

*SHADOW GIRLS*  
TAC WRITING SAMPLE

This writing sample contains an excerpt from the second draft, and select excerpts from the first draft as additional supportive material. These additional excerpts have been taken out of order from the various points of the play's chronology, which is not sequential.

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EXCERPT 1 (SECOND DRAFT)

*The stage is all white, with a white floor and white curtains. Maggie and Amelia stand centre stage, also in all white, and are lit in a simple square by Centre Stage (CS) Projector, which silhouettes them against the white backdrop. They play a clapping game from their childhood as the following rumours are heard from the animators. The animators' lines overlap, building in until they say the final lines in unison.*

ANIMATORS:

I heard spin the bottle made it all the way home last night.  
You girls just didn't get enough of each other eh?  
Are you guys lesbians now?  
Didn't you just break up with Kyle, Maggie?  
I heard he broke up with her.  
I wonder why—  
They were just drunk. I kiss girls too, when I'm drunk.  
So what are they bi?  
Hey Amelia, do you think she's hot? I think you'd be hot together.  
Maggie and Amelia sitting in a tree, K-I-S-S-I-N-G

*The sound of a loud school bell drowns out the rumours, which come to a sudden stop. Maggie and Amelia finish their clapping game, and stand face to face holding hands.*

MAGGIE:      Maybe we can pretend like it never happened? Want to do it that way? Like Brendan behind the bleachers never happened?

*CS Projector goes out. Stage Right (SR) and Stage Left (SL) Projectors and are turned on, with title cards reading "Shadow" and "Girls" respectively. Their images are overlapping. Amelia shoves Maggie away and the girls exit. Projector one straightens out so that the show title becomes legible.*

*Projectors go out. Maggie and Amelia return, and sit at the SR and SL Projector as though they are computers. They turn them on. The ding of Facebook Messenger is heard, and the following conversation is projected, a screenshot of their Facebook conversation. SR and SL Projector display Maggie and Amelia's side of the conversation respectively.*

AMELIA: Hey

MAGGIE: Hi, long time no talk lol

AMELIA: I saw you were doing that cool photography project, with girls' underwear? You went to art school right?

MAGGIE: Yeah, OCAD. You?

AMELIA: I have a degree in Psych that I put to good use by running a bike shop lol. Do you still need volunteers haha? For the project?

MAGGIE: Yeah, you want to volunteer?

AMELIA: Yeah! I want to get out of my comfort zone.

*SR and SL Projector go out. Work lights are turned on from the wings, casting long shadows.*

MAGGIE: Hit or kiss?

AMELIA: Kiss.

*CS Projector goes up, illuminating them in a square.*

MAGGIE/AMELIA: Hey!

MAGGIE: Welcome to my studio!

AMELIA: Hey, thanks, thanks so much for having me.

MAGGIE: Yeah, thanks for reaching out.

AMELIA: Yeah, I mean thanks for responding.

*They awkwardly hug.*

AMELIA: Okay, let's do this.

*CS Projector goes out. SR Projector goes up, projecting water under a red gel, out of focus. It appears as a Dark Room. Maggie places a transparent photo in the water, and pulls the image into focus. It is a pair of used women's underwear. She pulls it out, freshly developed. Walking to the white drop, the photo is projected onto the wall. She walks across the stage, entering her studio where Amelia sits waiting. SR Projector goes out and CS and SL Projector turn on. They are covered in negatives and art supplies. On CS Projector, a pencil is being sharpened in shadow, it's shavings falling onto the projector pane. Maggie puts her transparent underwear photo on SL Projector.*

MAGGIE: So, did it go like you thought it would?

AMELIA: What do you mean?

MAGGIE: This - was this what you were expecting?

AMELIA: I don't know what I was expecting. I wanted to see if we-- you know. I don't know. Fuck, never mind.

MAGGIE: No, say what you were going to say.

AMELIA: No, it's stupid.

MAGGIE: Say it.

AMELIA: I should probably go, it's late

MAGGIE: Are you kidding.

AMELIA: Well I don't know.

MAGGIE: Just say what you were going to say!

AMELIA: I don't think I have to, do I?

MAGGIE: So you're just going to come over and drop your panties for my art project, and we're going to leave it at that? I'm sorry, that's weird. What are you getting at? I haven't talked to you since we fucked in that girl's mom's room.

AMELIA: I mean, that was six years ago

MAGGIE: Yeah. I don't know, I mean it's whatever, it was rude.

AMELIA: I'm sorry. I guess, when I moved to the city I knew you were here and I thought I should reach out? And then I waited too long and it got weird, but I was still thinking about you, and if we'd run into each other, and how weird that would be, and then I saw your post and it was the perfect opportunity so yeah... and then you said yes.

MAGGIE: So I get a photo of your panties and you get morally relieved of your highschool sins, win win?

AMELIA: No, I mean, I'm just glad we're – I don't know. Fuck. I gotta go, I'm embarrassing myself.

MAGGIE: Really?

AMELIA: Well, I should, right?

MAGGIE: Do you want to go?

AMELIA: I don't know.

MAGGIE: If you want to stay over, you can. It's pretty late.

AMELIA: On this shitty love seat?

MAGGIE: Whoa.

AMELIA: Sorry.

MAGGIE: I mean you can have my bed. I'll sleep on the shitty loveseat.

AMELIA: Oh, no, that's okay, I'll just bike home.

MAGGIE: Stay.

*CS and SL Projectors go out. SR Projector turns on. In a glass dish, baking soda is reacting with vinegar and food colouring. It is a chemical reaction, fizzing and bubbling. Maggie and Amelia hesitate, as though they might kiss.*

*SR Projector goes out. CS Projector goes on. On it is a moving target. Maggie and Amelia face forward, playing another clapping game from their childhood. It involves guns and shooting each other. The target moves around before settling on Maggie's chest. Amelia wins the round. As she hold out her hands as guns, red food colouring appears in the centre of the target, spreading across Maggie's chest. She is shocked. CS Projector goes out.*

*SR and SL Projectors go on, with sheets placed over them with pinholes. It appears as a starry sky. The stars rotate, slowly, beautifully. Maggie enters her bedroom, where Amelia is staying the night.*

MAGGIE: Can I come in? That love seat is so small.

AMELIA: Yeah, sure.

*Maggie lays down on the floor.*

AMELIA: Are you going to be okay down there?

MAGGIE: I'm fine.

AMELIA: Maggie – I'm sorry.. for hurting you. I was confused back then.

MAGGIE: And now?

AMELIA: I figured it out. I watch girl-on-girl porn, I date guys.

MAGGIE: Right.

AMELIA: Thanks for letting me stay over. We should like, hang out sometime.

MAGGIE: BFFs again?

*Beat.*

MAGGIE: *Laughing.* Yeah.

AMELIA: But seriously.

MAGGIE: I'm pretty busy. But I'm going out this weekend and you can come. But it's a gay bar.

AMELIA: Oh okay maybe.

*The starscape sheets are jarringly removed. They are replaced by fists. The girls sit up. They play a game of rock paper scissors. As they play, the projected hands follow suit. Amelia wins.*

*SL Projector goes out. The women exit. A colourful, glowing Toronto cityscape is slapped onto CS projector. It swings around to face the audience, projecting onto them, shining an overwhelming light into their eyes. Loud club music is heard.*

*SR Projector goes on. It has a pride flag and many small shot glasses on it. Amelia enters the space, approaches the projector and takes a shot. She looks around uncomfortably.*

*The beat drops, and SL Projector turns on, illuminating Maggie who is dancing whole heartedly. It is projecting a tray of colourful translucent cassette tapes. The tray bounces and rotates to the beat of the music. The projector itself rotates, sending the image cascading across the stage in time to the music. A magnifying glass is placed in front of SR Projector, creating a bright rainbow light that also travels across the stage. We are at the club. Amelia approaches Maggie.*

AMELIA: So you actually go here? Often?

MAGGIE: Yeah!

AMELIA: So are you like, a lesbian now?

MAGGIE: I'm queer.

AMELIA: Are you sure this is okay? I feel like one of those annoying straight girls who goes to a gay club to escape boys and negates the queer safe space. I read an article about that.

MAGGIE: Just stop talking about being straight, and it'll be fine. Let's dance!

*They dance. It quickly gets close and intimate. They kiss. The Projectors go out. An animator turns on a work light, we are in a secluded place now, presumably a bedroom. The animator crosses the stage with the light, throwing their shadows across the stage. Parting from their kiss, Amelia takes the light. She uses it to light Maggie, who begins to perform a strip tease. Her silhouette is projected across the backdrop, larger than life, sensual, highlighting her dance. Maggie takes the light and sets it down. They begin to undress together now, their shadows amplifying this movement.*

MAGGIE: I push my fingers in her mouth, working up her with the other. Stoppering her from both ends, filling her until she bursts. She moans and I feel it vibrate on my fingertips.

AMELIA: Going down on her isn't like giving head— it's powerful. I invade her. I feel masculine— like I'm a him. I can hold her down. I'm flexing something that never had a place in the bedroom before. I want her to feel small. To fight with her sex. To slither around until she's so wet my fingers slip inside her and she curves onto the hardness of my bones.

MAGGIE: She squirms when she slips her fingers in me. Like she's uncomfortable. She doesn't like getting her hands dirty and wet. And that small recoil in her— I get off on that.

AMELIA: She announces when she comes but it's me being pulled into her.

BOTH: Enveloped in her sound, her swell, I am held more tightly than ever before, until we -

*The women split from each other and turn to face the backdrop. SR and SL Projectors turn on. Transparent photos of their faces at climax are projected in front of the women, so that they are looking at their partner's projected image. Another photo comes into frame, out of focus. The images shift so that the first is removed, replaced by a photo of each woman, straight faced. They are now standing in their own images. They turn to look at each other. Amelia looks distressed. Maggie walks over and kisses Amelia tenderly, as if to comfort her. They break from their kiss to rush forward and grab a white sheet of fabric from CS projector, fanning it between them.*

*SR and SL projector go out. CS projector turns on. We see a sheer sheet laid down, as well as a fine lace bra. Amelia and Maggie lie down, tangled in the sheet.*

AMELIA: Oh my god I need a fucking cigarette.

MAGGIE: You still smoke?

AMELIA: Yeah. You don't?

MAGGIE: No, that's disgusting.

AMELIA: Oh get off your fucking high horse Maggie, you used to bum cigarettes off me all the time.

MAGGIE: Yeah, in high school.

*Amelia pulls out an e-cigarette and takes a drag.*

MAGGIE: Amelia! You can't smoke in here.

*Maggie grabs the e-cigarette from her. A wrestling match ensues.*

AMELIA: Calm down. It's an e-cigarette. Time to put your panties and your glasses back on Margaret.

MAGGIE: Don't fucking call me that.

AMELIA: Or what Margaret?

MAGGIE: I swear to god.

AMELIA: Wanna drag Margie?

MAGGIE: I'm..gonna..fucking.. kill you!

*Maggie begins tickling Amelia.*

AMELIA: Stop! Oh my god stop! I'm dying. STOP IT! Maggie Maggie Maggie!

*Maggie stops.*

AMELIA: You're evil.

MAGGIE: *Taking a drag of the e-cigarette.* I hate you.

AMELIA: Okay.

*The animators rush on stage, efficiently tearing away the sheet, the e-cigarette and work light and assembling Maggie's studio as Maggie and Amelia begin dressing themselves again in slow motion. The sheets and bra are taken off CS Projector and are replaced with a half-completed portrait of Amelia and some drawing supplies. Maggie goes to sit at this projector, and Amelia sits, posing, in the studio. SR projector comes on, illuminating her, projecting a glass pane with water drops collecting on it, slowly running down.*

AMELIA: It's raining. *Beat.* Are you sleeping with anyone else, right now?

MAGGIE: Yeah.

AMELIA: Women?

MAGGIE: Not right now.

AMELIA: So who is it then?

MAGGIE: No one consistently.

AMELIA: So, you're just hooking up with whoever?

MAGGIE: Well, I am single, unlike some people.

AMELIA: That's so like you.

MAGGIE: Excuse me?

AMELIA: You just totally avoid real, adult relationships.

MAGGIE: Like yours?

AMELIA: I told you he wouldn't care.

MAGGIE: Because girls don't count? Or because I'm nothing to worry about.

AMELIA: No that's obviously not it.

MAGGIE: Like, how does that even-- fuck. No, I'm not doing this again.

AMELIA: So you're going to run away from the issue then.

MAGGIE: So *I* can't run away, but--

AMELIA: I was 17 Maggie. You're 23. It's time for you to understand how a real relationship works.

MAGGIE: You want to talk about real, adult relationships? And you don't see how much of a joke that is?

AMELIA: I'm just saying you have always hooked up with a lot of people without getting into anything.

MAGGIE: You are so repressed -

AMELIA: And you're volatile.

MAGGIE: - and so into slut shaming everyone else.

AMELIA: You can sleep with whoever you want Maggie, but fucking and dating is not the same thing.

MAGGIE: Fuck you! Because I slept with like, two guys in grade twelve that didn't pan out, you think you know my dating habits? You haven't been around for so long you literally know nothing about me. You don't even know you don't know me, you are so...

AMELIA: You haven't changed Maggie, trust me.

MAGGIE: Why do you even give a shit?

AMELIA: I'm your friend.

MAGGIE: No you're not. No, you're not my friend. Why are we doing this? Five years later?

AMELIA: I just thought it could be something fun, I didn't realize you would be like, holding this grudge against me.

MAGGIE: I'm so sorry for being such a buzz kill.

AMELIA: Grow up.

MAGGIE: How does it work in your brain that you can just show up in my life five years after ruining it and expect it to "just be fun?" I'm not a toy you can put away when you're bored or scared of your own sexuality and pull out when you're ready to have "fun."

AMELIA: Fuck you. That was five years ago, you need to let it go. You know nothing about my sexuality or my sex life, and you're so stuck in the past that you can't see why I'm here. It's only been you, Maggie. It's just you and it's the fucking worst and I - I wish -

MAGGIE: I'm sorry, but I think you should go. Just... go.

*The Projectors go out. Work lights from the side turn on, creating an image similar to the beginning before their first reunion.*

AMELIA: Hit or kiss.

*The work lights go out. SR Projector turns on, illuminating Maggie. She is standing in the shower. There is a shower curtain projected, creating little square tiles reminiscent of a pool floor. Water is rippling above the squares. Blue food colouring is dropped into the water, spreading, saturating the image. Maggie is seen crying. Suddenly the container is put down, shattering the peaceful illusion. The image is quickly, mechanically disassembled. The Projector rotates, swinging its square of light across the stage to Amelia.*

*SL Projector turns on. It is projecting a spinning bike wheel, with transparent photos of Maggie taped in the spokes of it. Transparent sheets of paper with the words "Maggie, Maggie, Maggie..." written endlessly across them are pulled across SR Projector. Amelia runs on the spot, as though escaping her own thoughts of Maggie. Eventually she gives up, fatigued, and rests her hands on her knees, trying to catch her breath. The images and words continue to bombard the space around her. She looks up.*

*Blackout.*

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