badly lacerated and dead before pulled free. Put him in a zip disposal bag for later burial.

Helena and Bergman now both critical of Koenig do an analysis of strands. Material writhes into vicious life whenever it touches earth. It has a fantastic corrosive effect on metal. The lichen is closing in. Koenig realises they must move the Eagle before they lose it. Communication with Moon Base Alpha blocked.

Chapter Two

Foam sprayed from canisters seems to inhibit lichen. Where it hits there is a spectacular burst of green flame and a charred area left.

They break out two small tracked excursion vehicles from cargo bay, hook up and tow Eagle forward. Party on foot go ahead to clear passage. They are making for a range of low hills about twenty kilometres away.

Lichen begins to act up. Rises in high banks as though manipulated to oppose them. Canisters of foam cannot hold it.

Bergman has a theory. Reckons an electric potential is involved. He improvises two earth pins like javelins with a connecting cable. Throws them out. Pushes a current through. Lichen increases dramatically.

Koenig yells - Reverse polarity- filaments sink away.

They have a laborious method to make progress.

3
Slowly they reach foot of hillside. Grey porous stone with
glint of hidden metal.

They haul Eagle to a plateau where they can work on it
Excavate a pit and put dead crewman in it
Curious disorientation effect begins. Crew men falling about
Eagle ready to go K. drives them all inside. Has to thump
Helena and carry her. He is only one with a toe hold on
consciousness. He takes Eagle up. Effect wears off
End of Episode as they approach Base. Helena partly
reconciled.

Episode Two Chapters 3-4

Chapter 3

Moon is still within contact of Pelorus.
Calculated it will make 3 eccentric orbits before peeling off
on further interstellar journey.
Data intermittent. Shows other areas which might be viable
Is it worth the risk?
Debate. Helena still opposed. Operator suddenly flips
Has picture of tropical type valley & signs of occupation.
All crowd to see. Grounded military spacer. Accommodation
around. Picture cuts as though jammed.

Bergman has been studying rock sample. Cannot identify metal
but says structure.....

reminds him of nerve conglomerates in human brain.

If multiplied by the immense mass of mountain it would add up to a colossal thinking machine. How activated? By flow of magnetic flux from lichen.

Koenig says they should go down and offer stranded space crew sanctuary. Calls for volunteers.

This time they navigate for far side of Pelorus.

Get down safely. Desert type locale some ten kilometres from valley.

Split into two parties using excursion modules.

Koenig's party come across what looks like oasis, yellow pool. Single stem trees with coloured spade leaves.

Helena about to touch water. Koenig knocks her aside. She reacts. He takes a tissue throws it on surface. It crumples blackens bursts into flame.

Chapter 4

Approach valley. Character of veg. changes. Tropical paradise. Have to leave vehicle and go on foot. Are surprised. Ambushed. Attackers led by bearded type in military rig with silver fist emblem on chest.

Second party are warned by Moon Base in a freak clear period for communications. They hold off.

Koenig taken to spacer's camp. Helena gets a lot of attention.

Second party work in from another angle and spring the prisoners.

Chase back to Eagle. Lift off with zero margin.

Episode Three (Chapters 5-6)Chapter 5

Moon still in orbit round planet Pelorus. Communications come from its surface; it is the stranded spacer crew.

Using Galactic lingua franca, Koenig talks with headman.

He is Commissar Amython. The spacer is from another planet in the same solar system as Pelorus. They are Triopians from Triops. Pelorus has always had mystical significance for Triopians being regarded as the home of the gods in Triopian mythology. The expedition to ~~frin~~ Pelorus was bitterly opposed as a kind of sacrilege.

But commercial zeal defeated religious fervour- the mountain was suspected to be a mine of valuable ore and indeed turned out to be so. The metal is infrangom, a super conductor, low resistance, easily worked, indestructible worth an incalculable fortune.

They need help to complete repairs on their spacer. Intend to ~~take~~ back samples which will overcome religious scruples by proof that Pelorous is only a mine which will show a profit. They offer a deal- technical supplies to repair spacer against colony status for Earth personnel on Triops.

Koenig dubious but agrees to meeting. Interference cuts communication.

Eagle goes back to valley. Conference. Feeling expressed by Helena that Triopians are not to be trusted.

Others feel the same but as Bergman says what they offer could be the best chance left for the community on Moon Base Alpha.

Technical needs are explained to Tech Officer. Can do.
 Will go back to Moon Base workshops and have it done.
 Bergman, Koenig, Helena politely but firmly retained as hostages
 against completion of work.
 Allocated a living unit.
 Moon Base Alpha in rare gap in communications blackout reminds
 Koenig that time is running out for easy return to moon.
 They are allowed to wander at will in the valley. Find a
 rocky outcrop similar in texture to the mountain. While
 examining it are overcome by hallucinations.

Chapter 6

All are seeing scenes externalised in 3-D but projected by
 their own minds. Helena for instance is seeing earlier
 sequence with Lee Russell. She walks towards him and so out
 of range of force field. Walks into real scene of valley.
 Realises what goes on. Throws rocks at others to get them
 to walk towards her.
 The same happens to them. Walk from previous ~~sequence~~ sequence
 into present reality.
 Bergman says mountain has listening post right there and must
 know what the Triopians are trying to do. Must also know that
 what they propose would be its own destruction.
 Koenig wants to talk to it. Goes into field again and asks
 questions. Do you understand me?
 Unexpected answer. Face of dead technician appears projected
 large size on surface of rock.

The face speaks. Matter is energy. Mind is energy arranged in a particular way. Once created mind can organise an environment to support itself.

Bergman joins Koenig and asks the hard question- Should we join Triopians and return with them to their planet?

Face of technician fades and scene on Triops gradually forms. It is a harsh world of dwindling resources and immense population pressures. Savage laws and punishments. Alien to Earth standards.

They are taken through a typical Triopian day.

When the vision fades all are silent. Triops clearly not on.

Rock throws up another picture. This time a look into the future. Shows Amython preparing to blast Moon Base Alpha.

He has no intention of giving them sanctuary.

What to do? Koenig says they must play along with it.

Give him the help he needs then get back to base.

As soon as the Eagle arrives and Amython is busy with the items which have been fabricated for him, the party make a run for it. Get to Eagle with nothing to spare and blast off.

Episode Four (Chapters 7-8)

Chapter 7

Moon Base Alpha in a state of alert expecting attack from military spacer on yellow planet of Pelorus.

Nervous tension all round. Helena thinks Koenig has handled it badly and there is a faction that would like to

see him replaced as commander.

Communications difficult. Not known whether Amython will attack or whether in fact he has lifted off and set a course for home. Koenig and technicians doing a quick conversion job to turn an Eagle into a military strike craft.

Further complication- scanners pick up fleet of three spacers approaching gravisphere of Pelorus. All carry clenched fist emblem. Intercepted conversations through transducer show that Triops has finally sent an expedition to pull Amython out of trouble.

The oncoming spacers talk to Amython. They hear him sell the idea of exploiting the mountain of infrangom.

The stranded spacer takes off and R.V.s with fleet.

Koenig expects them to attack Moon Base Alpha but in fact all go on a bombing run to strafe the thinking mountain .

Fantastic electrical disturbances develop which rock the base and threaten its survival.

Koenig crawls towards Helena in the debris.

Chapter 8

All hands work to stabilise situation on Moon Base Alpha.

Scanners at mission control now getting clear pictures.

Surface of Pelorus hidden in clouds of multi-coloured gas.

As it drifts clear mountain is shown to have many huge fissures.

Continuity of nerve structure is broken. It has become several separate individuals and all are aggressive. A spacer goes

low to check out the damage and a searing flash of blue light

envelopes it and turns it it to a charred wreck.

The remainder wheel away and converge on Moon Base Alpha.

Koenig goes up in an Eagle~~ta~~ to give combat. Eagle is handier craft. Spacers main armament in the cone.

He gets height. Dives on one from above rakes it with laser beam and falls away with fragments breaking off.

Goes for another watched by all hands at Mission Control.

But he cannot win them all. Before he can regain height in a fantastic climb there is one waiting for him turning to get him in its sight~~a~~.

Helena is very involved all criticisms long forgotten.

The mountain on Pelorus makes a supreme effort marshalling all electro-chemical reserves. Sends a finger of flame searing through the sky to home on the spacer.

Koenig has to make frantic course change to avoid crashing into the wreck.

The remaining spacer sheers away.

Koenig brings Eagle to land.

Travel tube goes out to meet him.

When he comes through the lock Helena is waiting for him.

The moon travels on with the yellow planet dwindling in the scanners.