

Nyoka Yendara

Cape File Snake

Oh-ohh vachairova musoro nyoka yendara
Oh-ohh they will hit it on the head, the cape file snake

Babawee, nyoka inoera
Dear Lord, the sacred snake

Oh-ohh vachairova musoro nyoka yendara
Oh-ohh they will hit it on the head, the cape file snake

Babawee, nyoka inonetsa
Dear Lord, the troublesome snake

Oh-ohh vachairova musoro nyoka yendara
Oh-ohh they will hit it on the head, the cape file snake

Babawee, nyoka inonetsa muzimba raMambo
Dear Lord, the troublesome snake in the King's big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Guitar solo

Baba vanyadzisei, Baba vanyadzisei
Father embarrass them, Father embarrass them
Vanoda kugara nyika vega nehama
They want to live in the country by themselves, with their relatives
Baba vanyadzisei, Baba vanyadzisei
Father embarrass them, Father embarrass them
Vanoda kugara nyika vega nehama
They want to live in the country by themselves, with their relatives
Baba vanyadzisei, Baba vanyadzisei
Father embarrass them, Father embarrass them
Vanoda kugara nyika vega nehama
They want to live in the country by themselves, with their relatives
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho

Thank the boys that play the shakers
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers

Guitar solo

Baba vanyadzisei, Baba vanyadzisei
Father embarrass them, Father embarrass them
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Baba vanyadzisei, Baba vanyadzisei
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They want to live in the country by themselves, with their relatives
Baba vanyadzisei, Baba vanyadzisei
Father embarrass them, Father embarrass them
Vanoda kugara nyika vega nehama
They want to live in the country by themselves, with their relatives
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house

Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Baba muzimba iro
Father in that big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho
Thank the boys that play the shakers
Muzimba raMambo
In the King's big house
Tendai vakomana vanoridza hosho...
Thank the boys that play the shakers...

This is another song that got the Green Arrows band in trouble with Rhodesian State security agents. *Nyoka yendara* ([cape file snake](#)) is believed to be a sacred snake in Zimbabwe. It is said that the snake is not one that you easily come across, so if one crosses your path, something terrible will happen to you in the near future. (<https://www.reptiletalk.net/cape-file-snake/> reports that the snake is strictly nocturnal, except during hatching season when the females move around looking for a place to lay their eggs. So that could explain why one would rarely come across it during the day.)

In the song, *nyoka yendara* refers to [Ian Smith](#), the then Prime Minister of Rhodesia. Apparently he was hardly ever in the public's eye (or the black public's, at least), so his appearance was a sign of impending doom. *Vakomana vanoridza hoshu* is the code name the band gave to the Comrades, as the Liberation fighters were called. A [hoshu](#) is a percussive musical instrument of the shaker family and is used here to refer to guns. So, *vakomana vanoridza hoshu* ("the boys that play the shakers") are Comrades with weapons of war. *Zimba raMambo* -- which means the King's big house (think Palace) -- refers to our country, Zimbabwe. *Baba*, which means Father, is used in the song to refer to the ancestral spirits that watch over the nation.

When the lyrics say "Father embarrass them", the band is calling upon the country's guardian spirits to grant victory to the Comrades. The central problem -- the reason for the war -- was that the whites took all the best that the country had to offer, shared it amongst themselves, and left the dregs for the blacks ("They want to live in the country by themselves, with their relatives, in the King's big house".) Hence, if the Comrades were successful in hitting the sacred snake (Ian Smith) on the head, the war would essentially be over, and the Comrades would take over the big house.

Language(s): Shona

Songwriters: Zexie Manatsa & The Green Arrows

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Translation / Transcription / Explanation: Butsilo Nare Charlie

Editing / Typesetting: Graham Arthur Mackenzie