

'The Screwtape Letters': 8 Facts

Though many are only familiar with C. S. Lewis' children's works, [The Chronicles of Narnia](#), he gained fame and recognition through his penning of [The Screwtape Letters](#). Initially published individually through *The Guardian* on a weekly basis in 1942, the volume is still a widely hailed work. It records the advice of one devil – Screwtape – to another, his protégé Wormwood. Below are eight facts about the author and his work.

1. According to [blogger Brenton Dickieson](#), the inspiration for *The Screwtape Letters* came to Lewis over the course of a weekend. After listening to one of Hitler's speeches on the radio on Friday night and then a sermon on Sunday morning, the idea was born from these starkly contrasting influences.
2. Though Lewis was familiar with the operational manners of evil, he admits that even he was not immune. [In a letter](#) to his brother, he wrote: "I don't know if I'm weaker than other people: but it is a positive revelation to me how *while [Hitler's] speech lasts* it is impossible not to waver just a little. ... Statements which I know to be untrue all but convince me, at any rate for the moment, if only the man says them unflinchingly." Perhaps this epiphany served as an inspiration as well.
3. Lewis wrote a sequel to *The Screwtape Letters*, entitled "Screwtape Proposes a Toast," in response to an invitation from *The Saturday Evening Post*. This sequel details, in Lewis' words, "...the annual dinner of the Tempters' Training College for young Devils."
4. In addition to the sequel, Lewis also spoke about *The Screwtape Letters* [five times publicly](#) via BBC in the

middle of their publishing.

5. Though Lewis' readers love reading *The Screwtape Letters*, Lewis did not feel the same about writing them. He disliked writing the book, as he details in the preface of "Screwtape Proposes a Toast": "Though I had never written anything more easily, I never wrote with less enjoyment." He also detailed that the writing "...produced a sort of spiritual cramp" because "Every trace of beauty, freshness and geniality had to be excluded. It almost smothered me before I was done."
6. Lewis believed that *The Screwtape Letters* should have been paired with a volume of "archangelic advice." However, Lewis felt unable to rise to the challenge: "Mere advice would be no good; every sentence would have to smell of Heaven."
7. C. S. Lewis dedicated his compilation of letters to the author of *The Lord of the Rings*, J. R. R. Tolkien. [The two became friends](#) after meeting at Oxford – Magdalen College, to be exact – in 1926. Magdalen College also happens to be the place from which Lewis signed his original preface in 1941.
8. One of C. S. Lewis' closest friends, Paddy Moore, [was killed](#) during World War I. A similar fate befalls Screwtape's patient in *The Screwtape Letters*. Additionally, C. S. Lewis cared for Moore's mother for the rest of his life, and Mrs. Moore's character is [not much different](#) from Wormwood's patient's mother.

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