

La Flava Floro, Saturday afternoon, people are starting to arrive.

Some of the ladies are each wearing a long floral-patterned dress.

Edith notices that one of the ladies is wearing an Empire line or Regency style dress.

'That is different.' thinks Edith.

A little later another lady arrives wearing an Empire line or Regency style dress, then another. Edith wonders if something is going on.

Jane arrives, wearing a turquoise blue Empire line or Regency style dress.

"Hello Edith, how do you like the new fashion look?" asks Jane.

"Well I had noticed several of the ladies each wearing an Empire line or Regency style dress. .... Have you had anything to do with this?"

"Well, yes, have you seen the latest issue of Arts Magazine?"

"Well no, it arrived last week and I have not opened it yet."

"Ah, well there was a fashion show a few weeks ago and I went along and there is a report on it in the magazine .... and also in my 'Letter from Jane' feature I mentioned that I had bought a dress in that style and that I was hoping to wear it at a matinée performance of a play next week, which today was at the time that the magazine was published. I started getting telephone calls and emails asking if the play is this one and ladies saying that they would like to wear the style but did not want to be the only person doing so."

Edith speaks. "Welcome everybody to this performance of a play around the theme of localizable sentences. All of the actors are my work colleagues. My role is that of narrator which I shall commence to perform."

Edith pauses, so as to separate her role as host from her role as narrator.

*Narrator:* The first scene takes place at the home of Albert Johnson, in England, where Albert is watching the television news.

*The television set is displayed in a sideways view. The part of the lady on the television is voiced by a lady hidden behind scenery.*

*Lady on the television news:* Reports are coming in of avalanches in Central Europe as a result of unexpectedly large snow falls. There are reports of blocked roads and railway lines. An Information Management Centre has been set up to try to provide information for people concerned about relatives and friends who may be travelling in the area. We are informed that the staff at the Information Management Centre do not speak English but enquiries may be sent by email to the email address that is on the screen and we are advised that staff at the Information Management Centre are set up to receive messages using localizable sentences and to reply using the same technique.

*Albert sits up and looks concerned. Albert grabs a pen and paper and writes the email address upon the paper.*

*Albert:* Francesca, can you spare a minute please.

*Francesca enters from the left as viewed by the audience.*

*Francesca:* Yes?

*Albert:* It has just been on the television. There has been avalanches in Central Europe. They say that roads and railway lines have been blocked. I am a bit concerned about Margaret and Anne who are travelling in that area by train.

*Francesca:* Oh dear.

*Albert:* The lady on the television news said that there is an Information Management Centre been set up, but they do not speak English, but she gave an email address and says that we can use localizable sentences and that the Information Management Centre is all geared up for that.

*Francesca:* What are .... what?

*Albert:* Localizable sentences. It is a new thing introduced into computers recently, I was reading about it in a magazine article. I had a quick look at it, it is on my computer, it is all within the email program.

*Albert moves to his computer. Francesca follows and watches over his left shoulder.*

*Albert:* I'll try to get a message through.

*Francesca:* Can I help at all?

*Albert:* Yes, fortunately I printed out the instructions the other day.

*Albert hands Francesca a few sheets of paper with printing on them.*

*Albert:* Could you read out the instructions for seeking information about relatives or friends after a disaster please.

*Francesca:* Yes, certainly. .... Here we are, this is the section we need. .... First, select from the cascading menu the collection of sentences about seeking information about relatives or friends after a disaster.

*Albert is sat at his computer, following Francesca's instructions.*

*[Note to readers: please note that the English localizations of the localizable sentences used in this play are shown within double quotes only because they are being quoted in the dialogue, they are not shown within double quotes in normal use.]*

*Albert:* Yes, ....

*Francesca:* Find the preset sentence that asks "Is there any information about the following person please?" and click on it so as to use it to start the message that is to be sent.

*Albert:* Yes ....

*Francesca:* In the main screen, key in the name of the person about whom information is being sought immediately after that sentence. If there is more than one person, enter the name of the leader of the group.

*Albert:* Right .... so in the main screen it now has in dark green the sentence and then it has the name Margaret Gattenford in black.

*Francesca:* Now add in the preset sentence "The person is female." because the people there might not know that Margaret is a female name.

*Albert:* Right .... good.

*Francesca:* If there is more than one person then select the preset sentence "Also, is there any information about the following person please?" and click on that to add it into the message.

*Albert:* Yes ....

*Francesca:* In the main screen, key in the name of the person about whom information is being sought.

*Albert:* Yes .... so I will add the name Anne Johnson and I will add a preset sentence that the person is female.

*Francesca:* Now using the cascading menu select the preset sentence that expresses the relationship, relative or friend, of this person to the first person that was named.

*Albert:* Ah, yes, here we are "The person is the niece of the first person that was named." though I suppose that means that saying that Anne is female was not necessary as that is implicit in her being a niece, yet nevertheless I shall leave it in as it might avoid confusion.

*Francesca:* Now, it says to repeat that part for each additional person in the group, if any. In our situation there are just the two of them so we can move to the next section. .... Add some information about the person making the enquiry using some preset sentences. It suggests using "The name of the enquirer is as follows." and then to put your name after it.

*Albert:* Yes ....

*Francesca:* Now, using the cascading menu select the preset sentence that expresses the relationship, relative or friend, of the enquirer to the first person that was named.

*Albert:* So that is my relationship to Margaret. So I need to put that I am her brother. .... Ah here is the preset sentence for that, "The enquirer is the brother of the first person that was named."

*Francesca:* And that appears to be all that is needed here. It seems that you just need to email that to the email address that you got from the television news.

*Albert:* Right then, I have got the following.

Is there any information about the following person please?

Margaret Gattenford

The person is female.

Also, is there any information about the following person please?

Anne Johnson

The person is female.

The person is the niece of the first person that was named.

The name of the enquirer is as follows.

Albert Johnson

The enquirer is the brother of the first person that was named.

So all of the preset sentences are in dark green and the text that goes straight through unaltered is in black.

*Francesca:* It says that you can display the encoding of the preset sentences by clicking on the Show Codes button.

*Albert:* Ah yes, the preset sentences are each shown in dark green as a symbol followed by some digits and the names are as they were. So no English at all in the sentences as they are sent. When the message is received they will be localized into whichever language is being used in the Information Management Centre. Anyway, back to Show Text and there we are again. .... So click the send button and off it goes.

*Scene 2. The Information Management Centre. Sonja is sat at the left as viewed by the audience, looking forward to the left at a computer screen. Tanja is sat at the right, looking forward to the right looking at a computer screen. Sonja is near the front of the stage area, Tanja is about half-way back.*

*Sonja:* Margaret Gattenford?

*Tanja looks up and down the screen of her computer.*

*Tanja:* Noge.

*Sonja:* Anne Johnson?

*Tanja looks up and down the screen of her computer.*

*Tanja:* Noge.

*Sonia starts using keyboard and mouse to compose a reply to Albert Johnson.*

*Sonia looks at the screen. Then Sonja looks concerned. Then Sonja uses mouse and keyboard again just a little. Sonja sends the message.*

*Scene 3. The railway station.*

*Chef du Train:* Ladies and gentlemen, the train has reached the end of the branch line along which we have been diverted. This gentleman is the station master - the Chef du Gare - and I will give him the list of your names so that he can pass them through to the authorities to let them know that you are safe. He does not know English but I have written down some codes that are about passing information in the event of a disaster and I have written your names too. He will be able to decode the message to his own language, each railway station has a code book and the staff have been trained.

*Chef du Gare:* Bonjour.

*The Chef du Train hands the sheet of paper to the Chef du Gare.*

*Chef du Train:* If you will follow me I will take you to the hotel, it is near the railway station, so not far to walk.

*They exit to the right as viewed by the audience, going behind a panel.*

*Scene 4. Albert Johnson's home. A ping to indicate that a message has arrived on the computer. Albert goes to the computer.*

*Albert:* Ah, here is a reply from the Information Management Centre.

*Francesca:* Ah.

*Albert:* It reads as follows.

Good day.

The following question has been asked.

Is there any information about the following person please?

Margaret Gattenford

My answer is as follows.

No.

The following question has been asked.

Also, is there any information about the following person please?

Anne Johnson

My answer is as follows.

No.

Best regards,

Sonja

That is like Sonia but it has a letter j instead of a letter i, so possibly the j is pronounced like an English letter y.

*Francesca:* That's a nice touch, adding a name to it. It sounds more personal, not so much as just a bureaucracy.

*Albert:* Yes. .... Well at least we know that they are aware of our enquiry.

*Scene 5. The Hotel.*

*The hotel foyer. Margaret and Anne enter from the right, the waiter enters from the left.*

*Margaret:* I am told that the waiter is very helpful but does not understand English, but does understand how to communicate through the language barrier using localizable sentences.

*Margaret takes a smartphone from her handbag and acts as if using an app.*

*Margaret:* I'll try to throw him the localizable sentence "Where can I buy a vegan meal with no gluten-containing ingredients in it please?" and hope that he understands.

*The waiter realizes that Margaret is wanting to throw a message to him and picks up a smartphone and indicates that he is ready to receive a message.*

*Margaret throws the message. The waiter displays a look of recognition and smiles and indicates for the ladies to please follow him.*

*They move behind the panel to the left and then emerge from the other side of it with the waiter now carrying a tablecloth picked up while behind the panel. There is a table with two chairs. The waiter puts the tablecloth on the table and the ladies sit down. The waiter stands back and the waitress brings the tray with the cutlery and the meals and serves them. The waiter and the waitress then go with the waiter turning, smiling and then slightly bowing before he goes.*

*Margaret:* Ah, pasta pieces and tomatoes, delicious. And the pasta pieces are in that special shape for pasta pieces in which only gluten-free pasta is ever made.

*A slight pause then, Scene 6, at the Information Management Centre.*

*Tanja:* Margaret Gattenford .... Jarg!

*and the focus switches back to the Information Management Centre for the next scene.*

*Sonja turns and looks at Tanja then looks again at her own computer screen.*

*Sonja:* Anne Johnson?

*Tanja looks at her computer screen.*

*Tanja:* Jarg-ja!

*Sonja stands and goes and looks at the screen of Tanja's computer. Sonja is finding that Margaret and Anne are both safe.*

*Sonja starts using the mouse unit and the occasional pressing of the return key on the keyboard as if building up a message using localizable sentences and parts of the original message that she sent. It takes a while.*

Sonja looks up. Sonja turns to Tanja.

Sonja: Neige fini? [meaning Has it stopped snowing?]

Tanja gets up and goes to the window, looks through the window then faces Sonja, looking somewhat despondent.

Tanja: Noge. [meaning No.]

### *Scene 7. The Art Gallery.*

*Margaret and Anne are visiting an art gallery. They enter from behind the panel next to the table, where they had gone while scene 6 was taking place, though entering from the other end of panel than where the table is located so that they are in the area previously used for the railway station and for the hotel foyer.*

*Margaret: It is interesting that they have an art gallery - albeit a small one - in this town. We might never have known of it had we not been diverted here.*

*Margaret and Anne look at a large image of the following glyph, presented as a picture on the wall such that the audience can view it clearly.*



*Anne: Ah, a modern art design.*

*Margaret: Actually, it is a glyph for a localizable sentence. It means "Welcome." - well that is the localization into English - it has the same meaning in whatever language the viewer is choosing to understand the meaning.*

*Anne: Oh. How do you know that?*

*Margaret: Well, I read an article about it some time ago.*

*Anne and Margaret gradually move to the right, looking at several pictures that are displayed on the wall such that the audience can view them too.*

*Anne: That is a rather nice landscape of fruit trees.*

*Margaret: Yes, the clouds are done well too.*



*Anne:* Ah, another of those glyphs - it is similar to the first one, but not exactly the same.

*Margaret:* This one means "Thank you for visiting." - well that is the localization into English.

*Anne:* And it has the same meaning in whatever language the viewer is choosing to understand the meaning, so all languages are treated equally in the expressing of that message using that glyph, regardless of how many people speak the language. That's nice. .... Do all localizable sentences have a glyph?

*Margaret:* No, only a few of them have glyphs, some from the early days of the research and some which are intended for display rather than, or as well as, electronic communication.

*They exit to the right behind the other panel.*

*Scene 8. At Albert Johnson's home. A ping to indicate that a message has arrived on the computer. Albert goes to the computer. Albert turns to Francesca.*

*Albert:* They're safe.

*Francesca:* That is good.

*Albert:* I will send a message to Sonja thanking her, thanking her through the language barrier.

*Albert uses the computer while Francesca watches over his left shoulder. The narrator steps slowly forward in front of the area that represents Albert Johnson's home. Albert and Francesca continue as if engrossed.*

*Narrator:* So our play ends happily and we hope that you have enjoyed our story built around the technology of encoded localizable sentences and their various ways of application for communicating through the language barrier.

A pause.

Applause.

The members of the cast all move to the area in front of what has been the Information Management Centre in the play and take a bow.

The applause continues for a while.