

**English translation:**

Tamanna (T): What's your name?

Sumitra (S): My name is Sumitra.

T: Sumitra? And last name? Sumitra...? Like my name is Tamanna Ahmad.

S: Sumitra Robidas.

T: Robidas?

S: Sumitra Rani Robidas.

T: Where do you live?

S: Lalbagh.

T: How far is Lalbagh from here?

S: It takes about...almost an hour to an hour and a half to go from here.

T: How do you come here?

S: Bus, rickshaw. I take a rickshaw from my house till Azimpur. From Azimpur I catch a bus to Kolabagan. From Kolabagan I either walk here or take a rickshaw.

T: Did you grow up there?

S: Yeah. Well, I didn't grow up there. I was married there.

T: When did you get married?

S: I got married twelve years ago.

T: And how old were you then?

S: I was around seventeen or eighteen then.

T: And where is your hometown?

S: Hometown? The district is Kishoreganj, and the police station is Kaliachor, and the post office is Shayeshwati.

T: Is it very far from here?

S: Yes, it's very far from here.

T: How does one come from there?

S: Bus.

T: How long does it take?

S: If you come by bus then... if there isn't any traffic then it takes two and a half hours, and if you are caught in traffic then about three hours.

T: Do you have any family there?

S: Yes.

T: Who is there?

S: My brother, my sister-in-law, my sisters. My parents are not there. They passed away.

T: When did they pass away?

S: It has been a long time since Baba<sup>1</sup> passed away. But Ma passed away six years ago.

T: How many siblings do you have?

S: We are seven siblings, six sisters and one brother.

T: Where are they all?

S: They are all married. The sisters are at their respective husbands' homes and my brother is in our village.

T: Do most of them live in Dhaka?

S: Yes. They live in Dhaka.

T: And...when did you come here? In which year? Or how many years ago?

S: To Dhaka? I came to Dhaka almost fifteen...fifteen or sixteen years ago.

T: And what do you do here?

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<sup>1</sup> Father.

S: Here?

T: Yes, as in, what's your work?

S: Massage.<sup>1</sup>

T: How do you do that?

S: You do it on the body.

T: Explain it so that people who don't know can know about it.

S: It's just body massage for one's comfort and for healthy skin.

T: What do you use for massaging?

S: You can use a lot of things. Such as cucumbers, carrots, red lentils, *uptan*,<sup>2</sup> yoghurt... you can use many things. You have to mix these ingredients and apply [them] to the body. You can use oil, either baby oil or olive oil for the massage.

T: Olive oil?

S: Yes, olive oil. It's a type of oil.

T: Where do you get that?

S: You can find it. You can find it in your country.

T: Really?

S: Yes. It's more abundant abroad. We get them from abroad. We use olive oil or baby oil.

T: And so why do people like getting massages?

S: People like getting massages because it helps them get better, beautiful skin; they have better blood circulation, and it eases the muscles. That's the reason.

T: Where did you learn this skill from?

S: I learnt it from my older sister.

T: And where did your sister learn it from?

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<sup>1</sup> The speaker means that she is a masseuse.

<sup>2</sup> *Uptan* is a paste made from turmeric, sandalwood powder, herbs and aromatic oils.

S: My sister learned it from her mother-in-law.

T: Did it take a long time for you to learn?

S: Almost three months.

T: And who did you practice it on?

S: On any one of the *madams*.<sup>1</sup>

**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 everyday. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> She means a female client. Female masseuses in Bangladesh only have female clients and male masseurs have only male clients.