

ARTHUR THE ANTIRACIST

by

Josh Issler

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Double-casting is possible in the Flashback scene. Principal Nelson may be double-casted with Chief Justice Narco. The three children (including Paula) can be cast with the same actors playing Johnson, Cpt. Anderson, and Trey. Minimal set is required. Have fun!

Special thanks... to America.

CHARACTERS

ARTHUR THE ANTIRACIST/KID ARTHUR: A lovable and mislead young man who genuinely wants to be liked by those around him, but does not know how.

MORTY: The Jewish manager of the Quizyes that helps Arthur out of the goodness in his heart.

CPT. ANDERSON: The schizophrenic, pyromaniac police captain who hates Arthur with a burning passion.

JOHNSON: A new police officer trying to do his job well.

TREY: A young, hard-working African-American man.

PRINCIPAL NELSON: The quirky principal that unwittingly leads Arthur to a life of loneliness.

CHIEF JUSTICE NARCO: The narcoleptic old Supreme Court Justice that hears Arthur's case. A symbolic character.

STEVE, PAULA, and JOHN: Kids that tease Arthur.

SINGER: Sings the transitions

SETTING

Present Day Los Angeles

ARTHUR THE ANTIRACIST

V-LOG ENTRY #1

*(ARTHUR's apartment is bare except for a table downstage right and a chair.
ARTHUR speaks to the audience as if it is the camera.)*

ARTHUR: Howdy-ho boys and girls! It's your buddy, Arthur. Arthur T. Antiracist. The date is December 11 and I am very excited to start this video log! It shall be called "Arthur's Video Log Against Hate." Yeah! Consider this my greetings to all you great people from around the world. For my Mexican speaking amigos, (*thick Spanish accent*) 'ello! For those of you that speak Asian, herro! And for my Jewish l'chaims, chello (*phlegm on the "ch"*)! So, once again, my name is Arthur The Antiracist. I am 23 years old, unemployed, and human. In fact, we're all human here in America! Speaking of America, I started this v-log because of a very interesting incident. In America. I was at the local sandwich shop, Quizyes, the other day and...

SINGER: Arthur The Antiracist!

QUIZYES

(ARTHUR walks up to the counter of the Quizyes. TREY, wearing plastic gloves, enters and approaches ARTHUR from the opposite side of the counter. ARTHUR smiles largely.)

TREY: Welcome to Quizyes, what sandwich would you like today?

ARTHUR: Hello new African-American friend, my name is Arthur!

TREY: What sandwich would you-

ARTHUR: Arthur The Antiracist! It's very nice to meet you, sir.

TREY: Nice to meet you too. My name is Trey.

ARTHUR: I could have guessed that due to the excess melatonin in your skin.

TREY: Hey, what's that supposed to-

ARTHUR: I'll take a Spicy Italiana sandwich please. (*Giggling*) Like Mario!

TREY: One Spicy Italian, coming right up...(*He prepares to make the sandwich*)

ARTHUR: (*Reaching out to stop TREY*) Whoa, whoa, whoa my friend. Let me get that, I don't believe in slavery.

TREY: Alright man, what have you got against black people?

ARTHUR: African-American people.

TREY: Aw, hell no.

ARTHUR: The proper term is "African-American." I can't believe you could be so racist!

TREY: Me, racist? I'm the black one!

(MORTY enters from behind TREY)

ARTHUR: African-American one.

TREY: ARE YOU KIDDING ME??

MORTY: Trey, what is all this commotion about?

TREY: Morty, this cracka-jack comes in here all trying to drink MY kool-aid and-

MORTY: I don't wanna hear it! Customer! *(Shoving TREY aside, approaching ARTHUR)* Customer! I'm so, so, so, so, so, very, very, deeply, deeply, deeeeeply sorry.

ARTHUR: Oh, it happens at most of the Quizyes I go to. I forgive you, Trey!

MORTY: Trey, apologize to this nice man.

TREY: He called me racist because I called black

ARTHUR: African American

TREY: people black people! He's the racist one!

ARTHUR: Me! Racist? I voted for Obama, friend.

MORTY: You know the motto of our store Trey. "He who holds the cash is king."

ARTHUR: Oh, I read about this on the Internet, you must be an Israeli!

MORTY: Trey, apologize.

TREY: Y'all tryin' to keep a black man down. Morty, I hereby proclaim my emancipation from the previously esteemed institution known as Quizyes.

MORTY: What?

TREY: *(TREY walks to the side of the stage ARTHUR entered from)* Dang, learn some English, fool. *(He throws down the gloves)* I quit!

MORTY: Oh...how would you like a job, customer?

SINGER: Arthur The Antiracist!

V-LOG ENTRY #2

(ARTHUR walks back downstage to his apartment)

ARTHUR: Howdy-ho boys and girls! It's your friendo, Arthur The Antiracist. The date is December 12, and you know what that means? Comment day!! Just gonna...reach in this bag *(a bag is thrown to ARTHUR from off-stage)* for a random comment from one of you lovely listeners *(reaches into bag, gets a slip of paper)*...Okay! This one is from *(Reading from slip)* Politically Correct Pauly.

(Waving) Hi there, Pauly! Here it is: "Dear Arthur, I will burn you alive and snort your ashes. Hate, Politically Correct Pauly P.S.- Watch my video log!" (*ARTHUR looks up, shocked. He slowly places the slip of paper on the table*) Ouch. That hurts my feelings, Pauly. I hope you learn to love people soon, or you're gonna be one lonely guy. In other news, I have a job! Mordecai, the manager at the local Quizyes, hired me right after Trey stopped being so racist. Roughing it out in the fast-food industry, the American dream comes true! I love my job, and I love my boss...

SINGER: Arthur The Antiracist!

QUIZYES 2

(MORTY makes sandwiches and cleans up the joint while ARTHUR follows MORTY like a puppy.)

ARTHUR: But Mortify, I don't get it. Why won't you be my friend?

MORTY: *(Pausing momentarily from his work)* It's pronounced Mordecai, Arthur. *(Resuming)* You only want to be my friend because you think it will make you less racist.

ARTHUR: Not true! I really do like matzoh ball soup, promise. All I want is a friend, Moldy...

MORTY: Judaism isn't even a race. It's a religion. You can convert to Judaism, you can't convert to being African.

ARTHUR: Oh...you can't? (*ARTHUR slouches into a nearby chair. He pouts.*)

MORTY: Did you think you could?

ARTHUR: *(He springs up from the chair)* Wait! Then my name, Antiracist.

MORTY: Yes I know your last-

ARTHUR: Arthur The Antiracist is for naught! I wanted to be nice to Jewish folks too! (*ARTHUR begins frantically pacing back and forth, mumbling to himself.*)

MORTY: Arthur, what a person calls themselves doesn't determine who they're nice to. My last name is

Rabinowitzgoldsteinisraelsilverbergabrahammosescohenzowiskisohn, *(deep breath)* but that doesn't mean jack squat!

(ARTHUR stops pacing and listens to MORTY)

MORTY: You're nice to someone because you're a nice person, not because they're a certain race or religion.

ARTHUR: Am I a nice person, Mollify?

MORTY: You're not even close with my name, Arthur. Mordecai. And I think the verdict is still out on that one.

ARTHUR: Well, people can change, right?

MORTY: (*Hopeful*) Of course people can change!

ARTHUR: So, stick with me here, people can change...their last names, right?

MORTY: Yeah, I guess so...wait a second, how did you get your last name?

ARTHUR: That's not important, Multiply! The only thing that's important is that everybody loves me. What do you call someone who doesn't like Fiddler on the Roof?

MORTY: Anti-semetic?

ARTHUR: That's it! (*ARTHUR suddenly hugs MORTY*) Arthur will change his name for you Moldy!

MORTY: (*Struggling for air*) Arthur, I honestly don't care what you-

ARTHUR: (*ARTHUR lets go of MORTY and talks to the audience*) Arthur The Antiracist-

MORTY: Please stop referring to yourself in third-person...

ARTHUR: Shall change his name to Arthur The...Antiantisemite! Get ready America. 1.7% more of your population is about to love me.

SINGER: Arthur The Antiracist?

POLICE

(The table used for ARTHUR's V-Log entries and the Quizyes counter can also double for CPT. ANDERSON's desk. CPT. ANDERSON does not need to use a lighter to light the paperwork, he can also use an electric candle and try very, very hard. He sits at his desk.)

CPT. ANDERSON: (*Shuffling some papers*) I never thought being a cop would involve all this paperwork.

(CPT. ANDERSON takes out a lighter, ignites it, and begins burning the paperwork)

BURN. BURN BABY. BURN.

(JOHNSON enters)

JOHNSON: Um, excuse me. Are you Captain Anderson?

CPT. ANDERSON: Jesus! (*CPT. ANDERSON waves the flaming paperwork in an attempt to put out the fire.*) Yeah, yeah, I'm Captain Anderson sometimes...

JOHNSON: What were you doing?

(CPT. ANDERSON throws the paperwork in the trash.)

CPT. ANDERSON: Paperburn-I mean, work. Very important paperburn. Who are you and why are you in my office?

JOHNSON: *(Saluting)* Captain Anderson, sir! Officer Johnson reporting for duty.

CPT. ANDERSON: *(Interlocking his hands)* Why are you interrupting my fun-time? No one interrupts my fun-time.

JOHNSON: Sir! *(Relaxing)* I was transferred from a different branch after your last partner caught on fire?

CPT. ANDERSON: Ah, yes! What an unfortunate...accident. *(He sizes JOHNSON up)* So! You're the fresh meat, eh? What are you? Barbeque? Sweet and sour? Buffalo?

JOHNSON: Sir?

CPT. ANDERSON: Barbeque it is! Now, what do you want Johnson?

JOHNSON: Sir, do you remember the man who started the "Hugs for the Homeless" campaign in your city?

CPT. ANDERSON: Yeah, that's the guy that kept hugging me and whispering in my ear that-

ARTHUR *(Offstage)*: Home is where your heart is, so as long as you got a heart, you got a home!

CPT. ANDERSON: I hate that guy. What about him?

JOHNSON: Sir, we believe he is a serial criminal.

CPT. ANDERSON: FINALLY. SOME ACTION. What's his name?

JOHNSON: We're not sure.

(CPT. ANDERSON sighs, takes out his lighter, lights it and grabs some paperwork again, preparing to burn it.)

JOHNSON: Wait, sir! That's the problem! He's changed his name 99 times. He's been Fred The Feminist, Gary For Gays, Ed Endorsing Environment, Ackbar For Abstinence, uh Christian The Christian, Meta World Peace and-

CPT. ANDERSON: *(He puts down the lighter slowly)* I get it, Johnson.

JOHNSON: *(Exasperated)* He's changed his name so many times that we don't know what his birth-name is!

CPT. ANDERSON: What's his current name?

JOHNSON: Arthur The Antiracist.

CPT. ANDERSON: *(Suddenly very interested)* From "Arthur's Video Log Against Haters?" The "Hugs for the Homeless" guy is Arthur The Antiracist...

JOHNSON: Sir, what are you talking about?

CPT. ANDERSON: Dammit Johnson, don't you worry about it.

JOHNSON: Sir, he's trying to change it again. He must be hiding something.

END OF FREE PREVIEW

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Josh Issler starts off his professional writing career with the short play *Arthur The Antiracist*. Josh competed for Granada Hills High School in Los Angeles, CA for four years, qualifying for the NFL National Tournament in humorous interpretation and reaching finals at the prestigious Cal invitational. During high school, Josh committed himself completely to forensics, attending many California tournaments his school did not participate in. Currently, he studies theatre and philosophy at Northwestern University near Chicago. When he can spare some time, Josh indulges in watching old NFL final round videos, writing, acting, and long walks on the beach.

ARTHUR THE ANTIRACIST

by Josh Issler

GENRE: Comedy (One-Act)

CAST: 10 Male, 1 Female

SUMMARY:

ARTHUR T. ANTIRACIST is not a racist. He promises. ARTHUR THE ANTIRACIST is a genuinely nice young man who only wants a friend. Yet, Arthur believes he can only make friends by altering his name. When ARTHUR tries to change his name for the 100th time, he must cross an insane police officer that seems to have it in for him. By overcoming some hilarious obstacles, ARTHUR discovers that a purposeful life cannot be gained through one's name, but through one's actions.

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