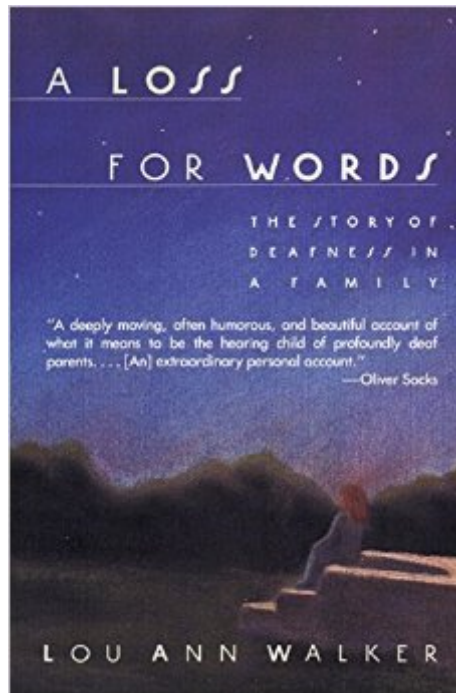


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# A Loss For Words: The Story Of Deafness In A Family



## Synopsis

From the time she was a toddler, Lou Ann Walker was the ears and voice for her deaf parents. Their family life was warm and loving, but outside the home, they faced a world that misunderstood and often rejected them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a child of Deaf adults (CODA), I found this book to be a mirror of my upbringing. Ms. Walker's stories of negotiating the hearing world for her parents are right on. Anyone who wants to know what growing up hearing in a Deaf world was like MUST read this book.

I was assigned to read this book while taking an ASL class (American Sign Language). Usually, the books that are assigned aren't of the biggest interest to me, but in this case, it was well worth my time. I think that it is a great insight into the historical and present day happenings that effect the daily lives of those who are members of the Deaf Culture. I thought the book was helpful in understanding a small aspect of a world I know that I will never completely understand.

As the oldest child in a family with deaf parents, I can totally relate to what the author went through. I was disturbed by a few of the reviews I read though. People are so quick to judge when they don't have a clue about the world that hearing children of deaf parents live in. I went through all the same experiences that the author did as well as many more. As the oldest child I too was responsible for

all the interpreting and basically felt as though I was "raising" my parents instead of the other way around. It is not a fun way to grow up. I found myself annoyed by the reviewer who said they found deaf people to be "fun" and that the author was too dour and negative about the deaf culture. Don't be so quick to judge until you walk in our shoes. The deaf community I was exposed to was not a "fun" one. They were, as a whole, a very distrusting, backstabbing, and gossipy group. I am NOT saying all deaf people are this way! I can only relate what MY personal experiences were. The reviewers who said that it seemed to be the author's own "personality quirks" that made her experience life with deaf parents the way she did don't have a clue either. We are basically products of our upbringing and the life we live as a child. Yes, we can choose as adults to move forward and overcome much of the damage that may have been done, BUT you cannot change who you are nor can you erase the person you are completely. And much of that is formed in childhood, a childhood that is VERY different from mainstream society if you grow up as a hearing child with deaf parents. I suffer from anxiety I believe it is because of the overpowering sense of responsibility I was burdened with as a child, which I cannot seem to shake as an adult and mother of 4. Anyone studying ASL or truly trying to gain insight into the deaf world would definitely benefit from reading this novel.

Walker's account of her relationship with her Deaf parents, the Deaf community, and by extension herself, is a touching, poignant and well-balanced treatment of a very important topic. It is a brave account, at once respectful of her parents and all Deaf people and at the same time unblinking in its honest approach to Deaf culture and the paternalism of many hearing people. Not only are readers treated to a portrait of a loving family, they come away with an in-depth understanding of Deaf people, their position as "other" in a dominant hearing culture, and the importance of the norms and language of that culture. Moreover, readers come away understanding a relatively unknown and unique group of people: CODAs, hearing children of Deaf adults. Walker's first person account will be interesting for readers unfamiliar with deafness and deaf culture. She carefully weaves her experiences as a child into her adult life in ways that are important for anyone. These experiences, however, are exceedingly important for those raised in the unique circumstances of being the hearing children of deaf adults. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in the subject of Deaf people. It is a thoughtful, comprehensive, and brave treatment written in a delightful, honest, easy-to-read style.

I thought this book was an excellent book. It touched me in so many ways, I can't describe it. I told

my mother about this story, and she cried. It had such an impact on my family. I too have deaf parents, and the what's so weird, is that my life is very, very similar to Lou Ann's. It's a real page turner, and I think anyone interested in deafness, or the hearing child's perspective should read this book. This book is a book that is worth sharing and reading over and over again... I guarantee it!

I am studying American Sign Language and we were instructed to read a book about Deaf culture for a book review. I just happened to pick *A Loss for Words* by Lou Ann Walker and it was great! Very easy to read and easy to understand, even for someone like me who has not grown up within the Deaf community. It's a very fast read and it is very interesting. It is so informative of the way that a hearing child grows up with Deaf parents. It was amazing to see how her family affected her life and her choices, expanding even to the decisions that she made regarding her career! I recommend it to anyone who wants to learn about Deaf culture.

This book is a wonderful window into the Deaf world through both deaf and hearing eyes. The author describes what it is like to grow up with two deaf parents. She explains to us what it is like to grow up in a minority group and to have people treat you differently. Lou Ann takes you on a journey from her uneasiness about growing up feeling on the outside to acceptance of her self as well as her parents. When you read the book you will feel everything that she went through. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in autobiographies, American Sign Language, or Deaf culture.

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