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## To All My Friends On Shore (1972 Telefilm/Cheezy Flicks DVD)

Picture: C- Sound: C- Extras: C-  
Telefilm: C+

Gilbert Cates is now known for directing events like The Academy Awards, but early on, he was a director of dramatic TV series, feature films and TV movies. 1972 was also a peak year for Bill Cosby. His first lone starring TV series **The Bill Cosby Show** (reviewed elsewhere on this site) was wrapping up a decent two-season run, **Fat Albert** was a huge hit, **I Spy** was in syndication, he was touring as a top stand up comic and even making great feature films like **Hickey & Boggs**. He also made a decent TV movie with Cates called **To All My Friends On Shore**.

In it, he is a working father raising a family in a bad part of town. As a porter at an airport, he wants to get his family out to a better neighborhood, but in an unexpected twist, his son turns out to have sickle cell anemia. Until we get to that point, we learn of a fractured father/son relationship as the son has problems the father cannot see yet and part of it is the father not being able to connect with his son. The father also has not been great at integrating into society, thus their financial hardships.

His mother (Gloria Foster) is more sympathetic and is trying to help both, but her husband has some personal anger issues and is taking them out on the son. This changes later when they find out why he gets sick more often than usual when the sickle cell diagnosis comes through and the father tries to make things better.

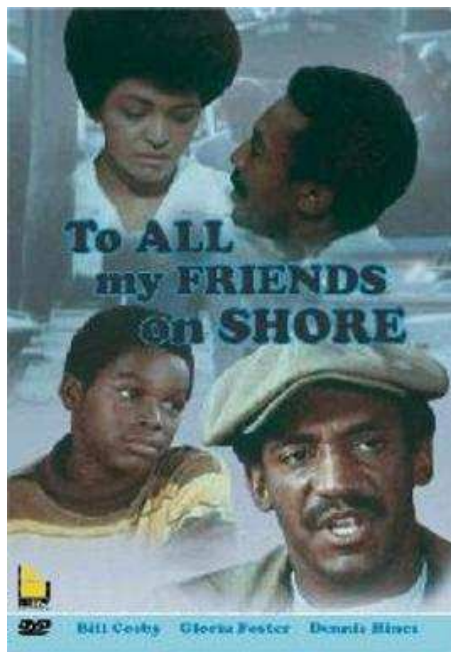
However, the father is more of a so & so than you'd think, but this is a dark side of Cosby playing fathers that found its peak in his huge 1980s hit series **The Cosby Show** (reviewed elsewhere on this site) showing a bizarre disdain for children that fit 1980s Neo-Conservatism, but highly contradicted his energetic, funny persona that made him a huge success. The angrier father in this telefilm is never explored and a missed opportunity (no matter what Emmy this received; likely because it was unprecedented for a black family to be the focus of *any* TV movie) and only runs 70 minutes. Cosby and company tried to do too much in too little a time frame and the result is a problematic narrative. Still, it is interesting enough to give it a look.

The 1.33 X 1 image is lensed by Director of Photography Urs Furrer (**Shaft, Shaft's Big Score, The Seven-Ups**) delivers a very good-looking, realistic-looking film and the kind that made TV movies popular to begin with. This looks like a 16mm film shoot, which was common for many telefilms of the time, as well as the live action segments of **Fat Albert**. Either way, the print and transfer are not great, but it seems like the best Cheezy Flicks could secure at this time and shows the telefilm to have a consistent look. The PCM 16/48 2.0 Mono is also distorted and weak, with some dialogue that you can barely hear, but this was a monophonic TV movie and some TV movies have disappeared altogether from being finished on video. If this one is in the vaults, some work would need to be done and Cosby may actually be the only owner of a print left!

Extras include trailers and intermission shorts.

You can order this title through the DRAMA section of the Cheezy Flicks at:

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