I have been encouraged by friends to get out and explore the world beyond the four walls of The Royal Academy’s library, as I apparently spend far too much time perusing books, so I finally listened to them - mostly to stop their incessant pestering. I made the decision to go out on a mission with members of the Adventurers’ Guild - as I have heard many stories of their experiences, I thought they would be best to work with for what would be my first adventure, and apparently my first stealth mission. I shall tell more of that later.

But yes. My first adventure. And, well… it was indeed an adventure.

The band of adventurers, a small group consisting of four - a necromancer, a rogue, a scout, and myself - were given the task to determine what the corsairs were doing in the Lady’s Forest. (I will admit to some trepidation when faced with the task, as my mother would often tell me stories of the strange creatures that lived in the forest, in an attempt to dissuade me from exploring its depths.) It was indicated that there was some suspicious activity occurring in the forest, and our group set out to investigate and learn as much as possible about what was going on. For the most part, the necromancer (named Evixa) and I spent most of the expedition working together, as we were the only magic casters there. (She seems rather preoccupied with turning people into zombies, including herself. Curious.)

We were not very far into the forest when we apparently disturbed some moas from their home. I ended up killing one of them, albeit unintentionally. I may have been a little too eager to test out my evocation skills on a live target. After all, there aren’t many who actually *volunteer* to be test subjects for destructive magic. But I digress. We were also, at some point, attacked by creatures that looked like earth elemental wolves of some sort, which attacked with wicked spikes coming out of their backs. I’m quite glad I wasn’t hit with any of those spikes, they did not look pleasant. In fact, we ended up encountering a number of strange creatures in the Lady’s Forest, including something that resembled a pair of bright magenta tigers, some sort of blue, slimy lizard-type creature, a giant orange centipede, and a pair of creatures that resembled slender horses with a single curved horn coming from their head. These latter creatures were most interesting, as it appears that their horns have healing powers - they healed scarred tree bark with a touch. They also smelled quite pleasant, like honey. Upon my arrival back at the Academy, I did some research and found out that those creatures were forest kirin. I think, out of all the creatures we encountered, these were the most fascinating. I shall have to do more research on them…

Strange creatures aside, we did indeed encounter orcs - a handful of scouts, and one massive orc who wielded an anchor for a weapon. He was fierce, and while fighting him I realized I am in dire need of swordsmanship training. That anchor HURT when it made contact with my leg - despite quick healing from Evixa, I’m still rather tender there. Somehow, however, our tiny band defeated him, and the necromancer tried to get information from him. We weren’t able to learn much - just that there were a number of orcs in the woods, and that they did indeed have a leader.

After more traveling through the forest, we came upon a blockade wall at the edge of the forest, extending into the Silver Sea - and the scout and rogue decided that the best course of action would be for them to swim around to the other side of the blockade and attempt to set the wall on fire from within. Their plan wasn’t quite as effective as initially planned, and Evixa and I managed to blast a hole in the blockade from the front and joined the rest of our party as they fought the orc scouts guarding the blockade. We were able to defeat them, and continued on our way.

Eventually we made it to where the corsairs were camped out. They’d built a rather sturdy wall around their compound, and breaking through said wall or scaling it without assistance were not options. After discussing the remaining possibilities (involving attempting to unlock a back entrance that may or may not be guarded), the rogue decided he would sneak in, with the scout staying nearby for backup in case a distraction was needed, while Evixa and I stayed near the back wall and waited for the rogue to toss us down a rope to assist in scaling the wall.

This is where I learned that I am not nearly as good at climbing as I hoped. I made it three quarters of the way up the wall, lost my footing and my grip on the rope, and slid most of the way down before I caught myself, managed to get a better grip, and finally made my way up the wall. (This is why I tend to stay in the library. I don’t end up falling nearly to my doom there.)

Once we scaled the wall, apparently our mission had turned into a stealth mission - had I known this ahead of time, I wouldn’t have dressed in my red dress. I’m a scholar, not an adventurer. Eventually we made our way up close to the main encampment of the corsairs. And given my bright attire I was easily spotted, so I ended up making myself the best distraction that I could and dashed as fast as I could across the camp, drawing the attention of the orcs guarding the camp so the others could attack them. This led to a fierce battle against the orcs at the encampment - we ended up being chased into the forest, our tiny group fighting fiercely, and eventually we felled the last of the orcs. The rogue searched the camp for anything of importance, and found a chest in the largest of the tents in their encampment.

With the orcs defeated, and the chest acquired, we made our way out of the forest. And of course as we were close to exiting the forest, there were more moas. We tried to scare them off. We failed. More moas died. The silly birds brought it upon themselves.

Once out of the forest and back under the wide open sky again, we examined the contents of the chest - there was a fair bit of goods and coin inside, and two very curious letters. Both letters seemed of an amorous nature, one wrinkled and obviously well-read, waxing poetic about how much they cared for the recipient and how they couldn’t wait to be reunited with them, the second more somber in tone, looking less physically worn, and wishing the fight between their peoples would end. Most curious of all: the letters were signed with a seal belonging to the Lotus Court. I sincerely wish I had thought to take the letters with us, but after the long trek through the forest and the rough battle with the orcs, I was a little worse for wear and not quite thinking as quickly as I normally do. I do wonder who wrote those letters, and to whom (I’m assuming an orc camped out in the Lady’s Forest, but who?), and what they really mean.

I asked around, and the rogue’s name is Flint, and the scout is named Erax. I only properly introduced myself to Evixa. Ah well, I am sure to see them again, and I’m quite sure they’ll remember this clumsy scholar-mage sun elf. After all, I was rather… obvious. Stealth missions are clearly not my forte, it seems. I plan to take some time to recover from this most recent mission (my body and my pride took a fair hit during this recent adventure) amongst my beloved books before venturing out again.