

## Inklings Forever

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Volume 8 A Collection of Essays Presented at the Joint  
Meeting of The Eighth Frances White Ewbank  
Colloquium on C.S. Lewis & Friends and The C.S.  
Lewis & The Inklings Society Conference

Article 15


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5-31-2012

# The Necessity of the Terrible Good in the Works of C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams

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### Recommended Citation

Moore-Jumonville, Kimberly (2012) "The Necessity of the Terrible Good in the Works of C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams," *Inklings Forever*: Vol. 8 , Article 15.  
Available at: [https://pillars.taylor.edu/inklings\\_forever/vol8/iss1/15](https://pillars.taylor.edu/inklings_forever/vol8/iss1/15)

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# **INKLINGS FOREVER, Volume VIII**

A Collection of Essays Presented at the Joint Meeting of

The Eighth

FRANCES WHITE EW BANK COLLOQUIUM ON C.S. LEWIS & FRIENDS

and

THE C.S. LEWIS AND THE INKLINGS SOCIETY CONFERENCE

Taylor University 2012

Upland, Indiana

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## **The Necessity of the Terrible Good in the Works of C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams**

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# The Necessity of the Terrible Good in the Works of C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams

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Created in the image of God, human beings are entrusted with a self. "From the very start we are something that can Be," remarks Johannes Metz, "a being who must win selfhood and decide what it is to be" (3). C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams both engage readers in the process of imagining ways we exercise the freedom of "becom[ing] what we are;" (Pindar qtd. in Pieper 3) that is, fully human beings. This exercise of freedom is fraught with temptations to rebel against the humanity entrusted to us, to betray our human dignity and run away from ourselves in an attempt to avoid the burden of our lot. Autonomy, egotism, pride, self-centered control of others, all dull our spiritual awareness and help us avoid direct confrontation with the self.

By depicting characters in their spiritual adventure of becoming a self, Lewis and Williams help readers identify a myriad of ways growth can be evaded. Until Orual from Lewis's *Till We Have Faces*, and Pauline in Williams's *Descent into Hell* can relinquish their demands for autonomy in their encounter with the "lord of terrible aspect," their spiritual growth remains obstructed. Until they are prepared to suffer terror in the face of goodness and embrace poverty of spirit, they will not know the reassurance of love or the joy of submission; they won't go on to discover authentic selfhood. Lewis's and Williams's characters' confrontation with the terrible good

shocks them out of self-absorption like the transparent ghost in the *Great Divorce* hiding in the shadows for fear she will be exposed. Not until she is frightened out of her wits by a herd of unicorns thundering past does she consider anything but protecting herself (Chaps. 8-9). That instant of self-forgetfulness can be the very thing, sometimes the only thing that stimulates recognition of our vulnerability, our utter dependence on God alone. Thus, the wrenching violence of fear and suffering often become fundamentally necessary for the work of becoming what God created us to be.

That God calls his creatures to suffer terror makes no sense to us. We can't believe God would create only to terrorize the very beings intended to bear his image. Such a harsh reality forces us to seek explanation. If the shortest distance between truth and human understanding is a story, then a timeless tale like *Red Riding Hood* proves instructive. In order for the child *Riding Hood* to be safe, she must both encounter the wolf who threatens destruction and discover the joy of the hunter's rescue. The fright of the wolf's desire exposes *Riding Hood's* inability to see, her innocence and naivete at imagining the wolf to be benevolent. She emerges from the episode able to discern between the appearance of kindness and the reality of seduction, ready not to mistake appearance for reality in the same way again. As Bruno Bettelheim describes it,

the child is reborn to a higher plane; her exposure to terror teaches her that overcoming the danger is possible, both in her newly acquired skills of discernment and in the possibility of rescue. Thus, she is transformed by her encounter (179).

The terrors faced by fairytale characters require reconstruction of their understanding of the universe. They must give up what they expect to happen for what is; they need a more accurate map of the territory, a reading of the world that more accurately matches reality. The extent to which they can surrender what they “expect” of the world for what is marks the extent to which they mature and survive. What Lewis’s characters in Narnia must give up when they face the terrible good is their insistence on the universe their way, a world in which they function as the center around which everything else revolves. Freedom to choose involves ordering life around a specific program for happiness that often becomes destructive in its denial of reality. To mature and survive, characters like Lucy, Jill, and Orual in Lewis’s stories must relinquish their false programs for happiness based on self-centered and distorted views of reality. Lucy, for instance, would prefer a gentle to an alarming Aslan for his tender reassurance. Her question about the lion Aslan, “Is he—quite safe?” is met with Mr. Beaver’s answer, “‘Course he isn’t safe. But he’s good” (*Lion*, Chap. 8). Lucy’s timidity would not prove equal to the reality; Aslan must be fierce in order to protect the children from the White Witch.

If the terrible good Lucy faces (before she actually meets him) is the threat of Aslan’s unpredictable violence, Jill encounters the terrible good as the possibility of outright destruction; she could be eaten. Facing Aslan beside the stream, Jill admits she is “dying” of thirst.

“Are you thirsty?” said the Lion.

“I’m *dying* of thirst,” said Jill.

“Then drink,” said the Lion.

“May I—could I—would you mind going away while I do?” said Jill.

The Lion answered this only by a look and a very low growl. And as Jill gazed at its motionless bulk, she realized that she might as well have asked the whole mountain to move aside for her convenience. The delicious rippling noise of the stream was driving her nearly frantic.

“Will you promise not to—do anything to me, if I do come? Said Jill.

“I make no promise,” said the Lion.

Jill was so thirsty now that, without noticing it, she had come a step nearer.

“Do you eat girls?” she said.

“I have swallowed up girls and boys, women and men, kings and emperors, cities and realms,” said the Lion. It didn’t say this as if it were boasting, nor as if it were dory, nor as if it were angry. It just said it.

“I daren’t come and drink,” said Jill.

“Then you will die of thirst,” said the Lion.

“Oh dear!” said Jill, coming another step nearer. “I suppose I must go and look for another stream then.”

“There is no other stream,” said the Lion. (*Silver Chair* Chap. 2)

That no choice other than approaching this fierce lion, the Christ of this world, exists for Jill orients her to reality. She comes face to face, terrible as it is, with the necessity of making herself vulnerable to him. Only submission to the threat of destruction saves her.

Orual, in Lewis’s novel *Till We Have Faces*, spends her Queenhood

alienated from the truth of her being, her spiritual growth obstructed. Indeed, she takes scandal at the innate poverty of the human soul in its worship of Ungit. The radical indigence of the human need for worship repulses her, because it requires submission to mystery. What she expects, human dignity and rational explanation of the mystery of Ungit, is turned upside down in the disgusting temple with its “smell of blood and burning fat” (Pt. 1, Chap. 1). If the ultimate meaning of Being is hidden in God, she will have none of it; she resists Mystery. “Why must Holy places be dark places?” (Pt. 1, Chap. 21). She despises the Priest’s recognition that “Holy Wisdom is not clear and thin like water but thick and dark like blood” (Pt. 1, Chap. 5). To the darkness of Ungit’s slaves and the villagers’ fear and trembling she prefers the bright light of the Greek’s rationalism, the clarity of rational assertions, even though they distort the elusive mystery of Being (“If the gods had an honest intention to guide us, why is their guidance not plain” (Pt. 1, Chap. 12). In this rejection of Mystery, she distorts reality because without submitting to the core of Being, the ground of reality, she cannot draw an accurate map of the territory. Reality without Mystery is too limiting to grow the soul.

The claim made by mystery and the worship of Ungit is Orual’s stumbling block. Ironically, she has chosen the light and brilliance of the Greek’s rationalism but hidden behind the darkness of the veil; thus, rejection of Ungit’s mystery leaves Orual shrouded in darkness. Hiding behind the veil is a rejection of mystery. She insists that the God who requires sacrifice is not a God of love but a God of the grotesque. Blood sacrifice means something has to die, a mystery too much to bear. Psyche’s dying, her sacrifice to the god in obedience to the divine will is a terrible good Orual cannot accept, and in her rejection of that necessity of dying and sacrifice she rejects

the path to being reborn, the path to becoming her true self. When Orual can’t see Psyche’s palace, her “whole heart leap[s] to shut the door against something monstrously amiss—not to be endured” (Pt. 1, Chap. 11). Psyche’s palace images the reality of the holy and Orual resists the vision: “I don’t want it. I hate it. Hate it, hate it, hate it” (Pt. 1, Chap. 11). Soon she admits she is “building a dam in [her] soul against belief” . . . “I now determined I would go always veiled”; . . . “I locked Orual up” (Pt. 1, Chap. 12). Orual makes herself the prisoner of her own being. However, the veil offers no protection from the truth; it haunts her in the nameless shape of anxiety. As Johannes Metz reminds us in *Poverty of Spirit*, “anxiety takes the place of scorned poverty” (28). Preferring the shadow of the veil to the necessity of sacrifice that expresses submission and dependence, Queen Orual becomes the slave of anxiety.

Anxiety haunts Orual in her longing for Psyche’s love; she blames the gods for their unjust treatment of her, driven to isolation, forced to be Queen, denied beauty and a husband’s love. But most of all Orual rejects the gods’ demand that she give up Psyche to the Shadowbrute’s devouring. This is her rejection of the terrible good. The Priest’s suggestion that the “loving and devouring are all the same thing” (Pt. 1, Chap. 5) is repugnant to her. Here Orual misses the opportunity to give herself up and thereby receive herself back more fully: “Do the gods flow in and out of us as they flow in and out of each other?” (Pt. 2, Chap. 3). Her rejection of the necessity of submission to the gods in self-denial is the real source of her trouble; she wants love without sacrifice. Psyche’s lover demands full alliance, blind obedience and trust, all of which Orual jealously guards. She demands Psyche’s love be all for her regardless of the people’s need for blood sacrifice. The Western literary code regards blood as symbolically transformative, the dying before we die. “The

necessary price of newness,” Richard Rohr suggests, “is always death to oldness . . . blood-letting, dying, letting go is necessary and always painful” (46). The flowing blood of Ungit makes Orual want to run. What she misses is that blood sacrifice images the death of the false self, the death of illusion exchanged for the stark reality of Christ’s sacrifice. Orual can’t receive love because she can’t submit to the terrible good of sacrifice.

Lewis describes misconceptions like Orual’s as a failure of the imagination. For example, we imagine we can pay our taxes like honest folk paying just enough to give us plenty left to live on. But Lewis reorients us to reality: “Let us make up our minds to it; there will be nothing of our own left over to live on” (*Weight of Glory* 14). God demands everything. Lewis also borrows George Macdonald’s analogy to describe the house we imagine God building in our soul. At first it looks just as we expect. “But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and doesn’t seem make sense. . . You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but he is building a palace. He intends to come and live in it” (*Mere Christianity* 174). Orual’s failure to imagine the new reality God wants to create in her soul keeps her from seeing Psyche’s palace; she rejects being reborn to a new reality. Thus, the suffering necessary for becoming a beautiful soul stands as a roadblock on her journey to [true selfhood.]

Orual’s rejection of sacrifice and humility is juxtaposed to Psyche’s complete openness and vulnerability. Psyche accepts the love of her people as an image of the soul’s authentic being; her self-love allows her to live from the simplicity of integrated wholeness that welcomes her poverty of spirit. She accepts the fate of being the daughter of the king who will never feel the burden of queenship but whose beauty and innocence require surrender first to the

people and then to their demand for sacrifice. Desire for another land, another reality than her own suggests her lack of self-centeredness. “The sweetest thing in all my life,” Psyche tells Orual, “has been the longing to find the place where all the beauty comes from” (Pt. 1, Chap. 7).

Psyche’s surrender stands in stark contrast to Orual’s insistence on her false view of reality. As a symbol of the soul, Psyche images the proper response of the heart: submission to the demand for sacrifice. Ultimately, this becomes submission to the devouring God. Such self-abandonment is not expressed in purely mystical terms, but in relationship to bloodthirsty people who expect concrete, tangible, physically brutal sacrifice. The path to authenticity and union with God is not worked out in abstract terms but through vivid physical realities such as her relationship to the people of Glome. Orual withdraws behind a veil; Psyche exposes herself to sight. Orual rejects vulnerability; Psyche surrenders to sacrifice. Orual “shuts the door” (Pt. 1, Chap. 11); Psyche opens her hands. Chained to the tree waiting for the Shadowbrute, she tells Orual, “I was holding out my hands” to the rain (Pt. 1, Chap. 10). Her readiness for sacrifice enables Psyche to become authentic, for in meeting the devouring god, she exchanges death for life, sorrow for joy, fear for peace. In a mutual exchange of love with the god, she becomes known, an authentic self discovering that she is made for god and all her dreams of a gold and amber house and husband are fulfilled beyond imagining. She receives all this on one condition: that she accept the mystery and not insist on seeing her lover. This condition is essential. Psyche has to give up her need for tangible knowledge: she is not allowed to actually gaze upon the lover who comes to her. The key to the soul’s fulfillment lies in self-abandonment, in relinquishing the self as the center of the universe. This obedience is the condition for joy. By

contrast, Orual insists on assessing the cost of a painful experience; she needs to gauge ahead of time how much suffering will be required so she can muster the resources to master it. But the terrible good takes her by surprise; it frightens her out of her profit and loss calculations. It invites her into new, uncharted territory where she will have to accept help.

Not until Bardia's wife, Ansit, shows Orual the degree to which she has projected her false self onto the lives of those she loves, does Orual recognize the false map she has created of the real territory. But even knowing how much she expended Bardia to meet her needs does not help her surrender her demands for Psyche's love. Not surprisingly, her determination to become a beautiful soul fails: "I could mend my soul no more than my face" (Pt. 2, Chap. 3). Still seeking to correct her mistakes at the end of her life, she reads out her case against the gods. But the last word is silence. Her own words of complaint condemn her selfishness. She has not surrendered her self-absorption; the false self's program for happiness has denied her poverty of spirit to the end. Without a face bared to the gods, naked and vulnerable, admitting that she can't solve the enigma of her loss, Orual has condemned herself. As long as her desire for union with Psyche remains a demand for exclusive possession, she will starve her soul into old age. She ends a hag forced at the last tribunal to admit her mistake before the gods, a small destructive soul untransformed.

Charles Williams's novel *Descent into Hell* recognizes the problem of the terrible good by emphasizing the quality of goodness that makes it terrifying. Pauline asks the poet playwright, "If things are terrifying, can they be good?" (Chap. 1). His reply assures her that "our tremors . . . measure the Omnipotence" (Chap. 1). The idea of trembling before God is reminiscent of biblical visitations of the Holy to mere mortals. Angels

reassure Mary, Joseph, Zachariah, the women at the tomb, and others not to fear them; even Saul falls to the ground (Howard 255). The specific good before which Pauline trembles presents itself as an alien figure, a doppelganger, literally, a "double-goer" that is, a special kind of ghost which seems to be [her]self dogging [her] own footsteps (256). Pauline is taunted by visitations of this figure resembling her own self whenever she ventures out alone until she feels positively haunted. To face this figure without charging in the other direction is almost impossible. Of course, Pauline's secret, unknown even to herself, is that she fears to face herself. Obligated without warning to face an image that is a replica of her moral being terrifies her as it would anyone. She fears to confront the goblin her moral self might, in her worst fears, resemble (Howard 256). To encounter the stark reality, the plain truth of herself, is actually a terrible good, though she doesn't recognize it.

Pauline is surrounded by spiritually dull characters each avoiding reality themselves: Wentworth, for instance, whose egocentrism encourages denial of his slow descent into hell; or Lily Sammille, the witch-scourceress, Lilith, who flutters back and forth between the characters on Battle Hill "like a chicken fluttering round the glass walls of a snake's cage (Chap. 4). Lily woos the others to dissatisfaction, to mistaking moral choices for opportunities for pleasure, to preferring illusions of niceness to hard facts. There is no mistaking the spiritual context of Battle Hill as a Golgotha, a place of ultimate battle between good and evil. What sets Pauline apart from her friends, however, is her openness to spiritual realities in Stanhope's play, her willingness to accept help from Stanhope and her grandmother, and her willingness in turn to aid her family ancestor who beckons her from the past. In the end, Pauline's openness to the spiritual realm and her humble

participation in it is what helps her face the terrible good.

First, Stanhope's play functions as a kind of "touchstone" (Howard 253). If characters understand the play they are working to present, then we can assume they have access to the realm where intellect and soul intersect. If the play remains opaque to them, they lack fundamental openness. As it turns out, Pauline alone recognizes that the Chorus is key to the playwright's "effort to shape in verse a good so alien as to be terrifying" (Chap. 1). Pauline is willing to pursue a new and disturbing idea if it is true. The beauty of art invites clarity, proportion, harmony and radiance, all aspects of truth and goodness as well. Pauline's openness to the beauty of Stanhope's poetry helps her acknowledge the connection between truth and goodness, especially the dark truth that there can be a good so fierce and demanding that it frightens. Acknowledging a connection between beauty, truth, and goodness brings her a little closer to facing the fear of her doppelgänger. Ruminating on Stanhope's phrases "a different life" and "a terrible good" she wonders if they are related. Could there be a "good so alien as to be terrifying. She had never considered good as a thing of terror, and certainly she had not supposed a certain thing of terror in her own life as any possible good" (Chap. 1). Faced with a new idea, Pauline does not demand understanding or closure; rather, she is willing to hold in tension mutually exclusive possibilities that the good and the terrible could sometimes be one.

Secondly, Pauline does not ignore the imminent death of her grandmother, Margaret, who knows "she will die soon. . . . This knowledge, terrible to most people, spurs Margaret to appreciate such a small thing as the evening. There would be few more evenings during which she could watch the departure of day, and the promise of such rarity gave a greater

happiness to the experience" (Chap. 4). Her acceptance of death expresses a properly ordered attachment to life that can let it go in faith that something better awaits her beyond the grave. "You can be at peace," she reflects, "so long as you accepted what joys the universe offered and did not seek to compel the universe to offer you joys of your own definition" (Chap. 4). Margaret's expression of goodness marks a soul at peace with the dread of goodness because she is confident that she won't be devoured by it. (Psyche's description that the loving and devouring are one would not be threatening Margaret; to lose ourselves is to find ourselves. There will be something on the other side of self-abandonment.) Thus, Margaret's submission to her own terrible good, her approaching death, enables Pauline to face her fear.

It is not just Margaret's knowledge, but her spiritual work that affects her granddaughter. Margaret can rest at the premonition of death because she has exercised her freedom to become a fully human being. She has not betrayed the humanity entrusted to her by running away from her difficulties and trying to take her own life as the suicide has done (Metz 24). "When God creates us," Johannes Metz suggests,

we are born into the 'categorical imperative' of the Christian faith: you shall lovingly accept the humanity entrusted to you! You shall be obedient to your destiny! You shall not continually try to escape it! You shall be true to yourself! You shall embrace yourself! Our self-acceptance is the basis of the Christian creed . . . In accepting the chalice of our existence, we show our obedience to the will of the Creator in heaven; in rejecting it, we reject God . . . . Knowing how readily we try to escape the harsh difficulties of the human situation, knowing how



difficult it is for us to bear with ourselves and how quickly we feel betrayed by ourselves, knowing how difficult it is for us not to hate ourselves, we can then understand why God had to prescribe self-love as a virtue and one of the great commandments, we can then understand why we constantly need the help of God's grace . . . in becoming human. (Metz 5)

For Margaret Anstruther, self-knowledge is not a hindrance to facing the terrible good because she has accepted grace; she has been humbled in poverty of spirit and grown in self-love to the degree to which she affirms adventuring into the next stage of life with God beyond the grave. In that spiritual strength she can help Pauline avoid running away from herself. Having embraced herself as a spiritual being having a human experience, Margaret has chosen love until she can "see into the life of things" as Wordsworth puts it in Tintern Abbey. "The girl and the old woman who lay, both awake in that house under the midnight sky, were at different stages of that way" of love (Chap. 4). This particular night Margaret is given a vision of a man who has committed suicide in a much earlier time upon the same Battle Hill where her house is located. Margaret discerns he is waiting for help on his spiritual journey and calls Pauline out to help him. Margaret is able to extend this offer of help both because her own spiritual work is done and "because [the suicide] had never had an opportunity to choose love, nor effectively heard the intolerable gospel proclaimed, he was to be offered it again, and now as salvation. But the first faint hints of damnation were permitted to appear" (Chap. 7). What happens in Margaret's room where the dead man is drawn by the warmth of light and love and Pauline is summoned takes on eternal proportions. For Margaret it is a "last gift of charity"; for Pauline, "a first

exercise in Charity" (Howard 279). In a spiritually tangible, supernatural exchange, Margaret, in the strength of Christ the "living stone" (Chap. 7) offers the dead man participation in the joy that comes from Christ's sacrifice and when he accepts, they hear his moan echoed by the groan of Christ's agony. The mystery of this kind of intercession echoes Williams's law of substitution and exchange, what Margaret has come to practice and what she illustrates for Pauline this night. The law inheres, for Williams, in the nature of human community: we owe our life to other people because we cannot eat a meal or travel to work without depending on the cooperation and sacrifice of others. Everyone, all the time, owes his life to others (Howard 25). From the breakfast cereal we eat, which depends on the planting and harvesting of farmers and the lives of chickens, to the self-giving love of a spouse who drives us to work, or the generous neighbor who rescues our dog from street traffic, we depend on others. Even eternal salvation we owe to Christ who laid down his life for us.

Margaret's work of intercession with the suicide carries such weight of glory because it represents a gradual deepening of spiritual power based on selfless acts of charity. Pauline is unaware of her grandmother's intercession for her, but she receives it as strength for her own acceptance of the law of substitution. Her fear of the doppelganger overwhelms her for a time, but Stanhope's offer to carry her fear as a way of bearing another's burden, gives her hope. At first she resists: "Would I push my burden on to anybody else?" (Chap. 6). But finally his answer sets her misgivings to rest:

"If you want to disobey or refuse the laws that are common to us all, if you want to live in pride and division and danger, then you can. But if you will be part of the best of us, and live and laugh and be

ashamed with us, then you must be content to be helped. You must give your burden up to someone else, and you must carry someone else's burden" (Chap. 6). "When you do," Stanhope tells her, "remember that I am afraid instead of you, and that I have taken over every kind of worry." (Chap. 6)

Standing in Margaret's room, Pauline recognizes a face in the window as her double's face and moves through tremors of rage and shame until she remembers Stanhope's substitution of himself for her. Since he carries her fear, she is free of it. She gazes into her face without dread of the grotesque, without fear of the mortality it implies. She sees it exposed as it is before God and doesn't flinch. At this moment, Pauline breaks free of the dread and faces this apparition "in all freedom and courage" as herself. Her act of charity towards herself extends to the dead man who needs her go out to the crossroads and point the way back to London. Margaret's help for Pauline, won through her own spiritual work, is intangible; Stanhope's is more obvious. But from them both, Pauline has been encouraged to open to self-knowledge, to submit her fear of the doppelganger to another and be carried forward to freedom in the divine love.

One more submission to the divine will awaits her. Its purpose is to drive home the law of substituted love that strengthens her for a final ordeal to come. The love extended to us is always for the good of others.

Pauline's ancestor, Struther, she has discovered in Foxe's Book of Martyrs was burned at the stake 350 years earlier. From her own experience of dread she is intrigued with his burning. The fact that she is called to share his burden of fear across three and half centuries of history is unusual until we compare the ways we send out prayers over the space of continents. Perhaps the Holy Spirit can

span time as well as space. Williams doesn't apologize for this idea, but regards it as a way the fabric of creation is knit up by love of one soul 'standing in' for another soul by bearing someone else's burden.

When Pauline envisions Struther in his cell anticipating his death by fire, she willingly stands in the desolation of his fear and asks him to give it over to her. Because Stanhope had carried her fear for her, she can substitute herself in the place of Struther's fear. At the moment when she accepts the burden of his fear of death, she gazes into the face of her doppelganger. The glory and beauty of her double gazes back at her without flinching; in this moment self-knowledge and self-love in Pauline become one. She has avoided her apparition out of fear that it was a grotesque mock-up of her naked soul. But this was a mistaken notion; the soul she recognizes now is actually an image of love and joy. This is the self God hoped she would become, but only now in obedience to divine love does she discover her true self, a self made by love, in love, and for love. Obedience to the doctrine of substituted love, a sacrificial love willing to suffer and willing to surrender its self-absorption and self-protection for poverty of spirit, only this love can know glory. She has heeded the call, the beckoning of her ancestor Struther from the depths of time and opened herself to the exchange of substituted love. Pauline has borne the burden of another. That moment her soul is freed to express its glory of creation. From the moment of her first deference and inclination toward Stanhope and his poetry, to her aunt, and to her ancestor, Pauline has been learning to surrender fear of the terrible good, to resist the abyss of nothingness, to deny fear of cosmic abandonment.

To confirm this recognition that joy and glory, not nothingness, await us beyond the grave, Pauline is called to the cemetery for one final encounter with

evil. Adela sends her to the shed in the graveyard to find the only one who can heal her sick soul. But Lily (Lilith the witch) can offer Adela no healing. She takes this chance encounter, however, to entice Pauline once again with vague promises of health, money, good looks, good luck, peace and contentment or their substitutes (Chap. 11). Pauline does not hesitate this time, sure of herself. "Thank you very much, but I don't want anything. . . How could I want anything but what is?" (Chap.11). She knows the core of reality, the ground of being himself, and prefers that substantial reality to flimsy promises. Risk, sacrifice, surrender, the law of substitution and exchange are the only basis for, the only path to love and joy. Pauline has faced the terrible good to exchange her false map of the territory for a true one. Her direct confrontation with herself has woken her to the glory of the creature at one with creation that rings and tells of its creator.

Pauline accepts the necessity of the terrible good; Orual resists the painful experiment of living from the outset. She angrily insists that she has been robbed of her right to happiness. To the last, Orual rails against the gods' arbitrary governance, unable to accept her lot. Taken so close to heaven that she can glimpse the palace made to house Psyche for an eternity of bliss, she rejects it in preference for a dingy palace in Glome. Like the bus travelers taken to the edge of Heaven in *The Great Divorce*, Orual turns back to Hell. She would rather rule in Hell than submit to a god who demands complete submission in Heaven. Only one response remains for God to offer. Lewis reminds us, "There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, 'Thy will be done'" (Chap. 9).

Pauline's submission to the exacting will of God is an embrace of the spiritual adventure. The fact that she does the spiritual work of facing the terrible fear adds to her spiritual

strength; as she loves she increases in stature. Teilhard de Chardin describes such experiences plainly: "When I surrender to the embrace of the visible and tangible universe, I am able to be in communion with the invisible that purifies" (50). Pauline's surrender places her in "communion with the spirit that purifies" to the degree that she is surprised by the beauty of the self-image pursuing her. She welcomes it with relief that it is not the shadow of her sinful self, but the glory of what God intended. Because she has quite literally submitted to the invitation to face herself, she has been transformed. She has welcomed the spiritual adventure of confronting the self, welcomed poverty of spirit, and faced the terrible good to win a new trust that God will not abandon her no matter what she faces.

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