



First degree of Sagittarius: 'A grand army of the republic campfire'

Many ideas are concealed in this image, one that may be incomprehensible to a non American. An explanation, I feel, is necessary before we attempt to decipher the symbols. The Grand Army of the Republic was a fraternity organization founded by veterans of the American Civil War. It helped the men who fought together to keep in touch, looking after their interests and safeguarding their rights.

So this Grand Army is not a fighting army but a group united by poignant experience of sorrow, death and victory. They come together to remember times past and to honour their fallen comrades.

The campfire suggests a night gathering, the fire representing the patriotic togetherness that the war experiences have forged. There is sadness in this image for all that has been lost to the war, youth, comrades, innocence; and also a sense that life will never be as exciting and meaningful as then, when these men were driven by a common purpose and became heroes.

Recalling life-changing experiences. Negatively, inability to move forward and appreciate what the humble present has to offer.

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