

Blues for Santa

By Reid Conrad

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Dedicated to those who still believe!

STORY OF THE PLAY

In a small police station Julius Buttrum is having his usual difficult time meeting the demands of both his superior, Lt. Frank Rhule, and his girlfriend, Emily. The capture of the notorious Big Al Gang in this sleepy coastal community has touched off a panic at the station. As it is Christmas, Julius is the one who has to watch the gang throughout the holiday. However, the mild-mannered police officer is under the impression that the Big Al Gang is actually Santa Claus, his helpers and reindeer. Can Santa save Julius from his much put-upon life and bring him the gift of happiness?

ORIGINAL CAST

Christopher T. Rhodes, Robert Gunn, Collin Gunn, Isaac Ramos-Zayas, Mark Espinoza, Joseph Warren, Anne' Revlett, Taylor Schuler, Laurel Weng, Isabella Piparo, Hailee Ballou, Reilly Pierson, Bailey Green, Jenny Morales, Chris Logan, Milena Canete, Jillian Goldman, Jocelyn Silvey and Dylan Radcliff. Stage Manager: Madison Marion. Asst. Stage Manager: Lena Kees.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(7-8 m, 11 w)

Kris Kringle: (m.) Aka Santa Claus, aka Big Al

Julius Buttrum: (m.) A mild-mannered police officer

Officer Kenny Leahey: (m.) Dopey police officer

Officer Davin Dwoltz: (m.) Dim police officer

Null: (m.) A travelling elf, assistant to Kris

Void: (m.) A travelling elf, assistant to Kris

Dasher: (f.) Singing reindeer

Dancer: (f.) Singing reindeer

Comet: (f.) Singing reindeer

Cupid: (f.) Singing reindeer

Prancer: (f.) Singing reindeer

Vixen: (f.) Singing reindeer

Donner: (f.) Singing reindeer

Blitzen: (f.) Singing reindeer

Chief Frank Rhule: (m.) Chief of the Bluewater Police Dept.

Millicent Rhule: (f.) Chief Rhule's wife

Emily Hightower: (f.) Julius's girlfriend

Fern: (f.) A lonely lady

Rudolph: (m.) Playboy reindeer

Doubling: Chief Frank Rhule can double as Rudolph.

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

Growing up a fan of the popular 1963 comedy, *The Nutty Professor*, I modeled the role of Julius Buttrum after Jerry Lewis's creation of Julius Kelp. Once our lead actor had mastered the imitation we found our production took on a very similar feel to those classic comedies of the mid-sixties. The character of Julius Buttrum certainly does not require a Jerry Lewis impersonation but, if you are game and have an actor capable, why not see where it takes you?

SETTING

All the action takes place at the local police station. A desk, center right has a phone, computer, a desk calendar, and a container of pencils and markers. Backlighting reveals two jail cells upstage. The cells have pillows. Other objects visible are file cabinets, a water cooler, and a bulletin board containing notices and Wanted posters. There are a few plants downstage.

COSTUMES

The Officers wear the standard bright blue uniform shirt, navy blue shorts, and caps of the Bluewater Police Department. Julius also wears black socks that are pulled high and his black shoes are highly polished. He wears thick glasses. Kris, Null, and Void wear Hawaiian shirts, shorts, and sandals. The Reindeer wear costumes reminiscent of cheap dance hall performers. Millicent Rhule dresses as loudly as she speaks. Emily Hightower is perfectly dressed and accessorized, and she is perfectly aware of it. Fern is a plain sort.

ACT I

(MUSIC of a harmonica playing onstage, a standard Christmas tune with a bluesy feel. LIGHTS up on KRIS KRINGLE who is sitting at the desk, feet up on desktop, harmonica to lips. After a bit he stops and acknowledges the audience.)

KRIS: You're probably wondering how Santa Claus ended up in jail, aren't you? The truth is, even in this perfect world of ours, sometimes things go terribly wrong. It's up to those of us who can do something about it to do something about it. Oh, I'm sorry. *(Feet off desk.)* I haven't introduced myself. *(Stands and moves around to front of desk.)* I'm Santa Claus. Kris Kringle to be exact. How do you do? The pleasure is mine. *(Looks out over audience.)* Oh, I see. You have your doubts. How could a magical and very *(Finger to side of nose.)* intelligent being like Santa Claus get himself locked up? Especially so close to Christmas! *(Turns sharply to another side of audience.)* What's that? You are having doubts that I am Santa Claus in the first place? *(Turns again.)* Or that Santa Claus even exists? Fair enough. We live in a world of doubt and suspicion. We've all grown accustomed to watching over our shoulder, counting our change. Mistrust is everywhere. I can see it here in your faces. But you are here, that's something. You want to believe...in something. *(Beat.)* Perhaps I can be of help. *(Moves around desk, motions, LIGHTS alter slowly.)* In order to accomplish this I'll need to turn back the clock, to an earlier time, and maybe, by experiencing the preceding series of events, you'll come to an understanding, and perhaps, some of you...will discover...you can believe again. *(Exits.)*

(LIGHTS black out except for the two windows in the jail cells. The LIGHTS change in the cell windows indicating the dawn of a new day. SFX: Keys are heard in a lock. A figure steps onstage. LIGHTS up full to reveal JULIUS BUTTRUM. After surveying the room he moves deliberately to the desk,

places a brown bag on the desktop, removes his jacket and sits. He then removes the contents of the brown bag— a banana, an apple, three juice boxes, a package of cheese and peanut butter crackers and two napkins. He lines these up in a perfect row in front of him. When satisfied, Julius picks up a juice box, inserts the straw and brings it to his lips. SFX: The phone rings. Julius sets down the drink box and lifts the phone receiver.)

JULIUS: Bluewater Police Department. Ho-Ho-Hoping you are having a wonderful morning. *(Beat.)* Emily! *(Beat. Snorts and giggles.)* Of course, I do. And how is my wittle sweetie-petitee? *(Beat. Snorts and giggles, then realizes he is not alone.)* Oh. Emily? Emily? *(Beat.)* Yes, darling, but you see, I'm busy right now, official business you see...*(Beat.)* No, dearest, it's simply that I must attend to more pressing matters...*(Beat.)* Now don't get yourself upset, my hunny-bunny, I am thinking about you. *(Beat. distracted.)* Yes, all of the time, my luscious— *(Quickly.)* I mean precious lover doll. *(Pause.)* No, I didn't forget, honeycakes. *(Beat.)* Well, just as soon as I am able to...*(Beat.)* The list? Yes, I have the list. *(Beat.)* No, I didn't forget the list. *(Beat.)* Read it back to you? *(Beat.)* Now? *(Beat.)* But, darling, as I mentioned just a moment ago I am engaged in very important police work at this moment. *(Beat.)* Engaged? *(Beat.)* Engaged to you, my dearest. *(Beat.)* Yes, my baby sugarloaf. *(Beat.)* Now, now, Emily. Emily. No, now don't you cry. Don't cry, sweetie-petitee. I'll read the list. Let me get it. *(Beat as he reaches into his pocket.)* No, I'm sure I wrote it all down. Here it is. *(Holds receiver close to mouth and speaks quietly.)* I have the list. Are you ready? Shampoo, conditioner, cocoa butter— yes, dear? *(Beat.)* What? *(Pause.)* Do I have to, hunny-bunny? *(Beat.)* You know how I hate to buy those feminine-type products. *(Pause.)* Yes, darling. *(Beat.)* Yes, dearest. *(Beat.)* Yes, my sugar pumpkin lover. I will. *(Beat.)* Yes, the...supers. *(Beat.)* Yes, Emily, my sweet. *(Beat.)* Yes, dearest, I'll call you at lunchtime. *(Beat.)* You, too, my boo-boo-boo-boo-boo-boo-lambkin.

End of Freeview

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