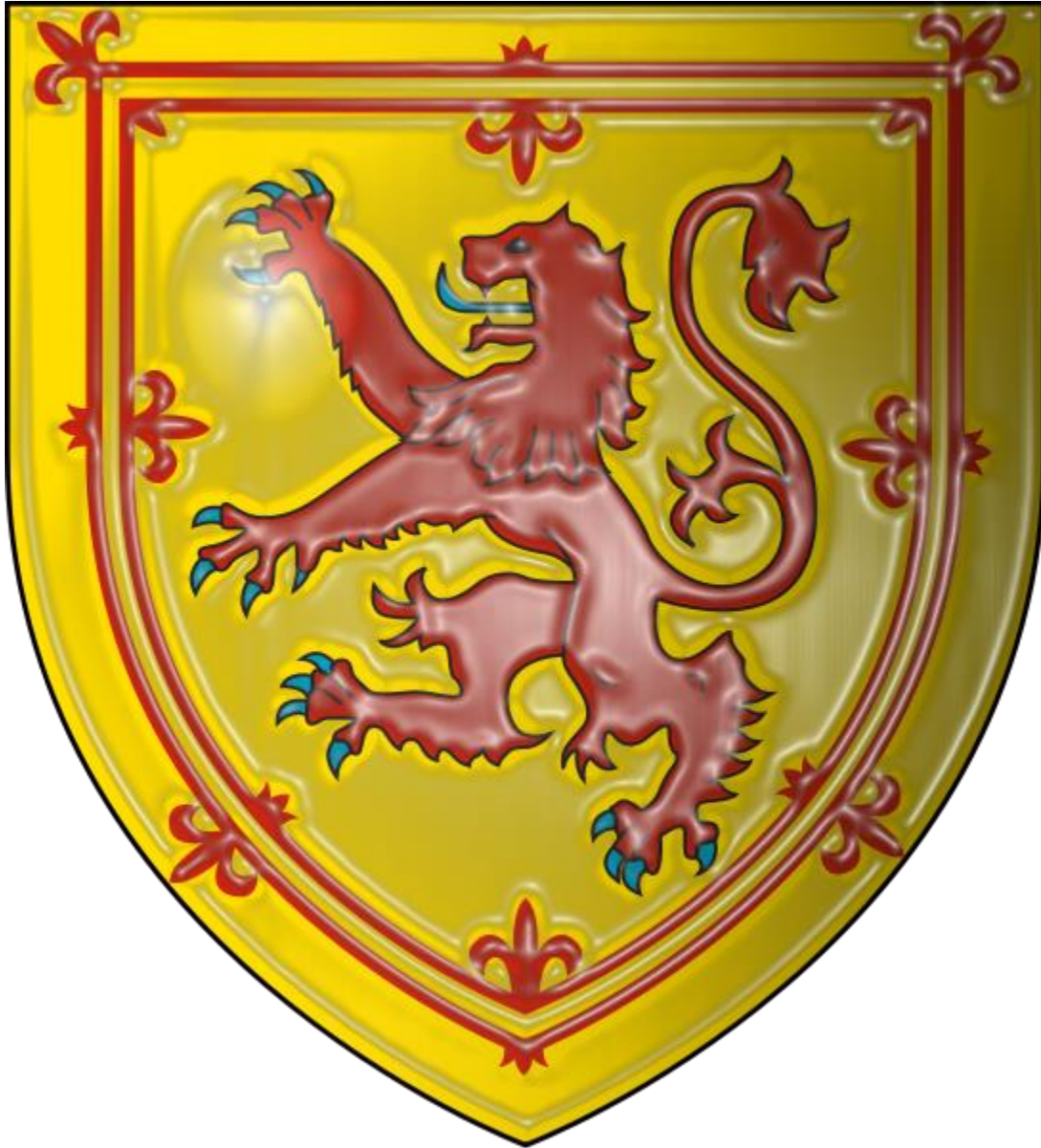


Adventure in Filbar



FT – Lord Morningstar's Keep

Lord Morningstar's Keep

Players Background:

Nestled atop a rocky outcropping overlooking a serene valley is a keep with four towers constructed of shale and limestone. Yellow banners with a black rampant lion adorn the walls and towers. Men guard the walls and have been watching you for quite some time. The wall is imposing but rumor has it that the master of the keep is firm but fair.

Lord Kelven Morningstar had this keep constructed in the Border Hills to continue his fight against evil humanoids bent on the feasting of human blood. A paladin by trade Lord Morningstar has been fighting evil all of his life. A devout man he resides in the keep with his companions and faithful men at arms. Also residing in fortress is his wife Carissa and two daughters.

Many camp tales have been told about the bravery of Lord Morningstar and his comrades in this area. A very bright man his voice can make even the most intense issue seem calm. He is always cautious but will not shirk from giving aid to those requiring it. He has recently been appointed the title of "Marquis" Morningstar by the emperor for his continued service to the realm.

Adventurers in the area will find the warmth of his halls inviting as long as they remain on good terms. He and his followers are always on their guard especially when the young ladies Morningstar's are about. He often remarks that he never had gray hair until his daughters became teenagers.

The keep offers food, water, healing, and item repair capabilities. Lord Morningstar can also offer guidance in weapon skills and level advancement. He is the third Morningstar to be a paladin for the realm and his banner has been recognized since his grandfather Norris Morningstar won it as his own. The emblem has garnered the respect it receives and Kelven Morningstar is well aware of the burden the crest carries with it.

The keep's retinue is exceptionally dedicated to stamping out the evil in the area and actively searches for problems. The men of the watch practice weapon skills daily and are very skilled in combat. Each has been trained by Lord Morningstar himself who still actively practices with the troops. Once a month they have tournaments to test each other in combat situations which is a morale booster.

The interior area has a large fountain, gardens, fruit trees and flowers. This should not be misconstrued as to how firm the fortress or its guardian force is. The grounds are kept beautiful at the behest of Marquess Carissa Morningstar.

DM's Background:

A stalwart force in the Border Hills region is Lord Morningstar and his retinue. For years he and his force have kept the Southern pass open and safe for the caravan route. Recently they have seen an increased amount of humanoid activity and they are starting to struggle with the excess. While the old paladin and his men are keeping pace they certainly wouldn't mind any extra swords to assist them.

Assuming the party is respectful and understands that they are guests they will find the Hall of Lord Morningstar to be warm and inviting. Should anyone in the party be rude or disrespectful this oasis in the hills will no longer welcome them or their associates.

The keep itself is nearly ten years old and has the appearance of a lived in abode. The Morningstar's have called the keep home all of these years. The new Marquis is loyal to his family first and his men second although anyone who is more than a casual observer can tell that he loves his men like brothers. He resides in the keep with his family and his old adventuring cohorts who are as loyal to him as he is to them. Needless to say between the Morningstar family, men at arms, and adventuring pals this group acts as a well-oiled team.

The castle is constructed on a rocky outcropping overlooking a peaceful valley. The drawbridge covers an open expanse of a 25' drop into a crevice below. The positioning of the fortification is quite impressive and it took nearly four years to complete the endeavor. It is composed mostly of shale and limestone a team of Dwarven sappers created it with typical Dwarven intensity. Lord Morningstar and his group had previously saved the Dwarven village of Sancrist. The men of the village were out hunting a party of trolls that had been terrorizing the area when the trolls doubled back and attacked the defenseless village. Morningstar's men had just arrived when the attack started. As a result the trolls were caught by surprise at the well-armed party and the village was saved. As a result the village of Sancrist "owed" Morningstar and his men. Their debt was paid in full with the construction of the keep.

The interior of the keep was designed using plaster and timber. The first floor is 15' high while the next two floors are only 10' high. The dungeon is also 10' high but with carved arches in the stonework. The staircases zigzag to allow travel up and down. The

rooms have carved arches in different horse formations. While the dwarves wanted to decorate to suit their tastes they knew it would be populated by humans. With the Sancrist Salvation on their minds they knew that if it hadn't been for Morningstar and his horse warriors their lives would have been different.

The keep is lit with wrought iron sconces every 5' on opposite sides of the corridor. The doors are heavy oak with banded steel making them exceptionally strong. The portcullis's are double strength at the front gate and are cold forged. The floors are also made of oak and are constantly polished to maintain their shine. The exterior courtyard is a gardener's paradise. Gardens, fruit trees, and flower gardens fill the keep grounds. A large fountain accents the corner of the grounds which is a favorite location of the Morningstar women. The grounds caretaker is Morningstar's wizard Bellus of Ma-Tok. He utilizes the garden to also grow his spell components. He is an accomplished wizard but his gardening skills are truly amazing.

Section A – Barbican

Crossing the 25' crevice is the first issue in gaining entry to the keep. A heavy oaken drawbridge must first be lowered so that passage may be gained. Once the crevice is crossed the party will be expected to state their case at the dual portcullis gates protecting the inner quarters. The captain of the watch will be summoned for strangers/first time visitors. Anyone making subsequent visits will possibly be remembered as those with a "free pass" to the keep are few and far between. Murder holes exist between the two portcullises' on the barbican and will spew forth burning oil for any aggressors.

Section B – Castle walls

The walls are only 10' tall for the keep but with the crevice encircling the keep the height isn't that important. As previously stated the walls are constructed of shale and limestone. The walls are fortified with merlons <square saw teeth> for the archers and defenders. Small catapults are present on the corners and two light ballistae are present on the barbican for defense. Entry to the wall defenses can be gained by numerous stairways within the courtyard. The back section of the wall is where water is obtained. In the crevice is a small stream and water is lifted up into the keep by a hamster wheel.

Section C – Inner Ward

The inner ward is kept clean and tidy per orders of the Carissa Morningstar. Apple and peach trees line the way to the donjon with other fruits and vegetables in various parts of the courtyard. There are several small wells scattered throughout the grounds primarily used for plants. For the most part the inner ward is green with well-worn paths to various points of interest in the keep. Sheep and goats roam freely and act as grass containment and food sources. A small grove of cherry trees is near the fountain <Section D> which the children enjoy.

Section D - Fountain

The fountain in the keep was actually commissioned by Lord Morningstar from the Dwarves. He was so impressed by the construction of the keep that he requested they make a special fountain. His only request was that they personalize the fountain with their faces. The fountain is a rampant lion of onyx spitting water into a pool. The sides of the pool are decorated with the faces of the Dwarven artisans that designed and built the keep. The fountain is therefore a work of art, love, and respect. Because of his fondness for the dwarves Lord Morningstar has a special room in the keep for visiting dwarves, out of respect for their kin.

Section E – Artisans

This building is used by the artisans who maintain the building and act as support staff for the men at arms and keep staff. This area is always a beehive of activity as maintenance of the grounds is a top priority for Lord Morningstar. “The Dwarven people didn’t work so hard on this complex to let humans ruin it by wasting time” is one of the lord’s favorite sayings.

E1 – Smithy

The largest portion of this building is utilized by the smithy. This area is the busiest spot in the keep complex as it used by every single member of the community. From making arrowheads to wall sconces the master smith Baduk Soderman is truly the busiest man in the keep. Baduk takes requests and can handle almost any assignment with the help of his son and apprentice Maduk.

E2 – Fletcher

This section is devoted to the Fletcher and sole Elf in the keep Quid Xenil. Quid was located on one of Lord Morningstar's last missions. The elf was found to be orphaned but at the age of 40 had already learned the craft of being a bowyer. The paladin took him under his wing and brought him to the keep to help with the duties of weaponry. Quid is quite loyal to his lord and quite good at fletching.

E3 – Carpenter

Will Dansik or as the men at arms call him "Will-o-wood" is a young man from the woods brought to the keep to assist in carpentry matters. He spends his time honing his craft and making a variety of items out of wood. When bored he tends to whittle small toys as he had none growing up.

E4 – Tinker

The only gnome in the area is Bulbous Aluminum a tinker and creator of strange items. Bulbous was the henchman of Bellus of Ma-Tok the magic user. Bellus took in Bulbous because he liked the way Bulbous could solve unusual issues. Although not magically inclined Bulbous is more of a scientist and "solver of problems". He tends to annoy the men at arms when he goes on about improving their angle of arrows which he tends to drone on about. Bulbous is rather gregarious and at times has to be told to stop talking.

E5 – Tailor

Eden and Mortala Taylor are the keep's tailors. Their duties include weaving, tailoring, cobbling and any other assortment of apparel and finery projects. They came to the keep seeking sanctuary and proved their worth with Carissa Morningstar in their manufacture of clothing especially for the Morningstar daughters whom they adore like their own children, if they could have any. They are an older couple and enjoy the keep.

Section F – Military Wing

This building houses the keeps watch and horses. This area also contains the stables and armory for the men at arms.

F1 - Barracks

This section is defined as the barracks for the men at arms. It has thirty beds and ninety footlockers present. The watch runs three shifts eight hours apiece. For the most part this is used only as sleeping quarters for the men at arms. Each man has his own footlocker but they do share beds as defined as to their shift assignments. The room is kept spotless as the lord of the manor hates a mess.

F2 – Armory

This area is the armory for the keep's men-at-arms. Spears, arrows, bolts, swords, shields and armor are all present here divided among size and type. No personal weapons are kept in this area so if a warrior has a special item it is kept with him, in his footlocker, or in the holding area of the keep. There are always at least two men at arms present in this room sharpening the weapons and making sure everything is in order.

F3 – Tack Room

This area is used to hold all manner of items used on the keep's collection of horses. Bits, bridles, saddles and blankets are all kept at this location. Lord Morningstar's horse armor is kept here and is bring silver horse plate mail. It is a showpiece of craftsmanship. In the rafters above the tack room are several trunks of oats used as rewards to train the horses for combat. They are high quality and only given to the keep's horses.

F4 – Stables

This section of the building is the stables for a small retinue of horses kept at the keep. There are ten light warhorses used for reconnaissance of the area. These animals are utilized by the search parties for longer trips. Two mules are present for a variety of uses and a double bay is present for Lord Morningstar's warhorse which is a magnificent animal and is highly trained. The men remark that if it were any smarter it would put its armor on itself. The horse's name is "Maximus". The groomer boy <orphan> is Tinneus and he loves the equine more than anything at the keep. At times he can be seen with a jousting post astride one of the mules. He dreams of becoming a knight and is already an accomplished rider. The younger of the Morningstar's daughter has taken a shine to him.

Manor House – Ground Level

The exterior of the actual keep is of clean white limestone carefully hewn from the sides of the crevice that surrounds the keep. The dwarves chose to make the outside smooth as opposed to the two outbuildings which, like the walls, are rough shale in appearance. The interior of the Manor house is also very smooth but the flooring is made of timber.

1 – Entry Hall

This 20' wide corridor and arched ceiling greets all guests with an air of rich history. Banners hang from the ceiling showing Lord Morningstar's heritage and the walls are adorned with pictures of his relatives and those of his wife. A large woven tapestry shows the Morningstar family including the now deceased family dog "Caliber" who was a chubby bulldog. Benches line the sides of the hallway and at times have a variety of items collected by the Morningstar daughters.

2 – Great Hall

The largest room in the keep is the Great Hall. The ceiling extends up through the second floor and two large wrought iron candelabras extend on a heavy chain from the top of the second story down illuminating the entire room in light. Benches and tables fill the room and the East wall is an inlaid mosaic of Anael the God of Strength and Morningstar's patron deity. The great hall is where meals are shared, stories are swapped, and religious service is held. The furniture is all oak and very heavy. Braziers in the corners add light to the room and it is warmed by a huge fireplace in the middle of the West wall.

3 – Castellans Chamber

This room is the personal chambers of Quid Alderman the keep's Castellan. Quid is actually an engineer and assisted the Dwarves with the construction of the keep. His job is to oversee the care and upkeep of the fortress and he is in charge of operations when Lord Morningstar is gone. He takes his job very seriously and can be construed as a dour individual until he is known better. It surprises some but he is so skilled with a hand axe that not even Lord Morningstar can beat him in faux combat with it. His personal effects are located in this room as well as his two prized hand axes won during a Gnoll incursion in the East.

4 – Captain of the Watch

Tiberius Urhd is a long time henchman of Lord Morningstar and one of his most trusted advisors. Tiberius has been with Kelven since the beginning of his adventuring career and has been rewarded with the title and duties of Captain of the Watch. Tiberius is a 7th level fighter and is quite skilled in the art of warfare. He is not to be trifled with at all. His personal armor and weapons along with some treasure is located in his colorless room.

5 – Guest Chambers

This Spartan room is decorated with two beds and two chairs. A bearskin rug covers the floor an untimely victim to one of the search parties sent out for food. The bearskin is quite warm and is suitable for a bed as opposed to living out in the wilderness. This room is used as guest chambers for those honored enough to be allowed into a personal room. Normal guests are allowed to sleep in the great room but are always watched by men at arms who are “guardians” to assist strangers with a stay at the keep. This room is used by those Lord Morningstar wishes to keep happy.

6 – Cleric’s Chamber

Jamik Orin is the keep’s cleric and longtime friend and adventuring aide to Lord Morningstar. His tight knit group has always enjoyed each other’s company and has chosen to reside together in their “retirement” years. Jamik is an avid gambler and enjoys cards and dice. His personal chambers are rather opulent for a cleric but his faith in Anael <deity> has never wavered. Jamik is also the keep Brewmaster and can often be found in the dungeon brewing mead, ale, or working with his wine. He doesn’t allow anyone into his personal chambers unless it is a fellow cleric of Anael.

7 – Guest Chambers

Another guest chamber this room is also the same décor as area #5 although there is no bearskin rug. In place of that furnishing is a small couch that would double as a bed if necessary. This room has the advantage of being closest to the kitchen for “snacking” purposes. There is a chance that it is occupied as this is the first room assigned to visitors.

8 – Kitchen

This long narrow room houses the kitchen for the keep. All meals are prepared at this location and something is always cooking so that each of the men at arms shift can be appropriately fed. The kitchen staff here have personal quarters marked "P". Those rooms are very Spartan but livable. There is always someone in the kitchen and always a guard nearby. The guard's usual lot is to fetch things as opposed to security. There are fire pits on either end of the room and it is always hot in this area.

Manor House – Second Level

The second level of the manor house is exactly like the ground floor in appearance and furnishing. The only difference being there are windows to the outside that have excellent views of the surrounding countryside. Sconces hang on the inside and outside walls and are tended to by the staff which also have rooms on this floor. These rooms are also marked "P". Just above the Great Hall the floor is open so that the room can be seen from above. This floor is used more for personal residences.

G1 – Dignitary Chamber

This room is rarely used but it was designed for any "special" guests such as royalty or war chiefs. It is also used by visiting paladins of Lord Morningstar's order. The room is well decorated and if guests are anticipated fresh cut flowers are always present. Frescoes of orchards are painted on the walls and it is a very calm room overall.

G2 – Morningstar Personal Chambers

Lord and Lady Morningstar keep their personal residence in this chamber. It is colorfully decorated thanks to Carissa Morningstar's tastes. A large oaken bed resides on the East wall and personal wardrobes are on either side of the room containing day to day clothing. A large buffalo hide from the Eastern plains covers the bed and provides warmth on even the coldest nights. A silver dressing desk sits on the West wall and has a very large mirror attached to it. Lord Morningstar doesn't keep many baubles and he considers family his most important asset. Carissa on the other hand enjoys items to keep herself beautiful. Her personal jewelry box made of Elven wood is her prized possession

and her collection of hair items is her most treasured physical item. She and her daughters often go through it trying on and wearing the different items Lord Morningstar has obtained for them.

G3 – Morningstar Daughter’s Room

Mercela <age 16> and Tonda <age 12> are the Morningstar’s two daughters. Mercela is a gorgeous young woman who takes after her mother in beauty and charm. Tonda is more precocious and tends to be more tom-boyish in her actions. Mercela can turn the head of any male which causes the Lord of the Manor a headache at times. Tonda doesn’t turn any heads yet but most likely will in the future. While Mercela spends most of her days with her mom Tonda can be found running the grounds and hanging out with the stable boy Tinneus. They act as siblings since they have grown up together. Tinneus does get under Tonda’s skin when he remarks at how pretty Mercela is. The two often leave the keep grounds to perform their own “adventures” but usually have a shadow to keep an eye on them. When the girls are not otherwise occupied they will be in this room with piles of clothes.

G4 – Meeting Room

Castle business is usually taken care of in this chamber. A large table in the middle of the room accommodates those who need to be present for meetings. Discipline of troops and staff usually is handled here whereas praise is in the Great Hall. Weekly planning meetings are held here and the South wall is a map mural of the immediate vicinity. A table top map is also present that allows foray planning. Books pertaining to keep costs and upkeep are kept in this room and a large cushioned chair is present for when the steward wishes to review expenditures. Aside from the meetings which sometimes last all day this room is nominally used. On occasion Tonda and Tinneus sneak in to seek out their next “adventure”. Lord Morningstar feigns ignorance at their side treks.

G5 – Personal Dining Room

This chamber is primarily used by the Morningstar women and dignitaries to eat their meals at. While Carissa is used to the revels in the Great Hall she understands that the men of the watch are on their best behavior when she is around. She knows that sometimes “boys will be boys” and it’s easier if she and the girls dine alone while the men swamp stories the young ladies should probably not hear. Dinner is also served her for visiting dignitaries.

G6 – Wizards Chamber

This is the personal chamber of the resident wizard/groundskeeper Bellus of Ma-Tok. When not working on his herb-ology with Carissa and Mercela, the old wizard is working on spell and potion research. Bellus and Lord Morningstar were the original adventuring party as Kelven was assigned to protect Bellus on his first duty in paladin hood. The trip was uneventful but they became fast friends. These led them to adventure forth and see many things. Bellus has many tokens of reminder from those first days and he is currently writing a book about the adventures. He wishes to have it complete before he dies. His quarters are as mystic as he is and contains a wide variety of strange items most of which radiate magic.

G7 – Library

This room is the home of dusty tomes and a variety of map and information scrolls. The keep library has books pertaining to things from landscaping to martial arts. Lord Morningstar has always realized the power of thinking and encourages his men and his daughters to study hard and make something of their lives. There are well over 200 books and documents on various subjects in this room. Some of the older tomes belong to Bellus and are in an ancient language and mostly magical in nature. He does have several magical scrolls tucked away in a small locked

G8 – Trophy Room/Observatory

Taking up most of the Eastern wall this chamber is used for relaxing by Lord Morningstar and his former adventuring cohorts. At least once a week the “crew” will meet in the room, drink mead, and swap stories from the old days. The room is furnished in memorabilia of their adventures from the great goblin ax to the fangs of the white dragon of the North they fought. Humanoid weapons and artifacts are everywhere in this room and each has its own story. The entire East wall is one large glass window overlooking the valley and at night all the stars in the sky can be seen in comfort and silence. On “revelry nights” in the Great Hall the ladies of the keep come to this room and drink wine telling their own stories.

Manor House – Top Floor

The top level of the manor house is dedicated to observation and defense of the main keep. The rooftop has two trebuchets on small risers in the center. Ammunition for these items is kept under the trebuchet platforms. A small wooden building sits in the middle of the tower.

H1 – Trebuchet Platforms

Sitting atop these two wooden structures are small trebuchets used for extending the “hand” of Lord Morningstar should the complex come under attack. Ammunition is kept under the platforms for both of the trebuchets. It takes four men at arms to operate each trebuchet but because of long practice hours there is a map for each device showing settings and range so that when used these war machines are very accurate.

H2 – Aviary

This open area is the home to hawks, falcons, and carrier pigeons utilized by the keep to stay in contact with the “outside” world. The pens and roosts are enclosed and a small drain that extends out to the roofline helps keep the area clean. There are currently two hunting hawks and two hunting falcons in the aviary all of which has been trained by the falconer.

H3 – Falconer’s Quarters

The keep’s falconer is a barbarian male named Alois from the Plains of Kimos in the Eastern lands. After goblins raided his village he wandered for days and happened to come upon Lord Morningstar’s party. He was taken in as a henchman and has been with the ensemble for over a decade. He found his niche to be with training birds and that is his main job. Although he still learning to read and write he understands the importance of pigeon messages. He does not like confined spaces and lives on the rooftop much to his enjoyment.

Manor House – Dungeon Level

Unlike the upper levels of the keep the dungeon level was left as roughhewn stone in the bedrock of spindle holding up the keep. The safest place in the entire keep is the

dungeon and it is also the home of the men at arms training area. The black wrought iron sconces are still present but gone are the smooth limestone walls.

I1 – Common Room

This room is used by the men at arms for relaxation purposes. There are chairs and tables and various games available to them. This area is just a place for the hearty warriors to calm down and enjoy their time off. Throughout the day one can find a game of chance going on and most likely one of the participants will be Jamik Orin the cleric. Stakes are usually low but the games are intense.

I2 – Training Facility

This area of the dungeon is used as a workout area for the men of the keep. Lord Morningstar has spent a great deal of time fighting in enclosed areas and while he prefers an open fight he understands that the limitations of a room have its advantages. This chamber has a number of obstacles in it to provide a sense of enclosure should his men be caught in a tight spot. The Training for the men takes place outside and in this room to facilitate as many options as possible. He also points out that should any of his men move on to dungeon investigation it's better that they get experience with "safe" monsters first.

I3 – Brewery

Jamik Orin spends 1/3 of his time in this area as it is the brewery. Here he works on various flavors and recipes of his alcohol. This room is dedicated to various liquids of the strong variety. Heavy Dwarven stout and Seafarer Mead are made here by the sure hand of Jamik as well as a soft gooseberry wine that Carissa Morningstar favors. Jamik and one of the more mead-savvy men-at-arms work here frequently although to ask them it's more of a labor of love. As luck would have it only Jamik and Lord Morningstar have keys to this room.

I4 – I9 – Storage

This section of the dungeon is used by the keep as storage of food and material. Each room is filled with items that it was designated to hold and is as follows:

I4 – Coal

I5 – Wood

I6 – Treasury protected by a portcullis with the only key belonging to Lord Morningstar

This area contains the wealth of the Morningstar's and the other members of the keep. If the nearly impenetrable

I7 – Oats and Grains

I8 – Fruits and Vegetables

I9 – Cold meat is stored here as it is the coldest spot in the keep.

I10 – Interview chamber

This area is utilized to question prisoners and enemies of the keep. While Lord Morningstar prohibits the use of torture the Captain of the Guard has used this area to interrogate "vigorously". The cells are currently empty and have straw as bedding. Prisoners, when present, are treated fairly until their case has been heard then justice is served if necessary.

