



MARIST CLS - THE POWER OF READERS THEATRE, VOL #3
FALL 2024
CLASS #4

MARY'S WEDDING BY STEPHEN MASSICOTTE

WHEN MARY AND CHARLIE UNEXPECTEDLY FIND ONE ANOTHER
SHELTERING IN A BARN DURING A THUNDERSTORM, THEIR LOVE IS BORN.

THE YEAR IS 1914. MARY AND CHARLIE MUST SURRENDER THEIR FATES TO
THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THEIR TUMULTUOUS TIMES DURING WW I.

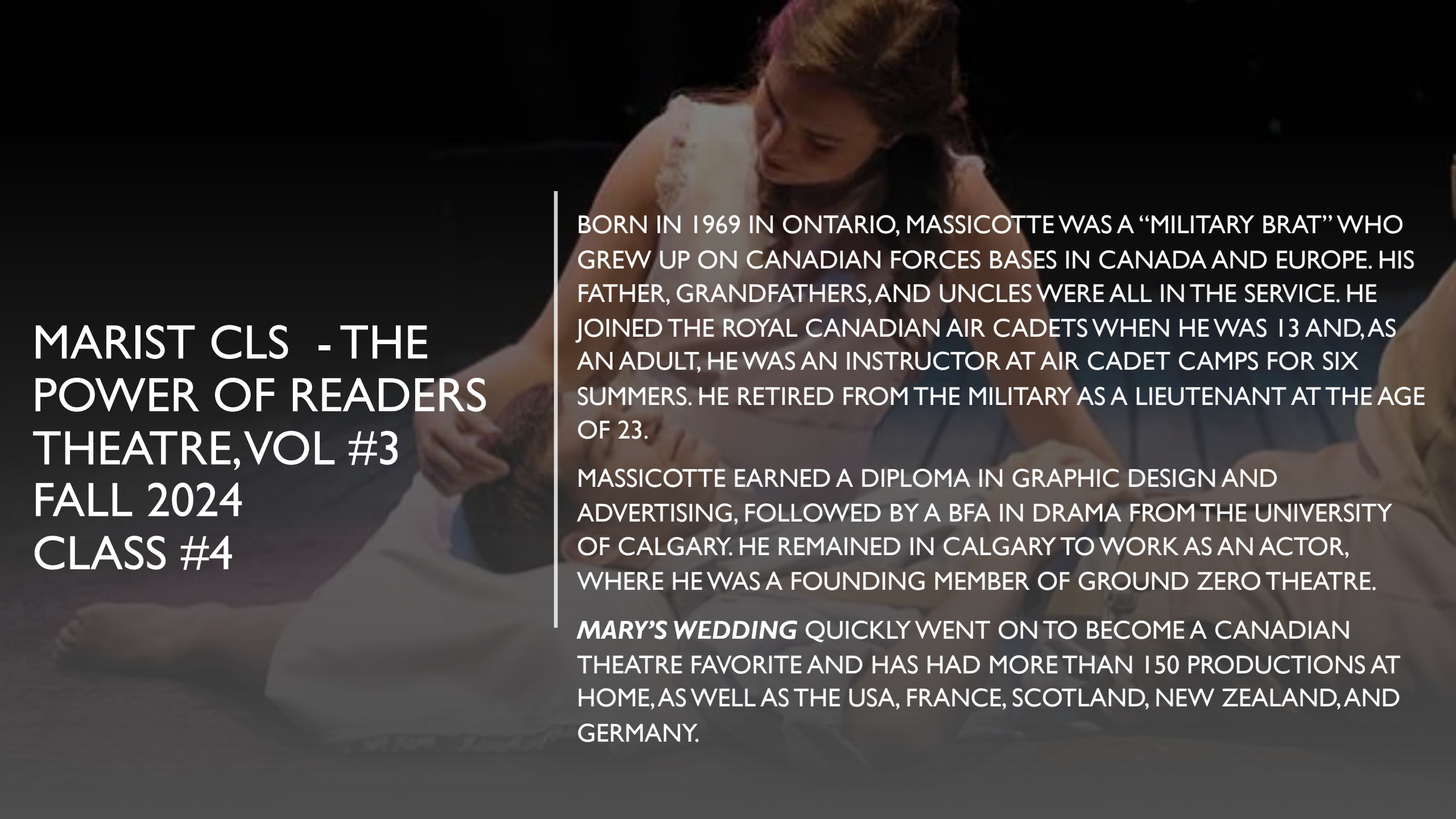
IN THIS AWARD-WINNING PLAY, THEIR LOVE STORY UNFOLDS AGAINST THE
DEVASTATING CONFLAGRATION OF WAR.

THE PLAYWRIGHT WEAVES TIME, DREAMS AND MEMORY TOGETHER TO
REMINDE US THAT THE HEART IS BEAUTIFULLY RESILIENT.



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- STEPHEN'S PLAY *MARY'S WEDDING* PREMIERED IN 2002 AT THE ALBERTA THEATRE PROJECTS' PLAYWRITERS FESTIVAL AND WAS THE WINNER OF THE 2000 ALBERTA PLAYWRITING COMPETITION, THE 2002 BETTY MITCHELL AWARD AND THE 2003 ALBERTA BOOK AWARD.
- *MARY'S WEDDING* HAS RECEIVED MORE THAN A HUNDRED PRODUCTIONS, TRANSLATED INTO FRENCH, AND HAS BEEN ADAPTED INTO AN OPERA BY THE PACIFIC OPERA VICTORIA.

A woman with blonde hair is sitting on a bed, reading a book to a young child. The child is leaning in and listening intently. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an evening or indoor setting with low light. The woman is wearing a light-colored top, and the child is wearing a dark top. The background is dark and out of focus.

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BORN IN 1969 IN ONTARIO, MASSICOTTE WAS A “MILITARY BRAT” WHO GREW UP ON CANADIAN FORCES BASES IN CANADA AND EUROPE. HIS FATHER, GRANDFATHERS, AND UNCLES WERE ALL IN THE SERVICE. HE JOINED THE ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADETS WHEN HE WAS 13 AND, AS AN ADULT, HE WAS AN INSTRUCTOR AT AIR CADET CAMPS FOR SIX SUMMERS. HE RETIRED FROM THE MILITARY AS A LIEUTENANT AT THE AGE OF 23.

MASSICOTTE EARNED A DIPLOMA IN GRAPHIC DESIGN AND ADVERTISING, FOLLOWED BY A BFA IN DRAMA FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY. HE REMAINED IN CALGARY TO WORK AS AN ACTOR, WHERE HE WAS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF GROUND ZERO THEATRE.

MARY’S WEDDING QUICKLY WENT ON TO BECOME A CANADIAN THEATRE FAVORITE AND HAS HAD MORE THAN 150 PRODUCTIONS AT HOME, AS WELL AS THE USA, FRANCE, SCOTLAND, NEW ZEALAND, AND GERMANY.

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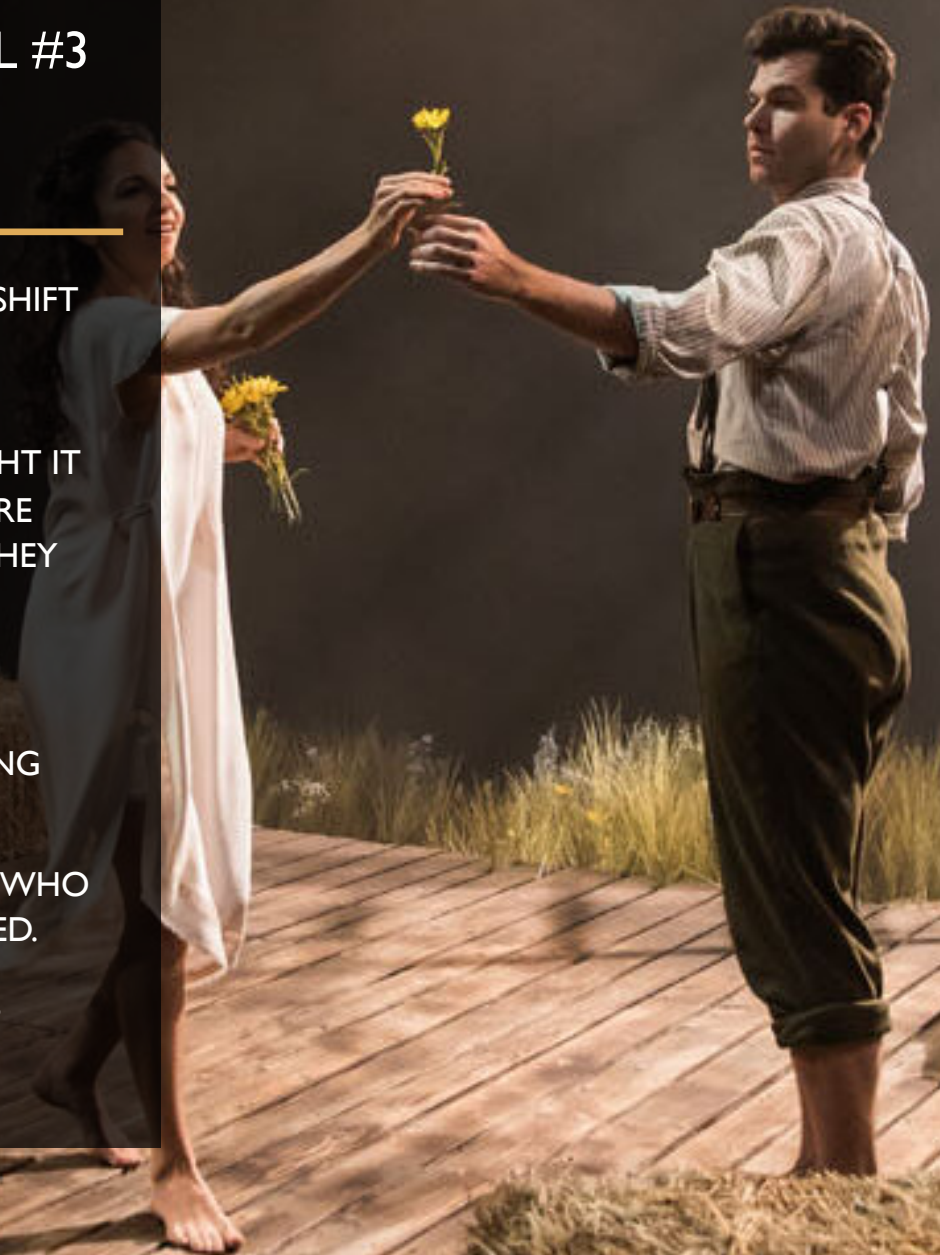
MARY'S WEDDING USES A COMBINATION OF MEMORY AND DREAM AS A THEATRICAL DEVICE TO SHIFT TIME AND PLACE, WHISKING THE AUDIENCE BACK AND FORTH FROM THE BUCOLIC PRE-WAR CANADIAN COUNTRYSIDE AND THE NIGHTMARISH FIRST WORLD WAR TRENCHES OF FRANCE.

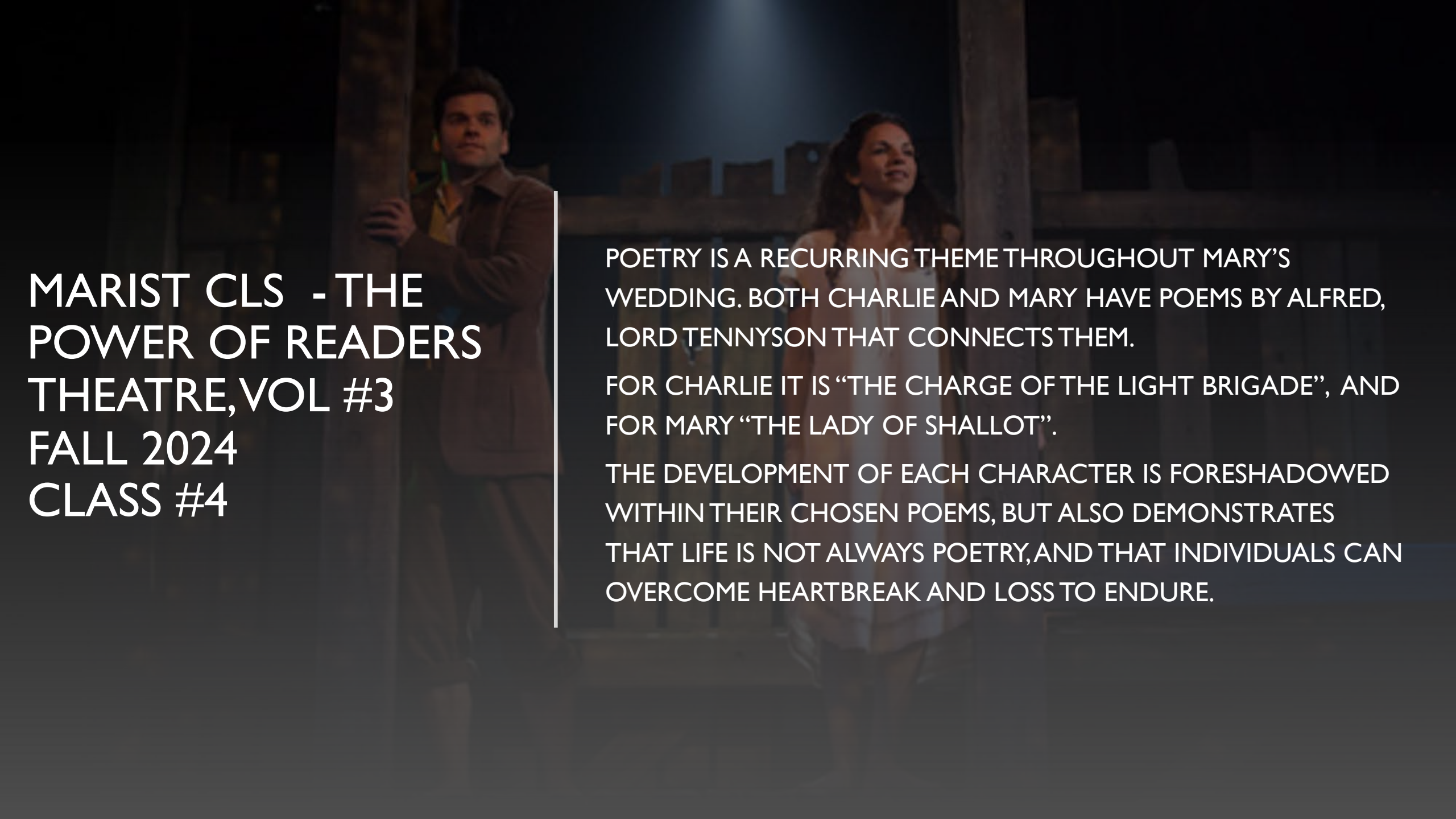
"THIS WAS GOING TO BE A WAR PLAY. HOWEVER, I WAS IN LOVE WHEN I WROTE IT AND I THOUGHT IT WAS A LOVE TO END ALL LOVES. THIS IS NOT THAT LOVE STORY BUT THE MORE I LOVED, THE MORE MARY AND CHARLIE LOVED EACH OTHER. THE MORE I LONGED TO RETURN TO HER, THE MORE THEY LONGED TO RETURN TO EACH OTHER. SO THE WAR PLAY BECAME A LOVE STORY. I WROTE IT TO FORGET HER AND TO GET HER BACK AND TO REMEMBER HER AND TO LET HER GO."

POIGNANTLY, MASSICOTTE ADDED THAT THE PLAY WAS ALSO INFLUENCED BY TWO STORIES OF WOMEN WHO LOST LOVED ONES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. THEIR GRIEF WAS SO OVERWHELMING THAT THEY NEVER MARRIED.

ALTHOUGH HE'S UNSYMPATHETIC TOWARDS WAR ITSELF, MASSICOTTE'S WORK HONORS THOSE WHO SERVED IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR, ESPECIALLY THE 66,000 CANADIAN SOLDIERS WHO WERE KILLED.

THE POIGNANT ROMEO-AND-JULIET ROMANCE OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS, CHARLIE AND MARY, BREATHES LIFE INTO THE VAST HISTORICAL BACKDROP.





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POETRY IS A RECURRING THEME THROUGHOUT MARY'S WEDDING. BOTH CHARLIE AND MARY HAVE POEMS BY ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON THAT CONNECTS THEM.

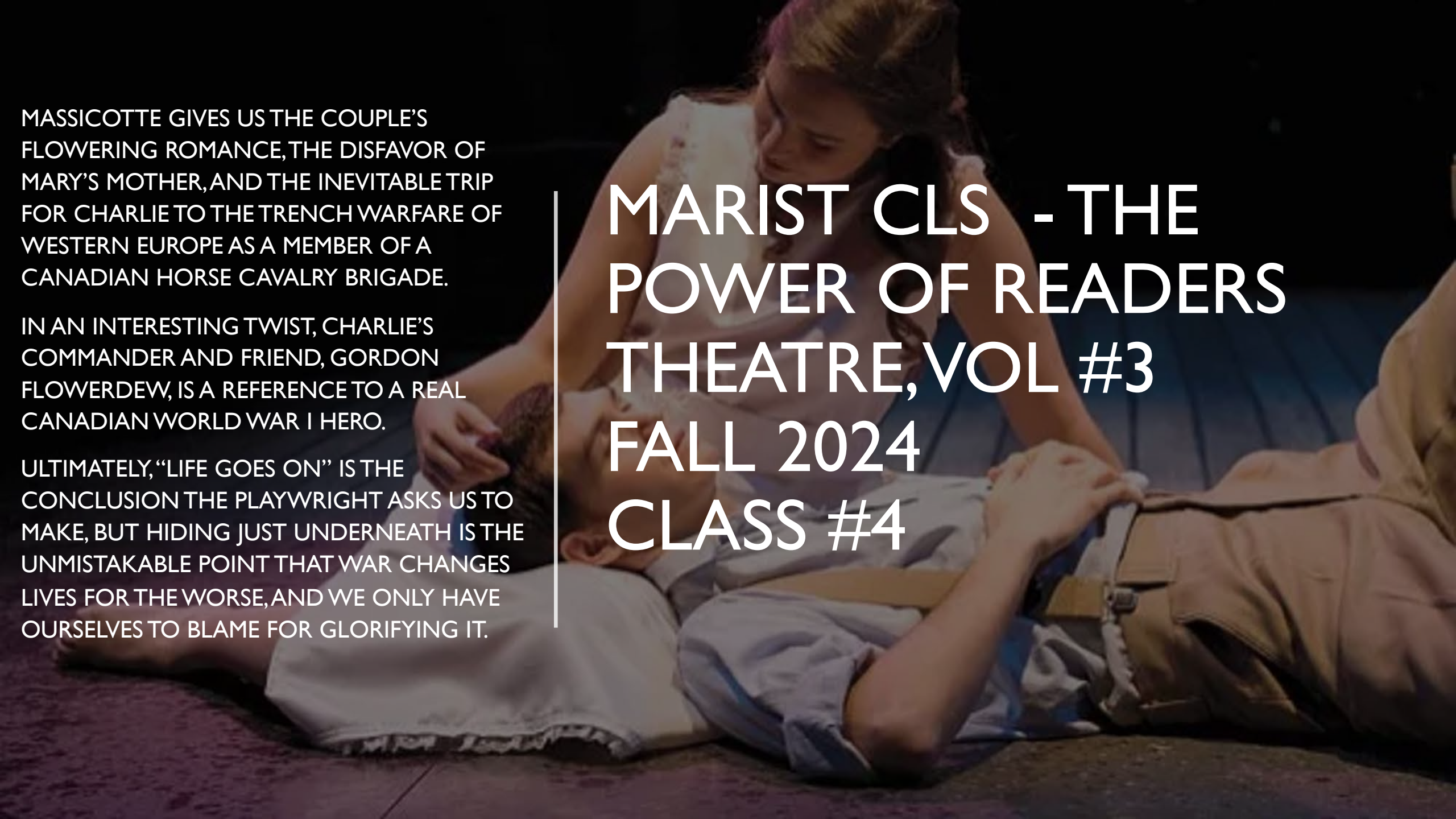
FOR CHARLIE IT IS "THE CHARGE OF THE LIGHT BRIGADE", AND FOR MARY "THE LADY OF SHALLOT".

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EACH CHARACTER IS FORESHADOWED WITHIN THEIR CHOSEN POEMS, BUT ALSO DEMONSTRATES THAT LIFE IS NOT ALWAYS POETRY, AND THAT INDIVIDUALS CAN OVERCOME HEARTBREAK AND LOSS TO ENDURE.

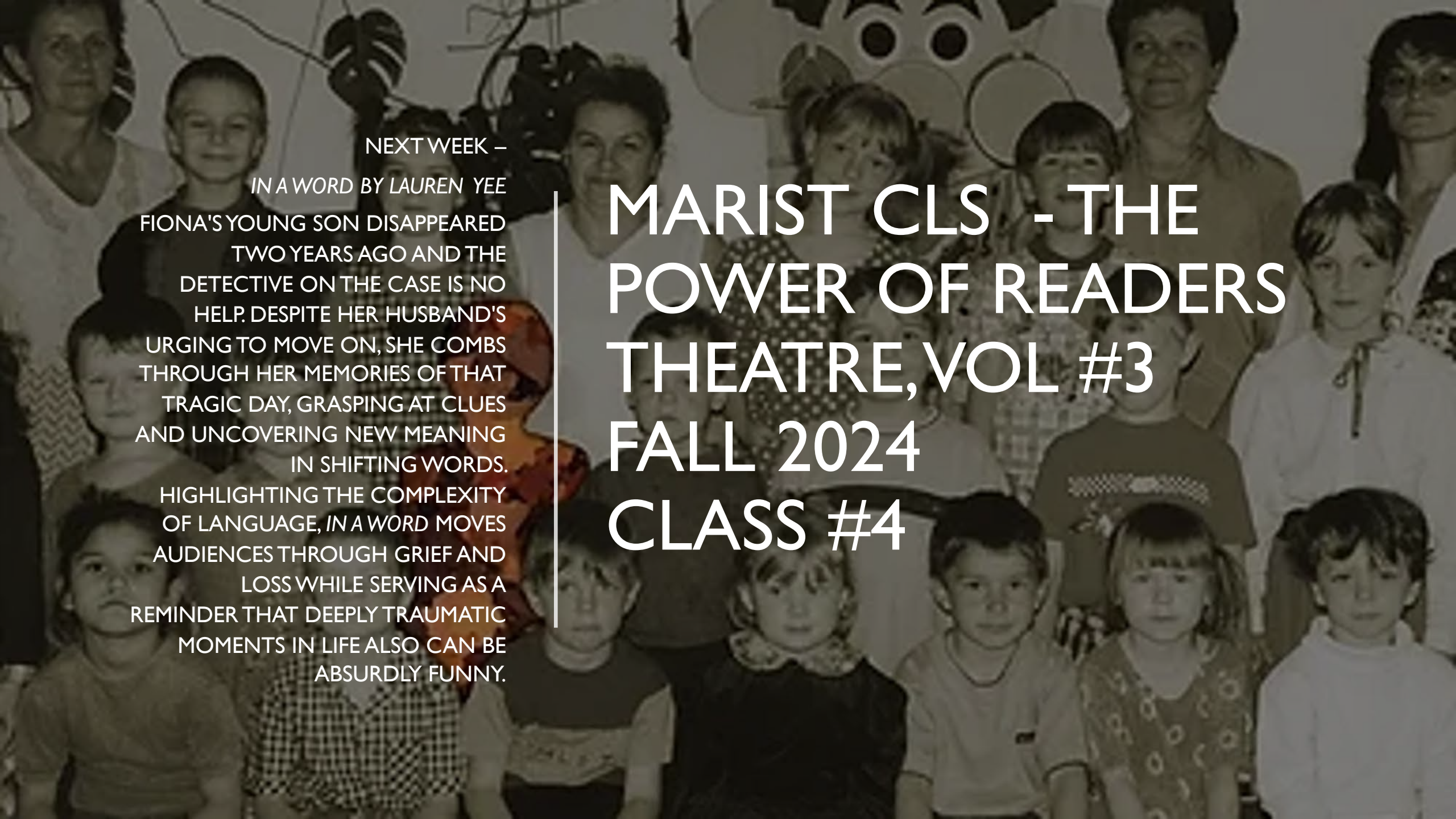
MASSICOTTE GIVES US THE COUPLE'S FLOWERING ROMANCE, THE DISFAVOR OF MARY'S MOTHER, AND THE INEVITABLE TRIP FOR CHARLIE TO THE TRENCH WARFARE OF WESTERN EUROPE AS A MEMBER OF A CANADIAN HORSE CAVALRY BRIGADE.

IN AN INTERESTING TWIST, CHARLIE'S COMMANDER AND FRIEND, GORDON FLOWERDEW, IS A REFERENCE TO A REAL CANADIAN WORLD WAR I HERO.

ULTIMATELY, "LIFE GOES ON" IS THE CONCLUSION THE PLAYWRIGHT ASKS US TO MAKE, BUT HIDING JUST UNDERNEATH IS THE UNMISTAKABLE POINT THAT WAR CHANGES LIVES FOR THE WORSE, AND WE ONLY HAVE OURSELVES TO BLAME FOR GLORIFYING IT.

A woman in a white dress is kneeling on the ground, tending to a man in a military uniform who is lying on his back. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting a trench or a battlefield at night. The woman is looking down at the man with a concerned expression. The man's uniform is light-colored, and he appears to be in a state of distress or unconsciousness. The background is dark and indistinct, focusing the viewer's attention on the two characters.

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NEXT WEEK –
IN A WORD BY LAUREN YEE
FIONA'S YOUNG SON DISAPPEARED
TWO YEARS AGO AND THE
DETECTIVE ON THE CASE IS NO
HELP. DESPITE HER HUSBAND'S
URGING TO MOVE ON, SHE COMBS
THROUGH HER MEMORIES OF THAT
TRAGIC DAY, GRASPING AT CLUES
AND UNCOVERING NEW MEANING
IN SHIFTING WORDS.
HIGHLIGHTING THE COMPLEXITY
OF LANGUAGE, *IN A WORD* MOVES
AUDIENCES THROUGH GRIEF AND
LOSS WHILE SERVING AS A
REMINDER THAT DEEPLY TRAUMATIC
MOMENTS IN LIFE ALSO CAN BE
ABSURDLY FUNNY.

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MARY'S WEDDING

Stephen Massicotte

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Mary's Wedding
By Stephen Massicotte