

'The Cure' is an emotional film starring Joseph Mazzello.

by John Hafner
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Something strange happened to me this past weekend that, up until now, I never thought possible. I actually learned something from watching a movie; I walked out of the theater with a powerful reminder that it was time for me to count my many blessings.

The emotional film with this meaningful message is "The Cure," starring Brad Renfro as "Eric" and Joseph Mazzello as "Dexter." The story of Eric and Dexter does not contain terrorists, high speed chases, international sabotage, or even the slightest mention of hand-to-hand combat; it conveys a strong message of a different type. The boys' relationship and the forces that act upon it serve to define friendship in its purest form.

The movie begins with a cloud of suspicion and mystery surrounding Eric's neighborhood, as a new family has moved in next door to his house. The new boy, Dexter, received AIDS from a blood transfusion some time ago and the townspeople are less than thrilled about "AIDS boy's"

residency in their quaint little town. Their anger and bitterness is clearly expressed by the series of cruel and ignorant nicknames they attach to Dexter.

Driven by a sense of wonder and curiosity, Eric slowly leaves his stereotypic fears behind, especially after Dexter assures him that his "germs aren't contagious through the air." Thanks to Dexter's patience and desire to have a true friend, Eric becomes the only person in town who's willing to look past the disease and see the real eleven year old boy struggling to live as normal a life as he can.

The boys' friendship grows stronger despite the prejudicial attitude of their neighbors. Eric and Dexter fill the voids in each others' lives: Eric gives Dexter the chance to have fun and forget, even if for only a short time, the grim reality of his condition, and Dexter shares the loving bond he and his mom have with Eric, whose parents are divorced.

The film's plot focuses on the boys' attempt to find a cure for AIDS from the variety of plants that grow along the creek near their houses. Their spirits are lifted after they read an article in



Getting a ride is Dexter (Joseph Mazzello), and 11-year-old boy with AIDS, from neighborhood bad boy Erik (Brad Renfro).

the tabloid magazine *The Examiner* about a man named "Dr. Fishburn," who has supposedly discovered a natural cure in the bayous of New Orleans.

Placing little faith in the ability of modern medicine and

driven by his own spirit of adventure, Eric convinces Dexter to run away with him in search of Dr. Fishburn's alleged cure. Eric sees the trip as the only way of saving his best friend's life, despite Dexter's mother's assurance that the article is

merely a hoax.

Relying solely on each other for their well being, Eric and Dexter's adventure ends well short of New Orleans when Dexter runs out of medication and becomes very sick. Their short-lived effort does, however, allow their bond to strengthen while on the trip and afterwards, when Dexter is hospitalized due to his worsening condition.

Eric's unconditional friendship and determination to save Dexter's life allow his best friend to really live life for the first time since his transfusion. The inspiring help Eric offers Dexter is, for all purposes, "the cure."

This tear-jerking film will take you on an emotional roller coaster as Eric and Dexter are forced to experience both the ugliness and the beauty of the world in which they are trapped. I won't reveal how "The Cure" ends, but I will say this: it will charge you conscience with guilt for ever feeling sorry for yourself over vain or trivial matters; it will make you count your blessings and force you to realize just how precious family, friends, and life itself really are.

Soap Updates

ALL MY CHILDREN: Belinda feared for Noah's future. Sophie agreed to help Janet build a bomb. Anton and Corvina brought Kendall to Wildwind for their comeuppance. Julia told her family about the rape and the HIV test. Later, the Santos family rejoiced together when Julia's second HIV test proved negative. Hayley and Arlene were tortured by past secrets. Janet fumbled with the bomb. **Wait to see:** Kendall decides to prove she can still get her way.

ANOTHER WORLD: Grant plotted a way to get Amanda back. John and Michael's mother, Clara Hudson, had a happy reunion with her family in Bay City. Justine was furious when she overheard Carl and Rachel (Victoria Wyndham plays both Rachel and Justine) speaking together. Joe deflected Paulina's question about Eberhardt. Spencer was shaken by a crank call. **Wait to see:** Grant is in for a rude shock.

AS THE WORLD TURNS: Dani was jealous of Jef and Emily's togetherness.

Although stunned to learn John had no insurance, Jessica agreed to take his case against Lisa. Dawn had a special favor to ask of Tom and Margo. After an incident in surgery, Larry suspended John. Barbara feared Hal would get custody of their children. **Wait to see:** Hal and Shannon's friendship begins to deepen into something unexpected.

BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL: Brooke was stunned when the hospital "volunteer" doffed her wig and revealed herself as Taylor. Taylor then said she would tell Ridge she's alive, and re-establish her life with him. An ecstatic Stephanie and Eric signed the papers transferring the stock from Brooke to Forrester. James realized there was something going on between Sheila and Mike that he might use to his advantage. Meanwhile, Sheila seethed at being fired by Eric. Anthony posed as Thorne's defender when the police revealed the evidence point to Thorne and Ivana's killer. **Wait to see:** Sheila sets off a potentially deadly new campaign.

DAYS OF OUR LIVES: A shocked Stefano heard Marlina betray him to the police, leading him to believe Celeste's charge that Marlina is a demon. Austin was rocked by news of Kate's death, realizing the mother he had only recently come to know was now gone. The demon (through Marlina) was about to seduce John when Caroline and Father Jensen arrived. While her friends and family mourned for Kate, and while Vivian had mixed emotions about her death, Kate was very much alive and planning revenge on Vivian. Lucas fumed at his half-brother, Austin, for taking Carrie away from him. **Wait to see:** Kate begins her journey home.

GENERAL HOSPITAL: In their luxurious hotel suite in Paris, Keesha and Jason nestled in their "morning after," while their families in Port Charles worried about their developing romance. Luke and Mike snared the drug shipment. Bobbie and Tony hid their real feeling during a meeting with Kevin. Robin suggested Stone get a checkup from Tony. Foster and Annabelle were reunited with their puppy. **Wait to see:**

Laura's fears about Luke may prove true.

GUIDING LIGHT: At the 5th Street Ball, Dinah froze when she saw Viktor eyeing her. Alexandra confronted Alan after seeing Tangie in their great-grandmother's dress which she (Alexandra) wanted to wear. Rick learned Annie hadn't told Josh about her past. Lucy fantasized about being at the ball with Alan-Michael. Later, she had a nightmare about the rape. A concerned Bridget saw her bruises. **Wait to see:** Lucy faces a "threat" from Brent.

LOVING: Unaware Jacob cut the wires on her car, Angie let him drive her home, giving him a chance to ask about Jessie. Casey told Alex either to work with him in finding the top drug dealer, or arrest him for dealing drugs. Stacey warned Tess not to underestimate her. Frankie found Charles searching Jacob's motel room. **Wait to see:** Jacob takes his next planned step.

ONE LIFE TO LIVE: Kelly comforted a heartbroken Joey after his talk with Dorian. Luna was felled by a high blood pressure attack. Dorian managed

to sedate Tommy so she bring Jean out. Her pleas for help caused Jean to split into Tori. Nora learned Rachel skipped her exam. Carlotta told her personal files. Luna told Max the disappointing news she received through the Tarot cards. **Wait to see:** Tori could prove unstoppable.

YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS: After Victor returned to Genoa City, Hope had her first labor pain, but refused to let the doctors contact Victor. Instead, she called Cliff. Nikki and Victoria realized the future of Victor's marriage could make him unattached and available. In New York, Chris heard Bernadette recite how Phyllis ran after Danny. Later, Sasha confirmed for Phyllis that Chris was the woman with Danny in the New York hotel lobby. Luan decided not to tell Jack about her illness. She also rebuffed Mari Jo's bid for friendship. Jill asked John if he understood her when she said she didn't want a divorce. A furious Jack learned Jill hired Maude as Mamie's replacement. **Wait to see:** Jill and John Silva make an important decision.