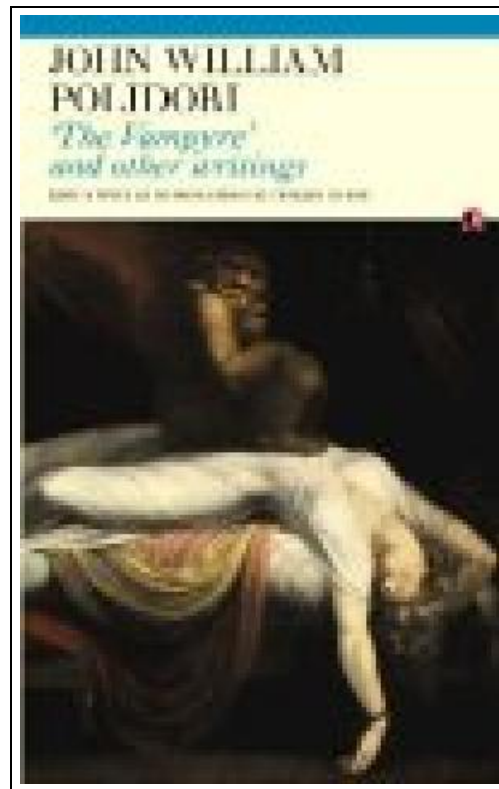


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Carcenet Press Ltd, United Kingdom, 2006. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. June 18. Began my ghost story after tea. Twelve o'clock, really began to talk ghostly. [Lord Byron] repeated some verses of Coleridge's Christabel, of the witch's breast; when silence ensued, and Shelley, suddenly shrieking and putting his hands to his head, ran out of the room with a candle. (from the Diary of Dr John William Polidori, 1816). So John William Polidori (1795-1821) records one of the most famous storytelling evenings in English literature, the stormy night at the Villa Diodati that was the source of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein and his own tale The Vampyre, as well as his Gothic novel Ernestus Berchtold. Polidori's still compelling works, included here in full, created figures of seductive evil that continue to exert a powerful hold over literature and popular culture. In addition, this collection makes available some of Polidori's fascinating lesser-known works such as his medical thesis on nightmares, his pamphlet on the death penalty, his poetry and diary. Many of these have not been republished since the nineteenth century. Now Polidori emerges from the shadows, an impetuous, sensitive writer with a sometimes fierce talent. His encounters with Byron, Shelley and their circle contributed to his fame and notoriety, and to his neglect, since they outshone him. Here he can be read by his own mysterious taper. Franklin Bishop's introduction describes the context in which The Vampyre was written and deepens our understanding of Romanticism and the Gothic.

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