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**Abstract**

Answers criticism of Lewis for setting up “caricatures” of villains in *That Hideous Strength* and then killing them hideously at the Belbury banquet. Notes “the contrast of festival and horror is […] a very old element in literature and human culture” and the relationship of humans to animals is appropriate to Romance as Frye defines it. Includes a map of Edgestow by Patterson.

**Additional Keywords**

Animals in C.S. Lewis; Lewis, C.S. *That Hideous Strength*; Lewis, C.S. *That Hideous Strength*—Animals in; Lewis, C.S. *That Hideous Strength*—As romance; Nancy-Lou Patterson; Ken Raney

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This is the hour of pride and power,  
Talon and tush and claw.  

Rudyard Kipling, "Night-Song in the  

In twenty-five pages, comprising much of the  
last part of That Hideous Strength, C.S. Lewis  
describes the destruction of the National Insti-  
tute of Coordinated Experiments, the devil-  
dominated N.I.C.E. Many people die in the process  
of this destruction, through the agency of fire,  
water, earthquake, and wild beasts. In particular,  
Lewis describes the deaths of eight people, all of  
whom have been central figures in the development  
of the N.I.C.E. Not everybody from the N.I.C.E.  
dies: Mark Studdock, who is a central figure in the  
book (but certainly not in the N.I.C.E.) survives.  
Lewis has called his novel "a modern fairy tale  
for grownups," and like any proper romance, it ends  
with nuptials--of the very animals who have killed  
some of the people--and with Mark Studdock restored  
to the arms of his wife Jane.

Another survivor is Curry, about whom Jared  
Lobdell has written an article with a self-  
explanatory title: "Petty Curry: Salvation by a  
taste for Tripe and Onions." A number of other  
people whose names we learn--Cosser, Stone, Capt.  
O'Hara, Wilkins, Winter, Gould, Kitty, Daisy, and  
Joe--either die without mention or escape without  
comment. And there are deaths which take place  
earlier in the novel, some caused by the N.I.C.E.  
--Compton and Mary Prescott--and, in particular,  
the scientist William Hingest, murdered for hav-  
ing attempted to leave the service of the N.I.C.E.,  
and the murderer Alcasan, whose execution provides  
his head to Professor Frost as Jane sees in the  
revelatory dream which begins the novel.

Writing in a tone of outrage, Diana Waggoner  
describes the deaths of those who, named or un-  
named, do not escape the destruction:

In That Hideous Strength . . . the char-  
acters are mere caricatures of both the good  
qualities he [Lewis] approved and the bad  
one he abhorred. All his prejudices--  
against science, against journalism, against  
vivisection, against sociology--are laid on to  
the villains, who are eventually dispatched in  
one of the most savage scenes in modern lit-  
erature, in which a horde of mad-dened wild  
animals invades a dinner party.

Numerous writers have condemned and defended Lew-  
is's positions vis-a-vis science, journalism, vivi-  
section, and sociology; it is my intention here to  
explain and perhaps account for his "savage . . .  
dinner party." The sequence will be discussed in
detail below, but it can be summarized as follows: at a banquet at Belbury, the headquarters of the N.I.C.E., pandemonium (literally, in the end) breaks out when the after-dinner speaker begins to utter nonsense syllables. The author of the disaster is actually Merlin, who, though sought by the N.I.C.E. in hopes that he will aid them, in fact becomes their nemesis. He has cast a “doom of gibberish” upon the N.I.C.E., as God had caused the builders of the Tower of Babel—“Gate of God”—to fall in their attempts to storm heaven, by descending to “confuse their language” (Genesis 11:19 RSV). When the confusion at Belbury has already caused rioting and even death, Merlin frees the animals which have been kept by the N.I.C.E. for vivisection and experiment. The beasts kill many of the banqueters. Some of the leaders of the N.I.C.E. escape, but they fall upon and kill one another, or commit suicide. The final escape, under the influence of Merlin, heads into the last centre of catastrophe, in which the town of Edgestow is destroyed.

The N.I.C.E. is destroyed, to be exact, by the activities of Merlin, by their own hands, by avenging animals, and by the outraged earth. But the sense of horror expressed by Diana Waggoner is centred upon the banquet, rather than upon the subsequent events, and the language used by Lewis is indeed evoke horror, of a very special kind. There are two especially potent passages in which food and tragedy are combined which are, interestingly, followed by additional passages in which food is combined with comedy. At the banquet, Lewis says, the elephant was “continuously trampling like a girl treading grapes, heavily and soon wetly trampling in the pash of blood and bones, of flesh, wine, fruit, and sodden table-cloth.” As the killing continues, “food and filth, spoiled luxury and mangled men, each more hideous by reason of the other,” are deliberately contrasted. The bear, Bultitude, having killed his man at Belbury, continues his feast at St. Anne’s (centre of opposition to the N.I.C.E.) with a she-bear guest, who has “eaten up all what was left of the goose and half the ham and all the junket, and now it’s lying along the table . . . wriggling from one dish to another and a-breaking all the crockery” while Bultitude is dancing in victory—“and he’s put one foot into the plum pudding already and he’s got his head all mixed up in the string of onions.”

This latter, comedic scene, as well as the scene of destruction, has more than a few elements in common with the nightmare dinner party which concludes Lewis Carroll’s Through the Looking Glass:

... some of them put their glasses upon their heads like extinguishers, and drank all that trickled down their faces—others up set the decanters, and drank the wine as it ran off the edges of the table—and three of them (who looked like kangaroos) scrambled into the dish of roast mutton, and began eagerly lapping up the gravy . . .

The passage continues—“already several of the guests were lying down in the dishes” and concludes, “one good pull, and plates, dishes, guests, and candles came crashing down together on a heap on the floor.” Nothing is not only funny but vaguely ominous in these passages, which becomes explicit in the following exchange:

“You look a little shy: let me introduce you to that leg of mutton,” said the Red Queen. “Alice—Mutton; Mutton—Alice.”

Alice, “not knowing whether to be frightened or amused,” offers the Queen a slice of mutton.

"Certainly not," the Red Queen said, very decidedly, "It isn’t etiquette to cut any one you’ve been introduced to."

The scenario is repeated, and though Alice declines to be introduced to the next course, a plum-pudding, the Queen growls the introductions anyway and commands the pudding to be brought back. Conquering her shyness under the circumstances, Alice outs a slice for the Queen.

"What impertinence!" said the Pudding. I wonder how you’d take it, if I were to cut a slice out of you, you creature!"

As if referring to these passages, Northrop Frye writes in The Secular Scripture, his recent study of romance, “At the bottom of the night world we find the cannibal feast.” He continues that “the image which causes that frisson [is] the identifying of human and animal natures in a world where animals are food for man.”

The elements to which Waggoner objects are present in That Hideous Strength precisely because it is a romance. Lewis wrote of it, “I have called this a fairy-tale in the hopes that no one who dislikes fantasy may be misled by the first two chapters into reading further.” Waggoner, of course, read on, and complained mightily, not only of the terrifying climax, but of the characterizations which lead up to it. But as Northrop Frye says:

The characterization of romance is really a feature of its mental landscape. Its heroes and villains exist primarily to symbolize a contrast between two worlds, one above the level of ordinary experience, and one below it. These are, first, a world associated with happiness, security, and peace: the emphasis is often thrown on childhood or on an "innocent" or pre-genital period of youth, and the images are those of spring and summer, flowers and sunshine . . .

This is almost a perfect description of St. Anne’s, especially as the weather grows preternaturally warm at the end of the novel. Belbury, too, seems to be exactly described by Frye:

The other is a world of exciting adventures, but adventures which involve separation, loneliness, humiliation, pain, and the threat of more pain. I shall call this world the demonic or night world."
Mark's experiences at Belbury follow just such a path. The whole structure of That Hideous Strength involves continuous movements from St. Anne's to Belbury and back, just as Frye says: "Because of the powerful polarizing tendency in romance, we are usually carried directly from one [world] to the other."22

The ceremonial dinner interrupted and finally ravaged is appropriate here: Frye writes, "Most of what goes on in the night world is cruelty and horror, yet what is essential is not cruelty as such but the presence of some kind of ritual."—in this case an elaborate formal dinner—and "the kind of chaos and disorder that is contrasted with the Elonian."23 is especially reflected in "the reducing of humanized beings to something subintelligent and subarticulate." The guests at Belbury are first reduced to unintelligibility, and then destroyed by the speechless beasts.

The contrast of festival and horror is, in fact, a very old element in literature and human culture. In discussing the dual nature of Dionysus's actions in The Bacchae of Euripides, Donald Sutherland speaks of "his kindliness and his deadliness," and observes that "it corresponds to the double and unarguable nature of experience in the world, its pleasurable or festive elements and its horrible or catastrophic elements, which are not distributed very well according to what we think is human merit."24 In That Hideous Strength, this distribution is rectified.

In The Bacchae, the young ruler Pentheus defies the beautiful god Dionysus. He is persuaded by that god to disguise himself as a woman in order to learn what rites the women carry out on the mountain tops. It is his fate to learn, for his own mother tears him to pieces, only learning when her five children are not killed a lion, but her own son. The contrast and juxtaposition of festival and horror have never been more forcibly drawn: "the fresh blood of the slain goat and the ecstasy of the raw feast we go racing to win," the women cry. "And the ground is flowing with white milk and flowing with red wine and flowing with nectar of bees.25 Thus his Maenads describe the scene of Dionysus's revels. But when Pentheus goes there, "His body was dispersed, one part below cliffs, another among the leafage of the deep woods... His mother somehow got into her hands / his battered head... Thus Pentheus, bemused by Dionysus as the residants and guests of Belbury are bemused by Merlin, himself becomes the main course of the feast.

In That Hideous Strength, the animals have been imprisoned and subjected to cruel experiments; early in his stay at Belbury, Mark takes a walk on the grounds:

This time he wandered round to the back parts of the house. Here he was surprised by a stable-like smell and a medley of growls, grunts, and whimpers—all the signs, in fact, of a considerable zoo.26 He recognizes this as part of "an immense programme of vivisection, freed at last from Red Tape," about which he "had thought vaguely of rats, rabbits, and an occasional dog." But, the confused noises from within suggested something very different. As he stood there one great yawn-howl arose, and then, as if it had set the key, all manner of trumpeting, braying, screams, laughter even, which shuddered and protested for a moment and then died away into mutterings and whines.27

Mark is not moved—he "had no scruples about vivisection. What the noise meant to him was the greatness and grandiosity of this whole undertaking... hundreds of pounds' worth of living animality, which the Institute could afford to cut up like paper on the mere off-chance of some interesting discovery."28

In Lewis's novel, these offences against animals are avenged by the animals themselves. Indeed, hunting culture myths frequently tell of disasters brought upon humankind by offenses against the etiquette required between animal and human, as in the Nishga (Tsimsian) myth from coastal British Columbia, which describes a lava flow brought down into the Nass valley by children who tormented a salmon. I saw the lava field myself: the Nishga live mainly on freshly-caught salmon even today. Hunting culture myths tend to cluster around a problem with two phases: first, both humans and animals are children of the earth; second, human killing of animals is thus fratricide. The solution to this dilemma lies in the formula: "We live in harmony with the animals: they give themselves to us so that we can live."29 in this ancient system, sin lies in humans offending animals (or the lord of the animals) so that this self-giving ceases and humans starve.

A particularly telling appearance of the ideas involved in this complex is found in the Kwakiutl myth of Elzabae (also from British Columbia). He goes as a guest to the table of Grizzly (a bear), only to find that he is the main course (a motif which appears in Lewis's The Silver Chair, where the children naively visit man-eating giants). With great irony, all the etiquette of a man about to eat an animal is practised by Grizzly before eating Elzabae. After being eaten, Elzabae is restored to life, and "being twice-born [he] is now a man of power." By dying as animals do (for food), the hero becomes a powerful food-provider. These hunting-culture themes tell in animal terms what in Neolithic culture became the Corn-god story, which finds its ultimate expression—and, Christians believe, historic fulfillment—in the Christian concept of a God who, in Jesus, dies and rises again, forever after to give His own Body and Blood as food and drink of eternal life to all who believe in Him. We are dealing here with motifs of the utmost antiquity, and the utmost sacrality.
I don't think That Hidous Strength is precisely about the etiquette of animal/human relationships, but, as with the two interplanetary novels which precede it, and with the Narnian Chronicles, that motif figures as part of Lewis's whole preoccupation with the role of humankind in nature. Lewis did not disapprove of the domestication of animals, nor was he a vegetarian. He thought, in common with much of conservative or traditional humankind the world over, that humans had a right to eat animals as well as plants. He also thought that this required responsible behaviour on the part of the humans, rather in line with Old Testament views: a swift, clean kill, no killing without the necessity of eating the prey, and an admission of responsibility in the case of animals domesticated and kept, whether for companionship, burden-bearing, or food. He was opposed to vivisection, which he interpreted as the infliction of pain upon helpless animals. I am not ready to argue this matter entirely from his point of view, but he was thinking of the needless pain inflicted upon animals to test their reaction, as when rats are subjected to electric shock. This kind of thing might have been seen as related to the experiments carried out on living people by Nazi doctors, or the experiments upon American blacks early in the century, in which men were allowed to die of syphilis when the cure was known. Humans behave abominably, both to animals and to humans. There is little fantasy in the ideas and practices of the N.I.C.E., and the things Lewis feared had come and have come to pass again and again.

Four years before Lewis was born, Rudyard Kipling wrote his children's masterpiece, The Jungle Book. The animals Lewis describes in That Hidous Strength (to which he refers as "pantomime animals") bear a strong resemblance to that Victorian work, just as the fatal dinner party resembles the one attended by Alice. The Jungle Book begins with the poem which has furnished my epigraph:

This is the hour of pride and power,
Talon and tush and claw.
Oh, hear the call--Good hunting all
That keep the Jungle Law!

The Jungle Law required, among other things, that animals greet one another with the salutation, "We be of one blood, ye and I." Mowgli, the wolf-suckled child, makes himself kin to the animal world, and all the stories in the Jungle Book deal at least in part with animal-human relationships. One may compare Lewis's descriptions of his animals with those of Kipling.

Lewis describes how "The beasts ... Merlin sent into the dining-room, maddened by his voice and touch." In the order of their arrival they are: tiger, wolf, snake, gorilla, elephant, and bear. Each of these has a parallel in Kipling: Shere Khan, Father and Mother Wolf, Kaa, the Bandar-log, Kala Nag, and Baloo. In That Hidous Strength, the tigers known to us as "pantomime animals") bear a strong resemblance to that Victorian work, just as the fatal dinner party resembles the one attended by Alice. The Jungle Book begins with the poem which has furnished my epigraph:

When Shere Khan threatens the baby, "Mother Wolf sprang forward, her eyes, like two green moons in the darkness ..."40

The wolf is followed into Belbury's dining-room by a snake: "Something else... darted between his feet. Mark saw it streak across the floor and snarl the scrap and rake that mass of interlocked terror into new and frantic convulsions."49 Kipling's parallel is the great python Kaa:

They found him stretched out on a warm ledge in the afternoon sun... darting his big blunt-nosed head along the ground, and twisting the thirty feet of his body into fantastic knots and curves, and lidding his eyes as he thought of his dinner to come...

After the snake, a gorilla appears at the devastated table in imitation of the real gorilla leaped on the table where Jules [the director of the N.I.C.E., just killed] had sat and begun drumming on its chest. Then, with a roar, it jumped down into the crowd."46 Lewis had seen the film "King Kong," and remarked upon it in one of his letters. The motif of imitation as a simian trait appears in Kipling's description of the monkey band which captures Mowgli:

One of the monkeys made a speech and told his companions that Mowgli's capture marked a new thing in the history of the Bandar-log, for Mowgli was going to show them how to weave sticks and canes together as a protection against rain and cold... the monkeys tried to imitate; but in a very few minutes they lost interest...46

The climactic animal arrival in That Hidous Strength is that of the elephant, whose approach is heralded by a great pounding at the door.

Then, Out of the darkness there came a grey smoky something... after that, monstrous, improbable, the huge shape of the elephant thrust its way into the room: its eyes enigmatic, its ears standing stiffly out like devils' wings...74

The elephant kills both by catching up people in his trunk and trampling them beneath his feet. These elements are present in Kipling's stories too:

There was nothing in the way of fighting, that Kala Nag, the old wise Black Snake [the elephant's name] did not know, for he had stood up in his charge to the wounded tiger, and, curling his soft trunk to be out of harm's way, had knocked the springing brute sideways in mid-air... and knocked him over... wailing upon him with his huge knees... Just as the elephants' dancing ground is seen by the residents of St. Anne's in the final chapter of That Hidous Strength, when nuptials of animal and humans conclude the novel.

The last animal to make a kill in That Hidous Strength is actually a character in the novel... if you had been watching, you would have seen the most wonderful thing in the world--the wolf checked in mid-spring... he shot straight up into the air... landing almost where he left ground. "Whoa!" he snapped. "A man's cub. Look!"

...
the only one of the revenging beasts to have a name—he is Mr. Bulitude. A bear, he is first encountered by Jane: "Sitting up on its hunkers beside the bath and occupying most of the room, was a great, snuffy, wheezy, beady-eyed, loose-skinned, gor-bellied brown bear." This appearance is paralleled in *The Jungle Book* by Mowgli’s teacher Baloo: "The big, solemn, old brown bear." 30 Bulitude’s benign behaviour at St. Anne’s is in contrast with his actions at Belbury: 31 32

Down the long, empty passages . . . it padded . . . Saliva dripped from its mouth and it was beginning to growl. It was thinking of warm, salt tastes, of the pleasant resistances of bone, of things to crunch and lick and worry. 32

Balloo, too, is capable of battle: coming to the rescue of Mowgli, who has been carried off by the Bandar-log, "he threw himself squarely on his haunches, and, spreading out his fore-paw, hugged as many as he could hold." 32

The animals in these passages—whether from Lewis or Kipling—go about their awesome tasks of violence with a ceremonial dignity and splendour which precisely matches the romantic prescription of festival and horror. Grace Ironwood says of the elephants at St. Anne’s: "How colossal they are. It is like a minuet of giants. They are a sort of good daemons." 33 And Ransom, the Director of St. Anne’s, replies, "They are not common beasts." The animals of *That Hideous Strength* are playing a symbolic role, whether in the world above ordinary experience, where they resemble the heraldic beasts of courtly display, or in the night world below, where they are magnificent avengers with blazing eyes and irresistible power.

Thus far I have concentrated upon the elements of Belbury’s destruction which most impressed Waggoner: the “horde of maddened wild animals” which “invades a dinner party.” In them the identification of human and animal natures truly causes the *frisson* to which Northrop Frye refers, for these animals come not from a zoo but from the unconscious mind of the reader. In them the "cannibal feast" is most horrifyingly presented. Nevertheless the novel contains a number of scenes of killing in which humans kill humans. In order to meanfully examine all these deaths, it is necessary to examine them exactly as they actually occur in the novel. In the order of their deaths, the dead are: Horace Jules, Director of the N.I.C.E., killed by Fairy Hardcastle; Fiiy Hardcastle, killed by a tiger; Steele, killed by an elephant; Pilastro, killed by Straik and Wither; the Rev. Mr. Straik, killed by Wither; Deputy Director Wither, killed by Mr. Bulitude the bear; Professor Frost, killed by his own hand; and Lord Feverstone, killed by the earth herself. I shall give the passages in which these deaths occur below, and couple each one with Lewis’s description of the death as he or she first appears. The order of appearance of these chapters is the reverse of their order of their deaths (I include below all those whose deaths we witness): Alcasan, seen in Jane’s dream; 33 Frost, seen by Jane in the same vision; 34 Curry, who meets Mark; 34 Lord Feverstone, Dickens Devine), who is first mentioned by Curry, 34 and then appears before Mark; 35 Wither, to whom Lord Feverstone proposes that Mark go; 35 and whom Mark then meets: "Jules, who is mentioned in almost the same breath" by Lord Feverstone, but who actually appears just in time for the fateful banquet; William Hingest, who meets Mark, 36 and is then murdered (witnessed in a dream by Jane), 36 and discovered dead; 36 Steele, who meets Mark; 36 Pilastro, also introduced to Mark; 36 Fairy Hardcastle, mentioned to Mark by Pilastro and then introduced to him; 36 and the Rev. Mr. Stralk, also met by Mark. 36 All of these characters first appear when met by Mark or, more rarely, seen in a dream by Jane: Mark witnesses the deaths of those killed by animals, and Jane witnesses the deaths of those killed before the Belbury banquet. All the rest die for the reader alone.

What is the meaning of all these deaths? They are arranged, as is characteristic of a romance, so that in each case the distribution of festival and catastrophe—so poorly arranged in our world—is rectified to accord with justice. Whether or not it accords with mercy is another matter.

At the Belbury banquet, the first to die is the after-dinner speaker, Jules, whose gabbling incoherence (caused by Merlin) has begun a riot. He is shot by the policewoman, Fairy Hardcastle. She has been told via an unintelligible note, to do something. In response, she has locked the door to the room, and fought her way to the head table. "Then came an ear-splitting noise and after that, at last, a few seconds of dead silence. Mark noticed that Jules had been killed: only secondly that Miss Hardcastle had shot him." Horace Jules, Director of the N.I.C.E., is described by Lewis: "He was a very little man, whose legs were so short that he had unluckily been compared to a duck. He had a turned-up nose and a face in which some original bonhommie had been much interfered with by years of good living and conceit." 37 Feverstone had said of him to Mark—"You don’t imagine that little mascot has anything to say to what really goes on?" 32 But Jules has "insisted on regarding himself not as a figure to the real director of the N.I.C.E." 33 As after-dinner speaker on the occasion of a great banquet at Belbury, he is the first to undergo the doom of gibberish, and the first to die. His position as first in prominence in the N.I.C.E. is thus ironically fulfilled.
Almost immediately afterwards, his murderer, Fairy Hardcastle, dies, killed by a tiger which has entered the room from "another door, the one used by the servants." The death is directly witnessed by Mark:

He saw the hideous head, the cat's shrill of the mouth, the flaming eyes ... Then the tiger had disappeared again. Something fat and white and bloody was down among the feet of the unconscious Fairy Hardcastle. He recognized it at first, for the face, from where he stood, was upside down, and the grimaces disguised it until it was quite dead. Then he recognized Fairy Hardcastle.

The dead woman had first appeared before Mark when he found himself in "the stoker's or caretter's grip of a big woman in a black, short-skirted uniform." She is the only woman included among the dead whose names we learn. "Despite a bust that would have done credit to a Victorian barmaid, she was rather thickly built than fat and her iron-grey hair was cropped short. Her face was square, stern, and pale, and her voice deep." She wears poorly-applied lipstick and chewed a cheroot, which ranked en insultingly, sexual and at the same time wholly unattractive." She is the head of "the police side of the Institute," charged with "all sanitary cases—a category which ranged from vaccination to chartry unfitness to death." She is who tortures Jane by burning her with a lighted cheroot in an effort to find out where she had travelled (in actual fact to St. Anne's). She has already caused the death of Hingest, and here we have, coolly shot Jules. As a murderer and torturer she is executed by a tiger, her counterpart, as "man-eater," in the animal kingdom.

Following her death, many more die, as a wolf, a snake, a gorilla, and other animals enter. Then the elephant breaks in, killing Steele. "Mark saw distinctly how it swooped down, curled itself round a man—Steele, he thought, but everyone looked different now—and lifted him bodily high off the floor." The passage continues, in an echo of Kipling's Kala Nag, "It stood for a second with Steele writhing in the curl of its trunk and then dashed him to the floor." Steele is head of the Sociology Department of the N.I.C.E. As first seen by Mark, "He was a tall, unsmiling man with that kind of face which, though long and horse-like, has nevertheless rather thick and pouting lips." Mark is presented with him as a sociologist for his department by Hingest. Steele contemptuously rebuffs Mark and he is rescued from embarrassment by Filostrato. Later on, Mark learns that he is, after all, to be in Steele's department. Steele is described to Mark by Cosser (Steele's assistant) as "rather a dangerous man." Mark's first task is to arrange the destruction of Cure Hardy, an ancient and exquisite village, but again Steele frustrates him. "I know nothing about your position." Mark then learns that his real job will be to rehabilitate Alcasan. Fairy Hardcastle tells him so. In attempting to clarify his position with Wither he learns that he has lost his original post at Bracton College. Finally he accepts a small stipend with the N.I.C.E. and is told to make himself useful, by Wither. "Elasticity" is her watchword. Finally a part of the N.I.C.E. helps to engineer a riot. "He enjoyed it even more when he heard Steele and Cosser talking about it in a way which showed they had known it had been engineered." Steele has been tossed aside by the N.I.C.E.'s inner ring. In the end, Steele is tossed aside (to his death) by the elephant in the same way that he has been prepared to toss Mark (and no doubt others).

Aroused by the smell of killings and by a newly released female bear, Mr. Bultitude (with the whispered words of Merlin in his ear) sets out. Merlin has freed Mr. Maggs, a tramp, and Maggs, all of whose escape and Maggs to Anne's and the tiger to his own devices. Nearly everyone else has been killed in the dining room by one or another of the animals. But not all, for Wither has already left the room, as have Straik and Filostrato. Straik and Wither drag the unconscious Filostrato and then the Head (of the decapitated criminal, Alcasan, which has become the mouthpiece for a Dark Eldil or Macrobe), true leader of the N.I.C.E., is kept "alive by tubes. They stand, bared before it, and it calls there Filostrato's rescuers then decapitate him in a device by himself has designed. "His last thought was that he had underestimated the terror." Filostrato, "the great physiologist," is described as Mark first meets him: "His dark, smooth face and black hair were unmistakable, and so was the foreign accent." He was fat to that degree which is comic on the stage, but the effect was not funny in real life." For him, the "real work" of the N.I.C.E. is ill-preserved: the existence of the human race. To do this he is quite willing to engineer disturbances: "this is how things are managed." His ideal is the "civilized tree," made of metal: indeed, he wants to "clean the planet of all organic life. And if that cannot be, at least it must be rendered "geldings and oxen." But the sterile moon remains his ideal. For him, the future is enshrined in the Head of Alcasan, to whom he presents Mark: Jane sees her husband in a dream, with "a great fat man." Filostrato's end is to be sacrificed to that which he has adored, beheaded by two of his closest associates.

Almost immediately, another sacrifice is called for; Straik is then killed by Wither: "Straik reached the ante-room, slipped in Filostrato's blood. Wither slashed repeatedly with his knife. He has not strength to go through the neck, but he had killed the man." Straik has been a clergyman, viewed by Mark in "the threadbare clothes and clumsy boots, the frayed clerical collar, the dark, lean, tragic face, gaunt and ill-preserved." For him, "the decisive of a real and lasting." In the end he adores this monstrous resurrected being, and becomes its final sacrifice, when Wither kills him.

Wither is then killed by Mr. Bultitude. A great bear, rising to its hind legs as he came in sight of it, had met him in the doorway—its mouth open, its eyes flaming, its forepaws spread out as if for an embrace. He is killed in a bear-hug, as Balto's monkey enemies had been killed in The Jungle Book. John Wither of the N.I.C.E. enters the novel when Lord Feverstone remarks, "Let's run you across tomorrow to see John Wither." In fact, Feverstone has been recruiting Mark with talk of "biochemical conditioning in its end and direct manipulation of the brain," and has said, "You are what we need; a trained sociologist with a radically realistic outlook, not afraid of responsibility." He is telling Mark the truth of the tale he will perform but revealing from him the secret desire of the N.I.C.E. to obtain the, Mark's wife. "Also," Feverstone continues, "a sociologist who can write." When Mark meets him, Wither was a white-haired old man with a kindly manner and whose face was clean-shaven and very large indeed, with watery blue eyes, and very rather vague and chaotic about it. Mark does not succeed in learning from Wither pre-
closely what job he has been hired to do. Indeed, he fears that "a perfectly direct question would [be] . . . a crudity which might suddenly exclude him from the world and towards the light work of vague, yet heavily important, confidence in which he was gradually being enfolded."

Wither is one of the central figures of the N.I.C.E. and has almost entirely abandoned any hold on reality. He and Frost are in direct contact with the diabolical and true masters of the N.I.C.E. Indeed, he has so far lost contact with his body that his image is often seen pottering about, vaguely humming in unexpected places, a tail, stooped, shuffling, creating figure." Lewis remarks of him, "be that souls who have lost the intellectual good do indeed receive in return . . . the vain privilege of thus reproducing themselves in many places as wraiths.

He does finally tell Mark precisely what he wants:

... here his face suddenly changed. The widely opened mouth looked all at once like the mouth of some enraged animal: what had been the senile vagueness of the eyes became an absence of all specifically human expression. "And bring the girl. Do you understand? Get your wife." Wither himself kills Filostrato and Straik: in the end, whose "widely opened mouth" had frightened Mark, falls prey to the great bear Bultitude, who greets him with "its mouth open."

Feverstone, meanwhile, gets furthest away of all those who had been in the dining room at Belbury. He heads towards Eldestow. He had watched "the whole massacre, his eyes bright, something like a smile on his face," and Frost, on the other hand, finds Straik, Wither, and Filostrato dead in the chambers of the Head. After this discovery, he retires to the "Objective Room" locks himself in, and pushes the key through a speaking tube into the passage. Then he "poured out the petrol and threw a lighted match." As he dies, he realizes "that souls and personal responsibility existed." Then, "with one supreme effort he flung himself back into his illusion. In that attitude eternity overtook him as sunshine in old tangles and overtakes frogs and turns them into unchangeable stone."

Frost first appears in Jane's dream: "He was a good-looking man in his rather cold way, but he wore pince-nz, and these kept catching the light so as to make his eyes invisible. This, combined with the almost unnatural perfection of his teeth, somehow gave Jane a disagreeable impression." Mark, too, in his turn is puzzled by "the silent man with the pince-nez and the pointed beard," whose presence in the inner circle of the N.I.C.E. he does not understand. When Mark returns to the N.I.C.E. after a last attempt to disentangle himself (he has actually tried to bring Jane there), he sees "a man in a grey suit whose pince-nez, as he glanced toward Mark and towards the place where the old window conceals his eyes," came opaque windows concealing his eyes."

There too are "the pointed beard, the extreme whiteness of forehead, the regularity of features, and the light Arctic smile." Frost is to be Mark's private master as is initiating into the innermost ring of the N.I.C.E. He introduces him to the Objectivity Room, and to the fact that Alcassen's head is "used by a different mind" - in fact, by "macabeg" who are "outside the whole world of our subjective but not by any means outside the universe."

This exaggeration of traits through the operation of evil is what Lewis was trying to show in the effects which Waggoner calls "mere caricatures," but which the great critic Frye might describe as "features . . . of a mental landscape." Karkainen aptly summarizes: "Mr. Wither and the hag represent one tendency of evil. The tendency toward vapid nothingness." On the other hand, "Dr. Frost and the wer-wolf are alike in their ruthless coldness and in their direct, unrelenting approach to pursuing their evil desires."

As we saw, the vague Wither meets dissolution by being devoured; the "Arctic" coldness of Frost is consumed in self-ignited flames.

Meanwhile, congratulating himself on his escape, Lord Feverstone passes the traffic pouring out of Edgestow (all its residents have become inured to leave it, but he rushes towards it). "It was about four o'clock that Feverstone found himself flung on his face . . . That was the first shock." More earth tremors follow. Then, "The temperature began to rise." The snow melts. Fog rises, there is another shock. Gradually he finds himself descending,
Devine at school as much as anyone he could remember.” In this early appearance, “He was nearly as tall as the other [Weston], but slender, and apparently the younger of the two.” Devine has, in fact, been to Malacandra (Mars) as West- on baldly, whom he secretly despises. In That Hideous Strength, he becomes Mark’s patron and patronizer. “Man has got to take charge of man,” he opines. “That means, remember, that some men have got to take charge of the rest.” Weston was a visionary, one whose interests went beyond himself: he dies on Perelandra (Venus). Devine (Lord Feverstone) was the perfect worldly, and he dies on, and indeed, in the Earth (Thulcandra), the last of Ransom’s adversaries to perish.

Should an artist invent characters he hates and then dispose of them with relish? One might cite (from the ridiculous) the almost universal practice of mystery novelists in making their convicted murderers unsympathetic, and (to the sublime) the whole of the “Inferno” in The Divine Comedy, where Hell is almost entirely populated by persons of whom Dante disapproved. In That Hideous Strength, the forces of “chaos and disorder” meet chaos and disorder. The tiny coterie of those devoted to “the courtly occasion” survives and flourishes. It is a Romance, after all.

Septagesima, AD 1980.

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

2 C.S. Lewis, That Hideous Strength (London: The Bodley Head, 1945): see 99, 105, 205; 113, 131, 194, 308-310; 150, 152, 189; 314; 209; 210-213; 190-192, respectively.
3 Ibid.: 270. 4 Ibid.: 91, 95, 96. 5 Ibid.: 12.
7 Lewis, 1945: 431. 8 Ibid.: 434. 9 Ibid.: 436.
10 Ibid.: 466-467. 11 Ibid.: 467.
26 Ibid., my italics.
27 Donald Sutherland, The Bacchae of Euripides (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1968): 123. 28 Ibid., my italics.
31 Ibid.: 122-123. 32 Ibid.: 123.
37 Ibid.: 432.
41 Kipling, 92. 42 Ibid.: 9.
43 Lewis 1945: 433. 44 Kipling op. cit.: 55.
45 Lewis 1945: 433. 46 Kipling op. cit.: 64.
47 Lewis 1945: 433. 48 Kipling op. cit.: 183.
49 Lewis 1945: 192. 50 Kipling op. cit.: 39.
51 Lewis 1945: 436. 52 Kipling op. cit.: 70.
68 Ibid.: 70. 69 Ibid.: 91. 70 Ibid.: 431.
71 Ibid.: 419. 72 Ibid.: 48. 73 Ibid.: 419.
74 Ibid.: 432. 75 Ibid.: 76. 76 Ibid.: 70.

(continued on page 42)
Textually this is the revised edition that first appeared in 1965, except that "Silver Anniversary Edition" is added to the title page of each volume. This edition is obviously meant for completist collectors, being priced at $50.00. It is visually handsome and a fitting way to mark twenty-five years of pleasure.

We may look forward later in the decade to 1987 and 1988, which will be the golden anniversary of The Hobbit in Britain and the United States respectively.

Glen GoodKnight

NOTE: A similar item on a more modest scale, is the "25th Anniversary Collection to mark the publication of J.R.R. Tolkien's great work of imaginative fiction," The Lord of the Rings published by Unwin Paperbacks, the Third Edition, 1979. Bound in paperback in a silver box, the three volumes are accompanied by "a 16 page anniversary booklet illustrated with photographs, cuttings, and letters," the text of which was prepared by Humphrey Carpenter. Parts of three contemporary reviews appear, along with a letter from Tolkien to Rayner Unwin and a manuscript page from LOTR.

Nancy-Lou Patterson

PREVIEW

OF THE NEXT ISSUE

The Motif of the Garden in the Novels of Tolkien, Williams, and Lewis by M. E. Pitts

The Irish Mythological Cycle and Tolkien's Eldar by Gerald V. Gillespie

The Cosmic Gospel: Lewis and L'Engle by J. L. Carter

"Felicitous Space" in the Fantasies of George MacDonald and Mervyn Peake by Anita Moss

At the present moment, we need more articles on the genres of myth and fantasy generally, other authors, and Charles Williams, in order to attempt to maintain a "balance" of material in each issue. Send submissions directly to the Editor: Glen GoodKnight, 740 South Hobart Blvd., California 90005.

Review: Tolkien in Silver, continued from page 33

The Hobbit on the front cover, with runes under it, the translation of which is not given. The three spines together contain a design of clouds and stars at the top and mountains and pines below.

(I have subsequently discovered from Ruth Noel that the Runes say "Twenty-five years" in Anglo-Saxon. It was she who supplied them to Houghton Mifflin for this edition. Small wonder my previous attempt to decipher them from the Angerthas had proved fruitless.)