sciendo

Perichoresis
Volume 20.3 (2022): 33–53
DOI: 10.2478/perc-2022-0016

SEHNSUCHT AS SIGNPOST: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL IMPULSE OF C. S. LEWIS

ANDREW LAZO*

Northwind Seminary

ABSTRACT. For half a century, readers of C. S. Lewis had only two problematic and at times obscure spiritual autobiographies (*The Pilgrim's Regress* and *Surprised by Joy*) to use in attempts to understand Lewis's journey to faith through what he called Joy, Sehnsucht, or longing. Both books, though important and full of key insights, in some ways hid more than they revealed. Recent discoveries, however, have widened the arc of autobiography. Lewis's landmark pre-Christian account of his conversion to theism, 'Early Prose Joy', published in 2013, monumentally widened and deepened our understanding of Lewis's spiritual journey to faith. And the fragmentary poem 'I Will Write Down the Portion that I Understand' also adds significant insight, at least into Lewis's composition process of grappling with conversion. Insightful recent scholarship by Alister McGrath suggests widening the scope of what we consider spiritual autobiography in Lewis to include *A Grief Observed*; this idea opens the door to a broader view of how autobiography functions both in Lewis's compositional life and in the categorization of his writings. This essay accepts that invitation, finding clear autobiographical efforts to capture the role of Joy in Lewis's early poetry, including *Dymer*, and in his late novel *Till We Have Faces*. That last book, written with soon-to-be-wife Joy Davidman, serves crucially to change the focus of Lewis's spiritual autobiographies from Joy to love. By thus expanding and exploring Lewis's autobiographical arc, this essay brings to light an almost teleological understanding of love and the central theme of Lewis's life and work.

KEYWORDS: spiritual autobiography, Lewis, grief, joy, love

For more than half a century, those seeking to read what C. S. Lewis had to say about his own life story contented themselves with his two published autobiographies, appearing in 1932 and 1956, respectively. In *Pilgrim's Regress: An Allegorical Apology for Religion, Reason, and Romanticism*, Lewis rather obscurely attempted to tell the story of his return to the Christian faith, although (he later admitted) he did so without enough 'consideration for the reader's difficulties' to avoid deep obscurities in that first attempt at spiritual autobiography (Lewis 2014: 207). *Surprised by Joy*, his second published attempt, fared somewhat better, and also proves challenging and somewhat

* ANDREW LAZO (MA 2006, Rice University; MDiv 2022 Virginia Theological Seminary) is Distinguished Lecturer at Northwind Seminary as well as an independent C. S. Lewis scholar. Email: andrewlazo@gmail.com.

© EMANUEL UNIVERSITY *of* ORADEA

obscure. Still, readers could learn much from both autobiographies, especially about Lewis's journey to faith, and so have made what they could of the two books.

In subsequent decades, however, tantalizing, previously unpublished scraps with autobiographical content have been brought to light by archival research. In 1974 in their authorized biography, Roger Lancelyn Green and Walter Hooper mention 'a long narrative poem', apparently written in the spring of 1932, in which Lewis sought to tell of his spiritual search for joy, resulting in his conversion to Christianity. Don W. King ultimately published all thirty-four lines of the rhyming alexandrine couplets, first in 1998, and subsequently in his critical edition of Lewis's poems in 2015 (Green and Hooper 2002, cf. King 2015: 468-9). And in 2013, I transcribed and edited 'Early Prose Joy', a short book-length account of Lewis's conversion to theism likely written between the summer of 1930 and the beginning of 1931 (cf. Lewis 2013a, Lazo 2012: 60). Internal evidence from 'Early Prose Joy' corrects the mistake Lewis made in *Surprised by Joy* when he dated his Theistic conversion to 'Trinity Term 1929', in fact revealing that date to be almost certainly in June (or perhaps July) of 1930 (Lewis 2017b: 279; cf. Lazo 2012). All of this recent research results in a wider picture of Lewis's autobiographical project, now that we know he attempted the task several times over at least two decades, trying again and again to tell his story.

This essay therefore endeavors to widen the scope of what we should consider autobiographical in Lewis, to explore a key turning point where Lewis changes the focus of his search for Joy, and to examine the way Lewis autobiographically explores the theme of longing leading to love in an autobiographical arc spanning almost the entirety of Lewis's compositional life.

The recent discovery of 'Early Prose Joy' opens up the topic considerably and invites a careful exploration of what Lewis attempted in his various autobiographical writings. Lewis used a number of different forms to try to tell this story, from the straightforward prose of 'Early Prose Joy' to the complex verse of 'I Will Write Down the Portion that I Understand', to the book-length dream allegory of *Pilgrim's Regress*, to the stylized narrative memoir of *Surprised by Joy*. The varieties of these genres certainly put us in mind of what Lewis himself had to say about form:

> In the Author's mind there bubbles up every now and then the material for a story… This ferment leads to nothing unless it is accompanied with the longing for a Form: verse or prose, short story, novel, play or what not. When these two things click you have the Author's impulse complete. It is now a thing inside him pawing to get out. He longs to see that bubbling stuff pouring into that Form as the housewife longs to see the new jam pouring into the clean jam jar. This nags him all day long and gets in the way of his work and his sleep and his meals. It's like being in love (Lewis 1982: 45-46).

Lewis seems to have had the story of his quest for Joy bubbling in his mind long enough to try several attempts in a number of forms; his last attempt could be considered his best. But many find *Surprised by Joy* unsatisfying, difficult, and uneven; and between its errors of dating and its surprising omissions, one is left to wonder if this last 'straight' autobiography indeed tells the spiritual story as well as Lewis wanted. And the distinctly different forms Lewis chose may well make us wonder if the nagging desire to tell that story was satisfied with the publication of *Surprised by Joy*.

In his 'Critical Reflections on *Surprised by Joy*', Alister McGrath asserts that, especially for C. S. Lewis, "[w]riting an autobiography was about self-discovery… about the person we had hoped we would be, or the person we would wish others to discern', a claim that helps make at least some sense of Lewis's tendency throughout his life to try to sort himself out through various formal attempts at autobiography (McGrath 2014: 15). McGrath also invites us to widen the field of what we might consider autobiography in Lewis's writings, expanding it to include poetry, fiction, and memoir. By doing so, we see this autobiographical impulse spanning nearly all of Lewis's life. So what did Lewis so assiduously seek to say? And did he ever manage to say it to his satisfaction? Exploring these issues will take us through the course of Lewis's writing career, and may even uncover deep themes of Lewis's life and writing that until now may have escaped the notice of scholars and readers alike.

In his thoughtful essay exploring Lewis's last novel, *Till We Have Faces*, scholar Peter J. Schakel makes an understandable mistake by claiming that, 'nearly all of Lewis's other stories are third-person accounts, with the narrator providing a reliable point of view to orient the reader' (Schakel 2010: 283). Indeed, at first glance these two premises seem to hold true in such books as *The Pilgrim's Regress*, *The Great Divorce*, the Chronicles of Narnia, the Ransom Trilogy, and *The Screwtape Letters*. But a closer look reveals something very different, and contributes to the conversation about the role of autobiography for Lewis. For when we look at what Lewis actually wrote, we find often-unreliable first-person narrators turning up everywhere. In fact, Lewis's self-referentiality extends to nearly everything he wrote

Almost the entirety of Lewis's work contradicts the assertion that third-person, trustworthy narrators speak in Lewis's stories; in fact, first-person narrators start early and prevail throughout Lewis's work, despite Schakel's claim. All of his writing before he became a Christian in 1931 make use of the first person. This includes his juvenile stories, written with his brother Warnie and much later compiled and published as *Boxen*; in them the young Lewis narrates the work from the start by saying 'It is my intention to lay before the reader in this volume…', a clear instance of a first-person narrator (Lewis and Lewis 2008: 37). In the collection of wartime poems *Spirits in Bondage*,

the first book Lewis published, thirty-seven of the forty poems use the first person; in the third line of his next book, the long, narrative poem *Dymer*, the narrator speaks of the moment when 'I first took pen to write' (Lewis 2008: 189; cf. Lewis 1984 [throughout]; Lewis 1979: 7). This trend continues in 'Early Prose Joy', which opens with the sentence, 'In this book I propose to describe the process by which I came back… to a belief in God', as well as in the aforementioned poem 'I Will Write Down the Portion that I Understand' and also in *The Pilgrim's Regress*, the allegorical apology that situates itself as a dream vision and opens with the phrase 'I dreamed of a boy…' as its opening line (Lewis 2014: 7).

In 1938 and into the 1940s, this trend of first-person narrators continued with the Ransom Trilogy, particularly in *Out of the Silent Planet*, which ends with 'Lewis' giving details about 'Ransom' and including correspondence between the two (Lewis 2003a: 153 ff.). 'Lewis' again appears in *Perelandra* as he walks to Ransom's house and converses with him in the first three chapters of that sequel (Lewis 2003b). And while absent from *That Hideous Strength*, the 'Lewis' narrator returns in *The Dark Tower*, Lewis's abandoned fourth installment in the series, the second line of which notes that there 'were four of us in Orfieu's study' (Lewis 1977: 1). *The Screwtape Letters* also follows suit in an unexpected way as Lewis in his preface not only asserts that he has come by this correspondence, but (in a deleted paragraph) also mentions getting the Letters from Dr. Ransom himself (see below). *The Great Divorce* again features a first-person narrator; from the first to the last sentence, Lewis describes his dream vision of purgatory and heaven from his own perspective (Lewis 2001: 1, 143). And in the Chronicles of Narnia, the last fiction Lewis wrote before penning *Till We Have Faces*, we again find a first-person narrator, a feature made most obvious by how the narrator addresses the reader directly; this occurs several times throughout the seven books, perhaps most famously when the narrator reminds the reader that 'you should never never shut yourself up in a wardrobe' (Lewis 2000a *Lion*: 54). The most direct appearance of this voice appears in *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'* in which the narrator actually speaks to Lucy about what she saw at the end of the world in Narnia: 'Lucy could only say, ‹It would break your heart.› ‹Why›, said I, ‹was it so sad?› ‹Sad!! No›, said Lucy'; this marks the only time the narrator actually speaks to one of the characters (Lewis 2000b: 162).

And not only do we find this self-referential 'I' pervading nearly everything Lewis writes (including, though not cited here, most if not all of Lewis's literary criticism and apologetics), very often, we find that we cannot trust that narrative voice. For example, in *Perelandra*, 'Lewis' includes a footnote in the first chapter: 'In the text I naturally keep to what I thought and felt at the time, since this alone is firsthand evidence… As a starting point for future investigation I recommend the following from Natvilcius', followed by a long

quote in Latin (Lewis 1996: 17). But 'Natvilcius' is actually not a real author of any sort, and is in fact a Latinized version of Lewis's own pseudonym, 'Nat Whilk', a pen-name he used, usually when publishing poetry, in order to keep his actual identity quiet. In this way Lewis again uses a layered, even deceptive first-person reference to reveal and to conceal at the same time.

Another instance of this occurs in the aforementioned preface to *The Screwtape Letters*. As scholar Brenton Dickieson has helpfully made clear, Lewis's preface as published omits an earlier, handwritten paragraph that includes the tantalizing phrase, 'Nothing will induce me to reveal how *my friend Dr. Ransom got hold of the script which is translated in the following pages* [of Screwtape's letters]', asserting that the hero of the Ransom Trilogy actually obtained and translated from Lewis's invented language Old Solar the thirty-one letters from the demon Screwtape (Dickieson 2015, emphasis added). Surely this instance defines the very notion of untrustworthy narrator [NB By 'untrustworthy', I cast no pejoratives at Lewis, nor do I miss the playfulness of persona in the various narrators Lewis invents. I simply mean to show that by correcting Schakel's assertion, we will see much more clearly Lewis's complex relation to himself, particularly as an author, especially of autobiography].

While the narrative 'I' of *The Great Divorce* was awoken at 3:00 AM by a siren, one can likely assume that Lewis invented this narrator and his dream vision of a bus from Purgatory; so too did Lewis invent the Narnia narrator that spoke with Lucy Pevensie, along with most of the other narrators through whose voice he speaks—surely Lewis himself never took such a celestial bus ride, nor spoke to his fictional character. So when we get to Orual, the troubling and unreliable first-person narrator of *Till We Have Faces*, far from finding her the exception to the rule of 'third-person accounts, with the narrator providing a reliable point of view to orient the reader', we can more safely see her instead as one of the best examples of an invented narrator who we cannot in fact trust, and one who does as much to disorient readers, as is often the case throughout Lewis's work. But before turning to Lewis's last novel, a work Lewis called, 'far and away my best book', we must return to the topic of autobiography and order to see what Lewis does about it, and where (Lewis 2007: 1148)

In his probing analysis of Lewis's autobiography, McGrath calls *Surprised by Joy*, 'a curious work—one that arguably seeks to conceal as much as to reveal, and which raises important and difficult questions concerning the correlation of Lewis' external and internal worlds', a description that can also apply both to other instances of autobiography (however widely we apply the term) as well as to Lewis's extensive, almost compulsive self-referentiality, as evidenced above (McGrath 2014: 23). Throughout his writing, Lewis talks much about himself, not only in his published work, but also in his thousands

of letters and in the diary he kept in the 1920s. Even in this diary, we find not only (of course) the self-referentiality that characterizes nearly everything he wrote, but also, interestingly, the same kind of conceal-and-reveal that McGrath notes. For Lewis clearly states that he read his diary aloud to Mrs. Moore, the woman with whom he lived, with whom he likely had a romantic relationship, and who he later took as his mother. [Cf., e.g., the entry for 29 September 1922, wherein Lewis notes that, after Mrs. Moore's daughter Maureen 'had gone to bed I read to D my diary for July' (Lewis 1991: 111; 'D' is Mrs. Moore).] So Lewis kept a diary, but revealed its contents to this woman with whom he was, in whatever sense(s), intimate—another example of Lewis's somewhat extreme tendency to conceal and to reveal.

And perhaps the ultimate example of this concealment matched with revelation comes in his (purportedly) last autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*. For in the preface to that book, Lewis claims that, '[T]he story is, I fear, suffocatingly subjective; the kind of thing I have never written before and shall probably never write again', which in one sentence captures the whole of issue of secrecy and self-revelation (Lewis 2017b: xii). Two problems instantly emerge. First, as we have already seen, Lewis's apology for suffocating subjectivity seems a bit disingenuous, given the fact that he seems to relish and indulge in that subjectivity in nearly everything he writes. But second, he claims that this apparently last autobiography is the kind of thing he has 'never written before', although he in fact has indeed done so in 'Early Prose Joy' (Lewis 2017b xii). [Cf. Lazo 2012: 8, wherein I note how 'Early Prose Joy' 'serves as a deliberate, and in places word-for-word, model for both *The Pilgrim's Regress* and *Surprised by Joy*'—in fact making the latter, in particular, precisely something he had written before.] And even in this autobiographical claim, Lewis here himself proves to be an unreliable first-person narrator.

So why does Lewis, especially in his autobiography, both conceal yet reference himself with such frequency? I believe this stems from the fact that he felt compelled to tell and retell the story of Joy, Sehnsucht, longing, because, as he claims in the last pages of *Surprised by Joy*, that was the subject of the whole book. And, indeed, we can see in all of his autobiographical work this thread of trying to define and describe the role of Joy in his life. And each time, it appears that success in capturing in writing the role of Joy proved as elusive as his vain attempts to capture Joy itself in his own life.

We find an important clue about why Lewis might have made so many attempts in an essay in which Lewis describes an important aspect of the writing of William Shakespeare, which he names 'variation'. In his essay 'Variation in Shakespeare and Others', Lewis describes how:

> Shakespeare plays variations on a theme that remains the same. [In Shakespeare you get] a series of lightning sketches, each of the same subject, and each tossed aside before the sketcher has really finished. We might distinguish these as the

> method of construction and the method of variation… [Shakespeare] cannot do even one thing except by doing it several times, as if even one thing were inexhaustible, and the poet could only go on having shots at it until mere necessity forced him to give it up (Lewis 2013b: 239).

In discussing Shakespeare's variation, Lewis might well have been writing about himself—and perhaps he was. For he employs this technique this in a number of his works; he re-writes the themes of *That Hideous Strength* in *The Abolition of Man*, tries at least one other version of a book on prayer before writing *Letters to Malcolm*, and tries several poetic forms for his early attempts at poetry. Perhaps most tellingly, as we will explore later, he tries out several different forms for *Till We Have Faces* before settling on the psychological, frame-story, modernist novel told through perhaps his most unreliable narrator, Orual.

His autobiographies (and I include *Till We Have Faces*) are in many ways frustrated and imperfect attempts to capture the experience of his repeated and failed attempts to capture Joy. But these published efforts, describing as they did the most intimate elements of his psyche, may well have mortified the intensely private and secretive Lewis. Even as (or perhaps *because*) he cannot cease to talk about himself and the thing that captivated him, he takes much effort to hide himself. Michael Ward deftly explores this inscrutable, secretive nature of Lewis.

Ward notes that we see this secrecy not only in Lewis's narrative pseudoselves, but also in his omissions from *Surprised by Joy*, a kind of literary cat-and-mouse autobiography that led fellow Inkling Humphrey Havard to call that book 'suppressed by Jack', and friend George Sayer to claim that 'Jack never ceased to be secretive' (Ward 2010: 6-7) [Ward's entire opening chapter 'Silence' merits much consideration; these two examples convincingly document Lewis's ability to construct 'a thoroughly maintained secretiveness' (Ward 2010: 7)]. I think that perhaps his profound, vigilantly maintained, extraordinary secrecy in some ways overcorrects itself in Lewis's pervasive self-referentiality and his autobiographical impulse as he tells the story of fleeting Joy. I believe that this compulsion both to tell and not to tell about his lifelong pursuit of Joy led him to continue to write and re-write his autobiographies. In fact, I would go so far as to assert that his 'straight' autobiographies are the minority portion of what I have elsewhere labeled Lewis's extended 'autobiographical impulse' that spans his life and the corpus of his writings (Lazo 2013: 7).

In fact, I go further, and claim that a sort of autobiographical arc begins very early in Lewis's young adulthood, and continues until very late in his life, shortly before his death. I expand this autobiographical arc to include much more than the three (or four) straight autobiographies, in part due to a very helpful conversation with Alister McGrath in March of 2013, shortly

before my publication of 'Early Prose Joy', which McGrath was only recently aware of when we spoke. We mused aloud about whether, in addition to 'Early Prose Joy', 'I Will Write Down the Portion that I Understand', *Pilgrim's Regress*, and *Surprised by Joy*, we helpfully might in some sense see Lewis's autobiographical impulse extending to some of Lewis's more creative books. McGrath agreed, and in fact comes to similar conclusions; in his *Intellectual World of C. S. Lewis*, he also asserts that we must also include *A Grief Observed* among the autobiographies (McGrath 2014:10).

On the heels of our conversation in the spring of 2013, later that year I made the suggestion in my introductory essay to the first publication of 'Early Prose Joy' that, 'perhaps we might profitably consider *Dymer*, *A Grief Observed*, *Till We Have Faces*, and others of Lewis's works also as specimens of spiritual autobiography, instances of Lewis again and again trying to tell the central story of how God worked in his life' (Lazo 2013: 6). In agreement with McGrath, I want to extend the notion farther. For if Lewis's autobiographies attempt to tell the story of his pursuit of Joy, then we can certainly include a number of his other works in that category. McGrath's inclusion of *A Grief Observed* at first does not appear to fit this category, as it chronicles the loss of Lewis's wife, Joy, rather than his lifelong pursuit of Sehnsucht. But the first chapter of *Surprised by Joy* offers a key clue, for therein Lewis describes Joy as a thing that: 'might almost equally well be called a particular kind of unhappiness or grief. But then it is a kind we want'—thus linking at least the quality of longing for Joy to experiencing grief (Lewis 2017b: 19). Combined with the directness of Lewis's reporting of his feelings at losing his wife, we might very reasonably agree with McGrath and add *A Grief Observed* to our working list of autobiographies (I explore this further below), now reaching to five in number and spanning half of Lewis's life, from 1930 to 1960.

But I suggest Lewis's published writing about the quest for Joy begins much earlier, on the cusp of adulthood. And incidentally, we find at least to some degree justification for doing so when we remember Owen Barfield's extraordinary remark about the cohesiveness of Lewis's mind and work. When Barfield claims that, 'somehow what [Lewis] thought about everything was secretly present in what he said about anything', we find not only another instance of the trope of concealing and revealing, but also justification for assuming a unity in Lewis's thought expressed in his writings (Barfield 1989: 120-121). If Lewis cares about a particular theme (and what does he care about more than Joy?), we can expect traces of it to show up virtually everywhere. And indeed it does—in fact, it spans his adult life and most of his publishing career. This fact perhaps comes as little surprise, especially given the way he has described the way glimpses of Joy haunted Lewis from his boyhood on, and served as a frequent topic of his personal, even confessional letters to lifelong friend Arthur Greeves during Lewis's teen years.

The theme appears in his first published book, *Spirits in Bondage*, a cycle of lyrics Lewis began writing as a teenager in 1915, which was published just after his service in WWI in 1919, while Lewis was just twenty years old (Hooper 2005: 139-142). Taking Barfield at his word that what Lewis ‹thought about everything was secretly present in what he said about anything›, we might find it productive to think about Lewis's impulse to tell the story of his search for Sehnsucht stretching throughout his authorial life. We can certainly extend this to as early as within the poem 'Dungeon Grates', in which Lewis sounds a now-familiar theme of seeking stabs of joy, powerful, redemptive, unrepeatable, and spurred by beauty: 'But only the strange power / Of unsought Beauty in some casual hour / Can build a bridge of light or sound or form / To lead you out of all this strife and storm; / When of some beauty we are grown a part / Till from its very glory's midmost heart / Out leaps a sudden beam of larger light / Into our souls' (Lewis 2015: 890). [King tentatively dates this poem to the spring of 1918, making this first literary mention of Joy appear in publishable form while Lewis was still a teenager.] If we consider Joy the theme of Lewis's autobiographical efforts, we find that the story of Joy as a guiding light in Lewis's life first appeared when Lewis had barely reached adulthood. Five years later, the theme of fleeting Joy resurfaces in another autobiographical work: the poem 'Joy', originally published under a pseudonym (more hidden Lewis) in 1924. The longing and its easy loss clearly come through: 'Rapture will not stay / longer than this, lest mortals grow divine / and old laws change too much. The sensitive ray / of Beauty, her creative vision fine, / Pass. I am hers, but she will not again be mine' (Lewis 2015: 138). The whole poem sounds the theme, but this closing stanza clearly demonstrates Lewis once again trying to describe this feeling that makes up 'what the story [of *Surprised by Joy*] has been mainly about', which he struggles once more to describe, this sensation he cannot adequately capture, though he continues to try (Lewis 2017b: 290).

We next find Joy appearing throughout the whole of 1927's *Dymer*, Lewis's long narrative poem and the last major work Lewis wrote before his conversions. In his book-length study of that influential early poem, scholar Jerry Root asserts that 'by the time Lewis wrote Dymer, … the longings were again finding quarter in his mind' (Root 2020: 192-193); this captures the on-again, off-again relationship Lewis maintained with his pursuit of Joy. Root credits Lewis's creation of the myth of Dymer with stirring up 'a sense of deep longing within him', noting that:

> Dymer, too, is questing to find something, but the object is never completely clear. Lewis writes *Dymer* as he is closing in on the day when he would discover God as the object of these deep-seated desires. In fact, his conversion would follow only five years after the publication of *Dymer*. In virtually all of his books, Lewis gives indication of these longings. *Dymer* in this regard is not unique (Root 2020: 193).

Root rightly notices that, although the main character may not know what he sought, Lewis understood it as desire, longing, Joy, Sehnsucht. And in his tragic pursuit of it, Dymer brings about destruction. Because of the extent to which the long poem concerns itself with Lewis's lifelong quest, we may add this book too to the list of autobiographical writings. Given Lewis's claim that *Surprised by Joy* is 'not a general autobiography [and that] it gets less like a general autobiography as it goes on', it is perhaps fair and even wise to expect Lewis to avoid writing a conventional autobiography even as he writes autobiographically in several forms through his various written attempts to describe the role of Joy in his life (Lewis 2017b: xi). Due to its preoccupation with the themes of Sehnsucht that preoccupy Lewis for most of his life, we may arguably consider *Dymer* as in many ways another instance of spiritual autobiography.

At this point, a timeline might prove helpful. [In this I have valuable assistance from Joel Heck's indispensable 'Chronologically Lewis' document, running to more than 1300 pages, as well as Walter Hooper's magisterial and indispensable *C. S. Lewis: Companion and Guide*.] Consider these key events:

- 1905: Lewis has experiences of beauty, including seeing the toy garden on a biscuit tin brought by his brother; this incident fills Lewis with Sehnsucht.
- 1914-1917: While living with his tutor in Surrey, Lewis maintains an extensive correspondence with Belfast friend Arthur Greeves, recording many experiences of Joy.
- ~1916: Lewis writes a first, prose version of *Dymer*.
- 1918-1926 Lewis composes the verse version of *Dymer*.
- Spring 1918: Lewis pens 'Dungeon Grates', describing aspects of Joy (published in 1919 in *Spirits in Bondage*).
- 1924: Lewis publishes 'Joy', a poem describing Sehnsucht.
- 1926: Lewis publishes *Dymer*, arguably his first spiritual autobiography.
- 1930: Lewis converts to theism.
- Late 1930-early 1931: Lewis composes 'Early Prose Joy'.
- 1932: Lewis composes 'I Will Write Down the Portion that I Understand', and *Pilgrim's Regress* (published in 1933), again trying to capture the sense of Sehnsucht's role in his life.
- 1948-53, 1955 Lewis composes, publishes *Surprised by Joy* (Joy Davidman types the manuscript).
- 1955: Lewis composes (with Joy Davidman) and publishes *Till We Have Faces*.
- 1960-61 Lewis composes and publishes *A Grief Observed*.

I have mentioned *Till We Have Faces* because I believe that, given the expanded view suggested herein concerning which of Lewis's books to consider significantly biographical, that novel, which Lewis called, 'far and away by best book', and 'much my best book', merits inclusion among those books in

which Lewis discusses his lifelong search for Joy (Lewis 2007: 1148, 873). Perhaps most poignantly, Lewis captures in that retelling of the Cupid and Psyche myth the sense of longing that captivated him all his life.

In the novel, Lewis describes not only Psyche from the traditional Apuleian myth, but also her jealous older sister, Orual. Due to her unloveliness (both physical as well as psychological), over the course of the novel Orual cannot bring herself to consider or love anyone outside of herself. In her unloving approach, Orual embodies Lewis's warning in *The Four Loves* about what happens when we 'give our human loves the unconditional allegiance which we owe only to God'. When we do this, he cautions that 'they become gods: then they become demons. Then they will destroy us, and also destroy themselves. For natural loves that are allowed to become gods do not remain loves. They are still called so, but can become in fact complicated forms of hatred', which describes almost exactly the fate of the self-centered, jealous, wounded Orual (Lewis 2012a: 8). And this self-centered hatred embodies the reaction of Orual to her younger sister Psyche's experience of Sehnsucht.

Psyche, when she looks at the Grey Mountain a little way from her native kingdom of Glome, experiences deeply the kind of Sehnsucht for it in a way that echoes Lewis's own longing for the mountains he could see but never reach as a young boy in Belfast. In *Surprised by Joy* he recalls how in his view 'every day there were what we called ‹the Green Hills›; that is, the low line of the Castlereagh Hills which we saw from the nursery windows. They were not very far off but they were, to children, quite unattainable. They taught me longing—Sehnsucht' (Lewis 2017b: 6). Psyche, too, experiences this Joy, inspired by longing for far off hills.

Early in the novel, Orual notes that, 'almost from the beginning', Psyche 'was half in love with the Mountain'; she would make up stories about it and always look towards it with the same sort of longing that Lewis describes in his other autobiographies (Lewis 2012b: 23). And when the plot of the novel leads the people of Glome to call for Psyche to be sacrificed to the god of love on the top of that mountain, we find perhaps the most poignant description of Joy in all of Lewis's writings. [This god, described by Orual as 'the god of the Grey Mountain, who hates me', is the son of Ungit; later we discover that Ungit, the main goddess of Glome, is actually a tribal version of Aphrodite (Lewis 2012b: 4). Therefore, Ungit's son, this god of the Grey Mountain to whom Psyche is to be sacrificed as his offering or bride, is the equivalent of Eros or Cupid in the Glomish pantheon (Lewis 2012b: 4)].

To Orual's dismayed surprise, because of her longing and even love, Psyche while facing this sacrifice expresses not horror, but delight at the prospect of joining with the god of the Grey Mountain, even though it appears to mean her death:

> It was when I was happiest that I longed most… Do you remember? The colour and the smell, and looking across at the Grey Mountain in the distance? And because it was so beautiful, it set me longing, always longing. Somewhere else there must be more of it. Everything seemed to be saying, 'Psyche come!' But I couldn't (not yet) come and I didn't know where I was to come to. It almost hurt me. I felt like a bird in a cage when the other birds of its kind are flying home… 'Orual', she said, her eyes shining, 'I am going, you see, to the Mountain. You remember how we used to look and long? And all the stories of my gold and amber house, up there against the sky, where we thought we should never really go? The greatest King of all was going to build it for me. If only you could believe it, sister! No, listen. Do not let grief shut up your ears and harden your heart… The sweetest thing in all my life has been the longing—to reach the Mountain, to find the place where all the beauty came from… [It is] my country, the place where I ought to have been born. Do you think it all meant nothing, all the longing? The longing for home? For indeed it now feels not like going, but like going back. All my life the god of the Mountain has been wooing me. Oh, look up once at least before the end and wish me joy. I am going to my lover' (Lewis 2012b: 74-76).

Here we find a key new experience of Sehnsucht, one heretofore never mentioned in this manner in any of Lewis's other writing about Joy—for never before have we encountered Joy so linked with love, and especially divine, romantic love. And Orual reacts with hatred—hatred for the gods, even for her sister, and likely, for herself. For the deep love she had for her sister Psyche was at bottom self-serving, and indeed had became a complicated form of hatred. And by linking joy to love and longing to selflessness, we find a key moment in the development of Lewis's quest for Sehnsucht. For I believe that Lewis kept trying to tell the story of Joy accurately, over and over again throughout the years of his adult life, because only in his mid-fifties does he discover that, in fact, Joy was not what he wanted at all. Perhaps part of the reason for his failure to write his autobiography to his satisfaction comes from the fact that Lewis had not yet realized the center of the story.

I do not believe that stabs of Joy, Sehnsucht, were the center of Lewis's lifelong longings. In fact, I will be bold enough to claim that if we think primarily of Joy when discussing Lewis, we come dangerously close to missing the actual point of what his life and work were actually about. Ultimately, Joy was not the end to which Lewis aimed all his life. And because of that, any spiritual autobiography (in any form) that took Sehnsucht as its center and goal was doomed to miss the mark—and I believe they all did, until Lewis wrote his last novel, his 'best book', *Till We Have Faces*.

We find the key to this claim in the closing pages of Lewis's last formal autobiography (and, I suggest, his last full treatment of Joy). Lewis concludes *Surprised by Joy* with a subtle but staggering claim that turns all his previous, lifelong autobiographical efforts on their head when he asserts:

> But what, in conclusion, of Joy? For that, after all, is what the story has mainly been about. To tell you the truth, the subject has lost nearly all interest for me since I became a Christian… I believe (if the thing were at all worth recording) that the old stab, the old bittersweet, has come to me as often and as sharply since my conversion as at any time of my life whatever. But I now know that the experience, considered as a state of my own mind, had never had the kind of importance I once gave it. *It was valuable only as a pointer to* ***something other and outer*** (Lewis 2017b: 290-291, emphasis added)/

So while he has taken pains throughout this book (and indeed, throughout his letters, poems, and other autobiographies) to stress the importance of Joy, he concludes all of his autobiographical efforts until now by saying that Joy only has value when it turns away from itself as an end, when it points away from itself, and when it suggests something different both in its essence and in its location—something 'other and outer'. But what in fact is this something? What is the thing that prompts this turning away from itself, and towards something else—something that is located somewhere else? Lewis goes on to remark that 'when we are lost in the woods the sight of a signpost is a great matter', but that once we catch the right trail, we do not stop to stare at the signposts, even though they point to Jerusalem (Lewis 2017b: 291). So what is this 'other and outer'? What could possibly mean more than Joy? To what did all the longings point? To what enormous lack did the longing after Sehnsucht point?

The answer comes in four recorded talks from 1958 that, when revised, became *The Four Loves*. I believe that one small phrase in them actually offers a key to this mystery of autobiography that spans Lewis adult life. And that phrase, taken in a widening context, should rightly re-shape one fundamental, thematic, and mistaken notion that scholars and readers alike have assumed for decades. For Joy was not the center of Lewis's life, nor even that important of a theme when compared with the thing to which Lewis points. Ultimately Lewis did not really care about Joy except as it served as a signpost to the thing he really lacked, the thing he really longed for: love. And to justify this landscape-altering claim, we now turn to the little phrase in the 1958 talks about the Four Loves.

In his talk about *S*torge, Affection, Lewis describes that first of the natural loves as 'the oldest, most spontaneous form in which *we go out of ourself towards others*, [which] is naturally taken up, both into friendship and into Eros' (Lewis 2017a: np, emphasis added). In speaking of these three natural loves, Lewis offers us a very helpful definition of love itself, and one which resounds back over the whole of his life, thought, and work. Love, for Lewis, is that thing that causes us to go out of ourselves, and towards others. It is a fundamentally selfless move; even more than selfless, love is in fact the conscious act where we do two things—turn from our own selves and interest, and then turn

instead towards the selves and interests of the other. When we place this definition from the 1958 talks alongside Lewis's ultimate statement about the role and value of Sehnsucht from the closing pages of *Surprised by Joy*, we in fact find that the center of Lewis's life was not in fact Joy, but that thing to which Joy pointed, namely, love—that which takes us out of ourselves and towards the other. In fact, once this revelation and reversal does its work, I believe that we will find that the center of Lewis's whole life was the search, not for Joy, but for love. For C. S. Lewis, love, not Joy, is the overarching, underlying theme of his whole life.

If we then shift our view from Joy and instead place love at the thematic center of Lewis's life and work, we begin to see his efforts at autobiography in a different, clearer light. Over the course of his life, Lewis seems to have realized that his whole life has been about love, and that he perhaps mistook the signpost for the center. And this realization necessarily should shift his approach to autobiography. Perhaps the frustration of capturing the story of his life led Lewis to persist in writing and re-writing that story until he realized that love rather than Joy occupied the heart of his autobiography. So throughout his authorial life, Lewis has been struggling to capture the essence of the longing that eluded him. I believe that he continues to write (and re-write, over and over) his spiritual autobiography because all his efforts ultimately fail him up until the closing pages of *Surprised by Joy*.

I suggest that Lewis perhaps did not fully understand his own story until he realized that what he searched for all his life was love, and that Joy, properly placed, was a means to that end. And in this journey of discovery, Lewis found invaluable aid in the person of Joy Davidman, who, by the end of the writing of *Surprised by Joy* had become not only Lewis's close friend, but who also transcribed and typed up the manuscript for that book. And the discovery in recent years of a series of forty-five love sonnets Davidman wrote to Lewis between 1949-1954 (they apparently stop just before her involvement with the composition of *Till We Have Faces*) serves to highlight the various loves involved in their complex relationship. Perhaps her very presence in his life caused Lewis to see the centrality of love, in part because Davidman would soon embody all four of the loves for Lewis. For she was first his friend (Philia), and soon after a recipient of his charity (Agape). But in short order he found that he had fallen in love with her (Eros), and married her the year before he gave his talks about love, thus making her a part of his family (Storge). Perhaps Joy Davidman's loving presence not only helped Lewis finally to understand in his head, and experience in his life and heart, the love to which all the longing pointed, but also helped him more successfully write his spiritual autobiography, now focused on love.

And this brings us to *Till We Have Faces*. If *The Four Loves* in its different iterations holds the key to what Lewis tried to get at when writing

autobiography, perhaps this last novel, this 'best book' holds important keys to the role of autobiography in Lewis's life as a search for Joy that leads to love. I believe that Lewis deliberately structures the novel around the absence of and longing for the four loves (affection, friendship, romantic love, and divine love). The second sentence on the first page of the book tells of Lewis's hidden structure, as Orual complains, 'I have no husband [lack of Eros] nor child [lack of Storge], nor hardly a friend [lack of Philia], through whom they can hurt me [opposite of Agape]'—a phrase that sounds the themes of the novel that Lewis fleshes out until the very last pages (Lewis 2012b: 3). The book serves as a sort of parable pointing us to what happens when selfishness, embodied by Orual, affects love.

As alluded to above, we certainly find in the novel the same sort of descriptions of joy and longing throughout Lewis's autobiographical work. Psyche memorably describes her longing, which Lewis often elsewhere describes as 'having and wanting' (cf. e.g. 'Early Prose Joy' wherein it occurs nearly twenty times; 'longing' occurs almost as often), even as she faces her fate to offer herself (mysteriously) both as a human sacrifice and as the bride of the god of the Grey Mountain. In this passage, we see explicitly the connection between the longing (which Lewis calls 'Joy'), and love. For Psyche's description of her longing to 'find the place where all the beauty came from' could as easily fit into *Surprised by Joy* as it does here.

But now this longing connects with the idea of self-sacrifice, and with love for the God of Love, with Love Himself. Even selfish Orual perceives the implicit connection, noting how 'someone or something else' had come between the Affection (Storge) between her and her sister: divine love in the form of a person. And Lewis has used this phrase before: in *Mere Christianity*, when describing God's voice uniting the church, calling it 'something, or a Someone' (Lewis 2009b: xii). Orual sees that a divine someone stands in between her and her sister, and it is this 'someone or something', the God of the Grey Mountain, Eros, the God of Love that is in fact the object of Psyche's lifelong stabs of having and wanting, of longing, of Joy. Here again, as in the end of *Surprised by Joy*, we find that longing in fact plays its central role in serving as a signpost to love, a love we lack and yet ever long for.

Even Orual, who refuses to believe in the love that surrounds her, experiences an invitation to Joy. Near the middle of Book I, Orual goes up to the holy mountain, hoping to find and bury the remains of her sister who has been sacrificed to become the bride of the God of the Grey Mountain for which she always longed. But a strange thing happens to Orual on the way to her grim task: she experiences a stab or invitation to Joy which echoes similar stabs of Joy in Lewis's other spiritual autobiographies:

> You may well believe that I had set out sad enough; I came on a sad errand. Now, flung at me like frolic or insolence, there came as if it were a voice—no words—

> but if you made it into words it would be, 'Why should your heart not dance?' It's the measure of my folly that my heart almost answered, 'Why not?' I had to tell myself over like a lesson the infinite reasons it had not to dance. My heart to dance? Mine whose love was taken from me, I, the ugly princess who must never look for other love… And yet, it was a lesson I could hardly keep in my mind. The sight of the huge world put mad ideas into me, as if I could wander away, wander forever, see strange and beautiful things, one after the other to the world's end. The freshness and wetness all about me… made me feel that I had misjudged the world; it seemed kind, and laughing, as if its heart also danced. Even my ugliness I could not quite believe in. Who can feel ugly when the heart meets delight? (Lewis 2012b: 95-96).

Here Orual hears in her heart or head or soul the insistent invitation to let her heart dance, an invitation to see beyond herself, to see beauty. And, although she does not know it, in mere moments she will meet Psyche, gloriously alive, happily married to Eros, and also asking her 'why should our hearts not dance?' (Lewis 2012b: 104-105).

But she refuses these invitations, turns from beauty, from Joy, and in fact from love, and turns only to her own self—hardened, ugly, and prideful. This refusal of the Joy leading to love blinds Orual, as surely as it does the dwarves in *The Last Battle* who also will not be taken in by the invitation to Joy and love. For in Lewis's practical theology, the opposite of love is not hatred, but pride, selfishness, the refusal to go out of the self towards any other. Joy provides signposts to love, but the soul that refuses to see these signposts will find itself lost and far from the path of love.

Orual's selfish, gaping, grasping need (seen in her approach to the loves), embodies Lewis's later warning in *The Four Loves* that the loves, when selfishly pursued past all sense of proportion, 'carry in them the seeds of hatred. If Affection is made the absolute sovereign of a human life the seeds will germinate. Love, having become a god, becomes a demon' (Lewis 2012a: 56). This fate we find in Orual, who would deny Psyche the chance of marrying the god of love, fulfilling her lifelong longing, and discovering joy of her own; Orual's thwarting of the fulfillment of Psyche's lifelong longing for love comes about because Orual, denied love for herself, refuses it to others. Her rejection of both Joy and its loving result (i.e., moving her out of herself towards anyone else) ultimately makes Orual's love a complicated form of hatred. Orual realizes this fact near the end of the novel when she admits that her so-called love (in this case, affection for Psyche) 'can grow to be nine-tenths hatred and still call itself love', a lie she tells herself until just before the end of the book (Lewis 2012b: 266). This 'nine-tenths' fraction should sound a significant echo for the careful reader, for Lewis a few years later in *The Four Loves* asserts that, 'Affection is responsible for nine-tenths of whatever solid and durable happiness there is in our natural lives' (Lewis 2012a: 53); he says this even as he warns what can happen when any love grows tyrannical.

Having shown the results of grasping, self-centered 'love' in *Till We Have Faces*, Lewis develops those themes in *The Four Loves*.

In fact, so closely do *Till We Have Faces* and *The Four Loves* connect, and so intrinsically do both books expound and explore the ideas and implications of the four loves (especially what happens to love when it grows disproportionate), that I believe that the latter book serves in many ways to explain in prose the point Lewis was trying to make in his last novel, his 'best book'. This should not surprise careful readers of Lewis, for he has done this sort of thing before, and not only by means of the variation alluded to above. Lewis admittedly re-wrote the themes of *Abolition of Man* in *That Hideous Strength*, describing the latter book as 'a ‹tall› story about devilry, though it has behind it a serious ‹point› which I have tried to make in my *Abolition of Man*'; this is a pattern, I argue, that Lewis also uses here (Lewis 2003b: 7). Even though in the later instance, the fiction of *Till We Have Faces* precedes its prose explanation in *The Four Loves*, much like with the previous pair, Lewis writes both books within a few years of each other, while their themes remain fresh in his thought.

In *Till We Have Faces*, we find the pursuit of Joy common to all of Lewis's spiritual autobiographies. And also in the person of Psyche, we see what can happen to a person who will follow Sehnsucht's signposts to something other and outer—for those signs, as Psyche experiences in her marriage to Eros, lead directly toward love. But in Orual we also see the opposite, what happens to love when it will not look outside of itself. One by one through a series of encounters, memories, and visions, Orual realizes that she has in fact betrayed all four of the loves—familiar, friendly, romantic, and divine, and, while she bewails her lack of love, and exalts her own loving actions, in fact, the very reverse of what she complains about for the length of her book proves true. She has in fact been surrounded by love, especially in form of Friendship and Affection. And ultimately she comes to realize that the two gods of love, Ungit and her Son, have in fact loved her, though she blinded herself to that fact, and would not follow the signposts. *Till We Have Faces*, written with a woman for whom Lewis in short order would find all four loves deeply, happily fulfilled, in many ways completes Lewis's long autobiographical attempts. For in finding finally that Joy pointed to love, and in finding all of the loves in Joy Davidman, Lewis in many ways fulfills his to need to write his spiritual autobiography, and to tell the story of Joy.

In many ways, but not in all. For McGrath includes one of Lewis's last books, *A Grief Observed*, among Lewis's autobiographical writing. But this inclusion in the autobiographical arc spanning Lewis's life makes little sense if we accept that the theme of Joy 'is what [Lewis's] story is mainly about' (Lewis 2017b: 290). But if in fact we see Sehnsucht as the experience that points to love, then we can understand that arc better. His earliest attempts at

autobiography up to *Surprised by Joy* concern themselves on the experience of Joy, longing, the lack of something other and outer. In *Surprised by Joy*, with Joy Davidman herself reading and typing the manuscript, something shifts, and in 1953 at the end of the book Lewis realizes Joy is about something other and outer. In the 1958 script of the radio talks, Lewis defines love as going out of the self towards the other—and, not coincidentally, by that year he had already married Joy Davidman twice. So autobiography has become about the longing for love, a longing fulfilled even as Lewis wrote *Till We Have Faces*.

Therefore, we should include *A Grief Observed*, with its intimate, journal-like quality of recording Lewis's thoughts and feelings after Davidman's death, because it fulfills, finally the autobiographical arc by chronicling the death of the great love of Lewis's life. Interestingly, once we include this last book, the autobiographical trajectory of Lewis writing about his life finds a kind of symmetrical completion. For autobiography in Lewis always coincides with death. Once we look through the lens of not only longing, but also of love and of loss, we seem to find a traceable pattern and even a motivation behind Lewis's autobiographical impulse.

As mentioned above, Lewis's first writing about Sehnsucht comes from his teen years, not long after the death of his mother. And if Joy is indeed about the lack of and longing after love, then this would certainly make sense for the young Lewis. Certainly, his flurry of three autobiographical attempts to describe the spiritual implications of Joy after his conversions (1930[?]-1932) follow hard on the heels of the death of Lewis's father Albert in the fall of 1929. And the decline and death of Mrs. Moore, Lewis's adopted 'mother' takes place right in the middle of his composition of *Surprised by Joy*. Seemingly, parental death sparks Lewis's impulse towards grappling with Joy and its implications in the form of spiritual autobiography.

And so too *A Grief Observed*. Although of course Joy Davidman was Lewis's wife, in chronicling his grief at her passing, he tellingly describes her as 'my daughter and *my mother*, my pupil and my teacher, my subject and my sovereign' (Lewis 2009a: 47, emphasis added); Lewis in at least one metaphorical way thinks of Joy's death as similar to that of parental figures in his life; in this case he writes autobiographically when trying to describe the now-absent love after which he longs. I find it wise to agree with McGrath in including this book among Lewis's autobiographical writings. Lewis himself gives us some license when discussing the quality of joy: 'Joy (in my sense)… considered only in its quality, it might almost equally well be called a particular kind of unhappiness or grief', a telling statement that equates at least some aspects of Sehnsucht and grief, of having-and-wanting at the same time as experiencing an irrevocable lack and loss (Lewis 2017b: 19).

It is an irony certainly not lost on Lewis, and many others, that longing, love, and loss, about which Lewis wrote throughout the entire course of his career, would be tied up in a woman called Joy. Because of her, Lewis found love, even all four loves. And this discovery of what he longed for almost as far back as he could remember helped him to see Sehnsucht as a signpost towards that love, and, ultimately towards the love of God. Seeing the autobiographical impulse of Lewis stretching across his life as a writer certainly helps us see what he tried so many times to accomplish, to find the place that the longing came from, as Psyche might say. Do these efforts prove successful? All readers of course must answer this question for themselves. But perhaps taken all together, one can find in Lewis's corpus of autobiographical writings a satisfyingly coherent and comprehensible map towards longing, love, loss, and a joy that points even beyond grief.

Bibliography

Barfield O (1989) *Owen Barfield on C. S. Lewis*. In Tennyson GB (ed) Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, pp. 120-121.

Dickieson B (2015) A Cosmic Find in The Screwtape Letters. *apilgriminnarnia.com*, apilgriminnarnia.com/2015/10/28/a-cosmic-find/.

Green RL and Hooper W (2002) *C. S. Lewis: A Biography*, fully revised and expanded edition. London: HarperCollins, 2002.

Hooper W (1996) *C. S. Lewis: A Companion & Guide*. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco.

Lazo A (2012) Correcting the Chronology: Some Implications of 'Early Prose Joy'. *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review* 29: 51-62.

_____ (2013) 'Early Prose Joy': A Brief Introduction. *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review* 30: 5-12.

Lewis CS (1992) *All My Road before Me: The Diary of C. S. Lewis, 1922-1927*. In Hooper W (ed) New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

_____ (2005) Books, Broadcasts, and the War, 1931-1949. In Hooper W (ed) *Collected Letters, Volume II*. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco.

_____ (2007) Narnia, Cambridge, and Joy 1950-1963. In Hooper W (ed) *Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis, Volume III*. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco.

_____ (2015) I Will Write Down the Portion that I Understand. In King DW (ed) *The Collected Poems of C. S. Lewis: A Critical Edition*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, pp. 259-260.

_____ (1977) *The Dark Tower: And Other Stories*. New York, NY: Harvest/HBJ.

_____ (2013): Early Prose Joy. *VII: An Anglo-American Literary Review* 30: 13-49.

_____ (2012) *The Four Loves*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

_____ (2017) *The Four Loves: Featuring the Vintage BBC Recordings of C. S. Lewis*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson.
_____ (2001) *The Great Divorce: A Dream*. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco.
_____ (2009) *A Grief Observed*. E-book edition, New York, NY: HarperCollins ebooks.
_____ (2000) *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. New York: HarperTrophy.
_____ (2009) *Mere Christianity: A Revised and Amplified Edition, with a New Introduction, of the Three Books Broadcast Talks, Christian Behaviour, and Beyond Personality*. New York, NY: HarperOne.
_____ (1979) Dymer. In Hooper W (ed) *Narrative Poems*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace, pp. 7-91.
_____ (1982) Sometimes Fairy Stories May Say Best What's to Be Said. In Hooper W (ed) *On Stories, and Other Essays on Literature*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, pp. 45-48.
_____ (2003) *Out of the Silent Planet*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
_____ (2003) *Perelandra*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.
_____ (2014) *The Pilgrim's Regress*. In Downing DC (ed) Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
_____ (2013) Variation in Shakespeare and Others. In Hooper W (ed) *Selected Literary Essays*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 74-87.
_____ (1984) Dungeon Grates. In Hooper W (ed) *Spirits in Bondage: A Cycle of Lyrics*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace & Company.
_____ (2017) *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.
_____ (2003) *That Hideous Strength: A Modern Fairy-tale for Grown-ups*. New York, NY: Scribner.
_____ (2012) *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
_____ (2000) *The Voyage of the 'Dawn Treader'*. New York: HarperTrophy, 2000.
Lewis CS and Lewis WH (2008) *Boxen: Childhood Chronicles before Narnia*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.
McGrath AE (2014) *The Intellectual World of C. S. Lewis*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
Root J (2020) *Splendour in the Dark: C. S. Lewis's Dymer in His Life and Work*. In Downing DC (ed) Downer's Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
Schakel PJ (2010) Till We Have Faces. In Ward M and MacSwain R (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to C. S. Lewis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 281-293.
Ward M (2010) *Planet Narnia: The Seven Heavens in the Imagination of C. S. Lewis*. Oxford: Oxford Uuniversity Press.

Ward M and MacSwain R, eds (2010) *The Cambridge Companion to C. S. Lewis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.