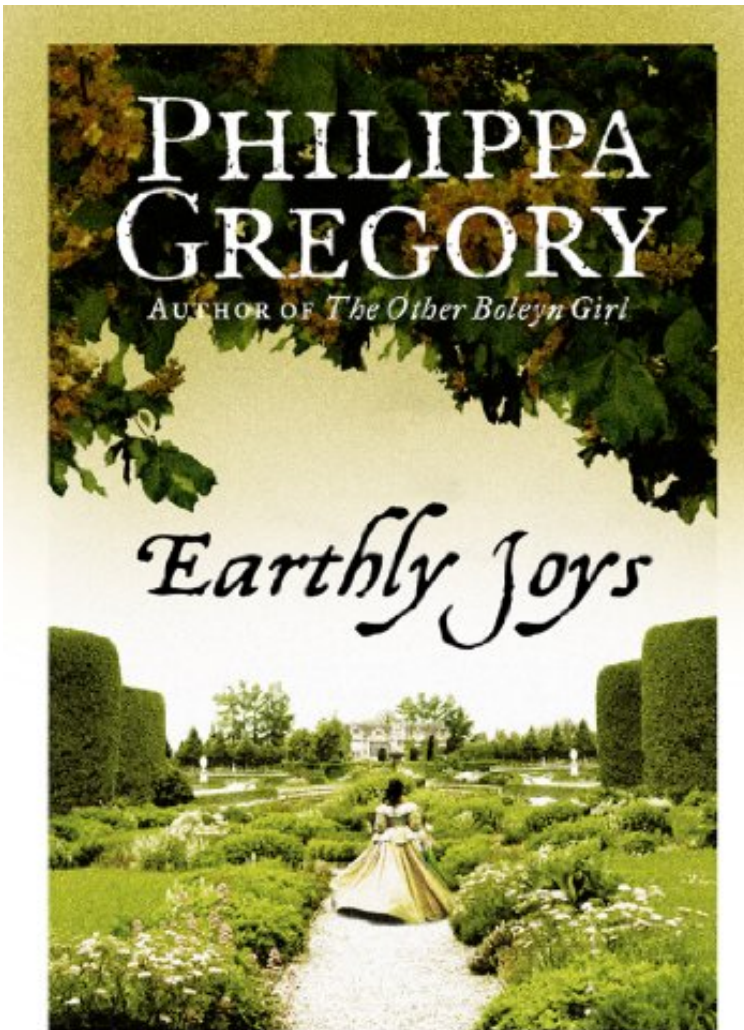


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# Earthly Joys



*Par Philippa Gregory*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurSweeping historical novel from Philippa Gregory the author of *The Other Boleyn Girl* and *The Virgins Lover*. Set in the 1600s and seen through the eyes of John Tradescant, gardener to the great men of the age.A traveller in a time of discovery, the greatest gardening pioneer of his day, yet a man of humble birth: John Tradescants story is a mirror to the extraordinary age in which he lives.As gardener and confidante to Sir Robert Cecil, Tradescant is well placed to observe the social and political changes that are about to sweep through the kingdom. While his master conjures intrigues at Court, Tradescant designs for him the magnificent garden at Hatfield, scouring the known world for ever more wonderful plants: new varieties of fruit and flower, the first horse chestnuts to be cultivated in England, even larches from Russia.Moving to the household of the flamboyant Duke of Buckingham, Tradescant witnesses at first hand the growing division between Parliament and the people; and the most loyal of servants must find a way to

become an independent squire. From Publishers Weekly Seventeenth-century England is the setting for this engaging historical novel based on the life of John Tradescant, a gardener of common birth who transforms plain plots of land into slices of heaven on earth. As vassal to the secretary of state, Sir Robert Cecil, Tradescant who, as fate would have it, had no sense of smell places his master's garden above all else, much to the chagrin of his wife, Elizabeth, and young son, J. Tradescant's affinity for botanicals is matched by his thirst for adventure; in the service of his lord, he travels to distant lands to defend his country's honor (and collect cuttings of rare and exotic plants). When Tradescant is summoned by King James I's closest confidante, the dark-haired and devious Duke of Buckingham, he is immediately taken by the nobleman's beauty. Devotion soon turns to erotic obsession, and Tradescant must face the consequences of loving a fickle, heartless man. Gregory (The Virgin's Lover; The Other Boleyn Girl) renders lush details of plants and clever commentary on the passions and power plays of the British royal court. Only the occasional detail-heavy battle scene slows this vibrant tale of a man grappling with the liabilities of loyalty and love.

Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Library Journal John Tradescant, gardener to Lord Cecil, depends on a well-ordered universe in which he serves a master, who serves the crown, who serves God. When James I succeeds Elizabeth, the social fabric begins to unravel. The disastrous rule of Charles I stirs more discontent among the people, including John's wife and son. As he searches for new plants and creates fabulous gardens for wealthy patrons, John witnesses court dissipation and corruption. His loyalty to Lord Buckingham, a man unsurpassed in beauty, ambition, and self-indulgence, changes John from servant to lover, bringing him guilt as well as pleasure before Buckingham's rejection. Gregory's (The Little House, LJ 10/1/96) strong plotting, intriguing characters, and rich evocation of a time and place will leave readers eager for the promised sequel about John's son. Highly recommended for historical fiction collections. ?Kathy Piehl, Mankato State Univ., MN Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.