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Fictions of Freemasonry: Appendix

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Appendix: The Entered Apprentice's Lecture

At the center of Masonry, guarded by solemn oath, is a fascinating ritual. Exposés of Masonry uniformly print parts of the ritual under the assumption that the various words and actions *are* the secret. Publication, on this view, would destroy the fraternity. But after centuries of such disclosure, Freemasonry continues to flourish. Obviously the assumption is false. The ritual, like rituals of other cultures, is allegorical in nature, simultaneously veiling and disclosing its meaning. For the "profane" it may be a veil. For the Mason in a community of Masons it may prove revelatory.

Karl Christian Friedrich Krause, whom German Freemasons rank with Lessing as a "father of humanitarian Masonry," recognized this as he worked in his lodge in the early nineteenth century. He took strong exception to other branches of Freemasonry that routinely promised extraordinary concrete (nonallegorical) revelations as their initiates advanced from one high grade to another. Such false promises can be devalued by publication; and to this end Krause published several Masonic rites. His stated wish was to further the most worthy aims of his fraternity.

I reprint part of one of these rituals here, the "Entered Apprentice's Lecture," and do so in Krause's spirit and from Krause's book: *Die drei ältesten Kunsturkunden der Freimaurerbruderschaft* (Dresden: Arnoldische Kunst- und Buchhandlung, 1810), 146-181. Grammar sometimes betrays the German printing.

Master. Brother, is there any Thing between you and I?

Answer. There is, Worshipful.

Mas. What is it, Brother?

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Ans. A Secret.

Mas. What is that Secret, Brother?

Ans. Masonry.

Mas. Then I presume, you are a Mason?

Ans. I am so taken and accepted amongst Brothers and Fellows.

Mas. Pray, what Sort of Man ought a Mason to be?

Ans. A Man that is born of a Free Woman.

Mas. Where was you first prepared to be made a Mason?

Ans. In my Heart.

Mas. Where was you next prepared?

Ans. In a Room adjoining to the Lodge.

Mas. How was you prepared, Brother?

Ans. I was neither naked nor cloathed; barefoot nor shod, deprived of all Metal; hood-winked, with a Cable Tow about my Neck, where I was led to the Door of the Lodge, in a halting moving Posture, by the Hand of a Friend, whom I afterwards found to be a Brother.

Mas. How did you know it to be a Door, you being blinded?

Ans. By finding a Stoppage, and afterwards an Entrance or Admittance.

Mas. How got you Admittance?

Ans. By three distinct Knocks.

Mas. What was said to you within?

Ans. Who comes there?

Mas. Your Answer, Brother?

Ans. One who begs to have and receive Part of the Benefit of this Right Worshipful Lodge, dedicated to St. John, as many Brothers and Fellows have done before me.

Mas. How do you expect to obtain it?

Ans. By being free born, and well reported.

Mas. What was said to you then?

Ans. Enter.

Mas. How did you enter, and upon what?

Ans. Upon the Point of a Sword or Spear, or some warlike instrument presented to my naked Left Breast.

Mas. What was said to you then?

Ans. I was asked if I felt any thing.

Mas. What was your Answer?

Ans. I did, but I could see nothing.

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Mas. You have told me how you was received, pray who received you?

Ans. The Junior Warden.

Mas. How did he dispose of you?

Ans. He delivered me to the Master, who ordered me to kneel down and receive the Benefit of a Prayer. Brethren, let us pray!

O Lord God, thou great and universal Mason of the World, and first Builder of Man, as it were a Temple; be with us, o Lord, as thou hast promised, when two or three are gathered together in thy Name, thou wilt be in the Midst of them: Be with us, o Lord, and bless all our Undertakings, and grant that this our Friend may become a faithful Brother. Let Grace and Peace be multiplied unto him, through the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ: And grant, O Lord, as he putteth forth his Hand to thy Holy Word, that he may also put forth his Hand to serve a Brother, [but not to hurt himself or his Family]; that whereby may be given to us great and precious Promises, that by this we may be Partakers of Thy Divine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the World through Lust.

O Lord God, add to our Faith Virtue, and to Virtue Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance, and to Temperance Prudence, and to Prudence Patience, and to Patience Godliness, and to Godliness Brotherly Love, and to Brotherly Love Charity; and grant, o Lord, that Masonry may be blest throughout the World, and thy Peace be upon us, o Lord: and grant that we may be all united as one, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

Mas. After you had received this Prayer, what was said to you?

Ans. I was asked who I put my Trust in?

Mas. Your Answer, Brother?

Ans. In God.

Mas. What was the next Thing said to you?

Ans. I was taken by the Right Hand, and a Brother said, Rise up, and follow your Leader, and fear no Danger.

Mas. After all this, how was you disposed of?

Ans. I was led Three Times round the Lodge.

Mas. Where did you meet with the first Opposition?

Ans. At the Back of the Junior Warden in the South, where I gave the same three Knocks as at the Door.

Mas. What Answer did he give you?

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Ans. He said, Who comes there?

Mas. Your Answer?

Ans. The same as at the Door, One who begs to have and receive Part of the Benefit of this Right Worshipful Lodge, dedicated to St. John, as many Brothers and Fellows have done before me.

Mas. Where did you meet with the second Opposition?

Ans. At the Back of the Senior Warden in the West, where I made the same Repetition as at the Door. He said, Who comes there? One who begs to have and receive Part of the Benefit of this Right Worshipful Lodge, dedicated to St. John, as many Brothers and Fellows have done before me.

Mas. Where did you meet with the third Opposition?

Ans. At the Back of the Master in the East, where I made the Repetition as before.

Mas. What did the Master do with you?

Ans. He ordered me back to the Senior Warden in the West to receive Instructions.

Mas. What were the Instructions he gave you?

Ans. He taught me to take one Step upon the first Step of a right Angle oblong Square, with my Left Knee bare bent, my Body upright, my Right Foot forming a Square, my naked Right Hand upon the Holy Bible, with the Square and Compass thereon, my Left Hand supporting the same; where I took that solemn Obligation or Oath of a Mason.

Mas. Brother, can you repeat that Obligation?

Ans. I will do my Endeavour, with your Assistance, Worshipful.

Mas. Stand up, and begin.

Ans. I—A.B. of my own Free Will and Accord, and in the Presence of Almighty God, and this Right Worshipful Lodge, dedicated to St. John, do hereby and hereon most solemnly and sincerely swear, that I will always hale, conceal, and never will reveal any of the secret Mysteries of Free Masonry, that shall be delivered to me now, or at any Time hereafter, except it be to a true and lawful Brother, or in a just and lawful Lodge of Brothers and Fellows, him or them whom I shall find to be such, after just Trial and due Examination. I furthermore do swear, that I will not write it, print it, cut it, paint it, or stint it, mark it, stain or engrave it, or cause it so to be done, upon any thing moveable or immoveable, under the Canopy of Heaven, whereby it may become legible or intelligible, or the least Appearance of the Character of a Letter, whereby the secret

Art may be unlawfully obtained. All this I swear, with a strong and steady Resolution to perform the same, without any Hesitation, mental Reservation, or Self-Evasion of Mind in me whatsoever; under no less Penalty than to have my Throat cut across, my Tongue torn out by the Root, and that to be buried in the Sands of the Sea, at Low-Water Mark, a Cable's Length from the Shore, where the Tide ebbs and flows twice in twenty-four Hours. So help me God, and keep me steadfast in this my Entered Apprentice's Obligation.

(He kisses the Book.)

Funde merum Genio!

N.B. After this Obligation they drink a Toast to the Heart that conceals, and to the Tongue that never reveals. The Master in the Chair gives it, and they all say Ditto, and they draw the Glasses across their Throats, as aforesaid.

Mas. Now, Brother, after you received this Obligation, what was the first that was said to you?

Ans. I was asked what I most desired?

Mas. What was your Answer?

Ans. To be brought to Light.

Mas. Who brought you to Light?

Ans. The Master and the rest of the Brethren.

Mas. When you was thus brought to Light, what were the first Things you saw?

Ans. The Bible, Square, and Compass.

Mas. What was it they told you they signified?

Ans. Three great Lights in Masonry.

Mas. Explain them, Brother.

Ans. The Bible, to rule and govern our Faith; the Square, to square our Actions; the Compass to keep us within Bounds with all Men, particularly with a Brother.

Mas. What were the next Things that were shewn to you?
Answer. Three Candles, which I was told were three lesser Lights in Masonry.

Mas. What do they represent?

Ans. The Sun, Moon, and Master-Mason.

Mas. Why so, Brother?

Ans. There is the Sun to rule the Day, the Moon to rule the Night, and the Master-Mason his Lodge, or at least ought so to do.

Mas. What was then done to you?

Ans. The Master took me by the Right-hand, and gave me the Grip and Word of an Entered Apprentice, and said, Rise, my Brother JACHIN.

N.B. Sometimes they shew you the Sign before the Grip and Word is given, which is JACHIN: It is the Entered Apprentice's Word, and Grip thereto belonging is to pinch with your Right Thumb Nail upon the first Joint of your Brother's Right-hand.

Mas. Have you got this Grip and Word, Brother?

Ans. I have, Worshipful.

Mas. Give it to your next Brother.

N.B. Then he takes his next Brother by the Right-hand, and gives him the Grip and Word, as before described, he tells the Master, that is right.

According to the following Proof.

The 1st. Brother gives him the Grip.

The 2d. Brother says, What's this?

1st. Bro. The Grip of an Entered Apprentice.

2d. Bro. Has it got a Name?

1st. Bro. It has.

2d. Bro. Will you give it me?

1st. Bro. I'll letter it with you, or halve it.

2d. Bro. I'll halve it with you.

1st. Bro. Begin.

2d. Bro. No, you begin first.

1st. Bro. JA—

2d. Bro. CHIN.

1st. Bro. JACHIN.

2d. Bro. It is right, Worshipful Master.

Mas. What was the next Thing that was shewn to you?

Ans. The Guard or Sign of an Entered Apprentice.

N.B. The Guard or Sign, as they call it, is by drawing your Right Hand across your Throat edgeways; which is to remind you of the Penalty of your Obligation, that you would sooner have your Throat cut across, than discover the Secrets of Masonry.

Mas. Have you got the Guard, or Sign, of an Entered Apprentice?

N.B. He draws his Right-hand across his Throat (as aforesaid), to shew the master that he has.

Mas. After all this, what was said to you?

Answer. I was ordered to be taken back, and invested with what I had been divested of; and to be brought again to return Thanks, and to receive the Benefit of a Lecture, if Time would permit.

APPENDIX

Mas. After you was invested of what you had been divested of, what was done to you?

Ans. I was brought to the North-West Corner of the Lodge, in order to return thanks.

Mas. How did you return Thanks?

Ans. I stood in the North-West Corner of the Lodge, and, with the Instruction of a Brother, I said, Master, Senior and Junior Wardens, Senior and Junior Deacons, and the rest of the Brethren of this Lodge, I return you Thanks for the Honour you have done me, in making me a Mason, and admitting me a Member of this worthy Society.

Mas. What was said to you then?

Ans. The Master called me up to the North-East Corner of the Lodge, or at his Right-hand.

Mas. Did he present you with any Thing?

Ans. He presented me with an Apron, which he put on me; he told me it was a Badge of Innocency, more ancient than the Golden Fleece or the Roman Eagle; more honoured than the Star and Garter, or any other Order under the Sun, that could be conferred upon me at that Time, or any Time hereafter.

Mas. What were the next Things that were shewn to you?

Ans. I was set down by the Master's Right-hand, who shewed me the working Tools of an Entered Apprentice.

M. What were they?

Ans. The 24 Inch Gauge, the Square, and common Gavel, or Setting Maul.

Mas. What are their Uses?

Ans. The Square to square my Work, the 24 Inch Gauge to measure my work, the common Gavel to knock off all superfluous Matter, whereby the Square may set easy and just.

Mas. Brother, as we are not all working Masons, we apply them to our Morals, which we call spiritualizing: explain them.

Ans. The 24 Inch Gauge represents the 24 Hours of the Day.

Mas. How do you spend them, Brother?

Ans. Six Hours to work in, Six Hours to serve God, and Six to serve a Friend or a Brother, as far as lies in my Power, without being detrimental to myself or Family: and Six Hours to Sleep in.

The rite continues in this vein at some length. For the full version, see Krause.



Notes

PREFACE

1. Günter Grass, *Dog Years* (Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1963), 337.
2. Thomas Mann, *Gesammelte Werke* (Frankfurt/M: S. Fischer, 1960), III, 700.
3. Karl Gutzkow, *The Knights of Spirit*, 2d ed. (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1852), VIII, 297–298.
4. For a more detailed, more comprehensive history of the Freemasonic movement than can be given in this book there are many sources available. One might well begin with the Eleventh Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Roberts's *The Mythology of the Secret Societies* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972) provides a readable and scholarly introduction to the order in the context of the conspiracy theories which grew up around it. D. Knoop and G. P. Jones's *The Genesis of Freemasonry* is good on origins. Mackey's *Encyclopaedia of Freemasonry* (Manchester, 1947), especially the later editions, is a good source for English speakers. For German Freemasonry, among the most helpful works are Eugen Lennhoff and Oskar Posner's *Internationales Freimaurer-Lexikon* (1932), J. G. Findel's groundbreaking *Geschichte der Freimaurerei* (Leipzig, 1870), and F. J. Schneider's *Die Freimaurerei und ihr Einfluss auf die geistige Kultur in Deutschland am Ende des XVIII. Jahrhunderts* (Prag: Taussig and Taussig, 1909).
5. The following studies of Freemasonry and of Masonic novels are among the most interesting:
1959 Reinhart Koselleck, *Kritik und Krise* (extremely influential) (Freiburg, 1959)