

Story better than soap opera

Seeds of Yesterday
V.C. Andrews
Pocket Books (\$3.95)

The fourth and last book in the Dollanganger series by V.C. Andrews, *Seeds of Yesterday*, nearly rivals the first — *Flowers in the Attic* — for literary brilliance. Andrews has consistently held onto the same straightforward style through the series, and even in the non-series book *My Sweet Audrina*.

The books are basically four chapters in the life of Cathy Dollanganger, who narrates the series, and her brother Christopher. They were locked in an attic with their twin brother and sister by their mother, Corrine, who eventually betrays them, and a wicked, rich grandmother who they need to obey to survive. It is during this period that Chris and Cathy begin having an incestuous love affair which will last their lifetime. This is very similar to their mother's romance and marriage to her young uncle, their father.

The second book, *Petals on the Wind*, takes place after the three living children escape and is about Cathy's rise to fame as a ballerina, her two marriages, the birth of her sons, Jory and Bart and the suicide of her sister Carrie.

If There Be Thorns tells how Bart becomes unstable because of his knowledge that his mother is having an affair with her brother and is living with him as though they were a "married" couple. Cathy finally forgives her mother for locking her up and ruining her childhood.

Seeds of Yesterday takes place when Chris and Cathy are in their 50s. Jory has married his childhood sweetheart and fellow ballet dancer Melodie. Bart is about to "come into his own" by Corrine's will. Bart rebuilt Foxworth Hall, the building with the attic which later burned down, and furnished it exactly as it had been. Bart has taken in Joel, Corrine's long-lost brother everyone thought had died years ago. Bart persuades Cathy, Chris, Jory, Melodie, and his adopted sister to return for his 25th birthday party. That's when the fun begins.

Bart, never quite fully recovered

from his childhood bouts of terminal cruelty, cripples Jory, steals his wife, beats his sister and her many boyfriends, gets drunk a lot, and constantly visits ladies of the night. He also has a deep-seeded need to see Cathy without Chris.

Joel is not the most pleasant of characters, either. He sneaks around the house to spy on people, especially Cathy, and instills in Jory's children the idea they are "devil's spawn." Needless to say Cathy and Joel always are at odds with each other. This is typical of their encounters:

"Out of the dark near the shrubbery, Joel spoke out. There are some who say that lost souls inhabit the bodies of loons."

"I asked sharply, turning to stare at him, 'What is a lost soul, Joel?'"

"His benign voice said softly, 'Those who can't find peace in their graves, Catherine. Those who hesitate between Heaven and Hell, looking back to the time on earth to see what they left unfinished. By looking back, they are trapped forever, or at least until their life's work is done.'"

"I shivered as if a cold wind blew from the cemetery."

There is always an underlying sense of foreboding and evil in this book. There also is strong foreshadowing of *Seeds of Yesterday* from *Flowers in the Attic*. The Dollangangers being locked in the attic is compared to Jory's confinement to his room and wheelchair. Cathy's stifled puberty, by her grandmother, is like Cindy's sexuality being stifled by Bart. Maybe the most obvious foreshadowing is in Corrine's betrayal of her children and Melodie's of Jory and their children.

Andrews' writing is such that her books are easy to pick up and read for a few minutes at a time. That is, if one can do that. Her style is like that of a soap opera — there is always a hook to bring the viewer back. But Andrews' books are better than soap operas. They can be read any time and she makes both her story and her characters believable.

Seeds of Yesterday is a reading must for everyone.

—Stephanie Zink

'Deathtrap' proves worthy...

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Helga Ten Dorp, the Dutch/German/Russian/Swedish/Chinese Elmer Fudd of a psychic, wasn't as confusing — just plain old obnoxious. Ten Dorp and Porter Milgram must have learned their blocking from a Marine drill instructor and Ten Dorp's voice was very rigid. She had no pitch deviation and everything was delivered loudly, but not clearly. Ten Dorp was supposed to be comic. Granted, some of the less discerning audience was laughing with her, but many just laughed at her.

Milgram handled his accent much better than much of the rest of the cast, but even he was a bit stiff.

The only natural performance was given by Heckman as Sidney. Sidney didn't push his voice, he was able to handle the humor and played off the other actors as much as was humanly possible.

He wasn't great, though. He just seemed wonderful compared to the rest of the cast and production.

The technical aspects of the play left much to be desired. During a thunderstorm, lightning was provided by a flashlight or something similarly effective, and the rain sounded as if it were rice being shaken in a pan.

Sidney's collection of weapons was a neat addition, but the rest of the set seemed half-finished or trite.

The play continues this weekend at the Lincoln Community Playhouse, 2500 S. 56th St.

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Poet says arts...

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She started teaching because "poets can't support themselves writing, and you have to decide what you're going to do. I love sharing writing and literature with people, and working with people," she said.

For beginning writers who are fearful of poetry classes, Sornberger would recommend that they "meet the person (who teaches the class) and find

out what their approach is to teaching."

"I'd like to encourage people who are interested in poetry to read everything they can get their hands on, to buy small literary magazines and poetry books. The little magazines are the places where real poetry is happening. These are hard times for the arts, and harder for poetry than for the performing arts," Sornberger said.

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