

Class X - English (Footprints without Feet)

CHAPTER 3 - THE MIDNIGHT VISITOR

By- Robert Arthur

About the Author

Robert Jay Arthur Jr. (November 10, 1909 - May 2, 1969) was a writer of speculative fiction known for his work with The Mysterious Traveler radio series and for writing The Three Investigators, a series of young adult novels. Arthur was honoured twice by the Mystery Writers of America with an Edgar Award for Best Radio Drama. He also wrote scripts for television such as The Twilight Zone and Alfred Hitchcock's TV show, Alfred Hitchcock Presents.

Introduction to the lesson

Ausable, a secret agent, is expecting a very important report. Another secret agent, Max, threatens him with a pistol, demanding the report. Does Ausable outwit him?

The story is about a secret agent, Ausable who has spent an evening with a writer named Fowler who had expected that as he would be meeting a secret agent he would be looking into a lot of adventure. But instead, he rather gets bored when he meets Ausable as the things that happened were exactly the opposite of what he had imagined. How Ausable gets rid of his unexpected guest proves his expertise as a secret agent.

The Midnight Visitor - Summary

The story is about a witty secret agent named Ausable. He was with a writer named Fowler throughout the evening as Fowler was interested in spending time with a secret agent but when he spends time with Ausable he realizes that he is exactly the opposite of what he had imagined and that he was a bore. Ausable then told Fowler that he had been thinking wrong and that soon he would be looking at a report that would change the country's future. Then Ausable takes Fowler to his room and when they entered the room a guy with a gun named Max was standing in the room. He asked them to be comfortable until the reports about the missiles arrived in 30 minutes as he was there to steal the reports. This was the first adventure out of many that Fowler had expected when he had thought of meeting a secret agent. While they were talking, Ausable started with a story about how a guy had entered from the balcony last month below

his room. While this talk was going on, a sudden knock was heard at the door. Ausable said that it must be the police as he wanted them to check on him after sometime because he wanted to make the reports that were coming in extra secure. Max, pointing his gun towards them, said that he would be waiting in the balcony and that Ausable should send away the police otherwise he would shoot them and even take the risk of being caught by the police. As the doorknob is turned, Max jumps out of the window and a loud scream is heard. The door opens and a waiter comes in and says that he has brought the wine that Mr. Ausable had ordered. He keeps the bottle, tray and glasses on the table and leaves. Fowler is surprised and asks him about the police to which Ausable replied that there was no police. Then Fowler asked what about the person who was waiting in the balcony outside the window to which Ausable replied that the person would not return and that there was no balcony there. This shows the quick wit of Ausable as he took advantage of the situation and made Max nervous due to which he jumped out of the window without thinking and looking down. He had jumped from the top floor of the hotel and would have possibly died. This is how Ausable outwitted Max and saved himself from a very dangerous situation.
