

Two-faced!

I'M SORRY, but I don't like him. I think he's two-faced," snapped the New Brother to the Old Tiler.

"Of course he is two-faced. Every one is," assured the Old Tiler.

"What do you mean? I am not two-faced!"

"If you are not, you are the single exception to all the rest of humanity!" grinned the Old Tiler.

"Why, Old Tiler, to be 'two-faced' is to be deceitful! I am not deceitful!"

"When we define what 'two-faced' means I have as much right to my idea as you to yours. I do not say you are twofaced according to your definition. But I do say you, I, every one is two-faced according to my definition. That's what you became a Mason for, to learn to see the other face."

"You amaze me," answered the New Brother. "I don't understand you."

"That's one of your other faces talking!" responded the Old Tiler. "You are amazed when you don't understand. Why should you be amazed when you don't understand?"

Most of us understand so little, seems to me we ought to get used to it without being amazed every time it happens."

"What do you mean?" The New Brother's voice trailed off into silence. The Old Tiler laughed.

"It's so easy to tangle you up in a snarl of words, I really shouldn't find sport in it," he chided himself. "But I'll try to untangle the snarl. Every man has an inside and an outside. Animals have only one side, as far as human beings are concerned. They look angry when they are; they purr or wag their tails when they are pleased; they growl or meow or bray when they are hungry and are gentle when they are contented. Man conceals his emotions. He doesn't want every one to know how or what he feels. He has the inhibition of etiquette.

"Do you know what etiquette is? Probably not. It had its origin in the heart of an indulgent French king, who listened to the complaints of his gardener that the royal court walked all over his flowers. So the king caused to be put in the gardens a line of estiquet - little tablets -- and issued an order that the ladies and gentlemen of the court should walk within the estiquet. The word gradually took on the meaning we give it; the established usages of our society, to walk within which is to be gentle, to walk without which is to be rude. When we walk 'within the etiquette' when we'd rather race over the garden, we conceal our real selves and our desires for the sake of our fellows. Therefore

we are two-faced; we turn one outward face to the world, and carry, perhaps, a rebellious inner one so unlovely that we hide it.

"Masonry teaches man to make the hidden face lovely, and to see past the stony and frozen outer face to the inner and pretty one. You call Brother Smith two-faced, and from your standpoint, meaning *deceitful*, you are wrong. But from my standpoint, meaning *conceal*, you are right. Brother Smith conceals a heart of gold under his forbidding face. He is the shyest man in the lodge. To protect himself he wears that stiff and 'don't touch me' expression. Inside he is warm-hearted and pleasant, and therefore, is two-faced according to my meaning.

"You are two-faced, my brother. You come out here with a statement or a question, expecting me to straighten you out. Often you say something you do not believe, just to hear what I'll say about it. You conceal the truth of your thought in order to get at the truth of mine and -- "

"How did you know that? It's true, but I . . ."

"Why, boy, I have been a Mason since the memory of man runneth not to the contrary!" laughed the Old Tiler. "Did you think your short time in the fraternity and less than a score and a half years in life could fool this old fossil? I knew you, like all other men, had a concealed face as well as an outward one. Your concealed face is eager and interested. Your outer one has a shamefaced pride in knowing as much as other men. You are still so much a boy you don't want to be thought a boy, just as if being a boy wasn't the most beautiful state there is for a he-person. And so you try to be a know-it-all, and, a devil-of-a-fellow and an old-and-experienced-man-of-the-world and a Mason-of-erudition, and to carry out this little play, which fools people like you, but not old hands like me, you pretend while you really want to know about it all."

"Why, you two-faced Old Tiler!" cried the New Brother aghast yet laughing. "I'll say you are two-faced, and in *my* meaning, at that. I never guessed you knew it!"

"The time wasn't ripe to tell you," grinned the Old Tiler. "To my certain knowledge no brother in our lodge is two-faced in your meaning of the word. Every one of them has a hidden face, but most of those are pleasant. Masons learn to show their hidden faces to their brethren, so I have just showed you mine."

"You think I am grown up?" asked the New Brother, wistfully.

"If you were *all* grown up, you'd know all this without being told," answered the Old Tiler. "Go along with you, boy! You'll grow up soon enough. Especially if you show that hidden face."

"It's on exhibition from now on!" announced the New Brother firmly.