

a script from



WORSHIP

"My Christmas Connection: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow"

By
Rachel Benjamin

What In this monologue the audience is challenged to guess the true identity of the character and what his connection is to Christmas. This portion of the larger script, "My Christmas Connection," portrays Henry Wadsworth Longfellow as he writes his infamous poem, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

Themes: Christmas, Monologue, Redemption, Truth, Joy, Peace, Freedom, Christmas Carols, Identity

Who Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

When Christmas 1863

Costumes Longfellow should be dressed in black.

Props Chair, Decorated Christmas Tree, Presents, Bell

Why Isaiah 9:6, Lamentations 3:22-23, Psalm 121:4

How The script was originally written so that the audience would be unaware of the character's identity at the beginning of the monologue. The character's true identity is revealed throughout the monologue; however, it is never stated directly. If you would prefer to have the character directly state who he is, feel free to adjust the following lines at the end of the monologue.

Longfellow: Who am I? I am Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. I heard the bells on Christmas Day, and I remembered.

Time 3 minutes

Upstage right there is a large decorated Christmas tree with presents underneath it.

Center stage there is a chair.

Director's Note: This monologue should have a heavy and somber tone, helping to emphasize that though we can't always see God's hand, we can rest assured that He is still working.

If possible, the bell sound is offstage and rung by a stagehand.

A man enters from behind the Christmas tree. He stands at the Christmas tree for a moment and looks at it. He slowly grabs a present and turns toward the audience.

Longfellow: The world is broken. The beauty that I once saw, the joy I once felt, the dreams I once had -all seem futile. Hope is a cruel tease. This is the world. Men are broken. Any attempt to cure that, only leads to despair. We are hopelessly flawed and desperately lost and headed for destruction.

Beat.

He steps towards the audience, as if letting them in on a secret.

Longfellow: This is not the feel-good part of the show. This is the grumpy old man section.

Pause.

Longfellow: Who am I? I'm a broken man trying to navigate this fallen world.

Beat.

He moves center stage.

Longfellow: As a young man, hope was closer. I was idealistic. I once dreamed that the world could be better, that I had a place in it – that I had a chance to make a difference. But the older I get, the more pain seems closer, and men's hate grows stronger.

He moves stage left, looking past the audience.

Longfellow: War seems inevitable. The good Book says that it is, but to see it-

Slight pause. He shakes his head in dismay.

Longfellow: To actually see men, line up to kill each other... We are made in the image of God, and yet we can do unspeakable things to each other. I don't see God's image in any of this.

Beat.

Longfellow: The one person who used to help me see the good - she's gone. *(he looks to heaven)* Taken from me.

Beat.

Longfellow: Where is God? Why doesn't He act? Does He see? Doesn't He hear?

A bell tolls.

Longfellow quickly looks toward the tree.

He slowly moves back toward center stage and looks at the audience.

Longfellow: And then, I heard them. It was Christmas, and my life was full of grief and despair and hopelessness. The world seemed to be falling apart before my very eyes. And then... there they were, loud and clear and persistent. Their sound persisted through the despair, ringing louder and louder, stronger and more resilient. The world is not spinning out of His control. He is still Sovereign.

He opens the present and pulls out a Christmas bell.

He rings it.

Longfellow: God is not dead, nor does He sleep. I heard the bells on Christmas Day-

Pause.

Longfellow: And I remembered.

He exits stage left.