



Pluto - The Iceriggers Pre-game - Day 15/20

For the last 200 years this distant world has seen an increase in homo sapien settlement. As the usually furthest major solar system body from the sun, Pluto, and its similar, tidelocked moon 'Charon' are the most distant, easily targeted objects with which to navigate by 'blink' drive.

The development of the 'Spin' drive however has rendered Pluto and Charon much more attractive for settlement and utilisation, however. Although still distant from the Oort cloud and sites of spin ship construction, these two small worlds remain distant enough to be safe from the occasional 'spin' construction misfirings and accidents which still occur from time to time; administration of the 'spin' ship construction is carried out from Pluto, and all material transport and crew training takes place on these worlds.

And what of Pluto and Charon? These icy bodies were shown by the early 21st century robotic explorers to be primarily made up of nitrogen ice, with trace methane and carbon monoxide incusions. With an atmospheric temperature of only 70 K colonisation by humans was considered forever unlikely, but actually, rendering the planet suitable for (well clad) Earth life was not so overly complex. For ~300 years nuclear piles have melted vast swathes of the surfaces and upper kilometres of these worlds - liberating great concentrations of gas and adding heat to the tenuous (but rapidly thickening) atmospheres. By grafting in antifreeze components to the DNA of settling engineered colonists, and by coating the lungs with methane processing custom-designed bacteria, liberal delivery of bottled oxygen is all that is required to allow individuals to walk, or skate, these distant icy surfaces.

Though warming, these worlds are still very cold, but not uniformly so. The radioactive piles create vortices of heated atmospheres which interact dramatically with the colder surrounding air, generating storms and diverse weather patterns. The tortured geology of these worlds, coupled with the point source atmosphere releases has created a network of relatively stable trade winds which are used by the human colonists to get about, navigating by computer assisted icerigger ships modelled after tea clippers or warships from deep antiquity.