

## Norbert - Introduction

It started with basic detective work, really. Find out who had burgled an alderman's house, investigate rumors of a feud played out at the village square, track a pickpocket to his ring. A fellow halfling, I'm afraid... didn't save his skin, though.

Things started to get more complicated when the King's Court noted my specific skills, and decided to make use of them. I've always tried to avoid politics, and it's all I could do not to get drawn into the petty games or court intrigue.

Finally, I was led into a meeting with the spy-master. The kingdom did not officially have a spy-master, of course - as I've come to learn since, only the worst of rulers loudly and publicly proclaim they have one; and then it's mostly to keep their own people down. The spy-master of Cormyr is not for public display. The office is not meant to intimidate. She's there to \*know\*.

My skills at detective work turned out to be quite useful for Cormyr, and as the cases became more challenging, so grew my enjoyment of them. Uncover evidence of a Black Network smuggling ring. Out a Thayan spy. Investigate rumors of trouble in the Dalelands.

I'm more of a city person, myself. One of the most peculiar things, though, was when I was tasked with finding - tracking - even infiltrating - a group of adventurers. I've seen their kind: oblivious to the goings-on of an organized society. Blindly following their greed, their ambition, their quests or their faith. Wanderers and troublemakers! They trawl through tombs and caverns, and then come to town to rest up. And when they've stirred up things - as one would when lifting a stone in a garden, long left undisturbed - and hairy centipedes and things with too many or too few eyes and legs come crawling after them, it is we who are left to deal with them. It's as if they think the whole world is there... just for them and their personal bit of nonsense and strife.

Harmless, you say? Inconsequential? A single pickpocket, stealing something off a market-goer; caught, confronted, trying to escape, fighting, struggling - a lynching, an outcry, a riot, and half a city burned. Small disturbances may have great consequences, IF no one is there to SEE and REPORT and KEEP IN CHECK the world's butterflies.

But I digress. The adventuring detail: a challenge. I tracked twelve distinct groups and managed to briefly infiltrate three of them. My disguises have been simple; that of a common rogue, looking for a job, or a scholar doing fieldwork. I've come to know myself better - a lot better - as a result, and even as I was preparing my reports, I found myself growing to... enjoy... parts of the adventuring life. .

A nobleman's house, a crime lord's abode... they may be locked and barred and guarded, and a foreign spy may have her own precautions. But the ancient ruins are guarded in many different, more intricate ways, and sometime you find *yourself* barring the way. My... enjoyment of this life was an astounding, shocking discovery. One I have tried to deal with it, decisively.