English 102  

Literary Analysis of *Like Water for Chocolate*

Please choose one of the following prompts to answer in a well-developed essay

1) Magical realism uses intense detail and descriptive imagery to relate the “truth” of a situation. Discuss the way several “truths” are revealed by citing examples from *Like Water for Chocolate* which show the difference between the “scientific” world and the “mythic” world. How is the magical description a better rendering of “truth”? What specific language is used? What do you suppose Esquivel is saying about truth and history? Are there real-world examples of how truth is twisted by the dominant hegemony?

2) How is the hugely popular novel *Like Water for Chocolate* a story of “The Other?” What similarities in our own culture might be found by examining the plot of *Like Water for Chocolate*? Keep in mind that a story of “The Other” examines the tension between groups in the majority and those in the minority. How is an exploration of this type of relationship useful to us personally and culturally? How does food (or other cultural markers) represent identity and strength?

3) *Like Water for Chocolate* is set during the Mexican Revolution. In this time of turmoil, many people were challenged to accept a new future or emboldened to hold on to the past in order to preserve tradition. What might Mama Elena, Rosaura, Tita, and Gertrudis each symbolize in this historical context? How do their actions support your conclusions? What does the characterization of each say about the nature of “civil wars”? Research real examples of women like the characters in the novel who had to face an uncertain future.

Specs:
- At least 4 full pages in MLA format
- 3 credible and meaningful research sources
- At least 2 quotations from each above source properly incorporated and formatted
- Works Cited Page
- Some form of prewriting, an outline, and annotated rough draft on peer edit day
- Final draft submitted to turnitin.com

Rubric and Points:
1) Thesis, Process, Response to Prompt (20 points)
2) Organization, Support, and Content Development (20 points)
3) Style, Diction, and Voice (20 points)
4) Grammatical Soundness and Mechanics (20 points)
5) Critical, Analytic, and Evaluative Elements (20 points)