

## Unpublished Works Summary - Maggie Tavares - Anthology ©2025

[The Modern Woman's Guide to Being a Lesbian Defence Attorney \(2024\) \\*a solo play](#)

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### **The Modern Woman's Guide to Being a Lesbian Defence Attorney (2024) \*a solo play**

#### **SYNOPSIS:**

At 28 years old, Josephine Sharpe is just starting to settle into her job at the big criminal law firm. Her world gets shaken up like a snow globe when Christine, a 49-year-old female lawyer with a stern voice and a passion for the legal system transfers in from another firm. Josephine is a lesbian, she realizes. And her next client is a man who has (allegedly) committed a brutal hate crime against two young, queer women. As Josephine meets with and prepares to defend her client, she wants nothing more than to throw this trial. Caught between her desire to succeed against the odds and her grand disillusionment, Josephine tosses and turns, but ultimately must get a handle on her own life before she can defend others.

#### **EXCERPT:**

JOSEPHINE     Does it matter if Chester Ross is guilty or not? Professionally, no. Personally... yes.  
Maria Belyakov and Emily Forrest, two twenty-four-year-old women are victims of *someone* brutally attacking at a bus stop them just for being together. September 19th, in my college town. The nearby CCTV cameras were recording, but the cameras face the opposite way and their attacker is unrecognizable in the tapes.

They were just like me. That could have been me.

I've been trying to rationalise... it for a while, like I would with this case.

Is being queer genetic? I guess my parents would disagree.

Is being queer moral? I guess my parents would disagree.

I figure, all my life, I've dreamed of having an older sister.

Someone who's been there before, who could teach me how to become a girl, and then a woman. In elementary school I looked up to— and also developed crushes on— the girls in the grades above me. When I think back to who the most influential people in my life were at that age, it was these girls, now women, who I saw as torchbearers in life. I am an older sister myself; I have a younger brother who was born two and a half years before me, and admittedly I have not been the best older sister I could be. However, I have no female siblings, no girls close to my age who could have been a mirror of progress, so I found them around me.

When I was nine, there was Chelsey,

When I was ten, there was the teenage girl who smoked,

When I was eleven, there was Bambi, and so on,

Until, when I was fifteen, I realised that this freakish behaviour was a side effect of liking women. I came out as gay to my close friend.

It... made things weird, and then things changed. To try and salvage our friendship, I convinced myself I was straight, and then I kept convincing myself for fourteen more years, until I met Christine.

Hey.

CHRISTINE Hi. Nice to see I'm not just hired to be the token woman at the firm. I'm Christine.

JOSEPHINE I'm Josephine. Our names rhyme. Yeah, Amber and I are a small but mighty crew, but we're really happy to have you now.

CHRISTINE You'll have to show me around sometime. How about tonight?

JOSEPHINE Um— yes. Yeah, I'm free.

We went out for drinks. She was instantly magnetic, smiling warmly at me from across the billiards table. I paid for her drink because I knew I was probably in love with her. She went home. I went home.

I've been avoiding her for a bit, since then. I got busy with this case, and she started working on cases and files of her own.

Still, I feel like I see her everywhere.

As I have gotten older, I've naturally stopped developing fantasized fixations on real people, but I've found that those women from my past have stuck around with me. Chelsey is the reason I dyed my hair blonde for the first time at fifteen. The teenage girl who smoked is the reason I still listen to and love My Chemical Romance today. Bambi was the reason I got into makeup artistry at around twelve years old, and also the person who made me want to go to law school.

If you squint, you can almost see all the different women I'm made up of. Like a corkboard of affection. I am proud of what I've loved and would be proud to have others love me. But for some reason I have these... limitations.

## Four Boobs on a Rooftop (2024)

### *SYNOPSIS:*

A surrealist, feminist play about plays in which nothing happens, the whole time. Both 28 years old in the year 2000, Freya and Eve are at pivotal moments in their lives. Eve has just (reluctantly) broken up with a long-term boyfriend and Freya wants to settle down and have a child. As the two women lounge, they talk of cats, poetry, and men before drifting off into dreams that reflect their inner desires in absurd, painstakingly cerebral ways.

### *EXCERPT:*

EVE It's natural. Everyone feels this way.

FREYA ...Then why are we talking about it??

DESIRE Why *are* you talking about it?

EVE Because that's how I feel as a woman in this world and it's important for others to know that they aren't alone. Are you telling me you don't feel the same way?

FREYA I don't. I want more, but when I get what I want, I'll be satisfied.

EVE But aren't you afraid to be satisfied? Haven't you been guilted into feeling responsible for the future of the world?

FREYA If nothing can be done, if it's natural and every other late-twenty-something has a deep hunger for the— the metal at the core of the earth for all I know, even though and in fact *because* it cannot be achieved, we're all supposed to go on living like that? Unchanged and unsatisfied? Having cry-fests about how miserable we are? It's the year 2000 for crying out loud, it's a new millennium. We've been feeling this shit for ages.

EVE But that's why we're crying about it; conversations start change in our systems, people start to become vocal about what's causing them to—

FREYA Men.

EVE Yeah. I mean, we should get more specific though, to underst—

FREYA No, I don't need to. Men are causing me to be unhappy. Their existence is fundamentally detrimental to mine.

EVE ...Deeply, deeply, degradingly detrimental.

### Three Weird Sisters (2024)

#### SYNOPSIS:

Three women in a production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* are forced to reckon with their futures as actors and the industry's perception of them when a mid-show mishap traps them in a room with no exit. As the women try and find their way out to continue the show, they discover that the walls blocking them from their idea of success are more systemic than physical.

#### EXCERPT:

ALL Double, double toil and trouble;  
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

*To the audience:*

CLEO I do not want to debase the art you like.  
Acting makes me want to live. It makes me brave. Oh, God, and I want to live.

LILLIAS I want to create a foundation for the art I want to make.  
And I want to work. I want to work in a way that is not demeaning to me.

1ST WITCH Round about the cauldron go;  
(CLEO) In the poisoned entrails throw.  
Toad, that under cold stone  
Days and nights has thirty-one  
Sweltered venom sleeping got,  
Boil thou first i' th' charmèd pot.

ADRIANNE I don't think I'm better than you. I will give my life away to this medium if you let me.

2ND WITCH Fillet of a fenny snake

(LILLIAS) In the cauldron boil and bake.  
 Eye of newt and toe of frog,  
 Wool of bat and tongue of dog,  
 Adder's fork and blindworm's sting,

ADRIANNE Or smarter than you. I'm not.  
 One day it will all be worth it. We will know why we suffered.

CLEO And we won't let you tell us how to behave about it.

3RD WITCH  
 (ADRIANNE) Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,  
 Witch's mummy, maw and gulf  
 Of the ravinéd salt-sea shark,  
 Root of hemlock digged i' th' dark,  
 Finger of birth-strangled babe  
 Ditch-delivered by a drab,  
 Make the gruel thick and slab.

CLEO I don't need you to understand my art.  
 This work is so happy, so full of joy. Still, it is so full of joy.

ADRIANNE But please hold it to my standards instead of your own.  
 Why do these words haunt me? My thoughts are in a tangle.

LILLIAS Time will pass, and we'll be gone forever, we will be forgotten. We'll play the roles we crave, we will forget ourselves. They will forget our faces, our voices, and how many of us there were— but our suffering will turn to joy for those living after us. This cycle will continue.

CLEO Oh, my sisters, cheer we up his sprites  
 And show the best of our delights.  
 I'll charm the air to give a sound  
 While you perform your antic round,  
 That this great king may kindly say  
 Our duties did his welcome pay.

*The witches scream. Bloody murder.*

### **Insomnia Girl (2023) \*a solo play**

#### **SYNOPSIS:**

Carrie has been going to sleep studies as long as she's had insomnia. She's had insomnia as long as her best friend's been dead. Through her haggard, exhausted state of slugging through each day, Carrie's mind begins to meld faces together, remember events wrong, and forget chunks of time. As two unsuspecting sleep scientists, Jamie and Finn, monitor Carrie's insomniatic brainwaves, they begin to piece together not just memories, but evidence in a case.

#### **EXCERPT:**

CARRIE I used to go to a lot of sleep studies. I saw the ads in the subway for years, but was never broke or sleep-deprived enough to actually try going to one. Then, suddenly, it felt like I was their biggest patient. Each one is usually a little different, but fundamentally the same. They ask you to mimic a typical night where you experience difficulty sleeping. It's exactly as hard as it sounds. They don't pay you all that much, but when you're not sleeping, it feels like the only thing in the world you can do *is* not sleep. I quit my job, I had no car. Sleep studies paid my bills.

(...)

What did you say? No, they never helped. That wasn't their purpose, their purpose was to find out more about the way our brains function while in active insomnia. Sure, everyone can experience a bout of insomnia from time to time, that's normal, but what they really want to dig into is the psychology behind people like me, people who completely stop sleeping. They, much like you right now, want to know *why* we can't sleep.

(...)

Sure. No, the last time I went... um, right. The last sleep study I participated in was weird. The last time they hooked me up to those wires and patches and watched my brain think from behind a two-way mirror, it was a lot to experience, especially while grieving. Because I *was* grieving, you know. I still am. So I sort of lost control, and I talked about her, which I'd never done before. I'd gone to visit her that day, so she was all I could think about.

(...)

I was scared, I felt confused...

...

CARRIE Hello everyone. Um... I just want to say that... Lily was my best friend. I know that everyone says that but..., I don't know what else to say. She was half of me? She was the only one who knew me? She was the only one I knew? Lily MacFadden was perfect. That is indisputable, and it's my fault that she is no longer here. But it is *not* my fault that I didn't know it for a while. I visited her in the cemetery and I didn't know I'd done anything wrong. I was living on a perpetual cocktail of caffeine, melatonin, ZzzQuil, and marijuana. Uppers, downers, the works. I had not been sane since I'd slept. I want to talk about insomnia and talk about how absolutely mentally unwell I have been since the death of Lily MacFadden. I have had my hell. In her eulogy, I talked about our friendship. Our friendship was toxic and codependent- I hurt her and she hurt me. Regardless, I was in love with her, really romantically, I think. Either that, or I was deeply jealous of the success she found in love. Everybody loved her. It was never about our friendship, it was just our own insecurities getting in each others' ways. In that eulogy, I wished it had been me instead of her in that casket. I don't wish that anymore- if Lily had lived and I had died in that crash, if I had swerved further right, she would have lived the same hell as I did. There is no way out; my actions only have negative consequences. One of us will always suffer. I promise you, I have imagined every single scenario and one of us always suffers. You can wish for me to die, but I have been wishing to die this whole time, and nobody has killed me yet. When I was unable to sleep, I wondered why. My doctor said it was because I was grieving, but now I know it was because of the guilt that was hiding inside me. Guilt that I am now able to confront, and heal. I don't want to justify my actions- because they're actions that killed my best friend, but I do want to live again, especially if Lily cannot. And I want to sleep. Thank you.