

# The John Acaster Memorial Short Paper Competition Nugget Submission

## OXBRIDGE LODGE

The Lodge roof is tiled, the Lodge room is tyled: to order brethren.

Common our gavels are not, but three treasured icons that crash in sequence maintaining order.

This could be a meeting of the Oxford and Cambridge boat crews, except here the light blues and the dark blues are on the same side.

More than enough dark blues to fill a boat or three and a healthy number of light blues, maybe enough to fill a boat or perhaps a pedalo.

I'm in the dark blue's boat, ready to steer the bark of life over the rough seas of passion.

Hear us Architect Divine and help us cross the line.....first!

Experience and youth stand as one.

A sea of white hair, a splash of grey hair, a smattering of dark hair, a few highly polished crowns, but..... not that many browns!

Collars and badges escaped their cases and jewels reflect in the Lodge lights, their dazzling rays dancing around the pillars of King Solomon's temple.

Aprons tell tales of rank and promotion, as distinctions among men are highly desirable to preserve due subordination and to reward merit and ability..... and they happen to look cool too.

But these are no ordinary aprons.

These are part of our identity, most perfectly positioned, some positioned up high below not so naked breasts, others slipping closer to knees..... and an occasional twisted rear strap catches our eye, squealing in contortion as its master squares the Lodge .

But as we are not all operative Masons, but rather free and accepted or speculative, we must apply our dressing skills to our morals .

What inducement have you to leave your fireside and journey to this place?

A solemn commitment to brotherly love, relief and truth perhaps or a hidden thespian desire to recite ritual so painstakingly learnt.

Look well to the South where a white gloved hand wipes a bead of moisture from a lined brow.

Relax, the rendition to come is merely the Working Tools and not the 'slightly' longer Charge!

Visiting brethren rise up, eyes glancing at the column which will soon call brethren from labour to refreshment and ears eagerly await the social board invite.

Glowing greetings abound.

There is no 4th time of asking, nothing to communicate for this time of asking, so stay seated brother Secretary and steer the boat straight.

The gavels crash thrice more, the ashlar quiver and forty years of Masonic life flash through my head.

The Lodge room is little changed, the faces much more so.

The Eye stares down at me, I grasp the badge I have never disgraced and I revel in the mystic signs and am ready to row with all my might.

In the name of the Great Architect Of The Universe and by the command of the Worshipful Master, let the race begin.

So mote it be.

Bro David Raymond Brown

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