

“Midnight Sun”

By Helen Lutz

In a perfect world all our precious infants are born “perfect” with ten little fingers, ten little toes and phenomenally good health. As they begin to grow they are loved, protected and taught living cherished lives free from any health abnormalities or afflictions. It’s so sad that we do not live in a perfect world.



In the true spirit of a small, entrepreneurial business I have a fantastic idea for the new teenage tear jerker “Midnight Sun.” Just like the cotton candy vendors walk through the audience selling cotton candy during the circus, a young entrepreneur could walk through the theater selling little tissue packages. Just in case nobody follows through on this idea, be sure to take your own should you attend the new “Midnight Sun” movie, currently showing in theaters.

Katie (Bella Thorne) is a lovely girl ready to graduate high school. Her graduation is anti-climatic since Katie has always been home schooled by her father, Jack (Rob Riggle), a widower. Katie suffers from an extremely rare affliction of xeroderma pigmentosum, or XP, which is an acute sensitivity to sunlight. Her entire life has been spent within the walls of her family home with the windows covered with special screens – people think that weird people must live there. Interaction in her life revolves around her loving father and best friend Morgan (Quinn Shephard).

Occasionally Katie ventures out in the evening making trips to the local train station where she sits in the evening air playing her guitar giving her a brief sense of normalcy. One evening while Katie is enjoying her evening, the sounds of her music carry to the ears of Charlie (Patrick Schwarzenegger) who seeks her out. Katie is surprised and embarrassed by his presence. Charlie is a real cutie and a championship swimmer. Every day since she was a little girl Katie would watch out her window as Charlie made his way to swim practice, holding a secret crush. Could the crush ever be reciprocal?

As a romance develops between Katie and Charlie, Katie explains that she’s always busy during the day, but could meet with him in the evenings. She is hesitant to tell Charlie about her strange cancer since she doesn’t want him to care for her out of sympathy, but for who she really is. What could possibly go wrong when a night to remember ends up on the beach with Charlie planning on waking Katie to a glorious sunrise?

“Midnight Sun” takes us along with Katie as she learns about true love and relationships while being faced with life and death decisions. Life isn’t fair. Director Scott Speer tells the story as Katie and Charlie learn the beauty and sadness of life and love. Yes, tissues are necessary. The film holds no surprises and is completely predictable (which still doesn’t stop the water works). Thorne makes us care about Katie; however, Schwarzenegger is a bit stiff. Ron Riggle plays the best loving dad Hollywood money can buy. The script is a little contrived, but the ending spares the audience the saddest scenes providing instead a celebration of life. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats, I give “Midnight Sun” ... TWO HARTS. My generation relished a cancer-related love story; my mother thought “Love Story” was a total waste in 1970. “Midnight Sun” might be embraced by this generation of young people, but probably short-lived.