

Branching Narrative Scenario Exercise

Before entering the Zone

Conditions: First meeting

Cutscene Script:

[Upon entering the Church in Kokov, the PC is stopped by an armed guard where PC says his name and that he is expected by a guide, Swedish. The guard then leads PC to a cloaked individual, sitting at a table near a high window and shrouded in shadows.]

[Swedish is talking with another man; they are closing off a deal by shaking hands when PC arrives at their table. Swedish wishes good luck to the man and dismisses him. After PC is introduced by the armed guard, he then turns his face to the PC and salutes him, before asking the guard to leave them.]

[Swedish drinks a sip from his wooden cup containing strong alcohol and cleans the table from unreadable documents and his remaining food.]

Swedish (full frontal portrait, through the eyes of the PC / seeming somewhat annoyed):

« So, you're the one the Old man was speaking about yesterday? The one with friends in high places? I heard you wanted to go visit... *her*. »

PC:

1. That's me. And you're Swedish, the one leading me into the Zone, my brother ?
2. Afraid so, they were running out of nice people in the low places. Are we leaving soon, my brother?
3. (Lie) Actually, the Old man has missioned me to speak to you about something important.

Swedish:

(response to 1 - serious):

"Good, you seem well responsive and alert. That is going to help you in the road ahead... I am Swedish, your guide, which means what I say goes. Listen to me as would a doctor. *She* is not without feeling, *she* rejects those that do not follow *her* ways."

(response to 2 – smiling / laughing):

"Oh, this one has spirit. Good, a true Stalker always keep its touch light and its footing flexible; it helps when *she* is angry... The same goes for taking care of your friends and your equipment. You remind me of someone... let's hope you live up to the expectations. I am Swedish, let's talk."

(response to 3 – visibly displeased):

"That I doubt. Nobody talks to the Old man, except those that have proven their valor through *her*. Come, come, my friend, drop the act, we have a long road ahead of us... It will not help you once we are there to be untrue and unwilling. You have come a long way to see me, let's not make it a short conversation. I am Swedish, your guide."

(Regardless of the conversation):

"Well then. I have been preparing the necessary tools for our... expedition. Many have passed through here, yet not so many have come back. *She* can be a real challenge for those crossing the threshold. Are you sure you want to proceed? It is still time for you to go back."

PC:

1. Willing and ready. There is too much on the line for me to go back. Let's leave whenever you are ready.

2. Do many people get afraid when you say that to them? Come on, my brother, if you wanted to scare me, you could have done better. I'm here for a reason, don't worry, and ready to go.
3. I've got tools of my own, my brother. I only expect you to show me where the road begins. When can we leave?

Swedish:

(response to 1 - pleased)

"This I like, I can almost taste the freedom burning inside you. Nothing to fear, everything to gain, eh? Maybe you could be of some use after all. Here, take this key (hands over a key), it will... help you with whatever *she* has in store for you. When you find what it opens, of course. We leave tomorrow morning, at sunrise. Rest, for now. (increase to affection)"

(response to 2 - unbothered)

"Oh! But I have no worries about you, your life is your life, and you do with it what you please. I am just a... concerned fellow. Often dreams of glory go hands in hands with ugly endings. But this is for *her* to decide... It is settled then: we leave tomorrow morning, at first light. Be prepared.

(response to 3 - displeased)

"Sure you do. They all do... Yet, I am always the one returning their bodies back here. I just hope you have the right ones with you. *She* can be deceiving on what is needed... We leave tomorrow, at the first hour of the day. I'll lead you on the way and, then, you'll get to be on your own to explore. (decrease to affection)"

[Swedish gets up from the table and leaves the PC to explore the Church]

[End scene]