

THE PROTECTION OF THE ORDER

Draft Version 5/96

(The following ceremony is performed in a lodge open in the Outer as part of the order of business.)

Dirigent: Companions, we will now prepare to confer the Protection of the Order. Companion Summoner, you will proceed to the anteroom and prepare the candidate.

(Summoner goes to the center of the room, faces west and makes the Sign of Silence and, when this is answered by the Adjuvant, leaves the hall. The Sentinel closes the door behind him. The Summoner then blindfolds the candidate, leads him/her to the door, and gives two raps, a pause, and then one more rap).

Sentinel: (Responds with one rap, a pause, and then two raps) Companion Adjuvant, an alarm at the door.

Adjuvant: Attend to it.

Sentinel: (Opens door) Who is this stranger that accompanies you? No one may enter this lodge except a Companion or a Friend of the Order.

Summoner: This is N., a Friend of the Order who seeks its protection.

Sentinel: Is he/she vouched for by a Companion in good standing?

Summoner: He/she is.

Sentinel: Then he/she may enter.

(Summoner guides candidate to the center of the floor and faces him/her toward the east. Sentinel closes the door.)

Dirigent: N., by the petition of a Companion of this Order and by the vote of the members of this lodge, you have been elected to receive the Protection of the Order. That protection extends to all the spheres of life. If at any time you are in danger or distress, the active efforts of the entire Order will be directed to your aid; and at all times, the ties of friendship which unite the Companions of the Stone will include you as well.

(The section between lines is to be used for candidates over the age of seven years. For candidates under that age, a separate section has been provided beginning on page 3.)

We ask, however, that as you enter our fellowship, you take a

solemn pledge of fidelity, friendship and secrecy -- the pledge we have taken, which joins us together in harmony. Are you willing to do so?

Candidate: (answers)

Dirigent: Then place your right hand upon your heart, and repeat after me:

I, (give your full name), hereby promise and bind myself, now and in time to come, never to reveal to any person the rituals, signs, grips, and passwords of the Companions of the Stone, nor to show documents belonging to the Order or any of its lodges to anyone who is not authorized to receive them. I will use the utmost discretion in speaking of the Order, its teachings, and its activities to any person outside it.

I furthermore pledge myself to consider the members of this Order as my friends and companions, and if it is in my power to do so, I will help any member of this Order, or any person under its protection, who is in danger or distress. I will faithfully observe all laws, rules and regulations of the Order. I will not wrong in any way the Order, a lodge or a member, nor will I circulate or listen to gossip or slander concerning any member or friend of the Order.

To the faithful performance of all which, I pledge myself, in the name of the Lord of the Universe, who works in silence and whom nothing but silence can express, and in the presence of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, upon whom I call as surety for my pledge.

Dirigent: In that Name and that presence, I call you from the darkness of the world to the light of our friendship and protection. Companion Summoner, you will restore our friend to light. (Summoner removes blindfold)

Dirigent: As a Friend of our Order, there are certain signs you must know, which will permit you to enter any lodge of the Companions of the Stone open in the Outer. These are the Sign of Silence, the Password of the Protection, and the Grip of the Protection.

The Sign of Silence is made by extending the index finger of the left hand, closing the other three fingers around the thumb in the palm of the hand, and bringing the index finger to the lips. At the same time, stamp with the left foot against the floor, thus. (Demonstrates)

The Password of the Protection is achad, which is the Hebrew word for the number one. It represents the unity which joins each Companion and each Friend of the Order together.

(Dirigent leaves station, and comes to the center of the floor.)

The Grip of the Protection is made by linking the index finger and thumb with the index finger and thumb of the other person, thus. (Demonstrates, then returns to station)

(The following section between lines is to be used for children less than seven years old.)

Dirigent: Who sponsors this child?

Sponsor: Companion Dirigent, I do so.

Dirigent: Will you pledge yourself, by the obligations you have made to this Order, to stand surety for this child before the Order until he/she is of age to choose his/her own path?

Sponsor: I so pledge myself.

Dirigent: N., I therefore welcome you among us, and grant you the Protection of the Order. Companion Summoner, you will proclaim it so.

Summoner: By command of the Companion Dirigent, I proclaim that N. has been granted the Protection of the Order.

(Dirigent seats the lodge; Summoner leads new Friend to a seat, and returns to his station.)