

## INKLINGS-SYMPOSIUM 2023

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### "Till Death Do Us Part"- or Not? Death as a Unifier in C.S. Lewis's Fiction

Death is usually regarded in popular fiction as the worst event that could possibly occur in the life of an individual. This is why most stories with a happy ending finish before death, either with a marriage (most of them), or with the resolution of a complicated situation. Death is usually perceived as a punishment for the mean characters, especially in fairy tales: those who do good are rewarded with life but those who do mean things are punished with death. It is the end of all things, from which there is no return. Who could challenge this deeply rooted concept? Only a firm believer in a different type of order.

C.S. Lewis included death in his works of fiction as a great gate to the Afterlife. Compared to the life that is described after death this life seems but a shadow, the Shadowlands, as the famous author used to call the earth. This paper will analyse Lewis's concept of death as it appears in two of his most famous books, *The Screwtape Letters* and *The Chronicles of Narnia*. In the former it seems that death means a victory of God over the soul of the "patient", so a defeat of Screwtape and Wormwood against their best strategies. In the last book of the chronicles, *The Last Battle*, the children die in a train crash and meet with Aslan, the dearest of their hearts. They learn then that their real life is only now about to start.

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