

Graceless at Capital Fringe

Max
Kaplow

Aaron, the Mayor of Anderson, South Carolina doesn't abuse power, power abuses him. Caught in the middle of a sexual harassment scandal, Aaron, his sister/chief of staff Nancy, and his no-bullshit wife Arya attempt to clear his name in time for reelection. The tagline for Tom Slot's political drama is *In politics, never let them see you bleed*, but for this naïve southern gentleman, the only thing he seems to do right is shed his own blood.

Graceless is a simple production set in a complicated world, and the production is better for it.

The entire play unfolds in Aaron's office, but is made more accessible because the stage is circular, with the audience peering in from all sides. Nancy is a fast-talking, frenzied, but undeniably smart and effective chief of staff, quick to tell Aaron what he needs to hear, even though it's usually not what he wants to. Arya is a bona fide career woman, eyes set on being a partner at her law firm, and she'll be damned if Aaron's scandal will slip her up. The Mayor, known as "the last boy scout in politics" comes under fire when he is accused of sexually harassing a former student. But if Aaron is a Boy Scout then it's an insult to Boy Scouts everywhere.



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Graceless

by Tom Slot

Directed by Sarah M. Chichester

[Details and tickets](#)

Spineless and cowardly, Aaron cringes at coarse language and is always quick to pray for his Lord and Savior's help, but as his support system crumbles, God might have given up on him too. Nancy calls him a pushover; Aaron replies he is a gentleman, to which she muses, "What's the difference?" Their investigation into Vera Gardner, the accuser, comes back with nothing, she's clean, and all hope seems lost. Smooth talking and lethal, Governor Grace, an old friend and even older fling, gives Aaron the dirt he needs to take out Gardner, but on one condition: that he accepts a Senatorial appointment.

Josh Krebs's Aaron may be the center of the story, but the play belongs to the strong performances by the three actresses, Elizabeth Pegg, Lauren D. Salvo, and Amanda Rodhe. They each have a fire, a passion that contrasts

effectively the inept Mayor.

We are used to seeing man dominate the political world, in *Graceless* we see man dominated not just by politics, but by women. The effect is less emasculating for Aaron than it is empowering for the female leads. The dialogue is quick, explosive, and laden with a generous amount of humor. This world feels lived in, researched, and is believable because of it.

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