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[https://www.100test.com/kao\\_ti2020/265/2021\\_2022\\_\\_E7\\_8E\\_B0\\_E4\\_BB\\_A3\\_E5\\_A4\\_A7\\_E5\\_c67\\_265206.htm](https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/265/2021_2022__E7_8E_B0_E4_BB_A3_E5_A4_A7_E5_c67_265206.htm) Lesson Eleven TEXT A The Midnight Visitor Robert Arthur Pre-class Work I Read the text once for the main idea. Do not refer to the notes, dictionaries or the glossary yet. Ausable did not fit the description of any secret agent Fowler had ever read about. Following him down the corridor of the gloomy French hotel where Ausable had a room, Fowler felt disappointed. It was a small room on the sixth floor and hardly a setting for a romantic figure. Ausable was, for one thing, fat. Very fat. And then there was his accent. Though he spoke French and German passably, he had never altogether lost New England accent he had brought to Paris from Boston twenty years ago. "You are disappointed," Ausable said wheezily over his shoulder. "You were told that I was a secret agent, a spy, dealing in espionage and danger. You wished to meet me because you are a writer, young and romantic. You thought you would have mysterious figures in the night, the crack of pistols, drugs in the wine." "Instead, you have spent a dull evening in a French music hall with a sloppy fat man who, instead of having messages slipped into his hand by dark-eyed beauties, gets only an ordinary telephone call making an appointment in his room. You have been bored!" The fat man chuckled to himself as he unlocked the door of his room and stood aside to let his frustrated guest enter. "You are disillusioned," Ausable told him. "But take cheer, my young friend. Before long you will see a

paper, a quite important paper for which several men and women have risked their lives, come to me in the next-to-last step of its journey into official hands. Some day soon that paper may well affect the course of history. There is drama in that thought, dont you think?" As he spoke, Ausable closed the door behind him. Then he switched on the light. And as the light came on, Fowler had his first real thrill of the day. For halfway across the room, a small automatic pistol in his hand, stood a man. Ausable blinked a few times. "Max," he wheezed, "you gave me quite a start. I thought you were in Berlin. What are you doing in my room?" Max was slender, not tall, and with a face that suggested the look of a fox. Except for the gun, he did not look very dangerous. "The report," he murmured. "The report that is being brought to you tonight concerning some new missiles. I thought I would take it from you. It will be safer in my hands than in yours." Ausable moved to an armchair and sat down heavily. "Im going to raise the devil with the management this time. I am angry," he said grimly. "This is the second time in a month that somebody has gotten into my room off that confounded balcony!" Fowlers eyes went to the single window of the room. It was an ordinary window, against which now the night was pressing blackly. "Balcony?" Max asked curiously. "No, I had a passkey. I did not know about the balcony. It might have saved me some trouble had I known about it." "Its not my balcony," explained Ausable angrily. "It belongs to the next apartment." He glanced explanatorily at Fowler. "You see," he said, "this room used to be part of a large unit, and the next room through that door there used to be the living room. It had the

balcony, which extends under my window now. You can get onto it from the empty room next door, and somebody did, last month. The management promised to block it off. But they haven't." Max glanced at Fowler, who was standing stiffly a few feet from Ausable, and waved the gun with a commanding gesture. "Please sit down," he said. "We have a wait of half an hour, I think." "Thirty-one minutes," Ausable said moodily. "The appointment was for twelvethirty. I wish I knew how you learned about the report, Max." The little spy smiled evilly. "And we wish we knew how your people got the report. But, no harm has been done. I will get it back tonight. What is that? Who is at the door?" Fowler jumped at the sudden knocking at the door. Ausable just smiled, "That will be the police," he said. "I thought that such an important paper should have a little extra protection. I told them to check on me to make sure everything was all right." Max bit his lip nervously. The knocking was repeated. "What will you do now, Max?" Ausable asked. "If I do not answer the door, they will enter anyway. The door is unlocked. And they will not hesitate to shoot." Max's face was black with anger as he backed swiftly toward the window. With his hand behind him, he opened the window and put his leg out into the night. "Send them away!" he warned. "I will wait on the balcony. Send them away or I'll shoot and take my chances!" The knocking at the door became louder and a voice was raised. "Mr. Ausable! Mr. Ausable!" Keeping his body twisted so that his gun still covered the fat man and his guest, the man at the window swung his other leg up and over the window sill. The doorknob turned. Swiftly Max pushed with his left hand to free himself and

0drop to the balcony. And then as he 0dropped, he screamed once, shrilly. The door opened and a waiter stood there with a tray, a bottle and two glasses. "Here is the drink you ordered, sir." He set the tray on the table, uncorked the bottle, and left the room. White faced and shaking, Fowler stared after him. "But... but... what about... the police?" he stammered. "There never were any police." Ausable sighed. "Only Henry, whom I was expecting." "But what about the man on the balcony?" Fowler began. "No," said Ausable, "he wont return." 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)