

C. S. LEWIS' SPACE TRILOGY

INTRODUCTION

DOUG OLENA • LIFE TOGETHER • EVANGEL TEMPLE • 9/10/2023

The Purpose of this class and the January sessions on *That Hideous Strength* will be a literature study that intersects with a study of some discussions between Ransom and Weston, then the Institute and its secret in the basement.

Some of these arguments are central to those that formed my theological self.

I want to explore what it is about people that makes them do what they do.

As Christians I believe we need to explore the landscapes of fiction to understand something about ourselves, and we in the Church are in dire need of a better anthropology.

There is a diffidence, an elevated character in the Christian people in these books. I want to describe that and understand why it is so desirable. How can a Christian achieve that?

There is no guarantee I will achieve my purpose here.

FORETASTE OF JANUARY 2024

PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE ABOLITION OF MAN BY C. S. LEWIS

Lewis published *Out of the Silent Planet* in 1938, *Perelandra* in 1943, and *That Hideous Strength* in 1945.

The Germans and World War II had to be a brain ingredient in Lewis at this time. Watching the horror of the build up and execution of the War on Europe was a central feature of the world's thinking.

Themes in these three books closely resemble some of the errors of fascism. But Lewis focussed our attention on the Spiritual Battle for the soul of humanity.

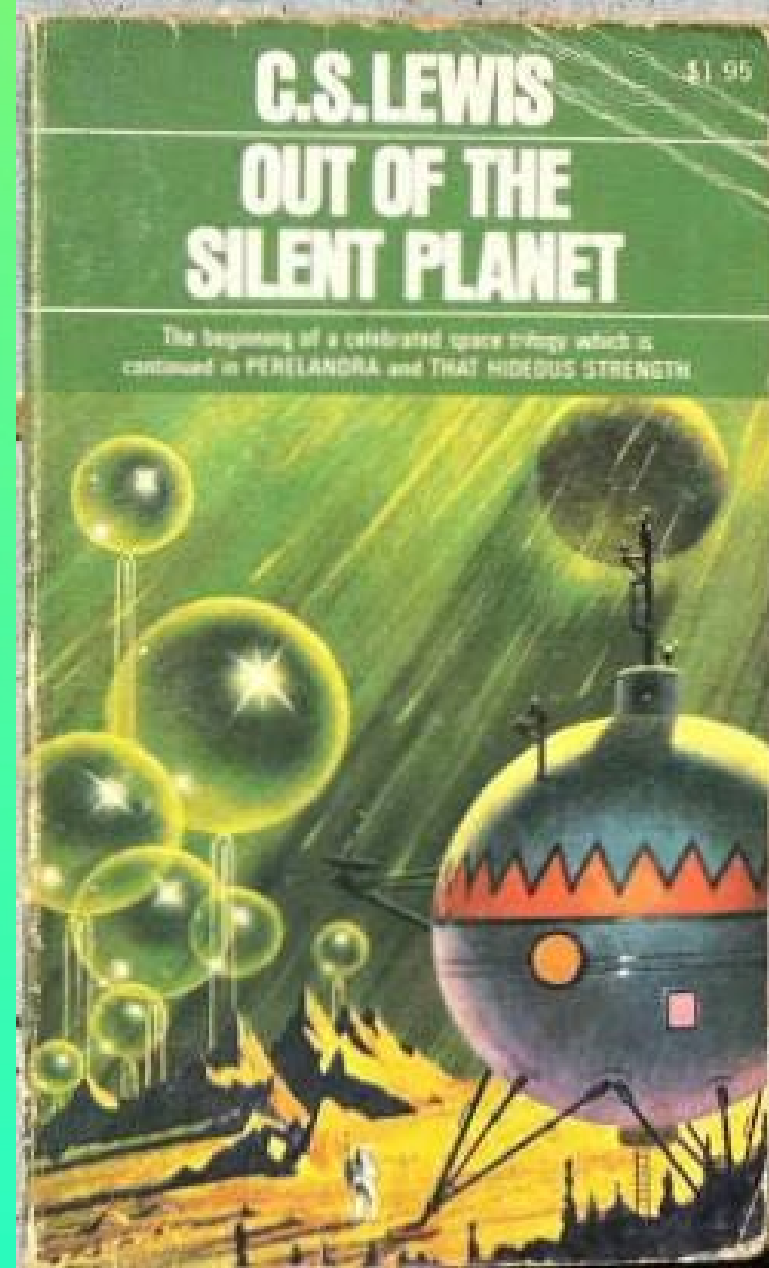
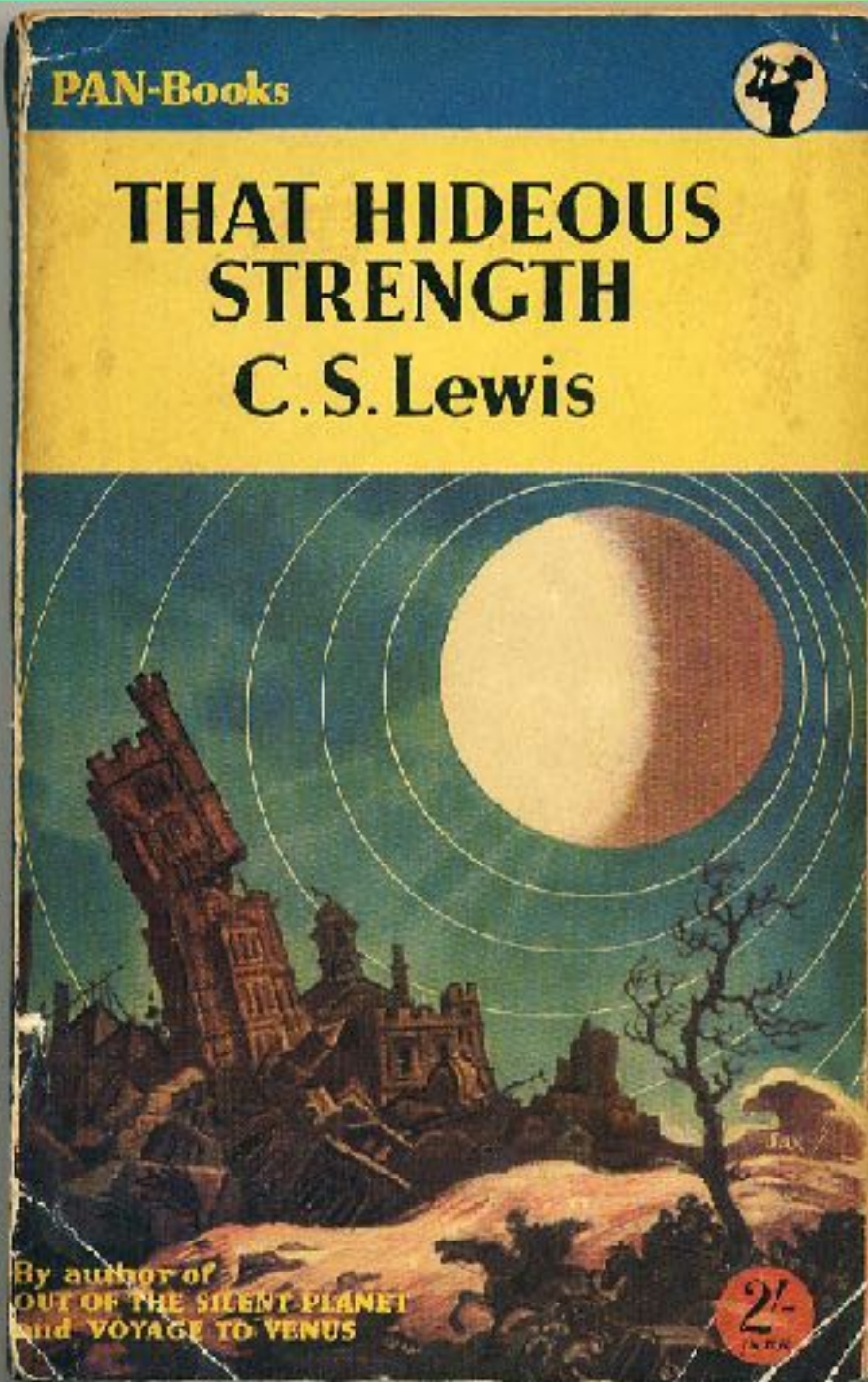
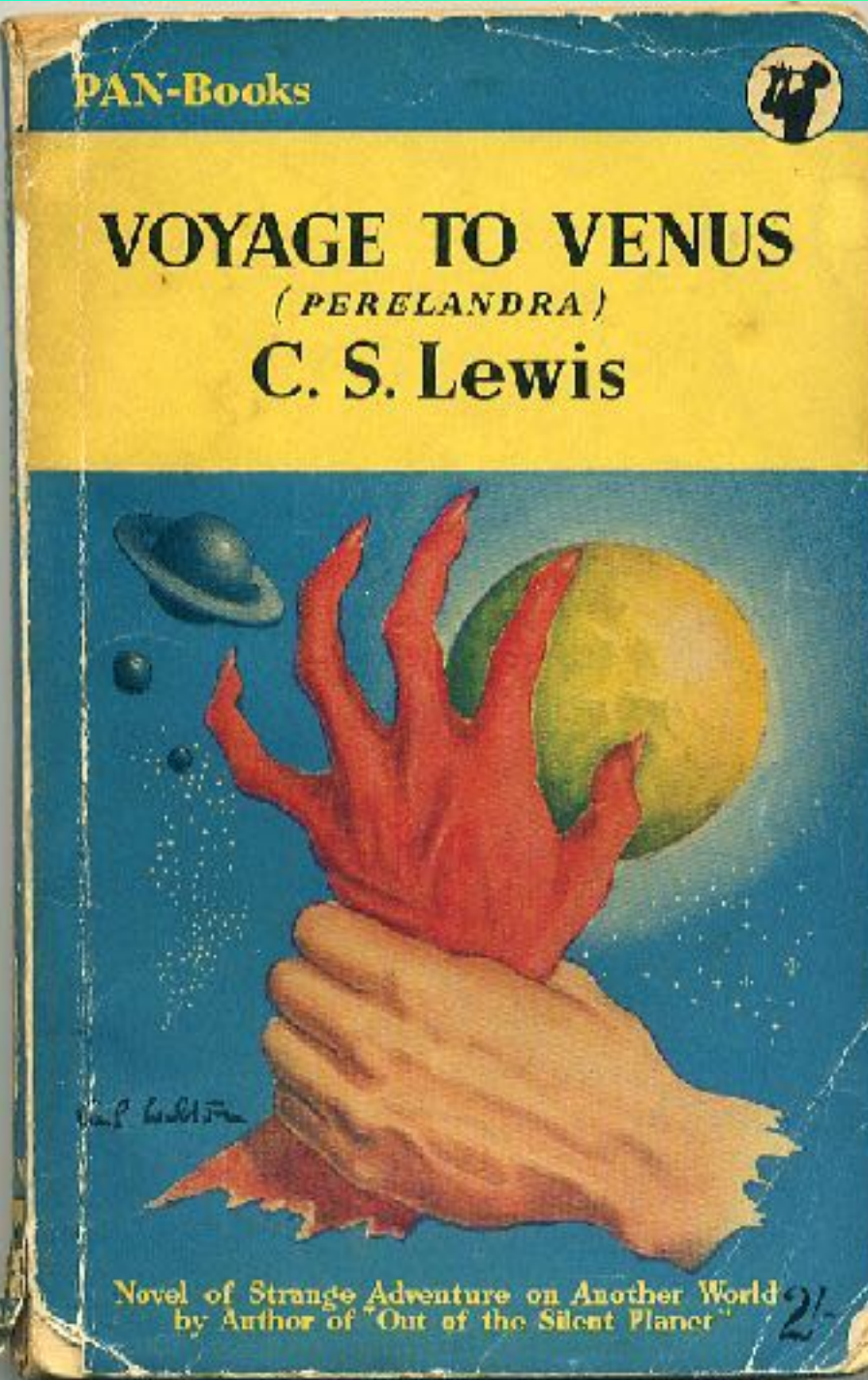
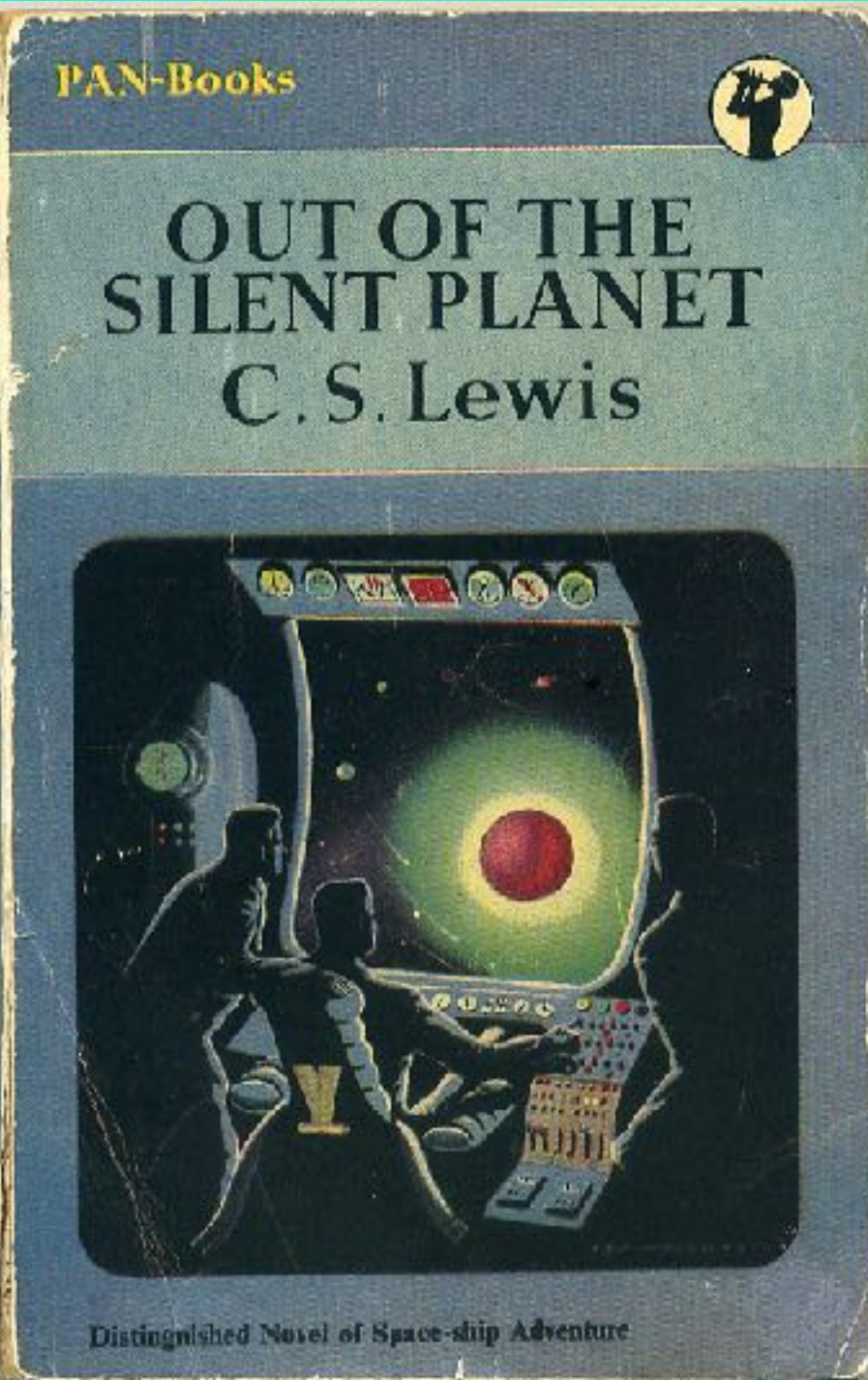
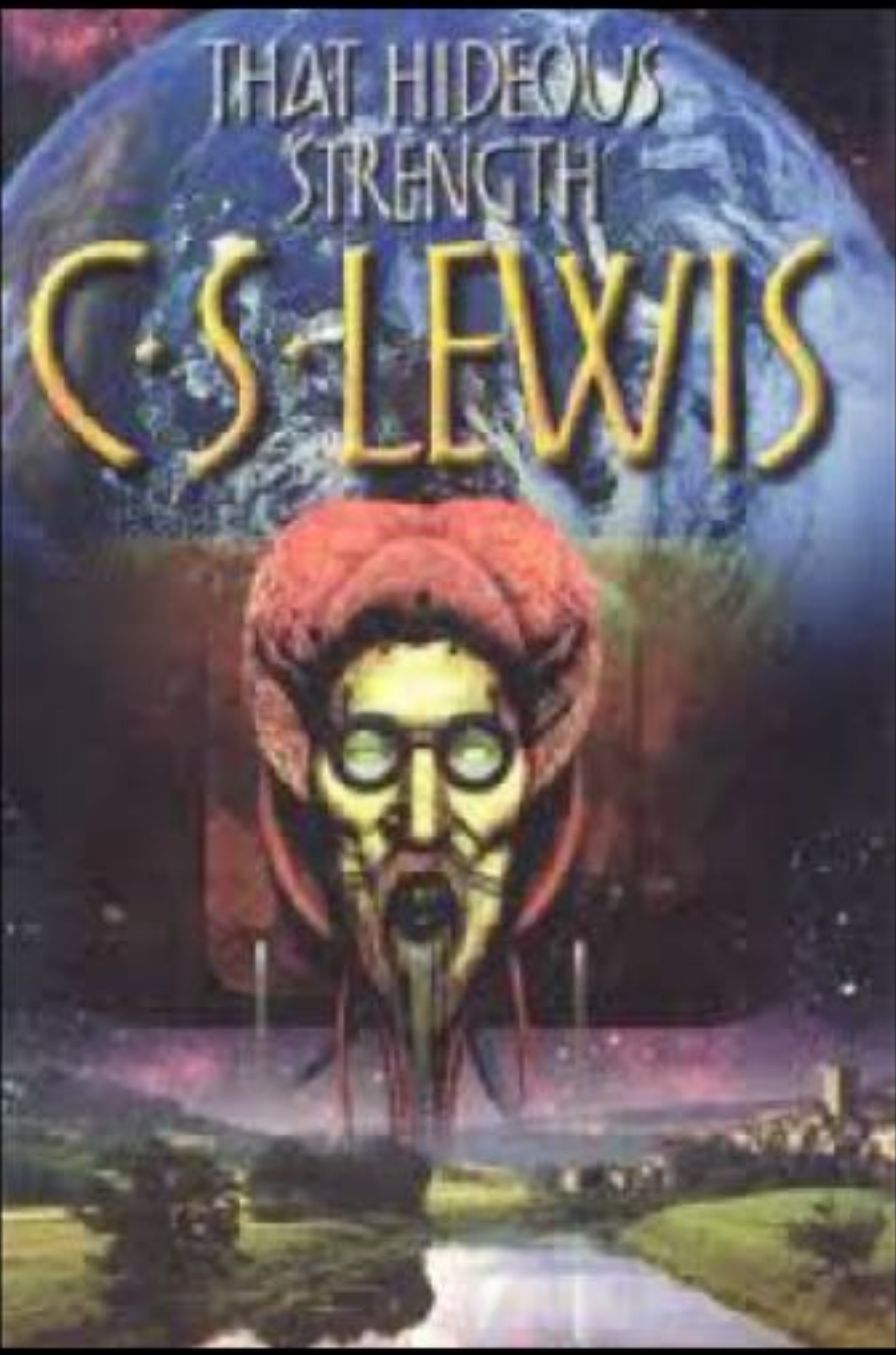
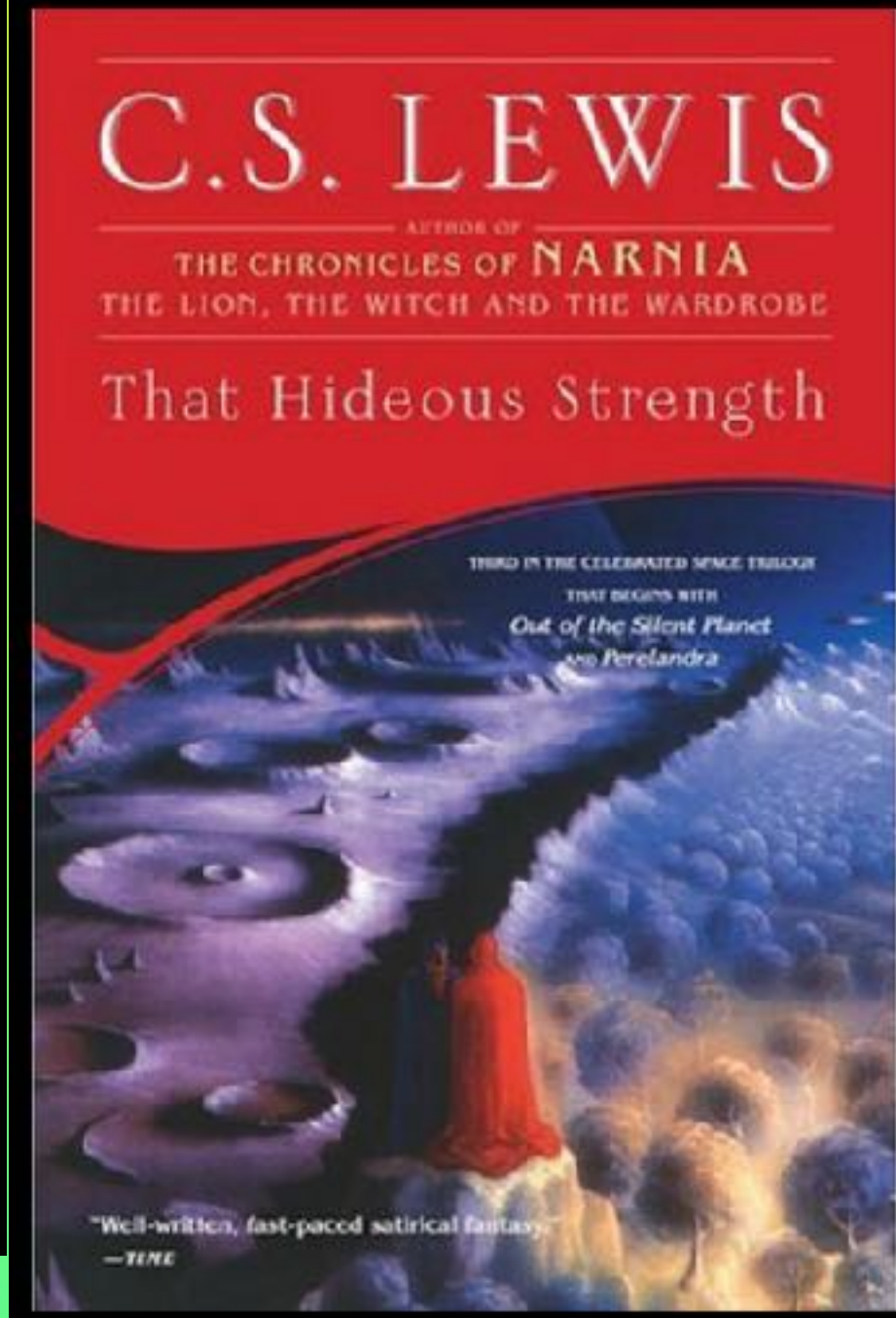
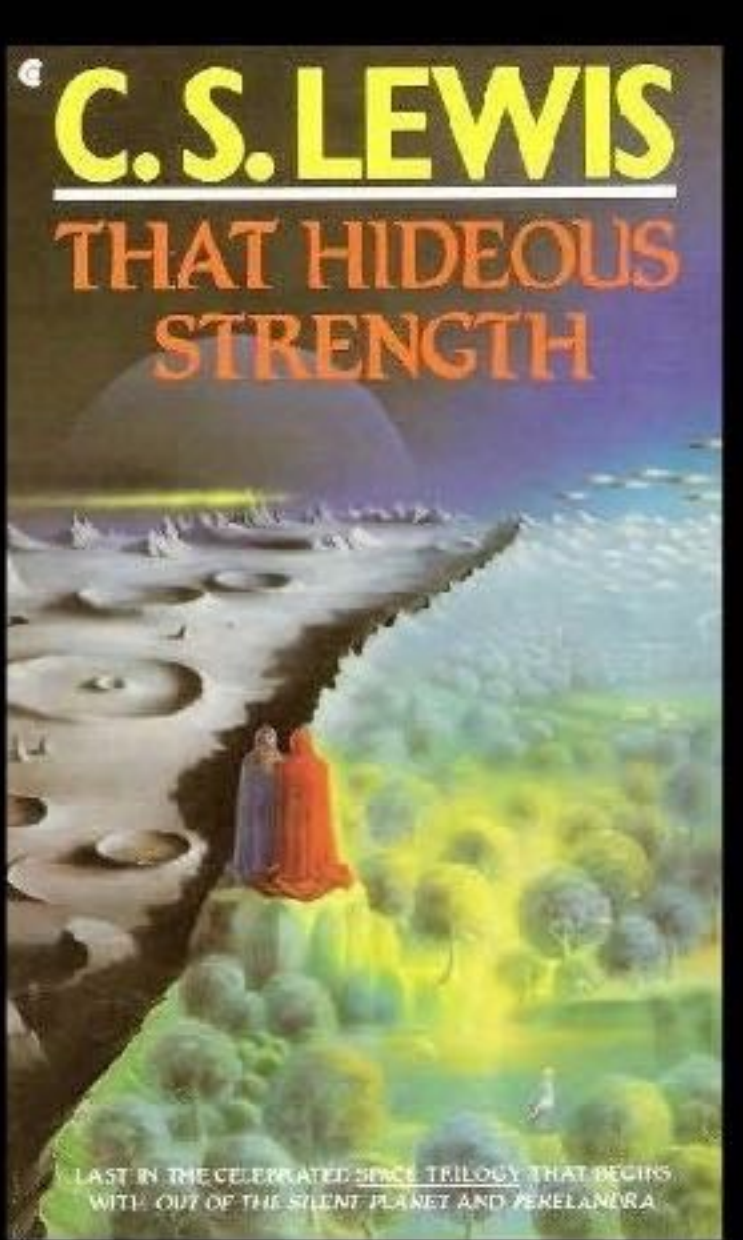
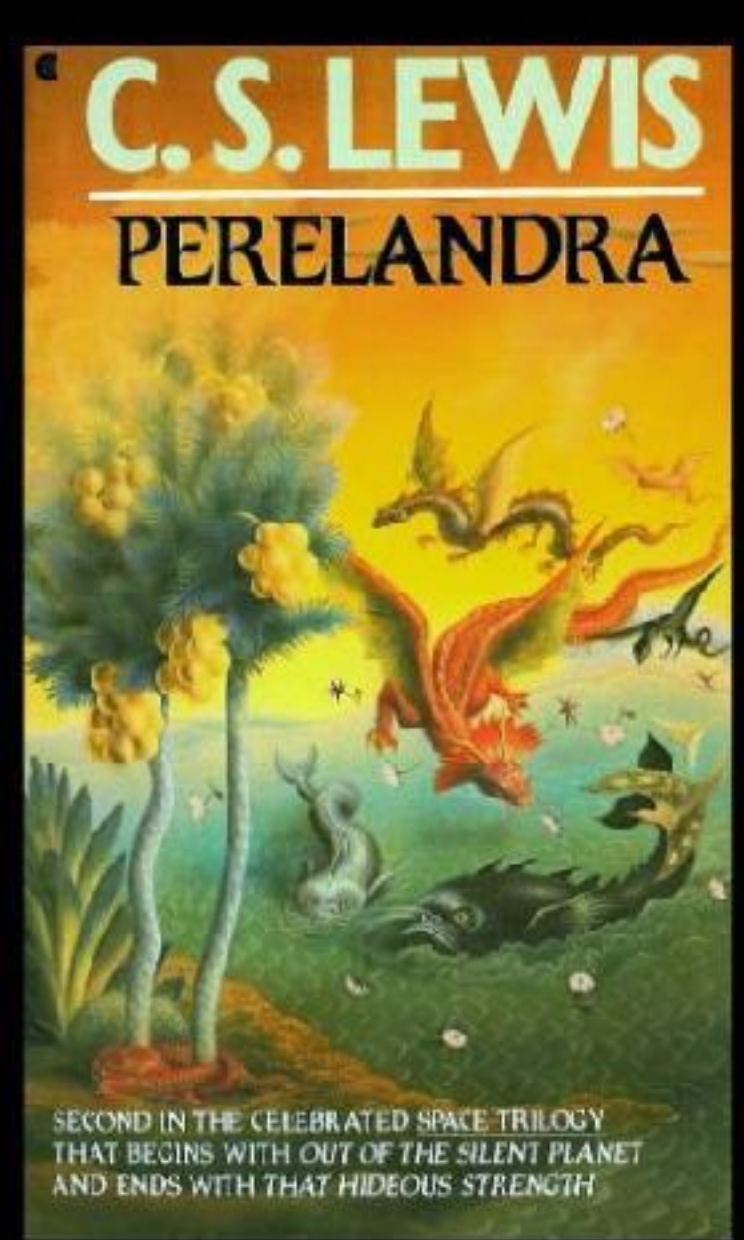
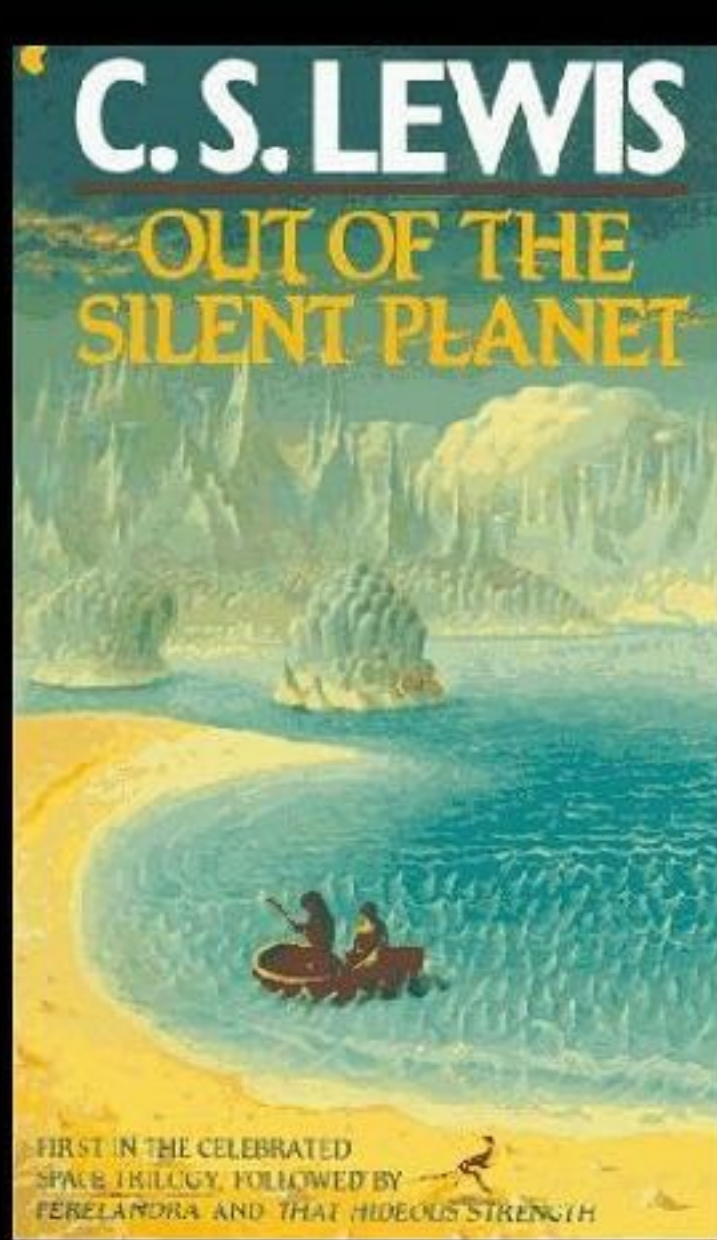
SUMMARY OF THE FIRST TWO

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MAN?

In *Out of the Silent Planet* Lewis focuses on modern colonialism, the ideologies surrounding European expansion into the world. Mars or Malacandra, is the proposed colony for the expansion of the human race. Dr. Weston thinks it is fine to wipe out the three races and inhabit that planet to provide a future home for humanity.

In *Perelandra*, Lewis attempts a telling of the temptation story on the oceans of Venus with the Venusian Adam and Eve.

I always thought there was something substantial to be discovered in the story of Adam and Eve, but here it is in living color, at least a story of temptation with some parallels



MALACANDRA

Tell the story. Set it up.

OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MAN?

Ransom Description:

“He was tall, but a little round-shouldered, about thirty-five to forty years of age, and dressed with that particular kind of shabbiness which marks a member of the intelligentsia on a holiday.”

Weston and Devine drug Ransom and take him to Malacandra in a spaceship with them.

They have infringed his rights by absconding with him, after Ransom transgresses their rental property. When Ransom complains, Weston goes off on Ransom with talk about the nobility of sacrificing his time and liberty. “Even a worm, if it could understand, would rise to the sacrifice.” (Ransom didn’t know he was the planned sacrifice.)

OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF MAN?

Ransom “You hold all the cards, and I must make the best of it. I consider your philosophy of life raving lunacy. I suppose all that stuff about infinity and eternity means that you think you are justified in doing anything—absolutely anything—here and now, on the off chance that some creatures or other descended from man as we know him may crawl about a few centuries longer in some part of the universe.”

OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

MYTHOLOGIES

The trip to Mars is difficult, but Ransom muses on his life and purpose.

The mythos of earth being the center of the universe is over. It rather seems like a locked room with the shades pulled.

When they land, Ransom discovers that Weston and Devine wish to offer him as a sacrifice to the ruling spirit on Malacandra, the Oyarsa. He ran away and encountered the Hrossa. Ransom, after some learning their language and having adventures was commanded by an eldila to go to the Oyarsa.

Ransom then encounters the séroni, and the pfifltriggi, more eldila, and finally the Oyarsa in Meldilorn.



OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

MYTHOLOGIES

Ransom is terrified at every step of the way, from landing to meeting the Oyarsa, but at each new encounter, he learns that the sacrifice Weston and Devine had prepared him for came from their delusions, not reality.

He needed to be cautious, but need not be afraid of the inhabitants of Malacandra.

OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

THE REALITY

The Oyarsa speaks to Weston.

Weston responds with talk about conquering Mars.

Devine interjects that in reality, all they want is the abundant gold found in Malacandra.

OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

THE REALITY

The Oyarsa only wished to meet the travelers from Earth, and interview them, honor them.

Weston and Devine had killed some Hrossa on their way to Meldilorn and are being interviewed by him.

OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

THE REALITY

Weston reveals his plans. (read)

Oyarsa praises him for his idealism, for wanting to eradicate all Malacandran life for the human race's longevity, not selfishly, but:

"It is well that I have heard you," said Oyarsa. "For though your mind is feeblor, your will is less bent than I thought. It is not for yourself that you would do all this."

"Strange!" said Oyarsa. "You do not love any one of your race—you would have let me kill Ransom. You do not love the mind of your race, nor the body. Any kind of creature will please you if only it is begotten by your kind as they now are. It seems to me, Thick One, that what you really love is no completed creature but the very seed itself: for that is all that is left."

OUT OF THE SILENT PLANET

THE REALITY

Oyarsa responds:

“Yes,” said Oyarsa, “but one thing we left behind us on the harandra: fear. And with fear, murder and rebellion. The weakest of my people does not fear death. It is the Bent One, the lord of your world, who wastes your lives and befouls them with flying from what you know will overtake you in the end. If you were subjects of Maleldil you would have peace.”

PERELANDRA

Tell the story. Set it up.



CAN'T SHOW A PICTURE OF THE QUEEN OF PERELANDRA

**SHE IS NAKED AND UNASHAMED
RANSOM IS ALSO UNCLOTHED
WESTON ALONE WEARS CLOTHING**

PERELANDRA, CH 7

CONVERSATION WITH WESTON

Weston: "I worked first for myself; then for science; then for humanity; but now at last for Spirit itself I might say, borrowing language which will be more familiar to you, the Holy Spirit."

Ransom: "Now what exactly do you mean by that?"

Weston: "I mean that nothing now divides you and me except a few outworn theological technicalities with which organized religion has unhappily allowed itself to get incrustated."

Ransom: "I don't know much about what people call the religious view of life," said Ransom, wrinkling his brow. "You see, I'm a Christian. And what we mean by the Holy Ghost is not a blind, inarticulate purposiveness."

PERELANDRA, CH 7

CONVERSATION WITH WESTON

Weston: “I couldn’t have believed, myself, till recently. Not a person, of course. . . . Call it a Force. A great, inscrutable Force, pouring up into us from the dark bases of being. A Force that can choose its instruments. . . . I know now that I am the greatest scientist the world has yet produced. I’ve been made so for a purpose. It is through me that Spirit itself is at this moment pushing on to its goal.”

Ransom: “Look here, one wants to be careful about this sort of thing. There are spirits and spirits, you know. . . . I mean a thing might be a spirit and not good for you.”

Weston: “But I thought you agreed that Spirit was the good—the end of the whole process? I thought you religious people were all out for spirituality?”

PERELANDRA, CH 7

CONVERSATION WITH WESTON

Weston: “Didn’t we agree that God is a spirit? Don’t you worship Him because He is pure spirit?”

Ransom: “Good heavens, no! We worship Him because He is wise and good. There’s nothing specially fine about simply being a spirit. The Devil is a spirit.”

Weston: “Your Devil and your God ... are both pictures of the same Force. . . . The next stage of emergent evolution, beckoning us forward, is God;

PERELANDRA, CH 7

CONVERSATION WITH WESTON

Ransom: “what proof have you that you are being guided or supported by anything except your own individual mind and other people’s books?”

Weston: “Guidance, you know, guidance.” He was squatting at the roots of his tree with his knees drawn up, and his face, now the color of putty, wore a fixed and even slightly twisted grin. “Things coming into my head. I’m being prepared all the time. Being made a fit receptacle for it. . . . There’s such a thing as the main current. It’s a question of surrendering yourself to that—making yourself the conductor of the live, fiery, central purpose—becoming the very finger with which it reaches forward.”

PERELANDRA, CH 7

END OF THE CONVERSATION WITH WESTON

Weston: “Do you see, you timid, scruple-mongering fool? I am the Universe. I, Weston, am your God and your Devil. I call that Force into me completely. . . .”

PERELANDRA

WESTON'S NEW PROJECT

Dr. Elwin Ransom mused the day after his first encounter with Dr. Weston:

“Ransom was not at all certain that he had understood all his wild talk on the previous day, but what he did understand he disliked very much, and suspected that this vague mysticism about ‘spirituality’ would turn out to be something even nastier than his old and comparatively simple program of planetary imperialism.”

PERELANDRA

WESTON'S NEW PROJECT

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PERELANDRA

MUSING ON WESTON'S CONVERSATION WITH THE LADY

The details of the conversation with the lady are at this moment unimportant. What stands out is Ransom's observation.

Ransom: <On the one hand he was certain, both from the voice and from many of the things it said, that the male speaker was Weston. On the other hand, the voice, divided from the man's appearance, sounded curiously unlike itself.>

This is where we find a theme that carries over into *That Hideous Strength*: Spiritualities inhabiting mortals, even dead people.

LEAVING *PERELANDRA*

THREE LAST THINGS

Weston's conversation revolves around getting the Lady to consider sleeping on the fixed land. That Maledil's command has been placed on her and the king in order that they may transgress it and become like their predecessors on Earth.

Ransom realizes that as strong as the Lady is, she will eventually be worn down by the devil that inhabited Weston, and so realizes that the only way to make it stop is to kill Weston's body.

A titanic struggle ensues, leaving Ransom wounded and Weston's body dead. The Lady didn't transgress, and Ransom is returned to Thulcandra.