

ORDER OF THE OVERSEERS



DEGREE RITUAL

The Players

Narrator Gives background on the Lesson
Chaplain Gives the blessing prior to eating
First Craftsman One of two discussing an important issue
Second Craftsman The second of two discussing an important issue

Chaplain's Blessing

Oh Greatest of Overseers, bless those who have prepared this feast that our simple bodies may be prepared for this evening's trials and tests. We know that we come into your Kingdom weary but eager workmen of the quarries and vineyards, yet with your guidance and judgement, toil in a meager life where the Greatest Reward awaits the final hour of days. Give us the strength tonight to pass inspection and make our mark upon Your world. Amen.

Lesson (given by the Narrator)

Brothers and Companions, being men of good repute and high principles, you have been chosen by the Ancient and Mystic Council of Overseers to receive one of the most arcane and esoteric orders in Freemasonry, the Order of the Overseers.

This degree is given only during the Feast of the Overseers, when our Brothers and Companions were satisfying their deep-seated desire to partake of the fruit of the earth, the beasts of the field and the fowl of the air.

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Our forefathers, when enjoying the honor of having this prestigious degree conferred on them, were reminded of the hardships our most ancient brethren would endure as they tolerated famine in their lands, would brave difficulties with failed crops and the realization that there was always something bigger - and more hungry - than themselves as they hunted their daily meal.

Enjoy now, this Feast provided for you and prepare your hearts, your minds and your stomachs for the journey you are about to undertake.

(The Brothers and Companions get their dinners and sit down)

Narrator: Brothers and Companions, draw near, for it is time for a lesson.

Narrator: Two elderly craftsmen were discussing the inevitable day when they would join the Greatest of Overseers in Heaven Above.

First Craftsman: "I wonder if there are Lodges up there?"

Second Craftsman: "Most certainly, but let's make a deal. The first of us to depart this world and travel to Heaven should come back briefly and inform the other."

First Craftsman: "Agreed."

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Narrator: A few weeks later, the first craftsman died suddenly after a short illness.

Narrator: The second craftsman, working in the quarry one day on a piece of work, heard a familiar voice.

First Craftsman: “Brother, my dear friend, I have returned.”

Second Craftsman: “Is that you?”

First Craftsman: “It is.”

Second Craftsman: “And are there any Lodges up in Heaven?”

First Craftsman: “Oh yes, and they are most splendid. Every meeting is well attended, the dinners are full of wonderful food and fantastic toasts, and our degree work is perfect.”

Second Craftsman: “That does sound delightful.”

First Craftsman: “There’s just one problem.”

Second Craftsman: “What’s that?”

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First Craftsman: “Next Wednesday we’re conducting the Mark Master Degree.”

Second Craftsman: “What’s so wrong with that?”

First Craftsman: “You’re slated to be the Senior Overseer.”

Lecture (given by the Narrator)

My Brothers and Companions, this lesson is intended to remind that you that though our Masonic work is often charged with the objectives of solemnity and sincerity, do not forget to seek out - and relish - those moments of humor, whimsy and relief.

For if you travel throughout life always with a dire and deliberate intent, you will live your days without the gentle and carefree demeanor that makes hard work tolerable, confrontation bearable and reward a cherished prize.

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Oath (given by the Narrator)

And now, Brethren, repeat after me:

“I, (state your name) - of my own freewill and accord - in the presence - of these, my hungry, Brethren - and famished fellows - do hereby and hereon - most solemnly and sincerely - promise and swear - that I will ever wear a smile upon my face - and a cheerful greeting on my tongue - and that I will fear no Brother - no matter how I am confronted - challenged - or commanded. So help me God - and keep me steadfast - in the due performance - of the same.”

Dewguard & Sign (given by the Narrator)

My Brethren, I now greet you as Companions of the Order of the Overseers by this dewguard: Take a stout and steady stance with your chest held high and your arms crossed in defiance. The sign is given by tossing your head back quickly and sharply, and thrusting up your chin into their air, as if to challenge another craftsman.

The Word (given by the Narrator)

The word of a Companions of the Order of the Overseers is “oh no!” and is the replacement word for the reply the second craftsman doubtless gave the first in this degree’s lesson upon learning that he would be called to Heaven in short order.

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Charge (given by the Narrator)

Finally, Companions, I give you this charge:

*I will not fear the Overseers
With their attitude and sass
For their duty is to safeguard
That only the best shall pass*

*I will create my finest work
And avoid their vicious snark
For I have only one desire in life
To finally make my mark*

*I will tirelessly toil in the quarry
Until they say unto me with a perk,
This is certainly something we need,
Good work, true work, square work*