

Aslan

We must now go back a bit and explain what the whole scene had looked like from Uncle Andrew's point of view. It had not made at all the same impression on him as on the Cabby and the children. For what you see and hear depends a good deal on where you are standing: it also depends on what sort of person you are...When the Lion had first begun singing, long ago when it was still quite dark, he had realized that the noise was a song. And he had disliked the song very much. It made him think and feel things he did not want to think and feel. Then, when the sun rose and he saw that the singer was a lion...he tried his hardest to make believe that it wasn't singing and never had been singing—only roaring as any lion might in a zoo in our own world. "Of course it can't really have been singing," he thought, "I must have imagined it. I've been letting my nerves get out of order. Who ever heard of a lion singing?" And the longer and more beautiful the Lion sang, the harder Uncle Andrew tried to make himself believe that he could hear nothing but roaring. Now the trouble about trying to make yourself stupider than you really are is that you very often succeed. Uncle Andrew did. He soon did hear nothing but roaring in Aslan's song. Soon he couldn't have heard anything else even if he had wanted to. And when at last the Lion spoke and said, "Narnia awake," he didn't hear any words: he heard only a snarl. And when the Beasts spoke in answer, he heard only barkings, growlings, hayings, and howlings. And when they laughed—well, you can imagine. That was worse for Uncle Andrew than anything that had happened yet. Such a horrid, bloodthirsty din of hungry and angry brutes he had never heard in his life. Then, to his utter rage and horror, he saw the other three humans actually walking out into the open to meet the animals. "The fools!" he said to himself. "Now those brutes will eat the rings along with the children and I'll never be able to get home again. What a selfish little boy that Digory is! And the others are just as bad. If they want to throw away their own lives, that's their business. But what about me? They don't seem to think of that. No one thinks of *me*."

"Please, Aslan," said Polly, "could you say something to—to unfrighten him?... "I cannot tell that to this old sinner, and I cannot comfort him either; he has made himself unable to hear my voice. If I spoke to him, he would hear only growlings and roarings. Oh Adam's sons, how cleverly you defend yourselves against all that might do you good! (C. S. Lewis, *The Magician's Nephew*, Ch. 10, 148-151; Ch 14, 202-3).