



Filed discreetly from the outskirts of Northkeep

Most Honored Guildmaster,

I present an updated account of the escalating irregularities along the Northkeep frontier. While I did not witness the earliest events personally, the patrol's loose tongues and the guard captain's anxieties have provided ample material.

The Messenger and the Forest Spiders

A Northkeep courier was found dead beneath the treeline, slain by spiders of considerable size. The creatures descended from the canopy—an unusual behavior for their kind—and left the body tangled in webbing. Two items were recovered:

- A half-decoded military message
- Slippers of spider climbing, curiously untouched

Before the patrol could investigate further, they were attacked by more giant spiders. The creatures withdrew into the forest, but the patrol later discovered a hidden tunnel leading beneath the city walls. These discoveries have caused the local captain no small amount of alarm; he now fears an imminent incursion from forces across the river.

My Encounter With the Patrol

Later, while conducting my sanctioned cartographic survey of the wetlands, I encountered the same patrol searching for a missing unit. They were eager for information and not particularly subtle in their attempts to extract it.

I shared only what was prudent: that such spiders typically dwell farther north. Their rogue, however, displayed an alarming lack of self-preservation. He reached for my belongings with the casual entitlement of a man who has never lost a hand. It was fortunate for him—and perhaps for diplomatic relations—that I chose restraint.

Night Fires Across the River

The patrol camped rather than return to the city. During the night, multiple campfires appeared across the river, arranged with the precision of a military staging ground. By morning, all traces had vanished. The patrol elected to continue their route rather than report back.

The Ambush in the Northeast Woods

In the northeastern forest, the patrol encountered the local innkeeper on a hunting excursion. Before any meaningful exchange could occur, a Chuul—yes, a Chuul, far from its usual habitat—drove a pair of wolves into an attack formation.

The innkeeper fled immediately, shouting that “Iuz is turning the woods against us.” A dramatic claim, though not entirely implausible given the region’s history.

Despite the ferocity of the ambush, the patrol emerged without injury. Their competence is uneven, but their luck is remarkable.

Conclusion

The patrol has completed its assigned route, though the situation along the river grows increasingly unstable. Spiders descending from the trees, phantom campfires, and aberrations herding wolves – none of this aligns with natural order.

I will continue my observations with the discretion expected of my station.

Your loyal servant,

Zahir of Ket, Cartographer, Merchant’s Guild of Ket