



A BIT OF HISTORY

About 500 years ago the planet experienced a rapid climate change, as a result of the high amount of pollution. Over the next ten years the climate began to chill, becoming colder and colder. A few decades later the northern and southern parts of the planet had been covered mostly in ice. Only a small amount of land in the equator has managed to avoid getting frozen completely.

Many countries and cities lost their ability to support the population and large amount of nations withered and disappeared in short time. Countries lost their meaning and people started to organise themselves into independent city-states. These cities were often build underground and mostly grew in areas that had become key points in pre ice age world. In time some cities specialised in food production, becoming huge green house complexes. Some provided needy with machines, soldiers or mercenaries. But Many cities were abandoned over time door to the extremely poor economy.

Then 80 years after the begin of the ice age, a group calling itself the Soul Office emerged from somewhere in the north. This group of ten unknown persons took control two nearby cities in the north at first. Soon they started taking over other cities one by one. Not by force, but by diplomacy. Many cities were actually happy to be ruled by the Office, due to the financial security and stability they miraculously could keep up. In course of thirty years, Soul Office had taken the control of most of the northern and great deal of the southern hemispheres. Only few cites wanted to remain independent and the cities of the equator kept resisting the Office.

THE CURRENT STATE

The current year is 2860

Currently the world is divided into a few different factions. The cities Soul Office couldn't take over are called anarchs. But as these cities don't have much in common, they all act on their own goals. Most green house complexes have remained as anarchs, since they're economy is very good due to the high demand for their products. The cities around the equator are called The Southern Free States. These cities work together very closely and have a strong military alliance designed to keep them secure and protect them from advances of The Soul Office.

HIERARCHY OF THE OFFICE

Ruling of cities is distributed to four different levels.

First there is the city council. The city councils are composed of ten people. These are men and women who have done something noteworthy, so that they have become to the attention of the city director or the president. Place in the city council does not get passed on in the family and it must always be earned. The city council handles most of the smaller decisions and can make suggestions to the director or the president.

The director is mostly responsible of hands on leading, like briefing the citizens and issuing commands to the soldiers. Director is responsible for lower level negotiations with other cities and making contracts with the greenhouses. Director is almost as powerful as the president and has a veto-right over every decision made by the city council.

The president is the more burocratical one of the pair. President handles the negotiations with high level authorities in other cities. He makes decisions of current population control and training of new professionals in all the fields. President has a veto-right to everything the city council or the director decides.

Then finally there is the Main Office. Main Office doesn't have a representative inside any cities, so they contact the cities with secure satellite transmission to issue their commands. No one has a right to question decisions made by the Main Office, and they have a right to overrule any decision made, no matter who makes it. It's not known who compose the Main Office, or where are they located. Even though they have such an huge amount of power over others, the Main Office only very rarely intervenes with decisions that are made.

OTHER GROUPS OF POWER INSIDE THE OFFICE

There are two notable groups of power inside and maintained by the Office.

Assassins have a good deal of influence over any military related decisions. They answer to the director of the city and the current assassin grand master. Local guilds are often ruled by local guild master, who passes on decisions of the director and takes care of the current assassins and training new ones. The assassins were made to replace the former obsolete military structure. Since the land is covered in ice, it would be useless to send large military groups to die out there, and now days warfare is mostly handled by fake diplomats and other infiltrators. Unfortunately there is not all that much need for the assassins these days, so most of them just hang around the guild and cash rather big paychecks. Only a few assassins ever get real combat experience, and those that do and survive, are commonly called psychos.

The couriers are also a notable power. These people specialise in travelling the ice wastelands in order to deliver packages, messages, make contracts and the like. There are only very few couriers, since the job is very harsh and dangerous. Many couriers are ex assassins or bounty hunters.

OTHER GROUPS OF POWER

Some cities find a way to become powerful. For example, before the attack that wiped out almost it's whole population, Marsto was famous for the skilled technicians they trained. Some of them were even capable of handling the revival engines (more of that later). Some of the old noble families have also risen to power in the after ice age world. There are dozens of smaller families, but only two great ones: House of the Blood Sword and House of the Shadows.

Blood Sword is an old family that owns it's own huge city, called Metropolis. Many members of the family work in ruling positions in cities owned by the Soul Office. Some of the family members are also known and terror inspiring soldiers that have been told to have levelled entire cities. Hierarchy inside the Blood Sword is based on the ability or abilities the members possess. The head of the family is always the one who possesses the blood sword –ability, currently Andrei Grand. The family hasn't made public how the blood sword and other "lesser" swords are passed on from one family member to another thought.

House of the Shadows was a mysterious group. They didn't have a official base or an own city, but many Shadows were notable diplomats or spies. For unknown reasons the Shadows vanished two years ago. They're leader disappeared and no new Shadows have come forth since then. The last known head of the family was Alex of the Shadows.

There are also some secret societies (or more often old boys clubs), that have gained some power. The most notable of them is the Society of Iron Storm. Iron Storm is a cult like group dedicated to battle. They also fought fierce wars with the soldiers of Blood sword for several decades before reaching an agreement. Even now neither of the groups get along with the other.

CLOSER LOOK

The following stuff concerns some of the smaller stuff in sort of a lexicon-like way:

Revival engines

Revival engines are very complex and mysterious machines, located in only small amount of the cities. Only few people ever learn how to use and repair them, and only a handful of the planets people understand how to build them from the scratch. These machines "catch" what is commonly called souls of recently dead people, and begin to revive them. The machine then grows them a new body, like the one they had before they're death. One machine can revive up to 5 people at same time. For unknown reason the machine also grows them a new organ, which seems to give power to revivals abilities (see below). So far no one has been revived after the person has died a second time.

Revivals

Dying is almost always a dramatic experience, and so is being brought back. Some revivals even commit suicide shortly to escape they're new life. Revival warps persons memory, but it seems to be up to chance how much. Most people have various black holes in they're memories, while some can't remember anything. While memories of life vary, none of the revivals have ever been able to remember what was it like after they died.

Most revivals often work in official tasks from the Office, since most normal people shun them for being unnatural. There is also an another reason for this. Since the revival process gives the revivals an unique supernatural abilities, some of them can be rather dangerous and so the Office wants to supervise them.

Leeches

Leeches have got the taste of the forbidden fruit. Eating a person's "ability-organ" is called leaching. This gives the leech very powerful hallucinetic experiences, but also grants them a chance of absorbing the victims ability. This process is very addictive and dangerous and the hallucinetic sights can drive one insane. It's no small supprise, that most leaches end up wondering the wastes, searching for what they can get or hunt to eat.

Population control

Since cities have been build mostly underground and ice makes getting natural resources hard, it's very hard and expensive to expand a city. This is why strict population control is in effect in cities under rule of the Soul Office. A couple needs to get a permission from needed authorities to have a child. The birth of unwanted children is prevented by giving out drugs for both men and women, to suppress they're capability to have children. The drugs don't affect person's sexual desires in any way.

Work

Everyone is given a place to live in Office controlled cities. But how good you're apartment is, depends on the job you do. Various jobs are given various points, and with higher points, one gets higher living quality. This includes things like how big apartment you have, extra food, alcohol, drugs and so on.

Smoking

Smoking is one of the rarer forms of drug use in modern times. These are not normal cigarettes that you might smoke, but instead often contain a hefty dose of some drug. In case of Daniel, his cigarettes contain good amount of sedatives to keep his sometimes violent temper down.