

# Derrick Vaughan, Novelist

Derrick Vaughan, Novelist by Edna Lyall is a character-driven novel that follows the life of a young and ambitious writer, Derrick Vaughan, as he navigates the challenges of literary fame, personal relationships, and self-discovery.



## Chapter I -Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

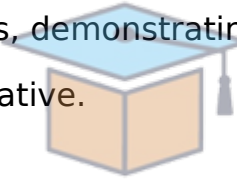
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In the opening chapter of "Derrick Vaughan--Novelist," the narrator, Sydney Wharncliffe, a barrister of the Inner Temple, introduces us to the subject of his recollections, Derrick Vaughan, whose ascension to fame has often been misconstrued by the public as a sudden leap rather than a gradual climb. Wharncliffe clarifies that his intention is not to draft a formal biography but to offer a truthful glimpse into Vaughan's journey, countering the widespread notion of his instantaneous success. Highlighting Vaughan's recognizable presence in media through various portraits, Wharncliffe desires to showcase the essence of Vaughan's personality—his unassuming appearance belies a spirit enlivened by an intense commitment to his writing, likening his reverence for his craft to a celestial calling.

The narrative delves into Vaughan's early life, illustrating his youthful imagination and passion for storytelling, with detailed anecdotes from their childhood. One particular story that stands out is Vaughan's fervid interest in a ruined church, spurred by his admiration for Cromwell, indicative of his deep historical curiosity which later matures into his literary themes. The narrative captures Vaughan's determined proclamation at a young age to become an author, a dream fueled by his keen perspective on authenticity and truth in storytelling, as demonstrated through an amusing incident involving him getting his head stuck between the banisters while attempting to gain a

proper perspective for a scene in his writing.

Wharncliffe continues by reminiscing about the evolution of Vaughan's aspirations through their school and university years, emphasizing Vaughan's dedication to his craft despite his academic commitments. Vaughan faces a period of doubt and depression, particularly during a family crisis with his mother's health, but emerges with a renewed sense of purpose in his writing. The chapter concludes with the beginnings of Vaughan's first novel, "Lynwood's Heritage." Despite initial struggles, Vaughan perseveres, demonstrating his deep connection and commitment to his characters and narrative.



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Thus, the chapter sets a reflective tone on Vaughan's early life, illustrating the blend of innocence, ambition, and the profound sense of calling that shapes his journey as a novelist. Wharncliffe, through fond and insightful anecdotes, lays the foundation of Vaughan's character, marked by an earnest dedication to literature influenced significantly by his life experiences and innate qualities, dispelling the myth of instantaneous success to reveal the labor of love behind Vaughan's literary accomplishments.

## Chapter II -Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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Chapter II of "Derrick Vaughan--Novelist" describes the enchanting beginning of Derrick's love story, set against the backdrop of a yachting adventure on the Aurora, hosted by Calverley of Exeter. The chapter immediately plunges readers into the allure and novelty of Derrick's first encounter with Freda Merrifield, a captivating girl freshly returned from school, full of life and unspoiled innocence. The narrative unfolds as the characters embark from Southampton on a fortnight cruise, filled with anticipation and the promise of memorable experiences. The introduction of Freda, dressed in a charming yachting costume, signals the start of Derrick's inevitable affection towards her. Her presence, combined with the unique setting aboard the Aurora, establishes a realm apart from the ordinary, where Derrick and Freda quickly form a special bond underpinned by shared interests and mutual admiration.

The cruise itself serves as a picturesque venture into camaraderie and leisure, with every turn bringing the characters closer, especially Derrick and Freda. Their connection deepens through shared moments, from lazing on deck to landing at quaint locations, with Freda's zest for life and Derrick's newfound vivacity painting a picture of idyllic romance. The pinnacle of their budding relationship occurs during a visit to Tresco, where an exchange of white heather—a symbol of good luck—between them, signals a silent acknowledgment of their affection.

As the journey nears its end, and the group disperses, promises of future gatherings hint at hopes and possibilities. Yet, even as Derrick is left to ponder the depths of his feelings in the subsequent solitary moments in Southampton, the chapter closes on a note of youthful optimism and the enchanting naiveté of first love, untainted by the specter of challenges that may lie ahead.

This chapter elegantly captures the essence of romantic aspiration, the serendipity of encounters that feel fated, and the tender beginnings of love that promises to defy

mundane realities. Derrick's emotional landscape, vividly painted against the serene backdrop of a yachting voyage, sets the stage for a narrative rich in personal discovery and the inherent beauty of connection.



## Chapter III -Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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In Chapter III of "Derrick Vaughan—Novelist," Derrick Vaughan awaits the return of his father, Major Vaughan, from India with a mix of hope and trepidation. The reunion, long anticipated, takes a traumatic turn upon the Major's arrival. Rumors of the Major being intoxicated are confirmed upon his noisy and drunken appearance, shattering Derrick's long-held image of his dignified father. The pain of public embarrassment and personal disillusionment is acute for Derrick as he processes this new reality.

Accompanied by his friend Wharncliffe and a kindly ship's doctor, they manage the uncomfortable task of escorting Major Vaughan to Radley's Hotel, where further attempts to celebrate his return are marred by the Major's inebriated state.

The ship's doctor reveals to Derrick and Wharncliffe that Major Vaughan suffers from liver disease, exacerbated by chronic alcoholism—a condition aggravated by his time in India. The doctor stresses the importance of total abstinence from alcohol for Major Vaughan and subtly indicates the challenge of maintaining such a regimen. In the midst of these revelations, Derrick learns that recommendations for recovery include relocation and possibly significant lifestyle changes.

Faced with the stark reality of his father's illnesses, Derrick decides, almost instinctively and with profound selflessness, to take personal responsibility for his father's care. This decision marks a pivotal moment for Derrick, demonstrating his deep commitment to family and duty over his own aspirations. He proposes living with his father, a choice that signifies a ready acceptance of the sacrifices required to support his father's health and well-being.

The chapter highlights themes of duty, family loyalty, the devastating effects of addiction, and the capacity for personal sacrifice. Through Derrick's experiences and decisions, the narrative delves into the complexities of reconciliation with familial

imperfections and the resilience required to face the challenges of caregiving.

Throughout, the writing retains a poignant tone, balancing the gravitas of the situation with moments of gentleness and understanding, showcasing Derrick's strength of character and foreshadowing the emotional and practical challenges he will confront in his evolving relationship with his father.



## Chapter IV -Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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In Chapter IV of "Derrick Vaughan--Novelist," the narrator starts with a philosophical musing about the significance of art, seen through the lens of Goethe and Schiller's beliefs. He shares a personal insight into his own selfishness and contrasts it with his admiration for Derrick's noble character, despite feeling indifferent to his problems. The chapter unfolds with the narrator's routine life in Mondisfield and later in Montague Street, Bloomsbury, where he starts his studies for the Bar in a discontented mood.

An unexpected letter from Derrick arrives, requesting help with some errands, and this letter serves as a reminder of the narrator's neglect of Derrick. The letter, although not detailed, hints at Derrick's struggles and challenges the narrator's conscience. Prompted by this, the narrator decides to visit Derrick in Bath, embarking on a journey that diverges significantly from his own life's concerns.

Upon arrival in Bath, the narrator describes the dreary yet respectable atmosphere of Gay Street and his meeting with Derrick and the Major, Derrick's father. The interaction between Derrick, the Major, and the narrator highlights Derrick's sacrificial care for his father, despite the Major's harsh demeanor.

Derrick's constrained life, confined by his father's demands and his commitment to his novel writing, is contrasted with the narrator's freedom and self-focused concerns. The chapter reveals Derrick's dedication to his father and his craft, despite the difficult circumstances, and his deep but unspoken frustrations. This dedication inspires a mixture of admiration, concern, and introspection in the narrator.

Derrick's confrontation with his father over the value and seriousness of his profession marks a pivotal moment, shedding light on Derrick's inner strength and convictions. The aftermath of the confrontation leads to a candid conversation between Derrick and

the narrator, revealing the depth of Derrick's struggles, both personal and professional.

The chapter concludes with the narrator's realization of the profound impact of Derrick's situation on his own perspective, prompting him to reconsider the value of sacrifice, duty, and the pursuit of one's passion amidst adversity. This chapter, rich in character development and thematic exploration, sets a reflective and poignant tone for the unfolding narrative.





## Chapter V -Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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In Chapter V of "Derrick Vaughan--Novelist," the narrative continues with Lawrence going to war, while the protagonist Derrick stays in Bath, enduring the discomfort of his father, Major Vaughan's, unwelcome companionship. Derrick finds solace as the Major's health appears to improve with sobriety and Bath water. However, upon an unannounced visit, the narrator discovers Derrick with a broken arm, the circumstances of which are suspicious and lead to speculation about an altercation with his father, who had relapsed into drinking.

The chapter delves into the struggles Derrick faces in caring for his father while trying to maintain his writing career. Through an incident of the Major obtaining and consuming brandy, leading to an altercation that results in Derrick's arm injury, the story portrays the toxic and dangerous environment Derrick endures. The landlady's concern for Derrick's safety highlights the severity of the situation, suggesting it's unsafe for Derrick to be alone with his father.

Despite his injury, Derrick continues his writing with adaptability, showing resilience by adapting his writing process to accommodate his broken arm. The chapter also touches upon Derrick's social life and his reactions to hearing about Freda Merrifield, indicating a potential romantic interest, and his literary career, especially the process and anticipation surrounding the publication of his novel "Lynwood's Heritage."

"Lynwood's Heritage" faces a mix of critical reception, with some positive reviews and others sharply critical, affecting Derrick personally and professionally. Despite the anticipation and effort, the novel does not achieve commercial success, leading to Derrick's profound disappointment and reflection on his efforts and sacrifices. This chapter vividly illustrates the personal and professional challenges Derrick faces, encapsulating themes of resilience, the complexities of familial relationships, and the struggles of a budding novelist against the backdrop of personal turmoil and Victorian

society's expectations.



## Chapter VI -Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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Chapter VI of "Derrick Vaughan--Novelist" narrates a significant turn in the lives of the characters, pivoting around the heroism of Lawrence Vaughan, Derrick's brother, and the emotional entanglements of Derrick himself. The chapter opens with excitement as Derrick and Sydney discover a newspaper article celebrating Lawrence's bravery in rescuing a fellow officer during battle. This event becomes a source of pride but also deepens the emotional divide within the family, especially as the Major uses Lawrence's bravery to belittle Derrick's life as a novelist.

The narrative delves into Derrick's struggles, highlighting his melancholy disposition exacerbated by his envy towards Lawrence, his yearning for Freda, and the pressures of his writing career. This personal turmoil is compounded by his father's toxic behavior, painting a picture of a young man caught between duty and the pursuit of personal happiness.

A plan concocted by Sydney and the family doctor sends Derrick and the Major to London, providing Derrick a much-needed change of scenery and the chance to engage with the literary and social circles he's been alienated from. The visit is timed perfectly with Lawrence's return from the war, setting the stage for a reunion fraught with familial tension and unspoken rivalries.

A major segment of the chapter is dedicated to an elaborate social event at Lord Probyn's house, where Derrick is thrown into the complexities of London society, replete with its judgments and expectations. This social setting amplifies Derrick's feelings of inadequacy and isolation, particularly in his interactions with Freda, the object of his affection, whose life of social engagements seems worlds apart from his own. Their conversation, strained and superficial, underscores the vast emotional distance that has grown between them, a gulf widened by Derrick's perception of his

failed novel and Freda's unwittingly hurtful remarks.

The chapter is adept at exploring themes of heroism, familial loyalty, and the personal costs of adhering to societal expectations. It also touches upon the struggles of creative endeavor and the painful realization of one's limitations in both personal and professional spheres. The narrative weaves together Derrick's internal conflicts with his external realities, presenting a poignant examination of the sacrifices made at the altar of duty and ambition.



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## Chapter VII -Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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## Chapter VIII-Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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Chapter VIII of "Derrick Vaughan--Novelist" unfolds during the autumn, continuing to narrate the life of Derrick Vaughan, a novelist devoted to his craft and the care of his ailing father, Major Vaughan. Despite his diligent routine of writing, studying, and observing various strands of life for his next book, Derrick remains determinedly silent on matters concerning Freda, with whom his thoughts linger guardedly. As Christmas Eve brings a noticeable change in him, Derrick decides abruptly to return to Bath, driven by concern for his father and a desire to be with him, leaving his friend Sydney and London behind.

Upon Derrick's arrival in Bath, he encounters a seemingly serene situation, with the city covered in snow and his father's health in a precarious state due to jaundice. Derrick's days are filled not only with the care for his father but also engaging with the local community, offering a glimpse into his compassionate and sociable nature despite his focused dedication to writing and his father's care. The narrative weaves through Derrick's reflections on life in Bath, his father's health struggles, and his interactions with the townsfolk, including a child who draws his artistic admiration.

Freda's presence in Bath adds complexity to Derrick's already strained situation. His reserved demeanor around her and insistence on mentioning Lawrence, her fiancé and Derrick's brother, highlights his loyalty and respect for family bonds, despite his own feelings for Freda. As Major Vaughan's health sharply declines, Derrick's character shines through his unyielding patience and selflessness, displaying a depth of devotion and sacrifice.

The climax of this chapter revolves around the Major's final moments, marked by regret and a poignant, desperate attempt to amend his will in Derrick's favor—an acknowledgment of Derrick's unwavering dedication. Tragically, the Major's attempt to rectify his oversight comes too late, and his death leaves Derrick grappling with the

profound impact of his loss, compounded by his forsaken effort to protect and care for his father. The narrative leaves readers with a reflection on the seemingly futile sacrifices Derrick has endured for his father, questioning the tangible benefits of his sacrifices and hinting at a deeper, possibly spiritual significance to Derrick's steadfastness and moral integrity.



## Chapter IX - Derrick Vaughan--Novelist

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Chapter IX of "Derrick Vaughan--Novelist" deals primarily with themes of loss, brotherly rivalry, the pursuit of success in literature, and subtle observations on the nature of personal success versus public recognition.

The chapter opens with the aftermath of a funeral and the revealing of an unsigned will that would have significantly benefited Derrick, the protagonist, had it been signed. His brother, Lawrence, dismissively suggests Derrick's budding literary career would compensate for the loss, an inference that strains their relationship further.

The narrative then delves into Derrick's literary struggles, particularly the rejection of his novel "At Strife" by multiple publishers, signifying the difficulties inherent in creative professions and the vicissitudes of an author's life. Despite such setbacks, Derrick remains undeterred, emblematic of his dedication to his craft and the intrinsic need to write, likening him to a prophet burdened with a message.

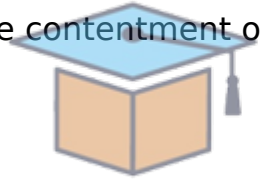
A portion of the chapter sheds light on Lawrence's faltering character, marked by his pretensions and eventual social downfall following the dissolution of his engagement due to discoveries about his past. This contrasts significantly with Derrick's introspective, steadfast, and humble nature.

Interestingly, Derrick's personal life remains intertwined with his professional endeavors. His third book, "Dick Carew," benefits from his experiences and observations in Whitechapel, showcasing his commitment to social issues and realism in his works. The narrative also briefly hints at Derrick's unfulfilled personal life, particularly his unresolved feelings for Freda, suggesting a complexity of emotions beneath his professional success.



The chapter closes with a hopeful turn, as Derrick receives an invitation for a cruise reminiscent of happier times, indicating a possible reconciliation or resolution to his long-standing emotional turmoil.

Overall, the chapter captures the essence of an artist's journey through adversities towards recognition, paralleled with a personal quest for happiness and fulfillment amidst societal and familial expectations. It portrays both the solace found in artistic expression and the lingering shadows of personal losses and unrequited love, suggesting that true contentment often lies beyond public acclaim or material success.



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