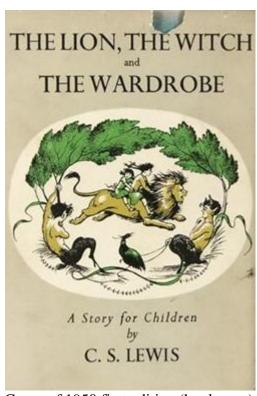
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

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For the film adaptation of the novel, see <u>The Chronicles of Narnia</u>: <u>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</u>. For other uses, see <u>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</u> (disambiguation).

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe



Cover of 1950 first edition (hardcover)

Author(s) C.S. Lewis

Original titleThe Lion. The Witch and the

Wardrobe

Translator LWW

IllustratorPauline BaynesCover artistPauline BaynesCountryUnited Kingdom

Language <u>English</u>

Series The Chronicles of Narnia

Genre(s) Fantasy, children's literature

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Followed by <u>Prince Caspian</u>

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe is a fantasy novel for children by C. S. Lewis. Published in 1950, it is the first-published book of *The Chronicles of Narnia* and is the best known book of the series. Although it was written and published first, it is second in the series' internal chronological order, after *The Magician's Nephew*. *Time* magazine included the novel in its *TIME 100 Best English-language Novels from 1923 to 2005*. It has also been published in 47 foreign languages.

Lewis dedicated the book to his god-daughter, <u>Lucy Barfield</u>.

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[edit] Plot summary

The story begins in 1940 during <u>World War II</u>, when four siblings—<u>Peter</u>, <u>Susan</u>, <u>Edmund</u>, and <u>Lucy Pevensie</u>—are <u>evacuated</u> from <u>London</u> to escape <u>the Blitz</u>. They are sent to live with Professor <u>Digory Kirke</u>, who lives in a <u>country house</u> in the <u>English countryside</u>.

While the four children are exploring the house, Lucy looks into a <u>wardrobe</u> and discovers a doorway to a magical world named <u>Narnia</u>. There she meets a <u>faun</u> named <u>Mr Tumnus</u>. He invites her to have tea in his home. There he confesses he planned to report her to the pretend

queen of Narnia, otherwise known as the White Witch but has thought better of it. Upon returning to our world, Lucy's siblings do not believe her story about Narnia. Her older brother Edmund enters the wardrobe and meets the White Witch, who befriends him and offers him magical Turkish delight which enchants him. She encourages him to bring his siblings to her in Narnia, with the promise that he shall rule over them. Edmund returns with Lucy to the Professor's house, having met her in Narnia. But after returning he lies to Peter and Susan: he denies Lucy's claim that Narnia lies behind the wardrobe.

Eventually all four of the children enter Narnia together while hiding in the wardrobe. They meet Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, who invite them to dinner. The beavers recount a prophecy that the witch's power will fall when two Sons of <u>Adam</u> and two Daughters of <u>Eve</u> fill the four thrones at <u>Cair Paravel</u>. The beavers tell of the true king of Narnia, a great lion named <u>Aslan</u> who has been absent for many years but is now "on the move again."

Edmund sneaks away to the White Witch. Her castle is filled with stone statues--enemies she has <u>petrified</u>. The beavers realize where Edmund has gone and abandon their home, leading the children to Aslan. As they travel, they notice that the snow is melting, indicating that the White Witch's spell is breaking. A visit by Father Christmas confirms this. Father Christmas gives the three children and the beavers presents. Peter receives a sword and shield, Susan a horn and bow, Lucy a vial of magical healing liquid, Mrs. Beaver a sewing machine and Mr. Beaver's dam was finally finished.

The children and the Beavers meet with Aslan and his army. Peter engages in his first battle, killing a wolf who threatens Susan.

The Witch approaches to speak with Aslan, insisting that according to "deep magic from the dawn of time" she has the right to execute Edmund as a traitor. Aslan speaks with her privately and persuades her to renounce her claim on Edmund's life. That evening, Aslan secretly leaves the camp, but is followed by Lucy and Susan. Aslan has bargained to exchange his own life for Edmund's. The Witch ties Aslan to the Stone Table and then kills him with a knife. The following morning Aslan is restored to life.

Aslan allows Lucy and Susan to ride on his back as he hurries to the Witch's castle. There he breathes upon the statues, restoring them to life. Peter and Edmund lead the Narnian army in a battle against the White Witch's army but are losing. Aslan arrives with the former statues as reinforcements. The Narnians rout the evil army, and Aslan kills the Witch.

The Pevensie children are named kings and queens of Narnia: King Peter the Magnificent, Queen Susan the Gentle, King Edmund the Just and Queen Lucy the Valiant. Several years later, now adults and mounted on horseback, the siblings go hunting for a White Stag. They see the lamppost and go towards it. Just beyond the lamppost, branches become coats. The siblings are back in the wardrobe and are children again. They reenter the Professor's house.

[edit] Chapters

- 1. Lucy Looks into a Wardrobe
- 2. What Lucy Found There
- 3. Edmund and the Wardrobe
- 4. Turkish Delight

- 5. Back on This Side of the Door
- 6. Into the Forest
- 7. A Day with the Beavers
- 8. What Happened After Dinner
- 9. In the Witch's House
- 10. The Spell Begins to Break
- 11. Aslan is Nearer
- 12. Peter's First Battle
- 13. Deep Magic from the Dawn of Time
- 14. The Triumph of the Witch
- 15. Deeper Magic from Before the Dawn of Time
- 16. What Happened about the Statues
- 17. The Hunting of the White Stag

[edit] Character list

- <u>Lucy Pevensie</u> is the youngest Pevensie child. She is the first to discover the land of Narnia when she slips through the magical wardrobe in the professor's house. When Lucy tells her three siblings, they don't believe her: Peter and Susan think she is just playing a game, but Edmund persistently ridicules and teases her about it. After the restoration of Narnia, Lucy is crowned Queen of Narnia with her sister Susan, and becomes known as Queen Lucy the Valiant.
- Edmund Pevensie is the second-youngest of the Pevensie children. In Narnia he meets the White Witch, who plies him with treats (Magical Turkish Delight) and smooth talk. Tempted by the White Witch's promise of power and seemingly unending supplies of Turkish Delight, Edmund betrays his siblings. He eventually regrets his actions and repents. After he helps Aslan and the good denizens of Narnia defeat the White Witch, he is crowned King of Narnia with his brother and becomes known as King Edmund the Just.
- <u>Susan Pevensie</u> is the second-oldest of Pevensie children. She does not believe in Narnia until she actually goes there. She is crowned Queen of Narnia, and becomes known as Queen Susan the Gentle.
- <u>Peter Pevensie</u> is the oldest of the Pevensie siblings. At first, Peter disbelieves Lucy's stories about Narnia, but changes his mind when he sees it for himself. He is hailed as a hero for his part in the overthrow of the <u>White Witch</u>. He is eventually crowned High King of Narnia, and becomes known as King Peter the Magnificent.
- Aslan, a lion, is the true ruler of Narnia. He sacrifices himself to save Edmund, but is resurrected in time to aid the denizens of Narnia and the Pevensie children against the White Witch and her minions.
- The White Witch is the land's self-proclaimed queen. She tyrannizes Narnia through her magically imposed rule. Her spell on Narnia has made it "always winter but never Christmas" for a hundred years. When provoked, she turns creatures to stone with her wand. She fears the fulfillment of a prophecy that "two sons of Adam" and "two daughters of Eve" will come to Narnia and help Aslan overthrow her. Her name *Jadis* appears in one proclamation in this book, [3] and Lewis's later prequel *The Magician's Nephew* tells of her origin and how she came to the Narnian world.
- Tumnus, a faun, is the first person Lucy meets in Narnia. Tumnus befriends her, despite the White Witch's standing order to kidnap any human who enters Narnia. After getting to know Lucy, he changes his mind about handing her over to the witch. He is betrayed accidentally by Edmund, who tells the White Witch that Lucy met a

faun. The witch arrests Tumnus and turns him to stone. He is later restored to life by Aslan.

- The Professor is a kind gentleman who takes the Pevensie children in when they are evacuated from London. He is the only one who believes that Lucy did indeed visit Narnia and tries to convince the others of her veracity. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe hints that he knows more of Narnia than he wants to tell. He is identified in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader as Professor Kirke, and appears as a young boy, Digory Kirke, a main character in the prequel The Magician's Nephew in which he is present at Aslan's creation of Narnia.
- Mr and Mrs Beaver are friends of Tumnus. They hide Peter, Susan, and Lucy and lead them to Aslan.
- The Dwarf is the White Witch's servant. Unnamed in the book, he is called Ginnarbrick in the film, where he has a more significant role.
- Maugrim (Fenris Ulf in some editions), a wolf, is the chief of the White Witch's secret police. She sends him to hunt down the Pevensie children. He tries to kill Susan but is killed by Peter.
- <u>Father Christmas</u> arrives when the Witch's magical hold over Narnia begins to break. He gives gifts to Peter, Susan and Lucy but not to Edmund, who is with the witch. The gifts, which include the sword Peter uses to slay Maugrim, ultimately help the children defeat the White Witch. Mrs Beaver receives a better sewing machine and Mr. Beaver gets his dam completed.
- Mrs. Macready is the housekeeper for the Professor.
- <u>Giant Rumblebuffin</u> is a character who was turned to stone by the White Witch. Aslan restores him to life. He breaks down the gate of the Witch's castle and crushes some of her army.

[edit] Writing

Lewis described the origin of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* in an essay entitled *It All Began with a Picture* $^{[4]}$:

"The *Lion* all began with a picture of a Faun carrying an umbrella and parcels in a snowy wood. This picture had been in my mind since I was about sixteen. Then one day, when I was about forty, I said to myself: 'Let's try to make a story about it."

Shortly before World War II, many children were evacuated from London to the English countryside to escape attacks on London by Nazi Germany. On 2 September 1939 three school girls: Margaret, Mary and Katherine, came to live at The Kilns in Risinghurst, Lewis's home three miles east of Oxford city centre. Lewis later suggested that the experience gave him a new appreciation of children and in late September he began a children's story on an odd sheet which has survived as part of another manuscript:

"This book is about four children whose names were Ann, Martin, Rose and Peter. But it is most about Peter who was the youngest. They all had to go away from London suddenly because of Air Raids, and because Father, who was in the Army, had gone off to the War and Mother was doing some kind of war work. They were sent to stay with a kind of relation of Mother's who was a very old professor who lived all by himself in the country." [7]

How much more of the story Lewis then wrote is uncertain. Roger Lancelyn Green thinks that he might even have completed it. In September 1947 C. S. Lewis wrote in a letter about stories for children: "I have tried one myself but it was, by the unanimous verdict of my friends, so bad that I destroyed it." [8]

In August 1948, during the visit of the American writer Chad Walsh, Lewis vaguely talked about completing a children's book which he had begun "in the tradition of E. Nesbit". After this conversation not much happened – until the beginning of the next year. Then everything changed.

In his essay *It All Began With a Picture* C. S. Lewis continues: "At first I had very little idea how the story would go. But then suddenly Aslan came bounding into it. I think I had been having a good many dreams of lions about that time. Apart from that, I don't know where the Lion came from or why he came. But once he was there, he pulled the whole story together, and soon he pulled the six other Narnian stories in after him.": [10]

On 10 March 1949 Roger Lancelyn Green dined with him at Magdalen College. After the meal, Lewis read two chapters from his new children's story to Green. Lewis asked Green's opinion of the tale, and Green thought it was good. The manuscript of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* was complete by the end of March 1949. Lucy Barfield received it by the end of May. When on 16 October 1950 Geoffrey Bles in London published the first edition, three new Chronicles – *Prince Caspian, The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* and *The Horse and His Boy* – had also been completed.

[edit] Illustrations

Lewis's publisher, Geoffrey Bles allowed him to choose the illustrator for the novel and the Narnia series. His choice was Pauline Baynes, possibly as a result of J. R. R. Tolkien's recommendation. Baynes had greatly impressed Tolkien with her illustrations for his Farmer Giles of Ham (1949). However Baynes claimed that Lewis learned about her work after going into a bookshop and asking for a recommendation of an illustrator who was skilled at portraying both humans and animals. In December 1949 Geoffrey Bles showed Lewis the first drawings for the novel and Lewis sent Baynes a note congratulating her, particularly on the level of detail. Lewis's appreciation of the illustrations is evident in a letter Lewis wrote to Baynes after The Last Battle won the Carnegie Medal for best Children's book of 1956: "is it not rather 'our' medal? I'm sure the illustrations were taken into account as well as the text". [12]

The British edition of the novel had 43 illustrations. American editions generally had fewer. The popular United States paperback edition published by Collier between 1970 and 1994, which sold many millions, had only 17 illustrations, many of them severely cropped from the originals, giving many readers in that country a very different experience when reading the novel. All the illustrations were restored for the 1994 worldwide HarperCollins edition, although these lacked the clarity of early printings. [13]

[edit] Reception

Lewis very much enjoyed writing *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and embarked on the sequel *Prince Caspian* soon after finishing the first novel. He completed the sequel in less

than a year, by the end of 1949. *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* had not been widely released until 1950; thus his initial enthusiasm did not stem from favourable reception by the public. [14]

While Lewis is known today on the strength of the Narnia stories as a highly successful children's writer, the initial critical response was muted. At the time it was fashionable for children's stories to be realistic: fantasy and fairy tales were seen as indulgent, appropriate only for very young readers, and potentially harmful to older children, even hindering their ability to relate to everyday life. Some reviewers thought the tale overtly moralistic, or the Christian elements over-stated — attempts to indoctrinate children. Others were concerned that the many violent incidents might frighten children.

Lewis's publisher, Geoffrey Bles, feared that the Narnia tales would not sell and might damage Lewis's reputation and affect sales of his other books. Nevertheless the novel and its successors were highly popular with young readers, and Lewis's publisher was soon anxious to release further Narnia stories. [16]

The novel was included on <u>Time</u>'s 2005 list of the 100 best English-language novels written since 1923. [17]

[edit] Allusions

Professor Kirke is based on <u>W.T. Kirkpatrick</u>, who tutored a 16-year-old Lewis. "Kirk," as he was sometimes called, taught the young Lewis much about thinking and communicating clearly, skills that would be invaluable to him later. [18]

Narnia is caught in endless winter that has lasted a century when the children first enter. Norse tradition mythologises a "great winter," known as the <u>Fimbulwinter</u>, said to precede <u>Ragnarök</u>. The trapping of Edmund by the White Witch is reminiscent of the seduction and imprisonment of Kay by <u>The Snow Queen</u> in <u>Hans Christian Andersen</u>'s novella of that name. [19]

The dwarves and giants are found in <u>Norse mythology</u>; <u>fauns</u>, <u>centaurs</u>, <u>minotaurs</u> and <u>dryads</u> derive from <u>Greek mythology</u>. Father Christmas, of course, was part of popular English folklore.

The main story is an allegory of Christ's crucifixion: Aslan sacrifices himself for Edmund, a traitor who may deserve death, in the same way that Christians believe Jesus sacrificed himself for sinners. The cross may be suggested by the Stone Table (reminiscent of Neolithic dolmens). As with the Christian Passion, it is women (Susan and Lucy) who tend Aslan's body after he dies and are the first to see him after his resurrection. The significance of the death contains elements of both the ransom theory of atonement and the satisfaction theory: Aslan suffers Edmund's penalty (satisfaction), and buys him back from the White Witch, who was entitled to him by reason of his treachery (ransom). In Christian tradition, Christ is associated with the Biblical "Lion of Judah," mainly on the strength of Revelation 5:5.

There are several parallels between the White Witch and the immortal protagonist of <u>H. Rider Haggard</u>'s *She*, a novel greatly admired by C.S. Lewis. [21]

<u>The Story of the Amulet</u> written by <u>Edith Nesbit</u> also contains scenes that can be considered as sources to sequences presenting Jadis, mostly in <u>The Magician's Nephew</u>. [22]

The freeing of Aslan's body from the stone table by field mice is reminiscent of <u>Aesop</u>'s fable of "<u>The Lion and the Mouse</u>." In the fable, a lion catches a mouse, but the mouse persuades the lion to release him, promising that the favor would be rewarded. Later in the story, he gnaws through the lion's bonds after he has been captured by hunters. It is also reminiscent of a scene from <u>Edgar Allan Poe</u>'s story "<u>The Pit and the Pendulum</u>," in which a prisoner is freed when rats gnaw through his bonds. [23]

[edit] Differences between the British and American editions

Prior to the publication of the first American edition of *Lion*, <u>Lewis</u> made the following changes.

- In chapter one of the American edition, the animals that Edmund and Susan express interest in are snakes and foxes rather than the foxes and rabbits of the British edition.
- In chapter six of the American edition, the name of the White Witch's chief of police is changed to "Fenris Ulf" from "Maugrim" in the British.
- In chapter thirteen of the American edition, "the trunk of the <u>World Ash Tree</u>" takes the place of "the fire-stones of the Secret Hill".

When <u>HarperCollins</u> took over publication of the series in 1994, they used the British edition for all subsequent editions worldwide. [24]

[edit] Adaptations

The story has been adapted three times for television. The <u>first adaptation</u> was a ten-part serial produced by <u>ABC Weekend Television</u> for <u>ITV</u> and broadcast in 1967. In 1979, an animated TV-movie, ^[25] directed by <u>Peanuts</u> director <u>Bill Meléndez</u>, was broadcast and won the first <u>Emmy Award</u> for <u>Outstanding Animated Program</u>. A <u>third television adaptation</u> was produced in 1988 by the <u>BBC</u> using a combination of live actors, <u>animatronic</u> puppets and animation. The programme was nominated for an Emmy and won a <u>BAFTA</u>. It was followed by three further Narnia adaptations.

Stage adaptations include a 1984 version staged at London's Westminster Theatre, produced by Vanessa Ford Productions. The play, adapted by Glyn Robbins, was directed by Richard Williams and designed by Marty Flood. The Royal Shakespeare Company did an adaptation in 1998, for which the acting edition has been published. In 2003, there was an Australian commercial stage production which toured the country by Malcolm C. Cooke Productions, using both life-size puppets and human actors. It was directed by notable film director Nadia Tass, and starred Amanda Muggleton, Dennis Olsen, Meaghan Davies and Yolande Brown). [28][29]

In 2002, the Philippines' Christian-based "Trumpets Playshop" did a musical rendition that Douglas Gresham, Lewis' stepson (and co-producer of the Walden Media film adaptations), has openly declared that he feels is the closest to Lewis' intent. [30][31] It starred among others

popular young Filipino singer Sam Concepcion as Edmund Pevensie^[32] The book and lyrics were by Jaime del Mundo and Luna Inocian. Music was composed by Lito Villareal.

In 2005, the story was adapted for a <u>theatrical film</u>, co-produced by Walt Disney and <u>Walden Media</u>. It has so far been followed by two films, the third one co-produced by Twentieth-Century Fox and Walden Media.

Multiple audio editions have been released. The best-known consists of all the books read aloud by Michael York, Anthony Quayle, Patrick Stewart, Kenneth Branagh, Derek Jacobi, Alex Jennings, Lynn Redgrave, Ian Richardson, Claire Bloom and Jeremy Northam. However, three audio CDs in the form of "radio plays" with various actors, sound effects, and music have also been released, one by the BBC, one by Radio Theatre, and one by Focus on the Family.

In the film <u>Shadowlands</u>, based on Lewis' life and his marriage to <u>Joy Gresham</u>, there is a scene where Joy's son <u>Douglas</u> opens the wardrobe in Lewis' home, hoping to find Narnia, and is disappointed to find it an ordinary wardrobe.

[edit] Spoofs

1980s UK comedy show The Young Ones spoofed *The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe* in the episode Flood. Punk rocker Vyvyan (Ade Edmondson) enters Narnia while playing hide-and-seek via a wardrobe and meets the White Queen and her dwarf Shirley (David Rappaport). Like Edmund in the original story the queen offers Vyvyan Turkish Delight only to be met with "No thanks. Got any kebabs?" She then demands to know who farted to which Shirley and Vyvyan squabble over who has the most ridiculous name.

[edit] See also



- The Chronicles of Narnia
- Aslan
- The White Witch
- Peter Pevensie
- Susan Pevensie
- Edmund Pevensie
- Lucy Pevensie

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Wikiquote has a collection of quotations related to: <u>The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe</u>

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- Eesti
- Español
- Esperanto
- Français
- Gaeilge
- 한국어
- Hrvatski
- Bahasa Indonesia
- <u>Italiano</u>
- עברית
- ქართული
- Latina
- Magyar
- മലയാളം
- Bahasa Melayu
- Nederlands
- 日本語
- Norsk (bokmål)
- O'zbek
- Polski
- Português
- Runa Simi
- Русский
- Simple English
- Slovenčina
- Српски / Srpski
- Suomi
- Svenska
- <u>ไทย</u>
- <u>Türkçe</u>
- 中文
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