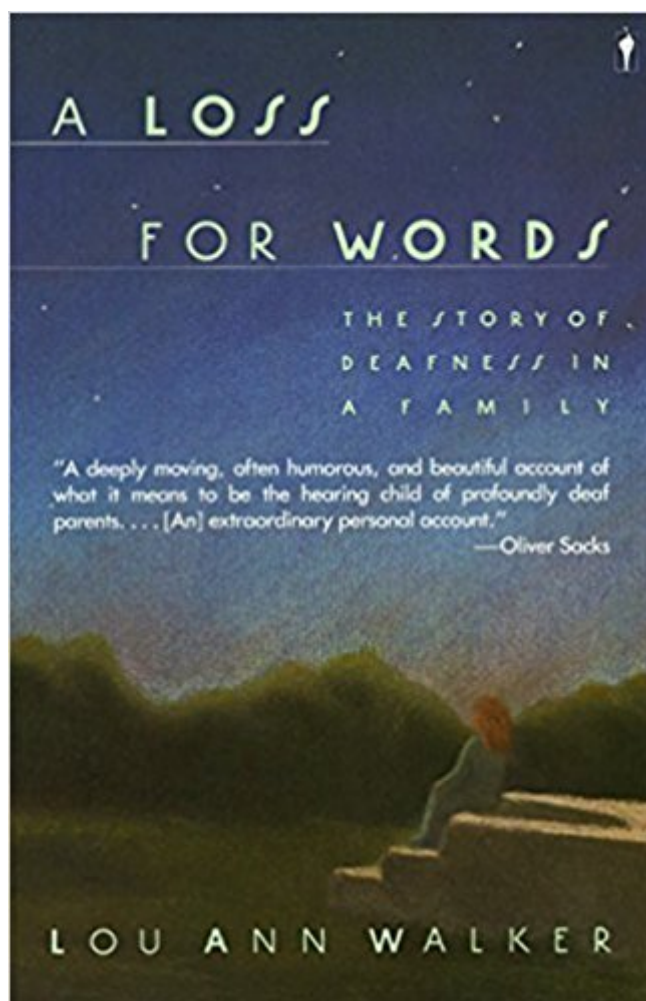




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# **A Loss For Words: The Story Of Deafness In A Family**



## 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

This is much more of a story than the subtitle suggests, beautifully written and deeply affecting. Born in the Midwest in 1952, Walker is one of three hearing daughters of Gale and Doris Jean Walker, both deafened as babies by illnesses. As the oldest child, the author served as her parents' "interpreter," dealing with outsiders. There is humor in her recollections but nothing lighthearted in accounts of crude or condescending reactions to her father and mother from indifferent people. Walker is candid in detailing her own frustrations and the burdens of life with the deaf. Having graduated from Harvard, she eagerly went her own way, establishing a writing career in New York, but she reunites frequently with the family in a home warm with love and shared memories. The reader says a fervent amen when the author declares, "I'd seen plenty of families where there was more communication and less love." Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A deeply moving, often humorous, and beautiful account of what it means to be the hearing child of profoundly deaf parents . . . I have rarely read anything on the subject more powerful or poignant

than this extraordinary personal account by Lou Ann Walker."-- Oliver Sacks"[Walker) describes in moving detail the joys of growing up in a family where the simplest communication was never taken for granted." -- "Newsweek""In this remarkable memoir, Walker recreates the pain and the joy of growing up between two worlds: her parents' loving but silent home, and the often confusing world she encountered outside those walls, and of which she was inevitably a part." -- "Seattle Times-Post Intelligencer""I have never thought hard about this before, but now I see that what deaf people do in sign language is even more mysteriously and specifically, biologically human than speech itself. My respect for the deaf, always high, is now still higher. My awe for the human mind is out of sight." -- Lewis Thomas"Readers will come away from this book informed, deeply moved and full of admiration for Walker's marvelous parents."-- "People""I loved "A Loss for Words." [The] style is brisk and clear and, it seems to me, never sentimental . . . The Lou Ann who emerges to find her own voice and write this book is a character whom I admire as much as any literary hero." -- Max Apple"In the end, I wanted to cheer Lou Ann Walker for having the gumption to write about a matter so close to her heart, learning to love and accept her parents as they are, not as she wished them to be. This is a gem of a book." -- "Glamour""Beautifully written and deeply affecting . . . There is humor in [Walker's] recollections but nothing lighthearted in accounts of crude or condescending reactions to her father and mother from indifferent people. Walker is candid in dealing with her own frustrations and the burdens of life with the deaf." -- "Publishers Weekly""So profoundly other is the unhearing culture . . . that moving it into a language we learn by hearing took both gifts and a nearly savage determination." -- "New York Times Book Review" This book is worth reading simply for its celebration of the strength and perseverance of the human spirit and for its account of a woman coming to terms with herself and a family coming to terms with itself."-- "American Annals of the Deaf"

Very well written. Loved how she explained so clearly what goes on inside the mind of a Child Of Deaf Adults. Their perception, the fact that they cannot allow themselves to feel while being the conduit of language for both parties, Deaf and hearing.

Great book!!! Gives you an idea of what a family can go through when coming across difficulties and how they handled it. Great view from the authors perspective of how one can feel when one takes up a role because they feel they have to in order to help. I was able to relate to it....loved it!!

My son had to read a book for ASL and this is what we chose. I ended up skimming through it and

while it is "older" I really enjoyed it. The struggle of having parents who are deaf and feeling embarrassed as a child and then growing up and understanding.

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.

This is really a wonderful book. The author opens her life up in a revealing and beautiful way. You really feel her joys and pains. It's a window into the lives of her and her family who love each other.

This book opened my eyes to many of the unseen differences between the hearing and deaf worlds. Profoundly insightful and educational, LouAnn writes of how the deaf world views outsiders as well as how the hearing world doesn't understand much of deaf culture, all while keeping true to her own personal experiences with both worlds.

As someone who is not deaf, this book helps others to know what the Deaf go through and their

children. The struggles and emotions are well expressed to help others understand. Very good read.

The authors ability to communicate to the feeling and emotions she was experiencing was wonderful. A timeless portrayal of what the Deaf experience and the challenges that they and their families are faced with daily.

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