



The Angel and the Perverts (The Cutting Edge: Lesbian Life and Literature Series)

By Lucie Delarue-Mardrus

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The Angel and the Perverts (The Cutting Edge: Lesbian Life and Literature Series) By Lucie Delarue-Mardrus

Set in the lesbian and gay circles of Paris in the 1920s, *The Angel and the Perverts* tells the story of a hermaphrodite born to upper class parents in Normandy and ignorant of his/her physical difference. As an adult, s/he lives a double life as Marion/Mario, passing undetected as a lesbian in the literary salons of the times, and as a gay man in the cocaine dens made famous by Colette.

Delarue-Mardrus's novel belongs to a category of literature, written between the turn of the century and approximately 1930, which depicted lesbians as members of a third sex. The hermaphrodite became the visual representation of the ways in which lesbians were different from their heterosexual sisters, and Rene Vivien, Natalie Clifford Barney, Rachilde, and Colette, among others, shared Delarue-Mardrus's fascination with the topic.

This is the first translation into English of *The Angel and the Perverts*. In an astute introduction, Anna Livia rereads Lucie Delarue-Mardrus as a prolific and significant writer, despite the fact that previous scholars viewed her primarily as the wife of the scholar and translator Joseph-Charles Mardrus. Livia also places Delarue-Mardrus's life in a lesbian context for the first time and decodes this delightful novel so that readers will feel quite at home in Mario/Marion's unusual world, which runs the gamut from Auguste Rodin to Jean Cocteau and Sarah Bernhardt.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Lucie Delarue-Mardrus lived during the golden age of lesbian literature: Paris in the 1920s. Her work, like that of her pals Renee Vivien, Sarah Bernhardt, and Natalie Barney, explores the boundaries of gender, sex, and desire. This first English translation of *The Angel and the Perverts* tells the story of Marion/Mario, a hermaphrodite who travels as easily through lesbian salons as s/he does through gay men's dope dens. The rediscovery of this lost classic contributes much to contemporary gender studies. And the plot and style are a hoot.

Review

"*The Angel and the Perverts*, admirably translated by Anna Livia, offers a glimpse into the subculture of gender ambiguity that was the origin point for today's lesbian and gay communities. As the question concerning the relationship between homosexuality and gender difference is once again being raised, Delarue-Mardrus' novel no longer seems an anachronistic apologia from a more closeted era, but an intriguing exploration of identities that take gender difference, rather than sexuality, as their starting point."

-Will Roscoe, author of *The Zuni Man-Woman*

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: French

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Peter Tesch:

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