



Sheldon Vanauken: The Man Who Received "A Severe Mercy"

Will Vaus

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The life story of Sheldon Vanauken is one of adventure, romance, conversion, grief, and recovery. Much of this was chronicled in the autobiographical bestseller, *A Severe Mercy*. However, a good deal of Vanauken's fascinating life remained shrouded in secrecy ... until now. Through a process of careful historical research, including interviews with Vanauken's many friends, colleagues, and students, Will Vaus reveals to the reader the numerous facets of a complex character.

In this biography we discover: Vanauken the struggling student, the bon-vivant lover, the sailor who witnessed the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the seeker who returned to faith through C. S. Lewis, the beloved professor of English literature and history, the feminist and anti-war activist who participated in the March on the Pentagon, the bestselling author, and Vanauken the convert to Catholicism. What emerges is the portrait of a man relentlessly in search of beauty, love, and truth, a man who believed that, in the end, he found all three.

"A sympathetic, perceptive and well researched study of one of America's most important recent religious writers. Readers of *A Severe Mercy* are in Will Vaus' debt for such an illuminating and informative study." Alister McGrath, author of *C. S. Lewis: A Life*

"Van was a character - a very good one as it happens, and Will Vaus catches the actuality of this intriguing man of many parts. Very illuminating reading." Thomas Howard, author of *On Being Catholic*

"This is a charming biography about a doubly charming man who wrote a triply charming book. It is a great way to meet the man behind *A Severe Mercy*." Peter Kreeft, author of *Jacob's Ladder: Ten Steps to Truth*

"Vaus has masterfully captured the spirit of Vanauken, his deep desire for beauty, his mistakes along the way, and eventually his love of God. Reading this biography takes me back to the same deep emotions I have every time I read *A Severe Mercy*." Jim Belcher, author of *Deep Church*

"Sheldon Vanauken's story of C. S. Lewis, Oxford, a passionate love, and a tragic loss captured the imagination of Evangelical Christians thirty years ago. Will Vaus' biography of the author of *A Severe Mercy* captures the same mixture of a flawed romantic quest driven by a longing for truth, goodness and beauty, that culminates in the fullness of the Catholic faith. Vaus' book is a study in divine providence and a captivating biography of a unique and noble soul." Fr. Dwight Longenecker, author of *The Quest for the Creed*

"Very well written, thoroughly researched, hard to put down despite many tears - Will Vaus captures the essence of Van in this book." Marion, Davy Vanauken's daughter

Will Vaus is a popular speaker and the author of a variety of books including *The Hidden Story of Narnia*, *Speaking of Jack*, and *Mere Theology*.

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