

# REBEL WITHOUT A CLAUS

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Daniel Guyton

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**REBEL WITHOUT A CLAUS**  
**By Daniel Guyton**

**SYNOPSIS:** Mrs. Claus explains how she almost married Arthur Kringle, Santa's rebellious older brother, in this lively Christmas comedy.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**  
(2 MEN, 1 WOMAN)

MRS. CLAUS (f) ..... Ageless.  
ARTHUR (m) ..... 19.  
YOUNG SANTA (m) ..... 14.

**PRODUCTION HISTORY**

*Rebel Without a Claus* premiered at Onstage Atlanta (Barbara Cole Uterhardt, Artistic Company Manager) as part of their **Merry Little Holiday Shorts Festival** in December 2011. The cast was as follows:

MRS. CLAUS ..... Judith Beasley  
ARTHUR ..... J Marcelo Banderas  
YOUNG SANTA ..... Charlie Miller

Director ..... Sylvia Veith  
Prop Design ..... Elisabeth Cooper  
Sound Design ..... Sylvia Veith  
Lighting Design ..... Tom Gillespie  
Stage Manager ..... Bill Byrne

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*This play is dedicated to Papa Guyton, who has always been a rebel in his own way—from riding the rails as a young boy, to his love of Eastern philosophy as an older man—but his warmth, kindness and spirituality have infused his essence, so that he is always—at once—the Rebel and the Claus.*

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**SETTING:**

*Santa's factory.*

**AT RISE:**

*SANTA's cloak, hat and mittens are resting on a coat rack. MRS. CLAUS sits in a large red chair, with her hands folded in her lap. She looks directly at the audience*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Hello. My name is Greta Kringle—but you may know me as Mrs. Claus. You see, my husband's name is Kristian Kringle—aka Santa Claus. People always ask me what it was like to know Santa as a young boy, and I... *(Embarrassed.)* Well, I have to be honest with you. I did not really pay attention to him as a young boy. I was in love with someone else. A...very different...kind of boy. *(ARTHUR enters from the wings, dressed like both an elf—and a greaser from the 1950's. He combs pomade through his hair.)* His name was Arthur Kringle—Santa's older brother.

**ARTHUR:** *(Yelling off stage.)* Hey yo, Krissy the Sissy! What's you doin', fat boy?!? Makin' toys?!? Heh heh heh heh heh.

*A young, heavysset boy enters with a toy sleigh.*

**YOUNG SANTA:** Yes, Arthur. And this one's for you.

*ARTHUR slaps the sleigh out his hands.*

**ARTHUR:** Psssh! Man! That stuff's for babies! *(He steps on it and breaks it.)* Aw, what's you gonna do, cry? *(YOUNG SANTA fights back a tear. ARTHUR pulls cash from his pocket.)* Shoot, I got singles to jingle. I ain't got time for this tomfoolery.

*He pops his collar and saunters off with a swagger.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** *(Dreamily.)* He was a rebel.

*YOUNG SANTA picks up the broken toy and exits, sadly. MRS. CLAUS stands and acts like she's 15 again. ARTHUR saunters back on stage from another entrance, reading Play-Elf magazine. She waves at him cheerfully.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Oh hey Arthur! Hi! *(He continues walking, oblivious.)*

Hello? Arthur? Hello? *(Angry for just a second.)* Arthur! *(Back to being sweet.)* Haha, hi! Hello!

**ARTHUR:** *(Sleazy, flirty.)* Oh, hey yo, angel face, what's happenin'?

Man, you look hot in that poodle skirt, I gotta tell you.

**MRS. CLAUS:** Oh, thanks! I... *(MRS. CLAUS looks down happily, then realizes she's still in the MRS. CLAUS garb.)* Oh! Haha! *(To the audience.)* I can't even keep my dream sequences straight. *(She removes her robe, revealing a poodle skirt and cardigan sweater. To ARTHUR.)* Why thank you, Arthur. And you look fab-o in that leather jacket.

**ARTHUR:** *(Showing it off like a commercial.)* Yeah, it's made with genuine yak skin.

**MRS. CLAUS:** *(Impressed.)* Oh wow.

**ARTHUR:** So listen, uh... Whaddya say you and I go up to Lookout Point tonight? I got the back seat of my sleigh all reupholstered.

**MRS. CLAUS:** Oh Arthur, I'm sorry. Tonight's Christmas Eve. And I always go to services on Christmas Eve.

*ARTHUR rolls his eyes.*

**ARTHUR:** Psssh! Man! Services are for babies! Howzabout you and me goes on a real date tonight? It'll be far out.

*She takes his hand.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Oh, Arthur... Why don't you come to church with me tonight? It'll be fun.

*ARTHUR rolls his eyes and points to his watch.*

**ARTHUR:** Pssh, tick tock, the tiny clock. I gotta roll, sugar bowl.

*He starts to exit.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** But wait! Arthur, where are you going?

**ARTHUR:** Well hey, you know. You'd rather spend time with the Big Man Upstairs, than with the Big Man Downstairs, if you know what I mean? *(He points to his crotch.)*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Arthur!

**ARTHUR:** So I'm cruising. I'm gonna find someone who gives a damn.

*He starts to exit.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Like who?

**ARTHUR:** I don't know. Some chick at the mall.

*He starts to exit.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** But Arthur, who goes to the mall on Christmas Eve?

**ARTHUR:** *(He looks at the audience, rebelliously.)* People who don't play by the rules, that's who.

*ARTHUR saunters off with a swagger.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Arthur! *(Small pause.)* Oh, Arthur. *(She touches her heart, clearly in love.)* What a dreamboat.

*YOUNG SANTA enters behind her, carrying a music box.*

**YOUNG SANTA:** Hello Greta.

**MRS. CLAUS:** *(Snapped out of a trance.)* Hmm? Oh. Kr...Kristian. Hi. How...how are you?

**YOUNG SANTA:** I made you something, Greta. For Christmas. *(He hands her the music box.)*

**MRS. CLAUS:** *(Politely.)* Oh. Well, that's... *(As she studies it, she becomes more impressed.)* Really lovely, actually.

**YOUNG SANTA:** It plays a swell tune when you open it.

*She does, and it plays "Silent Night" or another pretty song. She closes it.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Did you make this?

**YOUNG SANTA:** I did.

**MRS. CLAUS:** It... It's really beautiful. (*YOUNG SANTA smiles and turns to go.*) Oh, Kristian? (*SANTA turns to her.*) I...I didn't get you anything, I'm afraid.

*He taps his nose.*

**YOUNG SANTA:** You will. (*He smiles and exits. She looks at him curiously.*)

**MRS. CLAUS:** What a strange little boy. (*She stares down at the music box, then looks at the audience.*) Kris Kringle was in ninth grade when I was a junior. He was too young for me, I thought. But I couldn't get that melody out of my head.

*She opens the music box and lets it play. ARTHUR enters.*

**ARTHUR:** Hey yo, twinkle toes, what's happenin'?

*She closes the music box quickly.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** Oh! Arthur! You...startled me.

**ARTHUR:** Yeah, I was just thinking about what you said, like. And uh...you know...if you wanna go to church and make out, I'm cool with that, too.

**MRS. CLAUS:** (*Horried.*) What? No! I... I can't make out in a church, Arthur! That's a sacrilege.

**ARTHUR:** A what?

**MRS. CLAUS:** A sacri... You know, a sin against God?

**ARTHUR:** Psssh! Man! That God stuff's for babies! He's all, "Hey, I'm God." And I'm all, "Hey, get lost, freakazoid." I'm Arthur Kringle, man. I don't need God.

**MRS. CLAUS:** Well now, Arthur Kringle! I won't have you talk about God like that in my presence! If that's how you feel, then...then I guess you're just not the fella for me.

**ARTHUR:** Pssh! Man, you're just jelly cuz I'm the *coolest*. And if you get rid of me now, Candy Cane, then I'm a ghost. I am ecto. I am hitching up my saddles and taking *this* sleigh ride on the road. (*He grabs his crotch, and starts to leave.*)

**MRS. CLAUS:** But wait, Arthur! Where... Where will you go?

**ARTHUR:** Somewhere dangerous. Maybe the South Pole.

**MRS. CLAUS:** But I just want you to be nice to God, Arthur. I don't...want you to...

**ARTHUR:** Cut the small talk, Delilah. I know what you're trying to do to me. Why don't you save the handcuffs for another square, huh? Clamp that chain around *my* neck? I got ambitions, sugar plum! I got the hunger deep inside my belly. I got lions to wrestle. Mountains to leap, entire rivers to split asunder. The open road is my mistress, baby doll, and you're trying to shave my hair off! You're tearing out my lifeblood, Greta! I can't be tied down to no small town Jezebel with a spirit fetish. Try that with another bum. I am ARTHUR KRINGLE, woman, and I cannot LIVE within those BOUNDARIES!

**MRS. CLAUS:** What boundaries, Arthur? I just...

*Waving his hands to shut her up.*

**ARTHUR:** Sh-pp-sh-pp-sh-pp-sh!

*Pause.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** But I just...

**ARTHUR:** Sh-pp-sh-pp-sh-pp! I see you for who you are, Greta. I recognize the darkness within you.

**MRS. CLAUS:** What...darkness? I don't...

**ARTHUR:** (*Covering his ears.*) Cut it! Just cut out the noise!

**MRS. CLAUS:** What?

**ARTHUR:** (*James Dean.*) You're tearing me apart! You say one thing, society says another, and everybody changes back again!

**MRS. CLAUS:** What does that even mean?!?

**ARTHUR:** I don't know, Greta! *(Small pause.)* I don't know. *(Pause.)*  
I'm vapor. *(He exits dramatically.)*

**MRS. CLAUS:** No don't! *(MRS. CLAUS reaches after him. A motor revs in the distance.)* Oh no! Arthur! *(She grabs her face in horror. She cries out after him.)* Look out, look out, look out, look out! *(The sound of a motor-sleigh crashing. MRS. CLAUS cringes. After a moment, she turns to the audience, half-heartedly singing from "Leader of the Pack.")* And now he's go-one... *(Small pause.)* Arthur Kringle died that very night. He tried to leap over a mountain with his sleigh. He almost made it too, except...he didn't have a landing strategy. Somehow on the other side, he... They say that every night on Christmas Eve, you can still hear his screams, echoing off the valley walls. They never did find his body. *(She picks up a clump of something black.)* But they eventually found his hair. *(Small pause.)* Meanwhile, Kristian Kringle and I consoled each other on Christmas Day—over the loss of his brother. *(YOUNG SANTA enters and hugs her.)* I'm sorry. I'm so, so sorry.

**YOUNG SANTA:** I know. *(He wipes a tear from her eye.)* It's not your fault, Greta.

**MRS. CLAUS:** I know, but...

**YOUNG SANTA:** It's mine.

**MRS. CLAUS:** What? What do you mean?

*YOUNG SANTA pulls out the broken sleigh and shows it to her.*

**YOUNG SANTA:** I made this for him the other day. It was a magical sleigh! It was supposed to keep him safe. But... But when he broke it, it... It broke him. He's dead now because of me!

**MRS. CLAUS:** Oh Kristian, you don't think...

**YOUNG SANTA:** No! It's my fault, Greta! It's my fault! I should have known he was going to break it. It's in his nature! That's why... That's why I'm never making toys for naughty kids again! It's just too dangerous for them. What if it's a magical toy and then they... break it, and...and then they die?!? A... (*Morbid and oppressive.*) Miserable and horrible death. (*Back to MRS. CLAUS.*) I won't have that guilt on my conscience, Greta. I won't! No more toys for naughty kids from now on. I'll...I'll make a list if I have to, I'll...I'll double check it, I'll...

**MRS. CLAUS:** I'll help you.

*Small pause.*

**YOUNG SANTA:** You will?

**MRS. CLAUS:** Yes. I'll make the lists for you, Kristian. I'll even check them twice, to be on the safe side.

**YOUNG SANTA:** Oh Greta. (*He touches her face.*) You would do that for me?

*She touches his hand and smiles fondly.*

**MRS. CLAUS:** I'll do it for Arthur. (*YOUNG SANTA looks down sadly. MRS. CLAUS notices and feels bad. She turns to the audience.*) Well, I didn't fall in love with him right away, you know! It... It took time. (*As she talks to the audience, YOUNG SANTA moves slowly towards his cloak from the coat rack.*) But that morning was the beginning of our friendship. I helped him every Christmas after that. Making lists, protecting naughty children from their own negative impulses, and pretty soon, our friendship blossomed into love. (*As she talks, YOUNG SANTA puts on his cloak, beard, hat and gloves to resemble the modern day SANTA.*) And... Well... I guess you know the rest. (*SANTA helps her put on her robe.*) It still amazes me though that...he did something his brother never could. Every year on Christmas, his sleigh leaps over mountains like they were molehills. Deserts and rooftops, and even the Taj Mahal. (*She looks warmly at YOUNG SANTA, who is now OLD SANTA.*) I fell in love with a rebel once. But I couldn't live without my Claus.

*They snuggle up together. Lights out.*

**THE END**