APPENDICIES

Synopsis of That Hideous Strength.

When the story opens, Jane and Mark Studdock have been married for six months, and Jane is sitting in their flat and reflecting that marriage ‘had proved to be the door out of a world of work and comradeship and laughter and innumerable things to do, into something like solitary confinement. ’She picks up that morning’s paper and sees a picture of the brilliant French scientist, Alcasan, who has just been guillotined for poisoning his wife. She remembers her dream of the night before when she saw and overheard Alcasan talking to another man. The other man twists Alcasan’s head off and takes it away. She then sees people digging up ‘a sort of ancient British, druidical kind of man’ who, before they get to him, comes to life. It disturbs Jane that she had seen Alcasan in her dream before she saw his photograph in the paper.

Mark is a Fellow of Sociology at Bracton College in Edgestow University in the small midlands town of Edgestow. We learn that in Mark’s mind ‘hardly one rag of noble thought, either Christian or Pagan, had a secure lodging. His education had been neither scientific nor classical – merely "Modern". “The severities both of abstraction and of high human tradition had passed him by…He was a…glib examinee in subjects that require no exact knowledge. ’Ever since he arrived at Bracton he has been trying desperately to get into its ‘inner ring.’

Since his election five years ago, Mark has cared desperately about being in the ‘progressive element’ of his college. On the same day that his wife wakes from her nightmare about Alcasan, he is invited by an important member of the progressive element, the sub-warden, Curry, to meet Lord Feverstone. It turns out that Lord Feverstone is the same Dick Devine who went with Dr. Weston to Malacandra in OSP. That evening at a college meeting, the Progressive Element manages to force the college into selling Bragdon Wood, which lies in the center

of their grounds. The Wood contains ‘Merlin’s Well,’ a well of British-Roman date, and the purchaser is the National Institute of Co-ordinated Experiments – a laboratory on which so many thoughtful people base their hopes of a better world.

From this point on the story switches back and forth from the doings of Jane to those of Mark. Jane had been so frightened by her dream that she calls Mrs. Dimble, whose husband had been Jane’s tutor in Northumberland College and who is an authority on the Arthurian legend. When the Dimbles hear of Jane’s dream they conclude that she should seek help from a friend who lives in the manor house of ‘St. Anne’s on the Hill.’

Mark meanwhile meets Lord Feverstone, a member of the N.I.C.E., who suggests Mark apply for a job there. In explaining the purpose of the N.I.C.E. he says, ‘Man has got to take charge of Man. That means, remember, that some men have got to take charge of the rest – which is another reason for cashing in on it as soon as one can. ’A thrill runs through Mark as he discovers that this involves sterilization of the unfit, liquidation of backward races, selective breeding, pre-natal education, vivisection, biochemical conditioning of the brain, and eventually the elimination of organic life altogether, to be replaced by the chemical. Feverstone invites Mark to come out to Belbury and meet John Wither who is Deputy Director of the N.I.C.E.

The next day, Mark and Lord Feverstone make their way to Belbury, a few miles south of Edgestow, while Jane is on a train going north to the little village of St. Anne’s to see Miss Ironwood, a doctor, abut her dreams. From this point onwards, as the story unfolds, they see very little of one another. At St. Anne’s, Jane finds it easy to like the inhabitants, but she is horrified to discover that she has the hereditary power of dreaming realities. Miss Ironwood and the Dimbles urge her to join their ‘side.’

At Belbury, Mark accepts a job with the N.I.C.E., and this is the beginning of a long befuddlement as to whether he is ever in or out of the organization’s ‘inner ring. ’Three of those who befriend Mark are a lesbian called ‘Fairy’ Hardcastle, Chief of the Institutional Police, an Italian physiologist, Professor

Filostrato, and a mad Anglican parson, Mr. Straik, who believes that the N.I.C.E. is realizing the Kingdom of God in this world. They are receiving the assistance of higher beings called ‘macrobres’ which, unknown to them, are really the dark eldila, or devils, of Earth.

While Jane continues to dream frightening realities, Mark finds himself unable to leave the N.I.C.E. because a murder charge is devised to keep him there. As he is drawn into the workings of the N.I.C.E. the distinction between truth and falsehood begins to disappear. Eventually, Filostrato and Straik decide to introduce Mark to the real ‘Head’ of the N.I.C.E. The young man’s excitement mounts when they go onto explain that it is not Man in the abstract that will be given power over other men, but a single man. This excitement quickly turns to horror when Mark meets the ‘Head’ of the Institute, which turns out to be the actual head of Alcasan, kept alive by infusions of blood.

Jane comes to love the people of St. Anne’s and when they are certain of her loyalty they introduce her to their ‘Head. ’This is Ransom who has not aged since he came back from Perelandra, but who is in great pain from the wound on his foot – where he was bitten by the Un-man. Ransom is revealed to be the new Pendragon of Logres. Jane is to be their ‘seer’ and tell them what the N.I.C.E. is doing. Another addition to the Arthurian legend concerns the old man whom Jane ‘sees’ the N.I.C.E. digging up from Bragdon Wood. This turns out to be Merlin, whose magic the N.I.C.E. needs. Merlin wakes before anyone can get to him, and finding a tramp he takes his clothes and joins the company at St. Anne’s. He recognizes Ransom as the rightful Pendragon. The moment, however, Merlin lays eyes on Jane he calls her ‘the falsest lady of any at this time alive. ’‘It was the purpose of God,’ he explains to Ransom, ‘that she and her lord should between them have begotten a child by whom the enemies should have been put out of Logres for a thousand years. ’Merlin knows that Jane and Mark have been using contraceptives, and he says, ‘Be assured that the child will never be born, for the hour of its begetting is past. Of their own will they are barren. ’Ransom, however, knows that Jane is now a Christian, and that she and Mark will have a child who will become the next Pendragon.

The N.I.C.E., upon finding the tramp, assumes that he is Merlin and they take him to Belbury where they try talking with him in Latin. When they can get nothing from him, they advertise for a Celtic scholar. Meanwhile, the N.I.C.E. discovers Mark trying to leave their side, and they confine him to Belbury. They leave him to look after 'Merlin,' whom they dress in a doctor's gown in order that he can attend a great N.I.C.E. banquet. The tramp understands little of what is happening, but he trusts Mark and lets him know that he is not Merlin.

Even though he knows it will end with his death, Merlin is prepared to confront the powers of Hell by receiving into his body the *Oyeresu* of the Planets. Ransom then sends him to Belbury as a specialist in Celtic. He attends the great banquet as the tramp's 'interpreter'. In a splendid and spectacular scene, which is meant to echo the fall of the Tower of Babel with its resultant confusion of languages, Wither and the other speakers find themselves babbling nonsense. As the numerous caged animals are liberated from the laboratories, where they were to be vivisected, Merlin arranges for Mark and the tramp to escape before the full curse of Babel is loosed upon the N.I.C.E.

As he makes his way to St. Anne's, Mark turns back to see Belbury destroyed by an earthquake. With this danger to Britain averted, Ransom's work as the Pendragon is complete. Mark and Jane are united, and, after saying goodbye to his friends, Ransom is taken by the eldila to Perelandra where he will be healed of his wound.

Biography of C.S. Lewis

Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland on November 29, 1898, Clive Staples ("Jack") Lewis was reared in a peculiarly bookish home, one in which the reality he found on the pages of the books within his parents' extensive library seemed as tangible and meaningful to him as anything that transpired outside their doors. As adolescents, Lewis and his older brother, Warren, were more at home in the world of ideas and books of the past, than with the material, technological world of the 20th Century. When the tranquility and sanctity of the Lewis home was shattered beyond repair by the death of his mother when he was ten, Lewis sought refuge in composing stories and excelling in scholastics. Soon thereafter he became precociously oriented toward the metaphysical and ultimate questions.

The rest of his saga and the particulars of his writing career might be seen as the melancholy search for the security he had took granted during the peace and grace of his childhood. By Lewis's testimony, this recovery was to be had only in the "joy" he discovered in an adult conversion to Christianity. Long-time friend and literary executor of the Lewis estate, Owen Barfield has suggested that there were, in fact, three "C. S. Lewis's." That is to say, during his lifetime Lewis fulfilled three very different vocations-- and fulfilled them successfully. There was, first, Lewis the distinguished Oxbridge literary scholar and critic; second, Lewis, the highly acclaimed author of science fiction and children's literature; and thirdly, Lewis, the popular writer and broadcaster of Christian apologetics. The amazing thing, Barfield notes, is that those who may have known of Lewis in any single role may not have known that he performed in the other two. In a varied and comprehensive writing career, Lewis carved out a sterling reputation as a scholar, a novelist, and a theologian for three very different audiences.

No brief summary can thus do justice to the many and varied works Lewis produced in his lifetime between 1919-1961. Indeed, more Lewis volumes--collection of essays, chiefly--have appeared after his death than during his lifetime. A sampling of the range and depth of his achievements in criticism,

fiction, and apologetics might begin, however, with the first books Lewis published, two volumes of poetry: *Spirits in Bondage*, published in 1919 when Lewis was but 23, and his long narrative poem, *Dymer*, published in 1926. Neither were critical successes, convincing the classically trained Lewis that he would never become an accomplished poet given the rise of modernism; subsequently he turned his attention to literary history, specifically the field of medieval and renaissance literature. Along the way, however, Lewis embraced Christianity, and in 1933, published his first theological work, *The Pilgrim's Regress*, a parody of John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, that details Lewis's flight from skepticism to faith in a lively allegory.

In 1936, Lewis published the breakthrough work that earned him his reputation as a scholar, *The Allegory of Love*, a work of high-calibre, original scholarship that revolutionized literary understanding of the function of allegory in medieval literature, particularly Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*. Between 1939 and 1954, Lewis continued to publish well-received works in criticism and theory, debating E. M. W. Tillyard on the objectivity of poetry in *The Personal Heresy*, published in 1939, and in that same year publishing a collection of essays under the title *Rehabilitations*--a work whose title characterized much of Lewis's work, as he attempted to bring the fading critical reputation of authors he revered back into balance. In 1942, his *A Preface to Paradise Lost* attempted to rehabilitate the reputation of John Milton, while in 1954; he offered a comprehensive overview of 16th-century British poetry and narrative in his *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*.

Lewis is best known, however, for his fiction and his Christian apologetics, two disciplines complementary to each other within his oeuvre. In 1936, Lewis completed the first book in a science-fiction space trilogy, *Out of the Silent Planet*, that introduced the hero, Edwin Ransom, a philologist modeled roughly on Lewis's friend, J. R. R. Tolkien. *Perelandra*, a new version of *Paradise Lost* set in Venus, followed in 1943, and *That Hideous Strength* completed the trilogy in 1945; the latter Lewis billed as "a fairy tale for adults," treating novelistically of the themes Lewis had developed in his critique of

modern education in *The Abolition of Man*, published two years earlier. Lewis's most notable critical and commercial success, however, is certainly his seven-volume *Chronicles of Narnia*, which he published in single volumes from 1950-56. These popular children's fantasies began with the 1950 volume, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, a tale centered on Aslan the lion, a Christ-figure who creates and rules the supernatural land of Narnia, and the improbable adventures of four undaunted British schoolchildren who stumble into Narnia through a clothes closet. Lewis's own favorite fictional work, *Till We Have Faces*, his last imaginative work, published in 1956, is a retelling of the Cupid/Psyche myth, but has never achieved the critical recognition he hoped it would.

Lewis's reputation as a winsome, articulate proponent of Christianity began with the publication of two important theological works: *The Problem of Pain*, a defense of pain--and the doctrine of hell-- as evidence of an ordered universe, published in 1940; and *The Screwtape Letters*, a "interception" of a senior devil's correspondence with a junior devil fighting with "the Enemy," Christ, over the soul of an unsuspecting believer, published in 1942. Lewis emerged during the war years as a religious broadcaster who became famous as "the apostle to skeptics," in Britain and abroad, especially in the United States. His wartime radio essays defending and explaining the Christian faith comforted the fearful and wounded, and were eventually collected and published in America as *Mere Christianity* in 1952. In the midst of this prolific output, Lewis took time to write his spiritual autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, published in 1955. In the two decades before his death, Lewis published more than eight books that directly or indirectly served him in the task of apologetics and he is arguably the most important Christian writer of the 20th Century.

A prolific and popular author, Lewis's criticism, fiction, and religious essays stay in print, and are continually reprinted in various bindings and new collections. Lewis's life and work have been also the focus of countless books since his death in 1963. Ironically, though, Lewis may eventually suffer the same fate as other authors he himself "rehabilitated" during his scholarly career. Surfeited by volume after volume of analysis, paraphrase, and critique, Lewis's

own canon may be dwarfed by secondary sources, an attitude he opposed all of his life in reading others. As it stands, both his fiction and theological writings have been endlessly and hyper-critically explored, creating a trail of footnotes and asides long enough to camouflage the essential viewpoints and facts about his life--thus discouraging even the most diligent student of Lewis. It must be said that Lewis's own works remain the most reliable source and insightful interpreter of this original thinker and personality.