

Zuzana Uličianska

If it is fine, we shall go out

/Ak bude pekne, pôjdeme von/

Radio drama

CHARACTERS

Katarína

Paulína

Monsieur Martin

Katarína (speaking out loud)

S'il faisait beau, nous sortirions. If it was fine, we should go out...S'il fait beau, nous sortirions..If it's fine, we shall go out...S'il avait fait beau, nous serions sortis ...If it had been fine, we would have gone out.....

(the sound of alarm-clock breaks in, it's an electronic version of very well known French song which might later appear in another instrumental form as the signature tune of the lessons, e.g. Sur le pont d' Avignon)

Katarína (sleepy)

Il est six heures du matin. Le réveil sonne. Monsiuer Martin se réveille.

Martin (speaks unnaturally literary, but sympathetically)

Good morning.

Katarína (unwillingly)

Hmmmm..

Martin It's six o'clock in the morning. The alarm-clock is ringing.

Katarína What day is it today ?

Martin Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday...

Katarína Oh, Sunday ! Good.

Martin It's time to get up.

Katarína What's the weather like. Can we go out ?

Martin It's raining. it's windy. There's a storm. There's a rainbow. It's snowing. It's drizzling, freezing...

Katarína That's awful. Then we can't go out again. Please, do me the pleasure of introducing yourself instead. I love the way you introduce yourself so much.

Martin With pleasure. Allow me...

Katarína I will.

Martin Well, my name is Martin.

Katarína How very nice to meet you! But you used to do it better. This time you forgot the bunch of flowers as the expression of your deepest respect. Well, leave it. A test question : Who am I ?

Martin You are Miss Katarína.

Katarína Just call me Katarína.

Martin Yes, Miss Katarína.

Katarína What are you doing here so early this morning?

Martin As a reporter for a progressive French paper I am very much interested in your country.

Katarína (dissapointed)

In our country ? Oh, yes. Our country has a wonderful area and an interesting number of inhabitants.Over and above it is situated in a climatic zone.

Martin And besides , I have a lot of good friends in Slovakia.

Katarína Monsieur Martin, would you kindly tell me something about your friends. I always learn from you so much about myself. I believe in nobody in the world as much as you. I have no secrets from you.

Martin Hm...What is there to tell you about ? Which topic are we on today ?

Katarína Something practical and up to date. For example...What 's my daily routine ?

Martin You get up in the morning, dear Mademoiselle.

Katarína Every day ?

Martin Usually.

Katarína Terrible...And What do I do afterwards ?

Martin Then you wash and comb your hair.

Katarína Where do I wash ?

Martin In the bathroom.

Katarína Well, you've persuaded me. Can you, please, tell me how to get to the bathroom ?

Martin First go to the hall and there you can ask again.

Katarína Oh, thanks, Monsieur Martin.

(slamming of the door, hissing of water)

Katarína Oh, that was wonderful...Do ask me now, how I am feeling today.

Martin How are you feeling, Catherine ?

Katarína Splendid. really splendid. And you. How are you, Monsieur Martin ?

Martin All right...Very well. Thank you.

Katarína Do you notice how I am looking today ?

Martin O.K. So-so. Very well. Thank you.

Katarína You seem a bit absent-minded, Monsieur Martin. I have the feeling you're not in the best of health. What's matter with you?

Martin I have just got over a heart attack, hepatitis, typhoid fever, tonsilitis and measles but it was nothing serious. I am again...

Katarína ...as fit as a fiddle. So we can eat and drink to your health. Do you recommend me to have my breakfast or should I rather have my lunch ?

Martin In your place I would have your breakfast first.It's healthy to have one's breakfast in the morning.

Katarína I agree with you. Can't you perhaps tell me what would I like ?

Martin A bun and coffee with milk.

Katarína Again ? Are you trying to kill me ?

Martin But as to the aspect of grammar...

Katarína All right then, from the practical point of view it is also the simplest.

Will you take ?

Martin No, thanks. Don't worry about me.

Katarína O.K. I just asked out of politeness.

(clinking of plates, cutlery)

Martin Bon appétit !

Katarína Thank you. So, what are we going to do today ? It's a free day, we could get through some of our hobbies... read something interesting, a detective story or psychological novel...or to go in for some winter or summer sport...Oh, dear, you know, we haven't been to the cinema or the theatre for ages. I've almost forgotten how to buy tickets...

Martin Today we will have a visit.

Katarína Are you sure ?

Martin Your friend Paulína is coming to see you .

Katarína Oh, you're right. I nearly forgot that she had called me. So, we won't go anywhere and we'll go on to Lesson 13.

(the signature tune of the lesson, a gong strokes)

Katarína (memorizing)

Lecon treize. La visite.

Vocabulaire :

cordialement - cordially, franchement- sincerely,

avec plaisir- with pleasure, etre beinvenue- to be welcome,

hospitalité écossais- great hospitality

Phrazéologie :

faire l'honneur des lieux-to bestow one's presence upon somebody arriver en quatre bateau- to burst into

qu'elle aille sa faire voire - let him go to hell

(the ringing of the bell, the unlocking the door)

Katarína Is that you Paulína ? Les salutations .

Paulína (speaks unnaturally)

Hello, Katarína !

Katarína (answers in the same way)

Hello, Paulína !

Paulína We havn't seen each other for ages.

Katarína Really, it is so long.

Paulína May I come in ?

Katarína Of course, come through. You are welcome.

PaulínaThank you a lot. So, this is your flat ?

(a signature tune)

Katarína Le dialogue - Mon appartement.

Yes, it is my flat.

PaulínaWhat a nice flat !

Katarína It is a little bit small.

PaulínaYes, it is really not big but it is furnished very tastefully. You have everything here you need.

Katarína Certainly. I don't need anything else.

PaulínaA very nice room. Do you feel at home..

Katarína Yes, I do.

PaulínaAnd what is this ?

Katarína This is a couch.

PaulínaIs it comfortable ?

Katarína Very comfortable. take a seat, Paulína. Make yourself at home.

Paulína With pleasure...And what is this? A table ?

Katarína Yes, this is a table.

Paulína Isn't it too round ?

Katarína It is a little round.

Paulína It must be practical.

Katarína It is rather practical.

Paulína Can meals be served on it ?

(a signature tune)

Katarína Les repas et les boissons.

Oh, yes. Will you take anything ?

Paulína Yes, Thank you. What have you got ?

Katarína And what would you like to have ? Something to drink ? Or to eat ?

Paulína Yes, it can be something to drink or to eat.

Katarína So, I am going to prepare something for us. Would you mind me leaving you here alone for a little while ?

Paulína Of course not.

Katarína All right then. I'll be back in a minute.

(real sound of some household equipment in the kitchen)

Katarína (whispering)

Monsieur Martin, Monsiuer Martin...you are so experienced, really a knowing fellow, will you advise me what to prepare.

Martin And what about...let's say hors-d'oeuvre, soup, main meal, salad, dessert, fruit, pudding, speciality of the chef...

Katarína You don't mean that seriously !

Martin Then some trifle-shrimp, lobster, oysters..

Katarína Is there no living thing easier to...

Martin What do you mean by easier to ?

Katarína That's that , then. It will be salted twinglets as usual. But still we must choose the right sort of wine.

Martin In France there are white and red wines. Which kind would you prefer ?

Katarína I like merry wines.

Paulína (calling from the room)

Katarína !

Katarína (loudly)

Yes, I'm coming ...

(silently)

Because...when you drink merry wine, you are merry... and when sad , you are sad. Do you understand ?

Martin Yes, I do. In France there are two sorts of wine.

Katarína And what about getting smashed today ?

Martin You mean lit up, Catherine ?

Katarína Let's drain the cup to the bottom...put all our eggs into one basket and get plastered to the gills...

Martin Yes, dear Mademoiselle, I hope we shall spend a pleasant evening...

Katarína ...and make a lot of friends.

Paulína(calling)

Katarína !

Katarína I'm coming!.... I am very sorry, Monsieur Martin, but I must go back to Paulína again. It's a pity. I feel so released with you just like at the end of the lesson. What about singing before saying good-bye ?

Martin To sing a song ?

Katarína Yes, a song would be best. The one we were taught.

Martin You can only sing what you were taught to sing. So, which one did they teach you ?

Katarína The song about the dancing on the bridge... in Avignon...

Martin Do me a favour, please, sing it.

Katarína (sings)

Sur le pond d'Avignon...

Paulína(calling from the room)

Katarína ?

Katarína Oh, yes, I am back.

PaulínaI've lost my appetite while you where in the kitchen.

Katarína That's all right. I did not prepare anything, either.

PaulínaKatarína ...

Katarína Yes ?

PaulínaAre you glad that I came.

Katarína Of course, I am very happy you're here.

PaulínaDo you know why I came ?

Katarína No, I haven't a clue.

PaulínaI need your help, Katarína.

Katarína Oh, willingly, with pleasure...

PaulínaWill you help me to complete an application form in French ?

Katarína An application form in French.

PaulínaAnd the C.V. , too.

Katarína And the C.V. , too. What application ?

Paulína For a short - term post abroad.

Katarína To France ?

PaulínaYes, to France.

Katarína Oh, yes, willingly, with pleasure... But that's another lesson.

(a signature tune)

Katarína (memorizing)

Lecon vingt-une. Les formulaires d'inscription, d'application.

Vocabulaire :

nome - name, lieu de naissance - birthplace, nationalité - nationality

avoir le ferme propos de faire - to take something to one's head, faire sa part a part - to mind one's own business

avoir l'assiette au beurre - to have a profitable job...

Paulína Shall we start ?

Katarína Yes. Your name ?

Paulína Paulína.

Katarína Born ?

Paulína In my native town.

Katarína How does your native town look like ?

Paulína Pardon ?

Katarína Is it favourably located ?

Paulína I think so.

Katarína Is it the administrative , industrial and cultural centre of its region ?

Paulína Yes, it is.

Katarína Can you be proud of its rare historical sights ?

Paulína Of course !

Katarína Ha ! I was sure about it. All native town are the same. That's why we love them so much.

Paulína Katarína, I'm afraid...

Katarína I know. ..Let's go on... Parents..., grandmothers, cousins, nephews...What about your relations with the members of your family?

Paulína As far as I can see...

Katarína The family is the basis of healthy society. The French assign aspecially great significance to the family.

Paulína I have all kind of relations...Couln't we get to the nationality ?

Katarína All right then. What's your nationality ? Are you British ?

Paulína No, I'm not.

Katarína Are you Swedish ?

Paulína Oh, no !

Katarína Are you Spanish ?

Paullína No, please !

Katarína What are you then ?

Paulína I am Slovak.

Katarína Oh, Slovakia ! Is it not the country known for its developed industry and flourishing agriculture ?

Paulína Katarína, we haven't filled in the part about education yet.

Katarína You see! The system of education. That is a nice topic. Well, which grades of our unified system of education did you go through ? Creches ?

Paulína Yes.

Katarína Kindergarten ?

Paulína Yes, I did.

Katarína Congratulation ! Our school system provides the harmonic development and complete education of the personality without... origin, nationality, citizenship... and sex.

Paulína Oh, dear !

Katarína What's the matter ? What about your state of health , by the way ?

Paulína Excellent.

Katarína Did you suffer any infantile disease ? Come on ! Diseases - that's my favourite topic.

Paulína All of them.

Katarína Hepatitis ?

Paulína Of course.

Katarína Typhoid fever ?

Paulína Sure.

Katarína Heart attack ?

Paulína Any time you wish.

Katarína Have you ever experienced the advantage of free health care ? ...Did you get sickness allowances, maternity support...?

(sound of the broken glass, transmission into the real acoustics)

Paulína Why are you torturing me, Katarína ? I only needed to fill in an application form , a simple form...delete if not applicable, yes or no,...I did not really want to go into educational systems... just a simple questionnaire, nothing else.

Katarína Just a simple questionnaire, nothing more! You really think it's possible only to delete yes or no in a questionnaire and then pack your luggage ? Life is waiting for us !

Paulína But what am I to do ? I was given this document to fill in.

Katarína Were you asked whether you spoke French or not ?

Paulína Yes, I was.

Katarína And you answered : Yes.

Paulína You know, it's true that I dropped the language school after half a year... but ... I am now attending the crash-course.

Katarína Phew ! Crash-course ! Would you like to know what is it all about ?

Paulína I like it. It's quite efficient, there is a video...

Katarína What for ? What is all this course good for ?

Paulína What do you mean ? Everybody is getting ready for some...

Katarína ... studies, posts, scholarships... You mean , you've got a good reason for learning.

Paulína Naturally.

Katarína So , then you must know why ...

Paulína Yes, we've got a motive.

Katarína But what sort of motive ?

Paulína I don't understand. What do you want me to say ? We all have motives, as we know as to why we learn French. That's all.

Katarína You are right. That's all you know. Cramming a few words into yours mouth', swallowing a bit of grammar in a hurry because some miraculous agents are already waiting for you behind the door to fulfil all your wishes. That is heroism !

Paulína What kind of heroism would you like to have ?

Katarína What kind ? If only you had a pinch of vague commitment, idealism, baseless enthusiasm, unreasonable hopes... You can't be compared to us, former students of the evening language school.

 We were real personalities ! In those days the reading compositions on the topic " Why do I learn foreign language " was a moving experience. ...How many interesting human fates, unfulfilled desires of youth, love for books and films... We couldn't even dream that once we learnt French we would be able to use it , but still... we ...

Paulína Is that my fault ? No, seriously, could you explain what on earth you want from me ? Do you want me to spend all my energies in attending the language school just like you ?

Katarína No, you are going to spend all your money on these crash- courses instead. They promise to move heaven and earth to teach you hundred most frequently used phrases, but really... tell me, What will you get from them , if...if you don't take all this words to your heart .

Paulína What are you again talking about ?

Katarína Of course you don't know what I am speaking about . Can you at least imagine how much did I suffer for the sake of French ? How many dry buns did I have to swallow during all these years just because I could not remeber how to say butter in French. How often did I get up at six, because of the alarm clock that was so badly set in one of the lesssons. I did such things in French that I never thought I'd do in my life ! I played at skittles, I read detective stories, I ...

Paulína (bitterly)

 ...I fell in love !

Katarína Hm...and what of it ?

Paulína Oh, yes... What was his name?.. You know, this friend of yours...unforgettable character from all the French text- books, irresistible dandy with rather great nose, but really a nice chap, even a fighter for proletarian internationalism... Will you help me.....

 Monsieur ...

Katarína (reserved)

 His name was Martin.

Paulína Oh, that it. Monsieur Martin. How could I forget him ! Monsieur Martin - the symbol of an inaccessible world of hotels, taxis, aeroplanes and diplomats, mysterious Monsieur Martin always hurrying on urgent official matters, a pure boy, always standing lonely on platforms, sleeping alone in bare hotel rooms ..., but a real gentleman , the idol of the Frech learners who competed in showing him the way, changing his moneys, taking an urgent telegram...

Katarína Monsieur Martin was a journalist who always applied the principles of propriety, understanding and correct grammar.

PaulínaHa ! A journalist ! Actually I would like to see that proressive French newspaper he was reporter for. I am sure it has never existed ! He was an ordinary swindler, who abused the position of the only available Frenchman in our country to mislead creatures like you. I can't understant why on earth are you still defending him. Just have a look at yourself ! What a long time you courted him and what have you got from it ? Where have you been ? What have you experienced ? You have remained on the shelf in your little flat and now you can go around repeating to yourself : This is a table...This is a chair...

Katarína You villl never understand what Monsieur Martin meant to me... and still means ! I owe my life to him !

PaulínaBut what sort of a life is that ? It would be offensive to me to accompany somebody even to the bathroom, search his suitcase, read his letters and listen to his phone calls...

Katarína Really, what's the use of such a life ? These crash-courses have destroyed the very last oasis of consideration, politeness and decency in this world....our good old evening schools. Where beside the language school is the conditional still used in demands? People are envious and ignorant , nobody cares ... but there you could confide to your classmates everything...what you took for your breakfast, what you sat on, what you combed your hair with..You had the feeling that other people cared about you and you became more and more self confident with each lesson....And besides,...was there any other place where we could freely speak about going out? If it had been fine , we should have gone out.. If it was fine, we should go out ... If it is fine, we shall go out... Do you understand ? We really hoped for the time ...when it would be fine enough for us to go..somewhere ..We were repeating these senteces thousand times a day...

PaulínaOh, surely, you could talk about going somewhere ,especially if a policeman stood at each corner.

Katarína What policeman ?

PaulínaThe one who willingly showed you the way. And you could even freely choose wheather you wanted to go to the post office or better to the museum.

Katarína And where I can go now? Nowhere !

PaulínaWhat do you meant ? Now you can do anywhere . What's the problem ? Go and book a trip to France or anywhere you want .

Katarína There is no problem. I am just not interested in travelling any more.

PaulínaPardon ?

Katarína Should I cram into a train or a bus, then follow a guide running from one bridge to an nother, look at this, look at that..? .Anyone can do that without beeing able to get off the train in correct French..... ..

I have not been dreaming for all these long years to be herded together with ignorant mases with no idea of what France means !

(pathetic mixture of some French chansons or even a national anthem)

Katarína (raving about)

La France ...La France...est un tres grand pays ... un de plus vastes pays d' Europe...est un tres beau pays... un de plus beaux pays d'Europe...le pays desLa France est le pays des...

PaulínaKatarína ! Katarína, I am leaving.

Katarína (already sober)

Oh, yes, do go, Paulína.

(a signature tune)

Katarína (memorizing)

Les adieus.

Phrazeologie :

faire ses adieus - to say good-bye

c'est dans l'adversité qu'on reconnait ses amis - a friend in need is a friend indeed,

caquet de accouchée - to blah - blah

laisser quelqu'un a l'abandon - to leave someone to his fate

PaulínaSo, I 'm going. Thanks for your help.

Katarína Don't mention it.

PaulínaI am really obliged to you for all you've done for me. Sorry for bothering you.

Katarína You are welcome. Come again. You did not bother me at all.

PaulínaThank you for your kind hospitality.

Katarína Oh, it's O.K. I was very pleased to have you.

PaulínaI hope you'll come to see me soon.

Katarína Oh, willingly, with pleasure...

PaulínaI will be very pleased.

Katarína Me too.

PaulínaSee you , Katarína.

Katarína See you , Paulína.

PaulínaGood- bye.

Katarína Good- bye.

(the slammimg of a door)

Katarína Hm...What a nice flat. Whose flat is it ? Is it mine ? Yes, it is mine.

I have everything I need there. How tastefully it is furnished ! And what's that?

This is a chair...and that's a table. Is it not too round ? What do you think, Monsieur Martin ?

Martin It's a little round.

Katarína We won't stay here a minute longer. We'll escape together to...

Martin Where to ?

Katarína Let's say...to Avignon. It must be wonderful there. There is dancing everywhere, even on the bridge...

Martin How shall we escape ?

Katarína By train, plane, or by ship..It doesn't matter.I'm sure you'll find some quick a reliable means of transport.

Martin Oh, travelling ! Transport of passengers, cargoes...

Katarína You've understood me., Monsieur Martin. I won't leave you to the mercy of unknown taxidrivers, receptionist and accidental passers by... You deserve a better fate then always ask somebody to do a favour for you...We are going to escape...you and I...just we two...

We 'll be talking about the weather forever...

Martin What tickets shall we take ? Single ore return ?

Katarína Why return ?

Martin There is a reduction.

Katarína You haven't understood anything. We'll never come back.

Martin Do you like traveling, dear Catherine ?

Katarína Yes, I do. It's my hobby. I like all sorts of monuments, especially historical, I love all these unknown big beautiful cities...

defamed ... praised

shrines of the world wide countryside

towns - picture postcards

towns - inscriptions on T- shirts

towns talismans for good luck

towns - trash souvenirs

branded towns in gift packings

aromatic coloured dreamy towns

Martin I see...You certainly love them very much. Do you travel a lot ?

Katarína I haven't traveled yet.

Martin How interesting ! And where did you learn to speak French so well ?

Katarína It was in the language school where I learnt to speak French so well.

Martin You have a good pronunciation.

Katarína In your presence I feel like a real French woman.

Martin Very good. French is the language of the French all over the world.

Katarína Language of the Posts and Telecommunications...

Martin ...of diplomacy..

Katarína Monsiuer Martin, will you accompany me, please ?

Martin Oh, yes, willingly, with pleasure.

Katarína I want to go out. I desperately need to go out...to have some fresh air... to change something... to build someting ...or to destroy It doesn't matter. Just go out.. out....

Martin Naturally. If it is fine we shall go out. If it was fine we should go out. If it had been fine...

Katarína Monsieur Martin ?

Martin Yes , Catherine ?

Katarína Monsieur Martin, please, tell me...

Martin With pleasure.

Katarína WhenWhen will it be fine ?
(a signature tune)

Katarína (memorizing)

changer de l'air - to change the air
prendre l'air - to have some fresh air
vivre de l'air - to live without problems
un tete en l'air - happy-go-lucky
parle en l'air - to speak not seriously
promesses en l'air - faked promises
battre l'air - to fight at wind mills
batir en l'air - to build castles in the air
foutre en l'air - to send somebody to hell

THE END

