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Abstract

Considers *Dracula* as a source for *That Hideous Strength*.

Additional Keywords

Lewis, C.S. *That Hideous Strength*—Sources; Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*—Influence on C.S. Lewis.

BRAM STOKER AND C.S. LEWIS

DRACULA AS A SOURCE FOR *That Hideous Strength*

MERVYN NICHOLSON

It may seem odd to connect the author of *Dracula* with the author of *Mere Christianity*, the creator of the king-vampire with the creator of Aslan. Stoker published *Dracula* in 1897, a year before Lewis was born; he died when Lewis was a teenager, in 1912: both men were expatriate Irishmen. Stoker is part of the efflorescence of romantic narrative around the turn of the century that included Haggard, Hudson, Doyle, Stevenson, Wells; and he does indeed appear to have influenced Lewis, especially his Gothic extravaganza, *Dracula*.

To take a clear example: *Dracula* is referred to as the "Un-Dead" (201 ff.); Lewis' evil genius Weston (born 1896) is referred to as the "Un-Man." They are as close lexically as they are in other ways. Thus both are figures that have ceased to be human; their bodies house demonic forces. Both have a predilection for ranting, nihilistic speeches. Both are said to combine wickedness with puerility: "What chilled and almost cowed . . . was the union of malice with something nearly childish of a nasty little boy at a preparatory school . . . a black puerility, an aimless empty spitefulness" (Lewis, *Perelandra*, 123). Likewise, Van Helsing in *Dracula* explains that, while *Dracula*'s "brain powers survived the physical death, . . . in some faculties of mind he has been, and is, only a child" (302: note the anticipation of the "Head" in *That Hideous Strength*, whose "brain powers" also "survived the physical death"). But the influence of Stoker is often quite subtle; at times, it even explains certain features of Lewis' fiction. At the same time, Lewis' use of Stoker illuminates aspects of Stoker's work.

Critics have emphasized Lewis' Christianity and his links with writers like MacDonald, Williams, and Tolkien. Undoubtedly, Lewis is in the same tradition of Christian romance and apologetic to which they belong, but there is another side to his literary inheritance — a side which is non-Christian, at least concerning propagating the faith. This line of influence includes H. G. Wells and Bernard Shaw — but also Rider Haggard and, above all, E. Nesbit — the authors, in other words, of his youth. It is to this group that Bram Stoker belongs. *Dracula* is of course a Christian book; but its sticky religiosity is of a type very unlike the harmony and rational clarity of Lewis' "mere Christianity." The religion of *Dracula* is a prop to the tale rather than its point, as it fundamentally is in Lewis' fiction.

As an imaginative writer and literary critic, Lewis is distinguished by his sensitivity to genre. He was extremely conscious of formal construction, possessing a delight in

form for its own sake that is rare in modern writers, a delight he describes in *An Experiment in Criticism*. A key feature of his science fiction trilogy is the way it Christianizes a secular genre, specifically the kind of science fiction practiced by H. G. Wells, the early master of the form. Lewis acknowledges his debt to Wells in *Out of the Silent Planet*, besides acknowledging the brilliance of "invention" of the atheistic Olaf Stapledon in the preface to *That Hideous Strength*. Nevertheless, Lewis was attempting not just to "baptize" a non-Christian form, but to rework it altogether.

Hence his science fiction trilogy is a complex experiment in form: each novel is more ambitious and complicated than its predecessor. Just as the Chronicles of Narnia evolved out of E. Nesbit, the science fiction trilogy evolved, generically speaking, from H. G. Wells, especially *Out of the Silent Planet*, which is Wellsian in style, characterization, tone, though not, of course, in its theism and cosmic vitalism. *Perelandra*, on the other hand, is rooted not in Wells, but in an earlier and greater atheist: the poet Shelley, whose magical *Prometheus Unbound* haunts the superb scenes in *Perelandra* of Ransom's "rebirth," rising from the caves of Perelandra. The sensory baths of color and motion in *Perelandra* are thoroughly Shelleyan. Shelley is another influence on Lewis that has been underestimated, though Lewis acknowledged and praised the great Romantic rebel at a time when Shelley's stock was at its lowest (his essay on Shelley is reprinted in *Selected Literary Essays*).

That Hideous Strength, which critics have shown comparatively little interest in, represents a very different field of influence, that of Stoker. In fact, *Dracula* can be read as a model for *That Hideous Strength*. A. N. Wilson (the biographer of C. S. Lewis) argues that while *Dracula* has not been admitted to the canon, it has refused to go away, even in the simple sense of going out of print. Not only does it continue to attract readers, but its significance as a literary text is growing. The book is a classic, but not a classic of the mainstream "great tradition" kind. One cannot read it without being impressed by the author's skills, especially his narrative construction. *Dracula* is told entirely by way of documents produced by characters in the story — diaries, telegrams, newspapers, letters, phonograph records (a noteworthy attempt to bring the latest technology into the tale). Indeed, while not the kind of book that one can imagine post-structuralists showing much interest in, it has the typical post-structuralist feature of being a narrative about itself. *Dracula* is the story of its own making. Thus, we are often reminded that all the relevant documents in the case are being collated to produce a connected

account: presumably that the reader is reading. Stoker skillfully presents the story as a collective, with each character providing parts of the plot, all documents dovetailed and linked. Yet, at the same time, this highly self-conscious construction powerfully renders what it would be like to pursue — and to be pursued by — a vampire.

Dracula remains a disturbing book. Foolish or careless readers may guffaw over its kinky sexuality, which is supposedly visible only to post-Freudians. A similarly superficial tendency views *Dracula* as a repression of the Lacanian "Other" — a denial that silences, so to speak, the vampire's side of the story. But the careful reader — one who visualizes what the text presents — knows better. *Dracula* disturbs and shocks: it is still a book not to be indulged late at night, alone, or in dark places, even by readers who no more believe in vampires than they believe in Santa Claus or the obnoxious troll that annoys the three Billy Goats Gruff, or even, for many, God Almighty Himself. Its terrors command respect from the reader, not condescension. For of course the vampire is not only disturbing: he is "that hideous strength" incarnate: the reason why we do not see the story from the vampire's viewpoint is, simply, that the vampire is not accessible to human consciousness. He — or it — is a being of supernatural strength and power — not human at all: a being that literally feeds on humans, like the Morlocks and Martians of Wells's science fiction contemporary with *Dracula* — and reminding one of *Screwtape's* chilling references to demonic diet in the *Screwtape Letters*.

The most powerful part of *Dracula* is the sequence from Jonathan Harker's diary which opens the tale. The Count — he has him at his mercy in the castle — orders him to write letters dated weeks ahead and at various places in Europe, addressed to his connections in England, saying he is well and on his way home: transparent instruments by which the Count can evade responsibility for the death of Harker — as Harker knows. *Dracula* is soon aware that his "guest" has figured out he is no country squire. In response to his Transylvanian host's query, Harker carelessly reveals that in England he can have as many solicitors as he likes, thus casting away the one card Harker has to play — namely his usefulness. *Dracula* needs him, but not if, as Harker naively explains, he can be replaced: to lose one's usefulness to *Dracula* is to be a dead duck. Lewis' view of evil as a compulsion to use/control others is crystallized in Stoker's vampire. One recalls the dictum of *The Magician's Nephew* (set at the same time and in the same London as *Dracula*) that evil beings are only interested in power: "They are not interested in things or people unless they can use them; they are terribly practical" (71). *Dracula* illustrates this principle with ghastly preciseness.

There is no courtesy, no romantic appeal, no pathos, no charm in *Dracula's* personality: he is simply horrifying. His breath stinks of decaying partly digested blood — human blood. He is to humans what the "packer" in the "packing plant" is to the calf. One recalls *Screwtape* in

"Screwtape Proposes a Toast" raising his glass of distilled human misery and suffering. The unlimited hunger for power — the eating metaphor is crucial to *Dracula* — is exactly what *Dracula* is. He wishes to come to England in order to have an unbounded field of operation, to appease his frustrated appetite. He is an obsessed figure whose sole interest is to reduce people to food: an egoist, like Napoleon in Lewis' *The Great Divorce*, on such a scale as to cease being human. Any cultural refinements he may possess (he appears to be a good cook) are practical: a means to disguise and further his predation. This predation is a matter of sheer force, too, not of intellectual evil: "we need arms of many kinds. Our enemy is not merely spiritual. Remember that he has the strength of twenty men" (249). In *Perelandra*, Ransom makes the same realization, that he must physically fight the demonic Weston (147).

In fact, both *Dracula* and *That Hideous Strength* are virtuosic in their narrative construction. Stoker assembles a logical sequence of documents to sustain a bizarre plot: his skill in separating and entwining narrative lines has a counterpart in Lewis. Lewis presents the action by deftly coordinating a male and a female lead, the first involved with evil forces; the second with forces of good. The narrative switches back and forth between these strands, and unites them at the conclusion. These strands parallel each other and present the same or related events from differing viewpoints, in a fascinating way. In particular, the figure of the naive young man (Harker in one, Mark in the other) married to an innocent young woman (Mina in one, Jane in the other) is a crucial narrative device used by both Stoker and Lewis. Mark's sojourn in the house of N.I.C.E. parallels Harker's in *Dracula's* castle. (The complex of motifs here closely recalls Christian's capture by Doubt, the giant who imprisons Christian in his castle, in a book Lewis wrote his own version of: *The Pilgrim's Progress*.) In *Dracula*, Harker tells a hair-raising story of captivity and vampiric force; in *That Hideous Strength*, Mark undergoes a testing ordeal of captivity by evil. The N.I.C.E., interestingly enough, is obsessed with blood, as we are often reminded. Thus, whole buildings are devoted to "blood transfusion." The strategic closing words of Chapter Two describe the place as follows: "a florid Edwardian mansion which had been built for a millionaire who admired Versailles. At the sides, it seemed to have sprouted into a widespread outgrowth of newer cement buildings, which housed the Blood Transfusion Office" (51). The combination of overweening ambition and dependency upon blood is the basis of *Dracula*.

The most conspicuous device for uniting the narrative lines in both *Dracula* and *That Hideous Strength* is the central female figure. Jane, the lead female in *Hideous*, is burdened with a series of clairvoyant dreams which reveal to her the evil doings of the "Head" — that is, the conspiracy of evil — that increasingly controls her husband. Her clairvoyant visions become the focal point of a counter-conspiracy of good characters. Likewise, *Dracula* increasingly centers on Mina, who, like Jane, is married to a male who is frozen or paralyzed, if not quite captured, by the enemy. Like Mina

in *Dracula*, Jane is conspicuously — not to say ostentatiously — excluded from the councils of the comitatus group hunting the enemy (184).

Jane of course repeats the role of Mina in another way, for Mina also has visions that disclose the movements of the enemy. Both tales are thus punctuated by clairvoyant trances which are not merely Gothic props but are vital to the plot. They provide a remote viewing device, in effect, by which to hunt the enemy (remote viewing is a common plot motif in romance and folk-tale). These visions are ambivalent: while useful, they are the mark of the evil they combat. Significantly, they stop as soon as the evil is extirpated. In both novels, the evil figure is alerted to her psychic eavesdropping, and so attempts to take control of her. In fact, the attempt to capture her, mentally and physically, constitutes the plot and gives it its drive. In *That Hideous Strength*, Jane actually sees Frost in her "dream," watching her. Frost, with his coldness, thinness, and gleaming white teeth, closely recalls Dracula.

The fact that the action centers on a woman, on a struggle for control of a woman, is crucial in other ways. *Dracula* and *That Hideous Strength* are both obsessed with marriage, specifically the duties of marriage. Indeed one reason, it seems, why Lucy Westenra in *Dracula* succumbs to the vampire's attentions — and thus becomes a vampire herself — is that she is not married. She has no father, and her mother's imbecilic behavior exposes her to the vampire. She has no husband to protect her — or sustain her sexually. As a vampire, she is presented, essentially, as a prostitute, and has to be "saved" (stake in the heart etc.) from this fate — the fate literally worse than death. As everyone seems to believe, *Dracula* is about the danger of sex-impulse outside of social norms. "Interpreting *Dracula's* sexual subtext has become something of a cottage industry," as Kathleen Spencer puts it (197).

In both tales, the counter-conspiracy of good characters is centered around a patriarchal figure who articulates a gender ideology. In *Dracula*, this role is taken by Dr Abraham Van Helsing; in *That Hideous Strength* by Dr Elwin Ransom. Van Helsing did not seem to have had much impact on Lewis' imagination (possibly the Father-Christ-mas-like image of Merlin derives from the buoyant Van Helsing). Ransom emerges out of the preceding books in the trilogy, with a history of his own. Van Helsing by contrast is something of a *deus ex machina* in the structure of *Dracula* — the expert who fortuitously believes both in God — and more to the point, in vampires. Van Helsing is fallible in a way that Ransom is not, yet it seems clear that Ransom is the weak point in *That Hideous Strength*. Presented as a golden-bearded youth, Ransom is not convincing for the role he is assigned. The curious weakness of both these patriarchs suggests the presence of a subtext to which I shall turn later.

In any case, the theme of married sexuality which they represent is central, and for similar reasons. Anxieties about sexuality are prominent in both texts, which repeat-

edly emphasize traditional gender differentiation and sex-roles as the basis of godly life. To deviate is to invite evil — vampires in one case, the "hideous strength" in the other: sex roles are God's roles. Heterosexual marriage is obedience to God's hierarchy: to defy heterosexual marriage is to defy God; and to defy God is necessarily to invite demonic intervention. Lewis disapprovingly notes Mark's neglect of his wife: he fails as husband, and therefore fails in other ways too. In *Dracula*, the displaced sexuality of the vampires is a demonic parody of divinely ordained sexuality. In fact the three female vampires whose erotic appearance so excites Harker are not interested in sex at all. They are interested in food. They use sex as an angler uses a fly, as bait; as a means of facilitating the conversion of the male into a food object. Strictly speaking, the vampires are not sexual: they do not reproduce sexually but, as it were, orally; by consuming/converting others, like a virus. Sex means no more to them than it does to the invading Martians of H. G. Wells (which also are vampires with an unorthodox system of reproduction: vampires are non-sexual beings. Parodying the gender ideology of *That Hideous Strength*, they have gender — but not sexuality).

Anxieties about sexuality in *That Hideous Strength* manifest as intense heterosexual or homophobic fears. Thus the most prominent female in the tale, apart from Jane, is the conspicuous "Fairy Hardcastle" — the butch police-woman, a stereotype Lesbian who enjoys torturing the attractive young heroine. The grotesque scene of Frost and Wither embracing willy-nilly, locked in demonic union (243), is related. The two males are not dancing out of sexual desire for each other — they have no desire. Their contact expresses the devil's control over every aspect of their being. The control of sexuality here is a signifier of total control by another person — or, in this case, thing.

There is thus another way to view the gender ideology in these texts and its accompanying anxieties. For both Lewis and Stoker belong to the romance tradition, where chastity is not so much a sexual matter as a magic force, with aspects that go beyond sexuality. Eve lost her chastity when she disobeyed God and ate the fruit, not when she had sex with Adam: chastity is a power that links one to the divine, and hence it is absolutely essential for defeating evil. One reason, therefore, why Lucy Westenra gets into such trouble is that her attitude to men is in effect unchaste. Harker is similarly unchaste in abandoning his new wife to go to Transylvania, where he is made captive by Dracula, the embodiment of unchastity.

The fact that Harker is a married man, and that he calls upon his wife at the crisis of his story, however, explains why he is able to escape Dracula's castle. For how else can we explain his thousand-foot climb down the castle and mountain walls — a descent that is never directly described but left as a gap — a descent that ends in a convent? Only a superhuman power could enable Harker to make this escape. In terms of the conventions of romance, this force is chastity: the love for his wife that he invokes before

fleeing (53), the force Lewis explicated so memorably in *The Allegory of Love* as a complex and potent power, not simply sexual abstinence or monogamy.

Mark is embedded in a similar configuration in *That Hideous Strength*; he is unchaste, in effect, when he abandons his wife for the evil N.I.C.E., which he enters to advance his career, just as Harker goes to Transylvania in furthering his career. Once there, Mark discovers that he cannot escape on his own power. No wonder: by the terms of the convention, damage to chastity is damage to integrity and vital power. By corollary, renewal of power manifests as a reaffirmation of chastity. Both novels end in a celebration of chastity: the descent of Venus and the reunion of husband/wife in *That Hideous Strength*; in *Dracula*, the generation of children within the frame of the husband/wife relation. Given the power of chastity, these scenes are not mere displays of domestic bliss (or affirmations of Victorian sexual mores), they are a re-synchronizing of the human with the divine, the power by which human beings live/reproduce, and without which they are subject to demonic invasion.

I referred to the sticky religiosity of *Dracula* — there is no doubt that its religion is atavistic and primitive, essentially a superstition. Thus garlic and crucifixes have magic powers. The nakedly superstitious quality of the novel seems to undercut its determination to be completely up-to-date and modern. For the novel makes a point of presenting the latest technology, for example the "phonograph" (much of the text is phonographic records, that is transcriptions from the rolls used by the early form of phonograph). The Count is much preoccupied with train schedules and the apparatus of life in London at the peak of its imperial power. By contrast, set in the same period and the same city, Shaw's *Major Barbara* scorns the faith of the Salvation Army — let alone the grossly superstitious religion that dominates Stoker. Neither Darwinian science nor a century of deism and its demythologizing influence have any effect on *Dracula*. That is because its religion is not a matter of belief: it is a matter of plotting. If evil demons exist, then only a superstitious religion of garlic and talismans can hope to defeat them — anything less would be ineffectual. You cannot combat a vampire unless you believe in vampires, and to believe in vampires is to accept a worldview in which magic and ritual have a genuine, supernatural function. Hence *Dracula*'s somewhat surprising predilection for sanctified earth and chapels: the whole vampire mythology is a function of a superstitious religion, and depends upon it.

The acceptance of the supernatural may be one reason why Stoker stuck with Lewis, whose Christianity was supernatural if not superstitious. Like Lewis, Stoker was a Protestant Irishman, yet the crucifix is very important in Stoker's story (as it is in Lewis'). A superstitious peasant gave Harker a crucifix; contemplating it in *Dracula*'s castle, he muses: "It is odd that a thing which I have been taught to regard with disfavor and as idolatrous should in

a time of loneliness and trouble be of help" (28), and when Harker flees from *Dracula*'s castle, he finds refuge and is restored to health in a convent. In *That Hideous Strength*, a turning point is the great scene in which Mark, imprisoned by the N.I.C.E., is told to stomp on a crucifix ("and insult it in other ways" [334]) — and can not do it. Mark, like Harker before him, views the crucifix as "a pure superstition" (335), yet he suddenly feels a sense of connection with it. For reasons that are not religious in the ordinary sense — that is, concerned with belief — Mark is unable to desecrate it, despite Frost's insistence. To do so would violate something deeper, as it were, than belief: something vital to identity.

Almost as soon as he achieves this moment of authentic action, in the existentialists' term, Mark is effectively rescued. The scene corresponds to and anticipates the scene in *The Silver Chair* where Puddleglum rejects the Witch's argument — even if she appears to be right. Similarly, Mark realizes that even if Frost is right, he can not accept it. Lewis carefully notes: "It was, in a more emphatic sense than he had yet understood, a *cross*" (336) — a turning point. For both Harker and Mark, the crux is to accept something that reason rejects, something that is not a matter of belief in the ordinary sense, but of survival as a genuine human being. This is a commitment that they do not choose; it chooses them. Mark steps away from bad faith, as Sartre would call it, from the "ecstasy" of a false identity constructed by competitive needs to control and use. The implications here will be clearer in a moment.

Lewis of course "believed" in the devil, if "believe" is the right word here; the notion of demonic possession that he uses as a fiction was more than a fiction to him. Here we come to Lewis' theory of evil, a theory for which Stoker provides interesting hints. *Dracula* is, above all, a figure of power: power in the sense of control over others. The kinky references to sexuality and to blood (which in Freudian theory is symbolically equivalent to seminal fluid) have distracted readers from the real issue, namely the obsession with "power-over" relationships, in Marilyn French's term: the attainment of total control over others, using and discarding them as the need arises, or simply as the user's whim dictates. Thus, in a "power-over" relationship, one person controls another: such control may range from manipulating and using others to the extreme form of killing (or threatening to kill) them.

The obsession with controlling expands to the self; in Nancy Hartsock's words, "Power appears as domination not only of others but of parts of oneself (203). The itch to control is the nucleus of the theory of evil expounded in *Perelandra*; thus, evil is not just disobedience to authority, as in the common assumption. Rather, as the green Lady theorizes (68-71, 208), evil is a need to repeat, dominate, and objectify experience, as opposed to being alert and receptive to what time brings. Screwtape offers a corollary commentary:

The whole philosophy of Hell rests on recognition of

the axiom that one thing is not another thing, and, specially, that one self is not another self. My good is my good and your good is yours. What one gains another loses. Even an inanimate object is what it is by excluding all other objects from the space it occupies; if it expands, it does so by thrusting other objects aside or by absorbing them. A self does the same. With beasts the absorption takes the form of eating; for us, it means the sucking of will and freedom out of a weaker self into a stronger. "To be" means "to be in competition." (92)

Control means life and death, means everything. The metaphor of "sucking will and freedom out of a weaker self" is what vampirism is, precisely. This is one of the most important passages in *The Screwtape Letters*, possibly the most important, and it is interesting that it makes use of the symbolism of the vampire. Thus, Screwtape toasts his fellows in "Screwtape Proposes a Toast" with a drink hardly distinguishable from blood: "Hold it up to the light. Look at those fiery streaks that writhe and tangle in its dark heart; as if they were contending. And so they are" (25).

The real compulsion in the need to control — to convert others into passive objects — seems to be a dread of the life cycle. That is, it is the wish to control the life cycle: to be free, as Filostrato in *That Hideous Strength* explains to Mark, of the "need to be born and breed and die" (176):

This institute — Dio meo, it is for something better. ... It is for the conquest of death; or for the conquest of organic life, if you prefer. They are the same thing. It is to bring out of that cocoon of organic life which sheltered the babyhood of mind the New Man, the man who will not die, the artificial man, free from Nature. (177; my emphasis)

Similarly, Dracula has found a way of controlling life / evading death: "He is experimenting, and doing it well; and if it had not been that we have crossed his path he would be yet — he may be yet if we fail — the father or furtherer of a new order of beings, whose road must lead through Death, not Life," says van Helsing (302). In this respect, he is close to Victor Frankenstein, whose experiment was one of controlling the life cycle — i.e., escaping the death phase of the life cycle — by artificially constructing a person. In *Dracula*, the vampire has found a way of, in effect, constructing himself, so as to elude death. As with Victor, there are hints that he wishes to expand his control, to create a race of beings who will owe their origin to him.

Ironically, Dracula exists in a half-world of the "Undead," where he is neither alive nor dead. This is what demonic possession means: to become an automaton, as Weston in *Perelandra* is becoming, or as the ghostly "Head" in *That Hideous Strength* has become, a being permanently and in every way enslaved by a force hostile to it. *The Screwtape Letters* is particularly effective in conveying the horror of the demonic, not as something grand, exhilarating or spine-tingling, but as essentially what Hannah Arendt termed "the banality of evil." Thus, petty cruelty and boredom are closer to what demonic possession

means than spectacular acts of wickedness (*Screwtape* 64-65); much of the time, like Dracula, one is simply not there. One recalls the void of alienation that is the hell of *The Great Divorce*. The need to control masks a dread of boredom and meaninglessness in life, a zombie-like state that provokes the ranting and raving ambition characteristic of Weston in *Perelandra*, Straik in *That Hideous Strength*, and even Uncle Andrew in *The Magician's Nephew*. Dracula's boastful speeches to Harker are an illustration, combining compulsiveness with emptiness. Satan and his speech-making in *Paradise Lost* are the model here.

Dracula has left traces in the Narnia series, as well as in *That Hideous Strength*. One sees this influence especially in Lewis' first attempt in the Narnian genre, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, which is noticeably different from the other Narnia series. For example, it is hard to imagine a figure like Father Christmas appearing in the other stories as he does in *Wardrobe*; and the elaborateness of the allegory of Aslan's sacrifice has no counterpart elsewhere in the Narnia books. *The Magician's Nephew* and *The Last Battle* use the symbolism of Genesis and Revelation very straightforwardly; they do not allegorize Christian doctrine in the way that *Wardrobe* does.

The figure of the White Witch is itself unusual: nobody is comparable to her in the other stories. The closest is the Queen of Underland in *The Silver Chair*. But this queen remains a hidden figure — we never even learn her name. She reveals her own nature only when forced, virtually against her will. By contrast, the White Witch exults in her wickedness, and even confronts and directly attacks Aslan Himself. As Mrs Beaver explains, she only appears to be human — she looks like a woman, but is really something else altogether — like the female vampires in *Dracula* that attempt to bag Harker. The Witch's house, with its frozen victims and its filth — "that dark, horrible, fusty old castle" (155) — very much recalls Dracula's musty castle and its conspicuous emphasis on "dirt." We learn in *The Magician's Nephew* of the White Witch's origin in a ruined palace. Her nihilistic, death-obsessed speech in *Nephew* (59-62) recalls closely Dracula's ranting about battles and superior blood. Like him, she thinks much — indeed she brags — about superior blood lines.

Jadis — the White Witch — steals the apple of life, and so, like Dracula, acquires indefinitely extended life; like Dracula, she does so by means of eating. The act of eating itself is portrayed with striking vividness:

Only a few yards away from him stood the Witch. She was just throwing away the core of an apple that she had eaten. The juice was darker than you would expect and had made a horrid stain round her mouth. Digory ... began to see that there might be some sense in that last line about getting your heart's desire and getting despair along with it, for the Witch looked stronger and prouder than ever, and even, in a way, triumphant: but her face was deadly white, white as salt. (149)

The emphasis on the whiteness of face ("deadly white")

recalls the emaciated Lucy in *Dracula*, drained of blood by the Count: "She was ghastly, chalkily pale; the red seemed to have gone even from her lips and gums, and the bones of her face stood out prominently" (120). Jadis is, however, a victimizer (as Lucy is to become); her combination of whiteness of face with a "horrid stain round her mouth" is visually striking: "the juice was darker than you would expect." It recalls Dracula, with blood "trickling from the corners of his mouth" (51). On first meeting Dracula, Harker is struck by the "remarkable ruddiness" of his lips, joined to the "extraordinary pallor" of his face (18).

Lewis emphasizes the same combination in *Wardrobe*: "Her face was white — not merely pale, but white like snow or paper or icing-sugar, except for her very red mouth" (33). Jadis' "arms were . . . terribly white," as she prepares, in a very disturbing scene, to "sacrifice" Edmund (124); indeed, she is to slit his throat — the raising of head and the baring of throat are carefully described. The suggestion hangs over *Wardrobe* that Jadis is a vampire, like the vampires Harker meets in Dracula's castle. Jadis is, also, associated with wolves; Edmund finds one at the gate of her castle (it "opened a great, red mouth" [90]) — recalling the wolves that block Harker at the gate of Dracula's castle. In *Wardrobe*, the pursuit in the sleigh also recalls the chase through the snow at the climax of *Dracula*. In his first meeting with Jadis, Edmund climbs in her sleigh, as in Harker's meeting with Dracula at the snowy top of the pass, followed by his ride in the caleche.

Another common feature here is the moon. The moon is emphasized as Harker approaches Dracula's "vast ruined castle, from whose tall black windows came no ray of light, and whose broken battlements showed a jagged line against the moonlit sky" (14). Edmund comes to the White Witch, on his own, by night — and the moon, appropriately for vampires and witches, is full:

It was a full moon. . . . the moon was shining brighter than ever. The House was really a small castle. It seemed to be all towers; little towers, with long pointed spires on them, sharp as needles. They looked like huge dunce's caps or sorcerer's caps. And they shone in the moonlight and their long shadows looked strange on the snow. Edmund began to be afraid of the House. (85)

Compare the night of Mark's introduction — or initiation — to the Head, in *That Hideous Strength*: "Small clouds were scudding across the stars and the full Moon — Mark had never seen her so bright — stared down. . . . Her bloodless light filled the room" (174). Note the suggestive word "bloodless."

The most startling appearance of Stoker material in the Narnia books, however, occurs at the climax of *The Silver Chair*. Here the enchanted Prince Rilian is tied up for his nightly bout of "dangerous lunacy," as Claudius in *Hamlet* puts it — a bout when, in a reversal typical of Lewis, he is sane. In the most wrenching and pathetic plea, he begs the travellers to release him:

Buried alive... Quick! I am sane now. Every night I am sane. If only I could get out of this enchanted chair, it would last. I should be a man again. But every night they bind me, and so every night my chance is gone. But you are not enemies. I am not your prisoner. Quick! Cut these cords... It is at this hour that I am in my right mind: it is all the rest of the day that I am enchanted... cut my bonds... I beseech you to hear me... Believe me, you look upon a wretch who has suffered almost more than any mortal heart can bear. What wrong have I ever done you, that you should side with my enemies to keep me in such misery?... Once and for all," said the prisoner, "I adjure you to set me free. By all fears and all loves, by the bright skies of Overland, by the great Lion, by Aslan himself, I charge you —" (148-50).

Compare the desperate Renfield, locked away in the mental asylum, struggling against enslavement by Dracula. He too begs for release — release that would save him, like Prince Rilian, from the horrors of demonic possession:

"Let me entreat you, Dr Seward, oh, let me implore you, to let me out of this house at once. Send me away how you will and where... but let me go... You don't know what you do by keeping me here. I am speaking from the depths of my heart — of my very soul. You don't know whom you wrong, or how; and I may not tell. Woe is me! I may not tell. By all you hold sacred — by all you hold dear — by your love that is lost — by your hope that lives — for the sake of the Almighty, take me out of this and save my soul from guilt! Can't you hear me, man? Can't you understand? Will you never learn? Don't you know that I am sane and earnest now; that I am no lunatic in a mad fit, but a sane man fighting for his soul? Oh, hear me! hear me! Let me go! let me go! let me go!" (246-7)

The same desperation can be heard in the words of both enchanted captives as they beg for help. One also hears Weston's panic in *Perelandra*, clutching at Ransom as he descends physically and metaphorically into demonic possession: "I can't bear it, I can't bear it!" (171). In particular, Renfield's anguished appeal: "By all you hold sacred — by all you hold dear — by your love that is lost — by your hope that lives — for the sake of the Almighty!" echoes in Rilian's cry: "By all fears and all loves, by the bright skies of Overland, by the great Lion, by Aslan himself, I charge you —" "Sadly, Dr Seward and the others do not listen to Renfield, whereas the real triumph of *The Silver Chair* comes when the travellers believe Rilian, and release him. The fact that Lewis seems to have had Stoker in mind when he composed two of the crucial scenes in his fiction — the release of Rilian and Mark's confrontation with the cross — indicates how profoundly the imagination of *Dracula* affected Lewis.

Notwithstanding the distasteful gender ideology of *Dracula* and *That Hideous Strength* ("you do not fail in obedience through lack of love, but have lost love because you never attempted obedience" explains Ransom to Jane [147]), there is a subtext of female power in both novels. In this respect, *That Hideous Strength* anticipates the Narnia books, where the female figures are so often the real source

of heroism. The obvious example is Lucy, the child who guides the others into Narnia to begin with, and who is explicitly said to see Aslan most often. Lucy consistently shows the best judgment in the stories in which she appears (despite difficulties in *Prince Caspian*). In *The Horse and His Boy*, Shasta is the hero, clearly; but between the horses Bree and Hwin, it is Hwin, the mare, who shows real leadership. In the Narnia books, it is the traditionally female quality of receptivity that is most effective.

By contrast, Tirian's heroics in *The Last Battle* are mostly useless or disastrous. Significantly, Digory in *The Magician's Nephew* wakens Jadis by an act of aggression against Polly, through a violent determination to have his own way, in a heroic-seeming, ego-enhancing quest. The heroic moment for Mark in *THS* is one of refusing to act, one notes: it is a withdrawal from action, not a manipulation or deed of force of the type usually associated with male heroics. By the time Lewis wrote *Till We Have Faces*, he simply dropped male figures and worked out of a female persona — a female who follows the path of her sister Psyche. In *That Hideous Strength*, the story pivots on Jane, whose shift from an "unchaste" husband to the community of St. Anne's (even while undergoing clairvoyant visions) is probably the hardest thing anyone does in the story. Nor is it heroic in the traditional masculine sense of mighty deeds; in fact what she represents is a redefinition of heroic action, away from the force or cleverness of traditional heroics. But what she does — or rather, what she allows to happen — means far more in the story than what anybody else does, whether saintly Ransom or clever Merlinus.

Likewise, in *Dracula*, Mina enacts a similar heroic role. While excluded deliberately from the male group hunting Dracula — and exposed to deadly danger as a consequence of their stupidity — she is vital to the monster's defeat; she comes closest to Dracula, physically and in other ways, yet lives. In this respect, she parallels her husband's ordeal, but without his ambition, lust, or naivete. She also, significantly, assembles and collates the pieces that make up *Dracula*. Mina thus defeats Dracula both personally and textually: she is a creator in a way that no other character is. Mina and Jane represent the genuine power in their stories, for they are not tainted by the obsession with control over objects and people that characterizes so many of the males. Perhaps it is here that the deepest kind of influence from Stoker to Lewis may be found: a hidden protest against the destructive aspects of the very gender ideology that appears to be the framework of the story — which is, therefore, in a different way, that hideous strength itself.

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