

“I Lost My Talk” Questions

1. Using evidence from the poem, explain the tone of the first two stanzas. How might the repetition of words in the second stanza contribute to this tone?

2. What do the speaker's words "took" (2) and "snatched" (5) suggest about the way she lost her talk?

3. Who is the “you” that the speaker addresses in the poem? Is it a single person, a group, or a system? Explain.

4. Consider the line: “the scrambled ballad, about my word.” (9) What does the speaker mean by this, do you think? What might this reveal about how losing one’s language can affect one’s identity?

5. What contrasts of attitude are set up in the two lines: “Your way is more powerful / So gently I offer my hand”? (12-13)

6. What is the difference in tone between the first two stanzas and the last stanza? How might this contribute to the poem’s theme?