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Between the lamppost and Cair Paravel on the eastern sea lies Narnia, a mystical land where animals hold the power of speech . . . woodland creatures conspire with men . . . dark forces, bent on conquest, gather at the world's rim to wage war against the realm's rightful king . . . and the great lion Aslan is the only hope. Into this enchanted world comes a group of unlikely travelers. These ordinary boys and girls, when faced with peril, learn extraordinary lessons in courage, self-sacrifice, friendship, and honor. These classic stories by C.S. Lewis have enchanted millions around the world. Focus on the Family's Radio Theatre brings them to life in this dramatized audio production. Recorded in London with an all-star cast of England's brightest talent from the stage and screen, an original orchestral score, and cinema-quality digital sound design, this innovative recording provides over 22 hours of entertainment for the entire family. 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The British Army is withdrawing from Philadelphia, with George Washington in pursuit, and for the first time, it looks as if the rebels might actually win. But for Claire Fraser and her family, there are even more tumultuous revolutions that have to be accommodated. Her former husband, Jamie, has returned from the dead, demanding to know why in his absence she married his best friend, Lord John Grey. 3 out of 5 stars By Susi on 15-06-14 The Chronicles of Narnia Books The Chronicles of Narnia is a series of seven high fantasy novels by author C. S. Lewis. They are considered a classic of children's literature and are the author's best-known work. The Narnia book series has been adapted several times, complete or in part, for radio, television, theater, and movies. Most recently, the first three books in the series were made into feature films: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe (2005), Prince Caspian (2008), and The Voyage of the Dawn Treader (2010). Summary Discuss Reviews (0) Page 2 Lewis is known for his work on medieval literature, for his Christian apologetics and for his fiction, especially the children's series entitled The Chronicles Of Narnia and his science fiction Space Trilogy. He was also the leading figure in an Oxford literary group called the Inklings. Clive Staples Lewis was born in Belfast, Ireland (now Northern Ireland), to Albert James Lewis and Flora Augusta Hamilton Lewis. At the age of 4, shortly after his dog 'Jacksie' was run over by a car, Lewis announced that his name was now Jacksie. At first he would answer to no other name, but later accepted Jacks which became Jack, the name by which he was known to friends and family for the rest of his life. When he was six his family moved into a new house called Leeborough or Little Lea in Strandtown. He had a brother named Warren Hamilton Lewis (Warnie), three years his elder. Lewis' mother died in 1908, and he was schooled by occasional tutors. He was sent to a school in England at age nine following his brother. This school, Wynyard School in Watford, Hertfordshire was soon closed and the headmaster committed as insane soon afterwards. Lewis next attended Campbell College in the east of the city about a mile from his house but only for a few months. Next, Lewis was sent to Cherbourg and then Malvern College in Malvern, Worcestershire. Around 1913, he abandoned his childhood Christian faith. Leaving Malvern after a year, Lewis moved on to study privately with William T. Kirkpatrick, his father's old tutor. Lewis had a passion for "dressed animals" as a boy, falling in love with Beatrix Potter's stories and often writing and illustrating his own animal stories. He and his brother, Warnie, together created the world of Boxen, which was inhabited and run by animals. Lewis loved to read, and as his father's house was filled with books, he felt that finding a book he had not read was as easy as finding a blade of grass. He also had a mortal fear of spiders and insects as a child, so they often haunted his dreams. As a teenager, he was wonderstruck by Richard Wagner and the songs and legends of the North. They intensified a longing he had within him, a deep desire he would later call "joy." He also grew to love nature, the beautiful scenes in nature reminded him of the stories of the North, and the stories of the North reminded him of the beauties of nature. In his teenage years, his writing moved away from the tales of Boxen, and he began to use different art forms (epic poetry and opera) to try and capture his newfound interest in Norse mythology and in the natural world. Studying with Kirkpatrick ("The Great Knock", as Lewis afterwards called him) instilled in him a love of Greek literature and mythology, and sharpened his skills in debate and the penetration of claptrap. In 1916 Lewis won a scholarship to University College, Oxford while World War I was raging. Because he was Irish, Lewis was exempted from conscription, but against his father's wishes he enlisted in the British Army in 1917. He was commissioned as an officer in the third Battalion, Somerset Light Infantry. Lewis arrived at the front line in the Somme Valley in France on his nineteenth birthday. While being trained for the army he shared a room with another cadet, 'Paddy' Moore, who was killed in action in 1918. Paddy had introduced Lewis to his mother, Jane King Moore, and a friendship very quickly sprang up between Lewis, who was eighteen when they met, and Jane, who was forty-five. The friendship was particularly important to Lewis when he was recovering from his wounds in hospital and his father refused to visit him. Moore has been much disagreement among Lewis scholars as to the nature of the relationship between Lewis and Jane Moore. Lewis was exceptionally reticent on the matter in his autobiography, writing only "All I can or need to say is that my earliest hostility to the emotions was very fully and variously avenged". Many, including Lewis biographers Hooper, Wilson and Sayer, think that they were probably lovers in the early years of their relationship. At any rate, their friendship was certainly a very close one. In December 1917 Lewis wrote, in a letter to his childhood friend, Arthur Greeves, that Jane and Greeves were "the two people who matter most to me in the world." After the war Lewis and Moore began to live together, and in 1930, they and Lewis' brother, Warren Lewis, moved into The Kilns, a house near Oxford. They all three contributed financially to the purchase of the house, which passed to Lady Dunbar of Hemphriggs, Moore's daughter, when Warren died in 1973. Moore has been much criticised for being possessive and controlling and making Lewis do a lot of housework. However, she was also a warmhearted, affectionate and hospitable woman who was well liked by her neighbours at The Kilns. "She was generous and taught me to be generous, too" Lewis said to his friend George Sayer. In later years Moore suffered from dementia and was eventually moved into a nursing home where she died in 1951. Lewis visited her every day while she was in the home. Lewis was wounded during the Battle of Arras, and suffered some depression, due in part to missing his Irish home. On his recovery, he was assigned duty in England. He was discharged in December 1918, and returned to his studies. He received a First in Honour Moderations (Greek and Latin Literature) in 1920, a First in Greats (Philosophy and Ancient History) in 1922, and a First in English in 1923. "My Irish Life" Lewis experienced a certain cultural shock when living in England. "No Englishman will be able to understand my first impressions of England," Lewis wrote in Surprised By Joy. "The strange English accents with which I was surrounded seemed like the voices of demons. But what was worst was the English landscape... I have made up the quarrel since; but at that moment I conceived a hatred for England which took many years to heal." From his youth, Lewis had immersed himself in Irish mythology and literature and expressed an interest in the Irish language. He later developed a particular fondness for W. B. Yeats, in part because of Yeats's use of Ireland's Celtic heritage in poetry. In a letter to a friend Lewis wrote, "I have here discovered an author exactly after my own heart, whom I am sure you would delight in, W. B. Yeats. He writes plays and Poems of rare spirit and beauty about our old Irish mythology." He was surprised to find his English peers indifferent to Yeats and the Celtic Revival movement. In describing his time at Oxford he wrote, "I am often surprised to find how utterly ignored Yeats is among the men I have met: perhaps his appeal is purely Irish- if so, then thank the gods that I am Irish." Perhaps to help cope with his environment, Lewis even expressed a somewhat tongue-in-cheek chauvinism toward the English. Describing an encounter with a fellow Irishman he wrote, "Like all Irish people who meet in England we ended by criticisms of the inevitable flippancy and dullness of the Anglo-Saxon race. After all, ami, there is no doubt that the Irish are the only people... I would not gladly live or die among another folk." Lewis did indeed live and die among another folk, due to his Oxford career and often expressed a certain regret at having to leave Ireland. Throughout his life, he sought out the company of his fellow Irish living in England and visited Ireland regularly. He called this "my Irish life". Early in his career, Lewis considered sending his work to the major Dublin publishers. In a letter to a friend he wrote, "If I do ever send my stuff to a publisher, I think I shall try Maunsel, those Dublin people, and so tack myself definitely onto the Irish school." After his conversion to Christianity, his interests gravitated towards Christian spirituality and away from Celtic mysticism. Conversion to Christianity Although raised as a Christian, Lewis was an atheist for much of his youth. When he later wrote an account of his adult reconversion to Christianity, under the title Surprised by Joy, he said that he had been "very angry with God for not existing." Some interpret this to mean that he did not so much reject the existence of God as harbour anger at God for the unfairness in life. This interpretation appears to be contradicted by a letter to a friend, in which he said, "all religions, no, mythologies to give them their proper name, have no proof whatsoever!" The indifferent God is just as easily tested as the personal God of childhood, however, and in Lewis' considerations of an inadequate God within his own suffering, he began to believe in a deeper experience of some fundamentals of Western thought. Influenced by arguments with his Oxford colleague and Roman Catholic friend J. R. R. Tolkien, and by G.K. Chesterton's book, The Everlasting Man, he slowly rediscovered Christianity. In 1929, he came to believe in the existence of God, later writing, "In the Trinity Term of 1929 I gave in, and admitted that God was God, and knelt and prayed," describing himself as "the most dejected and reluctant convert in all England." In 1931, after a lengthy discussion with Tolkien and another close friend, Hugo Dyson, he reconverted to Christianity and (to the regret of Tolkien) joined the Church of England. He noted, "I came into Christianity kicking and screaming." Career as a scholar Lewis taught as a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford, for nearly thirty years, from 1925 to 1954, and later was the first Professor of Medieval and Renaissance Literature at the University of Cambridge and a fellow of Magdalene College, Cambridge. Using this position, he argued that there was no such thing as an English Renaissance. Much of his scholarly work concentrated on the later Middle Ages, especially its use of allegory. His The Allegory Of Love (1936) helped reinvigorate the serious study of late medieval narratives like the Roman de la Rose. Lewis wrote several prefaces to old works of literature and poetry, like Layamon's Brut. His preface to John Milton's poem Paradise Lost is still one of the most important criticisms of that work. His last academic work, The Discarded Image, an Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature (1964), is a summary of the medieval world view, the "discarded image" of the cosmos in his title. Lewis was a prolific writer and a member of the literary discussion society The Inklings with his friends J. R. R. Tolkien, Charles Williams, and Owen Barfield. Career as a writer of fiction In addition to his scholarly work, Lewis wrote a number of popular novels, including his science-fiction Space Trilogy, his fantasy Narnia books, and various other novels, most containing allegories on Christian themes such as sin, the Fall, and redemption. His first novel after becoming a Christian was The Pilgrim's Regress, his take on John Bunyan's The Pilgrim's Progress which depicted his own experience with Christianity. The book was panned at the time. Space Trilogy. His Space Trilogy or "Ransom Trilogy" novels dealt with what Lewis saw as the then-current dehumanizing trends in modern science fiction. The first book, Out Of the Silent Planet, was apparently written following a conversation with his friend J. R. R. Tolkien about these trends. Lewis agreed to write a "space travel" story and Tolkien a "time travel" one. Tolkien's story, The Lost Road, a tale connecting his Middle-earth mythology and the modern world, was never completed. Lewis's character of Ransom is generally agreed to be based, in part, on Tolkien. The minor character Jules, from That Hideous Strength, is an obvious caricature of H. G. Wells. Many of the ideas presented in the books, particularly in That Hideous Strength, are dramatizations of arguments made more formally in Lewis's The Abolition Of Man. Works on heaven and hell. The Great Divorce is a short novel about imagined conversations in the foothills of Heaven between the saved and the potentially damned. The title is a reference to William Blake's The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. This work deliberately echoes two other more famous works with a similar theme: the Divine Comedy of Dante Aligheri, and John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Another short novel, The Screwtape Letters, consists of letters of advice from a senior demon, Screwtape, to his nephew Wormwood, on the best ways to tempt a particular human and secure his damnation. The Chronicles of Narnia. This is a series of seven fantasy novels for children that is by far the most popular of Lewis's works. The books have Christian themes and describe the adventures of a group of children who visit a magical land called Narnia. The Lion, the Witch and The Wardrobe, which was the first published and the most popular book of the series, has been adapted for both stage and screen. Written by Lewis between 1950-1956, The Chronicles of Narnia borrow from Greek, Roman, and Celtic mythology as well as traditional English and Irish fairy tales. Lewis reportedly based his depiction of Narnia in the novels on the geography and scenery of the Mourne Mountains in County Down, Northern Ireland. Lewis cited MacDonald as an influence in writing the series. Other works. Lewis's last novel was Till We Have Faces. Many believe (as he did) that it is his most mature and masterful work of fiction, but it was never a popular success. It is a retelling of the myth of Cupid and Psyche from the unusual perspective of Psyche's sister. It is deeply concerned with religious ideas, but the setting is entirely pagan, and the connections with specific Christian beliefs are left implicit. Before Lewis's conversion to Christianity, he published two books. Spirits In Bondage, a collection of poems, and Dymer, a single narrative poem. Both were published under the pen name of "Clive Hamilton". Career as a writer on Christianity In addition to his career as an English professor and an author of fiction, Lewis also wrote a number of books about Christianity- perhaps most famously, Mere Christianity, which is considered a classic of Christian apologetics. In 2000, Mere Christianity was named the best book of the twentieth century by Christianity Today magazine, after the magazine asked 100 of its contributors and Church leaders to vote for best book. He was very much interested in presenting a reasonable case for the truth of Christianity. Mere Christianity, The Problem Of Pain, and Miracles were all concerned, to one degree or another, with refuting popular objections to Christianity. He has become popularly known as The Apostle to the Sceptics because he says he originally approached religious belief as a sceptic but was converted by the evidence. Consequently, his books on Christianity examine common difficulties in accepting Christianity, such as "How could a good God allow pain to exist in the world?", which he examined in detail in The Problem of Pain. Lewis also wrote an autobiography entitled Surprised by Joy, which describes his conversion. (It was written before he met his wife, Joy Gresham.) His essays and public speeches on Christian belief, many of which were collected in God In The Dock and The Weight Of Glory and Other Addresses, remain popular today. His most famous works, the Chronicles of Narnia, contain many strong Christian messages. These are often mistaken for allegory, but, as Lewis himself said, are certainly not allegory. Lewis is said to have stated that he wrote the novels when he wondered what it would be like if Jesus Christ was incarnated on another world or planet to save the souls of those inhabitants. Trilemma In the book Mere Christianity, Lewis famously proposed that Jesus' status as a great moral teacher cannot be divorced from his claims to divinity: "I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic- on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg - or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon and you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronising nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to." According to the argument, most people are willing to accept Jesus Christ as a great moral teacher, but the Gospels record that Jesus made many claims to divinity, either explicitly ("I and the father are one." - John 10:30) or implicitly, by assuming authority only God could have ("...the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." - Matthew 9:6). Assuming that the Gospels are accurate, Lewis said there are three options: 1. Jesus was telling falsehoods and knew it, and so he was a liar. 2. Jesus was telling falsehoods but believed he was telling the truth, and so he was insane. 3. Jesus was telling the truth, and so he was divine. Lewis held that for Jesus to be a liar or insane would contradict his position as a "great moral teacher", and the remaining option would make Jesus both a "great moral teacher" and divine. This was aimed against a specific line of reasoning which accepts the Jesus portrayed in the gospels as a "great moral teacher", but not as a divine being. Lewis maintained that they are failing to deal with the logical consequences of their position. His argument was later expanded by the Christian apologist Josh McDowell to serve as a logical proof to Jesus' Divinity. It is from this latter development that the term "trilemma" actually comes from. Outside of experts on the subject, trilemma is often taken to mean both arguments, assuming that in fact they are one and the same. Various versions of both Lewis's argument and McDowell's have been extensively debated and frequently attacked on the truth of their premises as well as the validity of their structure. (See the trilemma article for more.) Portrayals of Lewis's life Lewis has resulted in several biographies (including books written by close friends of Lewis, among them Roger Lancelyn Green and George Sayer), at least one play about his life, and a 1993 movie, titled Shadowlands, based on an original stage and television play. The movie fictionalizes his relationship with the American writer Joy Gresham, whom he met and married in London, only to watch her die slowly from bone cancer. Lewis's book A Grief Observed describes his experience of bereavement in such a raw and personal fashion that Lewis originally released it under the pseudonym N.W. Clerk to keep readers from associating the book with him (ultimately too many friends recommended the book to Lewis as a method for dealing with his own grief, and he made his authorship public). Lewis's death and legacy Lewis died on November 22, 1963, at the Oxford home he shared with his brother, Warren. He is buried in the Headington Quarry Churchyard, Oxford, England. Media coverage of his death was overshadowed by news of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, which occurred on the same day, as did the death of author Aldous Huxley. (This coincidence was the inspiration for Peter Kreeft's book Between Heaven and Hell: A Dialog Somewhere Beyond Death with John F. Kennedy. C. S. Lewis & Aldous Huxley. In this philosophical work, the three men meet in a limbo before the afterlife, and debate the divinity of Jesus Christ, contrasting the differences in their personalities and world views- humanism, Christianity, and pantheism.) A bronze statue of Lewis looking into a wardrobe stands in Belfast's Hollywood Arches. Many books have been inspired by Lewis, including A Severe Mercy by his correspondent Sheldon Vanauken. The Chronicles Of Narnia has been particularly influential. Modern children's authors like Daniel Handler (A Series of Unfortunate Events), Eoin Colfer (Artemis Fowl), and J. K. Rowling (Harry Potter) have been influenced more or less by Lewis's series. Authors of adult fantasy literature such as Tim Powers have also testified to being influenced by Lewis's work. Most of Lewis's posthumous work has been edited by his literary executor, Walter Hooper. An independent Lewis scholar, the late Kathryn Lindskoog, argued in several books that Hooper's scholarship is not reliable and that he has made false statements and attributed forged works to Lewis. (See The Dark Tower.) Scholars in the field of Lewis studies are divided over whether these charges have been settled at all, and if so in whose favour. Lewis was strongly opposed to the creation of live-action versions of his works due to the technology at the time. His major concern was that the anthropomorphic animal characters "when taken out of narrative into actual visibility, always turn into buffoonery or nightmare." This was said in the context of the 1950s, when technology would not allow the special effects required to make a coherent, robust film version of Narnia. Whether or not Lewis would be happy with the CGI creations of Disney, naturally, cannot be known.

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