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**Through the Door: A passage to a New World and
an Entrance to the Heart**

C.S Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* has been considered one of the classic children's literary works since it was published in 1950. It tells the story of the four young siblings Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy and their magical adventures in Narnia—a magical world accessible only through the door of a wardrobe. Based on the significance and indispensability of the wardrobe in the novel, this essay will firstly focus on the metaphorical meaning of the door and what insights it provides each time it is opened. It will then argue that the journey into Narnia, especially through the third opening of the door, is also a psychological journey for the four protagonists, representing their “spiritual awakening” (Veith, p. 114).

Dabney Adams Hart argues that opening the door to the wardrobe provides “the opportunity for new perspectives, new views, free movement of the mind and spirit” (Adams Hart, n.p.), which is an embodiment of the metaphorical meaning of the door in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (hereafter referred to as *The Lion*). The door of the wardrobe not only serves to move the protagonists out of the mundane world of mid-twentieth century England and enter a world of magic, but also constitutes a form of enlightenment giving rise to a nirvana for them. It starts a journey for exploration and education and gains knowledge and experience for the protagonists, as seen from Brown's comment: “[...] that Lucy and later her brothers and sisters will undergo is more of a rebirth, a passage from one condition in England to a more vital one in Narnia” (Devin, p. 40). On the other side, passing through the door and into Narnia is more than a fantastic adventure: it also represents a process of psychological

development of the protagonists and it is “a meaningful visualization of the inner landscape of the psyche where the internal conflicts that lead to personality growth” (Rigsbee, p. 11). Narnia also witnesses the protagonists’ psychological transformation “from consciousness to the imaginative world of the unconscious” (Rigsbee, p. 10), where they move from the initial consciousness of self in the real world to exert an unconscious sense of power and responsibility to a larger community in the magical world.

In *The Lion*, the door is opened four times allowing the children to go back and forth between the real and the magical world. Opening the door of the wardrobe is a metaphor for the opening of a new and unknown world. Lucy is the first one to find the wardrobe and gains access to Narnia, but it is not a pure coincidence. Objective factors like weather along with subjective factors like Lucy’s character contribute to the discovery of the wardrobe and the opening of the door.

Lewis sets the background to the plot development at the very beginning: the air raid in England during the Second World War drives the four siblings to bid farewell to their mother and be sent to Professor Kirke’s old house for shelter. Even the weather, a steady falling rain that prevents the four children from going outside is used as a prediction of the unusual discovery on the day when they feel bored inside the house and decide to explore it. The sentence “[i]t was the sort of house that you never seem to come to the end of, and it was full of unexpected places” (*The Lion*, p. 11) indicates that some magic exists in the house, waiting to be discovered and explored by the children.

These backgrounds create possibility for Lucy step by step approaching to the wardrobe, opening the door and getting into Narnia.

Meanwhile, Lucy's character is another important element in the discovery of Narnia. When the children explore the house and troop into the spare room with the wardrobe, they find nothing interesting and troop out the room, but Lucy stays behind. The sentence "[s]he thought it would be worthwhile trying the door of the wardrobe, even though she felt almost sure that it would be locked" (*The Lion*, p. 13), shows that Lucy is a curious person with a spirit of adventure and she is not frightened of new challenges even though she knows it would not be easy. She has fertile imagination and gifted intuition to the new things. "Lucy's discovery of the magical passageway to Narnia signifies her spiritual superiority over her siblings, who enter Narnia only by following her" (Rigsbee, p. 10). This spiritual advantage is an important quality and foreshadows Lucy's later involvement in the adventures in Narnia.

Although Lucy is the youngest of the four siblings and at first a bit scared of the new situation, she is the first to take on the role of adventurer. Her transition to the magical world in Narnia can be observed from the quotation "[...] she felt something soft and powdery and extremely cold [...] she found that what was rubbing against her face and hands was no longer soft fur but something hard and rough and even prickly" (*The Lion*, p. 13). She comes across a new world that she feels "soft and powdery and extremely cold" and her entrance is characterized by the words "hard", "rough" and "prickly". It contrasts sharply with the world in which she lives outside of the wardrobe

– a world bathed in sunshine and warmth in spite of the rain. Lucy’s embarkation on the new world means that, on the one hand, she leaves the old familiar world and enters the new world of the unknown; on the other hand, it represents the start of her psychological journey in Narnia. The sentence “Lucy felt a little frightened, but she felt very inquisitive and excited as well” (*The Lion*, p. 14) shows that she welcomes the new world but is scared and excited at the same time.

Lucy’s curiosity outweighs her shyness and leads her to keep going forward in Narnia, where she is going to encounter many unexpected situations. Her friendly nature and kindness is reflected from her first meeting with Mr. Tumnus. When Lucy tells Mr. Tumnus that “you are the nicest Faun I’ve ever met” (*The Lion*, p. 23), it indicates that she is kind and benevolent by instinct even towards a non-human. When she says that “I am sure you wouldn’t do anything of the sort” (*The Lion*, p. 23), it illustrates that Lucy sees him as a friend and trusts him. The virtue carried by Lucy convinces Mr. Tumnus into determining to defy the orders of the White Witch and completely wins him over. Lucy’s encounter with the Faun confirms that the White Witch is the cause of the perpetual winter in Narnia and the old prophecy that the White Witch’s spell will be broken when the four thrones at Cair Paravel are filled. This predicts the arrival of the four children in Narnia and creates suspense for both the Narnians and the readers.

With Lucy’s entrance into Narnia, she opens a picture of what this new world looks like for the readers: it is a wide and white medieval fantasy world that contains an immense space, as Bruce Edwards writes, “[i]t is larger on the inside than it is on the outside”

(Edwards, n.p.). The inside can be compared to the unconscious of human beings that contains vast and measureless thoughts. Narnia is “analogous to the life of the mind, which runs parallel to the physical life we lead” (Veith, p. 35). It symbolizes the limitless imagination in human’s minds. Every time the door to Narnia is opened by the protagonists, some magic occurs and fantastic imagination is unfolded for the readers. Edmund, the second-youngest sibling, is the second one to open the wardrobe and become involved in Narnia, taking readers together with him.

When Lucy tells her siblings about what she has experienced in Narnia, they do not believe what she says and think she makes up everything. Edmund sneers at Lucy and “kept on asking her if she’d found any other new countries in other cupboards all over the house” (*The Lion*, p. 29). Edmund’s unpleasant personality is revealed from his sneer, which is strikingly contrasted with Lucy’s kindness. Edmund is also “described by the narrator as negative, rebellious and argumentative” (Devin, p. 31). Since the first day the children step on this old house, their individual reactions to the Professor suggest their different personalities. While the Professor is described as very old and unmarried, he invites fear in Lucy and mockery from Edmund. This can be exemplified from the following words “Lucy was a little afraid of him, and Edmund wanted to laugh and had to keep on pretending he was blowing his nose to hide it” (*The Lion*, p. 9). Lucy reacts with humility and timidity to the unknown, while Edmund reacts with disrespect. The different attitudes shown by the two younger siblings hint at the conflict that is to come.

When Lucy takes her siblings to the wardrobe with the intention of proving the existence of Narnia, the door to the magical world is closed for them, while her first entrance is completely achieved when she has no doubt in her mind and is driven by her unconscious. This suggests that the door to the new world is only opened when the opener does not doubt but believes in the possibility and existence of magic. "Being able to see a fantasy place is the product of believing in its existence, a belief which indicates special gifts of imagination and spiritual vision" (Rigsbee, p. 10). Edmund follows Lucy to the wardrobe with the purpose of teasing her, not out of a desire to prove or disprove the existence of Narnia. This explains why Edmund can also open the door to the new land and demonstrates that he possesses the requisite gift similar to Lucy that gets him approach to Narnia. It still testifies that the old prophecy about "Sons of Adam" is providence, where Edmund is doomed to fulfill his mission to protect Narnia, though he is depicted as an unpleasant figure at the beginning of the story. As a result, Edmund will inevitably suffer more than his siblings to develop himself, both physically and psychologically, towards being a fighter for Narnia.

In Narnia, when Edmund finds himself standing alone in the woods on a cold winter day and Lucy is missing, he immediately draws the conclusion that his sister is angry with him and "sulking somewhere, and won't accept an apology" (*The Lion*, p. 32). It indicates that Edmund tends to focus on the negative characteristics, which is in contrast with Lucy's belief in the inherent goodness of people and suggests the divergent paths that Edmund and his siblings are about to embark on. When Edmund

first meets the White Witch, he assumes that she is good because she gives him Turkish Delight and promises to crown him King of Narnia. This can be reflected from his words to Lucy when later she appears and tells him about the wicked nature of the White Witch: “[w]ho told you all that stuff about the White Witch? [...] You can’t always believe what Fauns say [...] everyone knows it.” (*The Lion*, p. 43). Edmund’s misjudgment of the White Witch leads him to assume that anyone who believes her to be evil must be wrong. His mistrust results in his later action of “betrayal”. However, Edmund feels sick and uncomfortable after having too much Turkish Delight, which reveals that the sweets are enchanted and that Edmund has fallen under the spell cast by the White Witch. It hints that once the White Witch is destroyed and the enchantment is broken, Edmund will be free from her control and spiritually awakened.

By the time Edmund and Lucy tumble out of the wardrobe and come back to the real world, readers are convinced that Narnia is a real place but Susan and Peter are still unaware of Narnia’s existence. To convince them, Lucy asks Edmund to describe his experience in Narnia, but he gives a spiteful answer: “Lucy and I have been playing –pretending that all her story about a country in the wardrobe is true. [...] There’s nothing there really” (*The Lion*, p. 45). Edmund’s unpleasant character is further revealed here; at the same time, there is an interesting irony: Lucy, the more truthful of the two, is thought to be a liar, while Edmund, who actually lies, is thought to be telling the truth. As Peter and Susan turn to the Professor to clarify Lucy’s situation, the Professor advises them to use logic, which indicates that he hopes the children believe

what deserves to be believed and follow their instincts. “[...] we must assume that she is telling the truth. [...] nothing is more probable” (*The Lion*, p. 51). Here, the Professor helps to open up Peter and Susan’s minds as well as those of the readers. They are convinced that the other world is real and magic exists. “The Professor’s support for Lucy is an affirmation of the reality of psychic phenomena [...] fantasies represent elusive communications of the creative unconscious with consciousness” (Rigsbee, p. 11). Peter and Susan are motivated to search for the new world and therefore able to experience a psychological development of their own.

The third time the door is opened occurs to the four siblings together. As they stand in Narnia for the first time, the magic in the new world is slowly unfolded in front of them. Narnia is characterized as “a mystical blend of worlds, a place where the very real and the very imaginary come together” (Devin, p. 41), which can be observed from the description of the weather, the environment and the talking animals. It has the sun and the moon, the sea and the sky, the earth and all things that also exist in the real world. There are also other fairy-like creatures in addition to the Faun. “The distinctive atmosphere of Narnia is shaped by the blending of familiar things with unfamiliar, and by placing familiar things in an unfamiliar context” (Peter J, pp. 59-60). Since the moment the four children set foot on Narnia, they become unavoidably involved in the affairs on this familiar and unfamiliar land.

The perpetual winter of Narnia suggests that “the creative, life-giving forces of the unconscious are suppressed” (Rigsbee, p. 11). The coming of the four children

facilitates the fulfillment of the old prophecy that once the four thrones of Cair Paravel are filled, the reign of the White Witch and her life will be ended. When it ultimately starts to become warmer, the ice gets dissolved and the river starts to flood with the coming of Aslan, “Sons of Adam” and “Daughters of Eve”. All of these environmental changes indicate a rebirth of Narnia. Even the statues turned into by the White Witch are expected to be thawed and redeemed, waiting for a kind of rebirth.

Colin Manlove calls the journey from the realm of ordinary experience into the fantasy world “a development out of an old awareness into a new” (Colin, p. 35) in which the four adventurers are thrown into the battle between good and evil, struggling to overcome difficulties, searching for new understanding of life and experiencing psychological development. Lewis establishes early on each of the four children’s basic personality traits: “Peter as the upbeat leader; Susan as sympathetic but also motherly and pretentious; Edmund as negative, rebellious and argumentative; and Lucy as good-natured and seeking to please” (Devin, p. 31). Their personality traits are revealed in different stages through their adventures in Narnia. The journey to Narnia is at the same time a psychological journey for each protagonist in which they “achieved a new stage in development, a new perspective on life and their selfhood is enriched” (Rigsbee, p.10). What they undergo in the magical world makes their characters change and psychologically mature.

Lucy is described as a truthful girl with a spiritual privilege so that she proposes to visit Mr. Tumnus and she is the first to recognize the robin, following its way to the

deep forest and encountering Mr. Beaver. The subtle change in Lucy's character from timidity to boldness is first revealed when Lucy and her siblings find out that Mr. Tumnus has been arrested by the White Witch: "[...] it is all on my account that the poor Faun has got into this trouble [...] we simply must try to rescue him" (*The Lion*, p. 59). It illustrates that Lucy has gained in confidence and courage as the friendship between her and Mr. Tumnus deepens. She is motivated by her conscience to rescue the Faun, which is clearly indicated in the expression that "it is all on my account that the poor Faun has got into this trouble". As David C. Downing argues: "[i]n Narnia, the protagonists have to put away his or her fears in order to do what has to be done, which is an act of moral courage" (David C, p. 103). Lucy's boldness and her decision to rescue the Faun also inspire her siblings' moral courage, i.e. of doing the right thing, so they decide not to go back home but to stay and help. This moral courage becomes rooted in the children's hearts when Mr. Beaver tells them the prophecy of Thrones of Cair Paravel and they realize that it is their destiny and duty to save Narnia, of course, counting Edmund out, who at this moment still stands on the side of the White Witch.

The desire to save Mr. Tumnus and Edmund from the White Witch becomes stronger in Lucy's heart when the children meet Father Christmas and receive their presents. Father Christmas's words to Lucy "[...] the dagger is to defend yourself at great need. For you also are not to be in the battle. [...] why sir? I think- I don't know-but I think I could be brave enough" (*The Lion*, p. 103), indicate that Lucy will not participate in the battle and the dagger is used in times of "great need". But Lucy

shows a readiness and eagerness to be involved in the war, which is revealed from her question “why” and her answer “I think I could be brave enough.” “I don’t know” shows that she is unsure about her role and power in the war to save Narnia, but the affirmation at last demonstrates her determination to be a stronger and braver fighter.

Lucy’s character continues to develop until the battle between the army of Aslan and that of the White Witch is ceased and Edmund is seriously wounded. The talk between Lucy and Aslan “[q]uick, Lucy [...] There are other people wounded” (*The Lion*, p. 165) indicates that Lucy is so worried about her brother that she forgets about the others’ condition. “Yes, I know, wait a minute [...] others also are at point of death. Must more people die for Edmund? [...] I’m sorry” (*The Lion*, p. 165). The rejection of Aslan is a clear example of Lucy’s psychological development towards being a confident and brave character in that she dares to reject and realize her strength in this new world. She is not a shy and timid girl any more but develops as one of the rescuers of Narnia.

The weaknesses that characterize the protagonists in *The Lion* make them more accessible and believable; their complex psychological transformation ensures that they will not be viewed simply as one-dimensional characters. One of the ways Lewis achieves this is by “giving his readers reasons for the ways the characters behave” (Devin, p. 31). Edmund is such a figure. Edmund’s unpleasant character has been recalled from his former behavior in the real world where he teases and bullies Lucy. But as the four children enter Narnia together, he also embarks on his journey of

psychological awakening and his character undergoes a profound transformation as indicates in the following paragraphs.

As all four children enter and witness Narnia, it becomes clear that Edmund's words that he has never been there before turn out to be lies. Peter lectures Edmund and calls him "the poisonous little beast" (*The Lion*, p. 56). This mean call hurts Edmund and invites his hatred to Peter and leads to that the rift between the brothers worsens. It is partly Edmund's hatred for Peter that leads him to betray. When the four children find that Mr. Tumnus has been taken away by the secret police and Lucy suggests rescuing him, Edmund just thinks of food and shows no interest in helping, thereby demonstrating his selfishness. When in the forest he questions whether the robin and Mr. Tumnus are "good", his naturally skeptical character is revealed. The reaction to the name of Aslan elicits that the children all feel a sense of mystery, but for Edmund, the mystery is mingled with horror, reflecting Edmund's timidity. The utterance said by Edmund "she won't turn him into stone?" (*The Lion*, p. 75) shows that he assumes the White Witch is the legal Queen of Narnia and powerful enough to conquer Aslan who makes him frightened. Before Mr. Beaver furthers the siblings' understanding that they are the ones who will fulfill the prophecy to defeat the White Witch and save Narnia, Edmund sneaks off and steps on the way to the White Witch's castle as well as a traitor. A problem arises as a result: without Edmund, all four thrones cannot be filled and the prophecy will not be realized. Whether or not Edmund will be able to resist the temptation and rejoin his brother and sisters is of vital importance for the resurrection of

Narnia.

Will Edmund, a character with so many weaknesses, be able to change; is he, in other words, redeemable? Lewis is careful to state that Edmund is bound to the White Witch not out of his own inherently evil nature, but because he has eaten enchanted Turkish Delight. This can be seen from several times of referring to Edmund's felling sick after having too many enchanted sweets in the story. When Edmund makes his way to the White Witch's house, his psyche also begins to change slowly. The description "for deep inside him he really knew that the White Witch was bad and cruel" (*The Lion*, p. 85), illustrates that Edmund is not totally callous to the brutality of the White Witch, but he represses his intuition and chooses to believe her and self-cheats that she is "jolly nice" (*The Lion*, p. 85) and "[...] she wouldn't do anything very bad to them [his siblings]" (*The Lion*, p. 85). The narration reveals that Edmund does not actually wish any harm to come to his siblings; he is not evil by nature and appears to have the capacity for redemption.

Another example that demonstrates that Edmund is not all bad and still deserves to be redeemed is: when the White Witch raises her wand and turns a small party of creature who are sitting around the stone table and celebrating Christmas into statues, Edmund tries to prevent and willingly shouts "[o]h, don't, don't, please don't" (*The Lion*, p. 108). The begging "don't" indicates that Edmund has conscience and does not expect to see more tragedies happening. The cruelty performed by the White Witch makes Edmund finally see through her wicked nature. Regret mixed with hate starts to

root in his heart, as can be seen from the narration that “[a]nd Edmund, for the first time in this story, felt sorry for someone besides himself. It seemed so pitiful to think of those little stone figures sitting there all the silent days [...]” (*The Lion*, p. 109). The words “sorry” and “pitiful” indicate that Edmund is to some degree good willed, as opposed to inherently evil. It is the first time in the story that he is not selfish and able to consider the plight of others’, even forgetting his own suffering. This moment marks the inception of Edmund's psychological transformation in earnest.

But Edmund must pay the price for being redeemed, as the following examples reveal: when he arrives at the White Witch’s castle, she does not give him the promised treat, but rather feeds him only water and dry bread; when the White Witch takes him along on the sledge to capture his siblings, Edmund suffers a great deal: without a coat, he is cold, tired and tortured by the dwarf. The torment from which Edmund is suffering is as a consequence of his weak will in the face of temptation. As Edmund undergoes torments on his body, he cannot stop rethinking the whole thing and his psyche transformation furthers. The description “[...] she [the White Witch] was good and kind [...] sounded silly to him now. He would have given anything to meet the others at this moment—even Peter!” (*The Lion*, p. 106) illustrates that Edmund begins to regret his choices inside his heart and wishes that he could reunite with his siblings. His psyche keeps changing here: he realizes that he has misjudged the White Witch and learns lessons from his betrayal; his hate for Peter begins to dissolve and gains hate for the White Witch since then. As evidence of spring spreads through the forest, Edmund

begins to notice the details of spring:

[...] he noticed a dozen crocuses growing round the foot of an old tree-gold and purple and white. Then came a sound even more delicious than the sound of water. Close beside the path they were following, a bird suddenly chirped from the branch of a tree. (*The Lion*, p. 113)

The words “crocus”, “delicious” and ”chirped” symbolize the end of winter and the arrival of spring. This newfound, genuine appreciation of life signals that the White Witch's magic is weakening and Aslan is approaching. The arrival of spring signals the change in Narnia and it also demonstrates the rebirth of Edmund. He initially misjudges the White Witch and represses his own intuitions, but the truth has been revealed to him now, heightening his ability to see the world around him more clearly.

When Edmund is rescued from the White Witch’s army and walks back together with Aslan, what they talk about remains unknown in the story. From the sentence “[...] it was a conversation which Edmund never forget” (*The Lion*, p. 128), readers are informed that the talk is vitally important for Edmund and he is not as afraid of Aslan, as mentioned in earlier chapters of the novel. “Never forget” suggests that the conversation with Aslan opens up the door to Edmund’s mind that he is able to admit his own faults and apologizes to his siblings. Aslan’s advice for the children that “there is no need to talk to him about what is past” (*The Lion*, p. 128) not only teaches them about how necessary forgiveness and love are, but also influences Edmund’s psyche,

helping him to understand the importance of considering others and learn to become a tolerant person.

Edmund's psychological transformation is completed when Lucy heals him with cordial given away by Father Christmas. “[...] she found him standing on his feet and not only healed of his wounds but looking better than she had she seen him look [...] he had become his real old self again and could look you in the face” (*The Lion*, p. 165). “[B]ecome his real old self again” symbolizes that the enchantment of the Turkish Delight has finally been dispelled and Edmund has been successfully redeemed. “[L]ooking you in the face” represents that Edmund has changed into a new person who is frank and resolute. Peter’s description of how Edmund cuts down the White Witch’s wand and prevents more sacrifice demonstrates that Edmund has developed into a courageous fighter for Narnia. It also marks the completion of Edmund’s psychological transformation from a selfish and mean boy into a wise and calm figure.

As the eldest of the children, Peter, on the one hand, is presented as the natural leader of the four young siblings: he is responsible, thoughtful, and liked by his female siblings. He always bears in mind of his responsibility as the eldest and tries to protect his younger sisters and brother in his masculine way. On the other hand, he is the “upbeat leader” (Devin, p. 31) who is adventurous by nature. It is Peter that takes the lead saying: “Not for me. I’m going to explore in the house” (*The Lion*, p. 11), which foreshadows the adventure that is about to begin.

As Peter, together with Susan and Lucy embarks on the journey of meeting Aslan

under the guidance of Mr. Beaver, he also embarks on his psychological journey. Before that journey, what Peter cares about is only his siblings' welfare and security; he never associates himself with the fate of Narnia. At the beginning of the story, Peter is depicted as a normal eldest brother who never forgets the responsibility on his shoulders and is ready to offer help and protect to his younger siblings, especially Lucy, the youngest one. Peter's protection of Lucy can be observed from the following words he says to Edmund when Lucy has come back from the wardrobe for the first time: "[s]hut up! You've been perfectly beastly to Lu ever since she started this nonsense about the wardrobe [...] I believe you did it simply out of spite" (*The Lion*, p. 46). The word "shut up", "beastly" and "spite" shows that Peter disagrees with the way Edmund treats Lucy and criticizes him very sternly without considering whether his words will hurt Edmund. That is why Edmund hates Peter and always thinks of revenge.

Peter's character keeps developing and his psyche keeps changing that he slowly develops into a figure that is more thoughtful, sensible and learns to introspect. When Lucy finds Edmund's disappearance in Mr. Beaver's cave, Peter worries about Edmund a great deal and suggests dividing into four search parties to look for him. When they are told by Mr. Beaver that Edmund has betrayed them and has gone to the White Witch, Peter maintains his faith in his brother and tries to save him back: "[w]e'll still have to go and look for him. He is our brother after all, even if he is rather a little beast. And he is only a kid" (*The Lion*, p. 81). Peter's brotherly love for Edmund is embodied from the above quotation. It illustrates that Peter tries to protect his siblings; he will not abandon

any of them, even if Edmund does wrong. Peter's sensible character is revealed in his ability to admit his faults when he tells Aslan that Edmund's betrayal is in part by his anger at Peter. "That was my fault, Aslan, I was angry with him and I think that helped him to go wrong" (*The Lion*, p. 120). He realizes that he is too mean to his brother and wants to make up. When Edmund finally returns and apologizes for what he has done, Peter never blames him and welcomes his return with tolerance.

Peter's character moves from one that only concerns household welfare in the real world to one that extends his sense of responsibility to a larger community in the magical world gradually. Until the moment that he receives the presents--a shield and sword, from Father Christmas, Peter begins to feel a sense of mission: "Peter was silent and solemn as he received these gifts, for he felt they are a very serious kind of present" (*The Lion*, p. 102). The words "solemn" and "serious" demonstrate what Peter's inner feeling is like when he is confronted with a shield and sword. The gifts evoke his sense of righteousness and hidden desire to fight for Narnia. When they are finally taken in front of Aslan, "[h]e drew his sword and raised it to the solute [...] he advanced to the Lion and said: 'we have come-Aslan'" (*The Lion*, p. 119). "We have come" is not only to report to Aslan about their coming, but also signal that they are ready to get involved in the war; they are ready to fulfill the old prophecy and they are ready to devote what they can to save Narnia as well as their brother Edmund. From this moment on, what Peter concerns is not only his siblings, but also the security and prosperity of Narnia and its inhabitants.

The climax of Peter's developmental process occurs when he uses the sword and shield to strike the Witch's wolf and saves his sisters, which helps Peter overcome his timidity and hesitation before the mighty enemies and gains him tremendous confidence to conquer the White Witch. As Peter appreciates the far-off sight of Narnia together with Aslan, he is lost in the beautiful landscape and feels that "[i]t looked like a great star resting on the seashore" (*The Lion*, p. 121). A strong sense of honour and belonging fills Peter. At this moment he becomes spiritually awakened that he is doomed to be the King of Narnia and protecting Narnia is his inescapable responsibility. When Peter exposes himself to the last war to fight against the Witch, he displays incomparable courage and chivalrous spirit. That marks the completion of Peter's psychological development from a risk-taking teenager to a fearless knight who willingly undertakes the duty of protecting a country.

Susan is portrayed as a figure with maternal love who is always trying to keep the group together and mediates between Peter and Edmund. Her character is somewhat neglected throughout the story although she is constant presence. Susan is calm, gentle, cautious and practical, which can be first seen from that she reminds everyone to put on the coats when the children come to Narnia together. "[I]t isn't as if we wanted to take them out of the house; we shan't take them even out of the wardrobe" (*The Lion*, p. 55). Here, Susan uses logic to persuade her siblings to put on the coats, thereby demonstrating her intelligence. When Lucy asks everyone to stay to save Mr. Tumnus in the forest, Susan is the first one to echo: "I've a horrid feeling that Lu is right [...] I

don't want to go a step further and I wish we'd never come. But I think we must try to do something [...]" (*The Lion*, p. 59). Susan's willingness to help and her conscience is revealed in her words "Lu is right"; at the same time, she is timid and practical in that she wishes "we'd never come" and she tries to avoid danger for both herself and her siblings. But finally her conscience triumphs her timidity and she convinces everyone that "we must try to do something". These utterances mirror Susan's interior psychological movement.

Susan's prudent personality continues to develop and plays a crucial role in the critical time of the last battle with the White Witch. When Aslan is threatened by the White Witch who tries to use the Deep Magic to exchange Edmund's blood, he is really concerned about the future of Narnia. Susan's question enlightens him "[c]an't we do something about the Deep Magic? Isn't there something you can work against it?" (*The Lion*, p. 131) It is this rather ridiculous question that enlightens Aslan how to get out of the dilemma and how to save both Edmund and Narnia without being punished by the Deep Magic. It is in the war against the White Witch that Susan grows up: she combines vigilance and female softness as she assists and comforts, enabling Aslan to finally win the war. She shows the same intelligence as her brothers and is equally proficient in reducing anxiety and chaos.

When Susan witnesses Aslan's rebirth, she can hardly believe it. Susan thinks he is a ghost, but then realizes that he is real. While it seems impossible for someone to die and then come back to life, the embodiment of the possibility is literally standing right

in front of Susan, who must believe what she sees. The rebirth of Aslan awakens Susan's spirit and she begins to firmly believe what she has experienced in Narnia is not just fantasy and the fate of Narnia is closely connected to hers. She realizes how heavy the burden on her shoulders is to save Narnia from the reign of the White Witch and return its serenity and prosperity.

When the White Witch is finally defeated, the four children are crowned as Kings and Queens of Narnia foretold by the prophecy. The new titles of the protagonists mark their new roles and characters in Narnia. What they do for Narnia i.e. "made laws and kept peace and saved good trees from being unnecessarily cut down [...]" (*The Lion*, p. 168) shows that the children are devoted to the cause of building a secure and prosperous Narnia, but the appearance of the White Stag acts as a signal for the children to go back to their real world. The hunting leads to the discovery of the lamp-post serves as a reminder that the children recall their previous life that they have forgotten during their stay in Narnia. The children's agreement on following the White Stag into the thicket indicates that they will follow their instinct and respect their desire of exploring the new. This is demonstrated by Edmunds' statement "I have such desire to find the significance of this thing that I would not by my good will turn back for the richest jewel in all Narnia and all the islands" (*The Lion*, pp. 171-172). It also hints that the children have completed their mission in Narnia and it is time for them to return to the "real" world. On the children's way back from Narnia, the door is opened for the last time and their psychological journey is completed.

The last time the door is opened occurs when the four young siblings tumble out of the wardrobe and into the room. They are not medieval Kings and Queens but normal children. They exit the wardrobe at the same moment as they leave, no time appears to have passed. From the outside of the children and from the perspectives of the tourists, nothing special has happened to the children, but deep inside, they have undergone some magic. In the world accessible by the wardrobe, they face up to their personal responsibilities; they encounter sin and battle evils and they literally grow and psychologically mature, as seen from the quotation that “the return to home and security enables a satisfying psychological closure” (Nikolajeva, p. 168). The Professor chooses to believe the children’s story of adventure and says that “[y]ou’ll get back to Narnia again someday” (*The Lion*, p. 173), demonstrating that the children’s journey in the magical world is far from over. Another word “Once a king in Narnia, always a king in Narnia” (*The Lion*, p. 173), hints that someday the children will go back to the magical world again. In the very last sentence of the story “[i]t was only the beginning of the adventures of Narnia” (*The Lion*, p. 173), Lewis invites his readers to anticipate another journey into the magical world and convinces them that where there is faith, profound experiences will follow. In this sense, the novel represents another time of the door being opened, to the readers’ hearts and innermost soul.

Throughout the story of *The Lion*, two worlds are constantly on focus: the real world and the magical world. The real world is a realm of actuality, while the magical world is a realm full of expanded possibilities and the only entrance to that magical

world is through the wardrobe. “Lewis uses the wardrobe as a threshold symbol to link This World with the Other World” (Nicholson, p.17). Each time the door of the wardrobe is opened, the protagonists gain access to an extraordinary world where they not only experience magic, encounter evil and gain new views, but also undergo a spiritual rebirth. Each of the four young siblings has undergone spiritual trials and been raised to new heights: Lucy has overcome her timidity and has become a confident and brave figure; Edmund has learned a lesson from his misjudgment on characters and has developed into a calm and wise fighter. Peter has confronted his innermost soul and undertaken the responsibility of serving a larger community, ultimately developing into a magnificent knight. Susan has overcome her selfishness and fragility and developed into a gentle and considerate young lady.

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