

now playing



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Please Don't Ask About Becket reviewed by Rob Stevens

Not many among us have a twin but most have a sibling we are close with, that we admire, that we would do anything they ask of us. Over and over again until we might reach that breaking point. When we say "enough already". That sibling is usually the family's "golden child," the one who can do no wrong in the eyes of their doting parents. Such a family is the focus of Wendy Graf's new play, *Please Don't Ask About Becket*, being given its World Premiere by Electric Footlights.



Hunter Garner and Rachel Seiferth (all photos by Ed Krieger)

The Diamonds, Rob (Rob Nagle) and Grace (Deborah Puette), are a Hollywood power couple. He runs a major studio and she is the perfect wife and partner. Before amniocentesis, they were surprised by the birth of twins. The children, Emily (Rachel Seiferth) and younger brother Becket (Hunter Garner), are inseparable as they play explorer, or attend high school or summer camps on opposite shores of a Wisconsin lake. It's at summer camp where Becket first gets into trouble, caught smoking marijuana. His father's influence and money get him out of scrape after scrape—DUI, failing grades, admission into USC, a job in the industry. The offenses continue to escalate and at times Becket seems bent on self-destruction. Finally he commits an act from which even he feels he can't escape the consequences. The family is finally irrevocably torn asunder.



Deborah Puette and Rachel Seiferth

This familial tale is told by Emily in flashbacks until the coda at age 50. Emily never had a chance to shine with Becket's larger than life persona. His devoted mother always placed him first. Her first real alone time for mother and daughter comes on a trip to get Emily settled at Northwestern University. His father also put his son first because that's what fathers do. Emily may be the daughter he could smoke pot with, but Becket was his future heritage.



Hunter Garner and Rob Nagle

The quartet of actors is splendid under the assured and unfussy direction of Kiff Scholl. He lets Graf's words and his cast's talents deliver the goods. Seifert is exceptional as Emily, gently pulling the audience into her story, making them feel her joy, her pain, her frustration. Garner has the perfect looks and demeanor of that young male that gets all the attention, simply by being himself. Nagle and Puette offer fine support by avoiding the clichés of the over-protective parent.



Sacred Fools Theater Black Box, 6322 Santa Monica Blvd. in Hollywood. Ends Sept. 18. 323-960-7745 or www.plays411.com/becket