

Tales From the Darkside: "The New Man"

US TV series : 1984 : dir. : Embassy / JayGee / Laurel / Tribune : 25 min
 prod: T.J. Castronova : scr: Mark Durand : dir.ph.:
[Chris Hebert](#)
 Vic Tayback

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Halliwel's Television Companion general note:

"Series for syndication, very similar to **"Twilight Zone"**, **"Night Gallery"** and their ilk. Patchy, to say the least."

TV Times programme listing:

"Series of supernatural dramas. A boy goes to meet his father at work, but the man can't remember ever having seen the child before."

[no listing in "History of Television" or "Television's Greatest Hits"]

A shaggy dog tale with no immediately obvious point. Reformed alcoholic Alan Coones (Tayback) is basking in his boss's good favour at the office, but declines a drink to celebrate the clinching of a new account. A young boy (Chris Hebert) arrives to see him and addresses him as "dad". Thinking himself the butt of some practical joke, Coones marches the boy to the nearest police station, then proceeds home, where his wife and older son "Petie" are astonished to get a call from the police. "Why did you leave Jerry at the police station?" his wife demands. The Coones family - plus Jerry - sit down to a meal, and Coones grows increasingly indignant that everyone is trying to pass this unknown kid off as his, while his wife immediately assumes that he's been on the drink again. Next day she walks out on him, taking the two boys with her, and he returns to the office to be told he's been missing for several days. Not unreasonably, he hits the bottle. The episode closes with a new employee, lately on the wagon, being congratulated by the same boss for clinching a new account. Then a young boy arrives at the office to see him, addressing him as "dad". It is Chris Hebert.

Spooky stuff eh? Well scarcely. In common with several other stories from this **"Twilight Zone"** ripoff, it is neither well written nor handled with any style, and one is left shrugging for a meaning. I daresay some of us would be delighted to discover a new 10-year old "son" they'd previously overlooked, particularly one as ingratiating as Chris Hebert. He was also seen in an instalment of the **"Twilight Zone"** series grandly entitled "One Life, Furnished in Early Poverty", in which a writer is transported to his own past and befriends his boyhood self. In 1984 he starred in a TV movie called **"FUZZBUCKET"**, which "borrowed" rather shamelessly from the formula of **"E.T. THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL"** (82). Nothing else is known of him.

See other titles from the same series, and subject index under **ALCOHOLISM** and **PORT-MANTEAU FILMS & TV SERIES** for other spooky tales anthologies - **"The Outer Limits"**, **"Ray Bradbury Theater"** etc.