

MISS WONDERLING'S HISTORY CLASS

By Francesca Sanders

Copyright © 2003 by Francesca Sanders, All rights reserved.

ISBN 1-932404-65-1

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice:

Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers, LLC.

MISS WONDERLING'S HISTORY CLASS

by
Francesca Sanders

At rise: MISS WONDERLING, a sturdy teacher, around thirty-four years old, stands erect and holds a pointer in front of her class. SHE speaks with a British accent.

(with emphasis) World War One. ***(beat)*** Every day the witnesses to this monstrous skirmish are dying. The people who remember the blood, the rations, the nightly air raids, all the sacrifices. ***(dramatically)*** This dramatic war with its trail of evil... I say, are you listening to me, Miss Welsh? Well then stop yawning and pay attention. You don't want to miss one word, as we examine what led us down the evil garden path. The path speckled with bloodshed... we English forced to fight... European against European, brother against... ***(SHE notices a student coming in late.)*** I say, don't dally, Miss Warbridge. I'm in the middle of a fascinating lecture. Please take a seat and don't disturb your neighbors. ***(beat)*** Now where was I? Oh yes. ***(dramatically)*** Brother against brother. You see, with World War One we are forced to ask ourselves... Miss Kandeline if you don't remove your shoe from your ear, I'll be forced to send you to the headmaster's office. Do I make myself clear? ***(beat)*** Good. Thank you.

Now... today we'll take a look at the climate that led to this tragic battle for humanity... against humanity...

(rolls her eyes) Is this important, Miss Hummell? ***(beat)*** Direly important, you say? Well then let's have it. ***(beat)*** Well go on, Miss Hummell.

(paused as if listening)

Yes. Yes, that was a fascinating question but as it turns out, not directly related to the topic at hand. ***(beat)*** Yes, I realize it is about something that happened a bit ago. ***(beat)*** Yes, I realize that is history of a sort. But I'm afraid World War One was quite a bit before the Beatles. ***(beat)*** Yes, they are a bunch of old chaps now, aren't they? ***(beat)*** Yes, I'm sure it is hard to see what the big fuss was about, Miss Hummell. Back to World... ***(beat)*** Yes, I suppose it's true people probably felt about them similar to how you feel about the Backstreet Boys. ***(beat)*** No, I don't profess to know which one is your favorite.

Miss Wonderling's History Class - Page 3

Now while I'm afraid all this talk is fascinating, I'm being paid to teach you quite a different subject altogether. **(chuckling)** I'm certainly not a music critic now, am I? **(beat)** What was that, Miss Hummell? **(beat)** Yes, indeed. I suppose that was obvious, now wasn't it? **(beat)** Yes, I do know where I am, not getting addled, as you say. **(beat)** Yes, I'm quite sure I recognize that this is a history class and I the history teacher.

Now... as I believe I was mentioning, the war to end all wars was a classic example.... **(turning her head to look at Miss Epstein)** Miss Epstein, would you kindly remove your hand from Miss Warwick's face? **(beat)** I don't care if she said she was looking a bit pasty this morning, that's her problem. Besides as you undoubtedly know, slapping her won't help. It's the pinching of the cheeks that brings the rosy color to the face. Now as I was saying...**(sing-song)** What is it, Miss Webster? **(beat)** Can you be excused? For what, pray tell? **(pretends to listening intently)** No dear, it can't be your time of the month so soon. Remember? It wasn't two weeks ago you said the very same thing and went off for the afternoon with... what was that chap's name? Oh yes, Teddy. **(beat)** No, I'm afraid I quite remember the time frame and it was definitely two weeks ago! **(beat)** No one is that irregular, dear. Especially at your age. **(annoyed)** Please put your hand down, Miss Webster. I say, put it down. I don't want to hear another word about your biological abnormalities. **(beat)** No, Miss Webster. I actually don't believe you're... no I'm not calling you a freak. Merely a scientific anomaly perhaps.

Back to World War One and the way it changed life as we knew it. Say, I have an idea to help you better relate to the time period, get the feel of the places involved. For extra credit tonight why don't you all ring up your parents and see if they have any stories of World War One. Perhaps you'll hear some tales that have been passed down from generation to generation. Make things a bit more personal. Why, do you know my mother used to tell me the stories her grandmother told her about World War One? I'd sit in her lap, sipping tea, gazing out the big picture window in our country home when I was... stop snickering, Miss Moran. What is it?

(pause)

No, I'm afraid the dinosaurs were long gone when I was roaming the English countryside as a lass.

(pause)

Miss Wonderling's History Class - Page 4

No. No, believe it or not, I've met no cavemen at all. None at all. Now as for World War One... What was that, Miss Moran?

(pause)

No, I say that's not why I teach history. No, believe it or not, I actually don't pull it all from my own experience. **(beat)** Yes, I did actually have to "waste much of my youth" studying this subject... which is more than I can say for you, Miss Moran.

Back to World War One. Now here in England we had the honor of seeing first hand a clever leader of the Royal Fleet who later went on to great prominence in the Second World War. Class, can we guess who this man was? **(beat)** No I'm afraid it wasn't Sting. A bit before that. The man I'm thinking of is none other than the one, the only- Winston Churchill. When he was a young man he... **(resigned)** yes, Miss Chesterworth? No actually, I don't think a discussion of my behavior towards Miss Epstein warrants a class vote. But I appreciate the camaraderie you feel both towards Miss Epstein and your other classmates. A camaraderie that enables you to speak forth during my lecture on Winston Churchill and the First World War.

Now as I was saying... what is it now, Miss Blumberg? **(beat)** Oh really? Well that's fascinating, Miss Blumberg. **(beat)** Believe it or not, yes. Yes, I do feel World War One has a place in history. **(beat)** No, I don't think of it as the dark ages, though I suppose to someone as young as yourself... I see. No, I was not calling you immature, I was merely pointing out that to someone with your myopic slice of life... **(beat)** I say Miss Blumberg, you've been studying your vocabulary. **(beat)** Yes, I suppose that was a bit of a *slam*.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from MISS WONERLING'S HISTORY CLASS by Francesca Sanders. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

**Brooklyn Publishers, LLC
P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406
Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011
www.brookpub.com**