



## The Guardian of the Lodge

The sun shines through the windows of the Lodge as I watch over all four walls. I am the Elk, the guardian over the lodge that bears my name. Though I do not walk within its walls, I have watched generations gather here, bound not by blood, but by brotherhood.

From my post on the wall, I see them arrive — men and women carrying warmth in their laughter, purpose in their hearts. Their voices carry, and I listen. They speak of *Charity*, the first and most resounding principle. I see it not in words, but in their deeds — the way they share meals with the hungry, collect articles for the needy, and lift spirits in times of despair. It is a quiet power, like the strength of the herd protecting its young.

Then comes *Justice*, steady and unyielding. It guides them when choices are hard, reminding them that fairness is not always easy, but it is always right. I have seen how they stand up for others, how they build a lodge that welcomes all. In their fairness, I see the balance of the forest — predator and prey, each with a place in the great design.

*Brotherly Love* — that is their heartbeat. When one stumbles, others lift them up. When one triumphs, all rejoice. I have seen this love ripple outward like sunlight through the trees. It binds them stronger than any fence or wall. It is the same bond that keeps my herd together through snow and storm — trust, loyalty, and care for one another.

And then there is *Fidelity*. The truest test of all. I have watched the oldest among them, gray-haired and wise, still devoted to the oath they once took — to lead by example. Fidelity is the path worn smooth by years of footsteps — steady, sure, and sacred. It is what keeps them returning, generation after generation, to this place of belonging.

When night falls and the lodge lights dim, I lower my head in respect. The air hums with laughter, music, and the spirit of service. They may not see me watching, but I see them — living the very principles my kind has long embodied in the wild: strength, harmony, loyalty, and faith.

I am the elk, and they are my herd in another form — bound not by antlers or fur, but by heart. As long as they uphold Charity, Justice, Brotherly Love, and Fidelity, I will remain here, standing watch over the lodge that carries my name — proud, steadfast, and eternal.