

Rome Wasn't Built in a Day

By: Shamil Fattakhov
Place: Russia
Date: 1995
Topic: Parental Consent
Message: *For any unity and agreement, relationships must be forged not only between the two who wish to marry, but also with the families of the couple*
Characters: **Ben and Caroline:** fiancées; **Philippe; Nathalie**
Setting: Living room

Philippe and Nathalie are sitting in the living room, waiting for Ben and Caroline.

Philippe: Guys welcome, come in. How is it going? Take a sit. We were just talking about you **guys**. **We were wondering how you were.**

Ben: How can they be so stupid? I will never forgive them.

Nathalie: What's wrong with you guys?

Caroline: My parents didn't give us permission to get married.

Philippe: What?! Why?!

Nathalie: How come? I picked **out** the perfect dress too.

Nathalie tries to show Caroline a picture, but Caroline doesn't even want to look at it.

Philippe: Now stop this blubbering you guys. Who is the real decision making specialist here? *(To Ben)* Do you love her?

Ben: Of course, I do.

Philippe: *(To Caroline)*. Do you love him?

Caroline: Yes, of course I love him.

Philippe: Well, Okay you guys! Then, what's the problem here? Let's get you guys married!

Ben: Yes! I think you've got a point! What are we worrying about?

Caroline: No! This just won't work! I won't do it.

Ben: So, what does this mean? I know what this means— you just don't love me enough. Good thing I found out now!

Caroline: Well, if that's what you want to think, then do! Trust is essential in marriage, and you just clearly don't trust me. I am glad I found out now.

She rises to leave.

DISCUSSION

Nathalie: Good grief, you guys! This is a stupid game if I ever heard one! You know this is Caroline's life and her marriage too. And plus I know that you both love each other and trust one another. So, stop playing games! I have a question. Ben, how many times have you been to her parents?

Ben: Today was the first time I met them.

Nathalie: Oh, that was brilliant planning! Now think. You have a sister. And she brought home a guy that your parents had never seen before and then she announced that she wanted to marry him. You'd have some reservations and ask, "Who is this guy," right?

Ben: Well, I might also be interested in why he wanted to marry a ten-year-old girl...

Nathalie: You know what I mean. Do you think any caring parents would want to get to know you first before committing to anything? I mean did you even tell them that you work for the biggest telecommunications company?

Ben: No...

Nathalie: So you see. They might think that you're a light-minded student—and not reliable one for that fact. They might not even want to get to know you.

Philippe: Yeah, and by the way, he's a whiz with computers! They should know that!

Ben: I didn't say anything about that...

Nathalie: Okay, I have a suggestion: why don't you just start all over—and have a little patience. And spend a little bit more time with Caroline's parents. Maybe study together or have dinner. Maybe get involved in the family life—like help her Dad build a roof. Heck! Rome wasn't built in one day, you know!

Caroline: Dad does need help building a new computer...

Ben: Well, I guess we weren't very considerate of your parents' feelings.
This sounds like good advice to me.

Philippe looks at Nathalie with admiration.

Philippe: I'm beginning to question who is really the decision maker here!