

The Midnight Visitor

Summary: This story is about a detective who defies the stereotype; as we know from novels and movies. Ausable is a fat man with short height and thick accent. A young writer goes to meet him to get some inspiration for his next story or novel. But as Ausable says; the young writer must be highly disappointed to see an unassuming person as a detective. However, when they reach Ausable's room and intruder is already present in the room. Ausable uses his quick wit and makes a story of a non-existent balcony and policemen. The fear of police makes the intruder jump out of the window; only to crash at the ground.

Question 1: "Ausable did not fit any description of a secret agent Fowler had ever read." What do secret agents in books and films look like, in your opinion?

Answer: Secret agents in fiction are projected like ideal men, 'Tall dark and handsome'. They are usually well built and keep beautiful women for company. They would always smoke pipe or cigar and do death defying stunts. James Bond is a very famous character by Ian Fleming. Movies based on James Bond show hi-tech gizmos which assist the detective in countering villains. There are some exceptions as well. There is a character named Feluda which was created by Satyajit Ray, the famous Bengali Filmmaker. Feluda was typical bhadralok by appearance.

Question 2: How does Ausable manage to make Max believe that there is a balcony attached to his room? Look back at his detailed description of it. What makes it a convincing story?

Answer: Ausable creates a detailed description of how his office was part a bigger apartment and how the next room had direct connection with the balcony. His statement that somebody else also broke into his office through that balcony made it a convincing story.

Question 3: Looking back at the story, when do you think Ausable thought up his plan for getting rid of Max? Do you think he had worked out his plan in detail right from the beginning? Or did he make up a plan taking advantage of events as they happened?

Answer: Ausable is very clever the way a detective should be. He made the plan to get rid of Max from the very beginning which is evident from the story of the imaginary balcony. He knew the waiter would come to deliver his drinks. He planned carefully to create an imaginary policeman which would have compelled Max to jump on the non-existent balcony.