

The Citizen Online | Fanie Fourie's Lobola: Amusing anomaly

Romantic comedy portrays typical South African issues in pursuit of a realistic truth.

FILM: Fanie Fourie's Lobola

CAST: Eduan van Jaarsveldt, Zethu Dlomo, Jerry Mofokeng

DIRECTOR: Henk Pretorious

CLASSIFICATION: PG

DESCRIBING Fanie Fourie's Lobola as a bit of an anomaly (in that, as much as is possible, it deviates from the norm of South African films that use stereotypes to tell every local story) is probably not the best way to heap praise on this production, but it is a start.

Fanie Fourie (Van Jaarsveldt) is a young man who designs and builds vintage cars, and as you can probably deduce, he is Afrikaans.

This becomes an issue when Fanie is dared to bring Dinky Magubane (Dlomo), a Zulu girl, to his brother, Sarel's (Chris Chameleon) wedding.

Complications arise when Dinky agrees, but under the condition that Fanie pretends to be her boyfriend, in a bid to stall her father from pressurising her into marrying a nice Zulu man.

As this romantic comedy unfolds, it's plot follows a predictable route, as Fanie and Dinky fall for each other. They even go as far as to declare their love for each other – after setting a few issues straight with their families, who consider their respective traditions to be of the highest importance.

This results in Fanie expressing his intention to officially turn "Dinky" into "Dinkie".

Unfortunately, what Fanie is not fully aware of, is that he has to pay lobola for his damsel, and he is as clueless about this process as Dinky is about rugby.

Fanie Fourie's Lobola looks at a social occurrence that has started to, and will hopefully continue to, take place as our nation becomes more integrated.

When rugby fans venture out into Soweto after a game, they are bound to realise that there are dark-skinned lasses around. And as those referred to as "previously disadvantaged" explore activities such as waterpolo and lacrosse, it is only a matter of time before they realise that white is indeed right.

Of the deluge of local films being made in the last few years, many have proven to be patronising and stereotypical. What this film gets right is that, firstly, it does not overcompensate for its predecessors' mistakes by pretending that black and white does not exist in South Africa, and secondly, ensuring that its delivery is tactful.

No matter how liberal your views may be, the first time your child introduces you to a date of a different race, you will probably raise an eyebrow or two.

What this film brings across delicately is not that we are all closet racists, but rather that we are all different, and this is okay.

Chances are that you raised an eyebrow only because you suddenly realised that the beef burgers you

prepared for your child's guest are not halaal.

Or that he brought you a packet of amanqina (chicken feet) instead of a bouquet of flowers to say thank you for inviting him over.

Fanie Fourie's Lobola is not a novel concept, as interracial relationships have been around forever. It is, however, an exemplary example of a film not trying to tell a new story, but instead focusing on the way an age-old tale is portrayed.

After all, there are countless films that have had promising plots that offered inventive twists and original storylines, but ended up being disappointments as they neglected the art of storytelling.

That said, do not expect, after watching Fanie Fourie's Lobola, to suddenly be enlightened or anything miraculous like that.

But you will have a sense that the film does something right, even if you cannot pinpoint exactly what that might be.