

Arc 4 Seq 4 | Mini-Game

Outline

Setting:

The **Long Solo Mission** during *Arc 4 "Beat 5"* takes place in the **residential decks** — a quiet, human space now empty and in disarray.

Purpose:

Advance the story by isolating the Player, escalating direct artifact influence, and giving meaningful engagement rather than pure busywork.

Structure (settled outline):

1. Commander assigns an isolated repair mission in an unused deck.
2. Player travels alone through quiet corridors toward the task zone.
3. As Player nears the access hall, the Cultist is already there, waiting—presence feels oddly natural.
4. They walk together toward the task area; short conversation establishes distrust of Commander and concern about the station's safety.
5. Environmental stability slips slightly during transit (lighting or sound drift).
6. Near the task door, the Cultist lags behind or slips out of view; when Player looks back, he's gone.
7. Commander calls over comms, unaware of any companion.
8. Player proceeds into the mission area and performs the assignment alone, atmosphere returning to routine.
9. Task completes normally; Player returns to Command for debrief and rest directive.

Key Gains:

- Introduces new, active puzzle (power-routing maze).
- Deepens artifact influence and psychological themes.
- Uses sysop mechanics for exploration and revelation.
- Maintains continuity of player agency, isolation, and slow horror tone.

Lessons So Far:

- Batteries can't be moved but they can be cabled into things within reach
- Rooms can power all doors that they are attached to
- Rooms can send power to another room on the same local trunk

- Power and data can be rerouted to different trunks at junction rooms
- Terminals often give location specific interfaces with permission gates
- Some circuits have breakers that can flip

Why this matters: This final puzzle to get clear the mission should require all the lessons the game has taught so far and through them create a layered puzzle. - It should be hard but not so hard that it can't be done without pencil and paper - It should have a path that doesn't require optional content, or that can't easily skip it

Locations

Core Residential Modules:

- Crew Quarters (bunk beds, lockers, personal desks, terminals)
- Mess Hall / Galley (tables, vending machines, food prep counters)
- Rec Room / Lounge (seating, holo-tables, arcade-style screens)
- Showers / Lavatory (partition stalls, mirrors, hygiene stations)
- Observation Lounge (viewports, benches, starfield windows)

Residential Support Spaces:

- Residential Corridors (personal quarters hallways, room signage)
- Access/Elevator Lobbies (waiting areas, directory screens)
- Laundry Rooms (washers, drying units, folding stations)
- Personal Storage Lockers (corridor alcoves, numbered lockers)

Design

Core Objective:

Restore power across the residential deck by reactivating three key subsystems (lighting, life-support, and access control) using established station-maintenance mechanics. The process should feel like careful technical troubleshooting—every decision has visible impact, and progress is tracked through an evolving in-world checklist.

Core Mechanics

- **Battery Linking:** Fixed batteries can patch short power gaps through cable connections within reach. Players decide which rooms to energize at a time; repositioning not allowed, so routing order matters.

- **Trunk Line Rerouting:** Each color-coded trunk (Red, Green, Blue) supplies a section of the deck. Players toggle direction of current at junctions to redirect limited power between trunks.
- **Breaker Load Logic:**
 - Every configuration adds cumulative draw.
 - Overloading a trunk or powering sections out of balance pops local breakers and blacks out connected rooms.
 - Restoring function involves isolating overload paths and reestablishing healthy flow.
- **Terminal Management:**
 - Each zone terminal can route live current only from its active trunk.
 - Some doors, lights, and life-support ducts depend on nested permissions—one terminal must power another.
- **Dynamic Maintenance Checklist:**
 - A live "**System Diagnostics**" display (Commander feed or local HUD) lists immediate goals such as "*Power first access door*" or "*Stabilize Green Trunk Load.*"
 - Trip a breaker or cut current, and affected items gray out or uncheck until power returns.
 - The list updates automatically as systems come online, guiding awareness without revealing puzzle solutions.

Challenge Architecture

1. **Initial Isolation:** The deck powers up with only two illuminated rooms. Players experiment with rudimentary routing to open the first access path; checklist highlights "*Gain Entry to Corridor*" and clears once achieved.
2. **Mid-Puzzle Relay:** Redirecting one trunk energizes the secondary corridor but risks breaker overload. Players see "*Reroute Power - Green → Central Hall*" appear mid-task; if they misconfigure, breakers pop and the entry uncrosses on the checklist.
3. **Final Configuration:** Achieve stable simultaneous distribution to gain full residential access without tripping breakers. All checklist items display approved (green) for a short time before mission success triggers full deck restoration.

Feedback Cues

- **Visual:** Lights ramp smoothly with correct power, dim to red warning state on overload. A faint flicker may linger even in success, hinting at unseen interference.
- **Audio:** Clicks, thumps, and electrical hum respond to routing precision; tripped breakers release an unmistakable pop.
- **Interface:** Terminals state real-time "ONLINE/OFFLINE" statuses. Checklist entries update instantly when states change to maintain readability.

Difficulty Target

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- Designed for **logical reasoning and spatial deduction**, not hidden puzzles.
 - Solvable through in-world observation and trial-and-error—roughly ten minutes for a methodical player.
 - Optional complexity arises from tracing multiple trunks; success driven by comprehension, not rote memorization.
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