

# Edinburgh Festival Fringe REVIEW Solomon and Marion

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☒ This elegantly constructed play by Lara Foot is a real pleasure to watch, a slow burner revealing real heart and courage. It's the cold winter of Marion's life in South Africa, an ex-pat with arid land amidst the turmoil of the modern S.A. on the eve of the 2010 World Cup.

Marion is writing a long letter to her daughter, who lives in Australia, when she is visited by Solomon, an awkward young South African, who at first urges her to leave her dangerous life-long home, then gradually tries to help her, – bringing unwanted food (chicken feet) and painting her walls, around one significant photograph, rice paper white.

As the two mismatched characters shift up through the gears of their relationship the play becomes an understated dialogue on the position of the old ruling white class in modern South Africa, a glimpse at the tortured legacy of imperialism and apartheid, and finally a devastating critique of the violence endemic in the country to this day. The relationship is the play and it grows with the turning of the seasons, bringing sweet rain in the South African spring.

Janet Suzman is terrific as Marion, capturing the feisty gravitas of the older ex-pat clinging to memories and her home, but with a palpable sensitivity to Solomon's plight and a touching burden of pain. Khaya lethu Anthony as Solomon is delicate and threatening, vulnerable and violent, a living metaphor for the modern South Africa, he holds the audience in the palm of his hand and reveals his devastating secret with searing truthfulness.

Perhaps there are a couple too many false endings, but when

the real one comes, along with a 'borrowed' telly and the promise of that life affirming World Cup, it breaks like spun sunshine across the stage. The play speaks with an all too vital idealism of hope and potential redemption for both sides in the continuing violence.

Five Stars

Submitted by [Ade Morris](#)