

Smoke

FADE IN:

INT. THE UNDEAD RECEPTION - EARLY AFTERNOON

We see a trashed reception room with blinds barely hanging on to the window, dirty carpet, and thick spider webs. It is very busy, with hurdles of monsters lingering, chatting to one another, or staring at the posters/pamphlets around them. These monsters are of various sizes and looks. They are acting very quaint, politely queuing and adding litter to the rubbish bin, etc. What is out of place is the beautifully ornate and untouched wooden desk, with a wheeled desk chair behind it with stacks of pamphlets on top of it. A hand-made sign is hanging above the desk, reading "Assistant Wanted."

A person, ALLY, in a (very out of place) yellow raincoat stands in front of the desk, handing out pamphlets to monsters walking through the office's front door. They are smiling and repeating the same phrase to each monster they hand the pamphlets to.

ALLY

(Friendly, repeated)

Jobs for the Undead.

One man stops in front of them, his body and clothing are lightly translucent, showing that he's a GHOST. Ally hands them a pamphlet, only for it to fall straight onto the floor.

ALLY

Ah right. Ghost. Sorry about that.

They start to reach down for the fallen pamphlet, which begins to levitate on its own. After, it opens up mid-air with the sounds of whispers exploding out of its pages, attacking Ally who instantly turns to GHOST.

ALLY

(T GHOST)

Hey, cut it!

GHOST makes a mocking face and flips off Ally as he slowly becomes invisible. Once he disappears the pamphlet starts to fall again as Ally then snatches it out of the air.

ALLY
Fucking poltergeist.

Out from the front door, we then see a very pale-faced young man, CHARLES. He looks very lost and confused as he walks through the door, clutching a piece of paper in his hand. Staring at everything and everyone within the office.

ALLY
(To CHARLES)
Jobs for t-

ALLY immediately stops when they get a good look at CHARLES, a look of concern washing over their face as he walks into the reception.

ALLY
(Hiding their concern)
Hi, are you new here?

He looks at them with a look of surprise. Ally tilts their head to get a subtle look at his neck.`

CLOSE UP - CHARLES' NECK

His neck is showing two fresh puncture marks which are just starting to scab over.

BACK TO SCENE

Ally watches CHARLES closely as he tries to answer their question.

CHARLES
(Hesitantly)
Y-Yeah, I was told to come here... I think...

He holds up the piece of paper.

ALLY
Well, this isn't a bad place to end up. What should I call you?

CHARLES
Oh um Charles.

ALLY
Hey Charles, I'm Ally.

An awkward silence follows. It looks like CHARLES is trying to sus ALLY out, whilst ALLY is trying to figure out how to approach this situation.

ALLY (CONT'D)
Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

CHARLES looks at them and gives a small, nervous nod in response.

The Choice Dialog Appears for the player to respond as ALLY. All choices may be exhausted.

Ally's Reponse	Charles' Response
What do you mean "you think you were told to come here"?	This note had the address for this place on it... and I was already on the tube leading here. So, I guess someone gave this to me while I was in a blackout.
What happened to you?	I- erm, I don't know. I went out last night... to a club... and I woke up on the tube with this in my hand.
[This option appears after the player says the first response.] You were drunk?	I mean... I think so? I didn't drink much but I don't remember a lot... so maybe I'm just a lightweight now. Sorry, I've went through a break up recently and been a social recluse for a few months because of it... I went out to kind of clear my head and... maybe have some fun. I don't know...
How are you feeling?	Um... really weird. Which is mainly why I came here. I've never felt like this before and - I... I was looking at people on the train and - it felt strange...

Have you eaten recently?	I'm hungry but... no.
You're hungry but "no"?	Y-yeah, I just... feel weird.
[To end this Choice Dialog.] I think I know how to help you.	Huh? What do you mean?

ALLY

Come with me, I think we should go somewhere private to discuss this further.

CHARLES makes a confused face.

CHARLES

Why? I think I was just slipped something and given a weird note that my drunken arse decided to follow.

ALLY

(Serious)

Charles, what do you see around you right now?

CHARLES looks around the office, staring at the monsters around them.

ANGLE. FROM CHARLES' PERSPECTIVE.

We see a werewolf, standing by a poster that reads "Want to know the REAL London?", chatting with other monsters and laughing loudly with it's tongue dangling out. He looks friendly but also monstrous, with his sharp teeth in clear view of CHARLES.

BACK TO SCENE

CHARLES

(Unsure)

Erm... a Halloween party?

ALLY

It's April.

CHARLES

A confused Halloween party?

ALLY

Charles.

CHARLES

(Panicked)

Fuck, fine. I don't understand what's happening, okay? And the more I stay here, the more I am very confused and scared. Okay? OKAY? Is that what you wanted? Me to admit that? That I've never been so drunk that I forget everything in a night like that! That it feels like someone is burning into my neck with a live wire. And that - THAT I'M A VEGETARIAN! I don't like meat! I never have, and I REALLY WANT A STEAK! RARE! I WANT A RARE STEAK, ALLY!

He goes quiet as he notices that everyone surrounding him has turned to stare at him. The reception is now silent. ALLY stares at CHARLES, waiting for him to react.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

Just... lead the way to the room.

[GAMEPLAY] ALLY walks through the parting crowd, with CHARLES following them, towards a closed door on the other side of the reception. As they walk forward, some of the members of the crowd whisper amongst themselves.

CROWD MEMBER 1

(Whisper)

Ally's got their hands full with that one.

CROWD MEMBER 2

(Whisper)

I'm glad I didn't freak out that much when I got turned.

CROWD MEMBER 3

(Whisper)

I could do with a bit of steak
myself.

CROWD MEMBER 4

(Whisper)

These young ones are so dramatic
these days.

CROWD MEMBER 5

(Entering the reception)

Why has everyone gone quiet?

CROWD MEMBER 6

(Whisper)

Shhhhhhhhh, shut the fuck up.

*ALLY opens the door labelled "Office of the Vox Immortuos",
gestures for CHARLES to hurry inside and closes the door
behind him.*

CHARLES

(apologetic)

I'm really sorry. I've never been
like this, I don't know what came
over me.

The Choice Dialog Appears. Only one can be chosen.

Ally's Response	Charles' Response
Are you sure you're okay? I know that coming here can be a lot for some people.	[This response will gain Charles' trust]. I still don't know where "here" is. But yeah... I don't think I'm okay. But you said you can help me so... maybe I will be soon?
That was a lot. I'd recommend you don't blow up like that again.	[This makes Charles nervous]. Right, yeah. Okay... again I'm really sorry. I'll try to be better now.

ALLY walks towards the desk within the office, we can see that this office is nothing like the reception but rather like the desk we saw before; very ornate and well kept. As they move and CHARLES watches them, he starts to look around the room.

CHARLES
(Surprised)
Oh wow. This office is beautiful.

ALLY
Thank you. It came with the job.

CHARLES
With the job?

ALLY
With the job.

ALLY taps the sign on their desk reading "Ally Earling, Vox Immortuos." As they do, we see a shining ring on their index finger.

CHARLES
So, you're like the boss here?

ALLY
Erh, I don't like the idea of me being the "boss". More like the guide...
"Vox Immortuos", do you know what that means?

CHARLES
No clue.

ALLY
It's Latin so I wouldn't expect you to. It means "Speaker of the Undead."

CHARLES
(Amused)
Oh?

ALLY keeps their face very serious, showcasing that they are not joking.

CHARLES (CON'D)
(Serious)
Oh.

A Choice Dialog appears. Only one can be chosen.

Ally's Response	Charles' Response
(gently) I need to tell you something that may sound insane, but you have to trust me on this.	[This response will gain Charles' trust] . Trust a complete stranger in a trashed building, that I found because of a mysterious note in my hand? You know what, after the night I've had, sure. Hit me.
(harsh and blunt) You're not going to believe what I tell you. But I don't care if you do. If you want to believe it you can.	[This makes Charles nervous] . Um, ok. I guess just tell me so we can get it over with.

ALLY

Those "party guests" out there my people, the original London. Most of them have been here for centuries, building this city and creating their own society. There have been plenty of Voxes like me, guiding them, making sure that your London didn't interfere with theirs or theirs didn't interfere with yours.

SMALL PAUSE

Or rather **your old** London.

CHARLES keeps watching them but his expression turns to confusion.

ALLY (CON'D)

Ugh... this is never easy so I'm just going to say it: you've been bitten by a vampire, Charles. I think last night you were bitten when you went to whatever club you went to, they sent you on your way here.

I don't know why they did it or
why they would send you here.
Honestly, I've never seen a case
like you... but I'd love to work
with you to find out what
happened... and help you figure out
what life will be like now.

CHARLES stares at them in bewilderment, blown away by this
news. He slowly lifts his hands to his neck and reacts in
pain when he touches the bite.

[If the player picked both options to *gain trust from CHARLES*, the following will occur].

CHARLES
(Shocked)
None of this makes sense.

ALLY
I know.

PAUSE.

CHARLES
But I can't help but feel like
you're telling the truth.

ALLY
Really?

CHARLES
Yeah well, it explains the weird,
creepy office -

ALLY
(Mockingly annoyed)
HEY!

CHARLES
- and the monsters everywhere and
the... Latin name.

[If the player picked any option that *makes CHARLES nervous*, the following happens].

PAUSE

CHARLES

(Insulted)

Is this some kind of sick joke?

ALLY

What, no.

CHARLES

I may have been fucking drugged
last night! I may have been
through something very traumatic
that I can't remember! And you're
making fun of me?

ALLY

No, Charles -

CHARLES

No, NO! JUST FUCK OFF. COMING HERE
WAS A FUCKING MISTAKE.

CHARLES storms out of the office, slamming the door behind
him.