

Mozart #5

M—[*Shouting after VAN SWIRTEN*] I cannot live by arranging Bach!

SALIERI: [*Sarcastically*]. A generous fellow.

MOZART: All the same, I'll have to do it. If he were to turn the lodge against me, I'd be finished. My brother Masons virtually keep me now.

SALIERI: Wolfgang, it's embarrassing, I know—but you must allow me to relieve you also.

MOZART: Not

SALIERI: If it is the duty of a Mason to help—how much more of a friend.

MOZART: Not another word! I would never take money from you. That friendship is worth all the gold in the world. Please—no more of that!

SALIERI: You overwhelm me. †

MOZART: I'll manage; you'll see! Things are looking up already. I've had a marvelous proposal from Schikaneder. He's a new member of this lodge.

SALIERI: Schikaneder? The actor?

MOZART: Yes. He owns a theater in the suburbs.

SALIERI: Well, more of a music hall, surely?

MOZART: Yes. . . . He wants me to write him a vaudeville—something for ordinary German people. Isn't that a wonderful idea? . . . He's offered me half the receipts when we open.

SALIERI: Nothing in advance?

MOZART: He said he couldn't afford anything. I know it's not much of an offer. But a popular piece about brotherly love could celebrate everything we believe as Masons!

SALIERI: It certainly could! . . . Why don't you put the Masons *into* it?

MOZART: Into an opera? . . . I couldn't.

[*SALIERI laughs, to indicate that he was simply making a joke.*]

All the same—what an idea!

SALIERI: [*Earnestly*]. Our rituals are secret, Wolfgang.

MOZART: I needn't copy them exactly. I could adapt them a little.

SALIERI: Well. . . . It would certainly be in a great cause.

MOZART: Brotherly love!

SALIERI: Brotherly love!

[*They both turn and look solemnly at the great golden emblem hanging at the back.*]

SALIERI: [*Warmly*]. Take courage, Wolfgang. It's a glorious idea.

MOZART: It is, isn't it? It really is!

SALIERI: Of course say nothing until it is done.

MOZART: Not a word.

SALIERI: [*Making a sign: closed fist*], Secret!

MOZART: [*Making a similar sign*], Secret!

SALIERI: Good.