

THE BLACK LIST

THE CURE

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THE CURE

A Dramatic Series

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OVERVIEW

The Cure is a multi-character drama about medicine, wealth disparity, treatment and addiction in the tumult of San Francisco's new tech boom. At its center is Dr. James Paul Turner (Jim), once the young hero of the scientific community, credited with discovering the treatment that finally slowed the AIDS epidemic in the early 90s, now the Chief Executive Officer of his own Biotech Company, Timur. We encounter Jim, the once young and hungry idealist, in the present day, when he's burdened under the weight of his own corporate success.

While centering on Turner, this is also the story of the old and new generation of silicon-valleyites, the poor and the privileged, the addicted (including Jim's own daughter) and the sober, the philanthropists and entrepreneurs. It's about the struggle to reconcile the counterculture movement of the 60s which begat tech with the new guard: those hungry and foolish who are chasing a different dream of fame and wealth. It's about how the mind of a genius survives in the real world, and how the real world harnesses a genius. At its core, The Cure is about the challenges inherent in reconciling our new American cultural identity, one we see played out daily headlines around the country. We will see this national divide revealed within several conjoined stories in characters that traverse the Bay.

Jim's generation picks up on the heels of where Don Draper's generation left off - with the idealists of the seventies that rebelled against the conservative pragmatism of their parents. Unfortunately, the fame and rise of the corporate monoliths mean that Jim's peers have given birth to a new breed of entitled pacifists. Eager and brilliant, many of Timur's twenty-something biotech workers have never known failure or sacrifice. Rather than become bankers and financiers of 80's Wall Street, they have majored in computer science and graduated right into 6-figure-salary jobs that allow them to buy Teslas and wear sweats to work. Among this new breed Jim discovers a young and brilliant intern named Jonas, feverishly working on a cure for cancer in his spare time. In him our hero recognizes his young self. In both harnessing nascent curiosity and discovering a mentor he never knew he had, Jim seeks a way to bridge these ideological divides and cure America's ills, defying a circle of detractors seeking only to bring him down.

TOPE

THE CURE's tone is a unique mix of contemporary realism: the pace of I ROBOT played out by the more meditative and thought-provoking characters of MAD MEN. This may seem like a schizophrenic timbre from which to embark a series, but, like the Bay itself, THE CURE is a world of beautiful extremes. The pace of change is rapid, its people progressive, the scenery dramatic, and yet there is still a sense of quiet existentialism that permeates all aspects of culture. Nowhere but in San Francisco do these contrasts constellate around one another and to date, no show has been able to capture the zeitgeist of these extremes in a compelling way.

Structurally the show is a serialization. Each episode of the series will tell its own story with a dramatic introduction, climax and end, yet each episode will contribute to the larger thesis of the drama - the metamorphosis of Jim and the Bay itself. Each series is driven by the race to find and launch a 'cure' for disease, though figuratively, the series also seeks to expose those clandestine ailments that plague our larger society. We will follow Jim on his journey from incognizant CEO and husband, through the world of medicine, tech and science - ultimately exposing many a hard truth that he must face. This will be a subtle and evocative social commentary, and much like THE WIRE, is more committed to holding a mirror to society rather than clobbering the audience with a series of proselytizing lead characters. THE CURE will provide commentary through its drama and compelling stories.

STORY ENGINE

Akin to its dramatic predecessors, THE CURE is driven by a compelling premise: the drama of scientific discovery played out by nuanced characters. Yet the primary driver of THE CURE is its story (i.e. plot-driven). We will follow Jim through the world of biotech and invention, the race to find cures and treatments, the decisions necessary to sustain a company, the strange and unique world of the Bay area bubble, and Jim's own personal life. We will see Jim's genesis as he loses the company he created, nurture a creative mind in finding a

treatment for a type of cancer, and face the realities of parenting and living with an addict. Finally, we have Jim's own quest to explore futurology -- discovering how his own scientific community can predict and even extend human life.

The secondary driver of the show is the relationships between the characters, and how they play out both individually and in relationship to Jim. We will see Jim's own metamorphosis from beleaguered and indifferent CEO to the passionate scientist, excited by a love of science and discovery. This internal change is complemented by Jim's relationship to Jonas, the young and introverted scientist who in Jim sees a younger version of himself. We also see Siobhan, Jim's wife, immersed in her own philanthropic endeavor to launch a series of charter schools in marginalized communities throughout the Bay. Siobhan's relationship with Jim is built on mutual respect, with a dose of self-serving interests. Their relationship becomes even more complicated as Siobhan's bisexuality is revealed. Finally, we will see Jim's relationship to his biological daughter, Jess. Theirs is a tumultuous saga, fueled by struggles with addiction and the painful reminders of the past.

PRIMARY CHARACTERS

Dr. James Paul Turner (Jim) - Male, early 50s

Back in the early 90s Jim was the most celebrated man in the Castro since Harvey Milk; a young uncompromising doctor who fought past the homophobic Reagan administration and fearful drug companies to find a treatment for the ravaging AIDS virus. More than that, he fought hard to ensure that this treatment was available to every corner of the world -- from the rural village of Mali to the corner of Castro and Market. A Northern California native, Jim came of age during the decaying counterculture movement. When he does get a rare hour off he manages to cram Humboldt's finest weed, physical therapy and psychoanalysis into one session with his transsexual acupuncturist, Whitney.

When we meet Jim in series one, he has little semblance to the man he was twenty-five years ago. He's rich and powerful, though still believes himself to be an ethical leader with a strong moral compass; however, all too often he's been blinded by the burden of keeping the

shareholders happy. His home life has also become a dupery of sorts. Once hungry and engaged, Jim and his wife Siobhan (Shivvy), are more philanthropic partners than soul mates. While they both love each other, Shivvy's sexual proclivities and relationship with her lover, Victoria, become more pronounced as the series progresses. Eventually, Jim will have to face the realities of his home life head on.

Though Jim has made many friends over the years, we get the sense that many of these relationships are superficial, forged after Jim became famous. His closest ally is Carl Bello, a Harvard-educated, conservative 'fixer' who works hard to control the board. The two often squabble over Carl's disgust with the Bay's casual approach to work and its adherence to pseudo-intellectual, libertarian values.

The person who knows Jim the best is Ed Seol, Timur's co-founder. Ed has a fragile mind - he left the company as a protest after suffering a nervous breakdown, though still holds a significant stake as a silent partner. Ed lives reclusively on a Sausalito houseboat, a place of solitude where Jim often visits. Throughout series one we see Jim confiding in Ed about his problems and the internal strife at Timur. Ed is also the only person who knows about Jim's illegitimate daughter, Jess. Over time, Ed's unrequited love for Tracey (Jim's girlfriend before Siobhan) has given him an incurable broken heart. Tracey's death and his subsequent grief eventually manifest itself in resentment for his old ally, which pulls him out of his exile in order to take Jim down.

Jonas Levi - Male, mid 20s

We meet Jonas for the first time on the Timur bus heading into work. Jonas is young, brilliant, introverted and socially awkward. He grew up in a very rural area of Missouri, where being Jewish was still seen as an anomaly. Jonas's mom was a pharmacist before she passed away from cancer when he was in his early teens. His mother's death devastated the family and pushed his father far away from them. Jonas retreated further into his studies, eventually settling on biogenetic engineering as his field of study. After receiving a full scholarship from MIT, Jonas was recruited to join Timur right out of college.

Like most young San Franciscan transplants, Jonas lives in an overpriced shoebox in the Mission. His room and mind are permanently buried in his scrawled notebooks. At work in the Timur research labs he avoids his dimwitted lab supervisor, Richard, to secretly work on his own experiments -- treatments that will soon be heralded by the world. Jim takes notice of Jonas and his experiments (work he once pursued himself) and tries to take him under his wing like the genius son he never had. Eventually, Jonas will make a huge breakthrough in his work on astrocytoma (brain cancer) that helps put Timur back on the map. Unfortunately, this event coincides with Jim's downfall and Jonas will have to choose between staying with his mentor or stewarding his discovery through clinical trials.

While the main storyline for Jonas is his work in the lab, we will also follow him through his own metamorphosis in San Francisco. He will meet and fall in love with a young, tattooed hipster named Doris who brings him out of his shell. Some of the shows more lighthearted moments will be seeing Jonas learn to navigate the world - from Urban Golfing to Halloween in the Castro, his journey will be the mirror of life in the new San Francisco.

Siobhan Turner (Shivvy) - Female, mid 40s

Jim's wife, Shivvy is an African American Bay-Area native. She grew up solidly middle-class in Oakland, the daughter of a schoolteacher and bread-maker. Shivvy has always been ambitious, also brilliant and overachieving. She fought hard for a scholarship to Stanford and there she met Jim while he was getting his PhD. Shivvy was instantly enamored with Jim and his brilliant, uncompromising mind. She followed him to his first job out of grad school and became a teacher to make ends meet. She worked in an inner city school in Oakland, an honorable role, but one she secretly resented.

When we meet Shivvy, we recognize her as a Melinda Gates or Anne Wojcicki type. She knows that the only way for a woman to grab the limelight from a celebrated man is to become the face of a cause, and her cause is school reform. Siobhan's Charter School partnership, the Lakewood Learning Academy, is aggressively pushing communities of Oakland. Although its intentions are worthy, the charter school movement inevitably takes resources and attention away from the neighboring public schools, which proves to be the cause of tension, protests and even increased crime on school grounds.

Shivvy is bisexual and has been in secret relationship with Victoria - a Latina teacher also from Oakland - for at least a year when we meet them in season one. Shivvy's attraction to Victoria is not unlike her earlier attraction to Jim - she is passionate and committed to helping the community of Oakland. Shivvy promises Victoria and herself that one day she will come out to Jim and the world, but her political aspirations keep this at bay. The two break up and reconcile as the series unfolds, and eventually Shivvy's love for Victoria tips the scales in her favor.

Jessica Powell - Female, mid 20s

Jessica, or Jess, is Jim's biological daughter, born to Tracey, Jim's girlfriend before Siobhan. Distraught, Tracey bore and raised Jess on her own - never sharing the news with Jim. Tracey did confide in Ed Seol, who remained close with Tracey and helped to look after Jess.

Jess and her mom first lived in Berkeley (which Jess loved), but moved near the impoverished Tenderloin when she was 10. Tracey worked as a nurse at the UCSF Children's Hospital, often putting in long hours and extra shifts to support herself and her daughter. As Jess grew up, the exposure to the gritty side of San Francisco, coupled with her own issues of abandonment and neglect, eventually fueled a heroin addiction. Jess struggled for years - in and out of rehab (which Ed paid for), but has been clean for months when we meet her in series one.

Jess is tall and striking, but world-weary and a little malnourished. She has few friends and spends most of her spare time working for a non-profit needle exchange that aims to get recovering addicts off the streets. Jess also struggles with her own sexuality. When she was an addict she spent time prostituting herself for money; now in recovery, she worries that she cannot connect to men, thus attempts to date and become intimate with both women and men. We will see Jess through the tumult of these intimate encounters, venturing into a city where all forms of sexual pleasure are welcome.

Tracey's shocking revelation of paternity will rock Jess's life once more, throwing her off the wagon and into the street, where her biological father, billionaire Jim Turner, will come looking for her.

SETTING

Why San Francisco?

With young billionaires walking the same streets as the country's largest downtown homeless population, San Francisco is a heightened version of the disparity found across modern America. Like the iconic and infamous Manhattan of the eighties, present-day San Francisco is rife with youthful ego, style and greed. But the greed here is subtle, masked, bubbling under the surface. Many young tech entrepreneurs of Silicon Valley speak not of dollars and profits, but of changing the world in an almost cult-like way. They are often blind to the negative impact of the influx of IPO dollars, creating massive wealth disparity and compromising the old communities. This is a scene RIPE for storytelling. While shows like SILICON VALLEY have depicted a lighter version of life in the city, THE CURE will provide the much needed compelling moral drama.

THE CURE begins in the present, throughout multiple locations across the Bay Area, each representing a microcosm of America's varied demographics. We find these neighborhoods at crucial points in their histories -- each undergoing a seismic shift that, depending on which way the post-recession political and economic tides turn, will change the demographic of the Bay irrevocably.

We see the South Bay near Palo Alto, home to Google, Facebook and our own Timur. The campuses sprawl out like extensions of Stanford: beautifully manicured lawns with buildings spread out like strip malls. Their inhabitants are an eccentric mix of cultures, although their shared socioeconomic status places them firmly in the top 5% of Americans.

Timur's aesthetic is very much West Coast Modern, the sun-drenched board rooms and glassy offices sit above the hi-tech clinical laboratories where young brilliant scientists hustle like the caged rats they observe, to find the next cure.



We move through affluent neighborhoods of **San Francisco**, each with their distinct personalities. Jim lives in Pacific Heights, a place where the historically wealthy tend to congregate. The homes are stately mansions that tower over the Northern slope of the city. Its residents peer down to the Marina and towards The Golden Gate to watch the boats sail past. Each home is unique, ranging from faux Edwardian to the French Chateaux. Like our CEO, those in Pacific Heights count Nancy Pelosi and Larry Ellison as neighbors. Moreover, they share a common belief that the prosperity of the Bay is endless and available to all.

From Pacific Heights we move to the less grand, but increasingly affluent areas of the **Mission District** and **Noe Valley**. Here millennial tech workers, basking in the era that celebrates the nerd, have come to live. These newly minted millionaires began buying up the old Victorians, spending their new money to expand and customize their new habitats. The neighborhoods are undergoing dramatic changes: gone are the local independent stores and cafes, in comes

Whole Foods and boutique clothing shops. The war between the native Latino community and the corporate bus riding techies rages on, on every corner.



Downtown, mere blocks away from the most expensive apartments in America, we find San Francisco's problem child, the **Tenderloin**. The neighborhood heaves with the displaced young and old, immigrants and natives, dependents and dealers, pimps and prostitutes. Yet it also reflects a heterogeneity and spirit of San Francisco that has been long absent in the trendier and more gentrified areas. Glide Church, for example, hosts hundreds every week for gospel and comfort food. The bars too have a familial sense, serving multi-generational patrons. Volunteers at makeshift needle exchanges set-up in the alleyways breathe hope into the cold, desperate nights.



Across the Bay we find ourselves in **East Oakland**, a city often overshadowed by the Bay Bridge's new gleaming white pillars. Here, the demographics of San Francisco are in relief. The city is predominantly lower-middle and working class, a mix of African-American and Latino. In some areas the rates of gun violence and homicide remain the largest in the nation; while in others the green shoots of prosperity are breeding artisan coffee shops and hip restaurants. There is a sense that East Oakland is changing in the ways that Harlem and Bed-Stuy have done before. Our story will also chart this evolution.

Finally we find the famous houseboats of **Sausalito**, a hodgepodge of eccentric wooden shacks built on abandoned WW2 war ships. Only a couple miles across the water to downtown San Francisco, this isolated community may as well be in the middle of Pacific for those who, through necessity or choice, live happily off the grid.

FIVE SEASON ARCS

Season One (10 episodes) will focus on introducing our main characters and the main points of tension in the show. Tracey, Jim's ex-lover, commits suicide, revealing that he is Jess's biological father. Jess seeks her out while in the throes of relapse. Siobhan's Lakewood Learning Academy is launched with some contention at the beginning of the season. Jim struggles to maintain control over his company, Timur, amidst controversial stories leaked to the press by an unknown source. Meanwhile, Jonas and Jim work on treatment for astrocytoma (which Jonas discovers), eventually getting the tumors into remission by the end of the season. The two plan to reveal the news during the penultimate episode of the series, only to have the board bring a no-confidence vote against Jim. We ultimately learn that it was Ed who was instrumental in Jim's downfall. We see Jim at the end, broken, but reconciling with Jess and putting him into rehab.

Season Two begins with Jim working to build a new, radical biotech company from the ground up. This company, Pani, focuses exclusively on finding cures for obscure diseases - those that lack money or support from the big biotech companies. With the help of Ada, Jim's Head of Marketing from Timur, Jim finds a way to monetize the release of these "orphan drugs." Jim regain his passion for science. We also meet Jim's secret futurist, Marcus. Meanwhile, Jonas remains at Timur -- the company holds rights to his patent for astrocytoma. Under the guidance of Timur's new female CEO, Robin Catterson, the company makes an astounding recovery. Robin is tough and conniving, stopping at nothing to push the stock price up. After being released from rehab, Jess moves in with Jim and Siobhan, who is still grieving over her breakup with Victoria. Ed and Jim begin the series estranged, though eventually reconcile when Jess forces them back together. We see Jonas struggling under the weight of his fame at Timur as the series progresses. As Jim becomes more and more immersed in his new endeavor, Shivvy becomes lonelier and seeks Victoria out. Shivvy's schools, too, are struggling after some gang violence occurs at a neighboring school. Victoria helps Shivvy regain the trust of the community, and the two reunite at the end of the Season 2.

Season Three opens with Jonas in the tumult of getting his cancer drug to market. Even his girlfriend Doris cannot break Jonas out of his internal downward spiral. Meanwhile Jim's

company is thriving, having successfully fast-tracked one of his orphan drugs to market. Shivvy comes out to Jim and moves in with Victoria at the beginning of the series. A major lawsuit from the FDA is brought against Timur for the dodgy methadone replacement they brought to market. Jim is ultimately subpoenaed and the case is brought to trial. At the same time, Jonas discovers that his cancer trials have been falsified overseas. Jonas questions the decision to release the information (which he's legally obliged to do) or bury the findings to ensure the drug gets to market on time. At the trial, Jim's personal and political life is brought to bear. Shivvy's bisexuality is made public. Eventually Jim gets off, but is burdened with guilt. Marcus begins a secret formula with Jim's help. The much-needed methadone clinics in the city are shut down. Seeing this, Jess initiates an illegal operation to help those addicts in need.

Season Four opens after the fallout of the trial -- Timur is reduced to half its size. Robin approaches Jim about the possibility of merging companies. Jess is arrested after the cops raid her underground methadone clinic, putting the merger in a precarious position. Jim is forced to choose between standing by his daughter or his company's future. He chooses Jess, who eventually is released from prison. Later, the deal goes through anyway. Jonas, having chosen to hide the falsified clinical trial information, is tapped to become Robin's number two at the new company. Jonas has to choose whether he'll remain committed to his work in biomedical discovery or move up a corporate ladder. Meanwhile Shivvy's academies are facing considerable financial strain without Timur's support and she fears they may have to close. Jim approaches Ed to help finance Shivvy's schools; Ed does so under the condition that he is allowed to join Jim's new company. Jim agrees. Jim seems to be flying high, though throughout this series we've seen him suffering from some terrible headaches. We learn in the final episode the cause: Jim is diagnosed with Stage 3 brain cancer (the treatment Jonas has been working on).

Season Five begins with the realization that Jim is dying, but is still plugging away at the newly merged company. Jim also begins his experimental treatment with Marcus. Jim confronts Jonas about his decision to hide the falsified trials, ultimately asking what type of person he wants to become ("don't follow my path"). Jim and Jonas know that by releasing the news of the falsified trials, they will stall the release of the treatment - the treatment that could save Jim. Though scared, Jim realizes that it is the right and ethical

thing to do. Jonas eventually agrees. Jess is exonerated from her charges, and we end the series with her running for city council. Shivvy's schools become a success again, and she and Victoria become the new power couple. Jim finally becomes too weak to stay at work, and leaves the controlling shares of his company to Jonas. In the final montage we see Jess announcing his candidacy on the steps of Glide Church, Jonas performing experiments in the lab as Ed looks on, and Shivvy and Victoria walking up the steps of the White House to meet the president.

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