

# Woman and the Devil

in sixteenth-century  
literature



Lucy de Bruyn

## COMPTON PRESS

This is a detailed study in comparative literature that covers not only English sources but also Dutch, German and other Continental contributions. The role of Woman is currently much debated and it is amusing to note that the male ideal of a creature 'Faire, kinde and true' has always had its alternatives.

The ideal was refuted in the Wanton who proved false to her own nature and in the Witch whose blear-eyed and wrinkled appearance, obscure habits and revengeful attitude of mind could hardly be named fair. The Shrew's hostile and envious disposition lacked all traces of kindness. The Devil always turned to the weaker members of the female sex; he won the Wanton through the new luxuries and freedoms of the Renaissance; he entered into a close physical relationship with the Witch, who drew her powers from him. Unable to cope with the sharp tongue and waspish disposition of the Shrew the Devil attempted to humour her.

This is a work of scholarship but its interest is as universal as its relevance to the attitudes of today.

LUCY DE BRUYN, MA, a lecturer in English, has had a varied and adventurous career. She has travelled extensively, climbing the Andes and sleeping in the jungle.

In the 1950s she was a student at London and Oxford Universities, returning to King's in the Strand in 1962 as a research student. Since then, she has lectured in English and Drama at various colleges in England and abroad, and is a fellow of London House Trust for Overseas Graduates.

Miss de Bruyn's special interests are comparative religion, culture and literature. Recently she has become involved in research on Anglo-Dutch relations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which happens also to be the starting point in *Woman and the Devil*.

Woman and the Devil  
in Sixteenth Century Literature

Lucy de Bruyn

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My dear Maria,

Imagine my surprise and pleasure when I woke up a couple of days ago, turned on the 7 o'clock news and - there it was! Many congratulations and may you bring much happiness to warm and beautiful Portugal. If ever you should want to come to London to meet Mrs. Thatcher, Kew (above address) is not far off and you will always be welcome. I have a spare room and I can promise you that you will not be 'pestered' with reporters!

Enclosed is one of the paper cuttings from the English Dailies plus a 'flyer' of my bad book in case you are interested. It seems so very long ago since we met and you showed such an interest in English literature.

May God bless you and Portugal  
and help you to solve all problems attached to the post.

With much love,

as always,

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

