

THE GRADE OF FIRE

(The lodge is opened in the Outer in the usual form. Candidate then leaves in form and sits in the anteroom, with the Emblem of Fire as a focus for comtemplation.)

OPENING OF THE GRADE OF FIRE

(If the Dirigent will not be serving as Chief in the ritual work, this passage, between lines, is to be used:)

Dirigent: ! (Knocks.) Companion N., you will advance to the East and take charge of the lodge. (The companion chosen to act as Chief then advances by the square to the center of the floor and thence to the East, taking the Throne of the East, while the Dirigent retires to any convenient seat.)

Chief: Companions, you will assist me to close this lodge in the Outer and open it in the Grade of Fire. Those present who have not entered into this Grade must depart. Companion Summoner, you will proclaim it so.

Summoner: ! (Knocks with staff.) Procul, procul esti profani!

(At this point, anyone present who has not received this Grade leaves the lodge room in form. When this is done and the door is secured, the rite continues.)

Chief: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, and with the help of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I assume the Throne of the East and take up the power of the Spiritual Sun.

(Chief takes staff from its holder.)

Chief: Companion Adjuvant, confirm that all who are present have witnessed the Light of the Stone in the realm of Fire. !!!
(knocks; all rise)

Adjuvant: Companions, give the sign of the Grade of Fire. (All give sign to Adjuvant, who responds with the same sign.) Chief of the Rite, all have witnessed it. (Adjuvant gives the Sign to Chief, who responds with the same sign.)

Chief: The following Companions will take part in our present work. (Names the Companions and the ritual offices they will be taking.) Companions N. and N., you will advance the altar to the center of the lodge, and then purify and consecrate the lodge by water and by fire.

(This will normally be done by the Lecturer and Diviner, if these

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offices have been filled; if not, any conveniently placed Companions may do so. The officers advance by the square to the sides of the altar and move it to the center of the lodge. They then go to the stations of Water and Fire, take cup and censer, and move to a position halfway between these stations and the altar, facing East, as shown in the diagram below:



(Each makes a cross in the air with the implement, sprinkles or censens thrice to the east, and says:

Water: I purify with Water.

Fire: I consecrate with Fire.

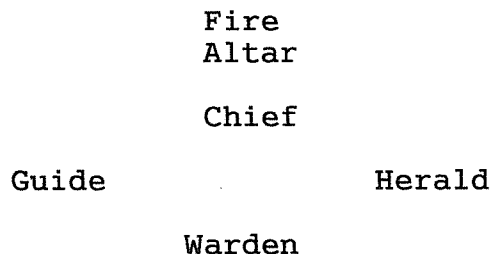
(Officers return the cup and censer to their places, and return to their places by the square if necessary.)

Chief: Let the element of this Grade be named that it may be awakened in the spheres of those present and the sphere of the Order.

All: The element of Fire.

Chief: Let us adore the Lord and King of Fire. (All face east; Chief moves in front of his podium to do so.) Elohim, mighty in power! Blessed be you who are many and one. Amen. (All make sign of Fire.)

(Chief leaves the East, goes with Sun around lodge once and then to South. Herald, Warden and Guide fall in from their Outer stations as Chief circumambulates, Herald before chief, Warden and Guide in that order behind. At the end of the movement, officers fan out: Chief stands before southern altar, Guide to left and behind, Herald to right and behind, Warden directly behind and further back; the four officers form a diamond-shape, as shown below. All face south.)



Chief: (traces an invoking pentagram of Fire to the south) And

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the Elohim said, Let us make Adam in our own image, after our likeness, and let him have dominion over the beasts of the field. In the Name of Elohim, mighty and ruling, and in the name of Tetragrammaton Tzabaoth, spirits of Fire, adore your Creator!

(Chief traces the symbol of Leo in the center of the pentagram.)

Guide: In the name of Michael, great archangel of Fire, and in the sign of the head of the Lion, spirits of Fire, adore your Creator!

(Chief traces an equal-armed cross over the pentagram.)

Herald: In the names and letters of the great southern quadrangle, spirits of Fire, adore your Creator!

(Chief holds the head of his staff at the center of the pentagram.)

Warden: In the three great secret Names of God borne upon the banners of the south, OIP TEAA PDOCE, spirits of Fire, adore your Creator!

Chief: In the name of EDEL PERNAA, great king of the south, spirits of Fire, adore your Creator!

(Officers face east, fall into line as Herald begins moving, and move around hall with Sun. They complete one circuit and then fall out as they reach their stations, taking their Inner places for this Grade.)

Chief: Companion Warden, you will assume your station.

Warden: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, and with the help of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I enter the Place of Darkness and take up the power of the Secret Fire.

(Warden takes staff from its holder.)

Chief: Companion Guide, you will assume your station.

Guide: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, and with the help of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I enter the Place of Light and take up the power of the Crescent Moon.

(Guide takes staff from its holder.)

Chief: Companion Herald, you will assume your station.

Herald: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, and with the help of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I enter the Place of Balance and take up the Staff and Lamp of Wisdom. (Takes station.)

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Chief: Companions, I ask you to join with me in establishing this lodge in the Grade of Fire. (Pause while the inner temple is built up.) And so it is established.

All: So be it.

Chief: Companion Herald, you will proclaim this lodge closed in the Outer and open in the Grade of Fire.

Herald: In the Name of Elohim, I proclaim that the Sun has risen in the realm of Fire.

Chief: !!! !!! !

Warden: !!! !!! !

Guide: !!! !!! !

Herald: !!! !!! !

Chief: ! (All are seated.)

INTRODUCTION OF THE CANDIDATE

Chief: Companions of _____ Lodge #___. Our Companion _____, having been proved in the work of the Grade of Water, is now eligible for advancement to the Grade of Fire, and I have received a dispensation from the Council to admit him/her in due form. Companion Guide, you will see to the preparation of the candidate. Companion Herald, you will guard the door.

(Warden sees that lamps for the three major officers and fire incense are placed on the altars. Guide goes to door and leaves hall; Herald stands by door. Guide blindfolds candidate, gives him/her the Emblem of Fire, and instructs him/her in the knock !!! !!! ! Candidate then gives knock at door, and Herald opens door slightly.)

Herald: All things shall be tested by the Fire. (Door is opened, and Guide brings candidate to West of the pillars, facing him/her East.)

Chief: Companion Monocris de Astris, by what emblem have you entered this hall of living flame?

Guide (for candidate): By this Emblem of Fire.

(Herald takes Emblem.)

Chief: Companion, give the sign of the Grade of Water.

(Candidate gives it.)

Chief: Companion Herald, receive from the candidate the Word of the Grade of Water.

(Candidate gives word to Herald.)

Herald: Chief of the Rite, I have received it.

Chief: Let our Companion be placed between the Pillars, with his/her face toward the East. (This is done; Guide stands behind candidate, and Herald goes with Sun to Fire altar, leaves Emblem, gets incense, and returns.) Companion Monocris de Astris, will you pledge yourself to maintain the same secrecy and diligence in the mysteries of this Grade as you are pledged to maintain for those of the previous grades?

(Candidate answers.)

Chief: Then you will stretch your arms above your head to their full limit and say: "I pledge by the torrent of Fire."

(Candidate does so.)

Chief: Let the symbol of blindness be removed. (This is done by Guide. At this point Guide and Warden both go with Sun around the lodge, take the censer and cup from their altars, and return, Guide standing by White Pillar, Warden by Black.) Take the incense in your right hand and wave it to the south, and say, "Let the powers of Fire witness my pledge."

(Candidate does so. Herald takes incense back to its altar and returns with Sun.)

Chief: Let the candidate be purified with Water and consecrated with Fire in confirmation of this pledge, and in the name of the Lord of the Universe, who works in silence and whom nothing but silence can express.

Warden: I purify with Water. (Sprinkles candidate thrice, and traces cross before candidate with cup.)

Guide: I consecrate with Fire. (Censes candidate thrice, and traces cross before candidate with censer.)

(Warden and Guide go back to their stations with Sun when done.)

ADVANCEMENT OF THE CANDIDATE

Chief: Companion Monocris de Astris, the Grades of Earth, Air and Water, through which you have passed, are the first three steps in our discipline. In the Grade of Earth, you learned the lessons of prudence; in the Grade of Air, those of courage; in the Grand of Water, those of temperance. In commemoration of which, you will circumambulate the lodge thrice.

Herald: Let us enter into the presence of the Lord of Truth. Arise and follow me.

(Herald leads Candidate forward from between pillars and once around the lodge with Sun, stopping just west of pillars. Meanwhile the following passages are read, slowly:)

Warden: (first circumambulation) The Sphinx of Egypt spoke and said: I am the synthesis of the elemental forces. I am also the symbol of Humanity. I am life and I am death. I am the Child of the Night of Time.

Guide: (second circumambulation) I am the soul in twin aspect, united to the Higher by purification, perfected by suffering, glorified by trial. I have come where the great gods are, through the power of the mighty Name.

Herald: (third circumambulation) I have passed through the gates of the firmament. Give me your hands, for I am made as you, O Lords of Truth! For you are the formers of the soul.

Chief: (as candidate returns to west) Let the candidate be placed between the pillars, that he/she may stand in the gateway of the realm of Fire.

(Candidate is placed between pillars. At this point Chief, Guide and Warden all leave their stations, taking lamps with them, and go around the hall with Sun. Chief goes directly to south and then goes between the altar and the pillars, facing candidate; Warden and Guide, in that order, do the same, timing their movement so that each one arrives as the previous officer leaves.)

Chief: I am the apex of the pyramid of flame. I am the solar fire pouring forth its beams on the lower world, life-giving, light-producing. By what sign do you seek to pass by?

Candidate: (prompted) By the sign of the pyramid of flame.

Chief: Stoop not down into that darkly splendid world, wherein lieth a faithless depth and Hades wrapped in gloom, delighting in unintelligible images, precipitous, winding, a black ever-rolling abyss ever espousing a body unluminous, formless and void. Stoop not down, for a precipice lies beneath the earth, a descent of seven steps, and therein is established the throne of an evil and fatal force. Stoop not down, for there is a place for your image in a realm ever splendid.

(Chief returns to station with Sun. Warden faces candidate.)

Warden: I am the left basal angle of the triangle of flame. I am fire volcanic and terrestrial, flaming through abysses of earth, rending, penetrating, tearing asunder the curtain of

matter. I am fire constrained and tormented, whirling in storm. By what sign do you seek to pass by?

Candidate: (prompted) By the sign of the pyramid of flame.

Warden: Nature persuades us that there are pure spirits, and that even the lowest seeds of matter can become useful and good. But these are mysteries which are evolved in the profound abysses of the mind. So therefore first that priest who governs the works of fire must sprinkle with the lustral water of the loud-resounding sea.

(Warden returns to station with Sun. Guide faces candidate.)

Guide: I am the right basal angle of the triangle of flame. I am the fire astral and fluid, winding and coruscating through the firmament. I am the life of beings, the vital heat of existence. By what sign do you seek to pass by?

Candidate: (prompted) By the sign of the pyramid of fire.

Guide: Such a fire exists, extending throughout the rushings of air, or even a formless fire whence comes the image of a voice, or even a flashing light, abounding, revolving, whirling forth, crying aloud. Also there is the vision of the fire-flashing courser of light, or of a child borne aloft on the shoulders of the celestial steed, fiery or clothed in gold, or naked and shooting shafts of light with a bow. But if your meditation prolongs itself, you shall unite all these symbols in the form of a lion.

(Guide returns to station with Sun.)

Herald: And when, after all the phantoms are banished, you shall see that holy and formless fire -- that fire which darts and flashes through the hidden depths of the universe -- hear the voice of Fire.

Chief: Let the candidate enter into the realm of fire, and learn the mysteries of fire in the midst of the purifying flame. Those mysteries are of the high wisdom of alchemy, passed down to us in the words of the Emerald Tablet.

(Candidate is brought forward to altar, and Herald gestures at the flame of the lamp.)

Warden: True, without error, certain and most true: that which is above is as that which is below, and that which is below is as that which is above, to perform the miracles of the One Thing. And as all things were from One, by the meditation of One, so from this One Thing come all things by adaptation. Its father is the Sun, its mother is the Moon, the wind carried it in its belly, the nurse thereof is the Earth.

Guide: It is the father of all perfection and the consummation of the whole world. Its power is integral if it be turned to Earth. Thou shalt separate the Earth from the Fire, the subtle from the coarse, gently and with much ingenuity. It ascends from Earth to heaven and descends again to Earth, and receives the power of the superiors and the inferiors.

Chief: Thus thou hast the glory of the whole world; therefore let all obscurity flee before thee. This is the strong fortitude of all fortitude, overcoming every subtle and penetrating every solid thing. Thus the world was created. Hence are all wonderful adaptations, of which this is the manner. Therefore am I called Hermes the Thrice Great, having the three parts of the philosophy of the whole world. That is finished which I have to say concerning the operation of the Sun.

(Chief leaves station and goes between altar and diagram.)

The Hieroglyphic Monad, like the Emerald Tablet, resumes the whole mystery of the alchemical work. (Chief points to Monad on closed diagram.) It is composed of the circle of the Sun; the crescent of the Moon; the cross of the four elements -- Earth, Air, Water and Fire -- and the sign of Aries, representing another Fire, the Secret Fire of transmutation, which is present in all material things and which descends in a secret manner in the spring of the year.

The Monad also comprises the signs of the seven planets: Sun; Moon; Mercury; Venus; Mars; Jupiter; Saturn. (Chief traces out signs as he names them.) It is also, in its simplest meaning, Mercury, the First Matter of the alchemists, heated by the alchemical fire of Aries.

The work of alchemy is a work of the redemption of matter, for it is an axiom of the Great Art that Nature, unaided, fails. The natural mineral in the Earth too rarely achieves the perfection of gold; the natural man or woman in the world too rarely achieves the perfection of humanity. It is for this reason that in the secret wisdom, the world we know is said to be a fallen world.

(He opens the altar diagram.)

This is the symbolic representation of the Fall. For the great goddess EVE, Nature, who in the Grade of Water supported the columns of the Sephiroth, was tempted by the tree of knowledge whose branches reach upward into the seven lower Sephiroth, but also downward into the Kingdom of Shells. She reached down unto the Qliploth, and the columns were unsupported; the system of the Sephiroth was shattered and with it fell ADAM, Humanity, the Lesser Countenance.

Then arose the great dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and the garden was made desolate, and Malkuth was cut off from the

Sephiroth by the coils of the dragon and linked to the Kingdom of Shells. And the seven lower Sephiroth were cut off from the three Supernals in Daath, at the feet of Aima Elohim.

And on the heads of the dragon are the crowns of the Kings of Edom. And since the greatest rise of the Serpent was in Daath, therefore there is, as it were, another Sephirah, making for the averse Tree, eleven Spheres rather than ten. Thus were the rivers of Eden desecrated, and from the mouth of the dragon rushed the infernal waters in Daath. This is Leviathan, the Crooked Serpent.

But between the devastated garden and the Supernal Eden, Tetragrammaton Elohim placed the letters of the Name and the Flaming Sword, that the uppermost part of the Tree of Life might not be involved in the Fall. And thence it is necessary that the BEN ADAM shall descend to Malkuth and from thence rise up, to cast down the dragon, purify the celestial rivers and make all things new.

This same renewal is the goal of the transmuting art of the alchemists.

RECEPTION OF THE CANDIDATE

The work before you is to make the radiant gold of the perfected self from the cold and corruptible lead of the natural self -- to achieve the Great Work of alchemy in yourself, with yourself as both the prima materia and the transmuting Stone. I ask you, therefore: Are you willing to take up this work?

(Candidate answers.)

Chief: Then I confer on you the secrets of this Grade. The step of this grade is the same as that of the other elemental Grades. The sign of the Grade is given thus: (does so) and represents the triangle of Fire. The Word of the Grade is AESH, Aleph, Shin, the Hebrew word for Fire.

I also confer upon you the title Pharos Illuminans, which means Illuminating Tower of Light. And as you have now attained to the highest of the elemental Grades of our Order, I further give you the Word which completes the First Degree: PHRATH, the Fourth River of Eden. It is spelled Peh, Resh, Tau. Remember it well, for it will become a key to further mysteries.

Companion Herald, you will announce that our Companion has been duly admitted to the Grade of Fire.

Herald: In the Name of Elohim, and in the presence of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I proclaim that our Companion _____ has witnessed the Light of the Stone in the realm of Fire.

Grade of Fire

(Herald leads candidate to a seat in the southeast of the hall. Chief returns to place.)

Chief: The Grade of Fire is the last of the four steps which lie between the First Degree, where you first saw the Light of the Stone shining in darkness, and the Second Degree, where that Light will be resumed in the living Stone of yourself. These four Grades form a bridge between the Degrees. You now stand at the end of that bridge, on the brink of the deeper mysteries of our Order.

The Grade of Earth, as you have seen, is the Grade of the Builder; the Grade of Air, that of the Knight; the Grade of Water, that of the Seer. The Grade of Fire, in turn, is the Grade of the Alchemist, and in it the symbolism of alchemy is central. As you continue on the quest of the Companions, however, you will learn that the four ways symbolized in these four Grades are ultimately one. Similarly, the four tasks you have taken upon yourself -- the building of the city of Adocentyn, the struggle against the inner enemies of wisdom, the quest for the light of the Grail, and the work of alchemical transmutation -- are, in the final analysis, the same. It is because of this that the virtue of this Grade is Justice, which balances and comprises all the other virtues.

Therefore be prompt and active as the sylphs, but avoid frivolity and caprice. Be energetic and strong as the salamanders, but avoid irritability and ferocity. Be flexible and attentive to images, like the undines, but avoid idleness and changeability. Be laborious and patient like the gnomes, but avoid grossness and avarice. So shall you develop the powers inherent in yourself, and make yourself fit to command the spirits of the elements.

I now present you with the working tool of this Grade, the Wand. (He shows it.) You will prepare such a wand for yourself as part of the work of this Grade. It is not an accident that this is closely akin to the pilgrim's staff, the working tool of the First Degree. Wand and staff alike represent unity, but where the staff symbolizes the unity of will that alone can control the powers of magic, the wand signifies that deeper unity of self toward which you must always strive.

Another of the principal emblems of this Grade is the Great Watchtower of the South, the third Tablet of the Angelic or Enochian system (points to tablet on south altar). The letters on it spell out Names of Power. From it are drawn the Three Holy Secret Names of God OIP TEAA PDOCE, which are borne upon the banners of the south, and there are also numberless names of angels, archangels and spirits ruling the element of Fire.

Beyond the First Degree of our Order lies the Second Degree, to which you are now eligible to aspire. In order to receive this, the highest Degree that can be conferred in a subordinate lodge of the Companions of the Stone, you must prove yourself in the

lore and the disciplines of our ancient wisdom, and you must continue to take an active part in the work of your lodge and our Order. A syllabus of the work required will be provided to you.
! (one knock)

CLOSING OF THE GRADE OF FIRE

Chief: ! (knocks) Companions, you will assist me to close this lodge in the Grade of Fire. Let us adore the Lord and King of Fire. !!! (All rise and face East.) Elohim, blessed be thy name to the countless ages, Amen. (All give sign, then face as usual.)>

Chief: Companion Warden, you will relinquish your station.

Warden: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, and with the help of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I surrender the power of the Secret Fire and leave the Place of Darkness.

<Warden replaces staff and moves in front of his station.>

Chief: Companion Guide, you will relinquish your station.

Guide: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, and with the help of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I surrender the power of the Crescent Moon and leave the Place of Light.

<Guide replaces staff and moves in front of her station.>

Chief: Companion Herald, you will relinquish your station.

Herald: In the Name of the Lord of the Universe, and with the help of the Guardian Companions of the Stone, I surrender the Staff and Lamp of Wisdom and leave the Place of Balance.

<Herald replaces staff and moves in front of his station.>

<Chief then goes around lodge once against sun and then to south. Herald falls in before Chief as he begins; Warden and Guide fall in behind him as he passes their stations. In the south, they form the diamond facing south as before, except that Guide is to the right and Herald to the left, as shown:>

Fire

Altar

Chief

Herald

Guide

Warden

Chief: Let us rehearse the prayer of the Fire Spirits.

Grade of Fire

Immortal, eternal, ineffable and uncreated father of all, borne upon the chariot of worlds which ever roll in ceaseless motion; ruler over the etherial vastness where the throne of your power is raised, from the summit of which your eyes behold all and your pure and holy ears hear all -- help us, your children, whom you have loved since the birth of the ages of time! Your majesty, golden, vast, and eternal, shines above the heaven of stars. Above them are you exalted.

O flashing fire, there you illuminate all things with your insupportable glory, whence flow those ceaseless streams of splendor that nourish your infinite spirit. This infinite spirit nourishes all and makes that inexhaustible treasure of generation which ever encompasses you, replete with the numberless forms with which you have filled it from the beginning.

From this spirit arise those most holy kings who are around your throne and who compose your court. O universal father, one and alone! Father alike of immortals and mortals, you have specially created powers similar to your eternal thought and to your venerable essence. You have established them above the angels who announce your will to the world.

Lastly, you have created us as a third order in our elemental empire. There our continual exercise is to praise and to adore your desires; there we burn in eternal aspiration unto you, O father -- O mother of mothers, archetype eternal of maternity and love! O child, flower of all children -- form of all forms -- soul, spirit, harmony and numeral of all things. Amen.

Depart now in peace to your habitations, (traces banishing pentagram of Fire) and peace be between us.

(Officers face west, fall in line behind Herald, and move around hall against sun one circuit, then fall out. All officers except Chief resume their Outer stations at this time.)

Chief: Companions N. and N., you will now retire the altar from the center of the lodge.

(This will normally be done by the Lecturer and Diviner, if these offices have been filled; if not, any conveniently placed Companions may do so. The officers advance by the square to the sides of the altar and move it back to its position three feet in front of the Dirigent's station, then return by the square to their stations.)

Chief: Companion Summoner, you will proclaim this lodge closed in the grade of Fire and open in the Outer.

Summoner: In the Name of Elohim, I proclaim that the Sun has set in the realm of Fire.

Chief: ! (All are seated.)

(This passage, between lines, is to be used if the Dirigent has not served as Chief of the Rite in the ritual work:)

Chief: Companion N., you will advance to the East and resume charge of the lodge. (The Dirigent advances to the East and takes the Throne of the East; the Chief resumes his or her station in the Outer.)

(The lodge is closed in the Outer in the usual form.)

LODGE IN THE GRADE OF FIRE

