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6-3-2018

Through the Lens of THE FOUR LOVES: Love in THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH

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Recommended Citation

Sauders, Paulette G., "Through the Lens of THE FOUR LOVES: Love in THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH" (2018). *Papers Presented at Previous Colloquia*. 6. <https://pillars.taylor.edu/colloquium-papers/6>

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Through the Lens of *The Four Loves*: Love in *That Hideous Strength*

It is my contention that when C.S. Lewis wrote his non-fiction book *The Four Loves* and published it in 1960, he had not been thinking about love in all of its manifestations for just a short time before it was written. All of the fictional works he wrote over the years, beginning in at least 1938, reflect his definitions and descriptions of the various kinds of love and their perversions that he systematically describes so well in *The Four Loves*. He does this in his fiction through his various characters and their actions. Each of his characters personifies one of the types of love or their perversions.

In *That Hideous Strength*, published in 1945, he once again shows the reader the four kinds of love instead of just defining and discussing the kinds of love as he does in *The Four Loves*.

Kathryn Hume calls *That Hideous Strength* a “romance” instead of “fantasy.” Hume says that the novel “can be viewed as traditional romance, but as such it centers on the Studdocks . . .” (505).

Janice Neuleib agrees with Hume, calling the novel “a cosmic romance” (16). Because it is a romance, *That Hideous Strength* will reflect something of *The Four Loves* as it examines the Eros/Romantic Love (or lack of it) of Jane and Mark Studdock, as well as the Affection/Storge and Eros of Dr. and Mrs. Dimble, the Friendship/Philia between Jane and the Dennistons, the Eros of the Dennistons and Maggses, and the Friendship and Gift-love/Agape among all those at St. Anne’s. However, most of the novel centers around Jane and Mark Studdock.

The reader becomes aware immediately that this novel will deal with Eros/Romantic Love since the very first word in *That Hideous Strength* is “Matrimony.” Thomas Howard suggests that marriage is supposed to be “the place where we find the idea of Charity guarded and taught and enacted . . .” (*The Achievement* 123-24), but Jane is contemplating only the problems and emptiness of her marriage. Howard feels that “the central theme of the book” is summarized in the sentence from the marriage rite in *The Book of Common Prayer* that Jane is recalling at the beginning of the novel: “Matrimony was ordained, thirdly, . . . for the mutual society, help, and comfort that one ought to have of the other” (*That Hideous Strength* 13).

Jane and Mark, according to their vows, should be helping and comforting one another. But instead, Jane is struggling alone with thoughts of “independence, self-determination, dignity” (Howard, *The Achievement* 132), and Mark is struggling alone with thoughts of Bracton College and getting to know the “right” people who could let him into the inner circle of leadership in that school. Neither is thinking about helping or comforting the other. Neither is thinking about his or her love for the other. At this point, each is a personification of what Eros is not. But by the end of the novel, each will be a personification of Lewis’s concept of true Eros and true Gift-love.

In the beginning, Jane reflects that, after six months, her marriage has “proved to be the door out of a world of work and comradeship and laughter and innumerable things to do into something like solitary confinement” (*THS/That Hideous Strength* 13).

Jane remembers the wonderful “endless talks” that she and Mark had before marriage and remembers that “life itself had seemed too short for all they had to say to each other” (13). All of

that conversation before they were married seems to her to be “the very medium of love itself” (13). Yet now they rarely speak and, when they do, it is superficial small talk.

Likewise, Lewis writes of Eros in *The Four Loves* that one who is romantically in love experiences first “a delighted preoccupation with the Beloved . . .” (133). These words seem to fit Jane’s description of their pre-marital absorption in conversation with each other. But now, only six months later, Mark and Jane’s relationship has changed. Eros is not what it should be. What has caused the change?

Part of the reason for the change can be found in Jane’s thoughts about being independent:

To avoid entanglements and interferences had long been one of her first principles. Even when she had discovered that she was going to marry Mark if he asked her, the thought, “But I must still keep up my own life,” had arisen at once and had never for more than a few minutes at a stretch been absent from her mind. Some resentment against love itself, and therefore against Mark, for thus invading her life remained (*THS* 72).

Jane has a “fear of being invaded and entangled” and thinks, “One had one’s own life to live” (*THS* 73).

Eugene Warren calls Jane and Mark a “modern” couple and says, “Jane is liberated enough to feel bound and bored in her marriage; Mark is free enough (so he thinks) of old-fashioned values to climb up in the N.I.C.E. without concern for other people” (14).

Janice Neuleib calls Jane selfish and notes that “her desire to be an independent person, mature and needing no one, leads her into a sort of coldness . . .” (17). Neuleib notes that Jane’s independence has even affected her ability to be comforted. This idea of comfort reminds the reader, too, of the sentence from the marriage rites that Jane is remembering at the beginning of the novel – that marriage is “ordained” for “the mutual society, help, and *comfort*” that husband and wife can give to each other.

For example, when Mark returns home late from his college faculty meeting, Jane is frightened over the nightmares she has been having and the fact that she reads about the same events and people in the newspaper each day after she has dreamed, so she uncharacteristically rushes to embrace Mark as soon as he enters the door. Jane has been so independent and aloof, rarely turning to Mark for comfort, that, now, there “was a quality in the very muscles of his wife’s body which took him by surprise. A certain indefinable defensiveness had momentarily deserted her” (*THS* 44). But by the next morning, Jane is quite short with Mark, showing her annoyance with him, because “she was deeply angry with herself for the collapse which had betrayed her last night, into being what she most detested – the fluttering, tearful ‘little woman’ of sentimental fiction running for comfort to male arms” (46).

Only one other time does Jane accept comfort, and that is from the affectionate Mrs. Dimble, the wife of one of her favorite professors. When Mrs. Dimble asks Jane unexpectedly, “Do you hate being kissed?” Jane intends “to reply, ‘Of course not,’ but inexplicably, and to her great annoyance, found herself crying instead.” It annoys her that she is crying, and she remembers from her childhood the times when her mother or nurse tried to comfort her and how she felt even then that their embraces “had been unwelcome and resisted as an insult to one’s

maturity . . .” (30). But, in this instance, Jane accepts Mrs. Dimble’s comfort, and “she was back in those forgotten, yet infrequent, times when fear or misery induced a willing surrender and surrender brought comfort.” Even though “not to detest being petted and pawed was contrary to her whole theory of life,” she soon confides in Mrs. Dimble about her nightmares (*THS* 30).

In both of these instances, Jane is briefly demonstrating what Lewis calls “Need-love.” In *The Four Loves*, Lewis points out that we need one another physically, emotionally, and intellectually. It is a good, natural thing, and “no one calls a child selfish because it turns for comfort to its mother; nor an adult who turns to his fellow ‘for company’” (13). Lewis stresses instead that if one rarely feels Need-love, it “is in general the mark of the cold egoist” (13).

So we see that while Jane is capable of giving into Need-love and affectionate comfort, she does not allow that to happen very often. Neuleib agrees with Lewis’s concept of a “cold egoist,” commenting that “in Jane’s case, the need to be a free woman kept her from being a warm human being” (17). Jane’s whole attitude of independence and self-sufficiency and rejection of others’ comfort is the opposite of Lewis’s concept of Need-love. This attitude is also the opposite of Eros, with Lewis’s emphasis on the necessity of humility and grace (*TFL/ The Four Loves* 160) and his emphasis on obliterating “the distinction between giving and receiving” (*TFL* 137).

Another part of the reason for the major change in Mark and Jane’s relationship is their differing attitudes toward sex – what Lewis calls “Venus” in *The Four Loves*.

Janice Neuleib believes that Jane is, at the beginning of the novel, “not much interested in either Eros or Venus. She is much too interested in Jane to come out of herself for either passion” (16).

However, Eugene Warren feels that Jane has too serious an attitude toward Venus. At the beginning of the novel, she is trying to write a doctoral dissertation on John Donne’s poem, “Love’s Alchemy,” laying stress on his “triumphant vindication of the body” (*THS* 14). In contrast, the previous paragraph in the novel describes the “deadly dullness” of her marriage (Warren 14) and her feelings of disgust toward Mark for seeming to want sex without giving love (*THS* 14).

Jane’s “intellectualizing” is obviously quite separate from her real life. Warren reminds us that “Lewis saw this split of the intellect from the feelings as one of the most serious errors of modern thought, resulting in ‘men without chests’” (15).¹

This “intellectual,” serious attitude about Venus reflected in Jane is discussed in *The Four Loves*:

We must not be totally serious about Venus. Indeed we can’t be totally serious without doing violence to our humanity. It is not for nothing that every language and literature in the world is full of jokes about sex. . . . But we must insist that they embody an attitude to Venus which in the long run endangers the Christian life far less than a reverential gravity. We must not attempt to find an absolute in the flesh. (*TFL* 140).

Similarly, in *That Hideous Strength*, Ransom warns Jane against “that daintiness in love which would intellectualize the bodily instincts away” (Carnell, *Bright Shadow* 126).

¹ See Lewis’s *The Abolition of Man* for his discussion of this issue.

On the other hand, while Jane is alternately not interested in sex with Mark yet intellectual and serious about the sex discussed in Donne's poem, "Mark is interested, most of the time, only in Venus" (Neuleib 17). Mark cannot see this in himself in the first part of the novel, but later he admits to himself his "laboratory outlook upon love" that has made Jane reluctant toward Venus (*THS* 380). He pictures himself with her and finally sees "his own clumsy importunity," sees "all the lout and clown and clod-hopper" in himself, and "the coarse, male boor with horny hands and hobnailed shoes and beefsteak jaw, not rushing in – for that can be carried off – but blundering, sauntering, stumping in where great lovers, knights and poets, would have feared to tread" (380-81).

Though Mark's attitude toward Jane has been "basely sensual," Lewis, as narrator, remarks in this novel that "even his sensual desires were the true index of something which he lacked and Jane had to give" (360). Mark reflects about Jane:

When she first crossed the dry and dusty world which his mind inhabited she had been like a spring shower; in opening himself to it he had not been mistaken. He had gone wrong only in assuming that marriage, by itself, gave him either power or title to appropriate that freshness (360).

Carnell points out that "Lewis believes, however, that sex can have a spiritual validity" inside of marriage (*Bright Shadows* 126). Carnell adds that Lewis stresses the "religious dimension" of sex based on Scriptural commands:

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. . . . So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even

as the Lord the church. . . . For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife as himself. . . . -Ephesians 2.25, 28-29, 31-33 (*Bright Shadows* 127).

In *The Four Loves*, Lewis speaks of the “‘sacrament’ in sex” in that “we are not merely ourselves. We are also representatives . . . [for] forces older and less personal than we work through us. In us all the masculinity and femininity of the world, all that is assailant and responsive, are momentarily focused.” Each partner “plays a part or role in – well, in something which is comparable to a mystery – play or ritual . . .” (*TFL* 145-46).

Lewis also speaks specifically of the Bible in relation to Venus when he says, “We must go back to our Bibles” (*TFL* 148). Here, he discusses Ephesians 5:25 which compares the husband’s love for his wife to Christ’s love for the church when he gave His life for her. This kind of love is actually Gift-love (Agape) or Charity.

At various times in *That Hideous Strength*, Lewis puts his own thoughts about Eros and Venus into the mouth of Ransom – especially when he is talking to Jane Studdock, trying to help her unsteady marriage relationships with Mark. He also speaks through Mrs. Dimble.

For example, in Jane’s first conversation with Ransom, “the Director” of St. Anne’s, Jane admits that she no longer loves her husband when Ransom questions her about joining St. Anne’s. However, Ransom says to Jane that “you do not fail in obedience through lack of love, but have lost love because you never attempted obedience” (*THS* 147).

When Jane starts to discuss equality, the Director says that people are equal “before the law” and should be equal in regard to “incomes”; but in marriage, equality is not always possible

or best. “Courtship knows nothing of it; nor does fruition” (Venus). And he adds that “obedience – humility – is an erotic necessity” (*THS* 148).

After more discussion, Ransom points out to Jane that obedience is not bad or servile: “But you see that obedience and rule are more like a dance than a drill – specially between man and woman where the roles are always changing” (*THS* 149).

On her next visit to St. Anne’s, Jane discovers that there is a kind of equality among the group living there. Mrs. Dimble (Mother Dimble) explains to Jane that no servants work at St. Anne’s, “and we all do the work. The women do it one day and the men the next. . . . It’s a very sensible arrangement” (*THS* 167). When Jane asks Mother Dimble about Ransom’s words on equality, Mother Dimble explains, “Some of what he says . . . about marriage does seem to me to be a lot of fuss about something so simple and natural that it oughtn’t to need saying at all. But I suppose there are young women now-a-days who need to be told it.” She adds about her generation, “We always intended to love, honor, and obey” (168). Thus both Ransom and Mrs. Dimble mention obedience to her.

Until Jane begins to understand that Ransom and Mrs. Dimble mean humility when they refer to obedience and that the male in a relationship also needs humility, Jane reflects a rebellious attitude toward obedience and commitment to Venus, to Eros, to her marriage. For example, when the Dennistons ask her to join the group at St. Anne’s, they ask her to consult Mark before joining. Jane resents the suggestion greatly and says, “Do you mean I’m to ask Mark’s *permission*?” And, as mentioned, she reacts the same way when Ransom suggests that she needs to consult with Mark before she moves into St. Anne’s (*THS* 146). This is because, before she meets Ransom, Jane sees all men as “complacent, patriarchal figures making

arrangements for women as if women were children or bartering them like cattle" (*THS* 177).

However, Ransom tells Jane that she ultimately has the wrong idea, for it is possible to "bypass the male and go on to meet something far more masculine, higher up, to which they must make a yet deeper surrender" (*THS* 315). Ransom adds, "The male you could have escaped, for it exists only on the biological level. But the masculine none of us can escape. What is above and beyond all things is so masculine that we are all feminine in relation to it" (316). This is a new idea for Jane.

Even though Jane and Mark, through much of the novel, do not seem to understand each other nor their own feelings, by the end of the novel, they finally see each other in a new light and find true Eros, "sanctified" Venus, and even Charity (Gift-love). The transition takes place gradually in each of them.

When Jane first talks with Ransom, the Director, she tells him she does not love her husband. Ransom replies by inquiring "how he has lost your love" (147). As she tries to "explore her inarticulate grievance against Mark, a novel sense of her own injustice and even of pity for her husband, arose in her mind." She finally concludes, "It was not his fault" (147). Till now, all of her thoughts have been full of blame and resentment toward Mark. This is the first time she feels that at least part of their problems may be her fault.

As Jane makes her way back home after she leaves St. Anne's and Ransom, she "kept on pressing into her mind those new feelings about Mark, feelings of guilt and pity. . . . It was Mark who made the fatal mistake [in marrying her]; she must, must, must be 'nice' to Mark." And she resolves to give Mark more than she had ever given him before. . ." (*THS* 148).

Later, after Jane has become a part of the group at St. Anne's, she and Mother Dimble are preparing the little Lodge at St. Anne's for Ivy and Tom Maggs, and Jane begins to think again about Mark. "The thought of going back to Mark if Mark were ever rescued from Belbury was one which her mind had long accepted. . . ." And, "at this moment she fully forgave him for his conjugal crime of sometimes apparently preferring her person to her conversation. . . ." Lewis calls her attitude, "This new humility" (*THS* 303). Jane also begins to fear for Mark's death.

In the little Lodge at St. Anne's, Jane's vision of the terrestrial Venus matches Lewis's view of Venus in *The Four Loves*. Jane sees a "mocking" woman with "an almost ogre-ish glee in the face," accompanied by "a whole crowd of . . . fat dwarfs in red caps, . . . quite insufferably familiar, frivolous, and irrepressible" (*THS* 304). In *The Four Loves*, Lewis calls Venus a "'laughter-loving'" and "partly comic spirit," as well as "a mocking, mischievous spirit, far more elf than deity" who "makes game of us" (141). These two views of Venus are consistent with each other throughout the two books.

However, it is not until the very end of the novel that Jane's feelings toward Mark are completely changed. When she says goodbye to Ransom, he sends her to the Lodge to meet Mark with the words, "Go in obedience and you will find love" (*THS* 379-80). As she goes to the Lodge, she is "going down all the time, down to the lodge, descending the ladder of humility," and she thinks with pity and love "of Mark and of all his sufferings" (382).

Thomas Howard feels that in all of Lewis's stories (and especially in *That Hideous Strength*), Lewis stresses that romantic love, married love, is happiest and best when the two lovers walk "down the hill of humility, right down into the valley of ordinariness, where men

and women *love* each other and trust each other and acknowledge their protohistoric need of each other” (Howard, “Moral Mythology” 391).

Actually, by the end of the story, what Jane feels for Mark is even more than Eros; it is Charity (Gift-love). When Ransom gets her to recognize who she is in God’s eyes and she submits herself to God, she feels she is “made to please Another and in Him to please all others” and love all others, especially Mark (*THS* 319).

According to Carnell, Lewis and Charles Williams together developed the idea that “one of God’s ways of connecting His world” is by “enabling the person to be more open to divine love through attending in a good way to the reality of another [in love]” (“The Friendship of C. S. Lewis” 5). Ransom’s words and Jane’s response seem to serve as an example of this idea.

Mark, too, goes through a transition in attitudes toward Jane and toward their marriage. All during his long stay at N.I.C.E. Headquarters at Belbury, Mark is very servile (and gullible) toward all of the leaders there in order to get into the inner circle. Whatever they say to do, he does – even if he knows, deep inside, he is being dishonest or wrong to do it. The only times he rebels are those instances when the leaders tell him he must bring Jane to Belbury. When he finally realizes, after being told by the bodiless “Head” of N.I.C.E., that Jane’s coming means the difference between life and death for him, “For the first time in his life a gleam of something like disinterested love came into his mind; he wished he had never . . . dragged her into this whole outfit of horrors . . .” (*THS* 185-86).

Though others try to stop him, Mark runs out of Belbury, planning to go right home to find Jane. As he walks outside of Belbury, “He was devoured with a longing for Jane which was physical without being at all sensual: as if comfort and fortitude would flow from her body, as if

her very skin would clean away all the filth that seemed to hang about him” (*THS* 189). When he reaches their apartment, he wonders hopefully, “Would Jane be in? He felt he could not bear it if Jane should not be in” (216).

In both of these thoughts, Mark is demonstrating Need-love. Lewis writes in *The Four Loves* that whether the need is for physical, emotional, or intellectual comfort, Need-love is a very good and natural thing, not a selfish thing (13). So Mark’s need for Jane’s comforting is a good thing, a sign of some change taking place in his selfish, ambition-driven exclusion of Jane from his life and thoughts till now.

Later, when he is back at Belbury, contemplating being hanged (unfairly) for the murder of Hingest, he thinks, “This – this death of his – would be lucky for Jane,” for she would be saved from what he had planned for her. If he had succeeded in life, “she was to have been the great hostess . . .” (*THS* 257). But he now recognizes that she has “in herself deep wells and knee-deep meadows of happiness, rivers of freshness, enchanted gardens of leisure, which he could not enter but could have spoiled.” In contrast, he considers himself to dwell in “the dry places” with “dust and broken bottles, the heap of old tin cans, the dry and choking places” (247). He concludes, “She was not like him. It was well that she should be rid of him” (248).

He finally decides to resist every idea and person at N.I.C.E. He sees all of them as the enemy and recognizes in himself what he has been and done. By this time, even though Frost is saying that Mark can be a part of the true inner ring at Belbury (for which Mark has previously craved), he thinks that “it was now his side against theirs. . . . Already he was with Jane and with all she symbolized” (*THS* 268).

Then, as he grapples against the dark thoughts the Macrobes are putting into his mind, he thinks, “No, no, no. He could not stand this any longer. He wanted Jane; he wanted Mrs. Dimble; he wanted Denniston [his old friend]” (*THS* 270). So again Need-love grows in Mark as he transitions toward his desire to be in the love and comfort of Jane and others who have shown him affection and friendship.

Later, when Mark is placed in the room full of irregular forms and surrealistic and Satanic paintings, he begins to recognize their opposite – “the ‘Normal.’” This reminds him again of Jane. The Normal is all mixed up with Jane and fried eggs and soap and sunlight . . .” (*THS* 299).

Thomas Howard points out that both Mark and Jane had been fleeing from the “plain, ordinary, well-trodden, ancient business of marriage,” because “that plain and ancient road was too bourgeois” for them. They had scorned “ordinariness.” But, Howard indicates, “What we human beings need, Lewis would argue, is not the blazing of new trails, but rather the grace to walk the well-trodden trails well” (“Moral Mythology” 391). Mark begins to recognize this when he thinks about meeting Jane at St. Anne’s, and “the humility of a lover” comes over him. He hesitates about being intimate with her and then thinks, “What could be more natural, more ordinary?” (*THS* 380). And that reassures him.

Toward the end of the novel, on his way to St. Anne’s, after the Babel banquet at Belbury, Mark finally feels real Eros for Jane. Her even feels Charity (Gift-love) for her – more concern for her than for himself – as he thinks, “He must give her her freedom” (*THS* 360). The narrator explains at this point that Need-love has kept Mark going back to Jane: “Love, Plato says, is the son of Want. Mark’s body knew better than his mind had known till recently, and

even his sensual desires were the true index of something which he lacked and Jane had to give” (*THS* 360).

Finally, just before he arrives at St. Anne’s, when he “knew that he was going to meet Jane,” he starts feeling the necessary “humility of a lover” which Ransom has earlier mentioned to Jane (380). He also begins to think of Jane as a *person* and remembers “her music, her sacrosanctity” her “pity,” her “patience,” her “style,” and how “noble” she is. He calls her a true “lady” and thinks again, “he would release her” – thinking with Charity only of *her* needs, “for he loved her now” (381).

Mark’s thoughts fit perfectly what Lewis says about Eros in *The Four Loves*: True Eros “sees the object most intensely as a thing admirable in herself, important far beyond her relation to the lover’s need” (136), and the true “lover desires the Beloved herself, not the pleasure she can give” (135).

Thomas Howard notes that:

the last scene in the narrative fulfills what the first scene lacks – that wretched first scene with Jane, solitary and frustrated, musing on the words from the Prayer Book about matrimony. Now the two are delivered to each other in a scene of unabashed eroticism – baptized eroticism, we might say (*The Achievement* 153).

Another idea that appears at the beginning and at the end of the novel starts with Jane’s thought, brought on by her doctoral thesis study of Donne’s poem, *Love’s Alchymie*, which includes the line, “Hope not for minde in women.” Jane thinks, “Did any man really *want* mind in women?” (*THS* 16). She doubts if *Mark* does, anyway, for though she considers herself a scholar, they never talk (13-14).

However, by the end of the novel, says Neuleib, “the reader is led to believe that for the first time, the minds of the two young people may indeed be going to be meet” (16). Mark is finally ready to meet Jane in both mind and body after he has been dwelling on her finer attributes in personality and attitudes. Neuleib says that Mark “has been transformed by a new kind of love” that unselfishly puts Jane first. His Venus has grown into Eros and into Gift-love. “Jane submits only when Mark is no longer a rude, arrogant person . . .” (16). Their minds can meet when neither is acting selfishly, when neither is protecting his or her thoughts from the other. Neuleib believes that Jane “finally possesses both her mind and body because she has become willing to give and received Charitas.” As for Mark, “in the end his humility is the key to Jane’s submission,” and ultimately, “Jane relinquishes selfishness, not self” (17). “At the close of the novel, Jane and Mark are finally about to experience Eros because they have first found Charitas” (17). Both Mark and Jane finally learn how to *give* Gift-love instead of merely guarding their deepest thoughts and individuality.

This change in their relationship reflects what Lewis expresses in *The Four Loves*: that Eros cannot exist long “except by humility, charity, and divine grace” (160). Lewis describes what a couple often becomes when Eros is not tempered by humility and charity, in the words, “each ravenous to receive and implacably refusing to give, jealous, suspicious, resentful, struggling for the upper hand, determined to be free and to allow no freedom . . .” (*TFL* 160). This description parallels perfectly Mark and Jane’s relationship in the first half of the novel.

But by the end of the story, the couple has changed and more closely resembles Lewis’s words describing Eros: “In one bound it has made appetite itself altruistic, tossed personal

happiness aside as a triviality and planted the interests of another in the centre of our being” (*TFL* 158).

Lewis also says that God can transform the natural loves, including Eros, “to become modes of Charity while also remaining the natural loves they were.” He continues, “All the activities . . . of the natural loves can in a favored hour become works of the glad and shameless and grateful Need-love or of the selfless, unofficious Gift-love, which are both Charity” (*TFL* 184).

Lewis says we must “let God turn our love into Charity” (186) so that we can experience “Divine Gift-love – Love Himself working in a man” -- which is “wholly disinterested and desires what is simply best for the beloved” (177). “When God arrives (and only then) the half-gods [like Eros] can remain.’ Left to themselves they either vanish or become demons. Only in His name can they with beauty and security ‘wield their little tridents’” (166).

Jane has discovered these things through her instructions from and response to Ransom. This is especially true when Ransom talks to Jane about God and Mark and her need to love both of them with humility. As Jane thinks about Ransom’s words, “She accepted what the Director had said, yet it seemed to her nonsensical. His comparison between Mark’s love and God’s” seemed “irreverent.” But then, she continues to sift his words around in her mind, and as she “realized God Himself did understand her and took her with full seriousness, the change came over her” (Haynes 4). She now realizes her love for Mark will be long lasting if she focuses on true Christian love – Gift-love.

Likewise, Mark is just beginning to discover these same things as he reflects about Jane on his way to meet her at St. Anne’s. Charles Nolan explains that Mark’s shyness “indicates his

new humility, the virtue which Lewis has stressed is one of the essentials of Christian love . . .” (“The Rhetorical End” 8).

Thus, while Jane and Mark do not personify any kind of love at the beginning of the novel, by the end, they both personify true Eros as well as true Charity – both Need-love and Gift-love. They both love each other as humans and as husband and wife, they both need each other as fellow humans and as husband and wife, and they both are concerned about and want the best for each other (Gift-love). The change is complete.

Other characters in the novel, besides Mark and Jane, personify true Eros and Gift-love: Ivy and Tom Maggs, the Dimbles, and the Dennistons. They demonstrate the characteristics of these two kinds of love throughout the whole novel and contrast with Jane and Mark in the first half of the novel.

When the gods of the planets, the eldils, come down to St. Anne’s, Jane perceives only one – Venus, the goddess of romantic love. Venus’s presence “shows Jane the Dimbles ‘like ripe fields in August,’ and the Dennistons, so godlike ‘she could hardly bear to look at them’” (Patterson 10). By showing happy marriages in the Dimbles, the Dennistons, and the Maggses, Charles Nolan feels, Lewis sets up marriage and true Eros as the best position for humans to be in (“*That Hideous Strength: Antidote to Modernism*” 5).

Friendship (Philia) is also demonstrated in various characters in *That Hideous Strength*, especially among those at St. Anne’s. while the Dennistons provide an excellent example of Eros, they also show friendship to Jane and later, to everyone at St. Anne’s. in Arthur and Camilla Denniston, Jane “finds quite natural companionship” (Howard, *The Achievement* 137). When she meets them in town and they invite her on a picnic with them, Jane sees “at once that

both the Dennistons were the sort of people she liked” (*THS* 112). And when she and they enjoy the picnic lunch in the back seat of their car (because it is so foggy and wet outside), Jane enjoys herself for the first time in a long time. The simplicity and frankness of the Dennistons as well as their naturalness and friendliness attract Jane to them.

The Dimbles are also friends for Jane. Jane feels companionship when with the Dimbles, especially Mrs. Dimble. For example, when she stays overnight with Jane, “the whole process of getting up and doing the ‘morning jobs’ was more cheerful, Jane found, because she had Mrs. Dimble with her,” especially since, like a true friend, “Mrs. Dimble fell in with her [Jane’s] ways” instead of doing things her own way as an older woman might do, or trying to change Jane’s ways as Mark had always done (*THS* 82).

Lewis says in *The Four Loves* that “the matrix of friendship” is “Companionship,” two or more people having something in common (e.g., “a common religion, common studies, a common profession, even a common recreation”). But Friendship itself grows “when two or more of the companions discover that they have in common some insight or interest or even taste which the others do not share . . .” (*TFL* 96-97).

Thus, Jane enjoys the companionship of the Dennistons and the Dimbles, but then discovers she has even more in common with them as she enters St. Anne’s: a loyalty to Ransom and what he stands for, and an aversion toward the N.I.C.E. and what it stands for.

A sense of equality, companionship, and friendship grows as all the members of the company share in the cleaning, cooking, and serving needed to run the household. The Friendship and Charity at St. Anne’s are manifested in “normality and humility and loyalty and merriment and candor and courtesy” (Howard, *The Achievement* 135).

Even the animals at St. Anne's (and there are many of them) seem to demonstrate friendship. At one point, Ivy Maggs exclaims, "What friends those two are!" – in reference to Pinch the cat and Mr. Bultitude the bear who have just curled up together. When MacPhee tries to explain that animals do not have friends and cannot be friends, Ransom responds, "You've got to become human before the physical cravings are distinguishable from affection – just as you have to become spiritual before affections are distinguishable from charity. What is going on in the cat and the bear" is something "in which you can find the germ of what we call friendship and of what we call physical need." MacPhee then admits that the animals "like being together," and Mrs. Maggs says that is the same thing as friendship (*THS* 260-61).

The friendship among all those at St. Anne's becomes especially evident when the eldils descend and the "fight" is on against Belbury. All of them sit around talking about what might happen, saying things such as, "I don't feel afraid of being killed and hurt as I used to do" (Dr. Dimble speaking), "'We may be, I suppose,' said Jane. 'As long as we're all together,' said Mother Dimble. 'It might be a *nice* way to die.'" Throughout the conversation, "Their love for one another became intense. Each, looking on all the rest, thought, 'I'm lucky to be here. I could die with these'" (*THS* 324).

C. S. Lewis talks about Friendship in *The Four Loves* in the same terms: ". . . in a good Friendship each member often feels humility toward the rest. He sees that they are splendid and counts himself lucky to be among them" (118). They are also a part of a "common quest or vision which unites Friends" and "is the very medium in which their mutual love and knowledge exist. One knows nobody so well as one's 'fellow.' Every step of the common journey tests his metal; and the tests are tests we fully understand because we are undergoing them ourselves"

(*TFL* 104). The battle against the N.I.C.E. unites them and cements their Friendship as they face the enemies together.

In stark contrast to the Charity and Friendship and camaraderie found at St. Anne's is Belbury and the N.I.C.E. The reader soon discovers that "the group at Belbury, the N.I.C.E., are a parody of community, with their 'elastic' authority, unclear lines of responsibility, and deceit" (Carnell, "The Friendship of " 6). In Belbury, we see no examples of Friendship, Affection, or Charity, even though Wither, the Deputy Director, declares that "nothing is nearer to my heart than the wish that this great Institute should all work together like one family . . . the greatest unity of will and purpose . . . the fullest mutual confidence . . . that is what I expect of my colleagues" (*THS* 95). His words are empty because he does nothing to promote those ideals. But Wither keeps repeating similar ideas when he says, "We regard ourselves here as being so many brothers and –er sisters" (206), and "I look upon the N.I.C.E., Mr. Studdock, as one great family" (209). "Our Head" feels for Mark "friendly – the almost fatherly – concern," "Unity, you know. The family circle" (212). And we need to "keep the whole matter in the family" (275). While all of these encouraging expressions sound good, in actuality, hatred, suspicion, and egotistic competitiveness abound instead at Belbury.

The main reason that Friendship and Affection do not exist at Belbury is the basic philosophy of the N.I.C.E.: "Everybody at this new place is supposed to stand only by the facts, brutish, bare, and given. By choosing to define facts as they do – and that is the point, they 'choose' so to define them – then all preferences, desire, and emotions are declared to be subjective, and offensive for that very reason" (Holmer 57).

It is interesting to note that everyone at Belbury is either not married or is living apart from his spouse (as Mark is), so there are no examples of Eros at the N.I.C.E. headquarters.

At Belbury, Professor Frost stresses objectivity, which sounds fine on the surface. But when he instructs Mark in objectivity, he stresses the denial of all human relationships. Frost tells Mark, "Friendship is a chemical phenomenon; so is hatred," and "one must go outside the whole world of our subjective emotions. It is only as you begin to do so, that you discover how much of what you mistook for your thought was merely a by-product of your blood and nervous tissues" (*THS* 257-58). When Frost talks coldly ("objectively") about eliminating the "large, unintelligent population" which has become "a deadweight," by means of "sixteen major wars which are scheduled to take place in this century," he sees Mark's response and speaks of Mark's "emotional (that is, the chemical) reactions" he is experiencing (258-59).

Mark himself is the opposite of Jane and the other individuals at St. Anne's. There, all of the members, including the Director, enjoy true Friendship and Charity, but Mark has no true friends. He thinks of Lord Feverstone (Divine) as his friend at first, because Feverstone gets him the job at Belbury. But later, when Feverstone tries to cut off any return to Bracton College that Mark might want to make, and Mark confronts Feverstone about it, Feverstone says, "And for your own good, I would advise you, in talking to people here, to adopt a more agreeable manner than you are using now. Otherwise your life may be, in the famous words, 'nasty, poor, brutish, and short!'" Mark responds, "It was you who brought me here. I thought you at least were my friend," to which Lord Feverstone says, "Incurable romantic!" (*THS* 111-12).

Mark has no true friends because he is always seeking to be "in" – in the inner circle of those in charge. C. S. Lewis has written much about the inner circle in several essays including

“The Inner Ring” and “Membership.” The friends Mark originally had – Pearson and Denniston – he has dumped “because they could not open the door for him to an inner circle” (Gibson 82). They were people who had something in common with Mark and who, thus, could have been his true friends. Instead, he caters to those people through whom he thinks he has the greatest chance to make it into the elite “inner ring,” even when he really does not like them. “Mark is vulnerable because he longs for acceptance by the esoteric group which builds a wall between those ‘in’ and those ‘out.’”

In contrast, “Jane is vulnerable because her admiration for the Dimbles and the Dennistons demolishes the wall of her private light and lets in the warmth of friendship.” Jane wants “not a ring of exclusion but a circle of common interest” (Gibson 86). So Jane finds true friendship at St. Anne’s, but Mark, even though he moves up quickly in the hierarchy of N.I.C.E. (because they want his wife), finds no friends at Belbury. He finds instead the jealousy and rejection of Steele, the “wishy-washy,” “say-nothing” responses of Wither, the cold objectivity of Frost, and no one with whom he can really talk and feel companionship. Lewis, as narrator, writes that Mark has “long lived in a world without charity,” both at Belbury and at Bracton College (*THS* 221).

Contrasting with St. Anne’s, even the animals at Belbury turn on their human masters and each other once Merlin sets them free from their cages of torture and experimentation. No “friendships” exist between these animals while they are at Belbury, unlike the animals at St. Anne’s. The animals that make it to St. Anne’s after their release, though, do show a type of friendliness among themselves and toward the humans there that is unknown at Belbury but common at St. Anne’s.

Fortunately, the world of Charity, Affection, Friendship, and Eros wins, through the aid of Merlin and the eldila, over the world of selfishness, jealousy, scheming, lies, tortures, and hatred at Belbury.

Thus, Lewis gives us, through the characters associated with Ransom, personifications of Eros, Friendship, Affection, and Charity (both Gift-love and Need-love) that are consistent with the description of love found in *The Four Loves*. And through the characters associated with Belbury, Lewis provides contrasts to each of these because no character demonstrates any kind of love at Belbury – not even the basic Need-love that most humans feel at one time or another.

The contrast magnifies the appealing loves found at St. Anne's.

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