

HBO's hit series *Succession* now streaming, exclusively on Showmax

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"This is the thing about being rich: it's f*ing great," says Matthew McFadyen in HBO's latest hit, [Succession](#), a show that suggests just the opposite in its skewering of the Roy family, one of the biggest media and entertainment conglomerates in the world. [Watch it now »](#)



McFadyen, in a slimy, sycophantic role miles away from Mr Darcy in *Pride & Prejudice*, is joined by a stellar cast that includes Emmy-winner Brian Cox (*War & Peace*) as the ageing patriarch; Hiam Abbass (*Blade Runner 2049*) as his third wife; and Golden Globe nominee Kieran Culkin (*Igby Goes Down*), Jeremy Strong (*The Big Short*), Alan Ruck (*Ferris Bueller's Day Off*) and Sarah Snook (*Steve Jobs*) as the children in the line of succession now that their father is starting to step back from the company. If you think the Lannisters are bad, meet the Roys...

Streaming exclusively on [Showmax](#), *Succession* is currently at number 32 on IMDB's Most Popular TV chart, has an 82% critics rating on Rotten Tomatoes, and has been hailed as everything from "my favourite show of the summer... the only thing I've been able to think about" by Vox to "King Lear for the modern media age" by The Telegraph.

Appropriately for a show about the 1% of the 1%, *Succession*'s credits boast an embarrassment of riches. Creator Jesse Armstrong was nominated for an Oscar for *In The Loop* and a Writers Guild of America award for his work on [Veep](#) and won a BAFTA for *Peep Show* and a Writers Guild of Great Britain Award for *The Thick Of It*. Adam McKay, who directs *Succession*'s first episode and doubles as executive producer, won the Oscar for *The Big Short* and topped the box office with *Talladega Nights*, with Will Ferrell, who is also an executive producer here.



And then there's Emmy-winning [Veep](#) writers Tony Roche and George Pritchett; Emmy-nominee Mark Mylod ([Game of Thrones](#)) as a director and executive producer; Oscar-nominated composer Nicholas Britell (*Moonlight*); Emmy-winning editor Ken Eluto (*30 Rock*) and Art Directors Guild-winning production designer Stephen H. Carter (*Birdman*), among many others...

As you'd guess from those credits, there's a tension in *Succession* between its comedy and its drama. Vulture pitched it as, "Having *Veep* withdrawals? Try *Succession*... another HBO comedy that also combines whip-smart dialogue, a killer ensemble cast, and a cynical look at the intersection of politics, corporate business, and mass media."

But *Succession* doesn't sit as comfortably within the comedy genre as *Veep* does. Rather, as Slate pointed out, "It's a comedy and then it's a tragedy, in the same show, but not at the same time... The show's ethos: to gut you while you're laughing."

Similarly The Guardian warns, "The writing is savage, the dialogue sharp and foul-mouthed. Although funny in places, it is also scary, as any drama peopled by monsters ought to be."

Not that *Succession* fits neatly into the drama genre either. "The show is a lot more fun than it might look," says Vox, praising the way it "expertly strikes a balance between humor and heartbreak."

The genre-bending result is one of the most acclaimed series of the year. As The Hollywood Reporter says, "*Succession* is spectacular... sharp, cutting, wonderfully acted... Each new episode is more darkly funny than the one before."

Or as Slate says, "It's amazing... Electric, funny, fun, and occasionally, tragic... You should be watching it."

In November, Forbes reported that a study had found that America's three richest individuals – Bill Gates, Warren Buffett and Jeff Bezos – collectively have more wealth than the bottom 50% of the population there – 160 million people in 63 million households. *Succession* is a voyeuristic glimpse into a family with that level of wealth – where kids are offered a million dollars to hit a home run, where destination weddings are held in picturesque castles. But their family life is not as f*cking great as McFadyen's character dreams it to be. Rather, as The Guardian says, "Above all, *Succession* is reassuring,

in that it seems to argue that wealth and power offer no respite from the obligation to live one's life in mortal fear... The next time you are annoyed by the arrogance of some ageing media mogul, try imagining him in the middle of the night, confused and alone, pissing all over an expensive carpet. I find it helps."

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