



This writing prompt was developed in conjunction with Lightbox interviews with [Jamaal May](#) and [David Yezzi](#). For more information, please see www.lightboxpoetry.com.

Writing Prompt

Write a poem in a voice other than your own, one that seeks to capture the psychology, emotion, and speech patterns of a speaker who is not you. This might be a fictional character, an historical figure, or simply someone from your own life. For this prompt, you will not only be writing as another speaker, but writing in a “dramatic situation.” David Yezzi reminds us this entails, “a speaker who is talking to another character or to a group of characters...As in a play, there is a discernable scene that is portrayed in the poem that might be staged. Browning’s ‘My Last Duchess’ is a classic example of this, as is Hecht’s ‘Death the Whore.’ Dramatic monologues are part of what Eliot called the third voice of poetry—characters talking to other characters.” As you write, reflect on how the presence of the listening character (who is spoken to but does not speak) affects the choices you make in the poem.