



## Entertainment :: Theatre

### Snake In The Grass

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I'll admit. I scare easy. But I wasn't the only one gasping for breath or reaching for my Plus One's hand. Theatre Three's production of Alan Ayckbourn's **Snake in the Grass** (being performed in their small performance space Theatre Too) is scary, great fun, especially considering the time of year and all. The tricky part is trying to decide how much to heart one should take the serious bits considering there are just as many silly ones as well.

The show is, on the surface, about two sisters, their dead father, and his will. But more than that, the show is about love and honesty and abuse and trust. It's also about zombies. Kind of. Herein lies my confusion. Lisa Fairchild and Cindee Mayfield as sisters Miriam and Annabel respectively are marvelous and moving. It is hard not to feel for these women for whom life has been little more than survival at the hands of various abusers.

Miriam stays home to care for her sick father. She reveals a history of sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse and eventually kills the sick old man, quadrupling his pills, removing the light bulbs, and pushing him down

the stairs. She has given up her life for him and so eventually makes him pay with his own. Annabel abandons her sister and ailing father in attempt to preserve her own well-being only to find herself in a relationship with an abusive husband. Life has not been kind to these women.

Then enters Alice Moody, fantastically played by Lydia Mackay. Once the old man's nurse now the blackmailer with knowledge that the old man's death was no accident. Quickly the plot thickens. What are the women to do? It seems as if they have their freedom at last. Abusive father gone. Inheritance to live upon. How they handle the new "complication" is shocking and hilarious.

As a whole, the show exudes a great deal of heart and humor. But it serves up a generous dose of fear too. Mysterious sounds, phantom tennis balls, tinkling wind chimes. I won't ruin the end for you. But I will tell you that there's a twist and then a twist on the twist and then one final curve ball before the creepiness finally draws to a close. The set, lighting, and sound design by David Walsh, Paul Arnold, and Marco E. Salinas respectively go a long way to set the eerie scene.

Snake in the Grass is a must-see being as it is the season of ghosts and ghouls and all. But watch your wine glass and your step. And be sure to keep a lookout behind you. There are lots of laughs to be had and heart strings to be pulled. But plenty of wicked this way comes as well...

**Snake in the Grass** continues through November 15, 2009 at Theatre Three (Theatre Too basement space), 2800 Routh St. in the Quadrangle. \$25-\$30. 214-871-3300, ext. 1. [www.theatre3dallas.com](http://www.theatre3dallas.com).

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