



2003

Tony Joins the Force

Charlene Gan

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Burgess, C. V. *Tony Joins the Force*. University of London Press Ltd, 1957. Contact publisher regarding price. 23 pp.

Reviewer: Charlene Gan

Reading Level: Primary; Intermediate; Young adult;

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Contemporary realistic plays; Plays;

Subject: Drama--Reviews; Police--Juvenile drama; Work--Juvenile drama; Discovery--Juvenile drama;

Theme: Everyone has the opportunity to help out. It is up to you to take that opportunity.

Production Requirements: 3 different sets. Police costumes and modern clothing will do.

Acts: 1

Run Time: 25

Characters: 12 M 2 F

Cast: Some characters may be changed to make for a mixed cast.

Time Period: Present or 1950's.

Tony has just gotten out of the army and has now decided that he wants to join the police force. He gets his buddy Chippy to join with him. Chippy has a hard time with the police because he doesn't think they do their job right. Chippy's father was killed by a drunk driver when Chippy was a kid. The police never found the guy who did the hit and run so Chippy's family never received compensation for the accident. His childhood and life have been very hard because of it. Tony and Chippy both pass their exams (though Chippy barely passes) and they start their street work. Chippy decides to turn in his resignation papers because he just doesn't like the force, but later is able to catch a drunk driver who killed a man. This changes his whole perspective on the police because he feels that he's done something that has helped another family. He takes back his resignation papers and continues in the force with Tony.

Even though this play was written in the 1950s it still has a lot of current applications. The theme involves everyone. Chippy is able to take advantage of an opportunity, and even though he doesn't like his job at first, it proves to be what he was supposed to do to help out others. Most of the characters are static, with the exception of Chippy, but each character is very different and enjoyable to watch. Tony and Chippy's friends tell jokes and are the typical pranksters in any kind of boot camp. They help add to Chippy's dilemma of deciding if he really wants to join the force and to Tony's and Chippy's friendship. Tony is a tool to tell the audience about Chippy's life experiences and is also used to help Chippy learn about life. The play has a lot of action from boot camp, games, and actual police work, leading the play to be fast paced and helping time to elapse. The dialogue is easy to understand but enjoyable. Because of the characters' actions the play does not seem too simple but would be easy enough for anyone to grasp.