



## Vathek (Oxford World's Classics)

*William Beckford, Thomas Keymer*

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**Vathek (Oxford World's Classics)** William Beckford, Thomas Keymer

**"Woe to the rash mortal who seeks to know that of which he should remain ignorant; and to undertake that which surpasseth his power!"**

One of the strangest and most unforgettable eighteenth-century novels, *Vathek* is a wild Gothic fantasy whose sensuous imagination and grotesque comedy have inspired writers from Byron to Lovecraft. The Caliph *Vathek* is dissolute and debauched, and hungry for knowledge. When the mysterious *Giaour* offers him boundless treasure and unrivalled power he is willing to sacrifice his god, the lives of innocent children, and his own soul to satisfy his obsession. *Vathek's* extraordinary journey to the subterranean palace of *Eblis*, and the terrifying fate that there awaits him, is a captivating tale of magic and oriental fantasy, sudden violence and corrupted love, whose mix of moral fable, grotesque comedy, and evocative beauty defies classification.

This new edition reprints Beckford's authorized English text of 1816 with its elaborate and entertaining notes. In his new Introduction, Thomas Keymer pays special attention to the novel's literary qualities, its hybrid nature and its connections with oriental fiction and the Gothic as well as to its origins and Beckford's scandalous public persona. Completely reset, the second edition includes new, fuller notes, an up-to-date bibliography, and a new chronology of the author.

**About the Series:** For over 100 years **Oxford World's Classics** has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

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