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Mrs. Rigisich

English 2

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Why is Kambili Tongue-Tied?

Kambili is quiet because she does not want to worsen the situation and she is afraid she may be abused. First of all, on page six, Kambili states that, "[h]e [Jaja] knew I was looking at him, that my shocked eyes begged him to seal his mouth..." This excerpt demonstrates Kambili's anxious emotions towards the ongoing situation. She, therefore, does not want to intervene, for fear of exacerbating the issue. Also, Kambili stays quiet for fear of abuse and/or mistreatment. This is clear when Kambili states that years ago, at night, she often, "...heard the sounds from their [Kambili's Parents] room, like something being banged against the door" (10). Kambili then goes on to say that her mother would often have an 'avocado-like' eye following such events. This goes to show that Papa may be an abuser, and, as such, scares Kambili into keeping her mouth shut. Furthermore, when Kambili speaks of the figurines with her mother, she is afraid to say that Papa had broken them. This goes to show how intimidated she is by Papa's fits. As a whole, it is clear that Kambili is not in a good position to talk back, and, therefore, disrespect her father.

Word Count: