

A Wife's Introduction to her New Family

Shona transcript:

A: Ko kana munhu aroorwa, mwana musikana. Chii chinobva chaitika?

B: Munhu aroorwa zviya zvinongobva nevamwe. Vamwe vanoda kuti muchato, vamwe vanongoti zviya munhu atoorwa abvisirwa pfuma vobva vaita ndaigati kupereka. Kupereka itsika yekuti mukadzi zviya nekuti vanhu vachata kan akuti atobvisirwa roora, anoenda na...vamwe vanogona kuenda namai, natete nevanin'ina vake. Kana uri munu ane mukoma, asi kazhinji vanin'ina. Anoneda nevanin'ina vake kumba kwemurume wake. Iyi itsika yekuti vanenge vaakundomusiya manje kumusha kwake, kumusha kwaaroorwa, kwatova kumusha kwake, saka aakuchikundosiiya kuti taiya nemukadzi wenyu. Saka pavanoenda, kune zvakawanda zvinoitwa. Munhu anogona kusvika akafukidzwa jira, zvinobva nevamwe, obvisirwa mari kuti vaone muroora wavo. Saka anenge achifamba ari kumashure kwavate, vatete ndivo vanenge vakamuvhara nejira kumashure. Kunobviswa mari yekuti avhurwe jira aonekwe. Vamwe ndivo vanoti akafamba akafamba akasvika apo, kuti afambe zvakare, kunobviswa chimwe chipo kana mari nekuti kunenge kuri kupemberera futi muroora. Zvimwe zvinotarirwa futi pakupereka ndezvekuti mangwanani ekuti asiwa---kazhinji kuperekwa kunoitwa manheru kuti vanoenda naye, muchato uchingopera, manheru vanhu votopinda munzira vobva vandosiya muroora/mwana wavo kumusha kwemurume wake. Mangwanani anomuka makuseni-seni. Makuseni aya amuka, anoenda kunotsvaga huni, kunyangwe kuri kumataundi chaiko vanhu vanozviita. Kungoti vanhu vanongobvawo vatenga huni dzavowo asi anongobudawo sokuti vaenda kundotsvaga huni asi kazhinji zvaiwanzoitika kumusha. Saka vari kumusha kudaro anomuka makuseni ondotsvaga huni, odzoka nesvinga rake rehuni, akadzisenga. Kutu adzidzise vanatete kana vanamai vanofanira kupemberera vomupa mari kuti adzise huni dziya. Apedza izvozvo anotsvaira chivanze, ounganidza marara. Aunganidza marara iwayo, haamaoreri, kuti amaorere paanenge amaisa, vamwe vanotoita zviya zvokunyatsondoisa pari pakati pemusha chaipo marara acho. Haamaoreri mararo iwayo kusvika futi apembererwa aiswa mari obva azoorera marara ake ozomabvisa. Oita futi zvekudziisa mvura; anodziisira vanhu mvura, vese vari pamusha, achindovapa mvura. Saka ndingati nzira yekupereka iyi, anoita mabasa akasiyana siyana. Kune mabasa akawanda chaizvo aanoita nyangwe kuvabikira sadza asi anenge achiziva kuti haatori ndiro kusvika vanhi vaisa mari muniro indzodzo dzekutenda kuti aah muroora wedu atibikira sadza, kana kuti muroora wedu vachinodzose mabhakiti emvura opiwa futi mari. Saka ndingati iyi ingongova tsika yekuti muroora anenge achiperekwa ouya kuzosiwa pamusha nekuratidzawo kuti muroora uyu zveshuwa mwana ane hunhu netsika, anoziva kuti chii chinoitwa pamusha. Kungoratidza kuti agadzirira kuchitangawo mhuri yake achiratidzirawo mabasa ake aanenge achiita iwayo

A: Hoo saka ndokuperekwa kunoitwa musikana?

B: Hongu.

English translation:

A: If a girl gets married, what happens?

B: When she gets married, it depends on the people. Some will have a wedding, but some will have the customary marriage and send off the wife in the form of *kupereka*. The *kupereka* tradition is done after the wedding or after the customary marriage.¹ The new wife is sent off to her in-laws, accompanied by her mother, aunts and sisters—older or younger. This is a way of officially taking her to her new family, and she will stay there because she has been married. So, when she is sent off, there are a lot of things that happen. When she arrives, she can be covered in a cloth, and the in-laws will pay to uncover her. She will be walking behind her aunt, and the aunt will be holding the cloth to cover her. Then they will pay money for her to be uncovered. Some people will make the in-laws pay for every couple of steps that the new wife walks to the house; this is a way of celebrating and appreciating the new addition to the family. The other part of this introduction happens the following morning—usually *kupereka* happens in the night or evening and usually the night after the wedding.

The following day, the new wife gets up early in the morning; she goes out to fetch firewood—even in the urban areas, people follow this. Sometimes they can buy the firewood ahead of time and simply go out, but it's more real in the rural areas, where she has to fetch firewood and carry the pile on her head. The aunts will then sing praises for her so that she can bring down the firewood. After that, she will sweep the yard and pile up the trash. She will not throw away the trash until they all celebrate and pay her for her again. In some cases, she can pile the trash in the center of the yard and will not take it away until they are paid. She will then heat up water for baths; she will heat water for every member of the family for the morning bath. All these chores are a way of being introduced to the new family, and the new wife does lots of different housework. She can also make *sadza*, but she will not serve them until they pay her for the work. So, I would say this is a way of introducing the wife and she will do a lot of different chores and she will be appreciated for that work through money or other gifts. This is also a way for the in-laws to see that she is capable of doing housework, that she is ready to have a family and is well-mannered.

A: Ohh, so that is how *kupereka* is done?

B: Yes.

¹ Customary marriage is a traditional marriage in which the man's family goes to the woman's family and pays bride-price. After this ceremony, the couple is officially married, they can leave together or they can have a wedding before they move in together.

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