



The Midnight Visitor: A Gothic Encounter

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The old hotel stood tall against a bruised purple sky, its gothic spires reaching into the swirling clouds. A low rumble of thunder vibrated through the floorboards as the wind shrieked through the narrow alleyways below.



Ausler moved down the dim corridor, his heavy boots thudding rhythmically on the worn carpet. With his wide handlebar moustache and thick black coat, he looked like a formidable relic of a bygone era navigating the shadows.



Close behind him walked Fowler, a tall and skeletal figure with a face as pale as parchment. His wrinkled hand gripped a cold steel pistol, his eyes darting nervously into the deep corners cast by the flickering gaslights.



As Ausler turned the key and pushed open the heavy oak door, a jagged bolt of lightning illuminated the room. The air was thick with the scent of old paper and the impending storm, chilling the men to their very bones.



In the center of the room stood Max, looking strikingly out of place with his bleached blonde hair and oversized Gen-Z streetwear. He leaned casually against a desk, a cool smirk playing on his lips as he watched the two men enter.



Max pointed a sleek, modern weapon at the newcomers, his effortless personality contrasting sharply with the gothic gloom of the room. He demanded the secret reports with a voice that was calm, detached, and dangerously sharp.



Ausler didn't flinch, instead complaining loudly about a dangerous balcony he claimed was just outside the window. He painted a vivid picture of previous intruders sneaking in through the ledge to distract his young captor.



A sudden, sharp rapping echoed from the door, causing Max to jump in surprise. Ausler smiled grimly, informing the intruder that the police had arrived to check on him, just as he had previously arranged.



Panicked by the knocking and a blinding flash of lightning, Max leaped backward through the open window toward the imaginary balcony. He vanished into the howling wind and darkness, leaving Ausler and Fowler alone in the silent, stormy room.