### intro

Greetings, EMPLOYEE\_NAME, and thank you for taking part in this year’s Employee Self-Assessment and Satisfaction Survey. We are grateful for your NUM\_YEARS of dedicated service, and appreciate you taking the time to give us your valuable feedback.

\* Yeah, I'm really feeling appreciated. Why am I filling out this survey again? I'd better get a gift card or something.

- NOTE: Participation in the Employee Self-Assessment and Satisfaction Survey is mandatory. Failure to complete said survey may subject you to monetary fines and/or confinement to the boiling sulphur pit.

\* Oh yeah, the boiling sulphur pit!

- Your values and identity are important to us. Please confirm the spelling of your name.

\* G-R-I-M. Is that so hard to remember every year? Yeesh.

-Here at NextSteps Soul Guiding Co., we pride ourselves on our courteous and professional service. Our team of Soul Guides (aka Grim Reapers) shepherd over 60 million people to the underworld each year. How would you rate your proficiency and efficiency in guiding souls to the afterlife?

\*Honestly, I’m not the sharpest scythe in the shed.

\*They don’t call me the Angel of Death for nothing.

-After a client takes their last breath, the fate of their soul (reincarnation, eternal life, oblivion, etc.) is determined by their personal subscriber package. How would you rate your knowledge of our most popular subscriber packages?

-Ex. Buddhism, Judaism, Atheism, Confucianism, Hinduism, Catholicism, Hellenism, Zoroastrianism, Shintoism, Sikhism, Paganism, Jainism, Islam, and Pastafarianism

\*… I’ll skip this one for now…

\*I know enough to realize one of those is fake.

- Many of our employees find it difficult to remain motivated after several centuries mired in the fetid stench of death and decay without the incentive of time off to escape from the merry-go-round of eternal servitude. How would you rate your dedication to NextSteps Soul Guiding Co.?

\* I show up for work, isn't that good enough?

\*I feel very dedicated to my paycheck, thanks for asking.

- GRIM: Honestly, I could use a bit of time off. Who wants to spend the rest of eternity haunting cancer wards and battlefields? But the last time I asked for vacation days, I spent them in the boiling sulphur pit.

-> END

### Lvl 0

// Cat enters the scene and walks up to Grim.

CAT: Grim, what are you still doing here? We're getting sent to the mortal realm any minute now, and you're not even geared up. Ay, dios mio...

\* Chill out, Catrina. I’m just going to get assigned to a hospital for the tenth time in a row. Take it easy.

- CAT: Idiota, you haven’t heard? There’s a major catastrophe happening topside and we’re getting deployed to the hot zone!

\* Huh? Was there an earthquake or something?

- CAT: It's worse than that, it's the end times! Some sort of clerical error bumped up the next scheduled apocalypse by a few decades... now the dead are walking the earth and there are sightings of giant insects terrorizing the cities. Someone needs to stop these zombie-bug things before humanity is wiped off the map for good!

\* I'd better be getting overtime for this.

CAT: Just try not to become worm food, okay? And get your weapon, for goodness sake.

\* Finally, something fun. They don't make apocalypses like they used to, you know?

CAT: I prefer the boring ones. Now get off your ass and gear up!

- <> It's time to save the world, and we're running late!

-> END

### Lvl 1

CAT: Finally, you're here. I thought you might have become something's lunch.

\* What can I say? I'm a snack.

CAT: I'll take your word for it.

\* I convinced them you would taste better.

CAT: Truly, you're hilarious.

- <> By the way, did you see anything... weird out there?

\* Weirder than a horde of the undead?

CAT: Nevermind, forget I asked.

\* [Now that you mention it...]

GRIM: I think one of those zombug things tried to... communicate with me.

CAT: Me too. I don't like it. Stay away from those things, okay?

-<> I'll meet you at the next checkpoint.

-> END

### Lvl 1 message

//this zombug should be weird looking, maybe tinted a diff color or with a particle effect

???: 🏱︎☹︎☜︎✌︎💧︎☜︎ ☟︎☜︎☹︎🏱︎ 🕆︎💧︎

\* Huh?

-???: 💧︎□︎□︎■︎ ⬥︎♏︎❼︎●︎●︎ ♌︎♏︎ ♑︎□︎■︎♏︎ ♐︎□︎❒︎♏︎❖︎♏︎❒︎

\* What? Are you saying something?

???: ...............

-> END

### Lvl 2

CAT: Our hero appears once more, covered in monster guts.

\* Hey, Kitty-Cat. What's new?

CAT: First off, the name is Catrina. Cat-RINA.

\* What, you don't like my perfume? I call it Eau de Zombie.

CAT: First off, that sounds disgusting.

-<> Second, where did you find a gun?

\* Oh, this old thing? I just picked it up while I was at the grocery store.

-CAT: Well, see if you can pick up another one for me!

-> END

### Lvl 2 message

???: 👎︎□︎■︎❼︎⧫︎ ⍓︎□︎◆︎ 🙵■︎□︎⬥︎ ⍓︎□︎◆︎ ♋︎❒︎♏︎ ♒︎◆︎❒︎⧫︎♓︎■︎♑︎ ◆︎⬧︎✍︎

\* Hello? Can you understand me?

???: ..............

-> END

### Lvl 3

CAT: You know, I used to take for granted that I was the one who would be swatting the flies. Now they're trying to swat me!

\* I can't blame them for wanting to take revenge.

\* I think the zombugs are kind of cool, actually.

-CAT: Those bichos repugnantes keep trying to eat me, of course you take their side.

\* You should be flattered they think you're so tasty.

CAT: I'd rather be alive and unbothered.

\* I have this feeling that at least some of the zombugs are intelligent, not just mindless drones, you know?

CAT: I don't like those things; they're not natural. Stay away if you can.

-<> I'll meet you up ahead, okay?

-> END

### Lvl 3 message

???: ✌︎●︎●︎ ♑︎□︎■︎♏︎📪︎ ♋︎●︎●︎ ♑︎□︎■︎♏︎📪︎ ♋︎●︎●︎ ♑︎□︎■︎♏︎📬︎📬︎📬︎

\* Are you going to say something I can understand?

- ???: ✡︎□︎◆︎ ♍︎♋︎■︎■︎□︎⧫︎ ◆︎■︎♎︎♏︎❒︎⬧︎⧫︎♋︎■︎♎︎

\* That's what I figured.︎

-> END

### Lvl 4

CAT: Ay dios mio. Trying to save civilization is exhausting. If I never see another fruit fly, it will still be too soon.

\* What do you think caused all this anyways? Do you really think it was a clerical error, like they said?

-CAT: I don't know what else it could be. Who would benefit from this chaos? All the death and detruction only causes more trouble for us downstairs.

\* Maybe...

-CAT: What are you saying, exactly? That this bug-pocalypse is a bug-spiracy?

\*I don't know.

-CAT: Don't get distracted with daydreams and what-if's, we don't have time for them right now. Just focus on reaping and slaying. You're not too bad at that.

\*Was there a compliment in there somewhere or was it all insult?

CAT: No comment.

-> END

### Lvl 4 message

???: 💧︎oo■︎ ⬥︎we●︎●︎ ♌︎e ♑︎on♏︎ ♐︎□︎❒︎ev♏︎r

\* Was there something intelligible in there?

-???: 💧︎oo■︎ ⬥︎we●︎●︎ ♌︎e ♑︎on♏︎ ♐︎□︎❒︎ev♏︎r

\*Hmm...

-> END

### Lvl 5

CAT: Bugs that climb, bugs that crawl, bugs that creep... we're going to start seeing bugs that fly and try to suck your eyeballs out soon, I can feel it.

\* I can't wait. How many kinds of bugs usually feature in epic plagues, anyways?

- CAT: There are your classic plagues of locusts and toads, parasites and viruses that kill your cattle... lice and fleas as well. And there are your more recent plague rats...

\* I'm just glad we're not struggling through the rat-pocolypse. Can you imagine? We'd be battling rodents the size of a city bus. Or bigger! And each of their fleas would be as big as a husky!

-CAT: What horrifyingly vivid imagery. You always have such a lovely way of... putting things in perspective.

\* Hey, I'm a reaper of many talents. I'm just gifted that way.

- CAT: The next time we have lunch, please keep your gifts to yourself.

-> END

### Lvl 5 message

???: 🏱︎☹︎☜︎✌︎💧︎☜︎ ☟︎☜︎☹︎🏱︎ 🕆︎💧︎/🏱︎L☜︎A💧︎☜E ☟︎E☹︎🏱P 🕆︎💧S

\* I think I'm starting to understand you...

-???: ✌︎llg□︎■︎♏︎📪︎ al●︎ ♑︎one📪︎ ♋︎●︎●︎ ♑︎□︎■︎e..📬︎

\* I hear ya, buddy.

-> END

### Lvl 6

CAT: And now you have a shotgun. Where are you finding this stuff?

\* Eh, just on the ground somewhere. Someone must have dropped it.

-CAT: Basura de unos, tesoro de otros. Too bad for them. Ha! If you weren't wearing platform shoes, you'd almost look intimidating with all those firearms.

\* I'll show you how intimidating I can get with my foot up y-

CAT: See you at the next checkpoint!

\* Between the two of us, I'm pretty sure I'm still the cute one.

CAT: Eh, I won't argue that.

-> END

### Lvl 6 message

???: 👎︎□︎⧫︎ ⍓︎□︎◆︎ 🙵■︎□︎⬥︎ ⍓︎□︎◆︎ ♋︎❒︎♏︎ ♒︎◆︎❒︎⧫︎♓︎■︎♑︎ ◆︎⬧︎✍︎/👎︎□︎⧫︎ you 🙵■︎□︎⬥︎ you ♋︎❒︎♏︎ hurting ◆︎⬧︎✍︎

\* Hurting? Who is hurting?

- ???: 💧︎oo■︎ ⬥︎we●︎●︎ ♌︎e ♑︎on♏︎ ♐︎□︎❒︎ev♏︎r

\* I think we may be getting somewhere...

-> END

### Lvl 7

CAT: Have you seen any glowy, shambling figures wandering around lately?

\* Yeah, what creeps! I don't know if they are zombugs under there, or if they just like spreading sickness with their nasty aura.

-CAT: "Nasty aura"... you mean the radiation? Are you getting radiation poisoning?

\*Uhh... maybe? Probably.

-CAT: Are you losing more hair and teeth than normal?

\*(...Is there a normal, non concerning number of teeth I could be losing???)

- CAT: Nevermind. Just remember that if your body is damaged or destroyed and you have to leave it behind in the mortal realm, you'll be put on desk duty until the end of time. Majorly inconvenient.

\* ... I'll keep that in mind.

-> END

### Lvl 7 message

???: ...soon we’ll be gone forever....

\* What? Who will be gone?

-soon... soon...

-> END

### Lvl 8

GRIM: Heyyyyy, Catnip.

CAT: Hello, Grim.

\*GRIM: I notice you look a little... goopy at the moment. Did something happen?

-CAT: Yes. Don't ask.

\* You know I have to ask, you're green all over!

CAT: Ugh. If you must know, I was partially eaten by a giant... I don't even know what it was. A man-eating snail maybe. But then I got stuck half-way down and had to cut my way out. Hence the goop.

GRIM: Ew.

CAT: You're the one who asked!

\* Fine, I won't. This is my non-curious face.

CAT: Thanks.

GRIM: But I'm sure it was badass.

CAT:...thanks.

- GRIM: Our job kinds sucks, huh? We're either doing paperwork or getting gooped- we don't even get regular time off.

CAT: I suppose, when you say it that way. But I actually really like this job.

\*Really? Why?

CAT: In a way, we have the easiest job in the world. It's the opposite of a life or death situation. No matter what happens with the client, they can't make any more mistakes. Whether they're going to reincarnate, go to the afterlife, or just find eternal rest, this stage of their existence is done. No going back.

-

\*I never thought of it that way.

\*I can see that.

-CAT: It's a bit different for everyone, I guess. When someone moves on, they can let go of stress and pain, and just... be for a bit. Until whatever happens next happens. I envy that state of existence a bit.

\*Me too, dude...Well, I'm ready to get back to it. Feel like reaping a few souls?

CAT: I always do.

-> END

### Lvl 8 message

???: 💧︎⧫︎□︎p📪︎ we❼︎❒︎♏︎ ♎︎ying

\* Have I heard this one before?

-...We're dying...

\*What is dying? How can we stop this?

???:............dying.....

-> END

### Lvl 9

CAT: We're getting close to the epicenter of the phenomenon. The ZomBugs we see keep getting faster and stronger... I wonder if they have a hive to protect, or a queen who commands the rest. Maybe that's the way to end all of this.

\* I don't know, Cat.

CAT: What's to know? We have to be ready for everything. It doesn't hurt to make a plan.

\* You could be right.

CAT: We'll need to be ready to fight together. You're pretty fast, maybe you can hit the queen with a sneak attack while I come in from the front.

-GRIM: The thing I'm worried about is these weird messages I keep recieving... They're trying to tell us something.

CAT: Don't be an idiot! If they can sow a seed of doubt that makes you hesitate for even a tenth of a second, that's the opportunity they will take to kill you.

\*I don't know...

\*Are you really that calculating?

CAT: Listen to me, chica. These things are hurting people- they've hurt you, they've hurt me. If they want to spread some message of peace and understanding, tell them to shove it up their culo. They started this fight. But I have to finish it, with or without you.

-> END

### Lvl 9 message

???: 👎︎□︎⧫︎ you 🙵■︎□︎⬥︎ you ♋︎❒︎♏︎ hurting ◆︎⬧︎✍︎

\* I'm really trying here. Can you repeat that?

- 👎︎□︎⧫︎ you 🙵■︎□︎⬥︎ you ♋︎❒︎♏︎ hurting us...

\* Who is us? Where are you coming from?

- Don't you know you are hurting us?

\* I'm trying to protect people.

-...you are hurting...

-> END

### Lvl 10

GRIM: Cat, I think there's something big going on here, something- are you okay? You look like crap.

CAT: Something...bit me.

\*Oh. Um. How did this happen?

-CAT: ...One of thossse flying creeeeeepy crawliesssss came down on me and....

\* And what? What's going on?

-CAT: ... it sssssstole my breath away.... and... sssstarted laying eggsssssss... eggsssss in my ear... I can hear them burrrrrrrrowingggg deeeeper...

\* Oh no. Oh Jesus.

-CAT: ... the buzzzzzzzzing of their little wingzzzz.... I can hear thhhhhem hatchinggggg... my... my...

\* Your what? Cat, your what?

-CAT: ....myyyyyy childrennnnn.... here theyyyyy come.... my... babiesssszzzzzzzz...

\* Cat? Catrina! Wake up!

-....

\* Cat?

-CAT:.... cat....

\*Cat, hold on. I'll go get help-

- ???:.... Catrina izzzzzz not here anymore.

-> END

### Lvl 10 message

???: You cannot understand.

\* Help me to understand.

- ???: You cannot understand.

\*I'm trying!

???: You cannot...

-> END

### Boss intro

GRIM: Who are you? What have you done to Cat?

???: Ssssssorry, darling, dear Catrina izzzzzz no more. I've taken thisssss body as my own, and now I'm going to take my revenge. Asssssss to my name, you may call me the LORD OF THE FLIES.

\*...Flies? Are you the one behind this bug-pocalypse?

- LOTF: Of coursssssse, darling. The inssssects and bugssss, critterssss and creeperssss are all my children. And like every parent, I'm just doing the bessssst I can to provide for them.

\* You can't provide for your children by wiping out everyone else!

-LOTF: Why not? Humanity ssssssstarted it. Thosssssse nasty, near-ssssighted humans are on track to drive a million speciessssss into extinction in the next few decadessssss. And who will be the worsssst hit by this extinction event? Who, I asssssk you!

\*...Bugs?

- LOTF: BUGS! INSECTS! ARTHROPODS! My children, lossssssst forever to pollution, invasive sssssspecies, to habitat loss and exploitation! Half a million ssssspecies of insects, gone in one lifetime...

\* Oh wow. That sucks.

-LOTF: It sssssucks indeed.

\* But how will all this destruction help your children? How will this address the damage already done?

-LOTF: I'll have plenty of time to figure that out after I sssssssuck the eyeballs out of your sssskull for my breakfast.

\* Oh, okay. Let's get this ass-whooopin out of the way, then.

-> END

### Boss outro

Whew! That was one of the more thorough ass-whoopings I've been a part of. Ouch.

\* [A voice carries on the wind.]

LORD OF THE FLIES: ..... my babiesssssss....

- I'll take care of your babies, captain. I'll figure everything out- you can pass on now.

\*[A voice fades on the wind.]

- LORD OF THE FLIES: ..... thank you, dear....

\* ...I should have gotten the Lord to fill out a customer satisfaction survey before they discorporated into malevolent mist. Dang. Raising your children counts as above and beyond customer service, right? Right?

-> END

### Outro

Thank you, EMPLOYEE\_NAME for returning to complete the Employee Self-Assessment and Satisfaction Survey. We value your voice and input as we strive to make NextSteps Soul GuidingCo. an even better company.

\* Here we go again. Seriously, they had better give me a giftcard.

- Here at NextSteps Soul Guiding Co., we believe in the saying “Teamwork makes the dream work!” How would you rate your relationship with your co-workers?

\* Eh[...], I'd say they're as good as they've ever been. Catrina is still mad I had to destroy her corporeal body to avert the bug-pocalypse, but even she agrees I had a valid excuse. She's on administrative duty until the end of time, pretty much, but at least I always know where to find my best frenemy.

-How would you rate your job satisfaction overall? What can your managers do to motivate your performance, besides confinement to the boiling sulphur pit?

\* [Hmm...]

Before the ZomBug catastrophe and meeting the Lord of the Flies, I would have rated myself "spiritually confined to the pit," but after averting the Bug-pocalypse, things have changed for the better. First, I got a hefty bonus, and second, my request for time off was approved for the first time in decades. But there's also been a shift in my personal motivation. As the new legal guardian to several hundred insect babies, I've become very interested in averting the ongoing mass extinction of bugs and insects all over the world. The way I see it, taking action now means that I'll have more time to annoy Cat and take naps in the future.

I don't think the Lord of the Flies will ever rise again, despite what my insect babies think. But if they're right, and if he does, I'll be ready. I'll be waiting at the gates of the underworld with my shotgun, a smile and a big old flyswatter.

-> END