



## The Journal of William Beckford in Portugal and Spain, 1787-1788

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Known as the "Fool of Fonthill" for his eccentricity, William Beckford was ostracized by polite society after being accused of having an improper relationship with a young boy, and soon after was forced to flee England. In early 1787 he arrived in Lisbon, the first stop on a journey to his plantations in Jamaica, but due to terrible sea-sickness, he decided to stay. However, despite his popularity with the Portuguese nobility, the scandal that had forced him to leave England again forced him to move on to Spain in November 1787. Here, in true Beckford style, he became entangled with an older married woman, a young married girl, and a twelve-year-old boy all at the same time. The account of his Iberian sojourn is at times scathing but often witty, as Beckford in turns bemoans his lot and then rhapsodizes about a new love affair. *The Journal of William Beckford* provides a fascinating and entertaining account of Beckford's time in Portugal and Spain, while offering a tantalizing glimpse into the life of someone famous for his hedonistic and unconventional behavior.

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