

- The Midnight Visitor Summary
- Character Sketches
- Themes
- Literary Devices
- Important Quotes and Explanation
- Practice Set
- Answer Key
- Quick Reference
- Glossary

The Midnight Visitor Summary

"The Midnight Visitor" is a suspenseful short story by Robert Arthur that highlights the power of intelligence and calmness over brute force. The story revolves around Ausable, a secret agent living in a small room in a French hotel in Paris. Ausable is described as a fat man with a peculiar accent who speaks multiple languages fluently. One evening, a young writer named Fowler visits Ausable, hoping to witness some exciting spy activity but is initially disappointed by Ausable's appearance and demeanor.

During their time together, Ausable reveals that he is expecting an important report that could influence the course of history. Suddenly, a man named Max, another secret agent from a rival organization, enters Ausable's room with a pistol, intending to steal the report. Ausable remains calm and uses his wit to outsmart Max. He fabricates a story about the police arriving to protect the report, which unnerves Max. In a desperate attempt to escape, Max tries to flee through the balcony but falls to his death. The story ends with Ausable calmly awaiting a waiter, reassuring Fowler that Max will never return.

Key Points

- Emphasizes intelligence and calmness over physical force.
- Ausable's quick thinking saves him from danger.
- Setting is a French hotel in Paris.
- Characters include Ausable, Fowler, and Max.

Important Vocabulary

- **Accent:** Modulation of voice in speaking.
- **Concocted:** Invented or made up.
- **Infuriated:** Extremely angry.
- **Perplexed:** Confused or puzzled.

Character Sketches

Ausable

Ausable is a secret agent known for his intelligence and calm demeanor. Despite his unassuming appearance and strange accent, he is highly skilled and quick-witted. His ability to think on his feet helps him outsmart his adversary without resorting to violence.

Fowler

Fowler is a young, romantic writer who is curious about Ausable's life as a spy. He is initially disappointed by Ausable's appearance but becomes fascinated by the unfolding events. Fowler represents the innocent observer in the story.

Max

Max is a rival secret agent who attempts to steal an important report from Ausable. He is aggressive and armed but is ultimately outsmarted by Ausable's clever tactics.

Themes

- **Intelligence over brute force:** The story shows that wit and calmness can be more effective than physical strength.
- **Deception and quick thinking:** Ausable's ability to concoct a believable story saves his life.
- **Danger and suspense:** The narrative builds tension through the threat posed by Max.

Literary Devices

- **Suspense:** The story maintains suspense through unexpected twists and the threat of danger.
- **Irony:** Ausable's unthreatening appearance contrasts with his sharp intelligence.
- **Dialogue:** The conversations reveal character traits and advance the plot.
- **Foreshadowing:** Ausable's mention of the important report hints at the conflict to come.

Important Quotes and Explanation

- *"It was the second time in a month that somebody had got into his room through a balcony."* – This line sets the stage for the intrusion and highlights the vulnerability of Ausable's position.
- *"The police would enter the room any way and shoot if he did not open the door."* – Ausable's fabricated story that cleverly frightens Max into making a fatal mistake.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Who is Ausable and what is his profession?
- Describe the setting of the story.
- What is the significance of the important report?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Explain how Ausable uses his intelligence to deal with Max.
- Describe the character of Fowler and his role in the story.
- What does the story suggest about the use of wit in dangerous situations?

Level 3 – Challenging

- Analyze the theme of deception in the story with examples.
- Discuss the use of irony in the characterization of Ausable.
- Explain how suspense is built throughout the story.

Answer Key

Level 1 – Easy

- **Answer:** Ausable is a secret agent working for an organization.
- **Answer:** The story is set in a small room on the top floor of a French hotel in Paris.
- **Answer:** The important report is a document about new missiles that could affect the course of history.

Level 2 – Moderate

- **Answer:** Ausable remains calm and uses a fabricated story about the police arriving to protect the report, which scares Max and leads to his downfall.
- **Answer:** Fowler is a young writer who visits Ausable out of curiosity and witnesses the spy encounter, representing the reader's perspective.
- **Answer:** The story shows that intelligence and calmness can overcome physical threats, emphasizing the power of wit.

Level 3 – Challenging

- **Answer:** Deception is central to the story; Ausable concocts a false story about the police to trick Max, demonstrating how deception can be a tool for survival.
- **Answer:** Ausable's unthreatening appearance contrasts with his sharp mind, creating irony that challenges stereotypes about spies.
- **Answer:** Suspense is built through the unexpected arrival of Max, the threat of violence, and the uncertainty of Ausable's fate until the climax.

Quick Reference

- **Author:** Robert Arthur
- **Setting:** French hotel in Paris
- **Main Characters:** Ausable, Fowler, Max
- **Theme:** Intelligence over brute force
- **Literary Devices:** Suspense, irony, dialogue, foreshadowing

Glossary

- **Accent:** The way in which people pronounce words, often indicating their origin.
- **Concocted:** Made up or invented, especially a story or plan.
- **Infuriated:** Extremely angry or enraged.
- **Perplexed:** Confused or puzzled.