

The Chronicles of Narnia - The Voyage of the Dawn Treader: A Study of Eustace Scrubb's Character

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Abstract: *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is a story in which the children who are the main characters go through painful processes that seek to transform them into better human beings. Such is the case of Eustace Clarence Scrubb, an English boy of around eight years of age. He is hopelessly doomed to his own self destruction if drastic measures are not taken to help him come out of his self-absorption and intrinsic bad personal traits. This boy is the by-product of an education given him by progressive parents and a progressive school, both of which see nothing wrong with the character, attitudes and behavior of this irritating boy. The worst thing about Eustace's character, however, is the fact that he does not and cannot see himself as others view him, as the insufferable human being that he is. Only when he is going through the agony of being a horrific monster does he come to his senses and starts seeing himself as the monster he really is inside and outside. It is then that he realizes that he is the problem that he would accuse everybody of being. Through this painful discovery his cure and recovery begin.

Keywords: Dawn Treader, character, change, dragon, pain, transformation

Abbreviations: VDT --- [*The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*]

1. INTRODUCTION

Eustace Clarence Scrubb is a character that undergoes a massive and very significant moral transformation in *The Chronicles of Narnia*. Everything about him goes back and begins with his very name, which "he almost deserved," according to Lewis. In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* (VDT from now on), Eustace is portrayed as a boy going through a remarkable case of character transformation and profound change not only of mind and heart but of his behavior and conduct as well. He is one of the central characters in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, the third book of the Narnia series, published in 1952. His character and personality are so outstandingly negative that he has been the subject of many a study in various fields. From a moral, psychological and theological perspective, the life of Eustace is a topic worthy of study.

The first glimpse the reader gets of Eustace is that of a mean and spoiled child who mocks his cousins Edmund and Lucy Pevensie for their "imaginative" Narnia stories. In VDT Eustace "accidentally" ends on board a Narnian ship where he is forced to spend a considerable period of time with people he does not like or approve of at the beginning. According to Peter Schakel (2005, 62), "the voyage turns out to be an occasion for growth and learning" for the boy, with "physical, emotional, and spiritual testing and maturation," and is all in all a "journey toward manhood". The ship, the time spent on it, the company Eustace keeps there, and Aslan the Lion, will be the combined elements working together to produce the forces necessary to bring about the process that will derive in the profound change that is so badly needed to transform an almost lost boy to make him a better human being.

When Eustace is transported to the Narnian ship *The Dawn Treader* through a picture he is looking at, Eustace's ugly character begins to be revealed on board through his behavior and conduct. He is seasick and utterly unhappy to be on the ship. He believes himself to be quite modern and clever, but manages to push away everyone else with his negativity and airs of superiority. The boy is completely self-absorbed (Rogers, 64) and egocentric, only caring about himself and not at all about anyone else. He has no consideration for the feelings of others, and is unpleasant to everyone, especially to Reepicheep, the Talking Mouse. Eustace is "pretentious, petty, spiteful and selfish", according to C. W. Starr (2005, 8). He lives imprisoned in the cell of his selfishness in his own personal world.

This condition that Eustace possesses calls for a drastic measure to be implemented in order to help the boy avoid going down the path of his own self destruction. He is the by-product of the education system of his day and is in great need of a special intervention in his life. That intervention can only be a supernatural one, if there ever is any hope for his salvation and moral recovery. At this point only Aslan the Lion can do anything to bring some light to this soul and produce the redemption Eustace so badly needs. There is no alternative. The need for a change of heart is urgent, important, and necessary. Hence the divine intervenes to bring about the inner change that will produce a new Eustace. This is done in such a way that there is a "before Narnia" and an "after Narnia" for the boy, or rather a "before Aslan" and an "after Aslan", the focal point of the story being the encounter the two of them have.

The main objective of this study is, first, to view Eustace's character through the lenses of the author of *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. Secondly, to check and see the opinions of various different literary sources regarding the character and behavior of the boy Eustace in order to see what response he elicits from them. These opinions Eustace raises are, of course, before Aslan's intervention in his life. The second objective is to look at the transformation Eustace undergoes, and its consequences. Finally, to come to a conclusion in regards to the remarkable transformation Eustace suffers being transformed from an obnoxious and peculiar English boy to an altogether different and better person.

This is a qualitative study that seeks to show the character of Eustace, worthy of preoccupation, because of the difficult position in which he finds himself due to his attitudes and behavior. In order to proceed with the objectives of this work, the methodology employed has been, first, to check how author C. S. Lewis portrays Eustace, the words and expressions he uses to describe and define the boy. Secondly, to check the literature review written on Eustace's character based on the traits he possesses in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* before Aslan. Various different sources have been looked at in order to cover a wide range of literary forms.

2. HOW EUSTACE IS PORTRAYED IN *THE VOYAGE OF THE DAWN TREADER*

Lewis introduces Eustace Clarence Scrubb as a boy who had no friends, a child who would call his mother and father Alberta and Harold, not mother or father. The boy Eustace "liked animals, especially beetles, if they were dead and pinned on a card. He liked books if they were books of information and had pictures of grain elevators of fat foreign children doing exercises in model schools" (VDT, 2). Eustace disliked his cousins Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy Pevensie. He "liked bossing and bullying; and, though he was a puny little person who couldn't have stood up even to Lucy, let alone Edmund, in a fight, he knew that there are dozens of ways to give people a bad time..." (VDT, 2). Edmund thought Eustace was a "record stinker" (VDT, 3), meaning a very bad or unpleasant person.

Once when Eustace was staying with the Pevensies, he heard them talking of Narnia and then he loved teasing them about it. "He thought of course that they were making it all up; and as he was far too stupid to make anything up himself, he did not approve of that" (VDT, 5). One particular day at his own house he was completely unwelcome by Lucy and Edmund in their room. "Most boys, on meeting a reception like this, would rather have cleared out or flared up. Eustace did neither. He just hung about grinning..." (VDT, 6). Then he referred to a picture on the wall there as "rotten", and said he would smash the "rotten thing." Eustace was not precisely a kind or pleasant boy to be around. His cousin Edmund openly disliked him, but Lucy tried somehow to be a little polite to him, but it is not easy to like someone who is so openly nasty and unfriendly.

As a crew member on the Dawn Treader Eustace is really selfish and misunderstands whatever happens on board, always thinking that everyone is against him or his "advanced" ideas. He believes he knows better than all the crew together and therefore cannot fathom how or why they do things the way they do, in such an "unscientific" manner. He sees everyone as a nuisance and a problem, without realizing that the real problem lies deep within himself, and manifests itself in his actions. He also "acts a coward while hiding behind the self-righteousness of claiming to be a pacifist and complains when the only girl on the voyage gets the only private cabin" (Starr, 2005, 8). Eustace "would be pleased with nothing" on *The Dawn Treader* (VDT, 30). He considers everyone as "ordinary people" who "can't even count right" (31), "fiends in human form" who "forced him to work like a slave" (74).

The boy insists that he “had been kidnapped and brought away to this idiotic voyage without his consent” (76) and refers to the voyage as “dangerous.” His perception of reality is completely distorted by his selfishness and self-centeredness. The beautiful Dawn Treader was the finest ship which the King of Narnia, Caspian, had built. Yet for Eustace it is not only a “ghastly boat,” a “rotten little thing,” a “funny little toy boat,” (31) but also a “rotten little tub,” a “beastly boat” (74), besides being a “blasted boat” (40). The cabin where he stays during the voyage is a “perfect dungeon” and a “hole” (32) and he calls it “the Black Hole” (76). The food is “frightful” and “pretty beastly stuff most of it” (74). Words and expressions such as these can only come from a heart that is full of annoyance and dissatisfaction.

It is Eustace's opinion that Caspian the captain “is too dense” (31), “doesn't seem to know anything at all” (32), that he is a “brutal tyrant” (77), “patronizing,” an “odious stuck-up prig,” and an “idiot” (78). His cousin Edmund is an “interfering prig” (76) and Caspian and Edmund are both “idiots,” “fiends” (78), and “simply brutal to Eustace” (74). And finally, Reepicheep the Mouse is his terror. Eustace considers it a “horrid thing” (13), “a kind of Mouse thing that gives everyone the most frightful cheek” (32), a “little beast” who “does all for the sake of showing off” (74), a “little spy” and a “dangerous little brute” (77). All of his personal opinions, of course, are based on the reactions Eustace's actions cause on the others. But he does not see things from that perspective, only from his own blind selfish viewpoint. So, in his eyes, he is everybody's constant victim. He never notices the way he acts or how people perceive him or feel about him. That dimension of reality does not reach him; it does not constitute a part of his mindset or thoughts. He is too self-absorbed.

A scene that sadly depicts Eustace's poor character in the story is the moment when Caspian and the three children are exploring the island of Felimath in Chapter 4. There they are captured by slave traders. Caspian is sold to a Lord, but comes back on the following day with the Lord to liberate his friends. Lucy and Edmund had just been sold but the buyers are still around, so the two children are rescued and liberated. When Caspian asks about Eustace, Pug, the slave trader, is eager to call the boy sulky, because he was acting sulky: morose, bad-tempered, and resentful, refusing to be cooperative or cheerful. The slave trader, then, is eager to comment,

“Oh *him?*” said Pug. Oh take *him* and welcome. Glad to have him off my hands. I've never seen such a drug in the market in all my born days. Priced him at five crescents in the end and even so nobody'd have him. Threw him in free with other lots and still no one would have him. Wouldn't touch him. Wouldn't look at him. Tacks, bring out Sulky.” Thus Eustace was produced, and sulky he certainly looked; for though no one would want to be sold as a slave, it is perhaps even more galling to be a sort of utility slave whom no one will buy (65).

No even a slave trader liked Eustace. And nobody would buy him, even when the price was going lower and lower... He kept acting superior, as can be seen in the following words he spoke to Caspian: “I see. As usual. Been enjoying yourself somewhere while the rest of us were prisoners. I suppose you haven't even found out about the British Council. Of course not” (65-66).

What child of Eustace's age would speak in this manner? This simply shows that the boy had a very sharp mind and a very selfish and inflated ego as well. He would see something and immediately conclude whatever he thought was the conclusion without even first asking or checking facts. There was no alternative. It was just what he thought it was, biased to his advantage, of course. But he was finally liberated by Caspian. This being imprisoned and liberated is symbolic of Eustace's imprisonment in himself and it foreshadows the greater liberation coming his way through Aslan's help. The boy is in a prison barred by his own “progressive” ideas, concepts and misconceptions. He is in really desperate need of help and it will take only a supreme power to change him. It will take Aslan's drastic intervention to bring about the necessary change Eustace's soul needs.

Eustace is, according to Lewis, the by-product of the “free” education he has received both at home and at his “experiment” school. Both had contributed to the shaping of his mindset and character, moral structure, and general attitude to life and his behavior. All these areas had been deeply affected and the boy certainly needs a profound transformation. That is precisely what happens to him in the end. In the opinion of author Rogers (2005, 52),

“For Eustace, the chief danger of the voyage is neither dragon nor sea serpent, neither storm nor slave trader, but his own self-absorption. His soul is in constant peril of being smothered underneath his

petty self-regard. He suffers the affliction of the thoroughly selfish: in all his self-centeredness he has lost track of himself. His only hope of finding himself is in self-forgetfulness.”

The same author also comments that the real freedom a person gets to experience is the freedom of the self, the freedom that lets a person turn his attention outward, toward precisely the things that give meaning to the self, and in turn, receiving the gift of forgetfulness one discovers liberty (52). Eustace is a desperate case of the need of liberation of himself in order to see reality as it truly is. He is in urgent need of a “new education.” And yet the boy is only some eight or nine years of age. He has not even reached puberty yet, but his character, his will, his feelings, his worldview, his opinions, his language miss the mark so consistently. It is frightful to hear him talk expressing his views. The contempt with which he expresses his opinions about the people around him is masterful.

On one occasion, when the crew has to ration water because of the scarcity of it, Eustace spends most of his time in bed and does not help at all, excusing his attitude with illness. He claims he deserves a greater portion of water since he is not used to this sort of situation and is ill. He even tries to steal some water, but is caught. Stealing for his own benefit is rightful in his own eyes. He seems to feel upset because the crew's attention is not on him, in the opinion of Conn (2008, 34). He is a very unpleasant person to be around. And when he learns of the work that everyone is going to have to do to repair the ship after a long storm, he sneaks away when they stop at an island. He is not interested in work, even less in team work.

When he walks about in that island, he climbs a mountain and reaches its top, where he sees an animal die. Then he finds a cave. Ditchfield (2003, 22) highlights that Eustace conquers his fear in the cave and enters it, but then his curiosity gets the best of him. The cave happens to be a dragon's lair, full of treasure—crowns, coins, rings, bracelets, ingots, cups, plates and gems (93). The boy starts stuffing his pockets with diamonds and begins to make conjectures about the use of the fortune he has encountered. Then he falls asleep.

3. EUSTACE SEEN THROUGH THE LENSES OF VARIOUS DIFFERENT AUTHORS

Eustace Scrubb is a character worthy of analysis. He is such a portrait of anti-virtues that much has been written to date about his character and actions as seen in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*. Such defiant character can be approached from several perspectives and fields. Authors in the fields of psychology, theology, pedagogy, sociology, social sciences, and interdisciplinary studies have attempted to analyze this impertinent boy, due to the fact that there is so much to learn from him. The opinion of various sources reveals how the world sees and feels Eustace as a Narnia character. People have expressed that he is so unlikeable that in the end, that very trait makes him likeable. His picturesque way of expressing himself and acting have made him endearing, but at the same time hateful. Eustace's character has produced innumerable reactions in the world of literature.

For Bill Davis (2005), for instance, “the children who enter Narnia are not saintly or heroic characters. All of them are morally immature, and some, like Eustace, are worthless blighters” “He is consumed by his own problems, thinks himself too good for others, and is insufferably arrogant”(106). Davis also adds that “Eustace is condemned for his narrow practical-mindedness”. He is of the opinion that “what children like Eustace needed... was not more talk about rules or a more serious outlook. What they needed was a world where objective goodness and beauty are obvious. They needed moral examples worth imitating.” He also points out that “Eustace is a self-centered, cowardly snob” (112), that “he has become a stuck-up know-it-all” (113).

Mark Herringshaw sees Eustace as “the pouting, self-centered, peevish tormentor” and asks “how a human soul can descend to monstrous depths, then find unexpected and undeserved redemption...”

The Examiner points out that Eustace is a “spoiled brat”, and that “his cousins and the Dawn Treader's crew find him insufferable.”

According to Lane Palmer (2010), Eustace is “so egotistical, so annoying, so absolutely infuriating that you would cross the street just to avoid being anywhere near him.” Also, “Eustace is the definition of every self-seeking, self-centered person you can think of, and he's stuck on a ship for a very long journey with a very bad attitude.” But “in his loneliness and isolation he realizes that if he doesn't change, he will die alone as a monster.”

Author Amanda Robins is of the opinion that Eustace is “filled with self-hatred and jealousy for his happier and more social cousins.” She argues that he is “logical, vindictive, argumentative and most definitely a non-believer—he doesn’t believe in magic, or in the magical land of Narnia.” She also claims that Eustace’s “solitary and perverse demeanor contrasts with that of the open and friendly Pevensies,” inferring that the boy Eustace “is not thoughtful—and responsible.” Also, by the same author, “at the beginning of Dawn Treader, Eustace is a thoroughly unpleasant boy,” having been raised by “ultra-modern ‘progressive’ parents in a completely mundane, joyless way”. Due to that education and upbringing, the boy “has absolutely no imagination at all, and he believes only what’s in front of his nose. And he’s anything but innocent... in fact he’s a spoiled, entitled bully.”

In shmoop.com we read that “Eustace's life is devoid of art, literature, and God, and as a result he is a puny, selfish, unpleasant person.”

For author Jeffrey T. Winkles (2017), Eustace is “the disagreeable cousin of Edmund and Lucy Pevensie,” and also “a thorn in everyone’s side with his constant complaining and know-it-all-ism, the risibility of which is underlined by his continuous inability to accept the reality of Narnia and to see things as they actually are” and “quickly makes enemies of all onboard” the Dawn Treader.

Sara Leonhartsberger (2017) finds him an “intrusive, egotistical nuisance,” “a child sure of himself and aggressive to any society unable to align with his worldview.” She also claims that Eustace is “isolated from The Voyage of the Dawn Treader’s society through his repugnant behavior.” The author even claims that through the controlling influence of his parents, the boy has “an intolerant, condescending worldview... that isolates him from the world of Narnia.”

In gradesaver.com we read that Eustace “is a very unkind child,” who “does not hold back his feelings which are largely ungrateful and peevish.” He is also “a very spoiled and pampered boy with no fighting spirit.”

For Harvey Edser (2010), Eustace “is certainly a liability on the Dawn Treader, selfish, spiteful, spineless and spiritually stunted.” And comments that the boy’s “entire upbringing is failing to train him in loving and enjoying what is truly good and disliking what is really bad.” The author keeps on saying that “Eustace is in many ways quite a clever boy, but his emotional and imaginative intelligence have been left underdeveloped by his upbringing.” That upbringing makes Eustace “not believe in Narnia (heaven, God, magic, a spiritual realm) and can’t understand why anyone else would.” According to Edser’s analysis, “violence is a common response to fear and prejudice. Eustace has been brought up to despise and disbelieve anything imaginative, magical or spiritual and he reacts with fear and aggression when faced with real magic—something which potentially threatens the whole rationale of his life up to now.”

In The Voyage of the Dawn Treader Transformation Quotes, Eustace finally has “the ability to see himself for who he really is: an unpleasant, selfish person who is a burden and blight to everyone around him.”

4. EUSTACE’S MORAL CHARACTER TRANSFORMATION

While sleeping in the dragon cave, Eustace became the reality of what he was inside of himself—he was turned into a dragon! Feeling terribly upset at his current condition and situation, the boy was totally mesmerized. However,

In spite of the pain, his first feeling was one of relief. There was nothing to be afraid of anymore. He was a terror himself now and nothing in the world but a knight (and not all of those) would dare to attack him. He could get even with Caspian and Edmund now—

But the moment he thought this he realized that he didn’t want to. He wanted to be friends. He wanted to get back among humans and talk and laugh and share things. He realized that he was a monster cut off from the whole human race. An appalling loneliness came over him. He began to see that the others had not been fiends at all. He began to wonder if he himself has been such a nice person as he had always supposed. He longed for their voices. He would have been grateful for a kind word even from Reepicheep. When he thought of this the poor dragon that had been Eustace lifted up his voice and wept (VDT 98).

Remembering his cousins and Caspian, Eustace now has a new perception of things. At first, he convinced himself that the Dawn Treader would leave him behind, since he had disappeared from sight because he did not want to cooperate repairing the ship, and in so doing, got lost. But “he

realized now that Caspian would never have sailed away and left him. And he felt sure that somehow or other he would be able to make people understand who he was" (VDT 98-99). He manages to return to the ship and let the people know that he, the dragon, is really Eustace. When he communicates with his friends in order to let them know who he is, he finds out that they are actually good people and that they have good intentions.

In his present condition, "it was, however, clear to everyone that Eustace's character had been rather improved by becoming a dragon. He was anxious to help" (107). "The pleasure (quite new to him) of being liked and, still more, of liking other people, was what kept Eustace from despair. For it was very dreary being a dragon" (108). But Eustace gets to the point where he discovers that being nice to people is more rewarding than being rude and avoiding responsibility. With this growth taking place in his inner being, his motivations shift to focus on helping others and he is happy doing so. His personal growth also comes from realizing that work is not such a bad thing to do. Once he learns this, he is happy to help others and by doing so he learns how rewarding it truly is.

While being a dragon Eustace is "almost afraid to be alone with himself and yet he is ashamed to be with the others"(VDT, 109). It is then this fact of being turned into a dragon that causes Eustace to begin to change. Had it not been for that, he would have never even realized there was anything wrong with him. His being dragged into Narnia, and to the *Dawn Treader*, is done with divine knowledge and will, with a specific purpose. He needed to be rescued from himself. That is why the moment of confrontation with Aslan comes after Eustace has learned many moral lessons in his heart through the condition of being a dragon.

At some point, Eustace is feeling more miserable than ever at being a dragon and a nuisance to his friends. He hears them comment that they do not know how they will be able to take the huge creature on board the tiny *Dawn Treader* when they leave the island. On that particular night Eustace goes over the experience of encountering Aslan and being the receptor of the Lion's favor and grace. The Lion tells the boy to undress and Eustace takes off his whole dragon skin and steps out of it. He does it three consecutive times. But still there was an ugly dragon skin covering his body. Eustace relates the experience to his cousin Edmund:

"Then the lion said—but I don't know if it spoke— 'You will have to let me undress you.' I was afraid of his claws, I can tell you, but I was pretty nearly desperate now. So I just lay flat down on my back to let him do it."

"The very first tear he made was so deep that I thought it had gone right into my heart. And when he began pulling the skin off, it hurt worse than anything I've ever felt. The only thing that made me able to bear it was just the pleasure of feeling the stuff peel off. You know—if you've ever picked the scab of a sore place. It hurts like billy-oh but it *is* such fun to see it coming away" (VDT, 115-116).

He then continues sharing the personal encounter with Aslan, saying now,

"Well, he peeled the beastly stuff right off—just as I thought I'd done it myself the other three times, only they hadn't hurt—and there it was lying on the grass: only ever so much thicker, and darker, and more knobbly-looking than the others had been. And there was I as smooth and soft as a peeled switch and smaller than I had been. Then he caught hold of me—I didn't like that much for I was very tender underneath now that I'd no skin on—and threw me into the water. It smarted like anything but only for a moment. After that it became perfectly delicious and as soon as I started swimming and splashing I found that all the pain had gone from my arm. And then I saw why. I'd turned into a boy again" (VDT, 116).

Eustace is now a new person and "great was the rejoicing when Edmund and the restored Eustace walked into the breakfast circle round the campfire" (VDT, 118). The boy manages to shed his childish and immature self and becomes a much better person and realizes what is really important in life. Eventually Eustace gains the honor and privilege of being taught by King Caspian how to use a sword, and is even given Caspian's second-best sword. This is a great honor indeed, and it signifies the truly remarkable road Eustace has gone through and how much he has changed for better. But although he had relapses "the cure had begun" for him (VDT, 120). The impertinent boy is a person of the past now. In the same way that he discarded the thick dragon skin, his old self has been left behind. Eustace is a new person. The change has gone deep into the very core of his being. In the remaining ten chapters of the book, the reader witnesses the new Eustace in action. At certain point,

the crew praises the boy's valor, even though he was not exactly efficient in his endeavors. He showed, however, a wiser attitude. On a not very nice comment he once makes, Lewis clarifies that "he only said it out habit, not really nastily as he would have done at one time" (130). He still had a very logical, practical way of thinking and concluding things, a detail that would help the crew at times as they sailed on the Dawn Treader. And finally, Lewis points out that "back in our world everyone soon started saying how Eustace had improved, and how "You'd never know him for the same boy" (271).

In his adventures in *The Silver Chair*, another book of the Narnia series, Eustace is an altogether different boy. He is loyal to Caspian, Narnia, and Aslan. The boy does his best to accomplish the difficult task assigned to him. He has changed. He has finally come to terms with himself and is free now to start being the real Eustace he was always meant to be. From a spoiled selfish irritating boy Eustace turns out to be a mature boy for his age, to the point that his mother loses all interest in him! He matures emotionally, spiritually and also intellectually. Even the bullies in his school notice the improvement.

5. CONCLUSION

Eustace Clarence Scrubb, the boy who "almost deserved" the name he had, can now perhaps be known for the boy who has an interesting name. He has passed the difficult test imposed on him. He has defeated his old self. He has conquered! He is victorious, even though the process has been tough, painful, humbling, and revealing. Had it not been for the difficult season he walked through, he would not have been able to know or understand himself and his attitudes, intentions and behavior. The time appointed for him in Narnia had come, and he has come out a new person. From naughty to normal. According to what has been seen concerning Eustace's character, there certainly is a before and an after in the life of this outstanding boy. Some words that describe his character, as exposed in this study, show that he was → a blight, a bully, a burden, a drug, anything but innocent, an entitled bully, a liability, a non-believer, a nuisance, a snob, a spoiled brat, a spoiled bully, a stinker, a thorn in everyone's side, unable to accept the reality of Narnia.

Other words that define him in his original state, before he met Aslan in an encounter that changed his life forever are → aggressive, annoying, argumentative, arrogant, bad-tempered, bossy, complaining, contemptuous, cowardly, critical, defiant, disagreeable, egocentric, egotistical, entitled, hateful, immature, impatient, impertinent, infuriating, insufferable, intrusive, irresponsible... He was also jealous, mean, morose, narrow-minded, nasty, negative, pampered, petty, peevish, pouting, and pretentious... And all that besides being resentful, self-absorbed, self-centered, self-seeking, selfish, spineless, spiritually stunted, spiteful, stupid, sulky, thoroughly unpleasant... To conclude with thoughtless, uncooperative, unfriendly, unkind, unlikeable, very bad, and vindictive.

He also has a solitary and perverse demeanor, absolutely no imagination, a repugnant behavior, an intolerant, condescending worldview, feelings which are largely ungrateful and peevish, no fighting spirit...

What a horrific picture of a human being. It is no wonder that Eustace needed a trip to Narnia. Only a supernatural, transcendent, divine intervention would have been able to operate a change of the boy's soul and heart. Eustace, the boy who was impatient because he thought so highly of himself and the rest were so not up to his standards. He would not notice people before. They were just failures for him. Now, however, he keeps seeing the failures, but at least he tries to be understanding and forgiving. As The Examiner quotes, Eustace "shows that nobody is beyond redemption and that even the most despicable people are capable of heroism." The boy that almost deserved his name, the terrible person that he was, has now become a hero at the end of the story.

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