

THE OLD MASTER



HE WAS SITTING IN A WHEELCHAIR,
LOOKING DOWN AT THE LAWN,
I THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE ASLEEP,
THEN I SAW THE OLD MAN YAWN.
I TOLD HIM I'D COME TO VISIT,
A BIG SMILE LIT UP HIS FACE,
HE SAID IT'S NOT VERY OFTEN,
PEOPLE VISIT THIS OLD PLACE.



PARDON MY MANNERS YOUNG MAN,
AS HE OFFERED ME A CHAIR,
WOULD YOU LIKE A GLASS OF TEA,
IT'S ON THE TABLE OVER THERE.
I BEGGED OFF THE OFFER,
BUT I SAID I HAVE A SURPRISE,
I'VE COME TAKE YOU TO LODGE,
YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN HIS EYES.



YOU KNOW, I'M PAST MASTER,
ABOUT THREE OR FOUR TIMES,
HE SAID AS MATTER OF FACT,

I CAN WORK ANY CHAIR IN LINE.
I FELT PROUD TO PUSH HIS CHAIR,
AS WE HEADED FOR MY CAR,
I HAD ALREADY CHECKED HIM OUT,
AND SIGNED HIS PASS CARD.



WHEN WE DROVE INTO THE LOT,
YOU SHOULD'VE HEARD THE CHEERS,
I HAD A LUMP IN MY THROAT,
DOWN HIS CHEEK ROLLED A TEAR.
THE LODGE WAS FILLED WITH BROTHERS,
WHO HAD COME TO CELEBRATE,
OUR GUEST OF HONOR HAD ARRIVED,
THE EASTERN STAR HAD BAKED A CAKE.



WE MADE A SPECIAL PRESENTATION,
THAT BROUGHT LAUGHTER AND TEARS,
FOR TONIGHT OUR WISE OLD MASTER,
HAD COMPLETED SIXTY-FIVE YEARS.
WITH COUNTLESS YEARS OF SERVICE,
IN THIS LODGE IN HIS HOMETOWN,
HE DID IT ALL WITH A GENTLE HEART,
AND THE STRONGEST GRIP AROUND.



HIS TIRED OLD VOICE CRACKED,
BUT HIS MIND WAS SHARP AND CLEAR,
AS HE TOOK THE MICROPHONE,
SITTING THERE IN HIS WHEELCHAIR.
WE ALL SAT DOWN AT TABLES,
WITH HOT COFFEE IN OUR CUPS,
HE SAID I'D LIKE TO TAKE YOU BACK,
TO WHEN I WAS JUST A PUP.



YOU SEE, THERE'S BEEN TIMES,
THIS OLD LODGE ALMOST WENT DARK,
WE WERE DOWN TO JUST A FEW,
AND SOME DIDN'T KNOW THEIR PART.
BUT WE KEPT ON WORKING HARD,
AND DOING EVERYTHING WE COULD,
TO GET MORE MEN INTERESTED,
IN THE CRAFT OF BROTHERHOOD.



OH THERE'S ALL KINDS OF THINGS,
THAT'S CHANGED OVER THE YEARS,
BUT YOUNGER MEN NOT COMING IN,
IS ONE OF OUR BIGGEST FEARS.

YOU SEE, IT WAS DIFFERENT THEN,
THAN IT IS THIS DAY AND TIME,
I REMEMBER HOW STRICT IT WAS,
YOU DIDN'T DARE CROSS THE LINE.



ABOUT ASKING A MAN TO JOIN,
WHEN YOU KNEW HE WAS GOOD,
GOD AND FAMILY CAME FIRST, THIS,
THE LODGE UNDERSTOOD.
WE HAD TO WAIT UNTIL HE ASKED,
ABOUT HOW TO BECOME ONE OF US,
THEN WE COULD TELL HIM THE TRUTH,
ABOUT FELLOWSHIP, HONOR AND TRUST.



WE WORKED HARD AND DID OUR BEST,
TO BE GOOD EXAMPLES AMONG MEN,
WE ALL KNOW FROM READING THE BIBLE,
THERE'S NOT A MAN WITHOUT SIN.
SO WE'D TAKE THE BEST MEN,
AND GENTLY SHOW'EM THE LIGHT,
JUST LOOK AT ALL THE BROTHERS,
THAT SHOWED UP HERE TONIGHT.



IF I COULD LIVE MY LIFE ALL OVER,
AND I COULD REWRITE EVERY PAGE,
I'D HIT A FEW BUMPS A LITTLE SOFTER,
BUT THERE'S NOTHING I WOULD CHANGE.

EACH TIME I WAS ASKED TO TEACH,
OH IT MADE ME FEEL SO GOOD,
TO LEAD YOU GENTLY TO THE LIGHT,
UNTIL I KNEW YOU UNDERSTOOD.



I LOVE YOU ALL MY BROTHERS,
I ENJOYED BEING THERE FOR YOU,
AND I'LL TELL EACH ONE TONIGHT,
YOU'VE BEEN THERE FOR ME TOO.

HE TALKED FOR HALF AN HOUR,
AS WE TRAVELED BACK IN TIME,
HE HAD TAKEN US ON A JOURNEY,
AND WE HUNG ON EVERY LINE.



IT WAS LATE WHEN WE GOT BACK,
BUT HE WAS STILL WIDE AWAKE,
AS I PUSHED HIS WHEELCHAIR INSIDE,
HE GAVE THE NURSE A PIECE OF CAKE.

UNTIL THE OLD MASTER IS CALLED,
TO THE GRAND LODGE ON HIGH,
HIS MEMORIES WILL BE FILLED,

WITH THE CELEBRATION TONIGHT.



A FEW YEARS HAVE COME AND GONE,
SINCE WE HONORED HIM THAT NIGHT,
THE OLD MASTER EVEN HELPED ME,
RAISE MY GRANDSON INTO LIGHT.
HIS KIND AND GENTLE MANNER,
STANDS TALL AMONG THE BEST,
TODAY HE MADE THE FINAL JOURNEY,
WE LAID THE OLD MASTER TO REST.