

# 2

## Genesis and Peaceful Coexistence

*And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.*

—Genesis 2:18–19

This chapter focuses on images of species-diverse communities in Lewis's writing and their evocations of the Genesis 2:18–19 palimpsest. The Garden of Eden is a paradise lost but it is a utopia Lewis contemplates often and with avidity. We begin with a few biographical notes to illustrate the man's affection for animals. He enjoyed their company and enjoyed writing about them. We then consider his intrigue with domesticity. Family—broadly defined—is an important concept for him as he considers animals. Even a passing definition of the term when developing an argument on another topic shows how comfortably he includes them: "How true membership in a body differs from inclusion in a collective may be seen in the structure of a family. The grandfather, the parents, the grown-up son, the child, the dog, and the

cat are true members (in the organic sense), precisely because they are not members or units of a homogeneous class.”<sup>1</sup> As Adam shared his garden with other species and Noah his ark, so too the redemption story is not limited to one species and is communal in nature. For Lewis, pets and the ‘tameness’ of animals—something characterizing the Garden of Eden and the ark—are important concepts. The chapter closes with consideration of ways animals are revelatory. As his stories often suggest, humans discover spiritual truths under the tutelage of the nonhuman.

Lewis’s 1954 novel *The Horse and His Boy* is a fitting place to begin as we explore species-diverse communities in his writing. The book’s very title indicates an association of people and animals while disrupting usual ways of looking at the nonhuman (as inferior, as property, as tools) through its use of an unexpected possessive. We begin near the story’s end, with the conclusion of a harrowing journey by the principal characters through a desert with a pursuing lion on their heels. The children Aravis and Shasta, and the horses Hwin and Bree find themselves taking refuge in the walled-in cottage of the Hermit of the Southern March. The four friends move out of a waterless wasteland haunted by enemies and ghouls and find themselves in a beautiful garden offering water, food, and safety. It is Eden-like but instead of a sword-wielding angel barring entry (cf. Genesis 3:24), they find the hospitable Hermit extending an invitation: “‘Come in, my daughter, come in,’ the robed and bearded man was saying, and then, ‘Come in, my son,’ as Shasta panted up to him. He heard the gate closed behind him.”<sup>2</sup> It is a peaceful, welcoming place and the presence of animals (bleating goats), and use of the terms garden and wilderness in the near context remind the reader of the Genesis paradise.<sup>3</sup>

The terms of address used by the Hermit are noteworthy as well. He refers to the children as son and daughter, and Aravis calls him father. Significantly, this familial imagery extends to the horses as well. After sending Shasta on an errand and tending to Aravis’s wounds, he speaks to the horses, saying, “‘Now, cousins ... It is your turn’” and “‘There, cousins ... dismiss it all from your minds and be comforted. Here is water and there is grass. You shall have a hot mash when I have milked my other cousins, the goats.’”<sup>4</sup> The Hermit calls Bree “cousin” again a few pages later, and this use of familial terminology continues when

the horses meet King Lune. They struggle to adapt to their newfound status as residents of Archenland and Narnia: "The Horses were rather tongue-tied for they weren't yet used to being talked to as equals by Humans—grown-up Humans, that is. They didn't mind Aravis and Cor."<sup>5</sup> The dominant imagery characterizing human-animal relationships in the lands of Calormenes from which they recently escaped is that of slavery. The term slave and derivatives appears 37 times in the novel by my count, referring to both humans and animals. But the horses' arrival to Archenland, which is to say an arrival to territories under Aslan's rule and in Aslan's presence, means they are now "free" (another key term in the book, used 21 times, again, referring to animals and people). In the opening chapter of *The Horse and His Boy*, Bree declares he is "a free Narnian" in identity, even if temporarily enslaved to a Tarkaan warrior. Bree lectures Aravis on this point later in the story, explaining to her that he and Hwin are "'free Narnians .... Hwin isn't *your* horse any longer. One might just as well say you're *her* human."<sup>6</sup> Readers sense the shift from the one to the other when they finally arrive to Archenland and the hermitage because the horses are no longer 'machines' but kin.

The story of their arrival to the hermitage is a reversal of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:23–24). The children leave their wilderness wanderings and enter a place of beauty where there is reverence for Narnia's Creator and obedience to divine rule. Lewis seems to stress the absence of animals, or at least welcome animals, in the one space, and their presence in the other. While the travellers are in the desert, morning arrives "but without a single bird to sing about it" but after crossing into 'the garden' and beyond, Shasta hears "birds singing. He knew the night was over at last" (there are two mentions of singing birds in this scene).<sup>7</sup> This surely marks Shasta's emergence from a kind of spiritual night because a light that appears comes not from the sun but from Aslan. The mountaintop encounter with the lion, with cloud, "whiteness," a voice heard out of the darkness, and a "swirling glory" that disappears suddenly is a theophany, echoing the biblical stories of Mount Sinai and the Transfiguration.<sup>8</sup>

Lewis knows the Bible stresses the proximity of humans and animals as they relate to God. When commenting on Psalm 104, for instance,

he observes the ancient Hebrew poet reminding readers that all living things depend on their Creator. The point made in Psalm 104:21 “about the lions is that they, like us, ‘do seek their meat from God’” and again, “The thought which gives these creatures a place in the Psalmist’s gusto for Nature is surely obvious. They are our fellow-dependents; we all, lions, storks, ravens, whales—live, as our fathers said, ‘at God’s charges’, and the mention of all equally redounds to His praise.”<sup>9</sup> God creates all land animals on the sixth day (Genesis 1:24–31). God breathes the breath of life into humans and animals alike (Genesis 1:30; 2:7; 7:15, 21–22; cf. Job 12:10).<sup>10</sup> God tells them all to multiply and fill the earth (Genesis 1:22, 28; 8:15–17; 9:1). God enacts a covenant with humans and “every living creature” after the flood (Genesis 9:10; see 9:8–17). Lewis offers a creative representation of this vision of community he finds in the Psalms, Genesis, and elsewhere with his Hermit of the Southern March, who welcomes the terrified, weary horses as cousins, as family.

## Some Animals in C. S. Lewis’s Life

Encounters with animals, wild and domestic, were a great source of pleasure for C. S. Lewis and it appears he enjoyed writing about them too. “I was greatly taken by the antics of a water rat, who sat up (apparently on the water, really, I suppose, on some branch just below the surface) to look at me and then in an access [sic] of coyness dipped right upside down like a duck.” During a different walk, some pigs caught his attention: “I tickled one with my foot and it made to roll over on its back like a cat. They are perfectly clean. I have never seen pigs at close quarters before.”<sup>11</sup> Such passing anecdotes are frequent in his diary and correspondence, giving us the impression of someone inclined to listen to birdsong and then describe it to the next person he meets.

To my mind, Lewis is rather like the Hermit of the Southern March. Both offered refuge to children during a time of war.<sup>12</sup> Both instructed young readers through fantastic stories about Narnia and Aslan. And both enjoyed the company of animals. Indeed, Lewis was surrounded by them all his life. We know of numerous pets kept over the years, and

we know he walked regularly, sometimes great distances, which afforded opportunities to observe birds and other wildlife. And there are, of course, the imagined creatures of beloved stories. It follows that the ability to write stories emphasizing the ‘kinship’ of horses and humans, while certainly owing something to sacred texts like Genesis and the Psalms, is not an exclusively intellectual and abstract exercise. He wrote of animals as one who knew animals, and indeed he knew a lot of them as a few examples illustrate.

Lewis took up his tutorial fellowship in English Language and Literature at Magdalen College of the University of Oxford in 1925, and remained there until 1954, when he accepted a professorship in Medieval and Renaissance English at the University of Cambridge. The grounds of Magdalen College are spacious and beautiful and Lewis cherished them. He mentions conversations had while strolling through the park, the best-known being a late-night discussion with J. R. R. Tolkien and Hugo Dyson on myth and the Christ story, which biographers frequently mention in their accounts of Lewis’s conversion.<sup>13</sup> We catch another glimpse of Lewis’s enjoyment of Magdalen’s property in recollections by Kallistos Ware (later a Bishop in the Eastern Orthodox Church):

The occasion when most often as an undergraduate in Magdalen I saw C. S. Lewis was not in fact in the lecture hall. I used to meet him in the morning, about 7.30 or 7.45. He would go for a walk through the grounds of the college, along Addison’s Walk and round by the Magdalen ‘Water Walks’, and I liked to do that too, and I used to meet him on those occasions, though our conversation was limited to saying, ‘Good morning.’

Ware notes how fitting this was, to meet Lewis regularly “in a place of remarkable natural beauty, because Lewis was in fact very sensitive to the beauty of the world around us.”<sup>14</sup>

In 1998, the Oxford C. S. Lewis Society unveiled a plaque along Addison’s Walk commemorating the centenary of his birth.<sup>15</sup> On it is his poem “What the Bird Said Early in the Year,” which is a celebration of that beautiful space he enjoyed for so many years: “I heard in

Addison's Walk a bird sing clear: / This year the summer will come true. This year. This year."<sup>16</sup> In addition to the magnificent trees and flowers, animals have long been a conspicuous feature of the Magdalen College grounds. The "best-known twentieth-century Magdalen animals," according to Christine Ferdinand, are the cats Hodge, The Lord Edward, Abelard and Origen, Bogo de Clare, and Jasper Tudor that belonged to the historian Bruce MacFarlane (1903–1966). They were "frequent visitors at his medieval history tutorials," and since Lewis was friends with MacFarlane, he presumably made the acquaintance of Bogo de Clare, Hodge, and the others. He may also have been aware of the "pack of beagles" Magdalen shared with New College from 1903 through to the late 1940s.<sup>17</sup>

Another noteworthy Magdalen colleague from early in Lewis's tenure is Paul Victor Mendelssohn Benecke (1868–1944). Lewis wrote brief but colourful portraits of a few of the other Magdalen fellows soon after he began teaching there, and what he highlights about the classicist Benecke hints at his appreciation of those who take animals seriously. Benecke had, Lewis tells us, a "mental stammer," a tendency toward indecision with a habit of qualifying every proposition he advanced. But there is one exception.

His holiness he shows clearly, not by his asceticism, but by his wise and curious understanding of beasts. He said at one time that he saw well why the Indians found in the elephant a manifestation of the divine: and at another that the life of every animal appeared sad and empty from the outside, and that the melancholy in a dog's eyes was its pity for men. It is only on this subject that he speaks with confidence.<sup>18</sup>

This is remarkable compliment.

One of the most distinctive features of the grounds of Magdalen College is the herd of some forty or so deer that has been maintained at the school "since at least the early eighteenth century."<sup>19</sup> Lewis mentions them on several occasions in his letters but perhaps most fully in one dated October 31, 1949. He responds in it to an inquiry about the Magdalen deer herd from the correspondent's father. I cite at length because it illustrates Lewis's skill in composing a rich description of animals:

About deer. They're not exactly tame. They scatter away, a dappled gleam across the 'Grove' (rather like my Bragdon Wood, only not so large) whenever I walk through it, and then all group at a safe distance, stags in front & women & children behind. They have however learned that tourists, divided from them by a fence, will give them eatables and to this they will come trooping; and once or twice I have got v. near a young faun that had not yet learned sense. At this time of year the young stags fight a good deal (just below my windows): their pig-like grunts & the klick-klick of interlocking antlers have been familiar night noises to me for twenty-three years. But they're not pets: we kill every now & then and eat venison. I believe the herd was here before the college was founded, so they are our oldest members. Of course your father mustn't picture them like elks or mooses [sic]. They're little chaps: the senior stag is about the height of a v. small pony, but of course incomparably slenderer & more fragile—exquisite, perhaps decadent, late flower of an ancient beast-aristocracy.<sup>20</sup>

These deer formed part of the soundtrack and backdrop for Lewis during his many years at Magdalen.<sup>21</sup> Note also his inability to offer a mere recital of facts. There is rich description (“dappled gleam,” “click-klick”), literary allusion (“my Bragdon Wood”), a lovely slip into poetry and fantasy (“an ancient beast-aristocracy”), and a sense of animal-human community (“our oldest members”). So much of his writing about other creatures includes similar flourishes.

In some ways, Lewis takes after a relative who lived in and around Oxford during his student days. Lily Hamilton Suffern was Lewis's aunt and though he often found her attentions exasperating,<sup>22</sup> certain anecdotes in his diary also suggest sympathy with her views on animals. His entry for October 28, 1922, for instance, relates the “good” adventure of Aunt Lily quarrelling with the Vicar's wife. When the latter offered to visit, Lily said fine, but added that she vowed never to enter any church until the clergy as a body supported the Dog's Protection Bill. “‘Oh!’ said the priest's wife in horrified amazement, ‘So you object to vivisection?’ I object to all infamies,” replied Aunt L.”<sup>23</sup> Clearly, the church ought to be part of animal protection initiatives in her view. Lewis himself was not yet a Christian in 1922 but inclusion of the story in a private diary, without censure, seems to indicate approval of the sentiment.<sup>24</sup>

There were several childhood pets at Little Lea, the home in Strandtown near Belfast where Lewis spent his childhood years after 1905. The family moved there when he was seven. The first pet mentioned in his letters is a canary named Peter. When writing to older brother Warnie, Jack reports the bird “had two un-fortunate adventures [sic] since I last wrote,” one involving a threatening black cat ready to pounce, the other a mouse that “got into his cage.” In the same letter (of sometime around November 1905), Jack also mentions the family’s dog Tim.<sup>25</sup> We learn something of that curmudgeonly Irish terrier in Lewis’s 1955 memoir in an affectionate and humorous portrait: “Tim’s society did not amount to much. It had long since been agreed between him and me that he should not be expected to accompany me on walks. I went a good deal further than he liked, for his shape was already that of a bolster, or even a barrel, on four legs.” His temperament was apparently as odd as his physical shape: “he hated dogs .... he and I were less like master and dog than like two friendly visitors in the same hotel .... Tim, though I loved him, was the most undisciplined, unaccomplished, and dissipated-looking creature that ever went on four legs. He never exactly obeyed you; he sometimes agreed with you.”<sup>26</sup> Readers of *Surprised by Joy* often observe how oddly out of proportion and selective it is, something I return to later in the chapter. That it includes a generous description (running a full page or two, depending on the edition) of this family pet suggests the dog’s importance for young Lewis, as does the brief remark opening the episode: “I had, to be sure, the society of Tim, who ought to have been mentioned far sooner. Tim was our dog.”<sup>27</sup>

His affection for domestic animals is everywhere present in his private writing. His friend Hugo Dyson was a lover of cats, which is something Lewis appreciated.<sup>28</sup> There were several cats at the Kilns, the home he shared with his brother, Mrs. Moore, and her daughter Maureen.<sup>29</sup> His diary of the 1920s also refers to them. “Immediately after breakfast I took Biddy Anne into Gillard to be vetted,” he records. “Biddy Anne is a yellow cat that has recently adopted us.”<sup>30</sup> There are also plenty of other dogs in addition to Tim. The one appearing most often in the diary joined the household on September 17, 1923: “Great excitement today over the arrival of the puppy who is to be called Pat.



He is quite ready to be friendly to the cats who maintain an armed neutrality.” He often reports their adventures together during walks. We also read about Pat’s first bath (“my first experience of dog bathing, and a very memorable one”), and the two travelling together in the sidecar of a motorcycle. Pat also earns the diarist’s notice by eating a copy of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, and on yet another occasion, chasing the Common Room cat at Magdalen College.<sup>31</sup>

## Animals and Domesticity

As these few illustrations show, Lewis surrounded himself with animals but in what ways do they become part of his religious contemplations? I highlight three concepts in this chapter and throughout. First, I argue that Lewis prized harmony between the species as an ideal consistent with biblical faith. Aspiring toward harmony is an attempt to enact the paradisaical conditions of biblical myth, to flesh out “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” Second, he thought of animals in relation to the domestic sphere. Just like the Hermit of the Southern March, he maintains animals are kin. Third, Lewis thought about the significance of tameness and wildness. These crucial terms figure prominently in a key chapter of *The Problem of Pain*.

As the retrieval of Eden is a recurring theme throughout our study, I move directly to the second concept. Connections between Lewis, animals, and domestic space are not difficult to find. In addition to examples given already, descriptions of life at the Kilns, Lewis’s Headington Quarry home where he lived from 1930 to his death in 1963, illustrate how easily Lewis links animals and family. Philip and Carol Zaleski, as mentioned, describe Lewis’s home as an “eccentric Noah’s ark,” where “animals galore roamed the property, including two swans (a gift from the president of Magdalen), a dog (the beloved Papworth who ... was replaced by the frequently barking, sometimes incontinent, much despised Bruce), cats, and countless chickens, badgers, foxes, rabbits, birds, snakes, and frogs.”<sup>32</sup> Lewis lived there with Mrs. Janie Moore and her role in surrounding Lewis with animals deserves notice. (She was the mother of Lewis’s wartime friend Edward Francis Courtenay

“Paddy” Moore). Walter Hooper’s editorial Epilogue to the Lewis diary mentions Mrs. Moore living at the Kilns, the home she bought with Jack and Warnie Lewis in 1930, “with her many pets.” Hooper also mentions her estranged husband Courtenay Moore who “left everything to the Dublin Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals” upon his death in 1951.<sup>33</sup> Does this tell us anything about Mrs. Moore’s priorities?

Animals loved Janie Moore, and Wilson and others intriguingly link her to a Great Lady described in Lewis’s novel *The Great Divorce*.<sup>34</sup> Animals surround the Great Lady—cats, dogs, birds, and horses among them. When the narrator of the story asks his guide George MacDonald for an explanation about her identity and why so many animals accompany her, he learns that “Every beast and bird that came near her had its place in her love. In her they became themselves.”<sup>35</sup> Assuming the connection between this fictional character and Lewis’s personal life, we see him moving from images of actual animals (those he sees out of the window of his Headington Quarry home) and a real family (his adopted mother, Mrs. Moore), to the inclusion of animals in theological contemplation and speculation (i.e., *The Great Divorce*). Lewis’s *Great Divorce* assumes the presence of animals in the afterlife. It also suggests Lewis’s on-going contemplation of George MacDonald’s animal theology, which we consider in Chap. 3.

The remark about animals *becoming themselves* in the presence of the Great Lady touches also on a distinctive idea put forward by Lewis. He proposes elsewhere that predation within nature is a corruption introduced long before humans appeared on earth: “The intrinsic evil of the animal world lies in the fact that animals, or some animals, live by destroying each other.” This “Satanic corruption of the beasts would therefore be analogous, in one respect, with the Satanic corruption of man.”<sup>36</sup> A tame animal is “in the deepest sense, the only ‘natural’ animal—the only one we see occupying the place it was made to occupy.” Prior to their fall, the first humans had opportunity to reverse that corruption through the proper exercise of their God-granted dominion, but failed to do so. However, to the extent that animals are part of the community of the redeemed (i.e., redeemed humanity), they participate in its life: “And in this way it seems to me possible that certain animals

may have an immortality, not in themselves, but in the immortality of their masters.”<sup>37</sup> He understands the potential immortality of animals in relation to the domestic sphere.

This hypothesis raises as many questions as it answers but at this point, I only mention these speculations to highlight the importance of companion animals for Lewis and to introduce connections between animals and the family in his writing. In remarks about the Great Lady with her cats, dogs, and horses in *The Great Divorce*, Andrew Linzey observes Lewis’s tendency to focus on companion animals. He suspects this is not to the detriment of other species “but rather because he grasped the possibility that in their relations with humans, some animals could find their true (originally God-given) selves, with the corollary, though this is not explicitly acknowledged, that humans too become most authentically human when they reflect God’s redeeming purposes for other creatures.”<sup>38</sup> Linzey’s last observation is consistent with storylines in the Space Trilogy and the Chronicles of Narnia where nonhumans are the means by which human characters discern spiritual truths and become authentically human. Consider Hyoi in the science fiction thriller *Out of the Silent Planet*, or Mr. and Mrs. Beaver in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* who play such crucial roles in the progressive spiritual awakenings of Elwin Ransom and the Pevensie children.<sup>39</sup> “God has shown us that he can use any instrument,” Lewis remarked during an interview in 1963. “Balaam’s ass, you remember, preached a very effective sermon in the midst of his ‘hee-haws’.”<sup>40</sup>

The scene describing the Great Lady recalls a few other figures in Lewis writings. One is the Queen in his poem *The Nameless Isle*. Lewis dated this relatively obscure work August 1930 in a notebook but did not publish it in his lifetime.<sup>41</sup> The Queen is in part a Mother Nature figure,<sup>42</sup> nourishing the animals and trees. One striking scene pictures her calling out to the forest’s inhabitants after which a long list of them approach: ape, lion, lamb, padding panther, purring cat, scurrying rat, and more. This fascinating woman “grudged no grace to those grim ones.”<sup>43</sup> Another is the beautifully drawn Green Lady in *Perelandra*, a novel published just two years before *The Great Divorce*. Diverse creatures surround her too, and both stories, set in contexts of luscious vegetation as they are, hint at Genesis: “the LORD God took the man, and

put him into the garden of Eden .... the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone .... out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam" (2:15, 18, 19).<sup>44</sup> If in fact the Great Lady, the Queen, and the Green Lady owe something to Lewis's home life and Mrs. Moore, it is a tremendous compliment to her; clearly this connection with animal life is something Lewis appreciated and chose to immortalize in print by associating her with these remarkable fictional characters.

We find another picture of animal-human community, this time involving a 'wild' animal, in a charming story Lewis tells a young girl in 1944. "I am getting to be quite friends with an old Rabbit who lives in the Wood at Magdalen," he explains. "I pick up leaves off the trees for him because he can't reach up to the branches and he eats them out of my hand. One day he stood up on his hind legs and put his front paws against me, he was so greedy." He then adds to the letter a short five-line poem about this "very nice Rabbit" he calls Baron Biscuit.<sup>45</sup> This kind of story is common in letters sent to young correspondents, many of them Narnia fans. In another letter, for instance, he writes of a thrush that flew into his office and his relief in seeing it get out unharmed. He gives a list in yet another of the animals currently at his home: a dog, a cat, four geese, and umpteen hens.<sup>46</sup>

There are glimpses of Lewis's attitudes toward 'pets' in his fiction too. Elwin Ransom befriends a Perelandrian dragon who seeks out physical contact in a way reminiscent of a cat or dog. The description of this creature relates its size to a St. Bernard, reinforcing the 'pet' association, as does its behaviour. It "came right up and began nudging him with its cold snout about his knees." The queen of Perelandra, the Eve-like Green Lady, also interacts with animals in ways resembling people's affectionate treatment of pets. She speaks of the adoring creatures that constantly approach her in ways elevating their status. Her interactions also make them somehow less inferior, to the point that Ransom says, "The beasts in your world seem almost rational," which is not unlike remarks made by pet owners all the time.<sup>47</sup> Here again we have hints of Lewis's ideas about the immortality of domesticated animals through their relationships with (redeemed) humanity.<sup>48</sup> Ransom learns that the

unfallen and Adam-like King of Perelandra “will make the nobler of the beasts so wise that they will become *hnau* [rational] and speak: their lives shall awake to new life in us as we awake in Maleldil [God].”<sup>49</sup> Ransom himself does something similar upon his return to Earth from Perelandra because he regains “man’s lost prerogative to ennoble beasts.”<sup>50</sup>

Lewis’s eccentric ideas about animal immortality resulted in some ridicule when he first put them forward in *The Problem of Pain*. An interesting example appears in a letter of July 1, 1945, sent by the literary critic William Empson to I. A. Richards:

I am chiefly writing to ask whether you have any views about the professorship [at Cambridge University] vacated by Q [Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch]. It ought of course to be offered to you, and I hope you would take it ..... The gossip is that C. S. Lewis is going to get it and I cannot forgive him for believing that pet animals live for ever because they have been taught nice feelings by their owners. He seems to have no interests now except his moralising.<sup>51</sup>

Another grumbling response, this time from the Catholic writer Evelyn Underhill, reached Lewis in a letter of January 13, 1941. It opens kindly enough, praising his 1938 novel *Out of the Silent Planet* and the more recent book *The Problem of Pain*. The latter, she reports, “impressed me deeply” but when commenting on his chapter on animal suffering, she parts ways with his views:

Where, however, I do find it impossible to follow you, is in your chapter on animals. “The tame animal is in the deepest sense the only natural animal ... the beasts are to be understood only in their relation to man and through man to God.” This seems to me frankly an intolerable doctrine and a frightful exaggeration of what is involved in the primacy of man. Is the cow which we have turned into a milk machine or the hen we have turned into an egg machine really nearer the mind of God than its wild ancestor?

Surely, she adds, you do not think “the robin redbreast in a cage doesn’t put heaven in a rage but is regarded as an excellent arrangement.”<sup>52</sup>

We are fortunate to have Lewis's response to Underhill's objection. Those assessing his ideas about animals tend to seize on his proposal that the tame animal is the truly natural one, just as Underhill does here. He reminds her *The Problem of Pain* insists the abuse of humanity's authority over animals takes many forms. Caging a robin and overfeeding a pet dog "are both, to me, instances of the *abuse* of man's authority, tho' in different ways." Domesticity does not rule out abuse, and efforts to tame wild animals—the robin in a cage—are potentially cruel. But more to her point, he speaks to Underhill's view that untamed nature is undeniably good and beautiful in many respects. Lewis's response deserves repeating here:

I *do* know what you mean by the sudden ravishing glimpse of animal life in itself, its wildness—to meet a squirrel in a wood or even a hedgehog in the garden makes me happy. But that is because it is, being *partly* exempt from the Fall, a symbol and reminder of the unfallen world we long for. The wildness wd. not be lost by the kind of dominion Adam had. It wd. be nicer, not less nice, if that squirrel wd. come and make friends with me at my whistle—still more if he wd. obey me when I told him not to kill the red squirrel in the next tree. I don't envisage the taming of all beasts as involving domestication of all—only perhaps the dog and a few others. In a paradisaical state if you wanted a horse to ride you would walk up to the nearest herd and ask for volunteers—and the one you chose wd. be regarded as the lucky one.<sup>53</sup>

He adds, "I'm not so happy as you about what my cat does when she goes off on her own. She has nasty ways with her disabled, but living, prey. I don't think she'd lose any real beauty by being obedient."<sup>54</sup> We find something analogous to his horse remark in the novel *Perelandra*. On the planet Perelandra, dolphin-like fish rush to the Green Lady when she wants to travel, 'volunteering' to carry her: "'We shall ride,' said the Lady [to Ransom]. Then she knelt down on the shore ... and gave three low calls on the same note.... A moment later and the sea beside the island was a mass of the large silver fishes .... The Lady seemed to take a long time in selecting two of them."<sup>55</sup>

Nature is ambiguous for Lewis. Predation clearly troubles him. His sympathy is with the disabled mouse or bird, not his cat "when she

goes off on her own.” That cat’s treatment of birds and mice is an evil, a consequence of Satanic corruption (note again, animals are “*partly* exempt from the Fall”) . At the same time, Lewis revelled in the beauties of the natural world and it presented him with deep meaning. “Beyond the fence was a deep glen ... with very big trees and all rich brown,” he records in his diary in 1922. “I got a very good touch of the right feeling. There was a great scurry of birds. Some pheasants flew out and gave me rather a start .... I don’t know if I was in a particularly receptive mood or whether it was the day, but this afternoon the trees and the sky and everything had quite an extraordinary effect on me.”<sup>56</sup> The “right feeling” is a cryptic theme that appears occasionally in the diary, and presumably refers to the stabs of longing and deep emotion discussed often in *Surprised by Joy*. Significantly, these experiences often attach to nature in one way or another. In this entry, he writes of the sky, trees, birds generally, and pheasants specifically. This is a familiar pattern.

Communion with nature is spiritually enriching for Lewis. His fascination with animals and humans in peaceful community finds a different expression in his religious writing. Adam and Eve are in the Garden of Eden not only with animals. God is also there, “walking in the garden in the cool of the day” (Genesis 3:8). It follows that spiritual awakening often occurs in nature, and that nature is even a stimulus for such awakening.

## Nature and Revelation

Lewis published *Surprised by Joy* in 1955 and as autobiographical writing goes, it is idiosyncratic and incomplete. It covers only the first thirty or so years of his life, and even within that abbreviated history, he leaves out far more than he includes. There is more description of books read than people met, and the weight attached to some episodes, such as certain boarding school experiences, seems out of proportion with the whole. *Surprised by Joy* is more a story of intellectual formation and emerging faith than an account of his personal and professional life, and his progress as a writer.

Its subtitle makes it clear that traditional autobiography is not the objective. *The Shape of My Early Life* invites us to approach this memoir as something other than a rehearsal of mere facts and curiosities. To speak of the shape of something points us toward its frame, its edges or outline, or even its skeleton. Lewis is less interested in a comprehensive rehearsal of the facts of his life than encapsulating something of its overall character. It is like a book lying closed on a table. We can describe its shape, color, size, and subject, provided the title is on the cover, but specifics about its content are out of view.

In crafting his story about this *Shape*, Lewis employs the biblical Eden—a garden glimpsed from afar early in the book but later approached, and eventually entered—as a framing device. It provides a setting. Eden gives *Surprised by Joy* the *Shape* referred to in the subtitle.

The book opens and closes with visions of nature that are revelatory though in different ways. In the early pages, he describes the Castlereagh Hills of Ireland that inspired in childhood his love of the Blue Flower. He also describes here a “toy garden” made by his older brother, which he identifies as “the first beauty I ever knew.”<sup>57</sup> Zaleski and Zaleski refer to it as a “simulacrum of Eden,” noting also that nature and art both offered a profound joy to the young Lewis. He was rather hobbit-like in this respect, sharing their “friendship with the earth.”<sup>58</sup> Art and nature point beyond themselves to something greater. Significantly, he connects both to gardens, to the biblical Garden. Both reveal God.

*Surprised by Joy* ends as it begins, in a garden. The story concludes with an account of his conversion, which occurs in two stages. An important turning point in Lewis’s journey to faith occurs during a stroll on Addison’s Walk near the River Cherwell with friends J. R. R. Tolkien and Hugh Dyson. Here we see again an association between nature and new discovery. In a letter to friend Arthur Greeves, he explains that the conversation helped him understand “The story of Christ is simply a true myth: a myth working on us in the same way as the others, but with this tremendous difference that *it really happened*” (October 18, 1931). Addison’s Walk, on the grounds of Magdalen College, with its beautiful gardens and lawns, enormous trees, and the enclosed deer park mentioned earlier, is a site of revelation. It is here



the first stage of his conversion—to theism, as he explains—occurs.<sup>59</sup> His conversion to Christianity comes later and again the setting is conspicuous. It occurs in a zoo of all places, or at least *en route* to one. In describing the scene, he mentions a “sunny morning,” “Wallaby Wood,” “birds singing overhead,” “bluebells underfoot” (cf. the blue flower mentioned above), and “Wallabies hopping all around one.” Lewis becomes a Christian at Whipsnade Zoo, which he describes as “almost Eden come again.”<sup>60</sup> That is where Lewis’s autobiography ends, when he is only in his early 30s. Why end there? Perhaps it is his way of saying the only truly important detail of the story is his conversion. Everything else—including his rising fame at the time he wrote the book, resulting from the ongoing publication of the Narnia novels—is unimportant by comparison. Animals in a zoo (birds, wallabies, etc.) are subtly part of this most important event.

The Christian Lewis believed creation revealed something of the Creator. There is also a tendency to find solace in nature in Lewis’s writings. He and various characters in his stories find in trees, brooks, pleasant weather, and animals moments of joy, solace amidst grief, and hope. An example appears in Lewis’s diary of the 1920s with his account of Dr. John Hawkins Askins’s descent into madness.<sup>61</sup> It was clearly traumatic for the young Lewis, and memorable enough he saw fit to mention it briefly in the memoir written thirty years later: “it had been my chance to spend fourteen days, and most of the fourteen nights as well, in close contact with a man who was going mad. He was a man whom I had dearly loved, and well he deserved love. And now I helped to hold him while he kicked and wallowed on the floor, screaming out that devils were tearing him and that he was that moment falling down into Hell.”<sup>62</sup> Lewis and Askins’s sister and niece brought the ailing man and his wife into their home to care for him for an excruciating two or so weeks. Perhaps it is telling that during the period he was in their care, Lewis mentions Faustus, compares the resulting discomforts to war-time twice (recall Lewis was recently returned, injured, from the battlefields of France), and marvels at the relief enjoyed once it was all over: “I could have gone on my knees to thank any deity who cared to claim the credit for this release.”<sup>63</sup> But amidst all this horror, a momentary reprieve: “In bed again about six [a.m., after being up most the night

comforting the raving man]. The light was coming into my window and a lot of birds were singing—sane, clean, comfortable things.”<sup>64</sup> Nature offers escape from life’s sorrows and hardships.

For Lewis, Addison’s Walk and Whipsnade Zoo were significant places of revelation where his conversions to theism and Christianity occurred. Natural beauty and animals are both part of that story. He includes the following entry in *George MacDonald: An Anthology*: “In what belongs to the deeper meanings of nature and her mediation between us and God, the appearances of nature are the truths of nature, far deeper than any scientific discoveries in and concerning them.... It is through their show, not through their analysis, that we enter into their deepest truths.”<sup>65</sup> Commenting on Lewis’s decision to add this excerpt, Kallistos Ware notes that Lewis “valued the material world around us in and for itself, he valued it still more because of its transparency, because of the way in which the material world brings us to an apprehension of God.” The world is, for Lewis, “a sacrament of the divine presence.”<sup>66</sup> No wonder the animals that are part of it contribute, however subtly, to his confession of faith. They reveal something of the Divine.

Lewis’s fascination with the Romantic poets deserves brief notice.<sup>67</sup> He refers to himself as a romantic in *Surprised by Joy* and takes his title and title page epigraph from William Wordsworth.<sup>68</sup> We do well to read this book with attention to literary romanticism, which among other things was characterized by an interest in nature and animals.<sup>69</sup> Wordsworth found there a stimulus for meditation, as did Lewis. He refers to recurring, precious but rare moments of deep longing or joy in *Surprised by Joy*—he uses the term *Sehnsucht* for it—and briefly in the 1943 Preface to *The Pilgrim’s Regress*. Here too we find a connection between “that unnameable something, [that] desire for which pierces us like a rapier” and interactions with nature. He lists various stimuli that occasion those moments of illumination and longing—the smell of a bonfire, the book title *The Well at the World’s End*, the opening lines of *Kubla Khan*, morning cobwebs in late summer, the sound of waves—and among them he lists “the sound of wild ducks flying overhead.” The birds and wallabies of *Surprised by Joy* and the ducks of his *Pilgrim’s Regress* Preface both figure into the spiritual awakenings

described in these autobiographical works. Lewis maintains that animals are potential sites of encounter with, or better, harbingers anticipating the approach of the Divine. Each object, whether poetry or cobwebs or ducks, rouse a longing that is itself an evidence that “the human soul was made to enjoy some object that is never fully given—nay, cannot even be imagined as given—in our present mode of subjective and spatio-temporal experience.”<sup>70</sup> Whether we agree with the apologetic reasoning behind Lewis’s argument or not, it is clear he invests deep value in nature (and the arts, at their best) as potential signposts directing us to God.

## Notes

1. C. S. Lewis, “Membership,” in *The Weight of Glory and Other Addresses* (New York: HarperOne, 2000), 164.
2. C. S. Lewis, *The Horse and His Boy* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 154 (Chap. 10).
3. *Horse and His Boy*, 155, 151 (Chap. 10).
4. *Horse and His Boy*, 157, 156 (Chap. 10). King Peter calls talking dogs “cousins” in *The Last Battle* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 199 (Chap. 14).
5. *Horse and His Boy*, 161 (Chap. 10), 228–229 (Chap. 15). Cor, we discover, is Shasta’s real name.
6. *Horse and His Boy*, 12–13 (Chap. 1), 33 (Chap. 2). Emphasis original.
7. *Horse and His Boy*, 137 (Chap. 9), 177 (Chap. 11).
8. *Horse and His Boy*, 177 (Chap. 11). Cf. Exodus 19:16–20; 24:12–18; Matthew 17:1–8; Mark 9:2–8; Luke 9:28–36.
9. C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (Boston: Mariner, 2012), 84–85. Wesley A. Kort suggests a pattern in Lewis’s work more widely: “Celebration in Lewis is not only a human event. It also includes the nonhuman world. Animals and all of life suffer under the reign of evil and are liberated when its siege is lifted. Human life comes into its own when it begins to recognize not only the relations that exist between persons but the relations that exist between people and their nonhuman context. Animals are not alien to humans in Lewis’s version of things, and they look to humans for their deliverance from the abuse

and disdain that evil imposes on them. Lewis's lifelong campaign against the mistreatment of animals, particularly in scientific experimentation, is only an example of the larger emphasis in his work on our relation with and responsibility toward the nonhuman world. Celebration is communal not only in its human inclusiveness; genuine celebration is all-inclusive" (*C. S. Lewis Then and Now* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001], 154).

10. On the breath of life and animals, cf. C. S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 137 (Chap. 9): "The Lion opened his mouth, but no sound came from it; he was breathing out, a long, warm breath; it seemed to sway all the beasts as the wind sways a line of trees."
11. C. S. Lewis, *All My Road Before Me: The Diary of C. S. Lewis*, ed. Walter Hooper (San Diego: Harvest, 1991), 435, 366.
12. During World War Two, there was need to evacuate thousands of children from London to avoid bombing raids. Lewis, his brother Warnie (when home from the war), Mrs. Moore, and her daughter Maureen (before her marriage in August 1940) billeted several girls during the war years, starting in the fall of 1939. The experience presumably lies behind the opening pages of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which introduces the Pevensie children as London evacuees. One of the girls that stayed at the Kilns, June ("Jill") Flewett (later Freud) kept in touch with the Lewis brothers in the years after the war. She gave Jack and Warnie a dog named Susie. We learn bits about Susie in letters to Jill: "Susie, precocious creature is on heat. The people I'm sorry for are the local cats who, you remember, always used our garden as a club. Now they find their premises day & night invaded by dogs. One gave a barking serenade at about 3 a.m. this morning. Another barked at me in our own drive. 'I am sick of (canine) love'; 'We are delighted to hear that you will be with us .... Perhaps better not bring Polly [Jill's dog] though we should like to renew our acquaintance; but our small kitten, Mervyn, is terrified at the sight of Susie, and I think two of these strange monsters in the house might give him a nervous breakdown" (*The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*, volume 3, *Narnia, Cambridge, and Joy 1950–1963*, ed. Walter Hooper [New York: HarperCollins, 2007], 591 [cf. Song of Solomon 5:8], 693).
13. C. S. Lewis, *The Collected Letters*, volume 1, *Family Letters 1905–1931*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: HarperCollins, 2000), 970 with 976–977.

14. Kallistos Ware, "Sacramentalism in C. S. Lewis and Charles Williams," in *C. S. Lewis and His Circle: Essays and Memoirs from the Oxford C. S. Lewis Society*, ed. Roger White, Judith Wolfe, and Brendan N. Wolfe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 53. This is consistent with George Sayer's recollections of Lewis's routine during visits to his home: "He usually woke early.... and liked, if it was fine weather, to go out in our garden or for a short walk before breakfast. I think he spent the time drinking in the beauty of the morning, thanking God for the weather, the roses, the song of the birds, and anything else he could find to enjoy" (George Sayer, *Jack: A Life of C. S. Lewis* [Wheaton: Crossway, 1994], 344). Cf. Walter Hooper: "Lewis walked here [Addison's Walk] nearly every day" (*C. S. Lewis: Companion and Guide* [New York: HarperCollins, 1996], 747).
15. On this, see Michael Ward, "Afterword: A Brief History of the Oxford C. S. Lewis Society," in *C. S. Lewis and His Circle: Essays and Memoirs from the Oxford C. S. Lewis Society*, ed. Roger White, Judith Wolfe, and Brendan N. Wolfe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 253. Lewis received another posthumous tribute on November 22, 2013, the fiftieth anniversary of his death, when Westminster Abbey unveiled a memorial to him. See James Wilkinson, *Poet's Corner* (London: Westminster Abbey, n.d.), 50.
16. "What the Bird Said Early in the Year" also appears in C. S. Lewis, *Poems* (New York: HarperOne, 2017), 110. I cite lines from the poem as they appear on the plaque. The punctuation is slightly different in *Poems*.
17. Christine Ferdinand, *Magdalen College Oxford: A Brief History and Guide* (London: Scala Arts & Heritage, 2016), 67.
18. Lewis, *All My Road*, 475.
19. Ferdinand, *Magdalen College*, 67.
20. C. S. Lewis, *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*, volume 2, *Books, Broadcasts, and the War 1931–1949* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 993. Bragdon Wood is part of a fictional campus in his 1945 novel *That Hideous Strength*. Magdalen College was founded in 1458. The citation from Ferdinand above suggests the herd may not date back as far as Lewis supposes. When writing to a friend's young son in 1944, he refers again to the animals on the college grounds, and includes some charming drawings of those mentioned: "I live in a College here: a college is something rather like a castle .... At the back of the part I live in

[called New Building] there is a nice grove of Trees. There are a lot of Rabbits there.... There are also stags and deer. The stags—I can't draw them because their horns, which are called ANTLERS, are so hard to draw—often fight at night and if I lie awake I hear the noise (*click-click* it goes) of their horns tapping together" (*Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 634). As in the letter cited above, he also mentions eating the venison on occasion. He also tells the boy he is busy writing a story with a bear in it (by which he means *That Hideous Strength*).

21. Presumably, the following would be a fitting description of the background noises of many other late-night conversations too: "McFarlane stayed with me [in my rooms at Magdalen] till 12.30 talking by the fire, to the accompaniment of the stags grunting in the grove outside" (*Collected Letters*, vol. 1, 836).
22. E.g., Walter Hooper notes how she "bombarded him with books and pseudo-metaphysical correspondence" (*Collected Letters*, vol. 1, 368n. 21).
23. *All My Road*, 127. On another occasion, she expresses doubts about the usefulness of vivisection for some lines of inquiry (228).
24. Lewis mentions vivisection again in the near context (*All My Road*, 128). He often associates Lily with animals. Later in the diary, he writes of a stranger overheard on a bus referring to his aunt as "'The old girl who lives all alone with them cats'" (302). Poor aunt Lily caught mange from one of them (444).
25. Lewis, *Collected Letters*, vol. 1, 2.
26. C. S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012), 162–163.
27. *Surprised by Joy*, 162. This comment appears in Chap. 15.
28. *Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 17.
29. Lewis and his brother Warnie worshipped at Holy Trinity Church in Headington Quarry. Ronald Head was Vicar there from 1956 to 1990 and he provides a colourful glimpse into the Lewis's homelife: "the 1939 blackout curtains, impregnated with the smell of tobacco, still hung about the windows. The ménage consisted of the general hand-man/gardener/spare cook and everything else—namely Fred Paxford—together with a Mrs Miller, who performed as cook on a daily basis, a dog—a poodle which should have been shorn, but wasn't—and several cats, who were also in evidence" ("C. S. Lewis as a Parishioner," in *C. S. Lewis and His Circle: Essays and Memoirs from the Oxford C. S.*

*Lewis Society*, ed. Roger White, Judith Wolfe, and Brendan N. Wolfe [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015], 182).

30. *All My Road*, 288; cf. 21.
31. *All My Road*, 269, 273, 284, 319, 422. It appears Pat was a regular guest at Magdalen (cf. e.g., 431). Lewis was working on his book-length poem *Dymer* (1926) around the time of Pat's first bath. Perhaps his antics contributed something to Lewis's verse: "The shouting, leaping, /Shaking himself, he ran—as puppies do /From bathing—till that door was out of view" (in *Narrative Poems*, ed. Walter Hooper [New York: HarperOne, 2017], 43).
32. Philip Zaleski and Carol Zaleski, *The Fellowship: The Literary Lives of the Inklings: J. R. R. Tolkien, C. S. Lewis, Owen Barfield, Charles Williams* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015), 284, 283. Walter Hooper notes that "Mr Papworth, or Baron Papworth as he was also known, was Lewis's and Mrs Moore's dog. Of the many pets they had over the years, he was their favourite. He died in 1937" (*Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 6n. 17). More generally, A. N. Wilson mentions "the whole, and very important, world of his friendship with animals," and further adds that Lewis anticipated the modern animal rights movement (*C. S. Lewis: A Biography* [London: Harper Perennial, 2005], 160, 190).
33. Walter Hooper, "Epilogue," in *All My Road*, 458.
34. Wilson, *C. S. Lewis*, 72. For a generous introduction to her, see Sayer's chapter "Mrs. Moore" in *Jack*. He met her on two occasions and describes her as "generous and hospitable to a fault," and refers to her "impulsive kindness" (154, 166). This is consistent with those noting her love and concern for animals.
35. Wilson, *C. S. Lewis*, 73 (citing *The Great Divorce*, in *The Complete C. S. Lewis Signature Classics* [New York: HarperCollins, 2002], 528). As George MacDonald puts it in his role as the narrator's guide, "there is joy enough in the little finger of a great saint such as yonder lady to waken all the dead things of the universe into life" (528–529). Cf. Psyche's influence on nature in Lewis's novel *Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold*: "She made beauty all round her. When she trod on mud, the mud was beautiful; when she ran in the rain, the rain was silver. When she picked up a toad—she had the strangest and, I thought, unchanciest love for all manner of brutes—the toad became beautiful" ([San Francisco: HarperOne, 2017], 25). Though Lewis is cautious in his

- speculations about animal immortality, they are clearly part of the after-life imagined here. It is fitting Lewis allows his George MacDonald character to make these remarks because the actual MacDonald speculated about animal immortality. Others in Lewis's circle also discussed this possibility. Zaleski and Zaleski refer to an Inklings conversation about whether dogs have souls (*The Fellowship*, 346).
36. C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*, in *The Complete C. S. Lewis Signature Classics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 632. Analogous but not quite the same. By Satanic corruption, Lewis does not mean animals 'falling into sin' in a way comparable to Adam and Eve eating forbidden fruit. As he puts it in *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*, "It is men and angels, not beasts, who rebel" (Boston: Mariner, 2012), 44. George MacDonald seems a likely influence here, as he too insists animals "are fallen, though without blame" (in C. S. Lewis, ed., *George MacDonald: An Anthology* [New York: HarperCollins, 2001], 63–64). At the same time, "Humanity and nature are both in need of redemption. With the death and resurrection of Christ, the process by which humanity and, indeed, the natural order are reconciled to their creator was initiated" (Cath Filmer-Davies, "C. S. Lewis," in *The Oxford Handbook of English Literature and Theology*, ed. Andrew W. Hass, David Jasper, and Elisabeth Jay [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007], 659).
  37. *Problem of Pain*, 634, 635. Susanne E. Foster's "Lewis on Animal Immortality" (*Mythlore* 22.1 [1997]: 47–53) offers a helpful summary of issues involved. As she puts it, humanity's stewardship of God's creation "involves more than conserving resources for future generations or minimizing the suffering of animals. For human beings are obligated to help animals attain the highest perfection of which they are capable, namely consciousness and personality. The fruit of this perfection is immortality" (53).
  38. Andrew Linzey, "C. S. Lewis's Theology of Animals," *Anglican Theological Review* 80.1 (1998): 66. It is possible Lewis's limited experience shapes his argument. Nicola Hoggard Creegan reminds us "Lewis was ... working within a much more restricted zone of knowledge of animals. He was a friend of domestic animals, and these therefore held a special place in his theology of salvation" (*Animal Suffering and the Problem of Evil* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013], 143–144).
  39. More generally, Lewis writes of nature's contribution to religious experience: "Nature never taught me that there exists a God of glory and of



infinite majesty. I had to learn that in other ways. But nature gave the word *glory* a meaning for me. I still do not know where else I would have found one. I do not see how the 'fear' of God could have ever meant to me anything but the lowest prudential efforts to be safe, if I had never seen certain ominous ravines and unapproachable crags. And if nature had never awakened certain longings in me, huge areas of what I can now mean by the 'love' of God would never, so far as I can see, have existed" (*The Four Loves* [Glasgow: Fount, 1987], 23–24).

40. C. S. Lewis, "Cross-Examination," in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 258–259. For a glimpse of Lewis at his humorous best, again referring to Balaam's Ass, see the poem "Donkeys Delight" (*Poems*, 49–51).
41. For commentary on this little-known work, see Don W. King, *C. S. Lewis, Poet: The Legacy of his Poetic Impulse* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2001), 145–153. See too Hooper, *C. S. Lewis*, 155–156.
42. She is a complex character so merely associating her with Mother Nature "seems too simplistic" (King, *C. S. Lewis*, 147). She is a powerful, even dangerous enchantress.
43. In *Narrative Poems*, 154.
44. For discussion about animals in *Perelandra*, including remarks about the Green Lady, see Matthew Dickerson and David O'Hara, *Narnia and the Fields of Arbol: The Environmental Vision of C. S. Lewis* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 196–203.
45. *Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 618–619. The same letter also appears in C. S. Lewis, *C. S. Lewis: Letters to Children*, ed. Lyle W. Dorsett and Marjorie Lamp Mead (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 21–22. A few months later, he relates another version of the story to a different child, only this time the rabbit's name is Baroness Bisket (*Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 634).
46. Lewis, *Letters to Children*, 61–62, 66.
47. C. S. Lewis, *Perelandra* (London: HarperCollins, 2005), 51, 75.
48. *Problem of Pain*, 635.
49. *Perelandra*, 268. The Eve character in *Perelandra* ennobles the animals that surround her: "There was in her face an authority, in her caresses a condescension, which by taking seriously the inferiority of her adorers made them somehow less inferior—raised them from the status of pets to that of slaves" (75). The goddess Venus instructs the rulers of *Perelandra* to name all creatures (cf. Genesis 2:20) and "guide all natures to perfection" (261–262).

50. C. S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength: A Modern Fairy-Tale for Grown-Ups* (London: HarperCollins, 2005), 426. This character is never far from animals. We find Ransom playing with a kitten in the novel fragment *The Dark Tower*, an aborted sequel to *Out of the Silent Planet* that came to light after Lewis's death (C. S. Lewis, *The Dark Tower and Other Stories*, ed. Walter Hooper [Boston: Mariner, 2012], 36–39).
51. William Empson, *Selected Letters of William Empson*, ed. John Haffenden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 145. For further discussion about animal immortality, its connection to human redemption, and humanity's responsibility for bringing them to a higher state, see Wesley A. Kort, *Reading C. S. Lewis: A Commentary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 62–65.
52. Evelyn Underhill, *The Letters of Evelyn Underhill*, ed. Charles Williams (London: Longmans, 1943), 301. The last line alludes to William Blake.
53. Letter to Mrs. Stuart Moore (Evelyn Underhill), dated January 16, 1941, taken from Lewis, *Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 460 (emphasis original; full letter, 460–461). As seen, Lewis found the idea of peaceful co-existence between species fascinating. He picks up that theme again, twenty years after *The Problem of Pain*, in *The Four Loves*: “[Affection] ignores the barriers of age, sex, class and education.... We see it not only between dog and man but, more surprisingly, between dog and cat.... Affection is modest—even furtive and shame-faced. Once when I had remarked on the affection quite often found between cat and dog, my friend replied, ‘Yes. But I bet no dog would ever confess it to the other dogs’” (34, 35). For further remarks on ways we abuse our authority over animals in the ways we treat our pets, see *Four Loves*, 51–52. In his poem “The Condemned,” Lewis speaks of unruly nature in more positive terms as part of an analogy. The poem is a challenge to authoritarian control; “we that are hedgerow folk” are not easily subdued. There is “a wildness still in England” that refuses to feed in cages. It shrinks from the trainer's hand, is not easy to kill or tame, refuses to breed in zoos, and “will not be planned.” Nature defines the “hedgerow folk.” The poem is also a condemnation of brutality. Animal wisdom recognizes “troubles in the air,” which include guns, traps, and “a Ministry gassing the little holes in which we dwell” (*Poems*, 97).
54. *Collected Letters*, vol. 2, 460.
55. *Perelandra*, 90, 91.

56. *All My Road*, 142.
57. *Surprised by Joy*, 7; cf. 8.
58. Zaleski and Zaleski, *The Fellowship*, 38, 2. For Lewis, nature is an important context within which art emerges. We see this in his frequent walking tours with friends. See e.g., Diana Pavlac Glyer, *The Company They Keep: C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien as Writers in Community* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2007), 137–141. She describes how walks with literary friends were often collaborative affairs. During large-scale walking tours “sightseeing was not the centrepiece .... Literature was.” The friends talked about poetry but also “composed stories and poems during these excursions” (138). For various insights into these outings, see the chapter “Walking Tours” in Laurence Harwood’s *C. S. Lewis, My Godfather: Letters, Photos and Recollections* (Downers Grove: IVP Books, 2007); and the entry “Walking Tours” in Hooper, *Companion and Guide*, 794–796.
59. See *Collected Letters*, vol. 1, 970, 976–977 (italics original).
60. *Surprised by Joy*, 237, 238. Lewis also mentions “the Blue Flower” in a similar fashion in his third edition Preface to *The Pilgrim’s Regress: An Allegorical Apology for Christianity, Reason and Romanticism* ([Glasgow: Collins, 1977], 14), in a section treating the same longing or joy discussed at length in *Surprised by Joy*.
61. *All My Road*, 202–218.
62. *Surprised by Joy*, 202–203. Cf. his Preface to the 1950 edition of *Dymer*, where he also mentions the episode: “It had happened to me to see a man, and a man whom I loved, sink into screaming mania” (in *Narrative Poems*, 7). Dr. Askins was Mrs. Moore’s brother.
63. *All My Road*, 202, 212, 217, 218.
64. *All My Road*, 216.
65. Lewis, ed., *George MacDonald*, 76–77.
66. Ware, “Sacramentalism in C. S. Lewis and Charles Williams,” 53, 54. On different kinds of connection with nature, see Lewis’s chapter “Likings and Loves for the Sub-human,” in *The Four Loves*, esp. 21–25. Cf. 51 where he observes animals have “three legs in nature’s world and one in ours. It is a link, an ambassador. Who would not wish, as Bosanquet put it, ‘to have a representative at the court of Pan’? Man with dog closes a gap in the universe.”
67. He carefully outlines various meanings of the term Romanticism in his Preface to the third edition of *The Pilgrim’s Regress*, which first appeared

in 1933 (and then with this Preface in 1943). Among the meanings outlined, he refers to a sensibility to natural objects that is “solemn and enthusiastic,” which comes closest to the experiences described in *Surprised by Joy* where we find Lewis’s spiritual journey unfolding within settings of natural beauty. See *The Pilgrim’s Regress*, 11.

68. *Surprised by Joy*, 5, 7.

69. See e.g., David Perkins, *Romanticism and Animal Rights*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

70. Preface to the third edition of *Pilgrim’s Regress*, 15.

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