



# The Midnight Visitor – Revision Notes

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## Summary

- The story is about Ausable, a secret agent, and his intelligence in dealing with a critical situation.
  - Ausable is unlike the usual image of a spy. He is fat, slow, and speaks with an American accent, living in a French hotel room.
  - One night, when Ausable returns to his room with Fowler (a writer who wanted to meet a spy), they find an armed man named Max inside, demanding a report on some important papers.
  - Ausable remains calm and uses his wit:
    - He invents a story about a balcony below his window, claiming many people enter his room through it.
    - When someone knocks at the door, Ausable says it must be the police, who visit regularly to protect the important papers.
  - Max panics, jumps onto the balcony to escape, but in reality, there is no balcony—and he falls to his death.
  - Ausable outsmarts the enemy without violence, showing his intelligence and presence of mind.
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## Theme

- Presence of Mind → Quick thinking can solve critical problems.
  - Intelligence over Appearance → True ability is not judged by looks.
  - Irony → Max underestimates Ausable and pays with his life.
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## Characters

- Ausable – Secret agent, fat and slow in appearance, but witty, calm, and intelligent.
- Fowler – Young writer, curious about the life of a spy, initially disappointed but later impressed.
- Max – Rival spy, overconfident, but foolish enough to fall into Ausable's trap.

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### ☀ Message of the Story

- Intelligence and wit are more powerful than weapons.
- Never underestimate others by their looks.
- Calmness in crisis leads to victory.

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### 🗣 Literary Devices

- Irony → A spy is expected to be fit and daring, but Ausable is fat and calm, yet successful.
- Humour → Ausable's contrast to the stereotypical image of spies.
- Suspense → Build-up of tension with Max's intrusion and the imaginary balcony.

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### ❓ Short Questions & Answers

1. Who is the author of *The Midnight Visitor*?  
👉 Robert Arthur.
2. Who was Ausable?  
👉 A secret agent working in France.
3. Why was Fowler disappointed when he met Ausable?  
👉 Because Ausable was fat, ordinary, and did not look like a typical spy.
4. Who was Max?  
👉 A rival spy who wanted the report from Ausable.
5. What trick did Ausable play on Max?  
👉 He made up a story about a balcony and police visit, forcing Max to jump to his death.
6. What does the story show about Ausable?  
👉 That presence of mind and intelligence are true strengths of a spy.

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### ☀ Long Q&A

Q1. How did Ausable outsmart Max?

**Answer:** Ausable invented a false story about a balcony beneath his window and convinced Max that the police were knocking at the door. In panic, Max tried to escape through the balcony and fell to his death because no such balcony existed. This shows Ausable's quick wit and calm presence of mind.



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**Q2. What impression of Ausable do you form after reading the story?**

**Answer:** Though Ausable did not look like a typical spy—he was fat, slow, and ordinary—he was intelligent, witty, and calm in crisis. He handled a dangerous situation without violence and saved himself and Fowler. He proved that a spy's strength lies in brainpower, not in appearance.

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### Value-Based Q&A

1. What value does Ausable's character highlight?  
 Calmness, intelligence, and presence of mind.
2. What lesson does the story teach students?  
 Never judge people by appearance, and always stay calm and think smartly in difficult situations.