

The CHRONICLES *of* NARNIA
C. S. LEWIS

The Magician's
Nephew



AUTHOR OF THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE
A
Major
Motion
Picture
HOLIDAY
2005



THE WRONG DOOR

This is a story about something that happened long ago when your grandfather was a child. It is a very important story because it shows how all the comings and goings between our own world and the land of Narnia first began.

In those days Mr. Sherlock Holmes was still living in Baker Street and the Bastables were looking for treasure in the Lewisham Road. In those days, if you were a boy you had to wear a stiff Eton collar every day, and schools were usually nastier than now. But meals were nicer; and as for sweets, I won't tell you how cheap and good they were, because it would only make

your mouth water in vain. And in those days there lived in London a girl called Polly Plummer.

She lived in one of a long row of houses which were all joined together. One morning she was out in the back garden when a boy scrambled up from the garden next door and put his face over the wall. Polly was very surprised because up till now there had never been any children in that house, but only Mr. Ketterley and Miss Ketterley, a brother and sister, old bachelor and old maid, living together. So she looked up, full of curiosity. The face of the strange boy was very grubby. It could hardly have been grubbier if he had first rubbed his hands in the earth, and then had a good cry, and then dried his face with his hands. As a matter of fact, this was very nearly what he had been doing.

"Hullo," said Polly.

"Hullo," said the boy. "What's your name?"

"Polly," said Polly. "What's yours?"

"Digory," said the boy.

"I say, what a funny name!" said Polly.

"It isn't half so funny as Polly," said Digory.

"Yes it is," said Polly.

"No, it isn't," said Digory.

"At any rate I *do* wash my face," said Polly, "which is what you need to do; especially



after—” and then she stopped. She had been going to say “After you’ve been blubbing,” but she thought that wouldn’t be polite.

“All right, I have then,” said Digory in a much louder voice, like a boy who was so miserable that he didn’t care who knew he had been crying. “And so would you,” he went on, “if you’d lived all your life in the country and had a pony, and a river at the bottom of the garden, and then been brought to live in a beastly Hole like this.”

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