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Diversity in Times of Adversity: Sounding a Horn in Narnia

D. G. KEHL

To say the country is experiencing severe adversity is an understatement. Historical revisionism has called old beliefs into question, labeling them old wives' tales and illusory fairy tales. Traditional values, considered retrograde, are made to appear irrelevant, and those who hold to them suffer repression. The founders have been disparaged and their codes of honor have long since been abandoned. Skepticism is rife. Violence and terrorism haunt the land. High taxes and injustice plague the citizens. Suspicion and fear, bitterness and hatred, intolerance and betrayal are widespread. Unscrupulous lust for power is a common motivation. Natural beauty has been despoiled. These conditions could apply, in varying degrees, to the United States in the twenty-first century, or to England in the fourth decade of the twentieth century, when C. S. Lewis wrote *Prince Caspian,* second of the Narnia Chronicles. Indeed, many of these conditions apply to both, but sadly all apply to Narnia, a land in decline from its Golden Age, which was ushered in at the end of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* with the reign of High King Peter the Magnificent, King Edmund the Just, Queen Lucy the Valiant, and Queen Susan the Gentle.

The Golden Age of Narnia was "hundreds of years ago"[1] but just one year of earth time since the four Pevensie children left Narnia and are now mysteriously "drawn back to Narnia" (Lewis' original title) as they wait at a railway station to return to boarding school. At first disoriented, they gradually recognize the ruins of the castle at Cair Paravel with its ancient treasure house containing the gifts received from Father Christmas—Lucy's magical cordial, Susan's bow and arrows (though the enchanted horn is missing), Peter's shield and sword Rhindon. The children soon learn that the cause of the adversity is the perversity of the false

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[1] C. S. Lewis, *Prince Caspian* (New York, 1951), 128.

leader of Narnia, King Miraz. When they rescue a dwarf from two Telmarine soldiers, Dwarf Trumpkin tells the story of how Prince Caspian lives in a castle with his uncle Miraz, who has killed Caspian's father, usurped the throne, and ushered in a reign of abject terror. He banished Caspian's old nurse for telling him the true stories of Waking Trees, Talking Beasts, and the majestic Lion, Aslan. Caspian longs for the old days of Narnia, feeling the poignancy of *Sehnsucht,* which Lucy also experiences later when she feels "a great longing for the old days when the trees could talk."[2] Caspian relishes the old stories related also by his new tutor Doctor Cornelius, part dwarf, part human, who warns Caspian that Miraz will seek to kill him because Queen Prunaprismia has given birth to a son, now false heir to the throne.

Cornelius gives Caspian the enchanted horn of Susan, then aids him in escaping to the southern border. Subsequently, Caspian sounds the horn (an earlier title was "A Horn in Narnia"), not certain of the results, if it will summon the Golden Age kings and queens or perhaps even Aslan himself. Sounded "in the name of Aslan,"[3] this act symbolizes a petitionary prayer for help—"prayer which," as Lewis expresses it in *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer,* "calls upon God to 'engineer' particular events in the objective world."[4] It is an ejaculatory prayer grounded in the admonition, "Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need" (*eis eukairon boetheian,* a Greek colloquialism—"in the nick of time").[5] "The prayer without words is the best," Lewis wrote—"if one can achieve it."[6] Sounding of the horn is also a call to battle, a call for "restoration of the true religion after a corruption," as Lewis characterized the novel's theme in 1961.[7] In ancient times the trumpet, or ram's horn, was used to signal danger or warn of a military attack.[8] "If the bugle produces an indistinct sound, who will prepare himself for battle?" Paul asks.[9]

Forthwith (or "straightaway," as the British would say), the negative adversity in Narnia begins to be countered by positive diversity. First, Caspian and the children learn from Trumpkin of the wide diversity of creatures, called "the Others": "all sorts of creatures from the Old Days of Narnia still [living] on in

[2] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 112.
[3] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 90.
[4] C. S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer* (San Diego, 1964), 35.
[5] Hebrews 4:16.
[6] Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm,* 11.
[7] Walter Hooper, ed., *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3 vols. (San Francisco, 2004), 3:1245.
[8] Amos 3:6, Jeremiah 6:17.
[9] 1 Corinthians 14:6.

hiding,"[10] a faithful remnant loyal to Aslan, recalling the 7,000 prophets of Israel in Elijah's time, who had not bowed to Baal, "a remnant according to God's gracious choice."[11] In Old Narnia there were no fewer than nine distinct categories of creatures, according to Doctor Cornelius[12]—*Waking Trees* (birch-girls, willow-women, queenly beeches, shaggy oakmen, lean and melancholy elms, shock-headed hollies, gay rowans), *Visible Naiads* (Dryads, Hamadryads, and Silvans), *Fauns* (Metnius, Obentinus, Dumnus, Voluns, Voltinus, Girbius, Nimienus, Nausus, Oscuns), *Satyrs* (five red as foxes), *Dwarfs* (Red—Trumpkin, Seven Brothers of Shuddering Wood; Black—Nikabrik), *Giants* (most notably Wimbleweather of Deadman's Hill,), *gods* (Bacchus/Bromios/Bassareus/Ram and his Maenads, Silenus, river-god of the Great River) *Centaurs* (Glenstorm and three sons), and *Talking Beasts* (Trufflehunter the Badger and the three Hardbiters, the Three Bulgy Bears, Pattertwig the Squirrel, Reepicheep and his eleven "people," along with Peepiceek, Clodsley Shovel the Mole, Camillo the Hare, Rabbits, Hogglestock the Hedgehog, Owls, Old Raven of Revenscaur). When Aslan roars, all the creatures are revived: "The alert ears of rabbits rose from their holes, the sleepy heads of birds came out from under wings, owls hooted, vixens barked, hedgehogs grunted."[13] Indeed, "Will you not revive us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?"[14] And then, even more astounding, "the trees stirred . . . . It looked first like a black mist creeping on the ground, then like the stormy waves of a black sea rising higher and higher as it came on, and then, at least, like what it was—woods on the move. All the trees of the world appeared to be rushing towards Aslan."[15] This is no fabricated Birnam Wood coming to Dunsinane. This is the full sylvan monty!

Why, one might ask, does Lewis go to such great lengths to specify twelve different varieties of animals—"all you variety of creatures"[16]—if not to stress diversity? In *Letters to Malcolm* Lewis wrote: "If grace perfects nature it must expand all our natures into *the full richness of the diversity which God intended when He made them.*"[17] Caspian himself, we learn, is no native-born Narnian but rather a Telmarine, the offspring of human pirates who entered Narnia through a chasm or chink from a South Sea island, then conquered and enslaved Narnia. With such diversity as this, we can almost hear Aslan say, "Other sheep I have—

[10] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 67.
[11] 1 Kings 19:18, Romans 11:4–5.
[12] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 47.
[13] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 150–1.
[14] Psalm 85:6.
[15] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 151.
[16] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 85.
[17] Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm,* 10 (emphasis added).

other badgers, other beavers, other bulgy bears—which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear my roar, and they shall become one flock, one herd, one pride, with one leader."[18] "One fold," Lewis reminded Malcolm, "doesn't mean 'one pool'."[19]

Interestingly, not many birds are mentioned—only a passing reference to "some owls," "the Old Raven of Ravenscaur,[20] and a stray hawk and eagle,[21] but diversity is enhanced by the appearance of one significant bird midway through the novel, during the night when Lucy, unable to sleep, gazes at the bright Narnian stars, smells delicious smells, and feels that the whole forest is awakening. Then, when "a great longing [*Sehnsucht*] for the old days when the trees could talk in Narnia came over her . . . somewhere close by she heard the twitter of a nightingale beginning to sing, then stopping, then beginning again." Shortly, with moonlight and shadows intermingling, "the nightingale, satisfied at last with his tuning up, burst into full song."[22] When the wind rustled the leaves "almost like words . . . , the nightingale stopped singing as if to listen to it [and] when the rustling died away the nightingale resumed its song," leaving Lucy with the feeling "that she had just missed something: as if she had spoken to the trees a split second too soon or a split second too late, or used all the right words except one; or put in one word that was just wrong."[23] The moment slips away, with Lucy feeling a vague sense of loss and sudden fatigue.

Why, one might well ask, did Lewis put the nightingale into this scene and highlight its song by referring to it four times, other than the obvious fact that it is one of the few birds that sing at night and that its song is putatively the most beautiful because, according to Ovid's tale, Philomela was changed into a nightingale and given the most exquisite song to compensate for her suffering at the hand of the rapacious Tereus, suggesting that "art is the child of pain"? First, we know that Lewis was especially fond of Keats. George Sayer notes that while Lewis was studying with William Kirkpatrick ("The Great Knock") at Great Bookham, he "loved Keats, especially his *Endymion*.[24] As early as 1923, after having read Colvin's biography of Keats and several works, including the odes, Lewis wrote in his diary: "I am a bit scared of Keats for he could resume complete dominion over

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[18] John 10:16.
[19] Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm,* 10.
[20] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 80.
[21] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 127.
[22] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 111–12.
[23] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 113.
[24] George Sayer, *Jack: C. S. Lewis and His Times* (San Francisco, 1988), 58.

me with very little trouble . . . ."[25] In 1949, the year he was writing *Prince Caspian,* he remarked in a letter that Keats "is on my side."[26] Though there is no ode *to* the nightingale in this scene, there is the intermittent ode *of* the nightingale, which functions as a melodic harbinger of Lucy's Aslanophany the next day. For Lucy, and for the reader, these moments in nature are potentially epiphanic, even numinous.

Another role of the nightingale in the novel is illuminated by Lewis' remark about the nightingale in Keats' *Endymion,* where "the nightingale, upperched high,/ And cloister'd among cool and bunched leaves—/ sings but to her love, nor e'er conceives/ How tiptoe Night holds back her dark-grey hood."[27] Of these lines, Lewis wrote to Arthur Greeves:

> Beauty descends from God into nature: but there it would perish and does except when a Man [*sic*] appreciates it with worship and thus as it were *sends it back* to God: so that through his consciousness what descended ascends again and the perfect circle is made.[28]

The nightingale's song, conjoined with the mysterious rustling of the trees, becomes for Lucy what T. S. Eliot called an "objective correlative"[29] of *Sehnsucht* or what Gerard Manley Hopkins called "inscape."[30] The perfect circle is not realized, however, for although Lucy senses the descending beauty she is not able to appreciate it with worship and send it back to God—until she encounters Aslan.

Besides the creaturely diversity, the creatures themselves have a wide diversity of abilities, talents, and gifts to be used in the fray. Trufflehunter, the faithful badger, reminds Caspian, "I am a beast and we don't change . . . and we hold on."[31] "Have patience like us beasts," he admonishes Nikabrik the dwarf.[32] The

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[25] Walter Hooper, ed., *All My Road Before Me: The Diary of C. S. Lewis* (San Diego, 1991), 228.

[26] *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 2:955.

[27] John Keats, *Selected Poems and Letters* (Boston, 1959), 57.

[28] Walter Hooper, ed., *They Stand Together: The Letters of C. S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves* (New York, 1979), 386.

[29] T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (London, 1960), 100. Eliot defines "objective correlative" as follows: "The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked."

[30] Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems and Prose* (Baltimore, 1967), 119–28. Hopkins defined "inscape" as follows: "The principle of distinctiveness in a natural or artistic object—i.e., the exterior reflection of essence of 'thisness' of a thing."

[31] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 168.

[32] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 158.

badgers are excellent sentinels and guard the entrance to Aslan's How.[33] "Squirrels, led by Pattertwig, are best for getting through enemy lines without being caught,[34] and squirrels and birds are the best messengers.[35] The mice, led by Reepicheep, are the best scouts,[36] and during the battle "the ridiculous little creatures were dancing in and out among the feet of both armies, jabbing with their swords. Many a Telmarine warrior that day felt his foot suddenly pierced as if by a dozen skewers, hopped on one leg cursing the pain, and fell as often as not. If he fell the mice finished him off; if he did not, someone else did."[37] Camillo the Hare is able to sense out and detect anyone new to the group, potential spies.[38] Clodsley Shovel—a delightful name for a mole—and his fellow moles not only throw up protective entrenchments around Dancing Lawn,[39] but also later scuffle up the earth so the trees can better eat it.[40] The Bulgy Bear is made Marshal of the Lists.[41] Glenstorm, the noble centaur, who is a star-gazer and prophet, proclaims the time is ripe for battle.[42] Dwarfs are especially adept at archery. Giant Wimbleweather, though we are reminded twice that giants are not at all clever, is brave as a lion, "looks impressive," helps by "carrying on his back a basketful of rather seasick Dwarfs who had accepted his offer of a lift," and during the battle "was stamping forward, stooping low and swinging his club."[43] Each creature uses his unique gift for the benefit of all.

Another form of diversity is the wide spectrum of belief and concomitant goodness, with the desideratum, of course, being strong, unquestioning belief, reasoned trust. In a letter, Lewis wrote, "Certainly this real belief in the truths of our religion is a great gift from God. When in Hebrews 'faith' is defined as 'the substance of things hoped for', I wd. translate 'substance' as 'substantialness' or 'solidity' or (almost) 'palpableness'."[44] The gradations of belief range from the most egregious, willful disbelief of Miraz to the faithful loyalty of the Talking Beasts in hiding to the simple, ready, childlike trust of Lucy. Clearly, Miraz represents not only lack of belief but also outright, deliberate rejection of the truth he knows to be authentic, calling the stories of the majestic lion Aslan, the fauns, dwarfs, and

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[33] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 155.
[34] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 91.
[35] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 207.
[36] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 88.
[37] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 190.
[38] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 81.
[39] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 8.
[40] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 206.
[41] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 204.
[42] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 74–5.
[43] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 88, 173, 80, 190.
[44] *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3:751.

talking trees "nonsense, for babies," "fairy tales," "silly stories," "nursery tales," "old wives' fables." "There's no such person as Aslan," he tells the young Caspian; "and there are no such things as lions."[45] This flagrant denial of known truth, leading to outright murder of his own brother, usurpation of the throne, cruel repression of the people, and attempted murder of his nephew, is arguably worse even than the outright evil of "the horrible creatures out of the old stories [such as the Ogres, Hags, and Wer-Wolves] [who], had some descendants in Narnia still."[46]

Next in ascending order of belief are the Telmarines, half of whom—the older ones who had served Miraz—were sulky and suspicious of "that awful Lion" and "a lot of blooming performing animals," and rejected Aslan's gracious offer to escape through the Door in the Air. Miraz' two Telmarine lieutenants, Lord Glozelle and Lord Sopespian, are traitorous villains who commit regicide, but at least, when asked by Miraz if he believes the "old wives' fables about Peter and Edmund and the rest," Glozelle replies: "I believe my eyes."[47] Next in order come most of the beasts, which, according to Trumpkin, "have gone enemy and gone dumb," such as the grey bear, "poor old Bruin," shot by Trumpkin as it sought "Little Girl for his breakfast." At this point, Lucy expresses a significant truth about human nature when she says to Susan: "Wouldn't it be dreadful if some day in our own world, at home, men started going wild inside, like the animals here, and still looked like men, so that you'd never know which were which?"[48] Lewis' implication seems to be that this is precisely what has happened in our world.

Next in order are the Black Dwarfs, typified by Nikabrik, who is suspicious of Caspian, skeptical about Aslan and the ancient days of Narnia, cynical about needing "the help of a performing lion,"[49] ardently power-hungry and practical in caring only to help his "people" the dwarfs, willing to use black sorcery to call up the White Witch. "We want power: and we want a power that will be on our side." He is an unscrupulous opportunist, who says:

> I'll believe in anything . . . that'll batter these cursed Telmarine barbarians to pieces or drive them out of Narnia. Aslan *or* the White Witch . . . . As for power, do not the stories say that the Witch defeated Aslan, and bound him, and killed him . . . ?[50]

When Trufflehunter reminds him that the stories "also say that he came to life

[45] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 39–40, 176–7.
[46] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 72, 165–6.
[47] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 177.
[48] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 116.
[49] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 163.
[50] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 73, 162–3.

again" (a significant point which the recent movie totally omits, whereas the BBC version includes it), Nikabrik counters:

> Yes, they say . . . , but you'll notice that we hear precious little about anything he did afterwards. He just fades out of the story. How do you explain that, if he really came to life? Isn't it much more likely that he didn't, and that the stories say nothing more about him because there was nothing more to say?[51]

Denying the resurrection from the dead, Nikabrik lacks all hope and is of all creatures most miserable, most pitiable.[52] After Nikabrik is killed during the battle in the darkness of Aslan's How, Caspian expresses compassion for him: "He had gone sour inside from long suffering and hating. If we had won quickly he might have become a good Dwarf in the days of peace."[53]

Trumpkin, a Red Dwarf, is in many ways a literary foil to Nikabrik and one of the most fully developed characters in the book, a "round character," according to E. M. Forster's designation: he surprises us in a convincing way and he defies easy summation.[54] Understandably suspicious of humans, he questions the old stories: "Do you believe all those old stories?" he asks Trufflehunter. "Who believes in Aslan nowadays?"[55] "I have no use for magic lions which are talking lions and don't talk, and friendly lions though they don't do us any good, and whopping big lions though nobody can see them."[56] He mutters, "I wish our leaders would think less about these old wives' tales and more about victuals and arms."[57] Being pragmatic and down-to-earth about food and security is one thing, but dismissing the old stories in the same terms as the wicked Miraz[58] is quite another. "Unless we return to the crude and nursery-like belief in objective values," Lewis asserted, "we perish."[59]

Thinking the other animals believe in Dryads, Naiads, and Talking Trees because they have overactive imaginations, Trumpkin rebukes them: "What imaginations you Animals have!"[60] Lewis argued in the *Christian Behaviour* (1943) section of *Mere Christianity* that it is *imagination,* rather than reason, that *battles*

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[51] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 163.
[52] 1 Corinthians 15:19.
[53] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 168.
[54] E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (New York, 1954), 78, 71.
[55] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 66.
[56] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 142.
[57] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 86.
[58] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 177.
[59] C. S. Lewis, "The Poison of Subjectivism," *Christian Reflections* (Grand Rapids, 1967), 81.
[60] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 76.

against faith: "It is not reason that is taking away my faith: on the contrary, my faith is based on reason. It is my imagination and emotions. The battle is between faith and reason on one side and emotion and imagination on the other."[61] In his essay "Religion: Reality or Substitute?" (which appeared originally in 1941), Lewis defined faith as "the power of continuing to believe what we once honestly thought to be true until cogent reasons for honestly changing our minds are brought before us."[62] This description would seem to apply more validly to Trufflehunter, for Trumpkin continues to *disbelieve* what he has honestly thought to be *untrue* until cogent reasons for honestly changing his mind are brought when Aslan summons him in a louder voice with just the hint of a roar in it: "And now, where is this little Dwarf . . . who doesn't believe in lions?" Trumpkin, confronted with the majestic, imposing presence of the Lion, totters toward Aslan, is tossed up in the air, caught gently in those velveted paws, and set upright on the ground.[63] Now this Son of Earth is ready to be a friend of Aslan.

Next on the spectrum of belief and concomitant goodness is Trufflehunter the badger—faithful, steadfast, immovable. "I'm a beast, I am, and a Badger, what's more," he tells Nikabrik. "We don't change. We hold on." "We don't change, we beasts," he tells Trumpkin, "We don't forget." Then he verbalizes his unequivocal belief: "I believe in the High King Peter and the rest that reigned at Cair Paravel, as firmly as I believe in Aslan himself."[64] He, perhaps more than any other creature, demonstrates loyalty, a trait valued by Lewis, who wrote, "Our loyalty is not due to our species but to God. Those who are, or can become, his sons, are our real brothers even if they have shells or tusks [or long claws, short and thick legs, fur, sharp teeth, and white-marked heads]. It is spiritual, not biological, kinship that counts"[65] Accordingly, when Trumpkin asks who believes in Aslan nowadays, Caspian replies:

> I do . . . and if I hadn't believed in him before, I would now. . . . Sometimes I did wonder if there really was such a person as Aslan; but then sometimes I wondered if there were really people like you. Yet there you are.[66]

Later, when Caspian meets Aslan face to face, kneels, and kisses the Lion's paw, Aslan asks if he feels himself sufficient to be King of Narnia. Caspian replies, "I—I don't think I do, Sir . . . I'm only a kid." Aslan responds: "Good . . . . If you

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[61] C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York, 1960), 108.

[62] Lewis, "Religion: Reality or Substitute?," *Christian Reflections,* 42.

[63] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 149.

[64] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 65–6.

[65] C. S. Lewis, "Religion and Rocketry," *Fern-seed and Elephants and Other Essays on Christianity* (Glasgow, 1981), 93.

[66] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 66.

had felt yourself sufficient, it would have been a proof that you were not."[67] Indeed, "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God."[68]

The four Pevensie children themselves constitute a micro-spectrum of belief, ranging in ascending order from Susan to Peter to Edmund to Lucy. "Susan was the worst," the narrator says frankly about her doubting Lucy's insistence that she has seen Aslan.[69] Susan insists that she cannot see anything "because there isn't anything to see. [Lucy's] been dreaming."[70] Lucy scolds her sister, "Don't talk like a grown-up . . . I don't *think* I saw him. I saw him."[71] Only later, when she and Trumpkin are the last to see Aslan, does Susan apologize to Lucy and admit that she really believed it was Aslan the day before—or she could have, if she had let herself. At the end Peter informs the others that Aslan has told him and Susan that they will not get back to Narnia because they are "getting too old,"[72] acting too grown-up, illustrating Jesus' words, "Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all"[73] and Wordsworth's Romantic lines from "Intimations of Immortality": "The Child is Father of the Man . . . / Trailing clouds of glory do we come . . . / Heaven lies about us in our infancy! . . . / The things which I have seen I now can see no more."

Peter, the first to recognize the ruins of Cair Paravel, notes that "it's no good behaving like kids now that we are back in Narnia,"[74] astutely says that "the only question is whether Aslan was really there,"[75] and admits that Lucy may be right after all—but he rejects Lucy's assured faith in Aslan, choosing instead to walk by faulty sight and take the downward path, literally and figuratively. When Peter later sees the glorious, majestic Lion, he drops to one knee, raises the Lion's heavy paw to his face, and expresses joy for the reunion but sorrow for his lack of faith, gestures met by Aslan's simple "My dear son."[76] Later still, when he is High King in command, he wisely tells Caspian, "We don't know when [Aslan] will act. In his time, no doubt, not ours. In the meantime he would like us to do what we can on our own."[77]

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[67] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 200.
[68] 2 Corinthians 3:5.
[69] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 143.
[70] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 141.
[71] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 121.
[72] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 214–15.
[73] Mark 10:15.
[74] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 21.
[75] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 122.
[76] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 148.
[77] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 170.

Edmund, recalling how he was "the worst of the lot" in doubting Lucy when they were in Narnia previously, sides with her this time, but when he cannot see Aslan he says to Lucy, "There's nothing there. You've got dazzled and muzzled with the moonlight."[78] He sulks over loss of a night's sleep, but he shortly sees Aslan, who welcomes him with a "Well done" and breathes on him, as he had on Susan, causing "a kind of a kind of greatness" to hang about him.[79]

Lucy, whose name (from the Latin) means "light," is, in many ways, the most enlightened of the humans and, except for Aslan, perhaps the most admirable, dynamic character in the book. Shortly after arriving in Narnia, Lucy, before any of the others, senses "some wonderful mystery hanging over this place."[80] She is the one to encourage Trumpkin's story of Caspian because, she says, "We love stories,"[81] yet she forthrightly rebukes Trumpkin's lack of faith: "Don't you yet see who we are? . . . You *are* stupid,"[82] and again later when her own belief is questioned: "Oh, don't be so stupid . . . . Do you think I don't know Aslan when I see him?"[83] She also gently rebukes Edmund, who, with a chuckle, expresses his discomfort at being "whistled for" by Aslan: "But we want to be here, don't we? . . . if Aslan wants us,"[84] significantly making at least her desire to be there contingent on Aslan's will. Later, when Edmund makes a derogatory remark—"That's the worst of girls . . . . They never can carry a map in their heads"—she responds with a perfect riposte: "That's because our heads have something inside them."[85]

Lucy's childlike faith enables her to demonstrate remarkable sensitivity, perspicuity, even prescience in seeing Aslan before any of the others. Her first re-encounter, her Aslanophany, has a profound effect on her person: "Her face had changed completely and her eyes shone,"[86] much as Moses' face shone after his encounter with Yahweh on Mt. Sinai.[87] Because she has eyes of faith to see, she sees Aslan. Later, in the second forest scene, because she has ears of faith to hear, she hears Aslan's voice: "She sat up, trembling with excitement but not with fear."[88] In the first forest scene she called on the trees to awaken, rather like Ezekiel in the Valley of Dry Bones; in the second she hears their "queer lilting,

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[78] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 140.
[79] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 174.
[80] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 17.
[81] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 35.
[82] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 97.
[83] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 122.
[84] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 96.
[85] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 114–15.
[86] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 121.
[87] Exodus 34:29–30.
[88] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 133.

rustling, cool, merry noise,"[89] a synesthetic lilt—a light, graceful, merry, swinging rhythm.

The description of Lucy's subsequent encounter with Aslan is one of the most poignant in the *Chronicles* and, for that matter, in all of Lewis' canon. When she spots the huge Lion shining white in the moonlight, she, overwhelmed with incredible joy, "never stopped to think whether he was a friendly lion or not. She rushed to him. She felt her heart would burst if she lost a moment. And the next thing she knew was that she was kissing him and putting her arms as far round his neck as she could and burying her face in the beautiful rich silkiness of his mane." "The great beast rolled over on his side so that Lucy fell, half sitting and half lying between his front paws. He bent forward and just touched her nose with his tongue. His warm breath came all round her. She gazed up into the large wise face." When she exclaims, "You're bigger," he says, "That is because you are older, little one." "Not because you are?" she asks. "I am not. But every year you grow, you will find me bigger."[90] This profound spiritual truth—that as we grow in grace our concept of God is enhanced exponentially, a truth conveyed in simple analogy—resonates with J. B. Phillips' *Your God is Too Small,* in which he concludes that "the trouble with many people today is that they have not found a God big enough for modern needs."[91] Lucy, to be sure, finds Aslan big enough to meet all her needs. Significantly, Lucy feels Aslan's warm breath all around her, just as Aslan later breathes on Susan ("Come, let me breathe on you"[92]), and still later he breathes on Edmund, causing "a kind of greatness [to hang] about him,"[93] much as the post-Resurrection Christ breathed on His disciples and bade them receive the Holy Spirit.[94] Immediately thereafter, Lucy "could feel lion-strength going into her . . . "'Now you are a lioness,' said Aslan. 'And now all Narnia will be renewed.'"[95]

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[89] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 135.

[90] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 135–6.

[91] J. B. Phillips, *Your God Is Too Small* (New York, 1968), 7. The book was published in England in 1952, a year after *Prince Caspian*. The Rev. Canon John Bertram Phillips was Vicar of the parish of the Good Shepherd in London. He and Lewis met just once but corresponded from 1943, when Phillips sent a copy of his paraphrase of Colossians, which Lewis praised, encouraged him to include all the epistles, supplied the title *Letters to Young Churches,* and offered to write an introduction. Phillips raised many eyebrows when, in his book *Ring of Truth* (Wheaton, 1967), he recounted that Lewis appeared to him a few days after his death and again a week later.

[92] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 148.

[93] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 174.

[94] John 20:22.

[95] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 138.

In addition to diversity of creatures, of talents and gifts, and of belief, the novel presents diversity of genre. One could argue that *The Chronicles of Narnia* in general and *Prince Caspian* in particular possess many characteristics of the epic. Interestingly, early in 1951 someone asked Lewis in a letter if his space-time trilogy is an epic. He replied: "An amusing question . . . . Clearly, in virtue of its fantastic elements, it cd. only be an epic of the Ariosto type [a reference to *Orlando Furioso,* written in 1532 by Ludovico Ariosto] . . . . It lacks sufficient roots in legend and tradition to be what I'd call an epic."[96] In his three lectures on Milton's *Paradise Lost,* subsequently published in 1942 as *A Preface to Paradise Lost,* Lewis discussed the Primary Epic, exemplified by the *Iliad,* the *Odyssey,* and *Beowulf,* distinguished by a "great subject," and the Secondary Epic, exemplified by Virgil's *Aeneid* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The author of the Secondary Epic, Lewis says, takes:

> . . . one single national legend and treat[s] it in such a way that we feel the vaster theme to be somehow implicit in it. He has to tell a comparatively short story and give us the illusion of having lived through a great space of time. He has to deal with a limited number of personages and make us feel as if national, or almost cosmic, issues are involved. He must locate his action in a legendary past and yet make us feel the present, and the intervening centuries, already foreshadowed.[97]

Lacking "one single national legend," unless one considers the Narnian legend of creation by Aslan, the origin of the White Witch, Digory's experiment with the magic rings, the adventure in The Wood Between the Worlds, and the quest for the magic apple, all recorded in *The Magician's Nephew, Prince Caspian* might be considered a Tertiary Epic, for we do feel that a "vaster theme" is implicit in it; we do experience "the illusion of having lived through a great space of time"; we do sense "a legendary past" and yet "feel the present, and the intervening centuries, already foreshadowed."

Drawing on such studies as Gilbert Murray's *The Rise of the Greek Epic,* E. M. W. Tilyard's *The English Epic and Its Background,* Gilbert Highet's *The Classical Tradition,* and Northrop Frye's archetypal theory of the epic in *Anatomy of Criticism,* one can specify various qualities of the epic present in *Prince Caspian*. Most notably there is the central, towering, heroic figure of imposing stature, who is "glorious,"[98] powerful (*passim*), "so majestic that they felt as glad as

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[96] *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3:87.
[97] C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (New York, 1966), 27–34.
[98] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 146.

anyone can who feels afraid, and as afraid as anyone can who feels glad,”[99] mysterious and inexplicable (“We don’t know when he will act. In his time, no doubt, not ours,”)[100] wise, awe-inspiring. Secondary heroes are Lucy, Caspian, Peter, even Edmund.[101] Second, the destiny of all Narnia depends on the actions of Aslan and the secondary heroes/heroines, and their exploits reflect the customs, mores, and aspirations of all the Narnians. Third, it is a “comparatively short story” with a simple plot, yet it has a vast scope, with a cosmic setting in time and place, what Frye calls “the encyclopaedic range,”[102] differing from simple narrative. Fourth, it features exploits of great valor, requiring superhuman courage. For example, there are various trials by ordeal, such as the fencing match between Edmund and Trumpkin, the archery contest between Susan and Trumpkin, the ferocious battle in Aslan’s How, Peter’s challenge to Miraz for a monomachy (that is, single combat, which, as Paul F. Ford has observed, was “an ancient form of battle often used in order to decide the outcome of a war without resorting to general bloodshed” and describes “one aspect of the theology of the atonement,” with Christ’s temptation being a monomachy with Satan and Christ’s death on the cross a monomachy with Death.[103] Finally, “full battle was joined” after Miraz is assassinated by Glozelle and Peter slashes the legs from under Sopespian. Fifth, superhuman, supernatural forces and figures are at work, including, of course, Aslan the Noble Lion, but also forces of evil represented by the White Witch, the Hag, and Wer-wolf, as well as mythic figures such as Bacchus. A sixth characteristic of the epic are the themes and symbols involving universal human problems and conflicts, such as good versus evil, initiation, descent to the dead (the battle in Aslan’s How), betrayal, the Dying God, vicarious sacrifice, and resurrection (echoed from *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*), fertility rites, rejuvenation and renewal, quest, a return to reclaim something lost. Clearly, the novel constitutes what Frye calls “the epic of return” with “the proper master of the house coming to reclaim his own.”[104] The proper ruler of Narnia, of course, is Prince Caspian, who is aided by the return of the Pevensie children and Aslan. These themes are, in fact, archetypes, universal symbols as part of what Carl Jung saw as the collective unconscious. Lewis referred to Jung at least four times in letters and commented on “archetypal beauty,” which he saw as eternal.[105] In another letter he said, “I expect some Jungianisms [archetypes?] do come in [to *Till We Have*

[99] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 148.
[100] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 170.
[101] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 131, 138, 200, 184–90, 174.
[102] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton, 1973), 318.
[103] Paul F. Ford, *Companion to Narnia* (San Francisco, 2005), 312.
[104] Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism,* 319.
[105] *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3:1130.

Faces], but the main conscious framework is Christian, not Jungian."[106] The same would appear to be true of *Prince Caspian*. A sixth characteristic of the epic is a dignified, if not elevated, style. Numerous examples from *Prince Caspian* could be cited, such as High King Peter's formal written challenge to Miraz, which borrows archaic language reminiscent of the Arthurian romance—*monomachy* (noted above) and *abhominable,* which is the Middle English spelling, derived from the Latin *ab homine,* "away from human, beastly,"[107] "behaving without a conscience, like a wild beast."[108] Other such examples are: *seneschal,* a steward in the household of a medieval noble, *mazers,* large drinking bowl or goblet, originally made of hard wood, "spells and *cantrips,*" Scottish for magic spells or pranks, "I went as hard as I could *pelt,*" "rush, hurry, speed" (as in "at full pelt").[109]

Though there is no formal epical cataloguing of warriors, armies, or ships in *Prince Caspian* there are catalogues of the old Narnian creatures, fauns, and the moving trees.[110] Nor is there an invocation of the Muses, but the work does begin *in medias res,* "in the middle of things," with Trumpkin's narrative recounting the anterior action in chapters 4 through 7. Further diversity is achieved by the counterbalance of the epic and heroic by the mock-epic and mock-heroic—the latter seen especially in the Bulgy Bear who persists in sucking his paws, in King Miraz not being felled by Peter but by tripping on a tussock and being stabbed by his own Lord Glozelle, in the savage Telmarine soldiers looking "the colour of cold gravy" and their knees knocking together, in giant Wimbleweather's tears flooding the whole bivouac of the mice, then inadvertently stepping on somebody's tail and being bitten for it, in mouse Reepicheep's chagrin over his severed tail,[111] et al.

Though not mythic or mythopoeic to the extent that *Till We Have Faces* is (retelling the classic myth of Cupid and Psyche) or even as the Space-Time Trilogy is, *Prince Caspian* does have a significant mythical quality. Shortly after Aslan's stentorian roar, shaking the earth and awakening Miraz' army, reviving the wood nymphs, the river god, and woodland creatures, inciting the entire forest of trees to move, there is suddenly a wild Bacchanalian romp, led by Bacchus himself (Roman god of wine and revelry, son of Zeus, identified with the Greek Dionysus).[112] In his classic study *Dionysus: Myth and Cult,* Walter F. Otto notes

[106] *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3:1410.

[107] Ford, *Companion to Narnia,* 332.

[108] David C. Downing, *Into the Wardrobe: C. S. Lewis and the Narnia Chronicles* (San Francisco, 2005), 118.

[109] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 95, 205, 160.

[110] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 47, 75–6, 78, 151.

[111] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 199, 88–9, 200–3.

[112] Many of the ancients wrote stories about Bacchus, including Apollodorus, Herodotus, Homer, Ovid, Pausanias, Seneca, Virgil, and Euripides. Lewis apparently knew of Euripides'

that Dionysus was "the god of ecstasy and terror, of wildness and of the most blessed deliverance . . . Dionysus, himself, who raises life into the heights of ecstasy, is the suffering god. The raptures which he brings rise from the innermost stirrings of that which lives."[113] Like Aslan himself, who is not a tame lion, not "safe" but good, Dionysus is fully a god: "most terrible and yet most gentle."[114] Lewis describes Bacchus as "a youth, dressed only in a fawn-skin, with vine-leaves wreathed in his curly hair. His face would have been almost too pretty for a boy's if it had not looked so extremely wild" (cf. Caravaggio's *Baccho*). He is accompanied by "a lot of girls . . . as wild as he,"[115] maenads or Bacchantes, female votaries of Bacchus/Dionysus who traditionally took part in the wild drinking and dancing to the loud, rhythmic music of drums and high-pitched flutes. In addition, there appeared an old, enormously fat, jolly, intoxicated man on a donkey, dispensing "refreshments" and falling off his donkey crowned with vine leaves, only to be hoisted back on again. This is Silenus, foster-father, nurse, teacher, and follower of Bacchus, perhaps the son of Pan (Greek god of flocks and shepherds, forests and wild life, and fertility). This wild entourage shout "Euan, euan, eu-oi-oi-oi-oi," the traditional Bacchic cry, expressing the ecstatic joy of worshippers exulting in their god. Significantly, it is Lucy who recognizes who they are, remembering that Mr. Tumnus identified them long ago. Susan says, "I wouldn't have felt very safe with Bacchus and all his wild girls if we'd met them without Aslan," to which Lucy wisely responds, "I should think not."[116]

For those who may consider Lewis' use of myth in general to be inappropriate and the wild Bacchanalian romp in particular to be incongruous in a work with Christian underpinnings, it is important to understand his view of myth and its role in the novel. In 1931, the year of his conversion, Lewis wrote to Arthur Greeves expressing his fascination with "the idea of the dying and reviving god" and went on to say that "the story of Christ is simply a true myth: a myth working on us in the same way as the others, but with this tremendous difference that *it really happened*: and one must be content to accept it in the same way, remembering that it is God's myth where the others are men's myths . . . ."[117] He developed the idea further in his essay "Myth Became Fact":

Bacchae even before he saw it performed in Greek at the Arts Theatre in Cambridge in February of 1956, an experience which he called "simply overwhelming" (*The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3:711).

[113] Walter F. Otto, *Dionysus: Myth and Cult* (Bloomington, Indiana, 1965), 65, 180.

[114] Euripides, *Bacchae* (Cambridge, 2007), 53.

[115] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 152.

[116] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 154.

[117] *They Stand Together: The Letters of C. S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves,* 427.

> The heart of Christianity is a myth which is also a fact. The old myth of the Dying God, *without ceasing to be myth,* comes down from the heaven of legend and imagination to the earth of history. It *happens*—at a particular date, in a particular place, followed by definable historical consequences. We pass from a Balder or an Osiris, dying nobody knows where, to a historical Person crucified (it is all in order) *under Pontius Pilate*. Becoming fact it does not cease to be myth: that is the miracle.[118]

In Chapter V, "On Myth," from *An Experiment in Criticism,* Lewis specifies six characteristics of myth, the last of which is especially noteworthy here: "The experience [of myth] is not only grave but awe-inspiring. We feel it to be numinous.[119] It is as if something of great moment had been communicated to us."[120] Positioned in strategic places in the narrative, there are five distinctive mythic dances—*oreibasia*—which do in fact convey a sense of the awe-inspiring, the numinous. The first occurs just after the creatures in hiding have been revealed to Caspian and Trufflehunter states that the Dryads and Naiads have sunk into a deep sleep, perhaps never to stir again. Just before he drops off to sleep, Caspian hears a wild but dreamy musical sound—drums and flutes—from the depth of the woods, then sees dozens of fauns dancing in the moonlight, whereupon he and Trufflehunter join in the dance. The next morning he thinks it was all a dream—until he finds the grass covered with little cloven hoofprints.

The second mythic dance occurs just before Lucy sees Aslan in the woods. In this case it is the trees dancing a lilt, "a complicated country dance" (for, Lucy thinks, "when trees dance, it must be a very, very country dance indeed").[121] The third dance is the Bacchanalian romp with the trees, Bacchus and his entourage, occurring just after Aslan roars and just before the climactic battle in Aslan's How. The fourth dance occurs at the denouement, when the battle against the Telmarines has been engaged. Aslan exclaims, "We will make holiday," and, with the Pevensie girls on his back, he leads the whole party of "Bacchus and his

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[118] C. S. Lewis, "Myth Became Fact," *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics* (Grand Rapids, 1985), 66–7.

[119] This key term was coined by Rudolf Otto in his book *The Idea of the Holy* (London, 1923). In the Preface to the second edition, translator John W. Harvey provides a succinct definition: "The word 'numinous' has been widely received as a happy contribution to the theological vocabulary, as standing for that aspect of deity which transcends or eludes comprehension in rational or ethical terms" (xvi). Because it transcends or eludes comprehension in purely rational terms, myth became for Lewis one of the ways to "steal past those watchful dragons" (C. S. Lewis, "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said," *Of Other Worlds: Essays and Stories,* ed. Walter Hooper [New York, 1975], 37).

[120] C. S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism* (Cambridge, 1965), 44.

[121] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 134.

Maenads leaping, rushing, and turning somersaults, the beasts frisking around them, and Silenus and his donkey bringing up the rear."[122] It is important to note that Aslan is fully in control, and, with Bacchus and the Maenads in his service, he commands Bacchus to deliver the river-god from his chains. In the town of Beruna, Aslan and "the wild people" liberate a school classroom having a dull history lesson, turning out the mistress Miss Prizzle and freeing little Gwendolyn, who readily believes; they free another schoolroom where "a tired-looking girl was teaching arithmetic to a number of boys who looked very like pigs."[123] They free farm animals along the way—sad old donkeys, chained dogs, harnessed horses—and a boy who was being beaten, the abuser's stick bursting into flower. Finally, they rescue a weeping boy's ill aunt (who turns out to be Caspian's old nurse), with Bacchus dipping a pitcher in the cottage well and handing her "not water but the richest wine, red as red-currant jelly, smooth as oil, strong as beef, warming as tea, cool as dew."[124] Lewis here dramatizes what he had expressed in *Miracles*: God incarnate in Jesus "is constantly doing all the things that nature-gods do: He is Bacchus, Venus, Ceres all rolled into one." Further, in discussing Miracles of Fertility, he notes: "The earliest of these was the conversion of water into wine at the wedding in Cana. This miracle proclaims that the God of all wine is present. The vine is one of the blessings sent by Yahweh: He is the reality behind the false god Bacchus."[125]

One final mythic dance is positioned at the very end, the evening before Aslan makes a doorway in the air. With a roaring woodland bonfire on a midsummer's night, "Bacchus and Silenus and the Maenads began a dance, far wilder than the dance of the trees; not merely a dance for fun and beauty (though it was that too) but a magic dance of plenty . . . ."[126] The magic dance produces a feast of the most exquisite, delicious viands—meats and cakes and fruit and wines.

How can the awe-inspiring, numinous experience "of great moment' conveyed by the myth be missed? The chorus in Euripides' *Bacchae* makes it clear that Bacchus is the "god of joy" who "delights in feasts"[127] such as the one just noted, and David Franklin astutely concludes in his commentary on the play that "the dominant emotion for the participants was joy."[128] Similarly, when the "tired-looking girl" in the classroom looks out the window and sees "the divine revelers

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[122] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 191–2.
[123] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 196.
[124] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 198.
[125] C. S. Lewis, *Miracles: A Preliminary Study* (New York, 1965), 119, 141.
[126] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 205.
[127] Euripides, *Bacchae*, 23.
[128] Euripides, *Bacchae*, 8.

singing up the street . . . , a stab of joy went through her heart."[129] A point "of great moment" would seem to be that the victory in the novel is accomplished through joy rather than the violence of battle, though that sometimes plays a role as well. As Nehemiah reminded his people in a time of adversity, "Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength."[130]

Those who may be inclined to dismiss *Prince Caspian* and the other Narnia Chronicles as "just children's books" should be reminded of Lewis' opinion "that a book worth reading only in childhood is not worth reading even then."[131] The wide-ranging diversity of *Prince Caspian,* which this essay discusses, most assuredly demonstrates levels of sophistication that can be appreciated by adults, not the least of which is diversity of style. "There is no class of books which can be 'good in their own way," Lewis said, "without bothering about style."[132] At the same time, one does well to remember Lewis' caveat about style: "It is always dangerous to talk too long about style. It may lead one to forget that every single sentence depends for its total effect on the place it has in the whole."[133]

This novel is enhanced by a variety of linguistic ploys, in addition to the medieval forms discussed above. For example, note the word play in this comment by Miraz: "So I'm to be a *dotard* with one foot in the grave, as well as a *dastard*"[134] and the excellent pun which Trumpkin uses after he has been bested by Edmund in their fencing match: "I see the point."[135] Note the use of synesthesia (from the Greek "to feel or perceive together"), the use of one sense to convey the experience of another or the close association or confusion of sense impressions, resulting in a heightened, even metaphoric impression. When Trumpkin relates the effect of first hearing the blowing of Susan's magic horn, he says: "The whole air was full of it, loud as thunder but far longer, *cool and sweet* as music over water, but strong enough to shake the woods."[136] Similarly, when Lucy sees and hears the trees awakening, "When they looked like trees, it was like strangely human trees, and when they looked like people, it was like strangely branchy and leafy people—and all the time that *queer lilting, rustling, cool, merry noise.*"[137]

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[129] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 196.
[130] Nehemiah 8:10.
[131] Lewis, "Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to be Said," 38.
[132] C. S. Lewis, "High and Low Brows," *Selected Literary Essays,* ed. Walter Hooper (Cambridge, 1969), 271.
[133] C. S. Lewis, "The Vision of John Bunyan," *Selected Literary Essays,* 151.
[134] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 179 (emphasis added).
[135] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 101.
[136] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 94 (emphasis added).
[137] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 134–5 (emphasis added).

Several other stylistic devices in the novel, both used so effectively in *Mere Christianity* (published in its revised edition the year after *Prince Caspian* appeared) are aphorism, a terse, pithy statement, and analogy, a comparison between two things essentially unlike but which have some similar properties, used to explain the unfamiliar by the familiar. Note this humorous aphorism used by Trumpkin: “A jibe won’t raise a blister”[138] and this analogy used to describe the trees moving in pursuit of the Telmarine army:

> Have you ever stood at the edge of a great wood on a high ridge when a wild southwester broke over it in full fury on an autumn evening? Imagine that sound. And then imagine that the wood, instead of being fixed to one place, was rushing *at* you . . . .[139]

Or note this analogy used to describe the moment when various Talking Beasts surge around the majestic Lion: “If you have ever seen a little cat loving a big dog whom it knows and trusts, you will have a pretty good picture of their behaviour.”[140] Perhaps the finest analogy in the novel is this one used to describe Aslan’s confrontation with the doubtful Trumpkin: “Aslan pounced. Have you ever seen a very young kitten being carried in the mother-cat’s mouth? It was like that.”[141] It is such stylistic devices as these which make the experience more immediate, vivid and poignant, bring the reader into the action, and enhance the empathy.

Other literary devices are too numerous to discuss here, but let one final example suffice. In an especially dramatic scene in Aslan’s How, morale is very low because although the magic horn was blown, seemingly no help has yet come, although Peter, Edmund, and Trumpkin are at that very moment poised on the other side of the door. Nikabrik expresses his cynicism: “To speak plainly . . . , your wallet’s empty, your eggs addled, your fish uncaught, your promises broken,” but Trufflehunter counters with his optimism and faith: “The help will come . . . I stand by Aslan . . . . The help will come. *It may be even now at the door*.”[142] This is an effective example of dramatic irony—when a character says something while unaware of its import, whereas the audience/reader is; the speaker’s assumption is the appearance, whereas the true situation is the reality, known by the reader. Further, in this case, Trumpkin *thinks* he speaks figuratively but, in fact, he speaks the literal truth.

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[138] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 105.
[139] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 191.
[140] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 200.
[141] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 149.
[142] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 158 (emphasis added).

The novel contains further diversity in its extensive use of humor, which has received scant attention. *The Magician's Nephew,* which recounts the creation of Narnia, records the first joke—a perky jackdaw (a grackle), who *is* the joke which produces the subsequent laughter. At this point, Aslan offers an admonition applicable not only to creatures of Narnia but also to sons and daughters of Adam and Eve on planet earth: "Laugh and fear not, creatures. Now that you are no longer dumb and witless, you need not always be grave. For jokes as well as justice come in with speech."[143] Jokes and justice do come in *Prince Caspian*.

Ironically (or perhaps not), most of Lewis' humor theory is expressed by Screwtape, who divides the causes of laughter into four categories, in descending order of value for "the enemy" and ascending order for devils: Joy, Fun, the Joke itself, and Flippancy, examples of all four appearing in *Prince Caspian*. Joy, of course, is most obvious in the five examples of Bacchanalian *oreibasis* discussed above and the times when Lucy and the others enjoy contact with Aslan. Fun, closely related to Joy, according to Lewis, is that "sort of emotional froth arising from the play instinct" and promotes "charity, courage, contentment."[144] It follows from joy, as shown after the Romp when "refreshments" are enjoyed: "Here, there were more [grapes] than anyone could possibly want, and no table-manners at all. One saw sticky and stained fingers everywhere, and, though mouths were full the laughter never ceased . . . ."[145]

The Joke Proper, according to Screwtape (and apparently Lewis), "turns on sudden perception of incongruity," echoing Schopenhauer's dictum: "The phenomenon of laughter always signifies the sudden apprehension of an incongruity between such a conception and the real object thought under it . . . . The greater and more unexpected, in the apprehension of the laugher, this incongruity is, the more violent will be his laughter."[146] Most of the examples of humor in the novel relate to the incongruity between, on one hand, the remarks and behavior, especially of the talking creatures, and, on the other hand, the occasion, the tone of the passage, or the expectations of the other characters and the reader. For example, the Bulgy Bears, who offer Caspian "very wet, snuffly kisses," suck their paws inveterately and, it turns out, incorrigibly, even in front of the enemy and even

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[143] C. S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* (New York, 1972), 118–19.

[144] C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (San Francisco, 2001), 54.

[145] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 153–4.

[146] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea* (London, 1886), 271. According to Walter Hooper, Lewis was introduced to Schopenhauer's works while being tutored by W. T. Kirkpatrick (*The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3:1128, fn. 19). In a letter to his father on November 15, 1915, Lewis wrote: "I have also been reading in library copes, Schopenhauer's *Will and Idea*" (*The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 1:151).

while being warned not to do so.[147] When Pattertwig the squirrel scampers to fetch Caspian a nut, Trufflehunter whispers, “Don’t look. Look the other way. It’s very bad manners among squirrels to watch anyone going to his store or to look as if you wanted to know where it was.”[148] The mice are flooded when Giant Wimbleweather sheds big tears “which collected on the end of his nose and then fell off with a huge splash on the whole bivouac of the Mice who had just been beginning to get warm and drowsy. They all jumped up, shaking the water out of their ears and wringing their little blankets, and asked the Giant in shrill but forcible voices whether he thought they weren’t wet enough without this sort of thing.”[149]

The dwarfs also account for much of the humor. Lucy, trying to get to sleep in the woods with the others, forgot that all dwarfs snore. Trumpkin, labeled “D. L. F.” (Dear Little Friend) by the children, sheds his disbelief in lions when confronted by Aslan:

> The Dwarf, hunched up in a little, miserable ball, hung from Aslan’s mouth. The Lion gave him one shake and all his armour rattled like a tinker’s pack and then—hey-presto—the Dwarf flew up in the air. He was as safe as if he had been in bed, though he did not feel so. As he came down the huge velveted paws caught him as gently as a mother’s arms and set him (right way up, too) on the ground.[150]

During his harrowing experience with the reality of Aslan, Trumpkin utters one of his humorous alliterative interjections, one of fifteen total uttered throughout the book: “‘Wraiths and wreckage,’ gasped Trumpkin in the ghost of a voice.”[151] A “wraith” (from the Scottish word for “guardian angel) is a ghost or a spectral figure supposedly seen as a premonition just before that person’s death. This interjection is doubly humorous because it indicates the terrified state of the dwarf’s mind, and he appropriately utters it “in the ghost of a voice.” The other interjections, each ironic in its passage as well as in the relationship between the two coordinate substantives, are: “beards and bedsteads,” “horns and halibuts,” “bulbs and bolsters,” “whistles and whirligigs,” “soup and celery,” “thimbles and thunderstorms,” “lobsters and lollipops,” “giants and junipers,” “tubs and tortoiseshells,” “bottles and battledores,” “bilge and beanstalks,” “cobbles and kettledrums,” “weights and water-bottles,” “crows and crockery.”[152] Each inter-

[147] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 69, 180–1, 183.
[148] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 70.
[149] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 88.
[150] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 149.
[151] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 149.
[152] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 33, 62, 63, 65, 86, 92, 95, 104, 119, 130, 142, 144, 166, 184.

jection also adds some comic relief, often in very serious conditions, exemplifying Lewis' comment that "a little comic relief in a discussion does no harm, however serious the topic may be. (In my own experience the funniest things have occurred in the gravest and most sincere conversations.)"[153] Trumpkin also injects humor, in this case a form of Gallows Humor, when, having just been rescued from Telmarine soldiers who were about to drown him, he says to the Pevensie children, "I was wondering if perhaps you were going to ask me to breakfast? You've no idea what an appetite it gives one, being executed."[154]

Considerably less humor comes from the children themselves, with Edmund perhaps showing the best sense of humor. He comments, "'When a magician in *The Arabian Nights* calls up a Jinn [jinni or genie], it has to come . . . . And now we know what it feels like for the Jinn,' said Edmund with a chuckle."[155] Later he announces to the others that "no one's going to have my hat for a fish-basket again."[156]

Lewis achieves other forms of humor with names—for example, Lilygloves and Clodsley Shovel, who, appropriately, are moles. Another humorous name, based on a kind of inside joke, is Prunaprismia, wife of Miraz and Caspian's aunt. In his essay "On Three Ways of Writing for Children," Lewis says, "Once in a hotel dining-room, I said, rather too loudly, 'I loathe prunes.' 'So do I,' came an unexpected six-year-old voice from another table. Sympathy was instantaneous."[157] Further, as Paul Ford reminds us, "Lewis modeled her name on the characteristic exclamation of Mrs. General in [Dickens'] *Little Dorrit*: 'prunes and prisms',"[158] also perhaps a model for Trumpkin's interjections.

Perhaps the novel contains only two examples of Screwtape's fourth category of Humor—Flippancy, a disrespectful joke about virtue; being "a thousand miles away from joy, it deadens, instead of sharpening, the intellect; and it incites no affection between those who practise it."[159] Not surprisingly one of the examples comes from Nikabrik, when he jeers at Trufflehunter's optimism and faith: "Your wallet's empty, your eggs addled [spoiled, rotten], your fish uncaught, your promises broken."[160] The second example is more surprising, coming as it does from Giant Wimbleweather, when he laughs at Mouse Reepicheep's courage and honor, "one of those not very intelligent laughs," but "he checked himself at once and looked

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[153] C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (New York, 1958), 90.
[154] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 32.
[155] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 96.
[156] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 106.
[157] Lewis, *Of Other Worlds: Essays and Stories,* 34.
[158] Ford, *Companion to Narnia,* 357.
[159] Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters,* 56.
[160] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 158.

as grave as a turnip" when the mouse discovers where the laugh came from and says: "I thought I heard someone laughing just now. If anyone present wishes to make me the subject of his wit, I am very much at his service—with my sword—whenever he has leisure."[161] To be sure, only Screwtape and his devils, along with Nikabrik and some of the other characters, would find this flippancy truly humorous. Screwtape speaks dramatic irony when he says that "humor is for [humans] the all-consoling . . . grace of life."[162] For the characters in *Prince Caspian,* as for all of us, "humor involves a sense of proportion and a power of seeing yourself from the outside," as Lewis wrote in his 1960 Preface to *Screwtape*—and, as he went on to say, Satan fell "through force of gravity."[163]

Rich diversity makes not only for succor and justice in adversity but also for enhancement of a novel about "the restoration of the true religion after a corruption."[164] Significantly, it is Aslan who provides the needed unity in adversity for both Narnia and the novel. Further, the rich diversity with unity makes not only for a more honorific world but also for a fortified church, not only for a broadened mind but also for expanded human nature. "Broaden your mind, Malcolm, broaden your mind," Lewis wrote in *Letters to Malcolm.* "It takes all sorts to make a world, or a church. This may be even truer of a church. *If grace perfects nature it must expand all our natures into the full richness of the diversity which God intended when He made them, and Heaven will display far more variety than Hell*."[165] May grace provide that rich diversity for us all.

[161] Lewis, *Prince Caspian,* 181–2.
[162] Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters,* 55.
[163] Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters,* ix.
[164] *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis,* 3:1235.
[165] Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm,* 10 (emphasis added).