



Teacher Wiggins and Reverend Ambrose (Torrey B. Lawrence and Antuan D. Hawkins) lock horns over a condemned man's soul in *A Lesson Before Dying*.

PHOTO BY MEGAN NERZ

*don't have—*

I would hate for you to ever have to see the things I've seen. I know we've had some really, really bad things happen. I know we have a system that's willing to kill innocent people in order to keep the secret that they were innocent.

*If there's a moment in that play you could say, "There, they really got it right..."*

The whole play, really. One of the worst parts of the play for me was where they find out that the guy is actually innocent. We saw the cop was sitting there. He's heard that he was innocent. He hears every bit of it. He hangs his head—and he's sad to hear it.

But he doesn't run to the sheriff. He doesn't run to the courthouse. And that's exactly

the way things worked for me.

Everybody heard it. Everybody knew it. But nobody did anything about it.

That's got to be one of the most accurate parts of the play for me.

*If I ask you what the show got right, I have to ask you what doesn't show up on stage—maybe what can't show up there.*

The pain of the person that's innocent sent to Death Row. The pain his loved ones and parents have to go through. When an innocent person is sent to Death Row, you're creating two victims. The person that was killed and the person sent to death row to die.

I don't think there's any way to convey that pain I went through on Death Row. ■