

# **The New Recruit**

A one-act comedy

by

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## THE NEW RECRUIT

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## THE NEW RECRUIT

The setting is a small provincial theatre in the Spanish village of Hasta la Vista on the Costa Packet. The local English theatrical group are struggling with falling audiences, an aging cast, and what to put on in June.

**Scene** Stage with a few chairs scattered. Back drop of a bedroom with window rear. Doors stage left and right. Bed stage left. Wardrobe rear right. Armchair by bathroom door front right.

### Cast

Derrick 60's Director. Flamboyant, always wears a flowered shirt, white shoes and a wide brimmed hat. Gay.

Sam 60's Confident, show off. Long suffering husband of.

Sidione (Cid) 60's Confident, French. After 40 years of marriage has Sid firmly under her thumb.

Betty 50's, 60's A little slow, very good with her hands. Props and costumes. Three times married and looking for number four.

John 70's An older man, quiet, has prostate trouble.

Christine 50's, 60's She is the producer. A hard taskmaster.

Henrietta. 50's She tries hard but does get things wrong.

Patricia 50's The grafter. Makes tea. Good actress  
Always first to learn her lines.

Mary. 60's The much suffering treasurer.

Bob 55 Wondering if he's made the right choice.

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*(Opens. All except Derrick and Pat on stage, just mingling. Enter Mary and Bob.)*

Mary Hello everybody. I've brought a new recruit for our little gang. This is Bob. Bob that's Sam and Cid, Bettie and John, Chris and Henrie. Where are Derrick and Pat?

Bob Hello everybody.

*(Pat enters)*

Pat Anyone like a drink before we start?

Sam Derrick's late as usual.

Betty Good idea, Tea would be nice, seems to cool you down better than anything else.

Sam That's a great idea, I'll have a brandy.

Cid Oh no!! You will not.

Sam I'll have what I want, thank you.

Cid Well I'm not driving home, its dark.

Sam Keep your eyes closed then, it's what you do when I'm driving.

Cid I'm just resting them.

Sam And the snoring comes with it, does it?

Cid I do not snore.

Sam You do. I can't hear the radio for it.

Cid I do not snore.

Sam I've hardly slept in the last twenty years for your snoring.

Cid I do not snore.

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Sam           That's it. I'm buying a tape recorder.

Cid            What for?

Sam            So I can tape you snoring.

Cid            I DO NOT SNORE.

Sam            They can hear you next door.

*(Cid starts to leave the stage, and then stops)*

Cid            That is it. I am going home, if all you're going to do is insult and embarrass me in front of our friends. I'm going home.

Sam            I've have the car keys, and you're not having them.

Cid            I'll take the bus then.

Sam            What bus? We're in Spain not England.

Cid            Well I'll walk.

Sam            Go on walk all five kilometres. But don't expect me to sleep with you tonight.

Cid  
in            I'd rather sleep with a rabid dog than with you when you're  
              this mood. I'm off.

*(She exits)*

Sam            Good riddance.

Pat            Anybody else for tea? Or do you want coffee?

*(Cid re-enters holding out her hand)*

Cid            It's raining, and the brollies in the car. Give me the keys please?

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Sam No. Walk. It'll do you good, might stop you snoring.

Cid Bloody pig. Give me the keys or else.

Sam Yeah!!!

Cid Keys!!!

Sam No.

Cid You asked for it.

Sam Asked for what?

Cid I'll tell them what they called you in school.

Sam You wouldn't dare.

Cid Wouldn't I?

Sam Come on now love. Be reasonable.

Cid Nooooo!!!!

Sam Cid please!

Cid Keys.

Sam Come on now love, we'll have a cup of Pat's nice tea and go home together. We've a rehearsal to get through.

Cid When Derrick turns up.

*(Derrick enters, taking off his driving gloves and brushing the rain off)*

Derrick Someone mention my name. Sorry I'm late, traffic you know.

Mary *(carrying a chair to stage left)* He only lives a kilometre away.

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- Sid           What traffic? If we get more than ten cars in a line they call it a traffic jam
- John          Which way did you come? Via Madrid?
- Pat           Come on who wants tea and who wants coffee? Hands up for tea? *(Derrick, Mary, Sid, Cid, Bob, and Betty put their hands up)*  
Seven, right and three for coffee.
- Derrick       Instant is it?
- Pat           It is when the water's boiled.
- Derrick       I'll have a coffee then. I hate instant tea.
- Pat           *(looking sideways at Derrick)* Right, six for tea and four coffees.  
I'll be as quick as I can. We're going to need a new kettle, this one's taking forever to boil.
- Sam          Try switching it on.
- Cid          Don't start on Pat now.
- Sam          I'm not. I'm just.....
- Cid          Being your usual obnoxious self.  
  
*(Exit Pat)*
- Betty        What is it this time? I hope it's a comedy. I love comedies.
- John         You love everything.
- Sam         And everybody.
- Betty        What's that supposed to mean?
- Cid         Sam don't you dare!
- Sam         Just that you don't seem to see any bad in anyone, that's all.

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Betty        If I did then I wouldn't have got married. Seen bad that is.

Cid            We all make mistakes love.

Betty        Well we're all good really. That's how we set out when we're kids.

Cid            *(patting Sam on the head)* You weren't at school with this one.

Betty        Maybe not, but he must have been good sometime.

Cid            Yes in the womb, maybe.

Sam          Well we do have five kids. Means I was good at least five times.

Cid            Don't kid yourself dearest.

*(Pat enters carrying a tray)*

Pat          Teas up.

Bob          Is it always like this?

Pat          Only at auditions. They get serious when they've got their parts.

Derrick      John. You've brought the scripts? Yes?

John         No!

Derrick      But I gave them to you last Wednesday.

John         I haven't seen you for a month. I've been away.

Derrick      *(looking round)* Well I must have given them to someone. *(Allshake their heads)* Must have left them at home. Won't be long. *(Leaving stage)*

Sam          Go via Almeria this time. It's not as far. He's got a new car, likes to play with it.



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- Betty I do hope that it's a comedy. I love comedies.
- Chris The number of mistakes we make, we'd make "Death on the Nile" look like a comedy.
- Betty We don't make that many mistakes.
- Chris Well when a man who has supposed to have been stabbed, gets up and walks off the set halfway through act two.
- John I was bursting. I couldn't hold it much longer. I had to go.
- Sam Should have tied a knot in it.
- John When you've got to go, you've got to go.
- Sam And you got up and went.
- John Talking about going. (*Leaves stage*)
- Sam Off he goes again.
- Pat It's not his fault.
- Sam Well it's not mine.
- Pat He has prostate troubles.
- Henrie Oh! I just love Tony Christie. Mam has all his books
- Chris Tony Christie?
- Henrie Yeah the fella who wrote "Death on the Nile".
- Chris That was Agatha Christie.
- Henrie Funny name for a fella that. Agatha.
- Chris She was a woman.
- Henrie Who was? Tony or Agatha?
- Sam Agatha. Tony is the singer.

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- Henrie        Wonder when the next one will come out?
- Chris         What next one?
- Henrie        Book by Tony or Agatha Christie.
- Sam          Tony is the singer not the author.
- Henrie        Well Agatha then.
- Chris         It'll have to come from beyond the grave then. She's dead.
- Henrie        Dead! Mum will be upset at that. What does she sing then?
- Chris         Who sing?
- Henrie        Tony Christie.
- Sam          She is a he. He sang how to stuff an armadillo.
- Cid          How did this all start?
- Chris         Because I said that we'd make "Death on the Nile" look like a comedy.
- Betty         I do hope that it's a comedy. I'm fed up with serious stuff.
- Mary         But you're only costumes and props.
- Betty         I know but I want to do for a comedy. I just love a good comedy.
- (Derrick enters waiving a large envelope.)*
- Derrick       Right I have the scripts. Silly me, I left the scripts in the car.
- Sam          What are we doing?
- Betty         Is it a comedy?
- Derrick       Yes. We're doing Richard the Third.

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John           *(entering)* That's not a comedy.

Betty           Oh! I did want a comedy.

Derrick         This Richard the Third is a comedy.

Sam             But Richard the Third is Shakespeare.

Derrick         Not this one.

Chris           What is it then?

Henrie         Don't keep us in suspenders.

Sam             It's suspense. Twit.

Derrick         It's about a woman who is married and has two affairs with men.

Cid             Called Richard.

Derrick         Right.

Cid             *(slapping Sam on the shoulder)* And don't call Henrie a twit.

Pat             Finished with your cups? *(Going round with the tray)*  
Anyone like another?

Derrick         Not now Pat. We have to sort out the parts.

Betty           Is it a comedy? I do hope it's a comedy.

Derrick         It's a farce.

Betty           Like the Poo lice?

Sam             What?

Betty           The Poo lice farce.

Sam             That's force.

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Betty        Well my uncle, he was dead posh, he was, lived down South, place called Guildford, or somewhere. Is there a Guildford?

Sam         Yes near London.

Betty        *(pushing the end of her nose up with one finger)* Well he said that 'e was a hinspector with the Poolice farce. My dad says that the only thing he inspected was the toilets. He was a cleaner in the police station.

Sam         Are you married Bob?

Bob         No. Never been down that road.

Sam         That explains it then.