

# "bondage in rosely" by alice walker essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



## **“ Bondage in Roselily” by Alice Walker Essay Sample**

Now I am going to talk to you about bondage in Alice walker’s short story “  
Roselily”

The word bondage which I will be talking about has the meaning of restraint or being used a slave therefore not having free will. This is what the main character; Roselily will be subjected to in the short story.

Alice Walker ingeniously structures and skillfully tells the story in the sequence of wedding vows.

Roselily is about a rural African American from Mississippi trying to escape poverty and disgrace by marrying a Muslim man believing that he will be able to “ free” herself. Roselily is conveyed to be an independent woman of the late 60’s or early 70’s who is apart of the outcome of the American civil rights movements where African American woman did not get a significant increase in equity.

In the opening paragraph of the story Alice walker writes “ A small girl in her mother’s white robe and veil, knee raised waist high through a bowl of quicksand soup.” The word quicksand is given a stronger meaning showing that she is being held back, sinking into the sand and therefore helpless. The subject of the robe and the veil persist through the story which connects to the Muslim religion, the first sign of bandage.

\*The cars whizzing past shows signs of mobility that Roselily desires, that she wants to have the freedom of going wherever she pleases she wants to move on in life and escape the past.

Roselily marries a Muslim and does not know much of his religion; he believes that her children have been taught from the wrong god. Roselily marries this man because she feels that he will be the "key" to her freedom, to be released from slavery of the factories and become an independent woman.

Ironically she imagines that she will be under total control by this man and has doubts of marrying him. In front of her hang images of bondage, "She thinks of ropes, chains, handcuffs, his religion. His place of worship where she will be required to sit with a covered head." This also connects to the first paragraph of the veil and robe but not as a wedding garment, an item of purity and love but rather as an item of ownership.

"She wonders what one does with memories of life"

She feels that Chicago will be a place where she will regain "Respect, a chance to build" and "a chance to be on top. Her ambitions will become true but she knows nothing of Chicago except of Abraham Lincoln whom abolished slavery but not the freedom of African Americans ....

Roselily feels "Shut away" because of her future husband's religion, "plain, black and white" instead of being a slave in the fields she is a slave of religion. Walker uses the word "yoked" not as in the yoke of an egg but as the feeling of restraint. This makes her look back and regret the decision she

makes. She was so caught up in the idea of becoming free and abandoning the life she once had, that she realizes that she does not love her husband she loves certain qualities, " his silvery grey car.", " his blackness," " his sobriety" and " his pride." She is even aware that he will render her in to what " he" truly wants and mold her into the person she will become.

She marries this man merely as a form of restoring herself of becoming free, respectable and born anew.

And finally she imagines herself " something as a rat, trapped, cornered, scurrying to and fro" she is a victim of her own dreams and passion of being liberated and the husbands hand is like a " clasp of an iron gate" signifying that all exits are closed. She is a prisoner not of her country's but of her husband, trapped, never to be free and once again a slave.