

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

# *Dreary and Izzy* 'too human' for pat ending

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With the word “dreary” right there in the title, Western Canada Theatre’s season-opening *Dreary and Izzy* doesn’t prime audiences for a laugh riot.

But, despite some heavy subject matter that includes, at various moments, death, racism, fetal alcohol syndrome and abuse, the latest offering from director and playwright Tara Beagan is, at its core, surprisingly sweet and funny.

When their parents die in a car crash, Deirdre and Isabelle are left to fend for themselves.

Or, rather, Deirdre is left to look after her adopted older sister Isabelle, who has fetal alcohol syndrome — though the play, set in 1970s Alberta, doesn’t refer to it quite so directly.

The sisters’ relationship anchors the play, and actors Roseanne Supernault (Isabelle) and Dakota Hebert (Deirdre) bring an easy, familiar chemistry to their scenes together. Even in the play’s most challenging moments, the bond between the two characters shines through.

Supernault delivers a particularly captivating — and, at times, monumentally uncomfortable — performance in her role as Isabelle, making the character feel rounded and three-dimensional and not at all cliché.

Rather than disrupt the sisterly bond, Garret Smith slips easily into the plot in the role of love interest and vacuum salesman Freddie Seven Horses.

His budding relationship with Deirdre, which straddles the line between adorable and the kind of sweet awkwardness best watched through your fingers with your hands over your face, is the outlet that keeps the play whipping along despite its heavy backdrop and approximately two and a half

hour run time.

But, don’t mistake *Dreary and Izzy* for a show with a happy ending.

It’s a script that trusts its audience — when Deirdre asks Freddie why his friends in Lethbridge resent him for going to Toronto for university he replies, simply, “have you ever heard of an apple?”

*Dreary and Izzy* leaves the audience with plenty to think about and few easy answers, but is better for it.

It’s a play that’s too realistic and too human for a pat ending.

*Dreary and Izzy* runs until Saturday, Sept. 28 at the Pavillion Theatre.

Tickets are at the Kamloops Live Box Office, 1025 Lorne St., 250-374-5483, or online at [kamloopslive.ca](http://kamloopslive.ca).