

ROLES:

Citizens 1–6: Narrators and congregation members. Each has a distinct personality to differentiate them.

Other Citizens: Additional narrators/congregants who enhance group dynamics and reactions.

Minister: A passionate and devout leader of the congregation.

Stranger: A solemn and commanding presence, the bearer of divine truth.

SCRIPT WITH DELIVERY NOTES

Opening Narration

What do you live for? What do you try for?

What do you wish for? What do you fight for?

(What do you live for? What do you try for?)

(What do you wish for? What do you fight for?)

CITIZEN 1: (Bright and excited, with rising energy) It was a time of great and uplifting excitement. The country was up in arms, and the war was on.

(Citizen 1 stays standing but steps back into position.)

CITIZEN 6: (Standing, with a grand and celebratory tone) In our small town, every breast burned with the holy fire of patriotism. Drums beat, bands played, toy pistols popped, firecrackers hissed and spluttered. On every street, a fluttering wilderness of flags flashed in the sun.

Transition: (Soft drumroll or marching sound effect fades in briefly, Citizens sway slightly in rhythm to the description.)

CITIZEN 2: (Proudly, with warmth) Daily the young volunteers marched down the avenue, smart and fine in their new uniforms. Proud fathers and mothers and sisters and sweethearts cheered with voices choked with emotion.

CITIZEN 5: (Energetic, almost theatrical) Nightly we packed the public meetings, where patriotic speeches stirred our hearts to the deepest deep. At every other word, we burst in with cyclones of applause, even as tears ran down our cheeks.

CITIZEN 3: (Low and conspiratorial, as though revealing a secret) A half dozen rash dissenters dared to disapprove of the war and cast doubt on its righteousness. But they right away got such a stern and angry warning that they quickly shrank from sight and offended no more.

CITIZEN 4: (Concluding brightly, hands clasped together) It was indeed a glad and gracious time.

Transition to Church Scene

(Citizens rise together and adjust positions to form rows, mimicking a congregation. The Minister stands at the podium. Soft church organ music begins playing in the background.)

CITIZEN 1: (Reverent, in awe) Sunday morning came, and our church was filled. It was the day before the battalions would leave for the front.

CITIZEN 6: (Somber yet proud) The volunteers were there, their young faces alight with visions of glorious victory. Beside them were their proud and happy dear ones, as well as envious neighbors with no sons or brothers of their own to send forth to the field of honor.

CITIZEN 2: (Slow and deliberate) The minister read a war chapter from the Old Testament.

CITIZEN 5: (With awe and excitement) Then an organ blast shook the building, and together we rose with glowing eyes and beating hearts to pour out that tremendous invocation:

ALL (except STRANGER):

(Delivered powerfully, as though in prayer)

God the all terrible! Thou who ordainest

Thunder thy clarion and lightning thy sword!

The Minister's Prayer

(The Minister steps forward, raising his hands, voice filled with passion.)

MINISTER: (With increasing intensity and fervor) Ever merciful and benign Father of us all, watch over our noble young soldiers. Bless and shield them in the day of battle and the hour of peril. Bear them in Thy mighty hand, make them invincible in the bloody onslaught. Grant to them and to their flag and country imperishable honor and glory . . .

Two hundred thousand lives at stake!

It's just their lives to take!

And when we kill them then our journey's over!

No dying on us now!

Defeat is not allowed!

We must live through this day so

Fight fight fight!

Entrance of the Stranger

(As the Minister finishes, the Stranger enters from the back of the performance space. The Citizens freeze, some turning to look. The Stranger slowly moves down the aisle with deliberate steps.)

CITIZEN 1: (Softly, in awe) An aged stranger entered from the back and moved up the aisle with slow and noiseless step. His long body was clothed in a robe that reached to his feet, and his white hair fell in a frothy waterfall to his shoulders. His rough face was unnaturally pale, almost ghostly.

CITIZEN 6: (Whispering, filled with suspense) With all our eyes on him, he ascended to the minister's side and stood there, waiting. The minister's own eyes were shut in prayer, and he went on unaware of the stranger.

MINISTER: (Concluding fervently) Grant us victory, O Lord our God, Father and Protector of our land and flag. Amen.

CITIZEN 2: (Breaking the silence, shocked) The stranger touched the startled minister on the arm and motioned him to step aside. The minister did so, and the stranger took his place.

CITIZEN 5: (Awe-struck) For some moments he surveyed his spellbound audience, then spoke in a solemn voice.

The Stranger's Monologue

(The Stranger stands center stage, calm and commanding. His voice is slow and deliberate, with a growing edge of sorrow and anger.)

STRANGER: (Solemn) I come from the Throne of Heaven, bearing a message from Almighty God. You have heard your minister pray, "Grant us victory, O Lord our God." The Lord too has heard this prayer, and He will grant it—if such is your desire. But first I am commanded to explain to you its full meaning. For it is not one prayer, but two—one spoken, the other not. Listen now to the silent prayer:

(Pauses dramatically between each line to let the words sink in)

"O Lord our God, help us tear the enemy soldiers to bloody shreds... Break their spirits, blast their hopes, and blight their lives. All this we ask in the spirit of Love, of Him Who is the source of Love. Amen."

Two hundred thousand lives I'll take

Two hundred thousand lives I'll break

And when I kill them then my pain is over

You're dying here and now

Escape is not allowed

You won't live through this day now

Die!

Die!

Die!

Final Scene

(The Stranger pauses, scans the audience, and steps back into shadow. Citizens slowly return to their positions.)

CITIZEN 1: (Dismissive, almost amused) Afterward, we agreed the man must have been a lunatic. What he said made no sense at all.

Positioning and Transitions

Opening Narration: Citizens in a semi-circle, standing to deliver lines before sitting again.

Church Scene: Rearrange into rows like a congregation. Minister stands at podium.

Stranger's Entrance: Freeze in place, creating a path for the Stranger to walk down.

Final Scene: Return to semi-circle, seated.

Props

Matching Folders for Scripts: Simple and uniform, fitting the rules.

Representative Items:

Minister: Small Bible or prayer book.

Stranger: Flowing robe (light-colored, minimal design).

Citizens: Flags or ribbons as subtle patriotic symbols.

Chairs or Stools: For congregation seating.