

Arc 4 Seq 4 | The Medic's Request

Narrative Purpose

This step shifts the emotional center from the Technician's unraveling to the Medic's quiet clarity.

- **Emotional tone:** Melancholy, gentleness, and creeping dread beneath routine.
- **Immediate goal:** Receive a personal request from the Medic and perform a medical-oriented task outside Command's authority.
- **Mechanical purpose:** Introduce the *Casualty Scanner* tool and begin the "classification of the dead" mechanic, reinforcing the station's emotional weight and the artifact's subtle distortions.

Narrative Breakdown

Beat 1 | Morning Intra?Mail

The **Player** wakes to a firm, professional message from the **Medic** — not urgent, but unmistakably a directive.

- **Camera:** Full Control; first-person in quarters.
- **Audio:** Soft ventilation; a single, decisive chime from the comm terminal.
- **Environmental Cues:** Dim simulated morning light; auto-brew steaming steadily.
- **Objective / Task:** Read the message.
- **Player Feedback:** HUD prompt: "*New Message — Medic.*"

Actions:

- Notification marker guides the **Player** to the desk terminal.
- The message is concise, authoritative, and expects compliance.

Dialogue:

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System (text display): "From: Medic — Subject: Report In."

"When you're awake, come to Med-Bay. I need you for something important"

Triggers:

- Objective update → "Report to Med-Bay."

Beat 2 | The Gift of the Casualty Scanner

The **Player** meets the **Medic**, who is calm but visibly worn. She presents a new tool and a personal request.

- **Camera:** Full Control.
- **Audio:** Soft monitor beeps; faint coolant drip; subdued hum of life-support.
- **Environmental Cues:** Med-Bay dim but stable; two occupied cots; one empty.
- **Objective / Task:** Speak with the Medic.
- **Player Feedback:** Dialogue wheel opens.

Actions:

- **Medic** greets the **Player** with a tired smile.
- She hands over a compact scanning device.
- She explains its purpose: identifying casualties for records and closure.
 - the dead body under the sheet is the **Medic**, you are given a chance to ask about it and they misunderstand your question and answer it in an indirect way but that lets you know that they do not see what you see. Scanning the body shows someone not the **Medic**

Dialogue:

“ **Medic** (gentle) "I know Command has you running ragged... but I could use your help with something."

Medic (offering device) "This is a Casualty Scanner. It tags remains for medical logs. Someone needs to start the list."

Medic (soft) "I trust you to do it right."

Triggers:

- Item acquired → *Casualty Scanner*.

- Objective update → "*Begin Casualty Classification.*"
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Beat 3 | The Melancholy Task

The **Player** moves through nearby decks, scanning bodies and debris sites. The Medic guides them over comms, her voice steady but somber.

- **Camera:** Full Control.
- **Audio:** Echoing corridors; distant metal creaks; Medic's voice through comms.
- **Environmental Cues:** Flickering hazard lights; sheet-covered shapes; dust drifting in beams of light.
- **Objective / Task:** Scan designated casualty sites.
- **Player Feedback:** Scanner hum; soft haptic pulse on successful scan.

Actions:

- The **Player** approaches each body or debris cluster.
- Scanner overlays display names, partial IDs, or "UNIDENTIFIED."
- The Medic speaks intermittently, reflecting on the dead and on the Technician.

Dialogue:

“ **Medic** (*quiet*) "Most of these people... I knew their routines. Their jokes."

Medic (*hesitant*) "The Technician's been... different. Softer. Forgetful. I don't think she realizes it. And now something happened when she confronted the Cultist about whatever you both found with his ship. You don't just turn like that. Do you?"

Medic (*sad*) "Thank you for doing this. It matters more than Command thinks."

Notes: Perception changes are the artifact's attempt to show the player that humans irrationality cause their own death. "Be peaceful, do not get yourself killed."

- the player tries to scan a dead body and it gives an error (no body), then the player looks away and back the body is not there
 - the dead looks like the player, the player scanner shows the player, the medic comments that they knew the person and that they had just talked to them the week before. When you look away from the body, it no longer looks like you. Scanning it again shows it's already been scanned.
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Beat 4 | Command Interrupts

As the final scan completes, the Commander cuts in abruptly — unaware of the Medic's task and uninterested in it.

- **Camera:** Full Control.
- **Audio:** Sharp comm crackle; Commander's clipped tone.
- **Environmental Cues:** None.
- **Objective / Task:** Receive new orders.
- **Player Feedback:** Incoming comm notification.

Dialogue:

“ **Commander** (*brisk*) "Kid, report to Command. Got a job that won't wait."

Medic (*soft sigh*) "Go on. I'll finish the logs. Be careful out there."

Triggers:

- Objective update → "Report to Command Deck."

Beat 5 | The Last Survivors

The **Player** is asked to search the residential sector to track the dead and search for survivors.

- **Camera:** Full Control.
- **Audio:** Ambient hum; occasional structural groans; no companion chatter.
- **Environmental Cues:** Distant flickers; long, empty corridors; subtle shadow lag.
- **Objective / Task:** Survey the residential decks, catalog casualties, and restore power to the area.
- **Player Feedback:** Standard mission UI.

Actions:

- The **Commander** gives the **Player** a brief, procedural assignment from the Command Deck.
- Objective appears on HUD: "Survey Residential Decks — Locate and Tag Personnel."
- The order carries no emotional weight; it sounds like busywork.

Dialogue:

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Commander (*flat, controlled*) "We're missing people in the residential sectors — maintenance crew, kitchen staff, a handful from logistics."

Commander (*after a short pause*) "Take the scanner and move deck to deck. Log any casualties, tag bodies for retrieval, and note any survivors you find."

Actions:

- The **Player** rides the lift down into the silent residential levels.
- The decks are half-lit, air still, echoes overlapping through the long halls.
- Distant lights flicker out of sync, creating a faint pulse through the corridor.

Dialogue:

“ (No comms traffic; only the echo of steps and the hum of the station.)

Actions:

- At the main access hall, the **Player** spots the **Cultist** leaning against a bulkhead.
- His posture is casual; his presence feels natural despite the impossibility.
- The **Cultist** straightens and walks toward the **Player**.

Dialogue:

“ **Cultist** (*quiet, almost friendly*) "Still running errands for the Commander, I see."

Cultist (*glances down the hallway*) "He talks procedure, but he's deaf to the hum. Can't hear what the station's saying anymore."

Actions:

- The **Player** and **Cultist** walk side-by-side toward the maintenance corridor.
- Lighting drifts brighter, then dimmer; footsteps echo half a beat out of time.
- The **Player**'s scanner briefly flickers between "Connected" and "No Signal."

Dialogue:

“ **Cultist** (*measured tone*) "The Commander clings to symmetry—to wires, charts, routines. But the Technician... she's worse. Something in her voice bends now."

Cultist (*turns slightly to the* `Player`) "You hear it too, don't you? The way the walls answer back?"

Actions:

- They reach the corner before the mission door.
- The `Cultist` slows his pace, staying just out of the `Player`'s peripheral vision.
- The hum deepens; air temperature drops a few degrees.

Dialogue:

“ **Cultist** (*almost whispering*) "Leave this place before it remembers you. Before it starts saying your name."

Actions:

- The `Player` looks down an intersecting corridor, hearing faint movement.
- When they turn back, the `Cultist` is gone.
- The hum returns to its normal tone—steady, neutral.

Dialogue:

“ **Commander** (*crisp, unaware*) "Report status. You at the junction yet?"

Actions:

- The `Player` enters the operations bay and activates the terminal.
- Power reroutes engage, conduits light sequentially down the corridor.
- Atmosphere returns to routine—checklist items marking “*Lighting,*” “*Access,*” and “*Life-Support Online.*”
- The last entry flashes green: “*Residential Deck Stable.*”

Dialogue:

“ **Commander** (*steady, muted relief*) "Power readings look steady. That'll do for now. Mark the deck complete and get some rack time."

Actions:

- The **Player** exits back toward the lift.
- The deck hums evenly now, but the faint echo of the Cultist's last words lingers through the vents—barely audible, perfectly timed with the station's heartbeat.

Beat 6 | Dismissal and Forced Rest

The **Player** returns to Command. The Commander has no further tasks and orders rest.

- **Camera:** Full Control.
- **Audio:** Low hum; faint rhythmic pulse beneath.
- **Environmental Cues:** Command Deck lights dim to "night cycle."
- **Objective / Task:** Return to quarters and sleep.
- **Player Feedback:** HUD prompt: "*Rest Required Before Next Operation.*"

Actions:

- **Commander** leans back, exhausted.
- He waves the **Player** off with a tired gesture.

Dialogue:

“ **Commander** (*weary*) "That's it for now. No more fires to put out. Rack out and we'll regroup next cycle."

Triggers:

- Enables *Free-Roam Mode: Limited Areas Open*.
- Activates sleep marker in quarters.
- Blocks next plot trigger until rest.

Narrative Intent

This sequence shifts emotional focus from suspicion to **melancholy and quiet dread**.

- The Medic becomes a stabilizing presence — gentle, perceptive, and increasingly aware of the Technician's changes.
- The Casualty Scanner introduces a somber mechanic that forces the **Player** to confront the human cost of the disaster.
- The Commander's interruptions reinforce the widening gap between *human needs* and *institutional routine*.

- The long solo mission deepens the sense of isolation and repetition.
- By the end, the `Player` feels caught between two worlds:
 - the Medic's emotional truth
 - the Commander's mechanical demands

The tone carried forward is one of **quiet unraveling**, where compassion and routine coexist uneasily, and the artifact's influence continues to erode memory, continuity, and trust.

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