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I just received an invitation from the Secret Society and a 5 story booklet in the mail after I answered. I think the secret message is that you have to create and keep an image in your mind visually (which uses the right side of your brain) that you are special and deserve all the riches, fame, love, etc. that life has to offer. This visual image is white magic that bends people and even things to help you in your life endeavors. And so subconsciously rich and powerful types of Illuminati in the Secret Society use this I am special thought and image to gain many advantages over left-wing brain operating people. Most of all celebrities use this same I have special thoughts or thinking to get the following, fame, and money. And so regardless of your aspirations in life, using this correct image of the brain specialty for yourself can attract people and circumstances to you in your favor and enhance any natural abilities or desires that you have to fulfill. It's also a method of creative visualization. The great sorrow is that the Secret Secret Society uses this knowledge to gain material benefit and sells this message for profit. Rather, it is better for the Illuminati to give all people the message that they are special and should use their right brain to contemplate and visualize what they want to achieve in life. This is the way of the future, not the pyramid form of society today rich and famous at the bottom. I copied the above text from a forum on the subject. Here's another article with a similar message: Not all scams are online, and I think it should give light. I'm not quite sure where it belongs because there doesn't seem to be a category here. A few weeks ago I received an email snail offer to get free information, telling me how I could become richer in life, wealth and love. The letter was very flattering and stroked my ego, as well as the desire to be rich and travel the world. It's all by design for you to take the bait. The offer said I had to go back or fax back the form asking for free information before this Friday coming up. With the hockey playoffs and the final arrival of some warm weather for spring, I didn't get around actually reading the information until Saturday beyond the deadline. I decided that for the price of the brand, I wanted to take the chance and send my form in. I was specially selected for this honor because I entered the second cycle of my life and could take the Secret Mysteries of Society, which is over 2300 years old and have been used by all the rich and powerful throughout modern history..... Fuf Heady stuff!!! Well, I think I'm lucky, and they're not paying attention to the deadline they set. I'm a new secret member of society now! I've in possession of my Secret Society Orientation booklet and according to as soon as I reveal the secret message inside true stories in the booklet I will come to wealth and glory. Now, if I happen not to discover the secret message...you still absorb it when you read your closed Secret Society Orientation booklet, and within two weeks, three very good things will happen to you involving money, power and love! The whole deal is to try to attract you to buying a 680 page Internal Secrets manuscript for a low, low price of \$200.00 USD, L130.00 British pounds, \$270 Australian dollars, \$235 Canadian dollars 150 euros in \$345 New Zealand dollars. It's all very convincing if you've read or seen any DaVinci Code or Angels and Demons books or movies. I have a free booklet. I read some... I'll let you know in 3 weeks if I became rich and famous.... and then I received a booklet and related propaganda in the mail, I never asked for it. Visa or MasterCard for \$200 is paid to the Company... That's it, the seven-day offer expires on Friday. Any Friday I think. Finally opened the envelope, found a booklet with 5 articles and some other things. Guess this special is just for me, the price has been reduced from \$250.00 to just Can. \$200.00 think I'm really special. There were several other parts of the print in the package, one page printed by the two sides promised a large penis. No kidding. The illustrations showed four different mini sizes to a large one about 12 inches. I'm afraid I was so shocked that I tore up this page, burned it in the fireplace. In defense of advertising, I believe that it was in a separate envelope marked with adult content. I cannot imagine for the world why one of my greatest desires or desires would be to have a bigger penis. Anyway, I have to admit, I entertained the unsolicited mail, but sorry not interested in the 630 page book for \$200... BALTIMORE - The secret society has been sending out invitations to potential members revealing the existence of an exclusive association and promising to share the greatest secrets of life. The letter states that the association consists of the most famous and influential people in the world, including famous actors and musicians, millionaires, Casanova and statesmen. And they want to share the most powerful secrets in the world with their members for free. The letter was signed by Tom and came from the PO Box in West Valley City, California. The organization is called the Society and league, but there is no other information about the sender or location. WMAR-2 News Mallory Sofatai received this letter over the summer. She decided to accept the offer and a few weeks later, she received a 55-page booklet in the mail. Again, the band promises to give members the secret of becoming 100 times richer without doing absolutely anything, losing 40 pounds in 4 weeks without even trying, and becoming so famous that rock stars are asking for your autograph. However, on page 17, you'll learn that the secret is not Free. You'll need a full full manuscript, which is available at a discounted price of \$139.95. After the deadline, the price goes back to \$240.Richard Vatz, a professor of communication and rhetoric for Towson University, said people can pay because they are intrigued by the mystery. People think they're getting in on something that no one knows about, said Dr Vatz. The letter was written about before when it was widely circulated a few years ago. Now it seems to be back. The Bureau of Business Improvement and others linked the brochures to Mark Hamilton, founder of the Neothink Society, according to his pseudo-Wikipedia page. Related businesses include Integrated Management Associates, Inc. and Neo-Tech Publishing Company in YouTube videos viewed by millions. Hamilton claims to be a 3,000-year-old secret. However, the big secret is more smoke and mirrors. It says that if the government acts less, we will do better. Vac said. There's nothing in this philosophy that guarantees you wealth, but it's the type of philosophy where if you're only after wealth and you don't care about your fellow man, you might wish to accept. WMAR-2 News contacted Hamilton and several others related to the business to ask why they did not include their names or additional information in their emails, but no one answered. So when people go public with that and they're interrogated by people like journalists, you know, they become less mysterious. They become less persuasive and people start to see through them, and people start asking questions about the weaknesses of their policies and the shortcomings of their policies, said Vatz.Waking up to the immediate wealth is that most will question, but there is always a willing to believe. And if you said you should be ashamed of yourself, they'd say you just don't understand, right? If you had a secret and you used it, you would understand -- said Vatz.While the letter is dishonest, it does not seem illegal. There are a number of people on the internet who have said that the books have opened them up to a whole new world, however. WMAR-2 News has not been able to verify these reviews or hundreds of comments on Hamilton's YouTube video. If you have matter for Mallory, she wants to hear from you. You can contact her using the form below or find her on Twitter or Facebook. The master wears an amulet with a blue eye in the center. In front of him, the candidate kneels in a candlelit room surrounded by microscopes and surgical instruments. The year is approximately 1746. The beginning of the initiation. The master places a piece of paper in front of the candidate and orders him to wear glasses. Read, the master commands. The candidate squints, but it's an impossible task. The page is empty. Also in this issue, the Candidate is told not to panic, there is hope for an improvement in his vision. The master wipes the candidate's eyes with a rag and orders preparation for the operation. He picks a pair of tweezers from the table. Another in attendance to raise their candles. The master starts plucking the hair from the candidate's eyebrows. It's a ritual procedure, no flesh is cut. But these are symbolic actions, none of which makes sense, the candidate assures. The candidate puts his hand on the master's amulet. Try reading again, says the master, replacing the first page of another. This page is filled with handwritten text. Congratulations, brother, members say. Now you can see. For more than 260 years, the contents of this page and the details of this ritual have remained a mystery. They were hidden in a coded manuscript, one of thousands prepared by secret societies in the 18th and 19th centuries. At the height of their power, these clandestine organizations, especially the Freemasons, had hundreds of thousands of adherents, from colonial New York to imperial St. Petersburg. Dismissed today as fodder for conspiracy theorists and a special history channel, they once served an important purpose: their lodges were safe houses where free-thinking could explore everything from the laws of physics to human rights to the nature of God, all hidden from the oppressive, authoritarian eyes of church and state. But in large part because they were so secretive, little is known about most of these organizations. Membership in all but the biggest extant more than a century ago, and many of their encrypted texts remained uncracked, dismissed by historians as impenetrable novelties. In fact, it was an accident that brought to light the symbolic ritual of restoring vision. The transcript began as a kind of game between two friends that eventually spanned a team of experts in disciplines ranging from machine translation to intellectual history. Its meaning goes far beyond the contents of a single cipher. Hidden in coded manuscripts like this secret story is how esoteric, often radical notions of science, politics and religion spread underground. At least that's what experts think. The only way to know for sure is to break the codes. In this case, as it happens, cracking began in a restaurant in Germany.For years, Christian Schaefer and Wolfgang Hock will meet regularly in an Italian bistro in Berlin. He ordered pizza and she would get penne all'arrabbiata. Two philologists - experts in ancient words - spent hours talking about dead languages and obscure manuscripts. It was the fall of 1998, and Schaefer was about to leave Berlin to get a job at the Faculty of Linguistics at Uppsala University, north of Stockholm. Hawke announced that he had a gift for Schaefer.She was a little surprised - showing the gift seemed like a strange personal gesture for such a low-key colleague. Even more surprising was the gift itself: a large brown paper envelope marked with the words top secret and a number of strange characters. Schaefer opened it. Inside was a note that read: Something for those long Swedish winter nights. It was up to 100 or so photocopied pages filled with handwritten script that makes no sense to her what it is: Arrows, Shapes and Runes. Mathematical symbols and Roman letters, alternately accented and unaccented. Apparently, it was some kind of cipher. Schaefer bombarded Hawke with questions about the contents of the manuscript. Hawke dismissed her with laughter, mentioning only that the original text could be Albanian. In addition, Hawke said she would have to find her answers. A few days later, on the train to Uppsala, Schaefer turned again to his present. The complexity of the cipher was enormous: symbols of Saturn and Venus, Greek letters such as pi and gamma, oversized ovals and pentagrams. Only two phrases were not coded: Philip 1866, written at the beginning of the manuscript, and Copials 3 at the end. Philip traditionally, as the Germans wrote the name, Copiales looked like a variation of the Latin word copy. Schaefer had no idea what to do with the evidence. She tried several times to catalog the characters, hoping to find out how often each of them appeared. This type of frequency analysis is one of the main methods of deciphering the encoded alphabet. But after 40 or 50 characters, she'll lose track. Thirteen years later, in January 2011, Schaefer participated in an Uppsala conference on computational linguistics. Usually such conversations gave her a headache. She preferred the quirky books to new technologies and didn't even have an internet connection at home. But this lecture was different. Featured speaker Kevin Knight, a University of Southern California specialist in machine translation-using algorithms to automatically translate one language into another. With his stylish rectangular sunglasses, a mop of prematurely grey hair, and a wiry surfer build, he doesn't look like a typical quant. Knight spoke almost in a whisper yet with intensity and passion. His designs were cute quirky too. He created an algorithm that will translate Dante's Inferno based on the user's choice of meter and rhyme scheme. Soon he hoped to produce software that could understand the meaning of the poems and even generate poems of his own. Knight was part of a very small group of machine translation researchers who treated foreign languages as ciphers, as if the Russian language, for example, was just a series of cryptological symbols representing English words. When hacking code, he explained, the central task is to figure out the set of rules for turning the cipher text into simple words: which letters should be changed, when to turn the phrase on your head, when to ignore the word at all. Creating this type of rule set, or key, is the primary goal of machine translators too. In addition, the key to translating Russian into English is much more complex. Words have several meanings, depending on the context. Grammar varies widely from language to And there are billions of possible combinations of words. But there ways to make it all more manageable. We know the rules and statistics of the English language: what words come together, what sounds the language uses, and which pairs of letters appear most often. (For example, it is usually followed by a, and quiet is rarely followed by a bulldozer). There are only so many translation schemes that will work with these grammatical parameters. This narrows the number of possible keys from billions to just millions. The next step is to take a lot of educated guesses about what the key might be. Knight uses the so-called algorithm to maximize expectations for this. Instead of relying on a predetermined dictionary, it goes through every possible English translation of these Russian words, no matter how funny. This will be interpreted as yes, horse, break the dance, and quiet! Then, for each of these possible interpretations, the algorithm invents the key to converting the entire document into English - what would the text look like if I were meant breakthrough? The first few thousand attempts of the algorithm are always the way, far away. But with each passage, he'll find out a few words. And these isolated responses inch the algorithm closer and closer to the right key. Eventually, the computer finds the most statistically likely set of translation rules, one that correctly interprets both and how quiet it is. The algorithm can also help break the codes. Knight told the Uppsala conference, usually the longer the cipher, the better they perform. So he casually told the audience: If you have a long coded text to share, let me know. Funny, Schaefer told Knight at the reception after that. I only have a thing. Neders's chisches Lanersarshiv-Staatsarshiv. A copy of the cipher arrived at Knight's office a few weeks later. Despite his comments at the conference, Knight was hesitant to start the project, alleged ciphers have often turned out to be hoaxes. But Schaefer's note, backed to the coded pages, was hard to resist. That's a top secret manuscript she wrote. It seems more suited to long dead Swedish winter nights than for sunny California days, but then you have hard-working and patient machines! Unfortunately for Knight, there was a lot of human grunt work to do in the first place. Over the next two weeks, he went through a cipher, developing a circuit to transcribe a coded script into a simple-in-type, machine-readable text. He found 88 characters and gave everyone a unique code: became light, became aa... became zs. By early March, he had entered the first 16 pages of the cipher into his computer. The next knight turned to his algorithm to maximize expectations. He asked the program what the manuscript symbols have in common. It spawned clusters of letters that behaved the same way, appearing in similar contexts. For example, circumcisions letters (a) are usually preceded or. There were at least 10 identifiable clusters of symbols throughout the document. The only way letters will be and act basically the same thing if it was a genuine cipher- one he could break. This is not a hoax; it's no accident. I can solve this problem, he told himself. A special cluster attracted his attention: unaccented Roman cipher letters used by English, Spanish and other European languages. Knight did a separate frequency analysis to see which of these letters appeared most often. The results were typical of the Western language. She suggested that this document may be the most basic cipher in which one letter is exchanged for another - a children's decoder ring, basically. Maybe Knight thought the real code was in the Roman alphabet, and all the funny astronomical signs and accented letters were there just to throw the reader away from the smell. Of course, the replacement cipher was simple if you knew what language it was in. German Philology, Latin copycats, and Hawk's all hint of Albanian all hinted at different languages. Knight asked his algorithm to guess the original language of the manuscript. Five times he compared the entire cryptotext to 80 languages. The results were slow in the coming-algorithm so computationally intense that each language comparison took five hours. Finally, the computer gave the slightest preference to the German language. Given Philip's spelling, it seemed as good an assumption as any other. Knight didn't speak a word of German, but he didn't need it. As long as he could learn some basic rules about the language, what letters appeared in what frequency- the machine would do the rest. As his family prepares for spring break - a historic tour along the East Coast - Knight was looking for patterns in the cipher. He saw that one common letter of the cipher - often accompanied by the second symbol. They appeared together 59 times; often came after... Knight considered the common German combinations of letters. He noticed that c is almost always followed by H, and CH is often followed by T. This sequence is used all the time in German words such as Licht (light) and masts (power). Knight guessed maybe cht. It was his first major break. During his vacation, when his daughters were playing on their iPads at night in a hotel room, Knight wrote in his orange notebook, fiddling with possible cipher solutions. So far, he has had a simple replacement code. But it left dozens of cipher symbols without the German equivalent. One evening, Knight changed his approach. He tried to suggest that the manuscript used a more complex code that used several symbols for a single German letter. Knight put his theory to the test. He assumed, for example, that, and everyone was standing behind I. It worked. He found others, and soon he began to collect small words, like der (in German), which Knight recognized from World War II films. Then he got his first big word: , or candidatis, and then , or antwortet (candidate responds). The wall of cipher secrecy was collapsing. But cipher symbols, especially the iconic ones, like, and and Puzzing. Worse, he couldn't get German translations for any of the standard Roman cipher letters. On March 26, Knight scanned his notebook. The words of his first phrase-Der candidat antwortet- were separated and . It didn't make sense if coded and stood behind the German letters. That's when Knight realized how wrong his original assumption was. The non-aligned Roman letters did not spell out the code. These were the spaces that separated the words of the real message, which was actually written in glyphs and accented text. Niderso Landestarchiv-Seataarzhiv Woflenbuttel sent a letter to Schaefer and her boss, Beata Meghesi, Uppsala's head of linguistics and philology, who was also interested in the manuscript. I think I have made some progress, he wrote, and included two lines from the cipher: dieser schlag id das zeichne und der anfang de verne vertraulichkeit de der bruder von jetzo an sie geselle von uns zunemer... Schaefer stared at the screen. She spent a dozen years with a cipher. Knight broke it all open in just a few weeks. The message in those two lines was almost as wonderful. Schaefer made some tweaks and sent back a preliminary translation: This stroke is a sign/symbol and the beginning of privacy / familiarity that the brother, from now on a companion, can expect from us... It was a ritual of initiation. Schaefer said. Geselle literally means companion. But she knew that the term was also used in fraternal orders - underground societies such as Freemasons. In this context, geselle was rank in a secret society. Schaefer's boss, Meghesi, a 41-year-old Hungarian migre, was particularly taken by the contents of the cipher. I wouldn't mind being pursued by a secret organization, she emailed Knight. At night, after she had finished managing her department of 450 courses and 25 professors and after she put her twins to bed, Megyesi sat at the computer, turning the characters into text. She and Knight started emailing several times a day about the cipher, and signing their names in a copiate text cipher. But they still haven't cracked the big code characters, especially which they transcribe like lindens. Megyesi and Schaefer were sure he was standing behind a word, not a letter. But they weren't sure what that word was. One night, in mid-April, while Meghesi was working late in her office, she absent-mindedly looked at the neatly arranged folders on the table. She looked at a page containing a lip symbol. Schaefer entered her office just as she thought about it. Meghesi looked up. This symbol, Megjesi told Schaefer, is not a lip. It's the eye. Niders Landearchiv-Seataarzhiv Woflenbittel How it turned out that Schaefer made her own discovery. The phrase in Kopiai's text, a reference to the light hand that should be the master of society, seemed familiar to her. So she dug up an academic article she had read some time ago about the secret Germany, which was called the Great Enlightened Society of Oculis. The light hand was mentioned in their charter. It was a huge breakthrough. Active in the mid-18th century, the optometrists became fixated on both the anatomy and symbolism of the eye. They focused on the view as a metaphor for knowledge. And they had eye surgery. We are superior to all other healers by being able to pierce all cataracts, whether fully developed or not, the group boasted in its public and uncoded bylaws. Concentrated in the city of Wolfenbuttel, Germany, the ophthalmologists were thought to play the role of gatekeepers in the booming field of ophthalmology. They kept out charlatans that could make someone lose their sight forever. On their crest, Oculists featured a needle cataract and three cats (which, of course, can be seen in near darkness). In their statutes, the optometrist's emphasis on the master's light hand seemed to be a reference to the surgical prowess of the members of the Church. And they seemed to have a rather progressive attitude: women can be optometrists, just like men. Schaefer contacted the state archives in Wolfenbuttel, which housed a collection of optometrist materials. The archives were coded text just like Copiale- and some interesting amulets too. Meghesi plunged even deeper into the cipher. But in the chambers of the Order, the light hand must have meant something else. Could it be about keeping secrets with cryptography? Even with its code broken, the whirlwind of the Copial ritual and the double conversation is getting harder and harder to follow, especially for those whose experience with secret orders has been made up mostly of cheesy movies. Meghesi knew she needed help finding out what kind of society they were. So she asked someone who could tell her what really happened in those candlelit rooms. Officially, Andreas Enerfors is a historian of ideas. But he spends a lot of time as one of the 50 or so university researchers in the world seriously studying the historical and cultural impact of secret societies. When Meghesi contacted him, Enerfors readily agreed to read this newly deciphered document from a secret order. As a child who sees candies, I couldn't resist, he says, tugging gently at his ascot. Plus, my boss wasn't there. They agreed to meet in September at the Castle University Library in Lund, the cobbled hometown of Snreforce in southern Sweden. Meghesi and Schaefer descended from Uppsala with the copy of Copiale. Knight Hundreds of thousands of Europeans secret societies in the 18th century, explained Oghesi Enerfors: sweden alone had more than a hundred orders. Although they were clandestine, they were often surprisingly inclusive. Many welcomed both nobles and merchants - a rare egalitarian practice in an era of strict social hierarchies. This made the orders dangerous for the state. They also often did not care about the Christian denomination of their adherents, making these orders, especially the largest of them, Freemasonry - an implicit threat to the authority of the Catholic Church. In 1738, Pope Clement XII forbade all Catholics to join the Masonic lodge. Others implied that male-only groups could be hotbeds of sodomy. Soon after, rumors began that the members of these orders actually worshipped the devil. These societies were incubators of democracy, modern science and eumencial religion. They elected their own leaders and drafted constitutions to govern their activities. It is no coincidence that Voltaire, George Washington, and Ben Franklin were active members of the Church. And just like today's network radicals, much of their power has been wrapped up in their ability to remain anonymous and keep their messages secret. After reading the Oculist's cipher, Enerfors suggested that he had described one of the most extreme groups. Forget about implicit threats to the state or the church. In the part of Copiale, there is clear talk about the murder of a tyrannical three-headed monster that deprives a man of his natural freedom. There is even a call for a general revolt. Remember, Yunnerfors told codebreakers that this book was written in 1740-30 before the Declaration of Independence. For someone at the time, he added, it would be like reading a terrorist organization's manifesto. For Enerforsee, deciphering Copiale was a significant achievement. Traditionally, historians have simply ignored such documents because they do not have the tools to understand them. That's why the ophthalmologists took so long to pass the early surgeons. But there are dozens of these generalized documents, many only in Lund. Some of them relate to new rites of brotherhood; others can study political movements in detail. There is no way to say for sure, because they are cryptologically sealed. There is a whole secret story of the West, which is waiting for it to be told. There are so many more codes. Deciphering copiale...Cracking the so-called Copiale cipher was a three-step process. At first, the characters had to be presented as machine-readable text: it became easy, and became a time. The software then analyzed the behavior of the encryption letters and assumed that Kopiai's original language was German. The team, breaking the code, was then able to translate the text into German and finally into English, revealing the secret leadership of the esoteric society. That's how it worked: pi lot g zzz ni x. ns ah jiot del zzz y. lam lot tk z eh plus f plus uu cross c. ot bas uu c del gr cross c. oh an lam h. nu x. uh | sgp lam e. m. nr | s. g. m. c. c. : uu h tri sqj. lam gs gry. ru ah ds bar p. ar uh b. m. oh c. : uu h tri sqj. c. tri bar n z gr bar m. ah x. uu o. m. gri id c. n bar n rs uh c. x. ih hd zzz y. plus zs del eh hd n. c. lam udie historie von dem ursprung der lip. - die neugierigkeit ist dem menschlicheN geschlecht a geerbt wir volkeN oft eine sache wissenN blos des wegeN weil sie geheim gehaltenHHistory of the origin of the alchemical society. Curiosity is the legacy of humanity. Often we want to know something just because it has to be kept secret. These unconvicted Roman letters appeared with a frequency that would be expected in the European language. But they do not represent letters - they mark the space between words. Algorithmic analysis showed that letters similar to each other also acted the same way. All of this is actually standing behind the letter E. It's a way to confuse codebreakers. More unusual symbols of Kopiai refer to words, not letters - in this case, ophthalmologist and society. On October 25, 2011, The New York Times published an article about Copial, which focused on Knight's code hacking techniques. The media spotlight followed along with hundreds of emails from people who claimed the ancient ciphers were their own. In December, when I visited Knight, he had just received a photo from Yemen. Some Bedouins found a stone with an unknown, square scenario. Maybe Knight could tell them what he said? It was an unfamiliar lawn. Knight and other members of the Copiale team are not used to such attention. And not all of this was positive: There were also miffed Freemasons telling him that he didn't understand the full picture, and warnings from the fringe set telling them to stop spilling dusty secrets or claiming that Lucifer was indeed a God's Freemason. Back in Lund, he was also surprised when Kopiai's plumb continued. In the midst of descriptions of oculistic rituals, the document took a narrative turn. She described meeting some good friends who talked about people wanting to know something just because it needs to be kept secret. Friends decided to use this curiosity to play a little joke. They have created a fraternity and would agree immediately as they would like to pretend that their unification will be a big secret. They called this force, this deception, this grandiose psychological experiment of Freemasonry. In other words, the Oculists made an outrageous statement: that they founded Freemasonry... as a joke. This is certainly not the case, but at least the Oculists seemed to be watching Freemasonry every step of the way. Starting with page 27 and continuing for the remaining 78 pages, the cipher detailing rituals performed supremely masonic order-rites unknown to ordinary Freemasons at the time. Nothing has been excluded from Kopiai's descriptions of these upper ritual rituals Not coffins. Neither the removal of underwear, nor with the hinges, nor with the veneration of Hiram Abiff, the builder of the Great Temple of Jerusalem, whose decomposed body became an alchemical emblem of the transformation of something rotten into something miraculous and golden. Decades later, most of these practices became widely known as the secrets of the Freemasons were leaked. But in the 1740s they were still well hidden, except for the ophthalmologists. The oculists were a secret society that burrowed deep into another secret society. He noted that cats on Oculists signs were watching mice. It could be another Oculist joke - or a sign that they were spies. Niderso Landearchiv-Seataarzhiv WoflensutteThe first their cipher was broken, the ophthalmologists were virtually unknown. Historians of the Wolfenbuttel knew about the group mainly because it was headed by Count Friedrich Augustus von Weltheim, who died in April 1775. Like many aristocrats of his time, he belonged to several secret societies, including the Order of the Golden Poodles, which probably sounded as blunt back then as it does today. But in his will, his Oculist relics deserve special instructions. He locked all the oculist objects in the leather trunk and ordered his son to make sure that the seals remained continuous until the local duke (or one of the Duke's descendants) said otherwise. If the purpose of the graph was to make sure that everything inside that barrel had disappeared into obscurity, he succeeded. The trunk was opened only in 1918. Since then, its contents have rarely been studied in the public archives of the Woflenbuttel. After months of talking about the Oculists with Knight, Schaefer, Meghesi, and Snreforce, I decided last winter to see the treasure of Count von Weltheim for myself. Unable to finish it in person, Ornerfors arranged to meet with his mentor, a professor named Jan Snook, in the archive. Snook is a high-degree Mason who has developed his own rituals for ordering. We met in the archives in Woflenbuttel and found a row of rectangular boxes waiting for us. Snook and I took them to a private reading room with round windows that overlooked the browsing woods. Inside the first box was a silver dollar-sized Oculists seal; his watchful cats and pinch-ness are perfectly preserved thanks to nearby two and a half centuries of near-isolation. Another box showed bones handled by cataract needles and fluorescent green aprons that members wore. Inside the third box were five oval amulets bearing raised blue eyes so anatomically correct I half expected them to wink. There was also a tiny cylinder covered with jade and gold-colored Copiale itself. I squinted it open to find a cup of turtle-shell holding an eye made of ivory and horns. The model fell apart like a Russian doll: a pupil inside a lens, an iris on top of a pupil, a cornea resting on an iris. Each layer was more refined than the next. Niderso Woflenbuttel Artifacts set out in the reading room also. The idea that the Oculters were sleeping agents on a mission to expose Freemasonry. Why would spies want all these extra rituals? Or be so interested in anatomy? Put yourself in Mason's shoes, Snook explained. The Catholic Church has banned your order and all other secret societies. You don't want to give up Freemasonry, but you don't want to be accused of sodomy. Even in a Protestant country like Germany, it was a without accusation at the time. So you're hiding it in a veil, Snook said. You start a new set of rituals to layer on top of the old, and make it impregnable to Vatican attacks. Perhaps the Oculters did not spy on Freemasonry so much as keep it alive. Like a Mason you can't write down, let alone publish -your rituals, Snook said. So, how do you spread your ideas? You publish esoteric rites as if they are expositions-public outings of Freemasonry. Also, you publish in code, so that only elite footage of fellow Freemasons can read dangerous things that you have to say. And when your mission is over, you'll put all the evidence in a box that won't be open for nearly 150 years. The ophthalmologists guarded and conveyed the deepest secrets of the Freemasons. Snook said, using a mixture of ritual, misreading and cryptography. In the end, we turned to the last paragraphs in Oculist trope: nine copies of a four-page document written in a mixture of old German, Latin and copy of the coded script. The message was more or less identical in each set. Die Algebra, he said at the top of the first page, primer on the old way of calculating. Rows of cipher letters lay beneath. The document seems to stack them up as if they were figures. The third page mentioned the Jewish Kabala, a mystical system in which meaning comes from the numerical meaning of the letters. It would seem the Copiale characters don't just represent words and letters, they stand for numbers too. But if they can do that, Knight, Meghesi and Schaefer can't tease the code. The optometrist letters apparently understood these coded documents in a way that today's translators do not. Despite years of attacks on their cipher, the secrets of the Oculists were not pried freely, at least not fully. What they saw in their initiation chambers may never be seen again. Editor Noah Shachtman (noah.shachtman@gmail.com) wrote about Russian cybersecurity tycoon Eugene Kaspersky in issue 20.08, 20.08.

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