

**Short Story Writing Exercise #4**  
Inspired by Alice Walker's "Roselily"

**You may write in ANY genre. The focus is on craft and experimentation with story structure.**

**Step 1.** Think of a song, prayer, saying, poem etc. that you can split into lines just like the priest's lines in "Roselily".

**Step 2.** Think of a character (or use an existing one) who may be listening to these lines as they are thinking. Who are they? Where are they? What is going on around them?

**Step 3.** Use this 'outside voice/portal' into the inner thoughts of the character to structure the story at ONE moment in time.

**Step 4.** Freewrite by hand as much as class time allows (15-20 minutes) to start the story. *Please read below for what you must include / do in this exercise, and what to avoid.*

**Step 5.** Type and extend the draft to a min. of 400 words. *Keep in mind the constraints listed below.*

**Your exercise MUST have:**

- Dueling or alternating voices as a structural device
- EITHER 3rd person omniscient OR first person narrator
- Sentence fragments (incomplete sentences) such as "Of veils. Covered heads...Joined...Of her father...A romantic hush"
- A stream-of-consciousness interior monologue-style focusing on one character's thoughts while they are hearing the other 'voice' you chose

**A few things to keep in mind as you do this exercise:**

<b>DO</b>	<b>DO NOT</b>
Keep the focus on ONE main character.	Write too much. (Keep it tight).
Limit the context of your piece like Walker – one moment in time	Describe every detail. (Tell the reader only what they need to know).
Use repetition or motif	Let plot drive the story.
Use a precise diction and connotation "yoked"	Wrap the story up in a neat little bow.

*These exercises count towards the process grade of your final short story. Missed checkpoints can be made up, but ultimately, you'll lose marks on the final product if these exercises are skipped.*