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Durian Gray, Medlar Lucan
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Durian Gray, Medlar Lucan : The Decadent Gardener (Dedalus Literary Concept Books) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Decadent Gardener (Dedalus Literary Concept Books):

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A garden of earthly delights. By James Ferguson A wonderfully perverse book on gardening, focusing on the more fecund aspects of horticulture. Not quite sure if Lucan and Gray are

fictional or real, but it doesn't really matter, as this book abounds in allegorical delights, as the two attempt to design a garden in the decadent spirits of the past on a large English estate. What follows is a free flow of thought on gardening down through the ages, with a special attention to the more perverse aspects. One is guided through various stages of development, focusing on love, torture, death, wisdom, etc. One wishes there were more photographs and drawings, but the authors kept that to a minimum. The imagination still stirs in reading these accounts of a garden in progress, until the parish priest closes down the whole affair after the staging of a ribald play. This book is as much a novel as it is a book on gardening, carried by the delightful personalities of Lucan and Gray. It is guaranteed to stimulate your creative drive.

"There is an odd, subversive book called *The Decadent Gardener* by Medlar Lucan and Durian Gray. The introduction describes the decadent gardening ethos thus: 'In the garden, the decadent seeks to create a moment of beauty, which should be allowed to fall into decay and ruin.' Gardening, Lucan and Gray believe, is 'little more than systematic violence in pursuit of beauty', and the gardener is first and foremost a sadist. These two, the Kropotkin and De Sade of horticulture, understand that 'nowhere are sex and death more intimately bound together than in the garden.' For them the garden is a place of 'agony, self-doubt and betrayal.' They remind us that, if we are to believe the Bible - not that they would be inclined to - the first murder was carried out by a gardener. And the first garden was a place where sin beckoned wherever you turned. The book abounds with piercing, pricking truths. The flower, they remind us, for example, is nothing but a sexual organ. The Decadent Garden consists of the plans for a series of thematic gardens that Lucan and Gray had conceived for a wealthy patroness. Each garden would symbolise an aspect of nature as they saw it. The Cruel Garden would consist largely of impenetrable thickets of thorns. The Fatal Garden would contain only representatives of the vegetable world's many poisonous denizens: among them, black bryony, dropwort and, of course, deadly nightshade. In the Narcotic Garden, by the side of the opium poppy and cannabis sativa, would grow more obscure mind-altering plants such as mandrake, henbane and thornapple. The Priapic Garden would be populated by those species whose flowers and foliage assumed the most suggestive phallic and vulvic shapes. Their Torture Garden carried the libertine ideas of Lucan and Gray furthest and is perhaps best left to the reader's imagination. Because Lucan and Gray barely realised their designs (they were too decadent to bother), their gardens flourish mainly in the mind."

About the Author Author