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Nature in Heaven and Nature on Earth

Heaven's Natural World in The Great Divorce

Joshua Richardson

Principally renowned as a theological discussion of what separates those in Heaven from those in Hell, C.S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce* (1945) has produced relatively little scholarship when compared with his other works (Jeffress and Brown 3). The scholarship surrounding *The Great Divorce* (which I will refer to as *TGD* from now on) predominantly focuses on free will, with scholars like Mary Bowman, Shari Cox, and Rachel Coleman writing about the nature of the Fall and the "realness" of Heaven, which comes as a result of correct choices (choosing God), and the purely mental state or "unreality" of Hell, which comes as a result of making incorrect choices (choosing pride).

While these conversations regarding free will are both important and convincing, there exist major critical gaps in discussing how the natural world in *TGD* has meaningful implications for the way we interact with nature here and now on Earth. If nature is mentioned by *TGD* scholars, it is typically in relation to free will and is not the subject of isolated discussion. Literary eco-scholars like Rhonda Herb have come closest to exploring these

implications by arguing that Lewis's "holy intimacy of the natural" is often intended as an invitation for readers to treat the Earth better (3). Deborah Klein suggests this was Lewis's intent in *TGD* when he contrasts the beauty of nature in Heaven against the dinginess of cities in Hell (65). These arguments, however, are few and only briefly mention *TGD*. Therefore, they are limited in how they bring *TGD* into the current conversation surrounding the implications of Lewis's use of nature. This paper hopes to fill those gaps. As an allegorical work that heavily involves nature in the progression of its characters, *TGD* shows that nature has dominion over those that seek to destroy it but not over those who learn to love it, while also arguing that man-made technology is ultimately more oppressive than nature.

Because *TGD* is allegorical, it is difficult to map parallels between Heaven's transcendent world and the Earth's natural world. Further difficulties arise when one considers that none of the characters either living in Heaven (the angels or the solid people) or visiting Heaven (the ghosts) are human. Therefore, these characters interact differently with nature than humans would. However, Lewis's own disclaimer that "the trans-mortal conditions [in *TGD*] are solely an imaginative supposal, they are not even a guess or a speculation at what may actually await us" and his wish not "to arouse factual curiosity about the details of the after-world" do not exclude an examination of how *TGD*'s natural world informs aspects of our relationship with the natural world on Earth (1). Rather, Lewis's primary concern is that readers will mistakenly take his description of Heaven as a literal reflection of Heaven's appearance instead of an allegorical one. But of this allegorical Heaven, Michael Edwards notes, "Lewis's first concern . . . is to imagine heaven by re-imagining the world 'as it is'; to discover the invisible not behind but within the visible" (108). Therefore, even though Lewis's Heaven is an imagined recreation of the world we now live in, Heaven and the beings that live there still carry significant and visible implications for our relationship with nature on Earth.

Like Lewis's imagined Heaven, his imagined Hell also provides important implications, but in a different way. With its crowded towns filled with buildings and streets, Hell sacrifices nearly all of its natural landscape in exchange for man-made creations (Lewis 9). In this sense, while Heaven is the world re-imagined by Lewis "'as it is,'" as Edwards suggests, then Hell must be the world re-imagined by Lewis as he hopes it will never be. Indeed, both Heaven and Hell host battles between human nature and

the non-human natural world, but each battle has different outcomes. It is because of these differences that Lewis's imagined Hell similarly carries significant implications for our relationship with the Earth.

Finally, while Lewis's main goal for writing *TGD* was most likely to help people come closer to God, this essay will rarely mention God in its discussion of the natural world on Earth. While acknowledging that Lewis believed nature to be representative of the divine and "suggested we focus on experiencing God's immanence on Earth, expressed through nature's beauty" as an "indispensable initiation into a higher world," this essay seeks to explore nature as an isolated subject, something that has not been done by most Lewis scholars (Herb 11). This may seem sacrilegious to some Lewis scholars, but by isolating nature from God, if only briefly, we obtain a better vision of how nature relates to humanity on an individual level, thus encouraging the individual to treat the Earth better, regardless of their beliefs.

Is Nature Dangerous or Hospitable?

Just reading the first few chapters of *TGD* may lead the reader to believe that nature is cruelly indifferent and inhospitable towards all beings. For example, as the bus carrying the ghosts emerges out of Hell and approaches Heaven, the ghosts experience what the narrator initially describes as a "cruel light" (17) and later as "the threat—of sunrise" (23). Regardless of their discomfort, however, the "cruel light" does not adapt itself in order to provide greater comfort to the new visitors. Indeed, nature's lack of change in the face of the ghosts' clear physical discomfort seems evidence enough of its indifference at the earliest moments of their arrival. Then, that same nature, which caused only slight discomfort moments before with its bright light, suddenly causes the ghosts even greater physical pain as they begin to interact with Heaven's natural world first-hand rather than from the window of a bus. In rapid succession, the narrator "los[es] most of the skin of [his] hands" after he repeatedly fails to pluck a dandelion which had a stalk that "wouldn't break"; his heart nearly cracks with effort when he tries to lift a leaf that is "heavier than a sack of coal" (21); he suffers extreme pain when he walks on grass that is as "hard as diamonds" to his "unsubstantial feet" (25); and, finally, his shins are badly bruised by the "flakes or islands of foam" of a solid river that "came swirling down towards [him] . . . like stones if [he] did not get out of their way" (45). In these instances, the narrator understandably begins to perceive the natural world not only as

indifferent to his suffering, but dangerous to his health—indifferent in its unyieldingness and dangerous in its potential to harm him. Interestingly, these perceived notions of an indifferent and harmful natural world stem from strings of negative encounters that are fueled by fear.

Despite his belief that nature is largely inhospitable, the narrator has brief moments of appreciation for certain aspects of nature as he spends more time in it. When he first steps off the bus he says, “[t]he light and coolness that drenched me were like those of summer morning, early morning a minute or two before the sunrise” (19–20). Later, as he explores the river on his own he says, “The cool smooth skin of the bright water was delicious to my feet and I walked on it for about an hour” (45). However, each of these experiences is fleeting. The refreshing character of the sunrise is quickly replaced by a feeling of fear from being outside in such a large, exposed place (20), and the coolness of the river is quickly forgotten as its rock-like foam crashes against his shins (45). Interestingly, in spite of the pain he feels, the narrator is in awe of the grandeur of Heaven’s natural world; and in those few moments of awe, nature’s refreshing hold on the narrator is enough to momentarily extinguish any fear. However, being alone and without an angel’s understanding of how to retain that appreciation through personal change, the narrator allows fear to replace awe.

In addition to his fleeting appreciation, the narrator’s developing belief that nature is indifferent and harmful is further fortified through his interaction with other ghosts. Not trusting the stability and longevity of the current sunny weather, one ghost says to the narrator, “I never saw one of those bright mornings that didn’t turn to rain later on. And, by gum, when it does rain here! Ah, you hadn’t thought of that? It hadn’t occurred to you that with the sort of water they have here every raindrop will make a hole in you, like a machine-gun bullet” (56). For this “Hard-Bitten Ghost,” the weather is nothing but unpredictable, potentially dangerous, and oblivious to his own actions. What is interesting is how quickly the narrator believes the other ghost’s view on the danger of nature: “What the Hard-Bitten Ghost had said about the rain was clearly true. Even a shower of dew-drops from a branch might tear me in pieces. I had not thought of this before. I gazed around on the trees, the flowers, and the talking cataract: They had begun to look unbearably sinister” (58). Based on how quickly the narrator accepts the Hard-Bitten Ghost’s analysis, and how adamant the Hard-Bitten Ghost is, it seems as if all ghosts are more inclined to fear nature than to love it.

This inclination, predicated on both actual experience and the possibility that nature could get nastier, is fueled by interaction with others who share the same unfamiliarity with the new natural world of Heaven. Consequently, the narrator is left “feeling as miserable as [he] ever felt in [his] life” in the face of nature’s unpredictability and danger (57). It is a combination of experience, fear, and interaction with others that leads the narrator, and many of the other ghosts visiting Heaven, to believe even more adamantly that nature is cruelly indifferent towards them.

While the ghosts believe nature to be cruelly indifferent, the angels interact with nature without any pain. As the angels first approach the ghosts, “[t]he earth [shakes] under their tread as their strong feet [sink] into the wet turf. A tiny haze and a sweet smell [go] up where they [have] crushed the grass and scattered the dew” (23). The grass that had been as hard as diamonds for the ghosts is easily crushed under the angels’ feet. If the angels mention nature at all throughout the rest of the book, they do so to help the ghosts to understand it—they never complain of it. For the ghosts, the natural world is dangerous and the focus of their pain; for the angels, nature is hospitable and, as we’ll see later, something they love.

Does Nature Have Dominion Over Humans? Or Do Humans Have Dominion Over Nature?

For Lewis, human dominion over nature likely meant harmonious stewardship—not tyranny. As M.J. Gilmour argues, Lewis, as a Christian and theologian, was influenced in his understanding of dominion through his study of the Bible (62). Genesis 1 records, “God said . . . let [man] have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth” (*The King James Version Bible*, Gen. 1.26). As a stand-alone verse, it sounds as if humans are meant to be unrestrained tyrants over the natural world. However, the Creation story continues in Genesis 2 as we read, “And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it” (Gen. 2.15). Explaining the relationship between these two verses, Gilmour writes, “The beautiful, irenic vision of Genesis 2, poetically enacts the rule assigned to humans in Genesis 1. It explains what dominion means for [Lewis]. Humanity has the capacity to realize peaceful coexistence [with nature]” (62). Lewis’s Christian and theological scholarship provide support to Gilmour’s claim. Indeed, it is likely Lewis would agree with the following definition of dominion posed

by Clause Westerham: "'Dominion' is . . . the full responsibility of the ruler for the welfare of the people and country entrusted to him" (98). As Gilmour points out, Lewis's belief in this biblical notion of peaceful coexistence and divine stewardship is evidenced in other works like the *Chronicles of Narnia* where Aslan places four human children in charge of *protecting* all the animals of Narnia (69). Indeed, Lewis believed humans had a right to dominion over nature, but he also believed that proper dominion was to love and care for nature, not to destroy it (Herb 10).

For the purposes of discussing nature's dominion over humans, we will define nature's dominion as the discomfort and disharmony the natural world causes humans who fail to gain proper stewardship over it. This is also a biblical idea; when Adam and Eve were removed from the Garden of Eden, we could say that the natural world had dominion over them, thus causing them great discomfort. Similar discomforts prevail in *TGD*. Indeed, it often appears nature has total dominion over the ghosts because of how much discomfort the ghosts are in, and the angels have total dominion over nature because they are able to live harmoniously with it.

Despite their differing circumstances, ghosts and angels share one similarity: neither group desires to feel pain from nature. For the ghosts, this is obvious through both their physical reactions to nature and their subsequent complaints, as discussed under the previous heading. The angels' equal, if not greater, eagerness to overcome nature's pain is reflected in their persistent effort to help the ghosts overcome their pain; phrases like "It will hurt at first, until your feet are hardened" recur throughout the book (39). The persistence of the angels in trying to help the ghosts overcome their pain reflects their empathy for the ghosts' discomfort, and this empathy and understanding open a window into their past; at some point, each of the angels found nature discomforting, and each of them had to learn how to overcome that pain. Neither ghost nor angel wants to feel pain from nature.

Although both ghosts and angels strive to overcome these pains by achieving dominion over nature, dominion takes on a drastically different meaning for the ghosts. In their assumption that Heaven's nature is both indifferent and dangerous, many of the ghosts are eager to remove any potential threat it poses. The narrator's personal mentor, an angel named George McDonald, says of these ghosts, "there were tub-thumping ghosts who in thin, bat-like voices urged the blessed spirits to . . . tear down the mountains with their hands. . . . There were planning ghosts who implored

them to dam the river, cut down the trees, kill the animals, build a mountain railway, smooth out the horrible grass and moss and heather with asphalt" (80–81). Evidently, the ghosts' first reaction upon encountering Heaven's uncomfortable natural world is to either change or destroy it.

The ghosts' immediate and violent reaction to Heaven's unfamiliar natural setting is not a new concept. In fact, McDonald's description is a near reworded copy of verse that John Milton wrote, several hundred years before Lewis was born, in his epic poem *Paradise Lost*. Milton writes of Satan and his followers who, having recently fallen from Heaven and arrived in Hell, immediately begin looking for ways to strip the ground of its resources, hoping to gain dominion over their new world: "Thither wing'd with speed / A numerous Brigad hasten'd" and "Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands / Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth / For Treasures better hid" (lines 674–75, 686–88). Both Milton's fallen angels and Lewis's ghosts believe the only way to gain total dominion over nature is to defeat it with violence. The fact that both Milton and Lewis wrote about the human impulse to destroy nature, even though these two writers lived hundreds of years apart, proves the relevancy of this ongoing debate today. Clearly, both authors observed how humans mistreated their stewardship over the Earth. The dominion Milton's fallen angels and Lewis's ghosts seek is not the ideal dominion the authors had imagined or knew possible.

While Milton's angels and Lewis's ghosts believe dominion over nature is violently earned, the angels living in Heaven's natural world believe that overcoming the discomforts of Heaven's natural world occurs by changing the individual—not nature itself. When another ghost expresses pain from walking on those "horrible spikes" of grass, another angel says, "'Oh, that! That'll soon come right . . . You can lean on me all the way. I can't absolutely *carry* you, but you need have almost no weight on your own feet: and it will hurt less at every step" (60). This angel's promise is that, with assistance, personal transformation is possible. In this formula, nature is not changed, but the individual is changed and adapted to nature. Interestingly, when the angels tell the ghosts that it is possible to change themselves to acclimate to nature rather than change or destroy it, a majority of the ghosts hurriedly dismiss such propositions. For the ghosts, it *appears* easier to change Heaven's nature rather than change themselves.

The angels' approach to dominion over nature is so unsavory to the ghosts, in fact, that only one ghost accepts the invitation to change himself

and adapt to Heaven's natural world. Nevertheless, this ghost is still reluctant. Knowing the lizard on his shoulder—which represents his lustful inclinations (114)—is the reason Heaven's natural world is so uncomfortable for him, but also acknowledging how deeply it is embedded in his character, the Ghost rightly presumes the Angel's suggested transformation will be difficult and painful. Indeed, it is this potent fear of the pain accompanying change that leads many of his fellow ghosts to flee Heaven rather than adapt to it. For the ghosts, fear repeatedly prevents personal change and cuts short the development of a harmonious coexistence between the ghosts and nature. Thus, nature's potential to comfort the ghosts is overshadowed by their fantasy of its demise. By overcoming his fear of change, the Ghost finally accepts the Angel's assistance and allows the Angel to burn the lizard off his shoulder, starting his transformation. "Then I saw," says the narrator, observing the Ghost's transformation, "unmistakably solid but growing every moment solider, the upper arm and the should of a man. Then, brighter still and stronger, the legs and hands. The neck and golden head materialized while I watched . . . an immense man . . . not much smaller than the Angel" (111). On a magnificent stallion, which had once been the Ghost's lizard, the Ghost-turned-angel now rides effortlessly over the grass that had previously caused him to limp from pain. The Ghost allowed himself to be changed in order to gain dominion over, and harmony with, nature. While dominion over nature for the ghosts comes through changing or destroying nature, dominion over nature for the angels comes through altering themselves to learn to live peaceably with nature.

Although this Ghost with the lizard's transformation is a powerful description of what the angels call dominion, *TGD*'s most powerful portrayal of dominion over nature comes during a single moment when the narrator simply records the Earth's reaction to the transformation of the Ghost with a Lizard. As the Ghost transforms into an angel and rides off towards a large mountain, the speaker records that "the whole plain and forest were shaking with sound . . . I knew it was not the Solid people singing. It was the voice of the earth . . . that came from all directions at once" (113). And these are the words that the nature sings:

Share my rest and splendor till all natures that were your enemies become slaves to dance before you and backs for you to ride, and firmness for your feet to rest on . . . the strengths that once opposed your will shall be obedient fire in your blood and heavenly thunder in your voice. Overcome us that, so

overcome, we may be ourselves: we desire the beginning of your reign as we desire dawn and dew, wetness at the birth of light. (113)

Interestingly, nature admits its dominion over the ghosts if they choose not to transform. However, nature quickly stipulates that it does not prefer this form of dominion. Rather, nature clearly proclaims its wish to be ruled by the transformed, while simultaneously and heavily promoting the benefits that await the ghosts should they choose to change.

Although *TGD* claims humans are to have dominion over nature, it clearly argues that to destroy nature is not the correct application of dominion. Herb was correct when she said, “One of the great myths that Lewis worked to dispel is the notion that the Earth is ours to destroy . . . [h]umanity has the power to make Earth more in the nature of . . . Heaven, depending on our treatment of the planet” (10). Indeed, *TGD* argues that humans gain their rightful dominion over nature by changing their understanding of nature. Like the narrator, humans’ fear of nature is what gives nature dominion over them, though such dominion is unnatural. And so, as long as the fear of nature exists in the ghosts, nature retains its dominion over them, and they miss out on possibilities of living in harmony with it. Obviously, the book isn’t arguing that we can survive in the cold by simply changing how we think of it, but it is saying that by changing our approach to nature, our fear of it diminishes and we are able to enjoy the “delicious” and “cool” water and sun in ways that aren’t fleeting, but enduring. The narrator’s view of nature as “cruel” and indifferent changes into a respect and understanding of it as he learns more about his environment. Replacing fear of nature with understanding shifts the dominion from nature to the human, the true intended state of being, according to *TGD*.

As humans claim dominion over nature by changing themselves, not only do humans and nature grow to love each other, but nature is finally allowed to “become itself.” Upon the magnificent processional arrival of Sarah Smith—an angel of great importance in Heaven but relatively unknown on Earth—the narrator immediately notices the large crowds of animals that accompany her and says to his teacher: “And how . . . but hullo! What are all these animals? A cat—two cats—dozens of cats. And all these dogs . . . why I can’t count them. And the birds. And the horses” (120). His teacher replies, “Every beast and bird that came near her had its place in her love. In her they became themselves” (120). Because Sarah Smith was so willing to

understand and love nature rather than fear and destroy it, nature in turn “loved” her. Surely the love these animals have for Sarah Smith represents nature’s ability to awe us when we take time to notice it. More than that, Sarah Smith’s love for nature appears to have freed these animals from a role they did not wish to fill. In other words, these creatures were not able to be what they were meant to be until they were loved by a human. In this light, the word “dominion” seems out of place. Indeed, the dominion Sarah Smith exhibits over these animals is not at all how we imagined it would be. There is no control, degradation, manipulation, or force; rather, there is mutual love and appreciation which empowers both parties. This is the sort of dominion the angels promise the ghosts if they will abandon their fear and change themselves.

What Oppresses Humans More: Nature or Man-made Creations?

But what of those ghosts that decide to return to Hell, like the lady who, soon after stepping out of the bus into nature, quickly darts back to the bus, shouting, “I don’t like it! I don’t like it!” (22)? In their minds, nature has dominion and is certainly more oppressive than the land they’ll return to, and no angel can convince them otherwise. The narrator’s teacher claims that “[t]here is always something they insist on keeping even at the price of misery” (71). But however miserable they were in Hell, it appears that the ghosts often are more miserable in Heaven. So, what is it that the ghosts think they have in Hell that is less awful than the pain they are experiencing in Heaven, and are they right?

The answer lies in comparing the personal improvement Heaven’s nature provokes (even demands) in its inhabitants and the isolation Hell’s man-made technology promotes in its inhabitants. As the narrator walks the streets of Hell, he observes “dingy lodging houses, small tobacconists, hoardings from which posters hung in rags, windowless warehouses, goods stations without trains” (1) in a “grey town” (8) that was later described by another ghost to be a “pigsty” (9). The houses in the “grey town” are built by the ghosts on the edge of town in an attempt to remove themselves far away from other ghosts (10), which creates for them a “feeling of safety,” even though their homes are never able to keep out all the rain (14). For the ghosts in Hell, man-made technology is not high quality, but it is an important way to separate themselves from interaction with other beings.

Interestingly enough, as the narrator flies away from the “grey town” on the bus headed to Heaven, he notices that “fields, rivers, or mountains I did not see, and I got the impression that the grey town still filled the whole field of vision” (9). With the exception of the rain, there is no nature in Hell. Lacking any natural world, the ghosts have opportunities to isolate themselves in a way that keeps them focused entirely on themselves and not on others. The interaction a ghost needs to transform and adapt to Heaven’s natural world is void in Hell. Correspondingly, Hell’s inhabitants are largely displeased with their living conditions and the entrapment they feel in that ““deuce of a town””—something they seem to have quickly forget upon arriving in Heaven (9). Indeed, the shock of an angel urging the ghosts to heed its words (interaction much beyond the social scope of their normal isolation) and to change themselves in order to find true comfort (change they have not attempted since arriving in Hell, or perhaps longer) is uncomfortable. And so, suddenly, those crumbling homes in Hell, the complete absence of nature, and their total isolation appears the more attractive alternative to the ghosts.

On the other hand, the natural world in Heaven may physically hurt the ghosts, but it offers freedom that man-made technology could not offer on its own. Upon arriving in Heaven and seeing nature that seems larger than the solar system, the narrator says, “It gave me a feeling of freedom, but also of exposure, possibly of danger, which continued to accompany me through all that followed” (20). Those feelings of vulnerability and freedom are exactly what the man-made structures of Hell do not offer its inhabitants but what the natural world in Heaven offers in rich abundance. While nature is indeed uncomfortable for the ghosts who are visiting, at least the large expanse of nature feels more like freedom than the confinement of the dingy town. Nature may seem daunting to those that are afraid of it, and even to those who experience it, but it is this exposure to discomfort that invites a choice between progression and stagnation to be made. One cannot live in nature and survive without changing something; one can live in man-made creations and survive without nature, but there will be no progression, no vulnerability—only “misery” (71).

This awareness, however vague it may be, of their misery in Hell among their man-made creations is evident in one ghost’s attempt to retrieve an apple from Heaven and bring it back to Hell. After struggling for an hour to reach the apple tree, constantly looking around because he is “haunted by the terror of discovery,” and being knocked unconscious for a time when

an apple falls on him, the Ghost finds an apple that is small enough for him to carry. The narrator observed, "I saw him rise staggering to his feet . . . [h]e was lame from his hurts . . . [y]et even so, inch by inch . . . he set out . . . carrying his torture" (49). Despite being incredibly hurt by nature, this ghost still struggled to carry a small piece of nature with him back to Hell, as if he needed it so badly that his life depended on it. It is at this moment, if we haven't picked up on it already, that we learn that Hell, or man-made things, cannot give us everything that nature can.

Additionally, in this lesson with the apple, we learn that we cannot accept all that nature has to offer if we are too entrapped in the world. This is represented by the weight of the apple. The natural world is difficult to appreciate, even a burden, if we are not able to change ourselves in a way that helps us understand it better. That is why, after observing the Ghost in his struggle, a nearby waterfall said to him, "'Put it down. You cannot take it back. There is not room for it in Hell. Stay here and learn to eat such apples. The very leaves and the blades of grass in the wood will delight to teach you'" (49). Unfortunately, the Ghost either doesn't hear or chooses not to listen and continues his painful and unnecessary struggle to carry the heavy apple back to the bus. Despite the Ghost's disregard for the Waterfall's counsel, however, we learn that nature is instructive from its invitation to free ourselves from the trappings of a burdensome man-made world.

Although Heaven's natural world initially seems more oppressive to the ghosts than Hell, its ability to provoke vulnerability and personal improvement makes it significantly less oppressive than the man-made and stagnating creations of Hell. Furthermore, the ghosts' pain caused by the natural world is not permanent, but the isolation of man-made technologies, if the ghosts choose to remain in Hell, offers nothing but unending misery. On this point, Herb focuses on the journey to God and says, "The ultimate journey to God takes mankind 'further into the mountains,' and away from cities and anything man-made" (11). In addition to leading us to God, the ultimate journey to simply improve as human beings also lies in finding moments to step away from anything that is man-made.

Conclusion

While scholarship has done an excellent job of dissecting free will in *TGD*, much is yet to be explored with regards to its profound implications on the interaction between humans and the natural world or the oppressiveness

of certain man-made technology and ideologies. Such an investigation is important to Lewis-scholars who are interested in Lewis's use of nature but have not yet looked to *TGD* as a source, as well as to anyone who admires Lewis and desires to have a better understanding of and relationship with nature. From the dynamic and often contrasting interactions of that of Heaven and that of Hell, Lewis shares these important ideas: nature provides comfort to those willing to experience it and discomfort to those who aren't; nature is meant to exist harmoniously with humans, not be destroyed by them; those who seek to live in harmony with nature understand its potential to comfort instead of fearing it; and, lastly, nature invites freedom from man-made technologies' isolations.

Scholars should not be afraid that the allegorical nature of the text and its Christian messages will prevent meaningful exploration of *TGD* as an eco-text. The lessons gleaned from *TGD* are not allegorical but are important fruits of an allegorical story. Lewis's blend of Christian theology and nature theory only speaks to his profound ability to replicate and revise older classic texts into his own, powerful words. Indeed, when one angel tells a ghost, "You painted on earth . . . because you caught glimpses of Heaven in the earthly landscape," it reflects Lewis's ability to use familiar messages to paint *TGD*'s Heavenly landscapes (83). It is in creating such a landscape that Lewis is able to offer us new glimpses into humankind's relationship with Earth in profound ways.

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