



# INTERNATIONAL WATERS

**A cyberpunk scenario for use with The Sprawl**

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A cyberpunk scenario for The Sprawl

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*"[The art community] extends its parameters quite widely to capture 'the new thing' and elevate it from low art to high art successfully enough to elevate the commerce proposition that goes along with it."*

— David Bowie

## **DISCLAIMER**

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"International Waters" is a work of fiction. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

Cyberpunk as a genre is an extrapolation of our current world into the near future. Therefore it may seem like the events depicted in this scenario have truly happened like they are described, but this is not the case.

## **PROCLAIMER**

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An RPG scenario is a piece of entertainment media: it is aimed to provide fun at the table for those participating. The baseline goal is to provide you with fun while running or playing this scenario. If you then move on with your life, you have used this scenario correctly.

Cyberpunk is an inherently political genre. If you run or play this scenario, and then walk away with an interest in how forcing workers to become independent contractors is inherently exploitative; how sailors are abandoned aboard stranded ships; and how the commoditization of art for commercial gain erodes both art and our culture — then you will have unlocked the hidden bonus content this scenario aims to provide.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The team is hired to extract an artist from aboard a shipping vessel that is anchored in international waters. The artist, Robin Spina, is under the patronage of Mitsuhan Heavy Industries, which is heavily invested in bulk transports of all kinds. She was going to do an 'artist-in-residence' program aboard the Friendship Queen, a vessel registered to the Mitsuhan subsidiary Ujeyong Line, crossing the Pacific from the US to India. However, Ujeyong Line has gone bankrupt while the Friendship Queen was in transit. No harbor wants to let the ship dock because there is no-one to send the bill for the docking fees.

The ship has been anchored in place for two weeks now, and a consortium of art dealers thinks the moment is ripe to convince Spina to work for them instead, while Mitsuhan is scrambling to get everything sorted out.

But there are more parties with a vested interest in the ship, and the contractors aboard have their own problems to deal with.

## CODEDUMP

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This is nominally a straight-forward extraction mission, but with the Action Phase conducted on a closed environment, aboard the Friendship Queen. The team has to rely on their preparations to see them through.

They will be confronted with a tense situation on board, with multiple factions in an uneasy stalemate. The team will have to play their cards right to get the support of one of them in order to succeed, and depending on the morality of their choices might make things on board better or much, much worse.

As there is no opportunity to access the resources of the urban sprawl that are usually the stomping grounds of the team, the scenario is less suited for Fixers and Hunters.

The closed nautical environment offers an opportunity to shine for Drivers with a nautical vehicle, Infiltrators and Pushers with a strong socialist or anarchist agenda.

Use this mission when you want to see how the team conducts an operation in a closed environment where their targets have no recourse.

## THE CORPS

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This scenario has two corps working behind the scenes. Their various activities and goals are described here, and you are encouraged to map these onto corps that exist in your game. If none match, then you could use these corps as-is.

## **MITSUHAN HEAVY INDUSTRIES**

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Mitsuhan Heavy Industries specializes in shipbuilding and heavy machinery. From there, they diversified into transportation and through their many subsidiaries they are one of the larger providers of bulk transportation.

They are headquartered on an island in Japan's Seto Inland Sea, and invest heavily in making this an idyllic place. No high-rise or skyscrapers here, but three villages spread out across the island. In-between are world-famous museums in ultra-modern architecture buildings, featuring art from the early 1900s onward. Mitsuhan is always on the lookout for more interesting art and artists to add to its stable and wields considerable power in the art world.

## **MITSUHAN AND THE ART WORLD**

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As the result of a strategic decision a few decades ago, Mitsuhan has become a dominating force in the art world through their Mitsuhan Foundation. While they make most of their money off shipping and heavy machinery, that space is hotly contested by other corps, large and small. But they had a significant first mover advantage when it became economically viable for them to pour resources into acquiring and curating art. They use this dominant position as PR to secure contracts, as well as to influence public opinion through art.

Whenever a new art movement emerges, Mitsuhan studies the field and co-opts specific voices from among the artists. Using their resources and PR 'pull', they elevate these artists as specially gifted newcomers, thereby encapsulating this new movement into their portfolio. In the end, Mitsuhan can profit from this new movement because only the work of their 'anointed geniuses' will be recognized as 'genuine art'.

## **MITSUHAN AND ROBIN SPINA**

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When the emergence of online video platforms blossomed, this democratized the field for video art. Anyone with a cheap, half-decent camera could make a video and post it on the net. Of the multitudes posting their video content, a few posters attracted a following with their new brand of short absurd videos. Mitsuhan selected Robin Spina to be the face of what they called the 'new absurdist movement' and invited her to live at their headquarters as a 'sponsorship'.

## **VALTION METALLICS**

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Valtion Metallics is nominally a producer of steel, but realizes most of their revenue from the manufacturing, selling and trading of weapon systems. They are specialized in bespoke armaments for large vehicles or structures. If you simply *must* have a rail gun on your transport plane, they will build you one. Nothing is too outlandish for them, but their goods come with a price.

## **PRECEDING EVENTS**

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This section lists the events that have led up to the current situation in chronological order.

## **SPINA'S SPONSORSHIP**

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Three years ago, 'New Absurdist' video artist Robin Spina accepted a sponsorship from Mitsuhan. She re-located to Mitsuhan's HQ island and, after a month to acclimatize, starts producing new work.

## **THE VALTION SHIPMENT**

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Three months ago, Valtion needed to arrange a shipment of an experimental weapons platform. The Valtion factory could deliver the containers to a port near them, but this is a smaller port that does not have the capabilities to service the huge vessels that are used for trans-oceanic voyages.

Rather than have the containers transported by a smaller 'feeder vessel' and have them combined with other cargo at a much larger port to such a huge vessel, the decision was made to ship directly trans-oceanic on a smaller vessel. The Ujeyong Line is selected which assigned their feeder vessel 'Friendship Queen' to the task.

To cover up the fact that this is some specialized cargo, the cargo hold is filled with containers with various goods that are picked up along two other smaller ports before setting off on the cross-oceanic voyage.

The crew is not made aware of the sensitive nature of their cargo.

## **ROBIN'S TRIP**

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At the same time, Robin Spina's work is getting more and more 'stale' because she has trouble retaining her 'edge' in the structured, corporate world she is now a part of. Her handlers devise a change of scenery, and Robin agrees to go on a trip by sea. A standard shipping container is outfitted as a workspace, and the first available vessel on a trans-oceanic voyage is selected as her transport. Robin boarded the ship at the last port before the Friendship Queen crossed the ocean.

The art department was not aware of the sensitive nature of the cargo, and the cargo planning department was not aware of Robin's presence on board.

## **UJEYONG LINE GOES BANKRUPT**

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Two weeks ago, Ujeyong Line went bankrupt. This halted all operations, including all the support programs for their vessels. No ship in transit (including the Friendship Queen) could enter a port because there is no entity to pay the port dues. After two days of confusion, the captain decided to anchor the ship in international waters - close to the Sprawl where the characters operate from. There, the crew wait for their situation to be resolved.

## **THE SCHISM**

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With normal operations suspended and the crew uncertain about how long this predicament will last, the crew divides into two camps. In one camp are the officers, salaried employees, who assume everything will be resolved quickly and thus want to keep the ship running as usual. The other camp consists of contracted crew, who normally do all the grunt work. They find themselves stranded on the Friendship Queen, uncertain whether they will be paid for their hard work keeping the ship running. They want to make sure the cargo is kept aboard as collateral for their payment.

Tensions rise, and the officers shut themselves in at the aft part of the ship, where the bridge and officer quarters are. All ship-side computer systems are under their control.

The contracted crew has the run of the rest of the ship, and they have closed off passageways out of the bridge area into the cargo hold, and hold control of all the 'hard' systems of the ship, like the cranes and engine.

Robin Spina is with the officers, but is sympathetic with the contractors. She is recording all her interaction and can upload those to her usual video hosting sites whenever she pleases. Without her presence, the officers would have used all the tools at their disposal, including violence, to assert their dominance over the ship.

## **RECOVERY SPECIALISTS ARRIVE**

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Mitsuhan is under heavy pressure from Valtion to ensure the weapon system is secured. A team of 'recovery specialists' was air-dropped aboard the Friendship Queen to ensure those containers are safe. Either the containers will be airlifted off the ship and passed onto another vessel, or the Friendship Queen will continue its voyage as originally planned.

The recovery specialists have aligned themselves with the officers. They are armed and disciplined, but refrain from violence against the contracted crew at the insistence of the captain.

## THE MEET

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The meet is arranged in a museum for modern art that does not charge admission, but charges separately for special exhibitions. The team receives tickets for one such exhibit, called 'Lillies by daylight', presented by the Mitsuhan Foundation. There is a specific time-slot on the ticket. After their ticket is checked, they will have to put any bags through a scanner and other 'security theater' measures. Only weapons with the *+discreet* tag can be taken inside.

There are two shoe-racks next to the door to the exhibit. One is empty except for a pair of well-worn and immaculately polished men's shoes, the other contains soft-soled slippers in various sizes. A sign directs visitors to change into the slippers before entering.

The exhibit room is spacious and the floor is covered with cubes of soft, white marble that softly click against each other when someone walks over them. On the walls are several of Monet's waterlily paintings. A large installation with lamps, colored filters, mirrors and shades is mounted on the ceiling, perfectly recreating the light conditions outside, such that the experience of watching the paintings changes with the weather and time of day. A man stands with his back to the entrance, hands in his pockets, studying one of the paintings. As they enter, he tells them that Monet was not the only painter of the impressionist movement, and maybe not even the best - but if he owned these paintings, he would certainly do his best to elevate Monet as a rare genius, thereby making his paintings very expensive indeed...

**Mr Brook** wears a dark blue confection suit over a white shirt without any visible cyberwear. He seems in his element here and is able to answer any questions about Monet, the waterlily paintings, impressionism and art movements in general.

He will explain to the team that a Mitsuhan subsidiary, Ujeyong Line, went bankrupt two weeks ago. This stranded all their ships at sea: with nobody to invoice for the harbor fees, none of their ships are able to dock. He is concerned with only one of these ships: the Friendship Queen, which is anchored twelve miles off the coast, in international waters. The video artist **Robin Spina** is aboard the Friendship Queen. The team is hired to retrieve her and deliver her back to Mr Brook.

If the team is able to identify Mr Brook, they will find out that he is the owner of a small art gallery, catering to a small audience of art lovers with specific tastes.

## MISSION DIRECTIVES

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- » When you accept the job, mark experience.
- » When you board the Friendship Queen, mark experience.
- » When you make contact with Spina, mark experience.
- » When you leave the Friendship Queen with Spina, mark experience.
- » When the mission ends, mark experience.

# PEOPLE

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## ROBIN SPINA

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Robin Spina is a 26-year old woman. She has enjoyed her time on the Friendship Queen, but when the bankruptcy brought the contrast between the officers and the contractors to the front, she has become conscious of how sheltered her life at Mitsuhan has been up to now. The officers and the recovery team won't let her leave her room near the bridge, otherwise she would have joined the contractors that have her sympathy.

Mitsuhan has equipped her with cybereyes (*+light amplification, +magnification, +recording*) to aid in her video making. They're relatively cheap models that are quite conspicuous. The recording system comes equipped with satellite communications. Because it is tied to a Mitsuhan account, the communication still works. Robin has refrained from uploading any footage of what is going on, but could do this without anybody being able to stop her.<sup>1</sup>

## THE OFFICERS

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The officers on board are (or were) salaried employees of Ujeyong Line. They are used to life on board, and are used to direct the ship's operations without their orders being questioned by the contractors. They prefer to stay in the bridge and their accommodations, leaving the 'grunt work' to the contractors.

They are convinced that the Ujeyong Line's bankruptcy will eventually be resolved and that they will all continue to be salaried employees working on ships one way or the other. With the threat of non-payment off the table, the officers have not been able to keep the contractors under control. Because they rarely left the bridge, it was easy for the contractors to outmaneuver them and restrict their

<sup>1</sup> This is an excellent Hard Move to fill the Mission Clock.

movement. Now they are holed up in the bridge, and things are getting cramped with the extra people aboard. Tensions are rising.

The officers are all unarmed and do not wear armor, making them very vulnerable targets. They know that the recovery specialists are after the Valtion containers and that they are expendable once these containers have been recovered. As an insurance policy, the officers have decided to keep the stowage plans hidden — not that the containers could be unloaded without the help of the contractors.

You should feel free to make up your own crew, and add or subtract crew members as are needed for the team to interact with. Here follow some examples of officers you could have on board.

### **ALEC HAYWOOD, CAPTAIN**

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Alec Haywood is the captain of the Friendship Queen. He never held a position on a ship before being 'promoted' to the rank of captain after an internal scandal made him persona non grata in his department. He resents his situation, treating his commission with a mix of cushy desk job and a way to take out his frustrations on his crew. A cowardly drunkard, most crew try to ignore him and just do their jobs.

### **GEORGE BONNER, FIRST OFFICER**

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A career seaman, George Bonner climbed up the ranks to become the First Officer of the Friendship Queen. He does not have a high opinion of captain Haywood, and tries to insulate the rest of the ship from the man's incompetence. He has Neural Interface cyberware, a remnant of his days as a steersman, but rarely uses it these days. Bonner values order above all things, and will try to assert the officers' authority over the ship.

### **ERASMO ZAVALA, SYSTEMS ENGINEER**

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Erasmus Zavala is responsible for running the systems on board. He monitors the sensor arrays and shuttles data to the AI and orders back to the crew. He regards the systems as his personal property and will react badly to anyone intruding or tampering. His sexist attitudes will color his judgment and he will be dismissive of the abilities of anyone presenting as female. He also trained the ship-side AI to be subservient.

He usually interfaces with the system from the bridge, but he also has a cyberdeck in his quarters that is loaded with porn programs.

### **CHENDA SOUN, STEERSMAN**

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Chenda Soun is on her first trip as a steersman and already tired of this crew. First Officer Bonner is the only person she respects; Captain Haywood's incompetence grates on her, and she finds Erasmo's casual sexism jarring. She has been keeping her head down since it's only her first trip, but given the right opportunity might seek to get these two buffoons out of her hair.

Ujeyong Line has equipped her with a **Neural Interface** with a **Remote Control Module** to control the ship.

### **ZLATKA TOMOV, COOK**

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Zlatka Tomov is technically a contractor, but since the kitchen is on the ground floor of the bridge, she has become de-facto part of the officer faction. She deeply regrets the divide between the officers and the contractors. For now she just makes sure tempers don't flare in the best way she knows: by making sure everyone is fed. However, food stores in the small cooler in the kitchen are running low and the larger fridges are in the area controlled by the contractors. She might have to negotiate with them soon for access to the food.

## **THE CONTRACTORS**

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The contractors' prime concern is to get paid for their work. They know they are at the rear end of the long line of creditors wanting to get paid from what is left of Ujeyong Line and do not expect their fees to be paid in the usual manner. They have decided that the best way to ensure they get their fair share is to negotiate with the value of the Friendship Queen and its cargo as their collateral. Obviously this is not a popular proposition for the officers, who see their career prospects plummet if they do not cooperate with their (now former) employers.

The contractors do not have weapons as such, but have crafted various cudgels (2-harm hand) and catapults (1-harm near reload quick) to arm themselves with. They can also lob heavy packets of metal parts (cut from containers and welded together) with a crude trebuchet (3-harm near/far reload area) which they can assemble on deck in a few minutes.

Here follow some examples of contractors who could be on board of the Friendship Queen.

### **THAKSIN PRAVAT, ENGINEER**

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Thaksin Pravat is an engineer in the literally sense of the word: he minds the engine of the Friendship Queen and makes sure it keeps working. As the engine also powers all the electric systems on board, he is also able to shut down the ship completely, if needed.

### **DAGNY SIGURSDOTTIR, WELDER**

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Dagny Sigurdottir is primarily a welder, making repairs and structural improvements to the ship whenever needed. Most of the barricades and improvised weaponry are her handiwork. She can cut through anything on the ship and patch any hole that needs patching.

## **BUDI IRFAN & SURYA WAHYU, STEVEDORES**

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Budi Irfan and Surya Wahyu are stevedores. Their primary task is to man the cranes during loading and unloading. During the trip, they make sure the cargo is secure (coordinating with Dagny when necessary). Even without access to the stowage plans, they know quite well which containers were loaded where, though they might not know what is inside any given container.

## **THE RECOVERY SPECIALISTS**

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The recovery specialists were airlifted onto the Friendship Queen with one mission: to ensure that the Valtion containers can be secured so that Mitsuhan has time to execute a plan to recover those containers. They're corporate soldiers, used to doing Mitsuhan's dirty work. They do not care about anything or anyone, except fulfilling their mission objective. Everything and everyone else is expendable.

Their mission was thwarted by the officers who did not relinquish the stowage plans, the contractors who control most of the ship and Robin Spina, who has recorded some of their interactions and is ready to upload that to a video hosting site when they use violence in order to get what they want.

They are armed with assault rifles, semi-automatic pistols and both smoke and fragmentation grenades.

Here follow some examples of corporate soldiers you can use.

## 'COLONEL'

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'The colonel' is the leader of the team. He is obviously ex-military, with the buzz-cut to match. He's outfitted with **Synthetic Nerves** and an **Implant Weapon**. He expects total obedience from his troops - and gets it because he keeps them alive.

When nervous or frustrated, he chews on a cigar. The stench of the cigar smoke gives away his presence.

## 'ZIG'

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'Zig' is the second-in-command for the team. She is fiercely loyal to the Colonel and would even jump into the path of any bullet intended for him. Equipped with **Synthetic Nerves** and carrying a **sword**, she prefers to strike from an ambush and leaves the grunt work to Humpty and Dumpty.

## 'HUMPTY' & 'DUMPTY'

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A pair of fraternal twins, Humpty and Dumpty are the muscle of the team. They are not used to think for themselves and are trained to blindly throw themselves into danger if needed, but they are not suicidal. If they can retreat from a tight spot to dig in at a better position, they will do so.

# THE FRIENDSHIP QUEEN

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## LAYOUT: THE DECK

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The Friendship Queen has three separate compartments for containers. The compartments are open on the top, so that the cranes can easily load the containers on and off. There is a steel plate placed over the middle compartment with a single container welded to it. Windows have been cut in the sides and at the front. This is Robin Spina's workshop, which has lied unused for two weeks now. The workshop houses a greenscreen, video equipment and a montage system. Anyone rummaging through the workshop could find disks with raw video footage and get a glimpse of life on board before the Friendship Queen got stranded here.

Two cranes are on deck at starboard, positioned in between the three compartments. When not in use, the cranes' arms are folded in. A ladder allows access to the crane cabins where the manual controls can be found. There is also a neural interface port. The cranes can only be operated from the cabins. It takes a while for the arms to unfold. After that, the cranes can grab a container one at a time. The arms can rotate 360°.

Two small cabins provide access to belowdecks.

At the aft end of the ship is the bridge, which stands three stories tall.

## LAYOUT: BRIDGE

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The bridge has three floors. Each floor has two 'wings' with a small lobby in the middle, where the staircases leading up and down are. The stairs go halfway to a little plateau and then turn 180° to ascend (or descend) the second half to the next floor. Two doors lead from the lobby to corridors in each wing. On the ground floor, the corridors end in doors leading to the deck.

One wing of the ground floor has storage closets, the other has the kitchen and the officer's mess hall.

The second floor has the officer quarters. The captain's quarters are spacious and luxurious, the other rooms are furnished like upscale business hotel rooms: functional and nice enough, but not luxurious. The various occupants have filled their rooms with personal items, like a family photo, books or personal equipment. Two rooms have extra sleeping pads on the floor: this is where the recovery specialists sleep. Robin Spina's room is on this floor. She is confined to her room.

The third floor is the bridge proper. It is an open space with windows looking out in all directions. Consoles with controls of various sorts line the walls. A door grants access to a walkway that runs around the whole bridge. Someone with a rifle would have an excellent coverage of the whole deck, but very little cover.

### **LAYOUT: BELOWDECKS**

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Three corridors run along the outer bulkheads of the ship, each on their own level. Staircases halfway the deck on port and starboard sides connect the three levels and allow access to the deck. Watertight doors are placed at every twenty meters. Usually these are open to allow for easy passage, but they have been closed on the Friendship Queen to impede the advance of the recovery specialists.

The lowest corridor is fully under the control of the workers. The other two are contested: barriers have been erected halfway by both the recovery specialists and the workers, with about twenty meters in between. Most are not guarded, but can be protected within minutes. As neither side wants the situation to escalate into open warfare, they are careful to keep to their side. Towards the bow are the contractor quarters and their lounge.

At the aft section of the lowest corridor is the engine room. The engine room is fully under the control of the workers. They keep the engine running stationary to provide power to the ship's systems. From the engine room, a set of stairs go up towards the lobby of the ground floor of the bridge. These stairs are barricaded too.

## **SHIP SYSTEMS: FUNCTIONAL VIEW**

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The systems aboard the Friendship Queen are geared towards controlling the cargo and workers. Throughout the ship, motion detectors and sensors for temperature and humidity keep track of people movement and cargo condition. All this information is stored and fed to a rudimentary, non-sentient AI which looks for abnormal patterns. If immediate action is needed, the officers are notified and they relay the orders to the workers.

Every so often, the ship-based AI bundles the data and sends it by satellite to Ujeyong HQ where a much more sophisticated AI combines that data with weather predictions, ship movements and global trade patterns to formulate orders. These are sent back to the ship and processed.

With Ujeyong's bankruptcy, their subscription to the satellite service has lapsed. That means there is no data connection between the Friendship Queen and Ujeyong Line HQ, but also means there is no easy way to send messages to and from the ship. The Friendship Queen is essentially isolated from the Matrix, and only Robin Spina is the only person on board who has an outgoing connection available.

## **SHIP SYSTEMS: MATRIX VIEW**

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As the Friendship Queen is essentially isolated from the rest of the Matrix, systems security is not very advanced. Nothing more serious than Blue ICE is available, though Erasmio might have some Red ICE on his personal deck to send after any intruders.

Physical access ports are available throughout the ship. They all connect to the single Login Gate. From there, two Building (or rather, Ship) Security Nodes are available. One monitors the sensors at the aft section of the ship, the other the sensors at the bow. Each Ship Security Node has a Database Node attached to it, where historical data is stored. A skilled Hacker could determine everyone's location and their movement since the begin of the journey.

The two Ship Security Nodes connect to a Production Control System, which houses the ship-based AI. As Erasmo is the only one who ever visits this node, he has used some of his free time to 'redecorate'. The node presents as the room of a teenage girl. The AI construct presents as a young girl with ample bosom and calls everyone 'brother'. She doesn't have any real conversation skills. She refers to the corporate AI as her 'older brother'. She has been coded to act demure and deferent.

The AI node provides access to the final Node on board, the Root Node. This is where Erasmo's avatar usually hangs out if he's logged in.

# LEGWORK PHASE

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## LEGWORK CLOCK

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- 1200 Everything's cool
- 1500 The team is making some noise, but nothing serious... yet
- 1800 There are some vague rumors circulating
- 2100 Insiders know that something is about to happen
- 2200 Mitsuhan knows that there will be trouble
- 2300 Mitsuhan has confirmation that the Friendship Queen will be targeted
- 0000 Mitsuhan has an intercept team standing by

## FINDING OUT FACTS

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As the team go into their legwork phase to gather [intel] and [gear], they might pursue a specific subject to get information about. To give the team some additional information, the following sections list facts about some subjects that can be found out during the Legwork Phase. 'Known' facts are easily found out through public media and message boards, and could be shared on a roll of 6-. 'Hidden' facts are not publicly known but could be found out by careful searching, and could be shared on a roll of 7+. 'Secret' facts require insider knowledge, and could be shared on a roll of 10+.

All of this information is meant to be given to the team in *addition* to any effects of the Move they use.

## **FACTS ABOUT MITSUHAN**

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### **Known:**

- Mitsuhan Heavy Industries specializes in building heavy machinery, shipbuilding and bulk cargo transports.
- Their headquarters is a whole island in the Sea of Japan.

### **Hidden:**

- The island doesn't house big arcologies: it's all greenery and villages, to emulate a 'hometown' feel.
- The Mitsuhan Foundation, their art initiative, operates many museums on the island. Being offered a luxurious, culture-filled retreat at the Mitsuhan HQ is an excellent bribe.

### **Secret:**

- The Mitsuhan Foundation picks a few artists from emerging art movements and elevates them as 'geniuses' in order to profit off them.
- This also reinforces the idea that art can only be made by special individuals, instead of everyone having the capability to create art. Encouraging workers to keep their heads down and keep working their menial jobs instead of pursuing a career in art is an additional bonus.

## **FACTS ABOUT UJEYONG LINE**

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### **Known:**

- The Ujeyong Line started out as an independent shipping company, but was bought up by Mitsuhan Heavy Industries twelve years ago and now operates as a wholly owned subsidiary.
- All their ships have 'Friendship' in their name.

### **Hidden:**

- To cut costs, they work with a skeleton crew of salaried officers on each ship, complemented with 'contractors' that are hired for a single ship. It's the contractors who do all the heavy and dangerous work, and if they become unfit to work, Ujeyong dissolves their contract at the next port of call.

**Secret:**

- Some Mitsuhan fund managers used the Ujeyong stock for a pump-and-dump scheme to make some cash, but this coincided with some large loans coming due. Because the Ujeyong stock was low at the time, it was impossible to generate the funds needed, and Ujeyong Line had to default on those loans.

**FACTS ABOUT ROBIN SPINA**

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**Known:**

- She's a video artist of 26 years old, originally from the UK.
- Part of the 'New Absurdist' movement, Robin made short absurdist clips that show the bleakness of life in a large city.
- She's been hired by the Mitsuhan Foundation since seven months ago and has been living on their HQ island since.
- She went on board at the last stop before the ship started its trans-oceanic crossing.
- Robin's workshop is in a 40' container on board.

**Hidden:**

- The price of her work has now skyrocketed as she is aggressively marketed by the Mitsuhan Foundation
- Robin's work has lost much of its absurdist tone and is now more focused on narrative

**Secret:**

- With Robin's work changing because of the corporate environment she is in, it's losing its edge and her star is waning in avant-garde circles.
- As the Mitsuhan Foundation sees its investment in her losing its value because of this, they must have thought that a change of scenery will allow her to re-gain her footing.

## **FACTS ABOUT THE FRIENDSHIP QUEEN**

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### **Known:**

- It's a LOLO (Load-On/Load-Off) container vessel with two cranes to hoist containers on or off the ship.
- Robin Spina came aboard at the last stop before the trans-oceanic leg of the voyage, along with her atelier.

### **Hidden:**

- It is usual for vessels like this to work on 'feeder routes', to transport containers from smaller harbors that don't have container loading infrastructure on shore, to much larger harbors where the containers are loaded on massive transports for cross-oceanic travel (which is much cheaper to do in bulk).
- The Friendship Queen has been making these 'feeder runs' until now, but it's now on a trans-oceanic voyage, which is unusual.

### **Secret:**

- The Friendship Queen has made stops at three relatively small harbors before setting off across the ocean
- The cargo manifest has been deleted from all shore-side systems

## POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS

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Whenever a Move results in a complication, you could advance the Legwork Clock as a result. But alternatively, you could also use one of these complications, if it fits with your setting and team.

### MITSUHAN WANTS ROBIN BACK

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Ever since the Mitsuhan Foundation became aware of Robin's predicament, they are working to get her off the ship. She has been a valuable asset, and abandoning her at sea would be a colossal PR nightmare.

Robin's handler, the 'executive assistant' **Chika Kawaguchi**, will turn up unannounced when one of the characters is alone, accompanied by two broad-shouldered guards in ill-fitting suits. She will tell them to deliver Robin to her instead. She implies that she can make life very dangerous for the team if they do not agree.

If you think it would be fun, you could let the character **get the job**. If they do not intend to follow through on any promises made, then Chika will realize this later on. In that case, you could advance the Legwork Clock and Mitsuhan's Corporate Clock as the team has made a powerful enemy.

### VALTION WANTS THEIR CONTAINERS BACK

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Even though Mitsuhan has assured their contacts at Valtion Metallica that the containers are absolutely safe and will be recovered and, eventually, delivered to their destination. But Valtion's patience is running thin — and they can't afford to have the contents become public knowledge.

**Linda Jokela**, a Valtion operative, will contact one of the characters (preferably one that is *owned* by Valtion) and tell them that Valtion has some containers on the Friendship Queen that they want recovered or at least protected. She will not reveal the contents, but will give the container identification numbers and reveal that the Valtion containers were the first to be loaded, so they are probably at the bottom of the stack.

# ACTION PHASE

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## ACTION CLOCK

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- 1200 The officers are actively scanning the ocean around the ship for approaching vessels
- 1500 The extraction specialists make sure to be fully armed at all times
- 1800 Every barricade erected by the extraction specialists is manned
- 2100 Guards are permanently posted with Robin Spina
- 2200 The extraction specialists are ready to take the whole ship by force
- 2300 Mitsuhan launches an attack helicopter
- 0000 The attack helicopter arrives at the Friendship Queen and tears it apart

## **POSSIBLE COMPLICATIONS**

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If you want to make the Action phase a bit more interesting, you could choose to throw these complications in the mix.

### **PIRATES APPEAR**

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If the team made a lot of noise in the Legwork phase, a group of unscrupulous thieves might have picked up on a rumor. And with the Friendship Queen stationary and loaded with containers with stuff that is apparently worth something, they hatch a plan. That team assembles a fleet of three fast, armed ships and a small cargo barge. They turn up, expecting only light resistance against their well-armed group. Their plan is to load any container they can get their hands on onto their barge and make off with it. They could be persuaded to cut a deal with the Contractors.

If you have a Driver stuck on their ship, this is an excellent way to shake up their routine holding pattern.

### **VALTION COMES FOR THEIR CONTAINERS**

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Once Valtion becomes fed up with Mitsuhan's empty promises, they decide to take their containers off the Friendship Queen themselves. As with the pirates, they will come organized. If given the chance, they will start to unload the Friendship Queen with the cranes on board, simply tipping any other container overboard: they are only interested in the Valtion containers.

In contrast with the pirates, the Valtion team *does* come prepared for violence, but they are open to make a deal with anyone who will agree to help them.

## ADAPTING THE MISSION

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Here's some advice on adapting the mission to your team, to make it 'pop' more:

- If your team does not include a Driver with a nautical vehicle, the team could hire or recruit one;
- If your team includes a Killer, you might want to add more extraction specialists to the roster so they have something to tangle with;
- If your team includes a Pusher with a socialist or anarchist agenda, you might want to emphasize the nature of the conflict between the contractors and the officers;
- If your team includes an Infiltrator, you might want to emphasize the barricades and the security measures in place for them to bypass;
- If your team includes a Hacker, you might want to play up the information about locations of people that can be found, and the counter-measures Erasmo can activate.