

# Return to Dark Island

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*I wondered on what happened to the infamous Dark Island in The Voyage of the Dawn Treader. This is my simple take, I also tried (I think) to imitate Lewis's writing style.*

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## Return to Dark Island

When Caspian came home to his throne in Cair Paravel after his voyage in the *Dawn Treader* and told all the marvelous adventures (which you can read in another book) of the fates of the lords, the mysterious islands, and, of course, of meeting the king and queen of Old Narnia, (which were two children named Edmund and Lucy) it started a massive sea and sailing exploration. Many brave souls left Narnia for adventures past the Lone Islands to explore the entire islands that Caspian only landed on. When you're looking for something, you hardly stop and enjoy what you have found in the process of looking, no matter how lovely it may be. This was how Caspian looked for the seven lords until he reached near the end of the world. Apart from the small bits of shore and inland, no one had any idea of what the rest of the island held. Everyone who set sail after King Caspian, no matter where they headed, always avoided the Dark Island, where dreams come true, the kind that make you moan and sweat and toss and turn in bed. This cursed island is where our brave little ship went. It was most unusual for two reasons, one, that it was heading straight to the Dark Island to try to stop the evil magic surrounding it, and, second, it was a crew made only of animals. Talking animals, mind you, not the kind you see in England. Maybe some readers will remember all of the brave, noble, good beasts that helped save Narnia, like Mr. Beaver the Brave, and Trufflehunter the True (who was still employed under Caspian at this time, although slightly fatter than when Caspian first took the throne.) Also, unlike animals in England, they were a great deal bigger and could also stand and walk and act as human do. Beasts do not go to sea very often, preferring to stay on land and even fewer would try to conquer the deathly Dark Island. The crew were simply nine animals; a bear, a tiger, two dogs, and five mice (the leader of these mice was the second in command after Peepiceek.) They had already been to Dragon Island and one new island, one recently discovered island that is, when they approached Dark Island. Men have always shuddered in fear, at the mention of this island, only Reepicheep was the only one anyone ever knew of that would have gone to this island, partially because he was a mouse, and mostly because he was the bravest creature ever to breathe in all of Narnia, Calormen, Archeland, and everywhere else you may think of. If he were in Narnia, he would have led the troop himself, but he had gone to Aslan's country, where I know he still lives today. The darkness had already engulfed them as they sailed even further in. Even for Monrith (the tiger) who was able to see in the dark somewhat, was relieved when the torches were lit. As the crew of the *Dawn Treader* had said (those that could speak of it that is) that the island created each of their own worst nightmare, save Reepicheep. It would certainly have worked on every man, even High King Peter, but talking beasts are different. They are more resilient to suggestions, subtleties, and tricks. They don't change very easily, so good beasts are more likely to remain good all their lives unlike some men (not to be disrespectful, but one hears of men who are traitors a great deal more than a traitorous beast.)

"Halt!" One of the mice cried (Creekiseep was his name) for he saw that the ship had almost run aground. The rowers stopped and all came on deck. They quickly anchored the *Opulence* and all piled in rowboats, setting out for the island, for no one knew what enemy they may face. They realized that the shore was immensely shallow, but stretched seemingly forever and with each stroke, they felt the magic grow stronger and stronger.

It was almost like being in a cinema, when the story and events happen on screen are so life-like (if it's fantastically well done) that one may forget that they are only watching it and believe that they are on the

screen as well. The crew felt as actors in a movie when they set foot on the island and nearly would have lost heads to their dreams, (as many good men have done before them) had they not reminded themselves of their purpose and that this was simply strong magic.

Olin (the bear) was the first to break the awful silence enclosing them (for he was the captain), "My noble friends, we have come far and wide for this; having fought pirates, survived deserts, and weathered the elements, and have met the good duke Bern, and even the sea-men of Nirocc. Now, we are here to destroy whatever madness that tormented Lord Rhoop when he was driven from Narnia by the dreadful tyrant Miraz. In the name of Aslan, may he bless us as we conquer this curse!"

They all cheered and went onward, but this speech did not lift their spirits for very long, for it only got darker and worse as they went farther in and each had to keep pushing out the unpleasant things they heard about this island which made it even worse. The ground was level, but a dull gray, a combination of gravel and coarse sand. Everything was gray, only darkness could be heard. The island rang out when Elon (one of the dogs, a fair coloured retriever) saw a man's skeleton, still arrayed with clothes. The strangest thing of all was the bones themselves. If it were a normal island, the bones would have been very white, but since no light ever shone, the bones were a burgundy-brown, almost as if the bones were forever rotting. Upon closer inspection, the mice realized that this poor soul had stabbed himself, straight through his heart.

When they all realized this, each was thankful that he was not a man; but now, this made it even harder for them to keep the few dreams out of their mind, for nothing is as hard to forget as what one tries not to remember. Even now, the effect seemed stronger, everyone's fur now standing up. The ground continued to be a dull gray, gravelly, sand plain, with no life whatsoever, save moss and an extremely bitter fruit that grew from the ground. After hours or minutes (no one could tell) of creeping onward, always on guard, they saw a little spire, five feet high and shaped as a lump of lead, smooth but dark. Rans (the other dog, a lithe greyhound) yelled in fear and all turned to him.

"What?!" all cried.

"I-I saw something, a horrid shape thing!"

And they all rushed after it, hoping that this may have been the evil they had been looking for. They chased whatever he saw, but they didn't find anything. They feared that their defense against the magic was breaking and they were being affected even more. They hurried on, not one of them looking back, to try to find whatever horror causing this. One of the mice did look back although and saw the strange spire still behind them. Even though they had been running steadily, he could see the spire still at the very edge of the torchlight, if one looked hard enough. He kept this to himself, even trying to put it out of mind, for fear of the island working on him too, but he soon looked back again and saw it still there, he softly said, "Creekiseep."

"What is it?"

"Look behind you and tell me what you see."

As he peered behind them he said, "It- it looks like the spire we passed a while back."

"I thought so too, but I didn't want to say it. Has... has it been following us?"

"It may have... or we've been running round in circles. We might have found the source at last!" (He meant the source of the island bewitching.) Creekiseep quickly went to Olin and asked him the same question Heapiseek asked. He halted the whole troop and, looking very hard, saw the exact thing both mice saw.

A strange feeling fell on each one of them, the feeling of being a complete idiot when you've been going around in circles with the uneasy feeling of something following you, especially when it shouldn't.

Monrith saw a looming creature directly behind the spire, but chose to say nothing, for he knew that if it were real the others would see it easily, but if not, then the island was deceiving him.

Every one of them then, in cold sweat, walked slowly back to the lumpy pillar shorter than each of them

(except for the mice and the retriever, who could barely see the top when he tiptoed.)

Two mice approached it first with the three mice, Rans and Olin behind them, and Monrith and Elon hanging back with dread hanging over them.

"What do you think it's made of?"

"I don't know." The other replied as each reached forth to touch the pillar. When they did, it was as if they were set on fire, each drawing his sword, shrieking in horror of the monstrosities before them, lashing out at thin air.

Olin rushed forward to stop them and succeed at this while getting his paw stabbed when he took the sword from each to them.

These two poor mice were still frenzied, and no one knew what to be done, except to tie them up with rope so that they wouldn't injure anyone (when one goes adventuring, everyone knows to bring rope with him, for a strong braided rope has saved the lives of many an adventurer.) Seeing their brethren in this state brought more fears and nightmares rushing through their minds so much so the Olin did a very brave (or very stupid) move. He charged the pillar, ramming it with all his might and while the same fear gripped him as the two mice, it only spurred him into charging the pillar a second time. When he did, the pillar broke, almost like when one has a candy with a hard outer shell that offers resistance at the first bite, but crumbles at the second. When this pillar broke, instantly the bound mice stopped yelling and looked around, bewildered that the monsters and atrocities surrounding them had vanished. Everyone rushed forward (except the bound mice) to help Olin pick himself up from the wreckage but as they were doing so they noticed that the rubble was unusual. With the lonely torch lights, each could see the insides of the pillar had strange inscriptions on the inside, and broken things lay about and what wasn't broken looked just as twisted as the rubble. Crannied glass and odd-shaped books and curious sticks lay around them, but most curious of all, was a little thing hopping (more like hobbling) away. Monrith quickly pinned it and it was so small he had to careful not to squash it, but so cold, he thought his shoulder would fall off.

"Let me go! Let me go you intruders!"

When they saw the creature, it was a surprising sight, it was a toad like creature (at least, a toad is the closest thing to describe it) had five legs, four horns, and glowed sanguine, a rotting, bruising brown, and pitch black (when I asked Creekeep how something could possibly glow black he replied that it seemed to block and dim the light around it, not letting any light in so that he could see where the light stopped and the dark started.)

Olin, with Elon and Rans accompanying him, approached this creature.

"Speak! What is your name?"

"What's it to you? Anyway, why'd you come here? You shouldn't have been able to."

"Why not?"

At this, it fell silent so Heapiseek asked, "Are you the wretch who has been cursing this island?"

The creature then screamed "It's my island and I'll do as I wish! How dare you wreck my castle! You should be hanged!"

At this, it seemed to try to do something, but Monrith pressed on him harder and he could only concentrate on breathing.

"Are you the one responsible for tormenting Lord Rhoop, one of the seven lords of Narnia, and the death of the poor man lying stabbed?"

The thing seemed to realize that he was outnumbered and overpowered, so he tried to think of something to say that would buy him time.

"A royal lord was here? Why sirs-I never knew of such a thing. No harm would have befallen him if I knew he was a lord, your honours, on my good word."

"LIES! And a weak on a that!" Olin spat out.

Creekiseep continued to glared at him, "Did you cause the human to kill himself?"

The creature became fretful, under Creekiseep's piercing eye. "They-they don't normally do that! He did it himself! I had no part in it!"

"MORE LIES!" Creekiseep cried, drawing his sword, approaching it, "You have driven him so that he killed himself and who knows how many countless others! You vile tormentor and sorcerer!"

"What gives you the right to barge in my island and crush me!?! Flinging accusations at me?!" it said, trying to put on a brave front but extremely fearful.

"What right need we to right wrongs and enforce justice!?" Creekiseep said as he drove his sword between the creatures eyes.

It shrieked, it's eye rolling back into his head and something very queer started to happen. It's body began to puff up, but not with air, but started to become solid and heavy.

Monrith first felt this and flung himself back shouting, "Quick! Throw him away!" and with a mighty effort, Creekiseep flung the dead creature with his sword (for the thing remained on the sword like an apple on a stick) and a blinding vermillion flash exploded from it's body, knocking everyone down, putting all torches out. When the torches were re-light, they each checked each other and, besides some bruising and the unpleasant smell of burnt fur, were sound.

"What was that thing?" Rans asked.

"I don't know, but I can the spend the rest of my life content if I never found out." Olin declared.

On this everyone agreed. The continued their journey across the island (the two mice already being unbound as they were talking to the thing) and soon found the edge of the island, and discovered it was a very small island. Surprisingly, they could see the *Opulence* from the opposite shore and realized that it was getting lighter and lighter by the moment. They walked back, and buried the skeleton of the poor man, to give it proper respects. They soon rowed out and returned to their ship and continued their adventures, but that is another story for another time.