

## FALLEN COMRADE CEREMONY SCRIPT

### 1820-1830: FALLEN COMRADE CEREMONY

**MASTER OF CEREMONIES:** LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WHILE WE ARE HONORED TO HAVE SO MANY OF YOU PRESENT TONIGHT; WE WOULD BE REMISS IF WE DID NOT PAUSE TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO COULD NOT BE WITH US. *(House lights dim to almost 0%)*

*'Amazing Grace' begins to play on bagpipes, barely perceptible.*

*(MC podium light fades, while overhead spot light illuminates fallen comrade table; Fallen Comrade narrator steps up to the podium)*

**NARRATOR:** AS YOU ENTERED THE BANQUET HALL THIS EVENING YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED A ROUND TABLE SET FOR ONE, IN A PLACE OF HONOR, SYMBOLIZING BOTH THE PRICE OF FREEDOM AND THE FRAILTY OF ONE PRISONER ALONE, AGAINST HIS OPPRESSORS. THIS MILITARY CASTE IS FILLED WITH SYMBOLISM. THE TABLE CLOTH IS WHITE SYMBOLIZING THE PURITY OF THEIR MOTIVES WHEN ANSWERING THE CALL OF DUTY. THIS TABLE IS OUR WAY OF SYMBOLIZING THE FACT THAT MEMBERS OF OUR PROFESSION OF ARMS ARE MISSING FROM OUR MIDST. THEY ARE COMMONLY CALLED FALLEN COMRADES. SOME ARE CALLED POW OR MIA. WE CALL THEM "BROTHERS AND SISTERS." THEY ARE UNABLE TO BE WITH US THIS EVENING AND SO WE REMEMBER THEM BECAUSE OF THEIR SACRIFICE AND INCARCERATION.

**Cue:** The first Soldier moves to the table and places the rifle at the start of the narrative.

*(Spot light follows Soldier from entrance to the table, then fades out)*

**NARRATOR:** THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE WAS FOUGHT FROM 1776-1782 BY A VOLUNTEER FORCE ASSEMBLED FROM THE ORIGINAL 13 COLONIES. THESE BRAVE SOLDIERS BROUGHT US OUR INDEPENDENCE FROM GREAT BRITAIN. THIS RIFLE WAS RECOVERED FROM THE HANDS OF ONE OF THE FIRST TO DIE FOR OUR FREEDOM IN A FIELD NEAR CONCORD MASSACHUSETTS FOLLOWING THE FIRST ARMED CONFLICT BETWEEN THE MILITIA AND BRITISH TROOPS. THOUSANDS NEVER CAME HOME.

*(Spot light follows Soldier from entrance to the table, then fades out)*

**Cue:** Second and third Soldiers will begin walking toward the table when the rifle is placed. Second and third Soldiers place the chair beside the table. Cue the fourth Soldier to start moving to the table when the chair is placed.

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**NARRATOR**: WORLD WARS I AND II WERE THE MOST DEVASTATING IN HUMAN HISTORY. MILLIONS OF LIVES WERE LOST IN DEFENSE OF THE WORLD'S FREEDOM. THIS CHAIR REPRESENTS THE THOUSANDS OF MOTHERS, FATHERS, GRANDMOTHERS AND GRANDFATHERS WHO WAITED AT HOME FOR OVER (292,000) AMERICANS WHO WOULD NEVER RETURN.

*(Spot light follows Soldier from entrance to the table, then fades out)*

**Cue**: Forth Soldier places the rose as the narrative is read. Cue the fifth Soldier to move to the table when the rose is placed.

**NARRATOR**: COMMUNISM FROM THE NORTH BROUGHT WAR TO THE KOREAN PENINSULA IN 1950. THE UNITED STATES LOST 23,300 TO GAIN ARMISTICE IN JULY 1953. THIS ROSE REPRESENTS THE HOPES AND DREAMS OF PEACE FOR EACH SOLDIER WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE FOR THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH KOREA.

*(Spot light follows Soldier from entrance to the table, then fades out)*

**Cue**: the fifth color guard to place the wine on the table while the narrative is read. Cue the sixth color guard to move to the table when the rose is placed.

**NARRATOR**: 57,685 CASUALTIES CAME WITH THE CEASE FIRE FOLLOWING 10 LONG YEARS OF DIRECT U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIETNAM WAR. A SLICE OF LEMON ON THE BREAD PLATE IS TO REMIND US OF THE BITTER FATE OF THOSE CAPTURED AND MISSING IN A FOREIGN LAND. A PINCH OF SALT SYMBOLIZES THE TEARS ENDURED BY THOSE MISSING AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO SEEK ANSWERS. THE BIBLE REPRESENTS THE STRENGTH GAINED THROUGH FAITH TO SUSTAIN THOSE LOST FROM OUR COUNTRY, FOUNDED AS ONE NATION UNDER GOD. THIS WINE GLASS PLACED UPSIDE DOWN REPRESENTS THEIR INABILITY TO SHARE THIS EVENING TOAST AND ALL OF LIFE'S HOPE AND DREAMS NEVER REALIZED BY THOSE WHO WERE LOST.

*(Spot light follows Soldier from entrance to the table, then fades out)*

**Cue**: the sixth color guard to place the ribbon on the table. Cue the seventh guard to move to the table to place the candle when the rose is placed.

**NARRATOR**: THIS YELLOW RIBBON REPRESENTS THE HOPES AND PRAYERS OF THE THOUSANDS OF FAMILIES AND FRIENDS WHO WAITED FOR THE SAFE RETURN OF THEIR LOVED ONES FROM OPERATIONS DESERT SHILED / DESERT STORM OF OVER 500,000 U.S. SERVICE PERSONNEL. THE HOPES AND PRAYERS FOR 246 WENT

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UNANSWERED. DURING THE ONGOING OPERATIONS ENDURING FREEDOM AND IRAQI FREEDOM, OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS CONTINUE TO MAKE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE WHILE SECURING FREEDOM FOR US AND OUR ALLIES.

**Cue:** The first and seventh guard will move forward to light the candle. The first guard will assist the seventh guard in lighting the candle. A 30 second pause will be performed at the appropriate point on the last "Remember" the Fallen Comrade participants will slowly present and order arms then face to slowly exit the room.

**NARRATOR:** THE LIGHTING OF THIS CANDLE SERVES TO REMIND US OF THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE OUR FALLEN COMRADES AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE MADE TO PRESERVE THE PRECIOUS FREEDOM WE ALL CHERISH TODAY. AS A SMALL TRIBUTE, I ASK THAT WE TAKE A MOMENT OF SILENCE AS AN EXPRESSION OF OUR GRATITUDE TO THOSE WHO SACRIFICED FOR US.

**(Moment of silence)**

*The Fallen Comrade participants slowly present and order arms AT THE END OF TAPS; then face to slowly exit the room.*

A bugler plays TAPS.