

# THE NARNIA CHRONICLES: THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE

## C.S. Lewis

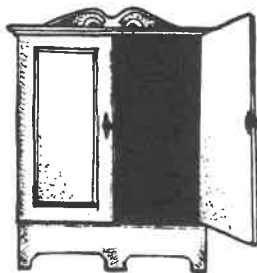


Clive Staples Lewis (1898-1963) was born in Belfast. As a child he was fascinated by the fairy tales, myths and ancient legends recounted to him by his Irish nurse. Later he became Professor of Medieval and Renaissance English at Cambridge University, a literary scholar, critic and novelist. In 1938 he published *Out of the Silent Planet*, which was the first of three science fiction novels with a strong Christian flavour. Together with his friend J.R.R. Tolkien he formed "The Inklings", a group of friends who met in Oxford for many years to read aloud and discuss their compositions. With *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1949) he began a series of seven stories, all taking place in the magical land of Narnia where the child protagonists learn the value of courage, loyalty and great sacrifice. The final book, *The Last Battle*, won him the prestigious Carnegie Medal. The Narnia books are being filmatized. You can visit C.S. Lewis at [www.cslewis.org](http://www.cslewis.org) or [www.narnia.com](http://www.narnia.com).

ancient *adj.*  
ældgammel  
recount *vb.* *f.*  
protagonist.  
hovedperson  
sacrifice *sb.* *o*

## LUCY LOOKS INTO A WARDROBE

air-raid *sb.* luftangreb  
shaggy *adj.* langt og  
usoigneret  
fall on one's feet  
*idiom* lande heldigt  
'splendid' *adj.*  
fantastisk



Once there were four children whose names were Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy. This story is about something that happened to them when they were sent away from London during the war because of the air-raids. They were sent to the house of an old Professor who lived in the heart of the country, ten miles from the nearest railway station and two miles from the nearest post office.

He had no wife and he lived in a very large house with a housekeeper called Mrs Macready and three servants. (Their names were Ivy, Margaret and Betty, but they do not come into the story much.) He himself was a very old man with shaggy white hair which grew over most of his face as well as on his head, and they liked him almost at once; but on the first evening when he came out to meet them at the front door he was so odd-looking that Lucy (who was the youngest) was a little afraid of him, and Edmund (who was the next youngest) wanted to laugh and had to keep on pretending he was blowing his nose to hide it.

As soon as they had said good night to the Professor and gone upstairs on the first night, the boys came into the girls' room and they all talked it over.

"We've fallen on our feet and no mistake," said Peter. "This is going to be perfectly splendid. That old chap will let us do anything we like."

"I think he's an old dear," said Susan.

"Oh, come off it!" said Edmund, who was tired and pretending not to be tired, which always made him bad-tempered. "Don't go on talking like that."

"Like what?" said Susan; "and anyway, it's time you were in bed."

"Trying to talk like Mother," said Edmund. "And who are you to say when I'm to go to bed? Go to bed yourself."

"Hadn't we all better go to bed?" said Lucy. "There's sure to be a row if we're heard talking here."

"No there won't," said Peter. "I tell you this is the sort of house where no one's going to mind what we do. Anyway, they won't hear us. It's about

ten minutes' walk from here down to that dining-room, and any amount of stairs and passages in between."

"What's that noise?" said Lucy suddenly. It was a far larger house than she had ever been in before and the thought of all those long passages and rows of doors leading into empty rooms was beginning to make her feel a little creepy.

"It's only a bird, silly," said Edmund.

"It's an owl," said Peter. "This is going to be a wonderful place for birds. I shall go to bed now. I say, let's go and explore tomorrow. You might find anything in a place like this. Did you see those mountains as we came along? And the woods? There might be eagles. There might be stags. There'll be hawks."

"Badgers!" said Lucy.

"Foxes!" said Edmund.

"Rabbits!" said Susan.

But when next morning came there was a steady rain falling, so thick that when you looked out of the window you could see neither the mountains nor the woods nor even the stream in the garden.

"Of course it *would* be raining!" said Edmund. They had just finished their breakfast with the Professor and were upstairs in the room he had set apart for them - a long, low room with two windows looking out in one direction and two in another.

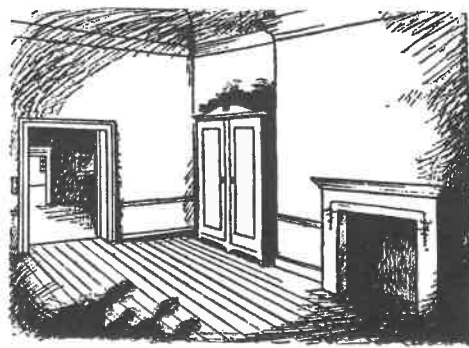
"Do stop grumbling, Ed," said Susan. "Ten to one it'll clear up in an hour or so. And in the meantime we're pretty well off. There's a wireless and lots of books."

"Not for me," said Peter, "I'm going to explore in the house."

Everyone agreed to this and that was how the adventures began. It was the sort of house that you never seem to come to the end of, and it was full of unexpected places. The first few doors they tried led only into spare bedrooms, as everyone had expected that they would; but soon they came to a very long room full of pictures and there they found a suit of armour; and after that was a room all hung with green, with a harp in one corner; and then came three steps down and five steps up, and then a kind of little upstairs hall and a door that led out on to a balcony, and then a whole series of rooms that led into each other and were lined with books - most of them very old books and some bigger than a Bible in a church. And shortly after that they looked into a room that was quite empty except for one big wardrobe; the sort that has a looking-glass in the door. There was nothing else in the room at all except a dead blue-bottle on the window-sill.

stag *sb.* (kron)hjort  
badger *sb.* grævling  
stream *sb.* vandløb,  
bæk  
wireless *sb.*  
radioapparat (gl.  
dags)  
spare *adj.* ekstra  
suit of 'armour' *sb.*  
rustning  
looking-glass *sb.*  
spejl  
blue-bottle *sb.*  
spyflue  
window-sill *sb.*  
vindueskarm

moth-ball *sb.*  
 mølkugle  
 fur *sb.* pels  
 stoop /stu:p/ *vb.* bøje  
 sig ned  
 queer *adj.* mærkelig  
 prickly *adj.* stikkende  
 ex'claim *vb.* udbryde



"Nothing there!" said Peter, and they all trooped out again – all except Lucy. She stayed behind because she thought it would be worth while trying the door of the wardrobe, even though she felt almost sure that it would be locked. To her surprise it opened quite easily, and two moth-

balls dropped out. Looking into the inside, she saw several coats hanging up – mostly long fur coats. There was nothing Lucy liked so much as the smell and feel of fur. She immediately stepped into the wardrobe and got in among the coats and rubbed her face against them, leaving the door open, of course, because she knew that it is very foolish to shut oneself into any wardrobe. Soon she went further in and found that there was a second row of coats hanging up behind the first one. It was almost quite dark in there and she kept her arms stretched out in front of her so as not to bump her face into the back of the wardrobe. She took a step further in – then two or three steps – always expecting to feel woodwork against the tips of her fingers. But she could not feel it.

"This must be a simply enormous wardrobe!" thought Lucy, going still further in and pushing the soft folds of the coats aside to make room for her. Then she noticed that there was something crunching under her feet. "I wonder is that more moth-balls?" she thought, stooping down to feel it with her hand. But instead of feeling the hard, smooth wood of the floor of the wardrobe, she felt something soft and powdery and extremely cold. "This is very queer," she said, and went on a step or two further.

Next moment she found that what was rubbing against her face and hands was no longer soft fur but something hard and rough and even prickly. "Why, it is just like branches of trees!" exclaimed Lucy. And then she saw that there was a light ahead of her; not a few inches away

where the back of the wardrobe ought to have been, but a long way off. Something cold and soft was falling on her. A moment later she found that she was standing in the middle of a wood at night-time with snow under her feet and snowflakes falling through the air.

Lucy felt a little frightened, but she felt very inquisitive and excited as well. She looked back over her shoulder and there, between the dark tree-trunks, she could still see the open doorway of the wardrobe and even catch a glimpse of the empty room from which she had set out. (She had, of course, left the door open, for she knew that it is a very silly thing to shut oneself into a wardrobe.) It seemed to be still daylight there. "I can always get back if anything goes wrong," thought Lucy. She began to walk forward, *crunch-crunch* over the snow and through the wood towards the other light. In about ten minutes she reached it and found it was a lamp-post. As she stood looking at it, wondering why there was a lamp-post in the middle of a wood and wondering what to do next, she heard a pitter patter of feet coming towards her. And soon after that a very strange person stepped out from among the trees into the light of the lamp-post.



He was only a little taller than Lucy herself and he carried over his head an umbrella, white with snow. From the waist upwards he was like a man, but his legs were shaped like a goat's (the hair on them was glossy black) and instead of feet he had goat's hoofs. He also had a tail, but Lucy did not notice this at first because it was neatly caught up over the arm that held the umbrella so as to keep it from trailing in the snow. He had a red woollen muffler round his neck and his skin was rather reddish too. He had a strange, but pleasant little face, with a short pointed beard and curly hair, and out of the hair there stuck two horns, one on each side

in'quisitive  
*adj.* nysgerrig;  
 spørgelysten  
 'pitter patter *sb.* klip-  
 klap; plisk-plask  
 glossy *adj.* skinnende  
 hoof *sb.* hov (*pl.* også  
 hooves)  
 woollen *adj.* ulden  
 muffler *sb.*  
 halstørklæde  
 pointed *adj.* spids



During the battle Aslan is caught, tied to a huge stone, a "Stone Table", and  
 killed. With him are Lucy and Susan.  
 and Aslan.  
 appears, the snow melts...), and eventually it is time for the battle between Jadis  
 their only hope. The White Witch's magic spell begins to break (Father Christmas  
 about the return of Aslan, the Great Lion who is the true ruler of Narnia and  
 In Narnia, the children stay with a beaver family for a while, and here they hear  
 the children to keep them in her castle.  
 she will be overthrown by four human children, and therefore she wants to catch  
 and sisters to Narnia as well. Jadis fears the fulfilment of a prophecy saying that  
 With some enchanted Turkish Delight Jadis lures Edmund into getting his brother  
 Edmund hides in the wardrobe and also ends up in Narnia where he meets Jadis.  
 her story is not believed. One day when the children are playing hide-and-seek,  
 When Lucy returns from Narnia, no time has passed in the real world and  
 who has cursed the country with eternal winter.  
 learns that Narnia is presently under the cruel tyranny of Jadis, the White Witch.  
 It turns out that Lucy has entered another world called Narnia. From the Faun she

"Goodness gracious me!" exclaimed the Faun.  
 surprise that he dropped all his parcels.  
 shopping. He was a Faun. And when he saw Lucy he gave such a start of  
 parcels and the snow it looked just as if he had been doing his Christmas  
 the other arm he carried several brown-paper parcels. What with the  
 of his forehead. One of his hands, as I have said, held the umbrella: in

parcel sb. pakke  
 what with ... and ...  
 idiom dels pga. og  
 dels pga.  
 faun /'fɔːn/; fawn  
 sb. faun: romersk  
 skovgud  
 start sb. sæt  
 presently adv. for  
 tiden, nu  
 eternal adj. evig  
 enchanted adj.  
 forryllet; forhekset  
 lure vb. lokke  
 overthrown vb. støde  
 fra trossen  
 eventually adv. til  
 sidst, consider

It was quite definitely lighter by now. Each of the girls noticed for the  
 first time the white face of the other. They could see the mice nibbling  
 away; dozens and dozens, even hundreds, of little field mice. And at last,  
 one by one, the ropes were all gnawed through.  
 The sky in the east was whitish by now and the stars were getting fainter  
 - all except one very big one low down on the eastern horizon. They felt  
 colder than they had been all night. The mice crept away again.  
 The girls cleared away the remains of the gnawed ropes. Aslan looked  
 more like himself without them. Every moment his dead face looked  
 nobler, as the light grew and they could see it better.  
 In the wood behind them a bird gave a chuckling sound. It had been  
 so still for hours and hours that it startled them. Then another bird  
 answered it. Soon there were birds singing all over the place.  
 It was quite definitely early morning now, not late night.  
 "I'm so cold," said Lucy.  
 "So am I," said Susan. "Let's walk about a bit."  
 They walked to the eastern edge of the hill and looked down. The one  
 big star had almost disappeared. The country all looked dark grey, but  
 beyond, at the very end of the world, the sea showed pale. The sky began  
 to turn red. They walked to and fro more times than they could count  
 between the dead Aslan and the eastern ridge, trying to keep warm; and  
 oh, how tired their legs felt. Then at last, as they stood for a moment  
 looking out towards the sea and Cair Paravel (which they could now just  
 make out) the red turned to gold along the line where the sea and the  
 sky met and very slowly up came the edge of the sun. At that moment  
 they heard from behind them a loud noise - a great cracking, deafening  
 noise as if a giant had broken a giant's plate.  
 "What's that?" said Lucy, clutching Susan's arm.  
 "I - I feel afraid to turn round," said Susan; "something awful is hap-  
 pening."  
 "They're doing something worse to Him," said Lucy. "Come on!" And  
 she turned, pulling Susan round with her.  
 The rising of the sun had made everything look so different - all  
 colours and shadows were changed - that for a moment they didn't see  
 the important thing. Then they did. The Stone Table was broken into  
 two pieces by a great crack that ran down it from end to end; and there  
 was no Aslan.  
 "Oh, oh, oh!" cried the two girls, rushing back to the Table.  
 "Oh, it's too bad," sobbed Lucy; "they might have left the body alone."  
 "Who's done it?" cried Susan. "What does it mean? Is it magic?"

mibble vb. bide  
 chuckle vb. klukke  
 startle vb. forskrække  
 to and fro idiom frem  
 og tilbage  
 ridge sb. bakkekam  
 make out vb. skimte  
 clutch vb. gribe

incan'tation *sb.*  
 besværgelse  
 treachery /'treɪfəri/ *sb.*  
 forræderi  
 in a 'traitor's stead i  
 stedet for en forræder  
 to be resur'rected *vb.*  
 at genopstå  
 thicket *sb.* buskads

"Yes!" said a great voice behind their backs. "It is more magic." They looked round. There, shining in the sunrise, larger than they had seen him before, shaking his mane (for it had apparently grown again) stood Aslan himself.

"Oh, Aslan!" cried both the children, staring up at him, almost as much 5 frightened as they were glad.

"Aren't you dead then, dear Aslan?" said Lucy.

"Not now," said Aslan.

"You're not – not a – ?" asked Susan in a shaky voice. She couldn't bring herself to say the word *ghost*. Aslan stooped his golden head and licked 10 her forehead. The warmth of his breath and a rich sort of smell that seemed to hang about his hair came all over her.

"Do I look it?" he said.

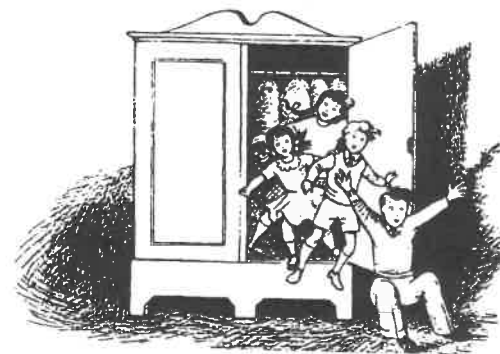
"Oh, you're real, you're real! Oh, Aslan!" cried Lucy, and both girls flung themselves upon him and covered him with kisses.

"But what does it all mean?" asked Susan when they were somewhat calmer.

"It means," said Aslan, "that though the Witch knew the Deep Magic, there is a magic deeper still which she did not know. Her knowledge goes back only to the dawn of time. But if she could have looked a little 20 further back, into the stillness and the darkness before Time dawned, she would have read there a different incantation. She would have known that when a willing victim who had committed no treachery was killed in a traitor's stead, the Table would crack and Death itself would start working backwards." 25

*The resurrected Aslan returns to the battle and the White Witch and her terrible army are defeated. As foretold in the prophecy, the four human children are installed as Kings and Queens of Narnia, which they govern well for a long time, only vaguely remembering their life in the real world.* 30

*One day while they are out hunting, they accidentally find themselves back at the lamp-post. Curious, they enter a thicket where branches gradually turn into coats.* 35



And next moment they all came tumbling out of a wardrobe door into the empty room, and they were no longer Kings and Queens in their hunting array but just Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy in their old clothes. It was the same day and the same hour of the day on which they had all 5 gone into the wardrobe to hide. Mrs Macready and the visitors were still talking in the passage; but luckily they never came into the empty room and so the children weren't caught.

And that would have been the very end of the story if it hadn't been that they felt they really must explain to the Professor why four of the 10 coats out of his wardrobe were missing. And the Professor, who was a very remarkable man, didn't tell them not to be silly or not to tell lies, but believed the whole story. "No," he said, "I don't think it will be any good trying to go back through the wardrobe door to get the coats. You won't get into Narnia again by *that* route. Nor would the coats be much 15 use by now if you did! Eh? What's that? Yes, of course you'll get back to Narnia again some day. Once a King in Narnia, always a King in Narnia. But don't go trying to use the same route twice. Indeed, don't *try* to get there at all. It'll happen when you're not looking for it. And don't talk too much about it even among yourselves. And don't mention it to anyone else unless you find that they've had adventures of the same sort themselves. 20 What's that? How will you know? Oh, you'll *know* all right. Odd things they say – even their looks – will let the secret out. Keep your eyes open. Bless me, what *do* they teach them at these schools?"

And that is the very end of the adventure of the wardrobe. But if the Pro- 25 fessor was right it was only the beginning of the adventures of Narnia.

hunting ar'ray *sb.*  
 jagtudstyr

spacious *adj.*  
rummelig  
maze-like *adj.*  
labyrintisk  
disorientating *adj.*  
forvirrende  
gloomy *adj.* skummel

## Understanding the text

1. The setting: When and where does the story take place?  
How would you characterize the atmosphere in the house:  
creepy, spacious, endless, safe, labyrinthine, intimate, maze-like,  
cosy, homely, disorientating, vast, weird, gloomy ...
2. Characters: Match the characters Peter, Susan, Edmund, Lucy and the Professor with the following words from the text:
 

the youngest	likeable
odd-looking	no wife
frightened	like a mother
bad-tempered	interested in birds
the next-youngest	a little afraid
an explorer	pretending
inquisitive	an old dear
very old with white hair	sensible
grumbling	excited
3. How do the children feel about staying in the house?
4. How do they spend their first day there, and what happens to Lucy?
5. Insert the words from the parenthesis in the following passage taken from the text:  
Then she felt that there was something crunching under her feet. "I wonder is that more moth-balls?" she thought, stooping down to feel it with her hand. But instead of feeling the hard, smooth wood of the wardrobe, she noticed something soft and powdery and extremely cold. "This is very queer," she said, and went on a step or two further. Next moment she found that what was rubbing against her face and hands, was no longer soft fur but something hard and rough and even prickly. [...] something cold and soft was falling on her.  
(noticed, wonder, something, felt, something, feeling, feel, something, something, queer, found)  
Look at the words you have inserted: Why did the author choose these particular words to describe Lucy's transition from the real world through the portal of the wardrobe into the other world?
6. List the words used about the "very strange person" that Lucy meets under the lamp-post.  
Discuss what seems familiar and unfamiliar.
7. Make sure that you know the meaning of the following words from the text, and then use them in a brief summary of pages 29-30:

- mice nibbling, the red turned to gold, his dead face looked nobler, a great cracking, deafening noise, shaking his mane, Deep Magic, Deeper Magic, willing victim, wardrobe, the Professor
8. Comment on Aslan's resurrection.
  9. Discuss the apparent paradox of time in our world compared to that of the magical world.
  10. "You won't get into Narnia again by *that* route," the Professor says. Discuss the possible implications of this statement.

implication *sb.*  
underforståelse,  
logisk slutning

## Interpretation and perspectives

### Group work with oral presentations

1. *LWW* as a children's story  
On one level, *LWW* is a simple children's story. Look for elements that are designed to make it a good read for children, such as characters, plot, language, style, narrative technique.
2. *LWW* as a moral tale  
On another level, *LWW* can be seen as a representation of the classical struggle between good and evil. What is characteristic of the good and the evil, respectively, in this text?
3. *LWW* as a religious allegory  
Some people see *LWW* as a Christian allegory. Find out what an allegory is and see if you can find Christian symbols and biblical parallels in the text. You may use this web site <http://cslewis.drzeus.net/papers/lionwitchallegory.html>
4. *LWW* in a historical perspective  
Discuss how the historical scene at the time when C.S. Lewis wrote *LWW* might have motivated him to invent Narnia. Find information on life in London during the Blitz in World War Two. Use this web site: [www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/blitz.htm](http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/blitz.htm)
5. *LWW* in a biographical perspective  
Find information about C.S. Lewis' life and works.

## Grammar task: Nouns

One dog, two dogs; one cat, two cats; one mouse, two ?? Normally, we just add an *s* to the noun to put it in the plural. But there are many exceptions to this rule. Put the following nouns from the text in the plural and deduce the rules. (Exercise also on WEB)  
Day, railway, story, country, sky, wife, hoof, fox, man, mouse, child, foot