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The Tragedy of Caspian: C. S. Lewis and His Trauma

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THE TRAGEDY OF CASPIAN: C.S. LEWIS AND HIS TRAUMA

by

CHANDLER HANTON

(Under the Direction of Joe Pellegrino)

ABSTRACT

This thesis reconsiders C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* as a type of scriptotherapy that enabled Lewis to process and come to terms with a life full of serious and significant traumatic events. Trauma theory offers a vehicle for us to consider the alignments and connections between Lewis himself and his fictional creation, Caspian. In the specifics of both characterization and incident, Lewis mirrors the events and relationships that instilled and healed the trauma in his own life. In situating Caspian as his alter-ego, Lewis allowed his writing to function as a gender-specific therapeutic process for addressing the effects of his traumatic past.

INDEX WORDS: C. S. Lewis, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, Trauma theory, Scriptotherapy, Children's literature

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

C.S. Lewis was a renowned literary scholar, children's literature author, and Christian apologist. Yet these aspects of his life tend to become intertwined and cause restrictions in analyzing his works. Many modern religious scholars quote Lewis to emphasize their articles' points¹. However, the quotes they include are picked in accordance to the topic that the scholar aims to cater towards, often disregarding other points Lewis makes. An example of this bias can be found in Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Scholars tend to come to the conclusion that because of the Christian allegories and it being a part of the children's literature genre, that the series is not to be interpreted as a product of Lewis' trauma. However, I argue that Lewis wrote the series as not only an escape into the idea of an innocent childhood, but also to express the horrors, trauma, and suffering that children must undergo to reach adulthood. Through this process of becoming an adult, readers, the characters, and Lewis alike revisit the trauma of growing up.

This revisitation into childhood trauma crosses the boundaries of Lewis' literary types. While *The Chronicles of Narnia* is in itself a part of the children's literature genre, the series also overlaps with Lewis' identities as a Christian apologist and Literary Scholar. Yet, scholars assume that because the series is geared towards children and encompasses these two major aspects of Lewis' life, that there is no need to go further. However, the inclusion of these subjects says otherwise. For one, the series acts as a vehicle to teach young children about Christianity. However, Lewis does not shy away from the violence and death scenes that are

¹ Judith Wolfe and Brendan N. Wolfe write about Lewis' activism in systematic Christianity, through both a cultural and modernist lens. See also Brazier's *C.S. Lewis—On the Christ of a Religious Economy, 3.1:1. Creation and Sub-Creation* as well as Kyoko Yuasa's *C.S. Lewis and Christian Postmodernism: Word, Image, and Beyond*.

inspired by biblical stories. For another, it also acts as a tool to explain responsibilities and the trials of adulthood, in both an analytic way as well as one that the young audience can understand. And even though this explanation may not be as direct, it is still brutally honest about the horrors that come with aging and witnessing all you know fade away. So while scholars may think that the series starts and ends with Biblical and Mythological references, they are missing the blatant sign that all of the allusions and implications that Lewis includes are lined with traumatic influences, from both the stories themselves as well as Lewis' personal interpretation of them.

So while *The Chronicles of Narnia* is within the realms of children's literature because it is focused on children and for children, the series goes a bit deeper than surface level. Each book within the series focuses on development from a 'childish' state and into a 'child-like' state. The childish state plays on the more negative connotations of children, often alluding to selfishness and tantrums. The child-like state however, surpasses youth and age, and is the acceptance of living life with a hopeful perspective, much like a young child seeing and experiencing the world for the first time. Through this development and coming of age process, within each book as well as over the course of the series, the young audience not only experiences fantastical tales of crossing between magical and normal dimensions, but they — just as the child characters — simultaneously undergo the process of growing up. Such experiences with growing up, from being childish to becoming child-like, are as Lewis implies, influenced by trauma.

But Lewis' series is more than just a Catechist tool or scholarly monologue. While the series is geared towards teaching children religion, morals, and the process of growing up, Lewis does more than that. The series acts as a filtered "reconstruction" of Lewis' own experience of growing up — and often growing up too soon. The tale may give off a hopeful perspective

through utilizing Christian morals (like forgiveness and community), but the series does not shy away from the harsh realities of fulfilling the role you are expected to grow into as you age. Even further, Lewis confronts the problem of how these expectations lead to failures and a loss of oneself. Instead of growing up being a process of a child evolving into a better version of themselves, Lewis alludes to how often children are forced into breaking themselves into pieces and reworking and reordering themselves to fit the molds of what it means to be an adult.

I argue that this process of creating a novel around the trauma that children experience is an example of Lewis partaking in a form of scriptotherapy. Yet, instead of writing about his experiences directly with the intention to heal, Lewis hides behind fantasy and fiction to alienate himself from his own traumatic experiences. Thus, while Lewis' series is based in fantasy and the pure implications that such a genre comes with, it hides an "underland" of suffering. Through the analysis of Lewis and his Chronicles, I will be aligning his biographies with his works and using it as an example on how Literature acts as an essential form in understanding trauma. I do not argue that Lewis' trauma is different from, or more substantial than, that of other traumatized individuals; rather, I argue that Lewis' position as an author, him living in a time where psychology was first emerging into scholarship, and our hindsight understanding of mental illness gives scholars a large area to work with. In addition, through using Lewis' biographies and works, readers can also take into account not just how trauma works after a singular, but major traumatic experience — as is normalized when studying trauma — but also taking into account smaller, accumulated traumas over the course of a lifetime. Using Lewis' life and works as an example of trauma and the projection of it into Literature gives scholars a more complex and broad plane to work with; thus, it offers a more thorough examination of how

trauma works when an individual is exposed to it time and time again over the course of their life.

Literature Review

In scholarship on Lewis, there are often two strands of criticism: Religious and Moral Studies and Feminist Theory. Both strands of scholarship analyze how Lewis positions his biases into his children's literature. Religious and Moral Studies focuses on how his biases based on Christian beliefs appear throughout the chronicles in allegorical form and how those allegories might aid readers in understanding Christian morals. As for Feminist Theory, feminist scholars analyze how Lewis' biases against women influence him into positioning characters emotionally, intellectually, and occupationally based on their gender identity and traditional gender stereotypes. While Religious and Moral Studies is a popular thread of conversation in discussions on Lewis, Feminist Theory was the first major theory that was being applied to Lewis' works, particularly *The Chronicles of Narnia*, that was outside the realms of religion and morality. Feminist Theory brought something entirely new to Lewis scholarship, yet due to it pointing out the prejudice in the writer's work, it came off as scandalous. By diverging from the primary scholarship on Lewis (Religious and Moral Studies), Feminist Theory signaled for other theories to be applied to Lewis' works as well. However, with the worry of these other theories being projected onto Lewis' series came the fear that it may spotlight him and Christianity in a negative light. So while more theories have been applied to the analysis of Lewis' works, it is an extremely slow process.

Similar to these veins of conversation, I want to take into account the slow moving divergence of scholarly interpretation while conducting this research. I would like to use Feminist Theory and the feminist scholars who had interpreted Lewis' literature through a

gendered lens as inspiration to go further than religious allegories and moral debate. Yet, I would still like to position that religious and moral scholarship as a foundation to what I want to argue. I believe that although Religious and Moral Studies is essential to Lewis scholarship, it still barely scratches the surface. And while Feminist Theory may go a bit deeper, it still does not reach a major issue within the chronicles. Rather, I believe that a major influence of Lewis' works was neither religion or gender based. Instead, I argue that Lewis' main influence stems from his trauma.

Methodology

In order to analyze Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia* with the application of Trauma Theory, one must understand what trauma exactly is. According to *Trauma Informed Care*, trauma is the result "from exposure to an incident or series of events that are emotionally disturbing or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, and/or spiritual well-being" ("Defining Trauma"). The American Psychological Association extends this definition by describing trauma as more than just an emotional and psychological response, but also as having a physical impact on the brain. As stated, the psychological damage from trauma results in not just emotional and mental afflictions, nor short term effects like "shock and denial," but also creating "longer term reactions...unpredictable emotions, flashbacks, strained relationships and even physical symptoms like headaches or nausea" ("Trauma"). While there are various instances that may instigate trauma, the two significant factors are major life changes and personal relationships.

Depending on the events and the people that the individual interacts with, the mind of that individual can either become ill or heal — or, on a more complicated note, go from one extreme to the other. Such was the experience of Lewis; I will be analyzing the major events in

Lewis' life as well as the various relationships he developed and how they in turn influenced his reenactment of them through his characters and plotlines. In short, I posit that Lewis used the character of Caspian as a way to address his own trauma, creating an adult version of what play therapists call "dollhouse therapy." This therapeutic modality,

offers the possibility for a child to stage dramas on an acceptable play stage: a safe and small space within which to create narratives that somehow parallel and reveal much about their own inner and outer lives. In dollhouse play, a child can remain untroubled by the painful awareness that direct or literal self-expression might entail. Given a dollhouse, many children will create scenarios that are wished for, despised and/or accurate representations of his or her life. (Scheftel)

By creating his own private "doll house," Lewis was able to be a bit more blunt about the traumatic situations he was thrust into and his feelings about them because — in his mind — it was fantasy and not his reality; the dolls could no longer hurt him and the playhouses no longer haunt him, so long as he was the one orchestrating their actions. Thus, for the sake of narrowing the scope, the major traumatic events and trauma-instigating relationships in Lewis' life specifically will be compared to those that appeared throughout the series. Through this method, scholars can have a deeper insight into not just how C. S. Lewis uses scriptotherapy as a coping mechanism, but also how scriptotherapy and the study of Trauma Theory can be used to understand the mind, the effects of trauma, and how to address these concerns.

CHAPTER 2

THE UNCOVERING OF TRAUMA: READING LEWIS' LIFE

Just like every good story, Clive Staple Lewis' life fluctuates between conflict and resolution. Lewis' multiple experiences of trauma and the lingering effects of those traumatic events almost amusedly resemble a typical dramatic "coming-of-age" story pattern: just when he thinks things are going to work out in his favor, he is traumatized yet again. And just when he is about to allow the memory of his trauma to overcome him, he is resurrected back into the present with some kind of transient hope. It seems that life swinging him between its carrot and stick created more havoc in Lewis' life than if he were continuously plagued by traumatic experiences. His pendulum swings of emotions and expectations became a psychodrama he performed in each stage of his life, from his early childhood into his last years.

The historical milieu into which Lewis was born, the centuries-long history of conflict between England and Ireland, was the background canvas on which Lewis' trauma would be painted. England's colonial oppression of Ireland, and the spasm of violence that broke that yoke, following hard upon the brutal trench warfare of WWI — where Lewis served as an officer and was seriously wounded — had lasting effects on his psychological well-being. Then, after just a few years of peace, a global depression made life more difficult, and brought about the last great conflict Lewis experienced, WWII (Wilson, x-xi). Having been cursed to live in "interesting times," Lewis' life was devoid of any stability, as he moved from emotionally scarring events to periods of relative calm, then back again, over and over.

Childhood

Lewis' life assumed this pattern early on; while appearing like any other child of a 20th-century Irish family, small and subtle traumas began to accumulate during his early years. He was the youngest child of Florence and Albert Lewis; Warren Lewis (fondly called 'Warnie') was his older brother. Albert Lewis worked most of the time as a solicitor; both his work and his temperament kept him at a distance from his younger son. When he did interact with Clive, Albert showed himself to be the perfect product of *Na Fianna Éireann*, the Irish nationalist boys clubs that promoted hyper-masculinity and a devotion to a martial way of life (Hatfield, 137-138). But such values were not well-suited for a child like Clive. At the age of nine Warren was sent off to the Wynyard boarding school, so for much of his childhood, for all intents and purposes, it was just Lewis and his mother in the family home. When Lewis was just four years old he first displayed his susceptibility to the deep and lasting effects of traumatic events. A neighborhood dog, "Jacksie," was hit by a car and killed. This so affected Lewis that he refused to be called by his Christian name, Clive, and instead would only answer to the abbreviated name of the dog, "Jack" (Johnson, 59). The new name stuck; Lewis was called "Jack" throughout the rest of his life. We can marvel at the strength of will that Lewis possessed, as he remained true to his commitment to the memory of a stray dog — made while he was just four years old — for over 60 years. But we must also recognize that every time someone addressed Jack by his assumed name he would have been reminded of this early trauma. This literal rebranding may have been the most overt and long-lasting response to trauma in Lewis' life, but it was not the deepest or the most significant, for the death of this dog was just the first of the many deaths and other traumatic events that seriously impinged upon his mental well-being and sense of self.

The next death that plagued Jack's life was that of his mother, Florence, who died of cancer when Jack was just nine. Florence's death shaped Lewis in oppositional ways. It informed his problematic interactions with women throughout his life (Wilson, xi-xii), and it led to his initial loss of faith in Christianity. Lewis would expend a great deal of psychic energy searching for a Florence surrogate, and this search would culminate in his extravagant promise, later in life, to assume the role of a son to his dead friend's mother. Soon after Florence's death, Jack followed his older brother into Wynyard School. However, this sudden transition from a small household with a beloved and nurturing mother figure into a school teeming with boys — replete with a draconian headmaster — lit the fuse that would later become Lewis' trauma bomb.

Yet, if his mother's death was the spark that lit the bomb, then it was his boarding school experience that was the primer for the inevitable explosion. Before he attended Wynyard, Jack had his mother to rely on for emotional support, and her presence outweighed his father's absence. But there was no such figure at Wynyard School. If anything, with the loss of his mother and her replacement by the school master Capron (known as "Oldie"), Lewis now had to deal with two aggressive, overly masculine father figures. In response to this loss of a caring parental figure and the doubling of intimidating caregivers, Lewis created a kind of self-isolation, insulating himself from any kind of role model or guiding figure — and thus, exposure to even more trauma. This significant distrust towards authority figures continued throughout his life (Black, 172).

"Concentration Camp" is the title of the chapter that Lewis devoted to his boarding school days in his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy* (Lewis, 29). Throughout this chapter, Lewis makes comparisons between his home life prior to boarding school and the duration of his time away from home. However, as he recounts this time from a distance in both time and space, there

is a distinct tone of disassociation from the experience. While he begins to logically explain the tyranny he and the other schoolboys were subjected to by the schoolmaster, Capron, Lewis also reveals his victimhood by creating excuses for Capron's behavior and pointing out one or two minor things that Capron did that could be seen as positive (*SbJ*, 34). Lewis claims that the traumatic situations that Capron inflicted upon them brought the schoolboys closer together, but there was clearly no attempt on the part of any student to intervene on behalf of a fellow student. Most of them stood and watched silently and uncomfortably as one of their peers would be ruthlessly caned. This created a type of "every man for himself" mentality in the boys, and became so pervasive that later they would not even acknowledge that such events occurred. This obvious manifestation of trauma, the repression of even the memory of it, condemned the students to a life of isolation and a lack of emotional support (*SbJ*, 37-38).

One example of this is an incident when his classmate, "P." was flogged by Capron as the other boys watched. Lewis describes the expressions of fear and "deathlike stillness" (*SbJ*, 34) that kept the boys from intervening, but he does not go into detail about the 'recovery' or 'bonding' during the aftermath of such a traumatic event. So even if the boys bonded through the shared trauma, Lewis' retelling of these events focuses far more extensively on their emotional reactions as they witnessed these floggings than on any sense of a shared burden, or even a communal consideration, of those events. In short, the elder Lewis wants to present his younger self as being part of a group, as more peer-focused than caregiver-focused (Black, 181). But his actual memories — or at least the ones he's willing to commit to paper — belie that desire. What we see is a group of young boys who are isolated, and even alienated, by their shared trauma.

However, Lewis' own writing diminishes this and other events in an attempt to downplay their effects. He vaguely waves his narrative hand at this, heavily editing or sweetening his own

memories: “The reader will notice that school was thus coming to reflect a pattern I had already encountered in my home life. At home, the bad times had drawn my brother and me closer together; here, where the times were always bad, the fear and hatred of Oldie had something of the same effect upon us all” (*SbJ*, 38). Lewis connects the time he and his brother spent with their strict father prior to being sent to boarding school and the instances of abuse, which Capron called his “lessons.” However, his claim that his fellow classmates went through the same tribulations and became closer because of them, is not supported by the other evidence he presents.

Lewis attempts to further downplay such atrocities with his remark that “there is a possible explanation of his behavior which renders it more forgivable.” He admits that he could write more about the headmaster’s cruelty, but says that he is restraining himself from continuing to “describe Oldie for many pages,” leaving “some of the worst [...] unsaid.” As if the incidents he presents are not harrowing enough, we are left to imagine those more severe and traumatic events that are actually absent from Lewis’ work. We also have to wonder how the perpetrator of such abuse, under any circumstance, could elicit any sympathy for his actions, especially since Lewis is left with a substantial amount of trauma (*SbJ*, 34). In another contradictory move, Lewis actually supports this reading, when he tells his readers that “You will remember that I had already learned to fear and hate emotion” and admits that these repressed experiences were “a fresh reason to do so” (*SbJ*, 38).

It is during this time that Lewis develops a coping mechanism that, while not perfect, will serve to keep the worst of any traumatic experience from his consideration. He retreats often to the Gurney, the school library, and loses himself in his reading. The salient characteristics of this: the self-isolation, the investment in other, fictional lives, and the transport of the self to

worlds that were free of such trauma, will be the linchpins of his reactions to trauma throughout his life.

When Lewis relates the story of his early schooling in *Surprised by Joy*, he devotes an inordinate amount of narrative energy to his time at Wynyard School. In reality, he spent less than two years there, but these years seem filled with incident, while his narrative glosses over the later years he spent at other schools. But just a few months short of his 16th birthday, Lewis was offered a tonic to his history of loss and fear, as he took up private tutoring with the former Headmaster of Lurgan College, W.T. Kirkpatrick. Kirkpatrick had a particular fondness for Jack, and was keenly aware of Lewis' academic skills and potential. He said as much to Albert Lewis, noting that "He [Jack] hardly realizes – how could he at his age – with what a liberal hand nature has bestowed her bounties on him" (Hooper, 178).

For his part, Lewis obviously enjoyed his two and a half years with Kirkpatrick: "Kirk excited and satisfied one side of me. Here was talk that was really about something. Here was a man who thought not about you but about what you said" (*SbJ*, 131-132). He also recognized just how nurturing Kirkpatrick was to the budding academic: "My debt to him is very great, my reverence to this day undiminished" (*SbJ*, 143). For the length of their time together, Kirkpatrick acted as both the nurturing mother-figure as well as the guiding father-figure in Lewis' life, giving him freedom in his studies but also encouragement and correction when needed. This professor sparked Lewis' life-long interest in fantasy and science fiction, an interest that Lewis himself couched in psychological terms: "My interest [in literature, particularly fantasy and science fiction], when the fit was upon me, was ravenous, like a lust. This particular coarse strength I have come to accept as a mark that the interest which has it is psychological, not spiritual; behind such a fierce tang there lurks, I suspect, a psychoanalytical explanation" (*SbJ*,

40). Lewis' fascination with fantasy and science fiction, coupled with his analyses of particular texts, reveals his interest as not just a coping mechanism or the desire to please and impress his substitute father figure, but a psychological attempt at self-healing, for these books brought him comfort as they presented an explanation of how the world functions as it does, and a reason for the struggles it inflicts. Kirkpatrick's influence on Lewis' scholarship prompted a response to trauma in which Lewis "participate[d] in a therapeutic understanding of experience that [formed] part of medical and managerial modes of surveillance and control" (Meek, 3). Through Lewis' education, he was able to learn how the world works, and thus learn coping mechanisms that would allow him to navigate that world in a way that inflicted the least amount of trauma upon him. His investment in books and learning was a tool for him to feel a sense of control over his own life.

Lewis' early life vacillated between times when he was under the protection of a benevolent caregiver and periods of trauma induced by authorities or situations. Florence Lewis, and even the neighborhood stray, Jacksie, offered a sense of protection, belonging, and companionship. But Lewis had these wrenched from him, to be replaced by a tyrannical headmaster, himself in turn replaced by a far more gentle and encouraging academic instructor. All of this culminated in the teenage Lewis experiencing another significant vacillation: he matriculated at University College, Oxford, then experienced the greatest traumatic event of the 20th century in Europe, WWI.

Young Adulthood

When Lewis left Kirkpatrick's nest and sought further education at Oxford, he was still filled with a sense of unrest. Within his first semester there, on the day after England declared war, Lewis enlisted in the infantry, but he postponed his induction until after he completed his

first semester. While WWI was not the typical learning experience that Lewis was accustomed to, it did allow for some reflection on his life and how he thought of continuing it. For instance, while an officer, Lewis was far removed from the Christian beliefs he saw promulgated around him, and insisted numerous times in his letters about how he never prayed or acknowledged any kind of spirituality while on the battlefield (Demy, 106). While many of his peers sought some kind of comfort in religion and used it as a means to cope with the horrors of war, Lewis did no such thing. He declared proudly that he “never sank so low as to pray” (Baker, 6). Rather, he says he was caught in a kind of dissociated state, balanced between the “two things” that stood out during his time in war: his close call with death and his experience in developing what Kant referred to as the “Philosophy of the Self” (*SbJ*, 187). This is how Lewis characterizes his investment in reading during his time in service. He was, in a way, forced to either confront his own mortality and its contribution to the war or distract himself with self-education and seeking self-knowledge.

Even on the battlefield, while others may have been praying for their own safety, Lewis spent his time reading classics of literature and philosophy. Finding little if any comfort in a belief in a higher figure (whether that be a caregiver, a military leader, or even a higher deity), he coped in isolation, relying on his own self-development and investing in his own education. The battlefield then not only became a moral duty (Clark, 28), but a place of spiritual and educational transformation. There, Lewis had to confront death personally; Jacksie the dog, his mother Florence, his peers at Wynyard School, they were all personal losses and pains. But the war confronted Lewis with the inevitability of death on both a much larger and much more intimate scale as Lewis began to come to terms with the inevitability of not just death for others or death

in general, but the realization of his own mortality. This process reached its culmination later in his life, upon the death of his father.

While Lewis spent roughly two years as an officer in the war, only a third of that time was actively spent among other soldiers and in the trenches. The rest was spent in recovery; he and his sergeant, Johnson, had happened across a landmine, which instantly killed his fellow soldier and left Lewis seriously injured (Leconte, 2). While his injuries were severe, with shrapnel from the blast piercing most of his left side, including some of his internal organs, it wasn't just the physical injuries that bound him to a hospital bed. Lewis writes that, as he felt the blast of the land mine, he "was not breathing and had concluded that this was death..." (*SbJ*, 241). And yet, what is perhaps more horrifying is that he "felt no fear and certainly no courage...the proposition 'Here is a dying man' stood before my mind as dry, as factual, as unemotional as something in a textbook" (*SbJ*, 241-242). This near-death experience was one of the major releases of his pent-up trauma; not only was he clearly in a state of shock, but while he was in the hospital recovering, he remained psychologically detached from the experience. He noted that even in his later life, "all this [the traumatic experiences of WWI] shows rarely and faintly in memory. It is too cut off from the rest of my experience and often seems to have happened to someone else" (*SbJ*, 187). But this emotional distancing was not a perfect shield; during his recovery, and indeed throughout most of the rest of his life, Lewis experienced various symptoms of shell shock: nightmares and bouts of insomnia were the most common for him (Edwards, 185).

As with his solitary reading on the battlefield while others were praying, Lewis also went through most of his recovery alone; he rarely had a support system nearby. His father did not visit him at all, and barely even wrote to him. But this feeling of abandonment by his father was

nothing new for him. It was like his time back in boarding school, where no amount of letters begging his father to bring him back home would save him from Capron's abuse (Weems, 130). However, unlike his time in the sanctuary of the school's Gurney, his wartime hospital room acted as a quarantine that "provided Lewis with one of his most enduring characteristics of Hell; a single soul suspended in absolute isolation by the loss of all relationships, human or divine" (Weems, 134). And while this may have provided fodder for his later, Christian, writings, the fact that he was actually living through it meant that one of his most effective coping mechanisms had been taken from him. While in this state, the possibility of an early death was constantly in his mind, creating an attractive alternative to dealing with his accumulated trauma. In an almost perfect example of Freud's death drive, the death-like state in which the blast had left him was a relief, for it was uncomplicated. Lewis later recounted how "Young men are supposed to think themselves immortal, but the subject is not very often out of my mind for a long time together" (*Letters*, vol. 1). And yet, when confronted with the inevitable end of his life, "the whole idea of immortality . . . became disgusting to him" (Edwards, 139). Death, though horrifying with its association with war and "the frights, the cold, the . . . horribly smashed men . . . the sitting or standing corpses," (*SbJ*, 185) was still preferable to the torment that was a traumatic life. Death was a state where you did not have to witness it as such; it was far less traumatizing than seeing and experiencing it second-hand. So death, and its possibility as a resolution to his trauma, lingered in Lewis' mind long after the war.

As Lewis began his recovery, though, he suffered yet another psychic blow. His best friend in the military, Paddy Moore, was reported missing just nine days after Jack was wounded (he would not be declared dead until five months later). When they were just cadets together, they had made a mutual promise to care for one another's family if either of them should die.

When they made this promise, the chances of this happening seemed slim, and neither could really understand the full implications of their vow. But upon Paddy's death, Jack felt duty-bound to keep his word, and thus began one of the most complicated and traumatic relationships of his adult life, with the woman he referred to formally as "Mrs. Moore," but, more intimately, as "Minto" (Heck, 4). While Lewis' biographers debate the actual nature of their decades-long relationship, it is sufficient for our purposes here to say that she was to Jack a combination of the maternal, the erotic, and the judgment of society upon his very existence.

After his first-hand experience with large-scale death, Lewis returned to University with more questions than answers. After the war Lewis began to question all that he had gone through. While he began ticking off the boxes of academic life, which included gaining leadership roles and publishing scholarly works, he also started to invest in a group of friends that would later become the Inklings (MacSwain, 1). Lewis and several friends and fellow faculty members at Magdalen College would often meet twice a week to discuss their current works and to offer criticism, advice, and support. But while this time was significantly less tense than his time in the trenches, it too spurred internal and communal debate.

In the late 1920s, when the Inklings first started to congregate, a few members had an oversized effect on Lewis: Arthur Greeves, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Warren Lewis, Jack's older brother (Duriez, 360-361). While Greeves was more or less on the fringes of the group, he and Lewis would often exchange letters which discussed the matters the others were discussing in person. Perhaps because their relationship was epistolary, there was a bit more openness and vulnerability between them; they often shared jokes (one of which was the threat to publish their letters, which later came to fruition) and included far more private thoughts and admissions (such as sexual fantasies) (Edwards, 81). After Lewis' death Greeves burned the more prurient of their

exchanges, in an attempt to guard Lewis' legacy. But Lewis may have been the only person to which Greeves admitted his homosexuality, and Greeves may have been the only one to share Lewis' Orientalized fantasies about various forbidden fruits: exotic women, bondage, sado-masochism, and intra-family infatuations (Edwards, 81, 108, 110, & 129). Greeves acted as Lewis' closest confidant, melding their shared interests in literature with their shared emotional experiences.

The other two influential members of the group, Tolkien and Warren Lewis, offered other kinds of support for Lewis. Tolkien, while warm, had a sharp critical eye, and Lewis benefitted from his literary advice. His older brother, however, was less concerned with craft and more unconditional in his emotional support for Jack. Tolkien, for instance, shared a passion for literature and the fantasy genre with Lewis; both writers were interested in similar literary works and themes and both adapted these sources into their own writings. However, while they both shared similar interests and were friends with one another, there was always a lingering rivalry between them. While their friendly competition prompted both of them to sharpen their intellectual and literary skills, the quick-witted jests and snarky comments they exchanged always had a hint of brutal honesty (Wilson, 154-155). Both writers may have hidden their actual concern for the other under the guise of emotional distance, but each encouraged the other if possible, and resorted to strong criticism if needed. This criticism sometimes bordered on an obsessiveness with perfection: "And they wrote. And rewrote. And squabbled. And rivalries began...Tolkien and Lewis didn't see eye to eye on matters of literary taste. Tolkien admitted Narnia was 'outside the range of my sympathy, as much of my work was outside his'" (Gilsdorf). These two thus were always sparring with one another, both competing for primacy in their reputations as literary scholars and also rejoicing in the other's successes.

Warren Lewis was in a way a combination of the best of Greeves and Tolkien for Jack. While he did help Jack with his writing (Heck, 14-16), he was more of an emotional support for him. Obviously, Warren and Jack shared the same background in family, culture, and schooling. They were each others' first playmate, first source of comfort from their tyrannical father and dead mother, and shared the same abuses at Wynyard school (Wilson, 11-15). Even though neither was a complete constant in the other's life, there was always a loyalty between them. The two brothers often even shared equally toxic coping mechanisms; Lewis sought out a sense of stability by playing house with Mrs. Moore, and Warren Lewis turned to the bottle, seeking comfort in alcohol. While Jack looked for a mother, Warren looked for release. The two would vacillate between sharing deep confidences about their traumatic experiences and vilifying the other's problems while magnifying their own. So, in short, they acted as brothers do (Heck, 13-14). Each railed against the other's coping mechanisms, yet neither of them could abandon their search for solace. They both struggled, they both attempted to pull themselves out of their respective trenches, and they both ended up backsliding into the mud until their eventual deaths.

These three major relationships within Lewis' life are, of course, not the only ones he had. However, they are his most prominent as well as his most long-lasting. While these three men all had positive effects on Lewis' life, they did this not by offering a hand to help him out of the trench of his trauma, but rather by becoming companions in that trench. They were companions, figures of support, and even sources of inspiration, but they were not saviors in any way; rather, their investment in their own and each others' works diverted their attention away from real-world problems and towards the problems in their fiction.

But Lewis' life was not limited to only his time at Oxford. Paralleling the initiation, development, and eventual dissolution of the Inklings, Lewis' personal life became inextricably

intertwined with the mother of his dead friend, Mrs. Moore. Lewis moved into Mrs. Moore's home, so his domestic house play with her provided him with material stability. Even though Lewis was the main provider for the Moores (Paddy's sister, Maureen, also lived in the house) during most of the time he lived with them — and even then they all lived at “poverty level” (Edwards, 136) — that familial and domestic relationship made it appear to Lewis as though he was fulfilled in all aspects of his life.

However, that house play might have been a bit more perverted behind closed doors; most of Lewis' family and friends suspected that Mrs. Moore was far from motherly towards him, and rumors about Mrs. Moore's exploitative use of Lewis — on multiple levels, including the interpersonal, domestic, and sexual — ran rampant. Whether these claims are true or not, the suspicious relationship between Mrs. Moore and Lewis, certainly looked to his friends like he was longing for a mother figure, and was willing to do almost anything to ensure Mrs. Moore remained so. Within that framework, the rumored sexual nature of their relationship becomes even more complicated, as Lewis' search for maternal comfort was eroticized. Of course, this relationship is easily seen as a resolution of the Oedipal Conflict, even to the point that he deliberately hides his day-to-day interactions with Mrs. Moore from his father. His insistence on secrecy led to aggressive conflicts between the two men (Edwards, 136). So this complicated relationship serves multiple functions for Lewis: he justifies it all as a dutiful commitment to his late friend Paddy, and Mrs. Moore then becomes for him both a surrogate mother, an object of erotic fixation, and a domineering female force who has Lewis wrapped around her finger.

Middle Age

All of these relationships bled into the next stage of Lewis' life as he, to some degree, became an authority figure within the university. While Lewis had, at best, a checkered history

with authority figures, he nevertheless took on a sense of pride and responsibility for being one himself. He no longer had to fear the opprobrium of other figures in positions of power, because he was able to fulfill that role for himself. However, without any real models for developing serious relationships, he soon became overwhelmed. As he entered his thirties, his father passed away (Edwards, 118). While his father might not have been the most positive influence in his life, his death occasioned what terror management psychologists call “mortality salience” in Lewis (Kite and Whitley, 219), or the awareness that his own death was inevitable.

Compounding this was the recognition that he was, in some part, responsible for the tension in his relationship with his father: “Albert’s death affected and depressed Lewis greatly, because of the guilt and shame he felt over their often very bitter and acrimonious relationship” (Edwards, 118). So while Lewis might have been on his own for some time, Albert’s death instigated his traumas and left him grappling for some sense of stability. This grappling with the shock of growing up and taking on responsibilities took two separate forms: domestic and religious.

While this internal belief system might have allowed him some kind of relief on the spiritual level, just as Lewis’ home life and school life fluctuated between stability and uneasiness, the same happened when he became an adult in the workforce. Lewis’ youth exposed him to the downside of war and the upside of a community, and his experience with religion and domesticity mimicked the same pattern. While his interest in Christianity provided him with a new subject to invest in and study, it was his time spent with the Moores that distracted him from those interests. Lewis’ brother, Warren, was particularly adamant about his distrust towards Mrs. Moore and her demand that Lewis devote all his attention toward her rather than other venues of interest. Most of these arguments were associated with Lewis being forced to participate in

chores or socialize with Mrs. Moore and her friends, rather than spending time on his own work and hobbies (Heck, 4-5). While this claim may be biased because of the gender norms of the time, with Warren particularly focused on Lewis' gender excusing him from such domestic duties, there does seem to be heavily manipulative elements in Lewis and Mrs. Moore's relationship. Many other companions of Lewis mentioned how he rarely had time for work or social events with the claim of having to help Mrs. Moore with something or another. The ubiquity of this claim caused many of Lewis' friends to doubt whether the woman that Lewis was living with really required such intense attention. Although Lewis rarely discussed this aspect of his life, we can construct a context for their secretive relationship from the comments of Lewis' inner circle. In many ways, Lewis' silence on this topic, when he writes so expansively about other areas of his life, raises suspicions about the nature of their relationship. Were Albert's misgivings about the sexual nature of their relationship well-founded? Or was Mrs. Moore merely an exploitative and manipulative maternal figure for Lewis, insisting he use his paternal allowance to pay her rent and looking for a quid pro quo for all her motherly attention?

We may be inclined to ask why Mrs. Moore was vilified to such an extent, especially in comparison to the previous two authority figures in Lewis' life, Capron and Albert. Our immediate assumption may be that the bias against Mrs. Moore is heavily gendered due to the conventions of the time. While this is certainly a consideration, the observations of Lewis' peers, as well as Lewis' own private letters after her death reveal her actions and attitudes to often be self-serving. In fact, what may make readers more suspicious is that many of Lewis' friends, particularly Warren, actually liked Mrs. Moore early on; Warren often praised her, even saying that "there is much that I like about Minto," including her "charitable" ways "even in the days of her greatest poverty" (Heck, 11). He also commented on "her kindness to animals" and her

acceptance of his “intrusion into the house without...protest” all of which put them “on very good terms with each other” (Heck, 11). However, the more that Warren was around Mrs. Moore, the more her mask began to slip. Warren began to notice her demands for “absolute subordination of everyone and everything to her own desires” (Heck, 7), which he initially attributed to just passing bad moods. But as their time together wore on, he noted that there was “something wrong with Minto” (Heck, 7). As even more time passed, and he developed a larger collection of observations, he realized how frequently Mrs. Moore’s “flat and emphatic denial of every statement made by everyone” resulted in “extinguishing all conversation” (Heck, 7). Her common casual comment to visitors, that Lewis was “as good as an extra maid in the house” (Heck, 7) shows how she regarded him. All fondness for the man aside, Lewis’ needs and desires were always subordinate to her own.

Even those acquaintances of the two who still enjoyed her company, like Owen Barfield and George Sayer, still could not deny “her main fault” of “being too autocratic and controlling” (Heck, 8). They excuse much of her behavior by laying the blame on her own chaotic childhood where she had “to take charge, at an early age, of a large house and family” (Heck, 8-9). In their own way, they were witnessing the transmission of generational trauma, where trauma is passed down from parent to child. Often the former will project their traumas onto the latter, thus creating an ongoing pattern of trauma, a dysfunctional relationship between each generation, and often the development of negative coping mechanisms through watching the former resort to them. While we had previously seen such with the Lewis brothers and their father, we also see it between Mrs. Moore and her daughter Maureen (Heck, 7). And while those like Barfield and Sayer may have a point about Mrs. Moore’s positive qualities and good intentions, scholars must also realize the continuum of characterization within this issue; obviously no one is ever fully

evil or fully good, and humans are complex creatures that cannot develop a moral compass that points solely to one extreme or the other. Perhaps Mrs. Moore — like many people who instigate others' trauma — did not intend to inflict upon Lewis this feeling of fear and entrapment, but she still did so. This gray area of trauma, specifically between instigator and victim, is not fully explored in the literature, because it inevitably ends up with the messiness that comes from pointing fingers. This obviously damages any therapeutic relationship. Nevertheless, trauma — no matter the shape, form, or intention — must be addressed, despite the discomfort it may cause. So while Lewis' circle of friends may have been products of their time, and therefore may have judged her more harshly than they judged Capron and Albert, the latter two were only characters in stories Lewis would tell about his childhood, while the former was an active and significant part of his present life. So while there may be a gender bias to a degree, it still does not erase the evidence that Mrs. Moore took advantage of Lewis, much like his past, masculine abusers.

If we acknowledge a gender bias toward Lewis' abusive authority figures, we must also figure out how that influences Lewis' acquiescence toward them. For instance, while Lewis had a significant distrust of authority figures, when it came to a feminine or more motherly authority figure, he was more prone to being manipulated by them, due to the subtlety of the abuse. The male authority figures Lewis dealt with employed negative reinforcement techniques like neglect or physical and verbal abuse in order to ensure his compliance with their demands. These methods, and the ensuing traumatic experiences they occasioned, left Lewis with what most consider to be a typical response to them. As stated, "For most survivors, there is an initial disbelief that someone would conceivably intend to harm others, followed by considerable emotional and, at times, behavioral investment in somehow making things right again or in

making sense of a senseless, malicious act” (*Trauma Informed Care*, 49). Lewis falls into this pattern by attempting to “make things right” with his father and Capron. Throughout *Surprised by Joy* he tends to idealize his relationships with them, offering excuses for why these caregivers treated him like they did. While he admits to strained relationships with both of them, he very quickly pardons them for their actions and positions himself as the reason for those strained relationships.

But Mrs. Moore was different. She doled out her affection as a form of positive reinforcement, and gave it conditionally, based on the aid and affection Lewis gave her in turn. Yet in the same text where he fumbles to explain away the behaviors of his male caretakers, Lewis passes over his relationship with Mrs. Moore in silence. He shies away from explicit details of their life together, and readers are left in the dark about what actually went on in their household. Most of the information we have about Mrs. Moore comes from Lewis’ friends and family, especially Warnie’s reporting about her manipulation of Jack. It is only after her death in January of 1951 that Lewis allows himself to hint at what their domestic situation was like. And even this is a very guarded statement, a single line in a letter to Mary van Deusen in April of that year, noting that when he was living with Mrs. Moore, he “never went home without a feeling of terror as to what appalling situation might have developed” (Hooper, 108). While this information is quite vague, it nevertheless offers some kind of insight; Lewis’ experiences with abusive authority figures were heavily gendered. The male figures were more physically and verbally violent while the feminine figure was more manipulative and cunning. Thus, from the perspective of someone who had seemingly endured much more than emotional manipulation and gaslighting, the situation with Mrs. Moore seemed preferable. Of course, this was never said outright.

Despite Lewis' heavy editing of his own memories, the effects that Albert Lewis and Capron had on Jack as an adult are blatantly obvious. So why was Lewis so much more guarded in what he revealed about Mrs. Moore, even after her death? Perhaps he felt obligated to uphold her public reputation (or his own), and perhaps it was still a vestige of his decades-old duty to his fallen comrade, Paddy Moore. However, since those who knew the pair already viewed their relationship with arched eyebrows, there was really not much for Lewis to lose at that point. I propose that Lewis saw the maintenance of Ms. Moore's dignity as part of his promise to Paddy, but this was compounded by his confusion, in what was now hindsight, about how to feel about his relationship with Mrs. Moore. Most victims of emotional manipulation suffer from the aftereffects of gaslighting, where they are never quite sure what had happened with their abuser nor how to properly define/explain it (Johnsen, 145-146). Due to his openness about many other topics including the wars and his religious conversion, which might often be assumed to be sensitive topics themselves, his avoidance of his relationship with Mrs. Moore — positive or otherwise — is alarming.

In addition to Lewis' questionable relationship with his substitute mother, he also began to seek out a replacement father figure. While Lewis sought after a more earthly mother to sate his erotic and emotional needs, this substitute father took the form of a deity. Through adopting the Christian God as his father figure, the belief of never being abandoned, alone, nor despised came with it. As Edwards explains, "He [Lewis] followed a hard road to reach belief and conversion; the 'checkmate' as he called it was in doubt for a long while as the world, his own flesh, and the devil unleashed their wiles upon him" (104). It was through Lewis' hardships — with the various deaths, the abuse and struggles in education, and the stress from the war — that he both left and found what he called *sehnsucht* (German for *joy*) (Edwards, 103) or what he

would later understand to be God. While he grew up in a Christian household, he was much too young and much too overwhelmed with strife to fully understand and accept that belief. Yet by the time he had suffered through much more and had at least somewhat come to terms with those experiences, he was more capable of understanding the Christian religion. This was especially so when the Christian God was depicted as this all forgiving and all loving father figure.

Yet what had made him an apologist for such a faith was because he recognized the hypocrisies — including his own — that were associated with Christianity. Due to his own disbelief and distrust in the faith in his earlier years, however, it made him more attuned to the arguments against it. Since he already knew such arguments, and was well versed in formulating his own such arguments prior to his conversion, Lewis was then well adjusted to confronting them and pointing out the flaws in such claims against Christianity. Readers can assume that this sudden devotion to the Christian faith stems from two issues: either this obsession with Christianity resulted because of Kirkpatrick's teachings and Lewis' preoccupation with gaining knowledge and thus validation from the former, or it is Lewis' attempt to make amends with his new father figure, Christ. Either way, this sudden hyper-focus on religion acted as not only a way to perceive and understand the world around him, but also to formulate a found family in the Christian community.

Christian morals and beliefs then became a kind of “self-help” guide which, despite Lewis' claim that religion was not a form of comfort (*GitD*, 28), still instilled a kind of order and understanding. Where the beliefs themselves may not have been comforting, having a kind of explanation for how the world works — especially for Lewis who was the type to search for answers — may have granted him a kind of relief. Through the Bible, there were creation stories, analyses of morals, and if anything, a ‘fellowship’ of support through the religious community.

To Lewis, who had never had a long-lasting community — whether that be in his homelife, in school, or in war — that aspect of the Christian lifestyle might have sounded appealing. Especially so if that community was based on having answers to what was deemed ‘good’ and ‘bad.’ While Lewis might have been surrounded by the gray scale of morality since childhood and all the way through his time in war, this black and white viewpoint may have provided a kind of simplicity that he was not granted elsewhere in his life.

Final Years

Soon enough, however, the Inklings held their last meeting and Mrs. Moore’s health started to deteriorate. All that Lewis really held onto was his religion and identity as a Christian apologist. Within the last year of Mrs. Moore’s life, his books on theology seemed to reach out towards one last major event in Lewis’ life: his meeting of Joy Davidman. Davidman was an American woman and a writer herself. After suffering her own heartbreak from her husband’s gambling, drinking issues, and various extra-marital affairs, as well as the trouble of raising two boys by herself, she turned to Lewis’ writing for comfort. In January of 1950, she wrote her first letter to Lewis (Edwards, 283). For the next several years, Lewis and Davidman exchanged letters, most often expressing similar traumatic experiences. A year into this exchange, Mrs. Moore had passed away, leaving Lewis alone on both the social and domestic level, with only his work to provide comfort. But it was with this work that gave him a link to Joy Davidman.

Lewis and Davidman’s exchanging of letters became a regular routine. After Davidman had filed for divorce and had cut ties with her husband, the letters soon transitioned into extended stays at Lewis and his brother Warren’s home, the Kilns. However, while Davidman was seeking a way out both emotionally and financially from her ex-husband, a major issue arose; Davidman, due to her nationality and domestic issues, was having trouble obtaining a

green card to stay in Britain permanently. With the fear of returning to America, and thus her abusive ex-husband then having access to her young children, Lewis made the leap of faith to propose (Edwards, 286). With his marriage proposal, Davidman would gain a green card and thus be able to maintain a sense of stability without the negative influence of her now ex-husband.

However, before this issue arose, Lewis had expressed skepticism in advancing his relationship with Davidman any further. While his initial change of heart was proclaimed to be a fear for her children being beaten by their father (linking back to his own experience with child abuse at the hands of older male role-models), he also admitted to being completely emotionally devoted to Davidman. Yet, if this were the case, one might question why he would not want to further their relationship by having a legal marriage license; the answer that I would propose would once again be that of Lewis' fear of emotional attachment. While he admitted to loving Davidman, there would be a sense of finality with the legal document. As expressed earlier, Lewis' sense of stability and finality was always questioned; his trauma never lasted long, yet neither did his happiness. Thus, for Lewis, there was a sense of fear that this one good thing — his relationship with Joy Davidman — would once again be ripped away from his reach.

After all, these several years that were spent in correspondence with Davidman not only made him reflect on his current situation with Mrs. Moore, but also made him ponder on what could lie ahead. Like most adults whose parents had passed, Lewis was inclined to think of what is called “generational trauma”; there is always an unspoken belief that children grow up to “become” their parents in a sense and continue with that cycle of succession. However, rather than Lewis thinking of following in his father's footsteps as a solicitor or becoming a parent himself, his thoughts seemed to linger on fulfilling the marriage and mortality issues that his

parents had suffered. Unfortunately, those fears came true; Lewis writing out his parents' relationship — with the death of his mother and the grief of his father — became an eerie foreshadowing of his own experience with Joy Davidman. His fears of generational trauma then became a self-fulfilled prophecy.

While he did sign the form in the end, his fear — once again — proved true. Soon after their marriage was official, Davidman was diagnosed with cancer and was expected to die relatively soon. Davidman ended up living for another four years, but not without constant scares and a substantial amount of dreadful anticipation of her inevitable death (Edwards, 288). Even though Davidman was not diagnosed with cancer until after their marriage in 1956, Lewis' skepticism of their union stemmed almost exclusively from the fear of repeating the relationship between his mother and father. While the fear for Davidman's children and the abuse they suffered from their father was a major factor in their decision to marry and in turn protect Douglas and David Gresham, it was the fear of repeating the marital abandonment that his own father experienced that made him doubt his decision.

Surprised by Joy, published in 1955, just a year before Davidman's diagnosis, confirms such fears when Lewis writes that "everything that might lead one off the main road into those dark places where men wallow on the floor and scream that they are being dragged down into Hell... There was no danger of my being taken in. But then, the loneliness, the sense of being deserted" (195-196). At that point in time, while Lewis is unaware that he will once again be left behind and separated from his loved ones through death, the idea of it and its inevitability weighs heavily on his mind; he no longer finds refuge in self-isolation like he did at the Gurney in boarding school or focus of his educational fixation like when he was bedridden during the war, but instead leans heavily on his relationships — positive or negative — to find a purpose and

validation of his existence. But in the midst of the fear and excitement, Lewis started to refocus on the idea of childhood. After all, Joy was now the third major female figure in his life. It appeared inevitable that she would assume the mother-wife role that Lewis had placed on her predecessors, both his biological and substitute mothers. However, what was unexpected, is that Davidman fulfilled that role more than the previous two could. Davidman surpassed being Lewis' mother and/or wife, and instead became a deity to which he was a follower; he may have been a "child of God" but with Davidman, he became a "child of Joy" first and foremost (*AGO*, 70). She was "plucky" and "good-humored," "witty" and "quick-minded" (Wilson, 246) and in those descriptions she exemplified the child-like, free-spiritedness that Lewis praised her for and sought after for himself. However, the shared mimicry of becoming child-like and healing the inner-child only lasted for as long as Joy Davidman was alive.

In his memoir, *A Grief Observed*, Lewis recounts his relationship with Davidman and their short marriage after her death. But this time, Lewis uses the pseudonym, N.W. Clerk. He could no longer put his name on his narrative; it would not only expose his trauma and reveal his emotional vulnerability, but it would also make her death — that was previously only speculation in *Surprised by Joy* — all too real. Davidman was, in Lewis' eyes, his last hope at gaining and maintaining "joy" or at least contentment. But with her death came the cold realization of perpetual loneliness which led to his abandonment issues giving way one final time. His reliving of a more positive and innocent childhood then fluctuated to the opposite extreme with her death. Lewis turned from the "child-like" version of his inner-child and resorted to the "childish" version where he succumbed once more to the feeling of abandonment and the consequential blame-placing and isolation. Lewis was once more, for the final time, left without hope or Joy.

These various events throughout Lewis' life show his accumulation of trauma. Specifically, these traumatic events and relationships show how Lewis' trauma fluctuates; they swing back and forth like a pendulum, leaning more towards mental and emotional instability before going back to contentment, on and on, back and forth throughout all stages of his life. For instance, one such swing was his time at home with his mother, before she died of cancer. The next swing was Lewis' experience with abuse at boarding school under Capron before being taken in by the motherly Kirkpatrick. Then another round consisting of Lewis' experience of the horrors of war before finding fellowship with the Inklings and comfort at University. The final swing was his grappling for stability through his domestic partnership with Mrs. Moore — despite the suspicious and manipulative nature — and finding solace in his exploration of Christian religion and his solid relationship with Joy Davidman. That final swing that ended up breaking the pendulum was the death of Davidman. All of these events accumulated into Lewis' being traumatized, time and time again.

However, the main vessel that Lewis used to find understanding was through his children's books. While it may be argued that his autobiographies, journal articles, or poetry might be better places to express his trauma, they are rather obvious places, and Lewis knows this. Lewis was a rather private person, perhaps for good reason due to his already well-known reputation in scholarly society, not to mention the damage that claims of trauma could inflict upon it due to the rise in stigma around mental health. Thus, his privacy was in constant battle between wanting his voice to be heard and the desire to stay safe and away from further traumatic experiences. So Lewis placed his true thoughts and feelings where no one would expect him to be completely honest; in fantasy books geared towards children.

Despite *The Chronicles of Narnia* being generally considered a catechist tool, the series goes further than that. The series does not just have religious allusions or significant moral cautionary lessons, but the scenes depict such through the eyes and pen of a writer who had learned such lessons the hard — and extremely traumatic — way. Many of the characters undergo such lessons that Lewis had to learn. Yet for them, it is a magical experience despite the underlying horror of being separated from all they know, being forced to grow up quicker than they should, and being swung back and forth themselves from who they identify as in Narnia and who they are treated as in England. Yet Lewis uses one particular character in his children's series as a tool to come to terms with all of these traumatic events that he has experienced; this character is Caspian.

CHAPTER 3

THE PROLOGUE TO THE GREAT STORY: ANALYZING THE CREATION OF CASPIAN

In *Surprised by Joy*, when Lewis is discussing his childhood, he mentions several events that could be considered traumatic, but he does not dwell on them, and in many cases seems to downplay their significance. Later biographers spend a bit more time unpacking these events, and see their lasting influence on Lewis' later life. However, even these biographers do not seem to give these events their proper weight. A fuller appreciation of the confluence between Lewis' life and that of his character, Caspian, hinges upon an understanding of the shared traumas between the man and his creation. In many ways, we could consider Caspian as the vehicle Lewis uses to process and eventually come to terms with the effects of these traumatic events.

To do so, we must consider the timeline of Lewis and how it relates to Caspian's lifespan. Lewis did not write the chronicles chronologically; he first wrote *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* before proceeding with the three major books that focus on Caspian's life: *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, and *The Silver Chair*. After he had those completed, he proceeded to backfill with the prequel, *The Magician's Nephew*, and the spin-off (set during the first book), *The Horse and His Boy*, before wrapping up the chronicles with its conclusionary book, *The Last Battle*. Caspian's life is an essential plotline for a majority of the series; even if other characters get more "page time," it is Caspian's conflict that acts as a catalyst for *Prince Caspian*, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, and *The Silver Chair's* conflict. Moreover, the three books that focus heavily on Caspian take up almost half of the series, are written one after the other, and are in the center of all the other narratives, publication-wise. So while readers might assume that because of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* being the first published book in the series, the Pevensie children might be a better gamble for Lewis' projection. However, due to

the hyper-focus on Caspian during the series' development and a near "diversion" with the prequel and spin-off books, it leads to a suspicion that Caspian might be more important to Lewis' psyche and in turn the production of the chronicles than is assumed at first glance. And if this realization is taken into account and a bit further analysis of Caspian is done, the similarities between Lewis' life and his character's become striking.

Caspian, through this mirroring effect with his creator, becomes a form of scriptotherapy for Lewis. Scriptotherapy, as it was initially defined and applied by Susan Henke, meant "the process of writing out and writing through traumatic experience in the mode of therapeutic reenactment" (xii). She later claims that "autobiography is, or at least has the potential to be, a powerful form of scriptotherapy — and that, as such, it lends itself particularly well to the evolution of twentieth-century women's life-writing" (xv). Henke, who is addressing specifically *women's* life-writing, sees a gendered difference in the production of such texts. But her work explores only women's writing, and although she positions male life-writing or autobiography as something different, she does not articulate that difference. I would like to complete her thoughts here. Women's life-writing is part of the process of healing from trauma, as the writing itself gives way to analysis, understanding, and eventual recovery from that trauma. With Lewis as a prime example, I would suggest that fiction, rather than autobiography, is a way for men to come to terms with previous trauma. Caspian, then, is a distant mirror for Lewis, a way for him to look at his own experiences without the vulnerability and exposure that autobiography would require of him. By creating an independent character, Lewis displaces his trauma onto this fictional subject, objectifies his own trauma, and can thus clinically dissect it without performing psychic self-surgery.

Childhood

For instance, one major factor that both Lewis and his character share is the absence of their parents. Lewis' mother died early on and his father was negligent until Lewis was an adult; both of Caspian's parents died when he was very young and was left in the care of his neglectful uncle, Miraz. If Caspian is a stand-in for Lewis, his position as an orphan reflects the abandonment and loss Lewis felt at his father's lack of care. This detachment from his only caregiver then produced a trauma-based response where he had to seek stability elsewhere. This detachment from his parents then implies interpersonal trauma, or, more specifically, developmental trauma from adverse childhood experiences (*Trauma-Informed Care*, 41-43). These experiences "can negatively affect a person's well-being into adulthood. . . . They set the stage for increased vulnerability to physical, mental, and substance use disorders and enhance the risk for repeated trauma exposure across the life span" (*Trauma-Informed Care*, 42-43). The lack of solid parental figures is not only Lewis' first exposure to trauma, but is also the first connection between himself and his creation.

As soon as Caspian is introduced for the first time in the series, he is described from a second person point of view, specifically from Trumpkin the dwarf. Through using a spokesperson for Caspian, the character becomes dissociated and distant for Lewis who is writing about him. Trumpkin acts as a barrier who is telling Caspian's life as it is, without going into much detail or specific traumatic instances; this mental separation is similar to how the book acts as a cover for Lewis' scriptotherapy. Further, this indirect telling of Caspian's traumatic childhood is strange for a number of reasons. For one, since Trumpkin is a Narnian and has thus only come into contact with Caspian briefly and just prior to his kidnapping, it can be implied that this knowledge is not just a regurgitation of what Caspian had told Trumpkin, Trufflehunter,

and Nikabrik; it may also be a widespread and general commentary that the Narnians had accumulated from being in hiding from the Telmarine colonizers. Thus, Trumpkin's narration of Caspian's life is eerily detailed while also being several times removed from the original source. Yet, despite the suspicions of where the information has come from and how accurate it is, there is an uncanny emphasis on Caspian's unhappy childhood.

Within the first page, Caspian is described as having everything he wants materially, yet is simultaneously described as being deprived of human affection and interaction. For instance, Caspian is said to have lived in a "great castle" and had "wonderful toys" (*PC*, 41). And yet, in the same passage, Lewis describes Caspian as preferring "the last hour of the day" where all of his material wealth would be set aside and the time for storytelling between him and his nurse would come (*PC*, 41). While Caspian and his people were of Telmarine descent, and thus deemed invaders and colonizers of Narnia, he has this desire for a time and place that he is unable to have. This time and place is what Caspian's nurse labels as the "Old Days" (*PC*, 42). These Old Days were those prior to the Telmarine invasion of Narnia, where the Kings and Queens of old ruled and Narnians were not forced into hiding. Multiple times throughout this scene, however, Lewis inserts small commentary on how when Caspian expressed these desires, he was "only a little boy at the time" and how if he was "a little older" he would have "shut up" but he instead "babbled on" (*PC*, 42-43). Lewis' tone is satirical, often pitying Caspian for both his hopes and his mistake on expressing them at the wrong time and to the wrong person.

The person that Caspian is divulging in these dreams to is his Uncle Miraz. Lewis writes how "He [Caspian] did not care much for his uncle and aunt..." (*PC*, 41) before following that statement with a scene between Caspian and his Uncle Miraz; as Caspian talks about his day and the stories about the "Old Days" that his nurse had told him, Miraz attempts to shut down all of

this talk by declaring these stories “nonsense” and “for babies” (*PC*, 42). Even further, Miraz, who had been holding Caspian’s hand as they walked, let go of his hand upon hearing Caspian discuss these events. He is both verbally reprimanding him as well as withholding any affection. All that Caspian does in response is to be “frightened” and say “nothing” (*PC*, 43). When Miraz continues his interrogation of Caspian on who was spreading such “lies,” Caspian begins to cry. Yet, his emotions are not comforted, let alone validated. Rather, Miraz gets angrier, demanding that Caspian “stop that noise” as he takes “Caspian by the shoulders” and gives him a “shake” (*PC*, 43). Miraz’s treatment of Caspian greatly resembles both of Lewis’ primary male caregivers.

In *Surprised By Joy*, Lewis makes comparisons between his life at home and at school; both Capron and his father were implied to be tyrants (*SbJ*, 38). However, Lewis had attempted to reassure readers, time and time again, that neither was at fault for the miseries that he and his brother had undergone under both figures (*SbJ*, 36-37). Yet the way that Lewis describes how he was being treated under their care erases any kind of sympathy towards Albert Lewis and Capron. No amount of reassuring can deflect the red flags that Lewis waves with his words. So even though Lewis pardons Albert Lewis because he had “never fully recovered from the loss” of his wife (*SbJ*, 25), it did not excuse the neglect upon his children. And despite Lewis’ admiration for Capron’s passion for teaching geometry, he still admits that Capron had abused those left in his care (*SbJ*, 34-35).

Albert Lewis’ verbal abuse and constant manipulation — particularly in a scene where his anger towards his children over a stepladder made them cry (*SbJ*, 45-46) — as well as Capron’s physical abuse, such as kicking his students down flights of stairs (*SbJ*, 32) or giving beatings with a cane (*SbJ*, 34) eerily resembles Miraz’s treatment of Caspian when the older man

had heard the child say something he did not wish to hear. Even the subtle word choice when Miraz compares Caspian's love of Narnian stories to something a "baby" would believe, brings to mind the passage where Lewis wrote about how a hypothetical "boy home from school" would prefer to project his instructor as a "buffoon" rather than himself a "cry-baby" (*SbJ*, 37). This far from coincidental connection gives way to the idea that these two figures in Lewis' life had been mashed together into a monstrous abuser. Even more, just as Lewis is pitying Caspian for his child-like fascination with Narnian history and misunderstanding of his caregiver's disdain for it, he too is remembering his own shame that manifested when Capron would beat him and his father would unfairly scold him. Through Caspian's interaction with Miraz, readers see a glimpse into Lewis' lingering traumatic experiences with his father and headmaster.

Even when recounting his times with these two prominent figures in his life, Lewis admits that his experiences with them haunt him in a way. Just as Lewis narrates a dialogue between Caspian and Miraz, Lewis is actually recreating the same scenarios that he was subjected to at the hands of those who were supposed to take care of him. For instance, in *Surprised by Joy*, Lewis writes that, "To think, in sunny and confident times, that I shall die and rot, or to think that one day all this universe will slip away and become memory (as Oldie slipped away into memory three times a year, and with him the canes and the disgusting food, the stinking sanitation and the cold beds)..." (41-42). Whether Lewis is contemplating death or reminiscing about the better times in his life, these traumatic experiences and the people, places, and even the senses associated with them, are always in the back of his mind. Lewis, while attempting to say that it wasn't the worst experience of his life, is still haunted by these scenarios. Through the character of Caspian, readers can see Lewis' true feelings on the

interactions between himself and his male caregivers without the filter that was put in place within his memoirs.

While Caspian and his connections to his Uncle Miraz may eerily resemble Lewis' relationship with Albert Lewis and "Oldie" Capron, another figure also resembles a major influence in Lewis' life. Professor Cornelius is Lewis' fantasy version of Professor Kirkpatrick. In some arguments on Lewis' characters and who they are based on, many assume that Professor Diggory Kirke is a stand-in for Kirkpatrick. Others want to argue that J.R.R. Tolkien is personified by Professor Diggory Kirke. However, while there are many similarities between these two people and Lewis' character — including a similar name with Kirkpatrick and the ideals of Tolkien — there is a stronger link between Kirkpatrick and Professor Cornelius.

When Caspian's nurse is taken away for telling Caspian stories about Narnia in the Old Days, the one who fills that role is Professor Cornelius; when Lewis first introduces Professor Cornelius, he is described as "the sort of person it is almost impossible not to like" (*PC*, 44-45). Similarly, Lewis described Kirkpatrick as someone who "excited and satisfied" him (*SbJ*, 131). While Lewis admits that most boys would not particularly care for Kirkpatrick and his studies, Lewis is biased towards the professor who had invested so much time and energy into his education (*SbJ*, 130). Just the same, readers can infer through their interactions that while Caspian may think that Cornelius is incapable of being disliked, his tutor is still outcasted by the Telmarines as well as the Narnians for being a half breed and not fitting into either society (*PC*, 69). So while Lewis might have some resentment towards authority figures, he as well as his character, Caspian, has a liking towards a singular professor who encouraged their education during their youth.

However, this bias towards these professors goes a little bit deeper than admiration; Lewis and Caspian show a severe attachment to their professors — more so than the average pupil — which makes it suspect that the attachment is a form of coping, more specifically by pinning the professor figure as a substitute father figure. For instance, both Lewis and Caspian had no solid and sympathetic male role model until these professors intervened. Due to this unfulfilled role, Lewis and Caspian sought out Kirkpatrick and Cornelius specifically to fulfill it; in turn, they both focused on their education so that they may gain validation where they otherwise would have none. For instance, trauma scholar Michelle Balaev writes that most communities isolate suffering individuals in fear of the vulnerability that comes with taking care of them (132-133). Just the same, Lewis and Caspian were not in an environment that could help him heal; rather, they were surrounded by connections, such as Capron and Miraz, who stimulate their trauma instead. But with Kirkpatrick and Cornelius, Lewis and Caspian were given the freedom to speak openly, not leaving them isolated to deal with their trauma alone. This attention towards them as individuals then instigated not only Lewis and Caspian's fascination with education and use of it as a coping mechanism, but also had these two clinging to their professors for validation throughout their learning. Their attachment to past trauma then became an attachment towards someone who they thought could provide them with a sense of self-worth.

However, neither of these professors enabled their pupils to do so. While both Kirkpatrick and Cornelius' relationships with their students encouraged them to learn, they also prioritized using that education to think for themselves and stand on their own. For instance, when Lewis' time spent with Kirkpatrick was over, he was sent immediately to Oxford with the knowledge and resources needed to thrive there. Similarly, Caspian, when urged by his tutor to flee for his life, is hesitant about leaving Cornelius behind (*PC*, 61). However, Cornelius had

already prepared for Caspian's journey, providing him with a purse and Susan's horn (*PC*, 61-62). Kirkpatrick and Cornelius were figures that supported their pupils, but rather than enabling their desire for codependency, they prepared Lewis and Caspian to live their lives without depending on others to sate their traumatic responses.

This impatience with their pupils' regressive behaviors is one trait that both Kirkpatrick and Cornelius share; Lewis recalls how Kirkpatrick would shout "Stop!" when he had had enough of Lewis' wasting time with his vagueness and desire to please (*SbJ*, 129-130). Simultaneously, Lewis admits his tendency for not giving direct answers in his youth, which is a major sign of trauma; as trauma specialists, Casper and Wertheimer state, "after trauma, the subject may be voiceless, unable to articulate [their] experience or who [they have] become. And into that silence is poured a host of meanings and expectations" (11). Lewis — already scarred from his past experience with his neglectful father, the abusive Capron, and other interactions he underwent at various "social functions" (*SbJ*, 153) — learned to fear self-expression and in-turn learned to filter what he thought and what he said. Rather, he often resorted to saying what he thought the recipient would like to hear instead of saying what he actually thought. Kirkpatrick, however, cared about Lewis' thoughts, leaving no room for Lewis to sugar-coat his words in hopes that the responder can validate him and not cause further trauma.

Cornelius, too, refuses to have Caspian waste time on matters that do not aid them in their efforts. Even at the beginning of their relationship, Cornelius and Caspian share "secret conversations" where Caspian believes that his "education was beginning in earnest" (*PC*, 56). Lewis says that above all, Caspian learned to use "his own eyes and ears" (*PC*, 57). Instead of using his eyes and ears to avoid trauma, however, Caspian uses his senses to better understand what is causing his trauma and formulating how to deal with it. Through doing so, he was able to

understand that his trauma stemmed from his uncle Miraz and aunt Prunapirismia and their greedy reasons for doing so (*PC*, 57). Later, when Caspian is coerced into the temptation to bring back the White Witch by her followers, Cornelius is the first to speak rationally, but it is Caspian who follows his example and begins to stand up against Nikabrik, the Hag, and the Werewolf, who threaten to overthrow and oppose him (*PC*, 169-171). Cornelius shouts, “Stop, stop, stop,” and begins to demand an explanation for the Narnians’ nonsense, and proceeds to call out a “sharp, ‘what?’” before the voice of “King Caspian...rose...like thunder” (*PC*, 170). Thus, while Caspian had undergone abuse and suffered afterwards from a lack of self-worth, it is Professor Cornelius who instilled his first perception that he is not a product of those who had neglected him (*PC*, 59). Both of these professors, real and fictional, are the primary sources of their pupils’ belief in themselves. Without them, Lewis and Caspian would have been unable to recognize their traumatic responses and thus not have been able to acquire the tools necessary to move forward with their lives.

Young Adulthood

Once Lewis and Caspian had received such encouragement and resources from their professors, they had to go out into the world and make something of themselves. However, the trials that they faced soon after acted as transformative experiences. These transformative experiences not only consisted of more traumatic events, but also included relationships that further impacted their mental health. For Lewis, his time at university and in World War I acted as his transformative experience; it provoked his confrontation with his childhood trauma and forced him to address it. Caspian follows a similar route of transformation. Just as Lewis’ time at university led up to his enlistment in the war, Caspian’s choice to flee into the Narnian forest was what prompted his decision to ally with the Narnians and go to war against his uncle. The

University at Oxford and the Narnian forest then becomes a kind of wilderness trope where the lack of familiarity or civilization acts as a gateway into war and a catalyst for personal and spiritual understanding (Alder, 5). Due to these places being free of any ties to their own pasts, Lewis and Caspian are free to confront their caregiver's negligent behavior, their early and narrow-minded education, and what it means for them both going forward.

The idea of the wilderness, however, was not the only trope that Lewis used for Caspian's coming of age journey; rather, Lewis also uses nautical imagery and the contrast of light and dark to imply Caspian's (and thus his own) self-discovery. While sailing was obviously connected to discovering other places to gain material wealth and additional land, sailing was also considered a spiritual journey often linked with the discovery of the self. Lewis had known such from his own experience with colonialism due to being Irish, his literary knowledge, as well as from his brother Warren's time at sea. Lewis recreates these ideas of the sea being linked to self-discovery through Caspian's coming of age experience. For example, Professor Cornelius explains to Caspian how his ancestors feared the sea because of its link to the spiritual deity, Aslan, and how they in turn "let great woods grow up to cut their people off from the coast" (*PC*, 55). Lewis plays with dark and light imagery, describing the Narnian Forest as the "Black Woods" that acted as a barrier between the Telmarines and the sea to which Aslan's Land was and where "the morning" rose. When looking deeper into the metaphorical landscape of Narnia, the Narnian Forest acts as the barrier which Caspian must penetrate in order to reach the sea. Only then can he fully begin his spiritual journey and heal from his past trauma. But before Caspian can reach the sea to find himself, he must first address the Narnian Forest that acts as the cutoff point; there Lewis' trauma-avatar, Caspian, must address his traumatic past before moving forward.

Yet before Caspian can address his trauma through direct battle with his uncle, he meets two of his life-long friends and companions. These two friends are Trumpkin and Reepicheep. These characters prove essential in Caspian's life, acting as accelerators in Caspian's healing process. And just as Lewis projected his traumatic experiences with his father and Capron into that of Caspian's uncle Miraz as well as his healing experiences with Professor Kirkpatrick into that of Professor Cornelius, Lewis is doing the same with these two characters. The characters Trumpkin and Reepicheep resemble that of Lewis' companions Arthur Greeves and J.R.R. Tolkien respectively. Lewis had developed these friendships during his time in war and education, similar to how Caspian, Trumpkin, and Reepicheep met in the Black Woods and fought together in the Narnian War. Yet, these shared instances of education and battle are not the only attributes that link these characters with their real-life counterparts.

There are several major connections between Greeves and Trumpkin: the first connection is that Greeves/Trumpkin made Lewis/Caspian aware of the difference between home and the wild. Greeves/Trumpkin acknowledge that the wild is a place where one must fight for existence while the home acts as a place of rest. There is a distinct difference between the two and Lewis/Caspian — who had grown up in what Lewis interpreted as a home, but displayed the attributes of a wilderness — had first understood that through the help of Greeves/Trumpkin. For instance, Trumpkin often acts as a guide for other characters when navigating through the woods and into a domestic space: “Trumpkin led the way back...on the northern slope of the mountains till they came to a very solemn place among rocks and fir trees” (*PC*, 75). And even when he was leading the Pevensies to Aslan's How where Caspian's army resided, “Trumpkin longed for the voyage to be over,” craving the comfort that the journey there could not offer (*PC*, 114); Trumpkin thus may be an expert in navigating that liminal space between the wild and home,

trauma and safety, but his preference lies within the domestic sphere, much like his real-life counterpart.

The second major connection between Greeves and Trumpkin is their epistolary mode of communication with their friend, Lewis/Caspian. While many people in Lewis' life as well as in Caspian's interacted with them through in-person conversations, Greeves/Trumpkin were the primary figures that communicated at a distance. For instance, while Caspian is away during his voyage to the utter east, he leaves Trumpkin as Regent as well as in possession of Susan's Horn, which acts as a supernatural object, powerful enough to call forth help from beyond the world of Narnia — thus the object acts as a form of communication (*VotDT*, 48). In addition, Aslan and Drinian act as messengers for Caspian and Trumpkin while they are separated (*VotDT*, 162 & 238). Even Trumpkin's final mention in this book is related to their communication; for example, when Caspian demands to travel through the Great Wave and into Aslan's Country; Reepicheep's main reason for denying him this opportunity is because if Caspian does so, he would "break faith with all your [Caspian's] subjects, and especially with Trumpkin, if you [Caspian] do not return" (*VotDT*, 239). This quotation thus shows not just their trust in each other, but also how that trust relied heavily on their continued communication, in whatever form that may be. To break off that communication, would also break that connection between them. So even if the communication between the two is often indirect, Greeves/Trumpkin are the ones who hold the most of Lewis/Caspian's unwavering trust and are primarily the ones grounding them. While there are many similarities, these two attributes stick out the most, especially given that these two in particular contribute to Lewis/Caspian's trauma-healing.

Lewis may have been interrogated by Kirkpatrick on his assumptions about the idea of wilderness, but Greeves was the person to clearly make that distinction. Through Greeves' and

Lewis' conversations, the latter became enthralled with the "sharp juxtaposition" between the home and the wild (*SbJ*, 194). Lewis describes Greeves' childhood as "the opposite" of his (*SbJ*, 185) where his family was large and his parents alive, yet was still "as silent as ours was noisy" (*SbJ*, 185). And yet, despite their background differences, Lewis says that they "were sufficiently different to help one another" (*SbJ*, 185). Specifically, they were different enough where Greeves' happy childhood made Lewis fully aware that his was not. Where Greeves' idea of home and wild, trauma and contentment, were distinctly separate, Lewis' was blurred.

What Lewis would have cast off as "stodginess" and "ordinariness" (*SbJ*, 186) is what Greeves would have glorified as "homeliness" (*SbJ*, 186). As Lewis recalls, "He [Greeves] did not mean merely Domesticity, though that came into it. He meant the rooted quality which attaches them to all our simple experiences, to weather, food, the family, the neighborhood... This love of the 'Homely' was not confined to literature; he looked for it in the out-of-door scenes as well and taught me to do the same" (*SbJ*, 186-187). Later, Lewis goes into specifics, saying how Greeves taught him the importance of being homely to the point of how he "should never have known the beauty of the ordinary vegetables that we destine to the pot" (*SbJ*, 193). Thus Greeves did not only make Lewis aware of the distinctions, but prompted the idea that the home should be a safe space and not a battleground. These ideas that Greeves had instilled in Lewis reflect those that Trumpkin instills in Caspian.

Throughout *Prince Caspian* Trumpkin is known for his exclamatory language. He is constantly exclaiming phrases that reflect the dynamics between wilderness and the home. Such examples include "Soup and Celery!" (*PC*, 91) and "Thimbles and Thunderstorms!" (*PC*, 98). In both of these phrases, the Dwarf character is creating a contrast between what is wild and what is domesticated, such as celery being a vegetable, but the soup being composed of vegetables but

recreated by man. The same goes for thunderstorms being a force of nature while the thimble being a metal that had been mined, but created as a tool for domestic purposes. Even during the scene where a wild bear comes across the Pevensies and Trumpkin, the Dwarf compares the Talking Beasts to that of Dumb Animals: “That’s the trouble of it...when most of the beasts have gone enemy and gone dumb, but there are still some of the other kind left. You never know, and you daren’t wait to see” (*PC*, 121). Trumpkin, just as Greeves, is aware of the contrast and is aware of the danger that such ambivalence and confusion imposes on one’s mind.

The conversation of the home versus the wild was one amongst many between Lewis and Greeves. Yet these conversations were mostly conveyed through pen and paper rather than in-person. While their differing backgrounds may have acted as a barrier and an initial reason to not associate with one another early on, the supplemental use of letters simultaneously acted as both a tool that broke the communication barrier as well as its own barrier to mask their respective vulnerabilities. Their “intellectual journeyings” and “emotional experiences” (Wilson, 38) were only possible because through not having to look directly into the eyes of the one you are confessing your deepest fears to, it becomes easier to be honest and thus rely more heavily on the listener.

Prior to their friendship, Lewis had written how his “mortification was intense; and after one or two such experiences I made it a rigid rule that at ‘social functions’ (as I secretly called them) I must never on any account speak of any subject in which I felt the slightest interest nor in any words that naturally occurred to me” (*SbJ*, 58-59). It was only with Greeves where Lewis could speak his mind free of judgment and free of being patronized. The two were an outlet for one another where they encouraged (if not enabled) the other and found healing in their exchanged letters. Lewis and Greeves’ craving to find a place where they needn’t hide nor

suppress their interest in fear of embarrassment manifested as a form of bonding between them, much like the characters Caspian and Trumpkin (Edwards, 97-98). Where Caspian was criticized by Miraz for his belief in the Old Days, it was Trumpkin — who was a direct link to those Old Days, yet was in danger for being so — that fully understood Caspian’s desire for such as well as the need to hide it. Even further, as the story continues into the next two novels, *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and *The Silver Chair*, Trumpkin is a permanent feature reminiscent of Greeves.

Just as Greeves was for Lewis, Trumpkin was the person Caspian left in charge of what he left behind. He was not only the Regent in Caspian’s search for the Seven Lords (*VotDT*, 20) but also became the Lord Regent when Caspian sought to sail east in an attempt to find Aslan (*SC*, 55). The two were separated by distance for a long time, but held enough trust in each other to keep each other’s secrets and promises. For instance, Trumpkin upheld Caspian’s request to have no one search for his lost son any longer, lest they too become lost, like many before had (*SC*, 54). In the same way, Greeves was left with the 300 plus letters that he and Lewis had exchanged over the course of several decades, left to filter through them and sort which to publish and which to destroy. Greeves was Lewis’ regent to the legacy he left behind, just the same as Trumpkin was to Caspian, acting as both a confidant and advisor during the course of their lives and their object of absolute trust after. In much the same way that Greeves was Lewis’ “Father Confessor” (Wilson, 121), so was Trumpkin to Caspian.

Yet if Greeves was the one to sit in the trench alongside Lewis, then Tolkien was the one to encourage him to make his time there worthwhile. Tolkien, while not fully understanding of Lewis and his various fixations and coping mechanisms, also contributed to how Lewis dealt with trauma. He was consistently challenging Lewis to improve himself, whether that was

through debates about religion, mythology, language, or philosophy. On one such occasion, Tolkien and Lewis were discussing death and its relation to the Gospel. Wilson writes that, “when Lewis came across myths of dying and reviving gods, he was moved” (126). Tolkien acted as a catalyst for Lewis to confront his biased ideas of religion both before and after his conversion, pointing out how Christianity was a contemplation of mythologies, adapted through time and translation, and thus could be interpreted differently.

Lewis, who was previously brought up in a Christian household where everything was done by the book (Wilson, 41), was now enlightened with the concept that religion was not untouchable and in fact could be understood and explored through his own imagination and sense of reason (Wilson, 125-126). In a previous letter to Greeves, Lewis had confessed that such “picking and choosing and slurring over” (Wilson, 123) the Gospel went against his sense of reason. And yet Lewis and Tolkien’s “long talk” on that “memorable September night” (Wilson, 126-127) gave way to Lewis looking at Christianity not just as a myth to believe or not, but as a book to analyze and a guide for understanding the world.

In the same way, Reepicheep has an unwavering sense of wit and spirit that challenged Caspian to step outside the bounds of his Telmarine culture; Reepicheep, just as Tolkien, encouraged both intellectual and spiritual growth in their friend. In one of the first encounters with the talking mouse, Reepicheep declares to Professor Cornelius that “My friendship you shall have, learned Man.... And any Dwarf — or Giant — in the army who does not give you good language shall have my sword to reckon with” (*PC*, 90). This declaration is reminiscent of many of Tolkien’s personal values. One particular example, however, was Tolkien and Lewis’ devotion to their acquaintance, Adam Fox, in becoming a Professor of Poetry at Oxford; Tolkien described the fight for their acquaintance’s election as a “public victory,” calling to mind this

idea of romanticizing the ordinary as if it were some valiant battle (Wilson, 159). Reepicheep's emphasis on his friendship with one who is "learned" and the comparison with those who have no "good language" to say, reflect Tolkien's fascination with language as well as his desire for someone to match his intelligence (Wilson, 117).

Reepicheep's personality and values were not the only link to Tolkien, however. Both the person and Lewis' fictional character were not just deeply religious or quick-witted, but they also followed the same kind of interactions with their respective companions, Lewis and Caspian. A major example of such is pointed out by Tolkien scholar, Ethan Gilsdorf; he compares Lewis and Tolkien's separation to the ending to Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* where "Frodo, irrevocably changed by his adventures and his wounds, chooses to leave Sam behind in the Shire and sail onward with Bilbo, Gandalf, and the elves to the Undying Lands" (Gilsdorf). If Tolkien's passage can be read as a projection of Lewis and Tolkien's ending friendship, the ending of Caspian's and Reepicheep's friendship could be read in the same way from Lewis' perspective.

Tolkien — along with Dyson and Barfield — was a major factor in Lewis' conversion; he offered the metaphorical communion cup to Lewis, opening his eyes up to the possibility of not just God, but also of Heaven and an end to suffering. Just the same, Reepicheep tells the crew of the Dawn Treader that "I tell you the water's sweet" before repeating the prophecy that states "where the waves grow sweet...there is the utter East" (*VotDT*, 228) which is the Narnia equivalent to the Christian afterlife. A bucket is cast down at Reepicheep's proclamation and Caspian is the first to drink; Caspian, after having tasted the sweet water, says "That's real water, that. I'm not sure that it isn't going to kill me. But it is the death I would have chosen — if I'd have known about it till now" (*VotDT*, 228-229). And when Reepicheep declares his departure soon after, Caspian is at a loss; he becomes aggressive in his being denied access to go with him

before he resorts to isolating himself within his cabin (*VotDT*, 240). Yet, in those moments alone, Aslan comes to him, saying “the worst thing he [Aslan] could have said...You’re to go on...and I’m [Caspian] to go back. Alone...what is the good of anything?” (*VotDT*, 241). Death and its relation to heaven and its offer of peace is a temptation, one that Caspian never forgets (*SC*, 55).

So while there was a separation between Lewis and Tolkien, as well as between Caspian and Reepicheep, the ideas that the latter instilled in the former continued. For instance, Tolkien offered Lewis not only that “desire” and “longing” for “joy” (*SbJ*, 217) — which he so often links to Christianity — but also that desire for his trauma to end. As Lewis states, “Death ended all. And if ever finite disasters proved greater than one wished to bear, suicide would always be possible” (*SbJ*, 211). Yet with Christianity’s disdain for suicide, “the horror...was that it [the Christian lifestyle] had no door marked *Exit*” (*SbJ*, 211). And just the same, Caspian despised his crew denying him access to see Aslan’s country alongside Reepicheep, with his accusations of thinking that the crew “were all my [Caspian’s] subjects here, not my schoolmasters,” which left Caspian “looking for a moment not unlike his uncle Miraz” (*VotDT*, 239). Even Lewis admits a similar “deep-seated hatred of authority, my monstrous individualism, my lawlessness” and how “No word in my vocabulary expressed deeper hatred than the word *Interference*” (*SbJ*, 211). That denial of his own autonomy and his projection of hypocrisy is a direct response to Lewis’ fear of dependency and lack of control. Tolkien’s influence on Lewis thus did not just challenge him academically or spiritually, but also forced him to realize this lack of control over his trauma as well as any relief from it. Just the same, Caspian has no control over their separation, and neither is he handling the inevitable desertion well, as seen with the departure scene (*VotDT*, 239-242).

After the loss of one friend and in between letters with another, one major influencer of Lewis/Caspian's trauma remained: Lewis' brother, Warren Lewis, and his fictional recreation as the character, Drinian. Just as the two other people/characters, Warren/Drinian have two major connections; one is their literal role as a Captain combined with his later activity of sailing. The other is that Lewis/Caspian and Warren/Drinian's relationship is based on similar cultural understandings and childhood backgrounds (Wilson, 11). The first connection is perhaps the most obvious; Lewis was only in the war for a short time while his brother continued until his retirement in 1932. All the while, Lewis had seen barely a few years of battle while Warren had been through 18 active years of military service and several tours. Warren, due to his extensive time in the army, was well traveled (Heck, 9). His knowledge, unlike what Kirkpatrick could provide or what Lewis was accustomed to, was based on experience. Warren's more worldly experience and his career that had instigated such had thus become inseparable when Lewis took to characterizing him.

Drinian acts as that same connection for Caspian. Just as Lewis/Caspian had experienced their early trauma at the hands of Capron/Miraz, been educated by Kirkpatrick/Cornelius, and had found solace in Greeves/Trumpkin and Tolkien/Reepicheep, it was Warren/Drinian who took him from his wanderings amidst the Black Woods and took him to the coast of self-discovery. Warren/Drinian was Lewis/Caspian's gateway to seeing past what their backgrounds had taught them and seeing for their own what the wider world could offer. Through adopting a broader outlook on the outside world, it educated Lewis/Caspian of his own interiority and its relationship and intersections with reality. His trauma is not an isolated thing, nor is anyone's. And only once the past trauma is addressed and the individual's bad habits that arose from that

trauma is rooted out, can the traumatized individual address the outside world — this time, free of fear and with the intention to live a life devoid of victimhood mentality.

Despite what their neglectful childhood and numerous abandonments may have implied and led them to believe, Lewis and Caspian — like every other trauma survivor — are more than helpless and hopeless child-figures with no authority or control over their own lives. An individual that is repeatedly exposed to events and people who convince them that they are alone and essentially damaged goods leads them to believe so themselves. They carry on with their lives, but always bearing in mind the memories of those events and those people, always aware that there is potential to once again be hurt by the outside world. Bad habits, like trust issues, self-isolation, hyper-vigilance, harmful coping mechanisms like drug and alcohol addiction, etc. begin to breed within the individual with every moment they are exposed and with every trauma they accumulate. Yet it was the elder brother figure that allowed for Lewis/Caspian to fully address these products of trauma.

One mode of addressing such was through travel. Travel was a major factor in Lewis and Warren's relationship, especially as a form of healing. One of Warren's fondest memories was that of traveling to Oxford with Lewis on his motorcycle in the summer of 1924. Other modes of travel also heavily impacted the relationship between them, some of which include them both accepting the Christian faith in 1931 — for Lewis in late September after they traveled to the Whipsnade Zoo (once again via motorcycle) (Clark, 21) and Warren later that year at Christmas, during his tour in Shanghai and a month before his first walking tour (Heck, 10). Proceeding these early travels, both Lewis brothers began regular walking tours together. They attempted to make these walking tours a yearly occurrence at the beginning of each year. However, their

eighth walking tour in 1939 would end up being their last, due to the coming war efforts (Heck, 11). Yet both brothers would later admit that these times were some of the best that they had.

Similarly, the character Drinian is first introduced in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* as the Captain and right-hand man to Caspian during their journey east (19). Throughout various scenes, Drinian is characterized as being well versed in sailing and military strategies, things that Warren Lewis would have been highly aware of with his position as Captain in the Royal Army Service Corps. For example, Drinian explains the geography and time in which they are working over the course of several paragraphs (*VotDT*, 22-23), demonstrating a deep knowledge of the area he is working with as well as an extensive amount of control over the recorded information. In addition, Drinian, despite his position under Caspian, is characterized as an older figure who more so keeps Caspian aware of what is going on aboard the ship. Readers witness such when Caspian is recalling the Seven Lords' names and Drinian must remind him of who the seventh lord is (*VotDT*, 21). Readers later see Drinian also collaborating with the other older figure, Lord Bern, in how to best work the ship and make it so that they are better able to free the enslaved people of the Lone Islands (*VotDT*, 48-49). The fictional character, Drinian, displays the skills and mindset that Lewis' brother, Warren, had to maintain throughout his military career — a steady sense of control and reason that Lewis recreated into Caspian's elder brother figure, Drinian.

Even later in the book, readers see a trace of what may have been inspired by Warren Lewis resorting to alcohol: On Ramandu's Island, the crew are debating whether to go onward and see the end of the world. Yet, Caspian is wary of some of the crew and their ability to go on with the journey after so many near-death experiences and such low supplies. Ramandu suggests that some of the crew, especially that of Lord Rhoop, which Caspian labels as a "broken man",

are given “what he needs most” (*VotDT*, 210). It is revealed that what is needed most is a drink that can put them to sleep “without stint or measure” (*VotDT*, 210). Yet, while the drink is not associated with Drinian specifically, it is Drinian who acts as the go-between, the one who has to take the orders from Caspian and offer it to the men who are too tired to go on (*VotDT*, 211).

After Drinian had composed a list of names to have left behind and those to go with them on “an errand to the world’s edge” (*VotDT*, 214), Lewis gives a descriptor of Lord Rhoop falling into an enchanted sleep via the offered drink. Lewis writes that “There was a smile on Rhoop’s haggard face...a long sigh of contentment came from his lips, his head fell forward, and he slept” (*VotDT*, 215). Several pages later, when the crew happens across the sweetwater and after Caspian had had his fill, “one by one, everybody on board drank” (*VotDT*, 229), heavily hinting at how Drinian — and thus Warren — had chosen to drink, not to avoid his duties, but to find relief. Lewis rewrites his brother, through the character of Drinian, by depicting him as becoming an alcoholic in a more sympathetic light. Where most of Drinian’s crew chose to drink in order to forget and prevent any further trauma by continuing their journey, the bucket that was cast down was more so life-giving, offering the same kind of relief without the negative connotations.

All of these rewritings of Lewis’ three major companions exemplify the essentiality of relationships to a traumatized individual; Relationships are an integral part of each individual’s life and are essential to both how they develop trauma as well as deal with and respond to it. Some, like Lewis’ relationships with his father and Capron, have instigated traumatic experiences. However, others like those between Lewis and his companions, Greeves, Tolkien, and Warren Lewis, have acted as positive influences on Lewis’ trauma responses. *Trauma Informed Care*, a medical trauma textbook, informs readers about the complexities surrounding a

traumatized individual's support group. As stated, "It isn't just the natural disaster or event that can challenge an individual or community; often, the consequences of the event and behavioral responses from others within and outside the community play a role in pushing survivors away from effective coping or toward resilience and recovery" (35). While Greeves, Tolkien, and Warren Lewis might have also been traumatized individuals due to their parts in the war, their childhood experiences, and their overall struggle to find their place in a swiftly changing society, they were relatively positive influences for Lewis. Their forming of the Inklings was not just a literary club nor a simple gathering, but a fellowship of mutual coping. Within that fellowship, Lewis' relationship with each member aided him in progressing towards a better understanding of his trauma as well as aiding him in developing better coping mechanisms.

Middle Age

Outside of this fellowship, however, Lewis' trauma kept accumulating. While his experiences with his neglectful father, his being taken advantage of by his abusive schoolmaster, and the threat of war was behind him (or at least on hold), there was a new battle to be had; this battle lied in the home. All of his other places in society seemed to be filled with promise; he had a secure place as a Fellow at Magdalen College, was a major member of the Inklings, and had a promising future in publication. And yet, when he was home at the Kilns with Mrs. Moore, his place was under hers. His relationship with Mrs. Moore during this time reflects that of Caspian and Rilian's relationship with The Lady of the Green Kirtle.

As stated previously, Lewis' relationship with Mrs. Moore was highly suspect. And while he made no outward comment about her in his memoirs or interviews, his recreation of their relationship in *The Chronicle of Narnia's* next installment, *The Silver Chair*, says a lot. Specifically, their recreated relationship brings up questions about the idea of the "inner-child"

and the complications with “substitute mothers.” However, they are only applicable if we are to explain the development of Lewis’ avatar, Caspian; While Caspian has acted as Lewis’ fictional self up until now, a separate identity is created during this part of Caspian’s life. In *The Silver Chair*, Caspian has settled down with Ramandu’s daughter and had a son, Rilian. I propose that Caspian’s son acts as a recreation of Lewis’ inner-child. This part of the self, as Cecire states, “must be found, nurtured, and healed from the ordeals of our actual childhoods” (235). As soon as this is done, the “inner child can help adults unleash their full potential for productivity and happiness, thereby serving as the key to both their pasts and futures” (Cecire, 235). This is true for Lewis and Caspian; both of them already had extremely traumatic childhoods and by the time that they came of age, they had no time to address the fact that they missed out on essentially being a child. There was no room for error or childish antics, and both of them were forced to grow up early because of their superiors. This damage is then redirected to Lewis’ inner-child and Caspian’s son, Rilian.

Lewis’ inner-child and Rilian, however, had originally become suppressed because of the death of their biological mothers. For Lewis, his mother had countless doctor’s appointments and surgeries in hopes of ridding her body of the cancerous growth (Edwards, 56). It was a slow and painful process that ended with her death. Lewis recounts how “There came a night when I [Lewis] was ill and crying both with headache and toothache and distressed because my mother did not come to me. That was because she was ill too” (*SbJ*, 25). It was not just the prolonged absence and death of his mother that caused his “inner-child” trauma, but also the constant hope that she would one day be well enough to care for him again. The death of Rilian’s mother was described in a similar manner: “at the first glance of her face Rilian knew that no physic in the world would do her good. As long as the life was in her she seemed to be trying hard to tell him

something. But she could not speak clearly and, whatever her message was, she died without delivering it” (SC, 58). There was no sense of closure because there was something left unsaid between the mother and son. Due to that, the feeling of suspense and her life being left unfinished created a sense of unease and desire to continue that mother-son bond.

As trauma scholars Ringel and Brandell state, “children mourned the death of a parent deeply and that, at times, such grief remained unresolved for many years” (78). Just the same, a “secure environment in which to grieve the loss was not available” for Lewis (Ringel and Brandell, 78). Lewis, as previously stated, had no outlet access; following his mother’s death, he was immediately put into school and into war soon after. As for Rilian, he too became preoccupied with other matters as a distraction, including hunting for the snake that killed his mother (SC, 58). Yet, during this stage of distraction and disarray, the motherless child begins to seek someone to fulfill the role that was abandoned; this is where the substitute mother intervenes (Kotzin, 46).

Some major clues that link Lewis’ experience with Mrs. Moore to that of Rilian with the Lady of the Green Kirtle include the substitute mother physically isolating the child from the outside world, limiting their creative outlets and self-expression, and an older male figure giving warnings about the dangers of the substitute mother. The physical removal from others is the most prominent; Lewis’ biographer, Wilson, describes his time with Mrs. Moore as being “cut loose from home” and “thrown in his lot,” implying that not only was he isolated from friends and family, but also taking a large risk at the expense of himself (76). And while the older woman had thought that her “providing him with a background of a home” where “meals were provided and clothes mended,” Warren and several of Lewis’ other companions saw Mrs. Moore as “jealously guarding” (Wilson, 92) Lewis and holding him in a perpetual state of “domestic

misery” (Wilson, 121). Rilian’s substitute mother, The Lady of the Green Kirtle, was depicted a bit more obviously. Lewis had made it clear that Rilian was being held hostage through the magic of the Silver Chair. He writes that under his substitute mother and her chair, Rilian became a “toy and a lap-dog, nay, more likely the pawn and tool” (SC, 165). The Witch is portrayed as a mother figure who enchants Rilian by patronizing him: “My lord Prince, thou art a man full grown...Are you not ashamed of such toys?” (SC, 180). And through this patronizing and motherly nagging, Rilian is convinced that he can make “nothing” of his “make-believe” without “copying” from “the real world, this world of mine [the Witch’s]” (SC, 180). Lewis’ inner-child and Rilian were coerced into a “good son” role (Wilson, 69), following the mother’s instructions even when her motherly ways took a more hostile turn; there was no room for being anything outside of being their adopted son, and certainly no need for venturing outside of the mother’s domain.

Due to this forced reclusion, both Lewis’ inner-child and Rilian were forced to focus their efforts on the whims of their substitute mothers. Wilson states that “from the very beginning of his relationship with Janie Moore, Lewis involved himself in all her domestic arrangements – the cleaning, the cooking, the shopping, as well as the schoolwork of the little girl” (74). Lewis even went as far to use his allowance to pay Mrs. Moore and her daughter’s rent. And due to Lewis’ hyperfocus on caring for the Moores, he lost touch and garnered resentment towards his father: Lewis had “always regarded this spell of angry estrangement from Albert as ‘the blackest chapter of my [his] life’” (Wilson, 77), but perhaps not so much because of the situation as much as it was instigated by his substitute mother. Through his social isolation and redirected attention, there was no room for his father, especially when he attempted to separate his son from the substitute mother (Wilson, 78). Moreso, there was only a limited time for his friends and seldom

enough hours in the day to devote to his writing. Lewis had to “write by snatches, between walking the dog and peeling the potatoes” (Heck, 6-7) because “there is room for other things besides love in a man’s life” (Hooper, *Vol. I*, 353). So while he made time for his own interests, like writing, it was Mrs. Moore who came first. As summarized by Wilson, “Mrs. Moore and her family took precedence over everything” (78).

In a similar manner, Rilian’s experience with *The Lady of the Green Kirtle* held many resemblances to Lewis’ time with Mrs. Moore. When we first see Rilian in *The Silver Chair*, he is referenced by Puddleglum as a “suit of armor” (90), completely disregarding the children’s idyllic fantasies of him being a “knight” (90). The reasoning for this is because Rilian does not speak nor is introduced; he acts as an accessory to his substitute mother. Jill defends his quietness, declaring that “I expect he was shy...or perhaps he just wants to look at her and listen to her lovely voice” (SC, 91), calling to mind Edwards’ statement of Lewis being “shy around women” (284). And because of this quietness and lack of outward identity, Eustace and Puddleglum debate on what one would “really see” if one were to lift “up the visor of that helmet and look inside” (SC, 91). While Eustace exclaims, “what *could* be inside it except a man?” Puddleglum questions back, “How about a skeleton...or perhaps...nothing at all” (SC, 91). With the combination of the helmet being hypothetically peered into and the question of “nothing” being there, it brings up the question of Rilian’s independence, state of mind, and whether or not any thought or action in his head is completely separate from the substitute mother’s. Yet, as later revealed, just as Lewis had seldom time to write and reveal his thoughts on paper, Rilian too had no outlet for personal thought or freedom of speech under the Witch’s spell. He was simply an object to look at, much like a suit of armor — better yet a puppet or a doll — without any interiority.

And when he was given permission to host and put on a show — only in his mother’s domain, of course, where she had strict control — was he allowed to speak. Even then, it was only with her absence and his words filtered; he would “hear no words against my [his] Lady’s honor” let alone say them himself (*SC*, 152). Further, it was not just her he supported, but also her beliefs; much like Lewis’ refusal to go to church like Mrs. Moore (Wilson, 76), Rilian disregarded Puddleglum’s claim that their “guide is Aslan” (*SC*, 154) despite him later revealing that it was Aslan who he truly believes in (*SC*, 166). But Rilian’s interiority is pushed aside in favor of his substitute mother. Jill’s claim that “where I come from...they don’t think too much of men who are bossed about by their wives” (*SC*, 158-159), leading the enchanted Rilian to respond that she would “think otherwise” when she “has a man” of her own (*SC*, 159). His following statements, however, start to link back to Lewis’ overlapping perceptions on wives and mothers; Rilian comments further on Jill’s claims about his “wife” and “lady,” stating that “no mother has taken pains more tenderly for her child” (*SC*, 159) and references back to his previous claim on how this “mother” has “promised...her own most gracious hand in marriage” (*SC*, 155). From Rilian’s spellbound consciousness, he not only synthesizes the mother and wife figure, but also regards her as this omnipotent being that he “shall do all by the counsel of my [his] Lady” and that “her word shall be my [his] law” (*SC*, 158).

The substitute mother isolated and manipulated the child figure, but was given a warning by an older male figure before the fall. For Lewis, this figure was his older brother, Warren. While Warren was a bit more subtle with his objection towards his brother and Mrs. Moore’s relationship, his outward disapproval grew the more he witnessed their interactions (Heck, 4-6). He often referenced Lewis as being in a “self-imposed slavery” (Heck, 5) and constantly being subjected to Moore’s “hate” and “malice” (Heck, 6). It wasn’t until after years of Warren’s

constant quips and Mrs. Moore's death that Lewis admitted to living "amid senseless wranglings, lyings, backbitings, follies, and *scares*" and that he "never went home without a feeling of terror" (Hooper, *Vol. III*, 108). It was only after her death and his release from her hold that he would "begin to realize quite how bad it was" (Hooper, *Vol. III*, 108). Warren's warnings, though accurate in foresight, were disregarded; it was only until it was too late that Lewis realized the extent to which his brother was correct.

Rilian's introduction of the Lady of the Green Kirtle and Drinian resulted in a similar outcome. Despite his claims of the woman being "the most beautiful thing that was ever made" (*SC*, 59), Drinian is wary, already seeing the signs and connecting the dots about her being a *Femme Fatale* figure. Lewis writes how "It struck Drinian's mind that this shining green woman was evil" (*SC*, 60). The emphasis on "green" in this line as well as earlier in the passage where Drinina notices that her "garment" was "as green as poison" (*SC*, 60) and the obvious reference to her title as "the Lady of the Green Kirtle" (*SC*, 89) acts as an association to the flaws of greed and jealousy. Through Drinian's notice of the Lady donning this particular color, it calls back to Warren's description of Mrs. Moore being "domineering" and "possessive" (Lewis, 26). But, as Wilson states, "both Warnie and Minto were jealous of anyone who claimed Jack's love; this meant that they were bound to be jealous of one another" (142). Thus there was an innate recognition of danger, not just for the object of their affection, but also for themselves if that affection was to give way for another. Rilian's kidnapping reimagines this fear, not just for Lewis/Caspian, but also for one of the most important people in their lives: their brother figure. There lies, not just jealousy, but the need to protect that younger, child-like figure like the proper elder brother that they must prove themselves to be. But with this failure to protect, both the

younger and older figure are traumatized from this exploitative substitute mother that has taken advantage of both the affection of the child as well as the trust of the elder.

Final Years

By the time that the Lady of the Green Kirtle is killed by Eustace, Jill, and Puddleglum, Rilian returns to Narnia. But just as the inner-child is going to be reunited with the adult self, the adult is ready to move on to the next phase. Puddleglum comments on the mental state of Rilian, asking Jill and Eustace, “do you think he’s very strong? Constitution ruined...looks the sort that might go off any day” (*SC*, 232) which prompts their discussion of funerals (*SC*, 232-233). Shortly after this conversation, Rilian is blessed by his father, Caspian, who dies soon after (*SC*, 235). Only with the death of the substitute mother and the passing of the adult self, can the inner-child reign. Similarly, Lewis was once more devoid of a mother figure and had reached what he calls his “Renaissance” (*SbJ*, 73) where he is free to explore all that he had missed growing up; no longer was he subjected to duty or maintaining the picturesque image of an “adult.” He was now old enough to enjoy the childish things he was shamed for in his youth (*LWW*, “To Lucy Barfield”). What’s more, he found a guide in rediscovering this part of him that he had lost. While Mrs. Moore was in her last year of life and he in his final year of “servitude” (*Heck*, 6), Lewis began exchanging letters with his future wife, Joy Davidman. Davidman ironically was named after the very idea that Lewis had been searching for his whole life: Joy (*SbJ*, 74). And through her, he could fully understand his inner-child, including the child-like and the childish.

While one might assume that Lewis would at this point be accustomed to traumatically influential and short-lived relationships, his experiences with Joy Davidman was the most impactful thus far. After all, even with Lewis’ disdain for authority and inequality in his relationships, he often had some kind of imbalance in power with each person he relied on (*SbJ*,

38-39). At this time, he no longer had the domineering relationships with those such as his father, Capron, or Mrs. Moore, but neither did he have access to the equalizing ones; Tolkien had broken off their relationship almost altogether, Greeves was mostly only available through letters, and Warren had taken to drinking; thus his relationship with Davidman held a significance that he had never had prior. Davidman offered him what others couldn't; a mother and wife figure that Florence and Mrs. Moore couldn't uphold, a companion who understood his grief like Greeves and Warren, and an intellectual who could hold a conversation about literature and religion like Kirkpatrick and Tolkien. And after all of these prior connections had fallen apart at some point, Joy Davidman was his last hope and simultaneously the one whose death was the lion coat that broke the donkey's back.

Davidman's influence on Lewis' life and trauma did not just affect his memoirs, however; it also acted as inspiration for Caspian's wife's death and the traumatic responses that Caspian and Rilian displayed in the aftermath. For Rilian it was seeking out a substitute mother, but for Caspian it was seeking comfort in the brother figure. Similarly, after both Moore and Davidman's death, Lewis returned to living with his brother, Warren, at the Kilns. Caspian and Lewis are left devoid of purpose and desperate enough to resort to extreme measures. For example, after Caspian's wife dies and he hears about the disappearance of his son, he swiftly becomes distraught and loses himself in his grief. Drinian was the one to break the news to Caspian as well as the one who knew about the potentially dangerous woman with whom Rilian was meeting, thus in a moment of anger, Caspian goes to kill Drinian as punishment for preventing the kidnapping of his son. But before he makes the final blow with the battle-axe, he "suddenly threw it away and cried out, 'I have lost my queen and my son: shall I lose my friend also?'" (SC, 60). The choice of weapon is telling as in Lewis' memoir *A Grief Observed*, Lewis

calls Joy Davidman a “battle-axe” (44), insinuating that her death was the blade that he clung to, debating whether to use it on himself or to take it out on others. Lewis follows through with this moment, depicting how the two “embraced” and “wept” (SC, 60). Yet Lewis concludes this passage with how “their friendship was not broken” (SC, 60) implying that it was the only relationship that Caspian had left, one that was intact and had not ended in death or separation like many of his relationships before had.

In Lewis’ final years, his brother Warren was the only one left to care for him. And despite his closeness with his brother, it was not enough to heal the pain of Joy’s death. But Lewis’ distraught behavior and depression affected not only the household, but also bled through into his final installment of *The Chronicles of Narnia, The Last Battle*. In this book, the various characters — whether main protagonists or side characters, ranging from *The Magician’s Nephew* all the way to *The Silver Chair* — come together one final time. But now, by the end of this last book, there is no conflict or nefarious plot. They are all finally home. It then becomes not just a sequel to the previous books, but also acts as a final check-in on Caspian.

Readers have seen Caspian’s resurrection in the previous installment. But this time, his regained youth and happiness is now joined by his wife and son’s. Originally, when Caspian passes away in *The Silver Chair*, Jill and Eustace are longing for home, yet they must first introduce Caspian to *his* new home (SC, 236-237). Aslan takes them to the “Mountain of Aslan” that is “high up above and beyond the end of the world in which Narnia lies” (SC, 237). There, Eustace was instructed to “go into that thicket and pluck the thorn” and then proceeded to “drive it into my [Aslan’s] paw” (SC, 238). The “great drop of blood...splashed into the stream over the dead body of the King,” causing the “dead King” to “be changed” (SC, 238). Caspian, despite his death, becomes younger, his “white beard” regressing into a more youthful appearance before it

“vanished altogether,” “his sunken cheeks grew round and fresh,” his “wrinkles were smoothed,” and his “eyes opened” (*SC*, 238). Through his appearance becoming younger after his death and his immediate response into hugging and kissing Aslan, readers are inclined to see this death as a rebirth and a renewal; Caspian is described as old and weary throughout the whole of the book and has been depicted as going through many instances of trauma. And yet, death removes all of that — and despite the Christian allegory of Aslan being God and his country as being Heaven, there is no doubt that Lewis portrays the afterlife as preferable to living in a traumatic reality.

And if the imagery does not convince readers, Aslan — the all-knowing deity of the chronicles — and his explanation does. The Lion replies to the children’s fear and “startled expressions” with “He has died. Most people have, you know. Even I have. There are very few who haven’t” (*SC*, 239). All the while, Aslan says this in a “very quiet voice, almost...as if he were laughing” (*SC*, 239). This scene was being written during the course of his and Joy Davidman’s marriage — soon after she first showed signs of bone cancer and he started to develop osteoporosis. Lewis wrote in his private letters to Coghill and Sister Penelope, “I am very crippled and had much pain all summer...I was losing calcium just about as fast as Joy was gaining it” (Wilson, 258). But through his detailed resurrection of Caspian, Lewis seems to be coming to terms with the inevitability of his mortality. He is no longer in that state of being disgusted with immortality while simultaneously being in fear of death, but is instead accepting of his and his wife’s fate. With death came a relief of both emotional and physical pain, much like when he was in shock due to the blast and shrapnel during WWI.

Caspian then not only becomes an avatar to relive Lewis’ trauma, but also a spokesperson to confess his present thoughts on what his past trauma has led him to thinking about his own death: “Don’t you see?... I don’t belong there [life/the real world] anymore” (*SC*, 240). And even

when Caspian inquired whether the children should stay in the afterlife, “a great hope rose in the children’s hearts” before Aslan had denied them (*SC*, 240). Death then is not just inevitable, but desirable. By the end of the final installment, *The Last Battle*, after the Seven Friends of Narnia (Digory Kirke, Polly Plummer, Peter, Edmund, and Lucy Pevesie, Eustace Scrubb, and Jill Pole) have been killed in a train accident, they are not even aware of the bloody death they have just suffered (*LB*, 210). Instead, all their focus is going “further up and further in” (*LB*, 202). There, they meet all of those who they had encountered in Narnia over the course of seven books: “King Rilian the Disenchanted, and his mother the Star’s daughter and his great father Caspian himself...close behind him were the Lord Drinian...and Trumpkin the Dwarf” (*LB*, 205) and greeting everyone at the front was “Reepicheep the Mouse who had fought at the Great Battle of Beruna and afterward sailed to the World’s end with King Caspian the Seafarer” (*LB*, 203). There is no mention of Miraz or the Lady of the Green Kirtle; there is only a happy reunion with those who healed trauma, not instigated it.

Even further, once they all come together, Aslan announces that “The term is over: the holidays have begun. The dream is ended; this is the morning” (*LB*, 210). There is a sense of finality that there will no longer be any hard times and that the narrator, Lewis, is truthful when he says that we can “most truly say that they all lived happily ever after” (*LB*, 210). “The real story” was about to begin now that they have died (*LB*, 210): “All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story...which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before” (*LB*, 211). This ending of torment and beginning of Joy, fully consisting of being surrounded by loved ones, reflects the opposite extreme that Lewis went through at the end of his life. Wilson writes that, “Lewis had never been so alone in his life...No

friends seemed to be there for him” (Wilson, 282). As his circle of friends dwindled and his health declined further, no idea of Heaven was more appealing than that erasure of pain and the comfort of loved ones. The knowledge that all good things ended — whether that be his routine meetings with the Inklings at the Oxford pub, The Eagle and Child, or his time spent with Joy Davidman at the Kilns — perhaps instigated his grief as the worst moments in his life did. All that Lewis could hope for was that the next phase, the post-mortem, would finally bring together all that he had lost.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSIONS

The famous phrase “Rest in Peace” is so renowned for a reason; death is the only end to the experience of trauma. No one leaves this world trauma-free. And while psychology and mental illness studies have been a discussed topic — let alone a medically researched field — for barely a century, it is an essential part of life. Mental illness, ranging from ADHD and into traumatic neuro-disorders such as PTSD, has become more widely acknowledged and studied. Yet, the topic is still stigmatized, especially surrounding celebrity figures, such as C. S. Lewis. As of now, it is extremely difficult to get a full understanding of how minds work, especially as the brain is constantly developing through age and circumstance. But analyzing literature is a good place to start.

When confronted with past experiences that may elicit a triggering response, it is important to recognize that people might not grant it full disclosure. In their writings, such as memoirs and journals, it still might be edited either consciously or subconsciously as a tactic of self-preservation. But there are some instances where trauma can be confronted in a way that breaks down the door locked behind the mind. In science fiction, fantasy, and other genres where the author can distance themselves and place their trauma away in a setting where it cannot realistically impact them, the walls begin to crumble. C. S. Lewis’ children’s literature series, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, is just one such example. This analysis, however, can be applied to most traumatized individuals. Scriptotherapy can act as a tool to better understand trauma and how it is processed, whether it be bluntly explained in an autobiography or hidden in the pages of fiction.

This is not to say that medical tests and therapies are not essential to the study of trauma and other issues of illness; on the contrary, they are a major factor in the progression of our understanding of these processes within the mind. Yet, as they are getting more prioritized, using writing and scriptotherapy as a form of study is getting pushed to the side. Scholars must realize that although science is progressing at an extreme rate, communication and the analysis of it is the foundation that such advances in medical and psychological studies are based on. Trauma must be studied. But studying trauma starts with the traumatized individual. What they say about, what they infer from, and how they interpret their trauma, especially in places where that trauma is least expected to arise, is a valuable part in understanding the sources of traumatic experiences and the possible treatments for trauma survivors.

C. S. Lewis, born in a time where trauma was not discussed and, more or less, shunned, is just one example of how communication plays a valuable role in tracking these developments in mental illness. His letters, his memoirs, and his fiction, all written at various stages of his life and under many different circumstances, allows a close inspection of the external trauma and the internal impact. Lewis and his *Chronicles of Narnia* series in particular gives way to how trauma is not just a reaction to a single instance like war or a product of childhood neglect, but an accumulation that must be studied to scale; current testing and medicine can only do so much to decipher trauma. Studying trauma in literature, however, allows for us to breach those boundaries and get an inside look at the trauma-bombed brain.

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