One of the personal codes I created and gave to Lord Dagult Neverember’s spymaster (who I know reads all my reports) works like this.

If the message has any variant of the word “count” in the preamble, then it is a counting code based on the first number in the document – usually the date.

If the first number in N, then read the Nth word in each paragraph to find the hidden message. Adjacent punctuation is part of the message.

Decoded, the message above reads:

“Larno suspect poisoned Sildar, treating Phandalin as personal domain. Request background report”

The rest of the report should also be considered truthful – after all, if you can hide a message in plain sight, what is the point of the code?

This is not the only code I created – just the one I’m using this time.

See over for a breakdown.

Lord Dagult Neverember Thomas Scrollseeker

Neverwinter Castle Phandalin Village

Neverwinter 12th day of Flamerule, 1479

With all respect accounted to my patron,

I have arrived at the village of Phandalin. I met with Larno Albrek; initially he had no work for me, so I ran errands for the town mayor.

Our first errand was pay a to visit Gnomengard, who we suspect we could provide aid to defend Phandalin against a White Dragon that has been seen in the area.

The gnomes of Gnomengard needed help against an invisible intruder that poisoned the Kings aide in the throne room. We located the threat which was an orcish shaman with the ability to shapechange. In return the Gnomes gave us a number of magic items, and promised to install anti-air weaponry in Phandalin. A return visit may be required.

Our next errand from the mayor of Phandalin was to rescue Sildar, of Holwinter and Donjon Raskin, who had gone missing between Neverwinter and Phandalin. We found the probable ambush site and backtracked to the lair of a Hobgoblin and his goblin and giant spider allies.

We rescued Sildar and returned him to Phandalin, to allow the treating of his wounds. No trace of Donjon has been found.

Upon our return, control was given to Larno of the town Phandalin by Harbin Wester, the Townmaster. The town is now under firm control by Larno’s forces.

At this point I was given my first task by Larno – as the local healer does not live within town limits, I was to locate her and convince her to return.

The healer lived in a far distant windmill which was her personal home, about a day’s travel from Phandalin.

When we arrived there, we found a Manticore assaulting the healers domain. We managed the dispatch the monster, and escorted Adabra, the healer, to the Phandalin town limits.

After delivering Adabra, we travelled further to the west, on the request of allies in the Emerald Enclave. There we found every human settlement overrun either by Orcs or, in one case, Necromancers. One of those encounters was a decisive win for humanity.

Twice we were forced to retreat; the enemy faded into the background before we could return. We tracked them to the best of our ability – the Orcs retreated into the Neverwinter Wood, while the Necromancer may have fled to the coast.

I have just returned to Phandalin, and I am writing this report while waiting to speak to Larno.

Best Regards,

Your Faithful Servant,

Thomas Scrollseeker

Lord Dagult Neverember Thomas Scrollseeker

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