

Preparing to Get Married

Shona transcript:

Man: Munyai.

Woman: Munyai, ndiye *go between*.

Man: Munyai ndiye *the intermed... the*

Woman: Anenge, pamunenge muchiita dare renyu remaroro iye ndiye anenge achiuya onzwa kuti mati rusambo, rusambo ndeimwe section yemari inobviswa parurooro. Imi mouya moti rusambo yedu toda \$500 kana kuti moda \$5000. Iye oenda neshoko iroro kuvakuwasha vanenge vari panze vasati vapinda mumusha menu, vari chinhanho kubva pamba penyu. Oenda onovaturira kuti rusambo ranzi mari yakati. Ivo vochemachema voti ii pa\$500 yamareva dai madzikisa mbijana. Iye odzoka oti ii vakwasha vachemachema.

Man: Ndiye anenge achichema chema.

Woman: Imi moti horaiti enda unovati \$499. obva ati iii, vana baba...So iye ndiro basa rake iroro.

Man: *He is like the intermediate.*

Woman: Nekuti vakwasha vanenge vasati vapinda mumusha menu and havasati vakuonana nemi pachena saka panoda munhu pakati.

Woman: But ini ndanga ndichifunga kuti tete vanofaniraku...pachi..manzwisiro angu, pachikarekare tete vanopinda kudhara havapinde nekuti vanhu vakuda kuwanana nekuti tete vanofana kunge vachiti paine chanetsa moenda kwatete monogadzirirana. Saka kuti inini nhasi ndaona tete vakutondibvunza kuti saka ndezvariinhi pane dambudziko.

Man: Asi wanga usina kugadzirira?

Woman: Ehe, *no, no*, handina dambudziko nekuvaona asi kuti vagondibvunza kuti saka ndezvariinhi, kungovaona horaiti kwekuti tizivane horaiti. Kunze kwekuti muzukuru wavo aine hurongwa hwandisiri kuzivawo ini.

Man: Vanenge vachingoda kungonzwisawo kuti vazukuru vavo zvavarikuita ndezve dambe here kana kuti ndezvechokwadi chokwadi.

Woman: *Because* inini sasisi vangu ka, sisi vangu vakangomubvunza musi wekutanga nemusi wechi..vakangomubvunza ka kuti saka murikufunga kuita sei, bvatangoti ah

hatisati taona. Kubva ipapowo chero pese patinoenda kumba kwavo, pese patinovaonawovanoziva kuti haa uku kungoti tizivane. Kuitira kuti mumwe musi ndikanonokawo kusvika kumba ndikanzi dzokera kumba kwenyu, dzokera kwawabva ivo vanenge vachizozivawo kuti hoo, ndekuya, kuna nhingi.

English translation:

Boy: *Munyai*.

Girl: *Munyai* is the “go-between.”

Boy: *Munyai* is the intermed...the...

Girl: During the customary marriage meeting, he will be coming to get the charges for, let's say *rusambo*. *Rusambo* is another section of the money that is paid during the marriage ceremony (the ceremony has other sections inclusive of the provision of cows and clothes for the in-laws; during the marriage, the groom's family pays the bride's family). If you say maybe you want \$500 or \$5000¹ for *rusambo*, he will take the word to your in-laws. The in-laws would still be outside², before they enter into your home, at a distance from your homestead. When he takes the word to them, they may seek to negotiate. Then he comes back to negotiate with you, saying, “Please reduce the price for your in-laws.”

Boy: He will be doing the negotiations.

Girl: Then you say, “Okay, go and say we now want \$499.” Then they say, “Oh, our fathers...” So that is his [munyai's] duty.

Boy: He is like the intermediate.

Girl: But I was thinking that the aunt should... In the...In my own understanding, according to our culture, the aunt's role begins way before marriage, not at the time of marriage. Because the aunt should, in the event of any issues, help you resolve them. So the fact that today I went to see his [my boyfriend's] aunt³, and she was already asking me the dates, that is a problem.

Boy: Were you unprepared?

Girl: Umm, no, no. I do not have a problem with meeting her, but the idea of her asking me the dates...it's just seeing her okay? So that we get to know each other. Unless her nephew has other plans that I am not aware of.

¹ People in Zimbabwe use US dollars as their currency.

² Usually during the progression of marriage, the in-laws remain outside for a while before they can be allowed to enter the homestead of the woman whom their child intends to marry.

³ Earlier she had mentioned going to see her boyfriend's aunt.

Boy: Her desire is just to get a glimpse of the seriousness of her [future] niece and nephew.

Girl: Because as for me, my sister, my sister merely asked him [my boyfriend] of our plans on the first day, and we told her that we haven't decided yet [whether we will get married]. Since then, each time we go there she understands that it's merely for us to get to know each other. This is done because some day I might get back home late and I might be asked to go back to wherever I will be coming from⁴. If that happens, at least they will have an idea of the place and the person [my boyfriend].

About CultureTalk: CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use every day. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

© 2013 Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and Five Colleges, Incorporated

⁴ It is typical of Zimbabwean parents to send away their female children if they get home late. It is a part of the Zimbabwean culture.