



Jettel (Juliane Köhler) and Walter Redlich (Merab Ninidze) discover deeper bonds in Africa.

Losing Home

But finding each other.

NOWHERE IN AFRICA (Germany, 2002): Written and directed by Caroline Link, based on the novel by Stefanie Zweig. Produced by Peter Herrmann. Executive producer, Andreas Bareiss. Cinematography, Gernot Roll. Editor, Patricia Rommel. Music, Niki Reiser. Set design, Susann Bieling, Uwe Szielasko. Costumes, Barbara Grupp. Co-produced by Bernd Eichinger, Thilo Kleine, Michael Weber and Sven Ebeling. Starring Juliane Köhler, Merab Ninidze, Matthias Habich, Sidede Onyulo, Karoline Eckertz and Lea Kurka. Zeitgeist Films Release, 2002. R. 141 minutes. 2002 Academy Award winner Best Foreign Film.

Based on a best selling autobiographical novel by Stefanie Zweig, Caroline Link's traditional narrative film is too tentative to be a great film. But it's rich with pleasures to be savored. The story begins in Germany in 1938, where the Nazis' rise to power has not yet deeply affected the privileged Jewish family of Jettel Redlich (Juliane Köhler) and her young daughter, Regina (Lea Kurka).

Regina (now played by Karoline Eckertz) finds her friendship with a village boy, Jogona (Silas Kerati), has grown more complex.

But Jettel and Walter have a hard time together. Each suffers from the absence of news about their families in Germany, and the heartbreaking news that does come through is almost unbearable. Through her grief, Jettel, who has hated living such a primitive life, begins to make her peace with Africa. Then the war comes, and all German immigrants are rounded up by the British, with the men separated from women and children, and all interned as enemy aliens.

The focus of the story shifts from Regina, after she leaves the farm for boarding school in Nairobi, to the parents' marriage. It asks complicated questions about what it takes to

A satisfying film that includes spectacular shots of the wonderful country and its genuinely lovely people

But Jettel's lawyer husband, Walter Redlich (Merab Ninidze), could see ahead, and he has emigrated to Africa, where he farms for an unpleasant British landowner. Walter sends for his wife and daughter to come to Kenya immediately. Bring a refrigerator, he begs, and leave the good china. Jettel does neither. As a proper wife, she and the child will join her husband. But really, she thinks, he is a fool to be so alarmed.

Jettel and Regina's travel and arrival in Nairobi are intercut with scenes of Walter going through a terrible illness and being tended by his German friend, Süsskind (Matthias Habich). But before Walter is out of danger, Süsskind must return to his own farm. He leaves the sick man in the care of his African cook, Owuor (Sidede Onyulo), with strict rules about medications. But Owuor knows about better plants. For saving his life, Walter rewards the servant with his own German-winter overcoat, which Owuor wears for much of the picture, despite the equatorial heat.

Regina bonds with Owuor immediately, and through him she learns the language of the children in the village and how to play with them. As she grows into adolescence,

make a marriage such as Walter and Jettel's survive over a long period. The questions become even harder to answer as these two flawed individuals gradually switch positions about Africa and Germany.

A satisfying film that includes spectacular shots of the wonderful country and its genuinely lovely people, *Nowhere in Africa* also introduces us to a great character in Owuor and an expressive, talented actor in Sidede Onyulo. The native Kenyan was recommended early in the casting process, but he had left the capital and returned to his home village in Lake Victoria, which is mirrored in the film.

Also, both of the children who play Regina give excellent, unspoiled performances. It's rewarding to see naturalistic acting by a child, and it tells me that the filmmakers made sure that the set was a welcoming but down-to-earth environment. Considering multiple locations, few amenities and that everyone lived in tents, this is an achievement worth notice.

Jump onboard for a warmhearted excursion into a time and place we haven't seen in film before. Opens Friday, July 25, at the Bijou. Highly recommended. **EW**

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SPY KIDS 3-D: GAME OVER* (PG) 10:15, 11:10, 12:45, 1:45, 3:20, 4:20, 7:00, 9:25	FINDING NEMO (G) 10:10, 11:55, 12:55, 3:40, 7:30, 10:20
SEABISCUIT* (PG-13) 12:00, 3:25, 7:20, 10:45	ITALIAN JOB (PG-13) 10:50, 1:55, 4:40, 7:50, 10:35
BAD BOYS 2* (R) 10:55, 2:20, 2:50, 6:15, 6:45, 7:15, 9:40, 10:10, 10:40	SINBAD (PG) 11:25, 2:00
HOW TO DEAL* (PG-13) 4:15, 7:10, 9:55	28 DAYS LATER (R) 7:25, 10:15
JOHNNY ENGLISH* (PG) 11:35, 2:05, 4:30, 7:35, 10:10	LEGALLY BLONDE 2 (PG-13) 11:15, 1:50, 4:25
LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN (PG-13) 9:55, 12:50, 1:30, 3:45, 7:15, 7:45, 10:05	CHARLIE'S ANGELS (PG-13) 10:35, 4:45, 10:40
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN (PG-13) 11:40, 12:10, 3:05, 3:35, 7:00, 7:30, 10:25, 10:50	

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DADDY DAY CARE (PG) 11:55, 2:30, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40	X-2: X-MEN UNITED (PG-13) 1:55, 7:10
DUMB AND DUMBERER (PG-13) 11:35, 5:00, 10:35	SUMMER MOVIE CLUBHOUSE CONTINUES
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