

From Monster

By Don Zolidis

LORD BYRON, 27

JOHN POLIDORI, 21, a physician.

1816. *JOHN has his medical case out. LORD BYRON is writing in his book.*

LORD BYRON

Are you planning on finding it within this century?

JOHN

Apologies. A ha.

He produces a bottle of laudanum.

LORD BYRON

Would you care for some?

JOHN

No, I had hoped to do some studying this afternoon, and I find it impairs my mind.

LORD BYRON

Pity.

JOHN measures out a quantity of the drug and hands it to BYRON, who drinks it.
Apothecary, thy drugs are quick.

JOHN

There are those who swear that it improves the imagination. I hear Coleridge wrote –

LORD BYRON

Yes, yes. Kubla Khan was written after an opium dream. Yes.

JOHN

Does it aid you?

LORD BYRON

Not at all.

JOHN takes out his diary.

JOHN

That story you wrote. What is it called?

LORD BYRON

A fragment. It may need a better title. And an ending. Among other things.

JOHN

No what is the creature called? The – undead thing.

LORD BYRON

Oh. A vampire. It's a... Hungarian myth. I find that when one needs something truly horrifying, Hungary is a good place to start. What are you writing there? Another story about a woman with a skull in her head?

JOHN

Diary.

LORD BYRON

Ah.

JOHN

I received a commission to record my travels.

LORD BYRON

With me?

JOHN

Indeed.

LORD BYRON

You're recording your travels with me.

JOHN

Yes.

LORD BYRON

So that they might be published?

JOHN

The public has an appetite not unlike your vampire.

LORD BYRON

Let me see it.

JOHN hands him the diary.

June 21st. Storms and ghost stories. Claire Claremont visited Lord Byron in his chamber after midnight. After some discussion, they were silent, and the noises I heard were shrieks of pleasure as Lord Byron undoubtedly ravaged the young lady.

He looks up.

Twice. I ravaged her twice.

JOHN

I shall amend it.

LORD BYRON

Those were my shrieks of pleasure, by the way. She groans in a rather guttural fashion. Much like a horse. I am a stickler for accuracy.

He tosses the book back to JOHN.

I imagine the more salacious my behavior, the more copies it will sell?

JOHN

That seems to be the way with these things.

LORD BYRON

Then perhaps, John, we ought to do something truly villainous.

LORD BYRON runs a finger down JOHN's cheek.

JOHN

My lord.

LORD BYRON

Let's write this next entry together, shall we?

JOHN

LORD BYRON

After taking a quantity of laudanum, Lord Byron's mood improved greatly.

LORD BYRON strokes JOHN.

As his manhood had sprung to life, I felt compelled to place my lips upon his cock.

JOHN

JOHN turns away from him.