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Is Now the Time for the Rise of Web-Novels?

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Content

1   Introduction

With the advances of time, our culture has slowly changed. It has adapted to us and how we spend our time in this technological world. Somehow, it has become common for comics to be released in several parts, in volumes. Even 'movies' are now often released in several pieces, in episodes. However, a particular fad has slowly faded out of time. It is the fad about a Novel, which gets released in several sections, to be precise, in chapters. They were called Serial Novels.

Nowadays, it is common to go to a book-store and buy a printed and done Novel there, if one wants to read a Novel. However, with the outbreak of pandemic diseases, an example would be the SARS-CoV2, which would be near impossible to do. Hence, one has to find an alternative. If one looks into the internet, one will likely discover Web-Novels, which have revived the fad to release a Novel in several chapters once more.

Though, why has that not become mainstream, just like comics or movies? Well, for a long time, there wasn't any institution that actively spread Web-Novel amongst the public. Moreover, no influential organisation could form without any form of wealth. However, a newly emerged cooperation, an internet platform, emerged, which started large scale commercialisation of Web-Novel. Immediately following, a question popped up in my head: Could Web-Novels rise, just like how Serial Novels once did? After all that, there was once a time in Britain in which it was all about Serial Novel.

As the question didn't let me go, this Research Paper will be dedicated to finding the answer behind that question. For that, in chapter 2, I will take a closer look at "The Pickwick Papers", as they are acknowledged to have started the hype around Serial Novel in Britain. Then I will try to find the difference between Serial Novel and Web-Novel and if the difference can beat the reason behind the Serial Novel's decline. In chapter 3, I will explain why exactly I choose the recently emerged company. Then I will look at the service they offer. Following, I will glance at the state of Web-Novels they provide before taking a closer view at a single specific Web-Novel they have.

Finally, in chapter 4, this Research Paper will be concluded. I will answer the question, if Web-Novels could rise, just like how Serial Novels once did, once and for all.

Besides that, please don't forget to look at the Appendix. Have a great read!

2   Serial Novel

2.1   Print

The Serial Novels were once quite popular. They often appeared in newspapers and magazines. At every new issue of the newspaper or magazine, only a part of the Novel, a single chapter, got released. As the Novel's chapters only appeared there, the reader couldn't read them anywhere else. Therefore, avid readers could only patiently wait; wait until the release of the next issue of the desired newspaper or magazine.

It was the 19th century in Britain as Serial Novels experienced a boom in popularity. Even though Serial Novels existed a long time before that, they just weren't popular before that time for various reasons. Hence, it may appear strange that the Serial Novel craze didn't only begin in Britain before it has spread further into the world. Around the same time as in Britain, Serial Novels' popularity similarly rapidly grew in France.

Nevertheless, at least in Great Britain, Charles Dickens is widely accepted as the man who started all the Serial Novel hype. There, it all began with his debut Serial Novel: "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club", or better known as "The Pickwick Papers". But why did it become such a success, great enough for it to start the hype around Serial Novels?

Well, there are many reasons, but I can't explain them all, or it would blow the Research up too much. Thus I will only mention a few.

For one, it would be the Industrial Revolution in England. Due to it, there was a higher density of the populace[1]. That led to the establishment of schools, which, in return, fostered a surge in the literacy rate amongst the populace[2]. Besides that, the standardisation of the English language has likely helped with the rise in the literacy rate.

Nevertheless, this isn't the only main factor behind the success of the Serial Novel. Although the literacy rate is indeed an essential contributor, without having met other criteria, still no one would have read it. Hence, the first instalment of "The Pickwick Papers" wasn't a commercial success[3]. Even the second and third

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1   cf. Tim De Chant: Population density fostered literacy, the Industrial Revolution, 2011
2   Ibid.
3   cf. Mulder, Megan: The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, by Charles Dickens (1836 – 37), 2012

instalment wasn't up to satisfaction. Only in the fourth instalment did it slowly change due to the emergence of a specific character, Sam Weller[4].

Despite Sam Weller only appearing in the fourth instalment, he is considered the character who has brought the Serial Novel to fame[5].

The narrator introduced him as an unimportant side-character, a simple boot-cleaner[6]. At first, Charles Dickens hasn't even considered a Larger Role for Sam. He only slowly developed to a central character, thanks to the great feedback he received from many readers. Though why?

Well, maybe it was due to his social-critical remarks[7]? After all, it is typical for an Industrial Revolution to have an immense gulf between the upper-class and working-class. And this, of course, causes much dissatisfaction, even if one doesn't mind the other problems, which comes with the Industrial Revolution. Therefore, the social-critical remarks are likely to have appealed to the working-class, which are the most amongst the population.

Furthermore, Sam Weller had a Cockney-accent and a world-view, unique to the working-class[8]. That could have let the working-class link themselves better to the character; hence, creating a stronger emotional bond.

While assuming that the readers are mostly from the working-class, it only makes sense that serial publishing has become popular. With serial publishing, each instalment of the Serial Novel has gotten cheap enough so that even poor working-class could buy them[9].

With that, I conclude the question. Nevertheless, as one shouldn't just focus on the good side of things, one should consider the disadvantageous side too. Despite that, I won't dabble into it too deeply, but at least, one should have them mentioned.

"The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club" has an enormous amount of characters, from which over fifty characters had names[10]. Something like that would never happen in the typical one-print Novel. Typically, in the usual one-print Novel,

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4   cf. Mulder, Megan: The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, by Charles Dickens (1836 – 37), 2012
5   cf. Die Pickwickier, 2002
6   Ibid.
7   Ibid.
8   Ibid.
9   cf. Mulder, Megan: The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, by Charles Dickens (1836 – 37), 2012
10 cf. Die Pickwickier, 2002

each named character will be filled and rounded at least to some extend. Hence, if there were over fifty rounded characters in a single Novel, there won't be enough space to develop every character. Of course, unless the Novel contains over several million upon millions of words.

Besides that, there is a hidden challenge in writing every single issue. According to the Mulder, Dickens himself had once described "that every number should be, to a certain extent, complete in itself, and yet that the whole twenty numbers, when collected, should form one tolerably harmonious whole, each leading to the other by a gentle and not unnatural progress of adventure"[11]. In essence, that merely means that every instalment of the Serial Novel should meet at least two conditions. First, it can, or at least should, enthral the reader on its own, without the necessity of the other instalments. Second, it should still maintain itself as a part of the overall story progress without interrupting the story flow or standing entirely out of the way.

The last shortcoming of Serial Novels I will mention for now is the method of publishing. Sometimes, due to troubles in real life, the author couldn't finish writing an instalment, hence delaying it. That even happened to Dickens while he published "The Pickwick Paper". His sister-in-law died, which delayed the May issue in 1837[12].

2.2   Digital

The hype, which Dickens created around the Serial Novels, is already long over. Now it is only a happening of the past. Due to the emergence of another form of entertainment, Serial Novels gradually declined[13]. Concurrently, newspapers and magazines slowly reduced their entertainment parts as they began to focus on providing information and news[14].

With the inception of the World-Wide-Web, Fan-fictions has little by little begun to spread. Mostly, they form around already famous work, which has already build a big community. Hence, they effortlessly gained popularity. Furthermore, as they were usually published serially on the Web for free, the whole world can read

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11 Mulder, Megan: The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, by Charles Dickens (1836 – 37), 2012
12 cf. Mulder, Megan: The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, by Charles Dickens (1836 – 37), 2012
13 Serial (literature), 2020
14 Ibid.

them. Due to the easy accessibility and entirely free service, they gained popularity like they never had before. Some of them even attracted a crowd of readers comparable to successful Novels or New York Times bestsellers[15].

Nevertheless, they still haven't become mainstream. The reason is that no big industry has formed around Fan-fictions. Most of the Fan-fictions' authors are only amateur writers who write without the copyright of their work. That means the characters, the world, the plot, the setting, and more aren't properties of the writer. Legally, he isn't even allowed to use them. Hence, he can't commercialise. Without any money, no influential industry would form around it. Therefore, leading to a restricted development of Fan-fictions.

However, that won't restrict Web-Novels, which only emerged shortly after them. Just like Fan-fictions, Web-Novels are often published serially on the Web by aspiring writers. But they have a decisive different; the authors do have the copyrights about their work or, at least, should have.

Although they aren't published in magazines or newspapers, they are indeed published periodically as a serial. Hence, they too can be considered as Serial Novels. Moreover, they do have many similar characteristics. Though, in what do they differ except the medium?

At least, I can't see any distinctive difference between them. At most, it would be the professionalism at the beginning of a Web-Novelist. But even that would most likely be gone if the Web-Novelist has become successful enough and has gained enough experience.

With that, I establish Web-Novels as a sub-category of Serial Novels. After all, every Web-Novel can be considered a Serial Novel, but not every Serial Novel can be regarded as a Web-Novel. In the end, a Web-Novel has to be incepted on the Web, and not anywhere else.

Nevertheless, for the sake of simplicity, I will for now refer to Serial Novels as Novels, whose most instalments happened on the paper. On the other hand, I would like to refer to a Web-Novel, if most of a Novel's instalments happened on the World-Wide-Web.

Now, in today's time, one can witness live as a new industry is born with Web-Novels at its centre. Therefore, the question, will Web-Novels rise, just like the Serial Novels once did?

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15 cf. Serial (literature), 2020

To answer that question, one can't only focus on the only crucial difference between them, the medium. One has to know if Web-Novels, at least, meet the criteria too, which "The Pickwick Papers" once did to make the Serial Novel rise in popularity. Finally, one has to ask oneself, can the different medium counter the reason behind the fall of the Serial Novels?

To answer that, one first has to determine the differences made by the medium. A significant difference would be convenience.

For example, if you want to read a Serial Novel, you have to go to a store to buy it. However, if there aren't any stores nearby, you won't be able to read, or else you have to set out for a long journey, only to buy it. On the other hand, if you want to read a Web-Novel, you can do it everywhere, as long as you carry a smartphone with you. Furthermore, you won't have to skip an instalment if you were busy with something and be unable to read it. As all chapters are well kept within the Web, you can read them anytime you want.

Another notable difference would the quantity. After all, there is only a limited space in a magazine or a newspaper. The Web has, compared to that, nearly unlimited space for all kinds of things.

With that, one can come to the next difference; exposure. With the paper print Serial Novel, you mostly limited to your region. Something that you wrote is only unlikely to reach Indian or Cuba. However, Web-Novels can easily cross the distance. Therefore, Web-Novels could possible connect to a broader range of readers. Moreover, coming with that, you can find a greater variety of different kinds of readers.

Earlier, I have mentioned that Serial Novel declined due to the emergence of another type of entertainment. The biggest reason behind that, I suspect, is the convenience. At the beginning of the 20th century, broadcasting rose, and television became popular[16]. I claim, its most important advantage over Serial Novel is its convenience.

A TV can provide dozens of entertainment channels. A magazine or a newspaper couldn't even try to compare with that with only a single instalment. Moreover, they were a lot more convenient to use. While laying lazily on the couch, you could turn on the TV and watch a great show. That does sound a lot more

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16 cf. Serial (literature), 2020

enticing than going out in the harsh weather, only to buy a magazine or a newspaper, right?

Therefore, for Web-Novels to rise nowadays, they should, at least, be able to contest against other types of entertainment regarding convenience. Besides that, I will compare it with Web TV, instead of the classical TV, which bested Serial Novels.

Nowadays, people use Web TV more often than classical TV due to it having a higher convenience. With Web TV, they don't have to wait for an exact time any longer, in which their show is broadcasted. They can instead easily watch it whenever they have the time for that. Moreover, they can watch the show wherever they want, as long as they carry their smartphones with them.

As Web TV and Web-Novels indeed do have the same medium, they too have similar characteristics. Nevertheless, they also have differences. For example, a typical episode of a TV series is usually at least 20 minutes long. It's not very unusual for one to go even up to over 40 minutes. A chapter of a Web-Novel, on the other hand, is generally a lot shorter.

Therefore, a Web-Novel can be more convenient if one doesn't have much time. For example, if one is standing in a long line, it is more practical to read a chapter. After all, if one starts an episode, one is more likely to have to abort midway due to a lack of time. Though, anything else, and it would just be a matter of preference.

Although there are still more differences, they mostly minor ones – like the sound or images instead of words. They are just a matter of preference too. As they all are just a matter of inclinations, a study or a survey has to be done to discover how many in today's society would be willing to read Web-Novels. Due to limited resources, they can, unfortunately, not be done.

Nonetheless, the main point is at least proven; technically, Web-Novels can contest against Web TVs.

3 Evaluation

3.1 Platforms

Now, I have to look at a specific platform, a company, which provides Web-Novels. After all, without a platform, Web-Novels can't rise. It is just like books can't be sold without a store. The platform can, if you have to, be compared with a book-store or a library.

From the dozens of platforms, I have decided on the recent risen platform "Webnovel". Although there are other popular platforms, for example, "Royal Road" or "Wattpad", they are more similar to a library than a book-store. On these two platforms, most authors commonly earn money through donations or providing advanced chapters.

To reinvigorate the online Novel-industry money is essential. After all, this world revolves more or less around money: to maintain the server costs money, to pay the employees needs funds, to consume electricity requires money, to expand the industry demands money etc., etc.

Even though Wattpad has stared a program called "Paid Stories", it doesn't instantly change Wattpad from a "library" to a "book-store". The program only grants a limited number of popular stories for their authors to earn money from[17]. The majority of the Web-Novels remain just the same; free for everyone to read. Hence, making Wattpad, in the end, and after all, still more similar to a library than a book-store.

Webnovel, on the other hand, has commercialised on a large scale. They can be considered as the first who has done large commercialisation on Web-Novels. Before them, most readers were used to read Web-Novels entirely for free. Hence, Webnovel has hit on a wall of complaints due to them extensively commercialising Web-Novels.

Nevertheless, they have mostly subsided now. Authors can today relatively easy put a paywall on their chapters without much retaliation from the readers. Henceforth, when most Web-Novels are paid, the platform resembled more a book-store than a library. Therefore, I have decided on Webnovel.

17　cf. Frequently Asked Questions, n.d.

3.2   Webnovel

Webnovel has implemented a system: After a certain number of free chapters, the following ones would be locked behind a paywall. The free chapters can be interpreted as a sample to see if it is worth to continue reading. Moreover, as every chapter has its own paywall, one can easily quit the Novel if it isn't any more up to one's taste[18].

To buy fifty Coins, it would cost 0.99€ [19]. Hence, making a single Coin worth around 0.02€. Even by considering the other possible options, a single Coin would, if rounded, cost 0.02€. Though is that now cheap or expensive? To decide this, I will make a comparison.

To buy the entire Harry Potter set costs 62.93€[20] and have a word count of 1084170 words altogether[21]. If the Harry Potter book series had been published on Webnovel, it would have had cost around 5421 Coins to read. With the single Coin priced around 0.02€, one would have to pay 108.42€ to read the entire work.

Nevertheless, one can't disregard the initial free chapters or the Free Passes. Hence, let's assume that the Harry Potter series has been split into 678 chapter with average pricing of eight Coins per chapter. Its initial free chapters are 60. Therefore, reducing the price of 5421 Coins to 4941. However, even then, it would still cost 98.82€.

One would have to wait 75 days, while one only uses the daily Free Passes on Harry Potter, to gain a price lower than 62.93€, 62.82€. Of course, the longer one can wait, the cheaper would one 'buy' the work; until it has become entirely free. Though, would you be willing to wait 206 days, only to 'buy' it for free? You may if it was released like any other typical Web-Novel out there. The chapters would be released one by one, day after day; you have no other choices except waiting, as not all chapters are yet published. Of course, only if you are still wishing to continue reading 'Harry Potter' at the end of the day.

Concluding, I judge that if one would like to read much in a single sitting, it would be quite expensive. Hence, Webnovel wouldn't fit in the wallet of the small man. However, if one spread one's reading into several sittings and consume a chapter only as a snack, not as an entire meal, it would be pretty easy to

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18 Please refer to Appendix C, Figure 1, to read about Coins, Free Passes, and how much Words they are worth.
19 cf. Appendix A, Figure 1
20 cf. J.K. Rowling: Die Harry-Potter-Buchreihe (Reihe in 7 Bänden), 2015
21 cf. How many Words Are There in the Harry Potter Book Series?, 2015

accommodate a whole Web-Novel into the wallet of the small man. After all, the complete Web-Novel could be completely free.

To further inspect, if Web-Novel meets more criteria to rise, just like how "The Pickwick Papers" has once done, one has to look at specific Web-Novels. As such, I have decided to look closer at the current popular Web-Novels.

The popularity on Webnovel is decided by "Power Stones", which the reader can freely distribute to his favourite work daily. As the popularity ranking is based on the number of Power Stones each Web-Novel periodically has, it is called the "Power Ranking". Moreover, the user can set whenever the Power Ranking displays the ranking with the Power Stones collected this month or the current week.

I will look for similarities in the top four. However, only on the surface, without reading the chapters, or else it would burst the scale of this Research Paper. Following, I will take a closer look at the first place on the Power Ranking.

The top four on the Power Ranking are "My Vampire System" by JKSManga, "The Crown's Obsession" by ash_knight17, "Married to the Devil's Son" by JasmineJosef, and "Supreme Magus" by Legion20[22].

By looking at the general data, one may spot several similarities immediately[23]. For one, it would be the chapter release rate per week. However, there is an exception: While most have a considerable high release rater, up to 19 per week, the Web-Novel "Married to the Devil's Son" has, in comparison, a low one – only three per week[24].

On Webnovel, it has become common for the release rate to be one or two chapters every day. That is due to the translations, Web-Novels that originated from a different language. As it is comparatively easy to swiftly translate several chapters in succession, there is a high release rate. That, in return, made the reader used to a rapid release.

A further common ground that has likely stemmed from the translations is the high number of chapters in a Web-Novel. In other words, one may say a substantial word counts, which came with them.

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22 cf. Appendix A, Figure 2
23 cf. Appendix B, Figure 1
24 Ibid.

For example, Supreme Magus has 1069 chapter[25] with an average of 10.875 Coins per chapter[26]. That means that typically there are over 2000 words in every chapter. With that in mind, one can calculate that, if it is only a matter of a word count, Harry Potter can't compare with Supreme Magus, as the Web-Novel has over double as much of words as Harry Potter has altogether.

Even if we took the Web-Novel "Married to the Devil's Son" as the example, which has the fewest chapter of the four, it would still be more than any of the Harry Potter series book alone.

If one compares the cost of the various chapters, one may notice that they don't massively differ from each others[27]. The average pricing is from seven to eleven, with occasional ups and downs.

That means that the cost of a chapter usually ranges from only 14 to 22 cents. That is roughly the same as a little sweet or a small snack in a kiosk. Roughly, a Coin can be interpreted as a minute of reading, as the average reading speed is coincidentally 200 words too.

Therefore a chapter would require around seven to eleven minutes of reading. Though why would that be preferred by the readers? A survey has to be done to answer such a question. All I can do for now is to ponder upon when the reader could possibly read the chapters.

For example, the reader could be reading while he is waiting for the bus. Or he is waiting to be called upon by the physician in a waiting room. Or maybe he currently has a short break at work or in school.

There are countless possibilities that I can't mention all of them. Hence, I will now move on and look deeper into a single Web-Novel, "My Vampire System", the current placeholder of the number 1 on the Power Ranking[28].

3.3   My Vampire System

The Web-Novel, "My Vampire System", has over 600 chapters and is now not yet finished. Furthermore, by looking at the entire Web-Novel, it would overstep the circumference of this Research Paper. Hence, we would only look at the initial free chapters[29].

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25 cf. Appendix B, Figure 1
26 cf. Appendix B, Figure 3
27 cf. Appendix B, Figure 2 – 3
28 cf. Appendix A, Figure 2
29 Please refer to Appendix C, Figure 2, to gain a summary.

The story has excellently fused the elements of science-fiction, supernatural powers, and the myths about Vampires. It is only rarely seen that a Novel contains both Vampires and science-fiction, or science-fiction and supernatural powers.

The happenings are mostly told by a third-person narrator, who occasionally switch to a third-person omniscient narrator. At the end of a chapter, one can see quite often a cliffhanger. As it is an open ending, it leaves the reader anxious, wondering what will happen next.

The third-person narrator didn't stay only with a single person. Instead, he changes several times to various figures. That gives a deeper insight into the different characters. Hence, creating in the reader a more heartfelt sympathy or hate towards diverse characters.

There are altogether an entire 27 named characters who appeared in the initial free chapters[30]. However, most of them aren't significant. Some of them appear only for a few chapters before they disappear forever. Others only appear if they are needed to drive the plot forward. Hence, they are only minor characters, who aren't that important, and one doesn't have to speak too much of them. Therefore, I will only talk about three characters: Quinn Talen, Vorden Blade, and Peter Chuck.

Quinn Talen is the protagonist of the Web-Novel. His rebellious character, at least in his society, can be spotted right from the start. Despite knowing, if he retaliated to the mocking, he would be hit, he still retaliated[31].

Peter, on the other hand, would act differently. He is pretty much like any other weak, bullied person in their society. Peter lacks self-confidence. When Quinn saw Peter at first, "[He] looked to be the most nervous among anyone there."[32] That likely stemmed from his years of bullying, as he too didn't have a special ability like Quinn.

Even when others bully him, he didn't dare to retaliate, unlike Quinn. When Quinn saw someone bullying Peter, he intervened[33]. As he saw that the other only had a weak special ability, he realised there is a chance to win against the other[34]. Hence, he fought for Peter. That demonstrates Quinn's courage and spirit to stand up for his friends, even if it means to go through a lot of pains.

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30 cf. Appendix B, Figure 4
31 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 1
32 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 5
33 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 10
34 Ibid.

However, Peter didn't dare to fight for himself, despite similarly realising that they had a chance to win against the bully; he was frankly simply too afraid[35]. That highlights once more Quinn's courage in comparison to Peter's cowardice. Moreover, this makes it entirely clear to the reader which kind of society the characters currently are: A hierarchical society based upon power.

Hence, it is off the norm that Vorden, who is considered high on the power scale, befriended Quinn and Peter. As he appeared like a snobbish child from an elitist family at first, there were a lot of hate comments about him. Moreover, due to him immediately trying to use his special ability on Quinn as soon as they met[36], he drew even more hate from the readers.

However, this slowly changed later. First, Vorden treated Quinn and Peter nicely and didn't care about their power level. He, himself, has said, "I don't care about this stupid power level hierarchy going on"[37]. That shook the previous image of Vorden as a snobbish elitist child. Yet, it was still not entirely broken, as it could be a lie, which he uses to manipulate Quinn.

That only entirely break off, when later Vorden's thoughts and feelings get shown to the readers[38]. It implies that in Vorden's lives before he meets Quinn, others tried to dictate how he should live his life, and he would fight back. That added a further layer of mystery to the character. After that, the hate comments mostly vanished, leaving now behind good comments about him.

Though, the author didn't stop piling more mysteries around Vorden. For example, to name a few, others think of him as a monster[39], he claims Vorden isn't his name[40], and he is strangely sensitive to the word "crazy"[41].

Due to his attitude to not care about the social hierarchy and hanging around Quinn and Peter, the older students have set him up to show the others what will happen if one goes against the social rank.

They first effortlessly forced Peter to betray Vorden, as he didn't dare to go against them. After Vorden fell in their trap, he was bound to a target[42]. They have

35 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 10
36 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 4
37 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 13
38 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 14
39 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 21
40 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 34
41 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 38
42 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 41 f.

gathered the other students, including Quinn, to witness the example and forced them to throw a metal ball at him[43].

When Quinn witnessed that, he didn't just stand there or went with the flow. Instead, he began to fight against the older students for his friend, despite knowing that he can't win the fight[44]. That distinctly demonstrates Quinn's courage and heroic spirit to protect his friends.

When Peter saw what Quinn did, he regretted his deed[45]. He wished to make things right[46]. Unfortunately, due to his shy personality and lacking confidence, Peter didn't dare to fight against the others. Instead, he – an action which befitted his character – fetched a teacher[47]. That emphasises, once again, Quinn's courage to act against the older students.

Later, when the students confronted him about why he called a teacher, he tried to solve it on his own[48]. Despite having decided to never betray his friends again, under the torture of others, he couldn't keep with the decision[49]. That shows that he isn't used to getting any help from others. Hence, he still stubbornly tries to solve everything on his own until he breaks.

Summarising, one can determine that these three characters still have a simple build and aren't yet entirely filled and rounded. Each of these characters has a distinct main trait: Quinn as a courageous adolescent boy who will stand up for his friends; Vorden as someone loyally supporting Quinn with the same sentiments and coming from a mysterious past; Peter as someone with a similar background as Quinn, but with an entirely different personality; hence, as to highlight Quinn's characteristics to the readers.

Finally, I speculate that Quinn's popularity will likely continue to grow, due to his courageous and heroic character, as long as he remains, to a certain extent, realistic. Vorden's popularity similarly will likely continue to grow. However, if his mystery is unveiled, it would become more difficult for him to continue growing in popularity. At least, as long as his character doesn't gain any more depth.

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43 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 41 f.
44 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 43
45 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 44
46 Ibid.
47 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 46 f.
48 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 49
49 Ibid.

4   Conclusion

Now to answer the initial question: Could Web-Novel rise just like how the Serial Novels has once done, due to Dickens – No, it can't. At least, not with a Web-Novel like "My Vampire System". That is not to say that the Web-Novel is terrible. In the end, it even has attracted a wide range of readers due to its unique setting and various characters. After all, many admire heroic spirits, love the unknown mystery, and are intoxicated from the future.

However, times have advanced, and technology progressed. We aren't limited any longer by the number of entertainments we have. As long as one medium doesn't wholly surpass another, it would be hard for the medium to take the whole cake of the market. During Dickens' time, there was a limited number of pleasures; hence, Serial Novels had an easier time to stand out. Unfortunately, Web-Novels can't yet surpass every other medium for entertainment and can now only fairly compete against them.

Although Web-Novels won't be able to explosively rise like how Serial Novels once did, for now, they still can slowly develop to grab a larger piece of the cake. After all, Web-Novels currently met most criteria of why "The Pickwick Papers" started the craze around Serial Novels. The only problem would be the business model of Webnovel. They aren't suitable for avid readers who read a lot. Due to that, many readers have been likely lost to the piracy-sites. Hence, to raise Web-Novels to a new high, a different model is required.

Nevertheless, one has to say that the current model is more suitable for slower development. With it, Web-Novels can gradually creep into our daily lives; each day, a few chapters as an occasional snack. That is only possible, thanks to the generally high release rates of the different Web-Novels.

For "My Vampire System" to kickstart another craze, it would require at least another character set. The current ones are simple and fun to read. However, precisely due to the simplicity, it is a fun read, but it lost difficult understandable intricate emotions. That isn't to say that they can't still develop them.

As for questions: What kind of business model is required, or how the characters have to be precisely for an explosive rise? That has to be researched in another Paper. At least, I will conclude this Research Paper here and leave with the statement: Web-Novels won't explosively rise yet as it has once done in the past, but it will slowly grow until it has its own fair share of the cake.

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type=1&novelType=0&categoryType=1&listType=0&rankId=power_rank&timeType=3&bookType=0&sex=-1&bookStatus=1 (Retrieved: 12.02.2020)

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Appendix

A   Screenshots

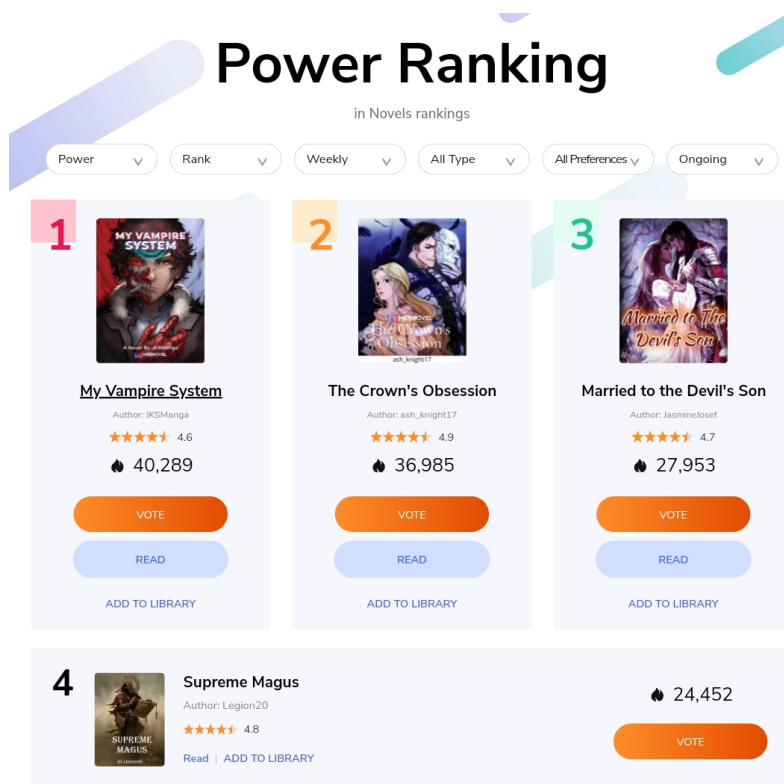**Figure 1:   The prices to buy Coins on Webnovel[50]**
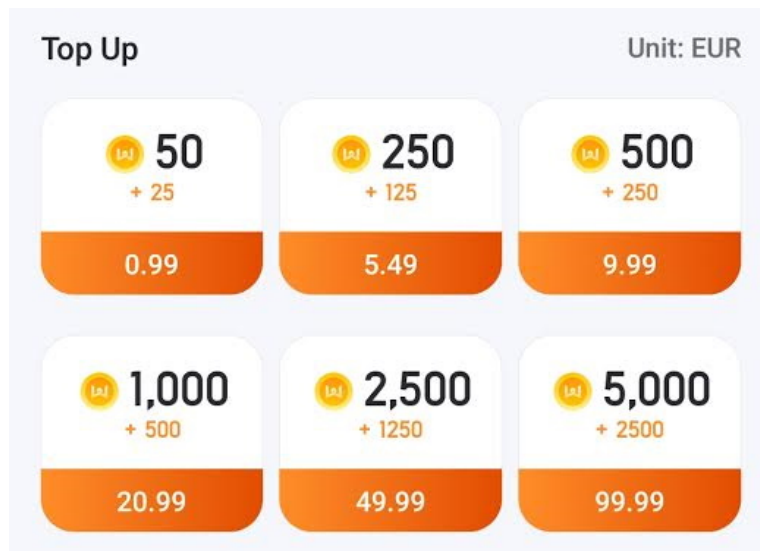
Figure 2:   Power Ranking at 11.02.2021[51]

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50 Cloudary: Webnovel (4.12.0) [Mobile App], 2021
51 Power Ranking. In Novels rankings, 2021
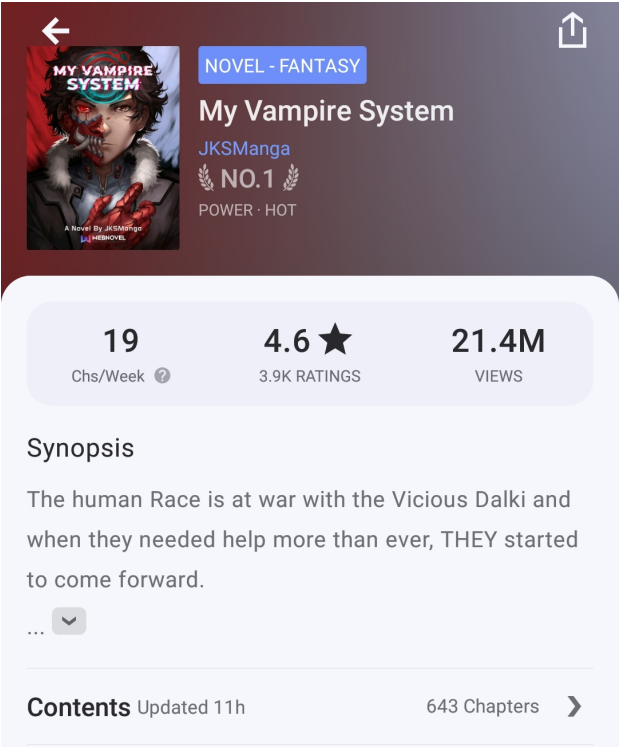
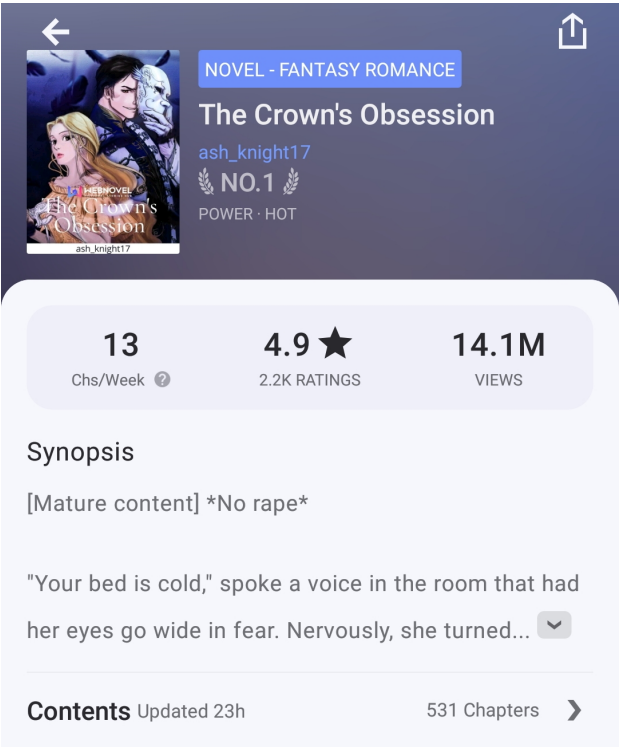**Figure 3:   My Vampire System[52]**

Figure 4   The Crown's Obsession[53]

52 JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021
53 ash_knight17: The Crown's Obsession, 2021

Figure 5   Married to the Devil's Son[54]

Figure 6   Supreme Magus[55]

54   JasmineJosef: Married to the Devil's Son, 2021
55   Legion20: Supreme Magus, 2021

B   Tabular

Figure 1   General Data of the Power Ranking's Top Four [56]

Rank	Name	Genre	Chapters	Chapter/Week
1	My Vampire System	Fantasy	643	19
2	The Crown's Obsession	Fantasy Romance	531	13
3	Married to the Devil's Son	Romance	207	3
4	Supreme Magus	Fantasy	1069	14

Figure 2   A Random Cost Survey of two Web-Novels[57]

Chapter	My Vampire System	The Crown's Obsession	
351	8	7	Coins
352	7	6	Coins
353	9	8	Coins
354	9	6	Coins
355	9	6	Coins
356	10	11	Coins
357	10	7	Coins
358	9	7	Coins
Average	**8.875**	**7.25**	*Coins*

Figure 3   A Random Cost Survey of two Web-Novels[58]

Chapter	Supreme Magus	Married to the Devil's Son	
170	11	7	Coins
171	11	7	Coins
172	12	8	Coins
173	8	7	Coins
174	12	8	Coins
175	11	11	Coins
176	12	9	Coins
177	10	9	Coins
Average	**10.875**	**8.25**	*Coins*

56 cf. Appendix A, Figure 2 – 6
57 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021; cf. ash_knight17: The Crown's Obsession, 2021
58 cf. Legion20: Supreme Magus, 2021; cf. JasmineJosef: Married to the Devil's Son, 2021

Figure 4   **Named Characters of "My Vampire System" (1 – 63)[59]**

Number	Character's Name	First Appearance
01	Quinn Talen	01. Chapter
02	Sergeant Griff	02. Chapter
03	Vorden Blade	04. Chapter
04	Peter Chuck	04. Chapter
05	Layla Munrow	04. Chapter
06	Erin Heley	04. Chapter
07	Jane	05. Chapter
08	Del	08. Chapter
09	Kyle Main	11. Chapter
10	Momo	14. Chapter
11	Rylee	15. Chapter
12	Dan	19. Chapter
13	Hayley	20. Chapter
14	Leo	28. Chapter
15	Brad Richardson	29. Chapter
16	Fei	30. Chapter
17	Loop Savy	30. Chapter
18	Raten	44. Chapter
19	Fay Dallum	46. Chapter
20	Duke King	47. Chapter
21	Nathan	48. Chapter
22	Earl	49. Chapter
23	Jerry	49. Chapter
24	Sam	54. Chapter
25	Nate	54. Chapter
26	Richard Eno	59. Chapter
27	Logan	63. Chapter

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59 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 1 – Chapter 63

C   Explanation

Figure 1   Webnovel's System of Free Passes, Coins, and Words

Chapters can be unlocked either through "Free Passes" or "Coins". The Coins are the official digital currency of Webnovel. On the other hand, Free Passes can be understood as a ticket, which grants a privilege. One can daily gain at least three Free Passes for free. However, Coins can only be purchased with actual money if there aren't any events running.

If one wishes to read a chapter with a paywall, one has to with Coins. The exact number of Coins may vary depending on the chapter length. As a common knowledge, at least amongst the older Webnovel-users, who are a bit interested in the happenings, a single Coin is worth around 200 words. However, the privilege a Free Pass can grant is to unlock one chapter unconditionally; the chapter's cost doesn't matter.

For example, a chapter ranging from 1401 to 1600 would cost eight coins. You can't just pay a part of it, let's say four, to read half of the chapter. You can only pay the total price or use a Fast Pass to read the entire chapter.

Figure 2   My Vampire System – Summary (1. Chapter – 63. Chapter)[60]

The story happens in a post-war and a pre-war time. An alien race, called the Dalki, has invaded Earth. At the brink of losing the war, humans with special abilities – supernatural powers like controlling fires, water, shape-shifting – appeared, which forced the Dalki's to draw a five-year peace treaty with mankind.

Despite having once freely spread the knowledge on how to gain such special abilities, they stopped it immediately after the war. Henceforth, only the high governmental official or rich peoples had strong special abilities. They only left the weaker special abilities for the commoners to buy. The strength of the supernatural power is classified into levels: With level 1 as the weakest special ability, they get, with each number higher, progressively stronger too.

Unfortunately, our main character, Quinn, a 16 years old orphan, doesn't even have the money to buy the weakest special ability. Hence, he got often bullied at school. Due to the influence of special abilities, society has developed to a place

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60 cf. JKSManga: My Vampire System, 2021, Chapter 1 – Chapter 63

where the strong ruled. In short, it is a hierarchy based upon power and nothing except power matters.

His parents have died in that war against the Dalkis, leaving him only a book behind. And through the book, he accidentally received a game-like System that gradually turns him into a Vampire.

Only shortly after activating the System, the military came to fetch him. Every individual is required to visit a military school for two years. There, he meets Vorden and Peter. Together with two others, they went through an assessment to evaluate their special abilities.

After that, they – Vorden, Peter, and Quinn – have quickly become friends. However, due to the military's arrangement, the level of one's special abilities is openly shown to everyone. Hence, it quickly spread that a high-level special ability user befriended low-level users.

The older students didn't like that as it broke the social hierarchy. Nevertheless, they only warned Vorden and his friends and didn't do anything at first. Still, other students with weak abilities came to bother Peter and Quinn as they are even weaker than them.

At the same time, Quinn had to overcome, besides the harassment of others, his own personal problems, which the game-like System put him through, for example, weakness in the sun or the thirst after blood.

When the older students notice that Vorden didn't listen to them, they went to Peter. Driven by his fear, Peter cooperated with them to lure Vorden into a trap. Subsequently, the older students gathered the new students to witness what would happen if one went against social hierarchy. They should all throw a metal ball at Vorden, who is bound to a target. Quinn couldn't accept that; hence, he fought against the older students.

Peter, who saw that, used to the ensuing chaos to escape and call a teacher. Later, the students came to Peter and questioned him. Despite having decided to never betray his friends again, at first, he quickly gave in under the torture of the students. He didn't wish to experience any more pain. Therefore, with the help of the older students, he set another trap. Peter called Quinn and Vorden to a usually restricted location. There. he quickly pushed Quinn into a portal, which teleported him to another unexplored planet.

And with that, the initial free chapters end.

Declaration

Hiermit erkläre ich, dass ich diese Arbeit selbstständig verfasst und keine anderen Quellen und Hilfsmittel als die angegebenen benutzt und die Stellen der Arbeit. Die anderen Werken dem Wortlaut oder dem Sinn nach entnommen sind, in jedem einzelnen Fall unter Angabe der Quelle als Entlehnung kenntlich gemacht habe. Das gilt auch für Abbildungen, Zeichnungen, Kartenskizzen und Darstellungen.

Köln, den 22.02.2021 _____

(Unterschrift)