

That Face at the Window!

Extraordinary Discovery That Young Mrs. Grossman's Midnight Visitor Is an Ape That Has Been Trained to Be a "Second-Story" Burglar

"A visage human, yet inhuman; little deep-set eyes, shining with phosphorescence; long hairy arms and clutching talons of hands."

YOUNG Mrs. Frederick Grossman was sound asleep in her bed. Beside her lay her husband. The bedroom was at the front of their pleasant little Detroit flat and the bottom of the bed itself was close to the wall. Beside it was a window opening into the street four stories below.

An hour before, Mrs. Grossman had pushed this window up six inches from the bottom to admit air. This was her nightly duty after putting out the lights, because she slept on the outer side, close to that window. After she had raised it she had stood there for a little time, looking at the tall tree close to the house. Its naked branches were beginning to show promise of buds. She had thought how pretty the tree would be when Spring's touch had clothed it with leaves.

Then she had tiptoed over and crept under the covers, quietly, so as not to awaken her husband, who was already asleep.

And soon she was asleep, too.

Then she began to dream. It seemed to her that she saw the room just as it was when she had gone to bed, with the faint light from the street glimmering through the window. But—the window sash was arising slowly and silently!

With the helplessness of nightmare she watched it slide up, slowly inch by inch. Then out of the semi-darkness beyond she saw appear a great ugly hand, hairy and knotted. It was followed by a long, sinewy, hairy arm.

The hand reached cautiously up and raised the drawn blind!

Mrs. Grossman struggled against the depressing of the nightmare terror.

Now the sash had reached the top. She saw, apparently floating in the air behind where it had been, a pair of huge, staring eyes, in the depth of which phosphorescences burned as they do in those of a dog. At first all she could make out was the eyes. Then gradually a face became visible. It was human and yet not human; larger than a man's and evil, cunning and brutal.

Another hairy hand grasped the sill and the leering face drew closer and closer to her. Its mouth twitched and she smelt the fumes of liquor.

With a tremendous effort Mrs. Grossman broke the spell that held her and sat bolt upright. But the thing that she had held in what she had thought her nightmare did not disappear, as such dread visions do when the sleeper awakens!

It was still there!

And its hideous face was not far from her and a dark body crouched upon the window sill with the long arms stretching out to her and the talons bent to seize her.

The nightmare had merged into reality—and such a reality!

Mrs. Grossman fell back, fainting. As her body dropped the right arm struck her husband across the face. He awakened. His eyes caught at once the shape of the thing now almost in the room. He saw the face with the malignant shining eyes peering at him over the body of his wife. Grossman jerked his pistol from beneath his pillow and fired straight at it.

There came an inhuman shriek. But when, an instant later, his eyes had cleared from the flash of the pistol, the Thing was gone!

Grossman jumped to the floor. One quick glance showed him blood spattered upon the bed. He saw that the window was raised to the top, and as he leaned out his hand rested upon another red, warm splotch. He scanned the tree. There was nothing in it. He looked down at the street. It was deserted.

Grossman turned up the lights, telephoned to the police and strove to restore Mrs. Grossman to consciousness.

As he worked he heard far below a loud knocking as of fists upon a door.

Then a scream.

Then silence.

The basement apartment of the house in which the Grossmans live is occupied by Joseph Swift, his wife and two children. All had been sound asleep for several hours. Suddenly Mrs. Swift shook her husband by the shoulder.

"Listen," she said. "There's somebody knocking!"

Swift raised up. He heard a soft, timid rapping at the door which led into the hallway. This rapping changed quickly to a rapid, loud, insistent beating.

"Something's the matter! Somebody wants to wake us up! Maybe the place is on fire," gasped Mrs. Swift.

The two children, awakened, ran in from their room and clung to the skirts of their mother's nightgown.

"Another hairy hand grasped the sill. Mrs. Grossman broke the nightmare spell that held her and sat bolt upright in her bed."



Mr. Frederick Grossman.

Young Mrs. Grossman, Who Had Such a Distressing Experience with the Ape.

answered Swift, grimly. "But whatever it was, don't be afraid. I won't let it hurt you."

He was rummaging for his revolver when five policemen who had answered the call from the Grossman apartment came marching through the door. By the aid of flashlights through the Grossman window they had seen spots of blood upon a branch of the tree near the window. They had followed these spots from the bottom of the tree trunk along a cement walk that led to the basement entrance to the apartment house.

"It dodged into the kitchen," said Swift. The police took away the barricade and cautiously opened the door. From inside came a moaning and a frightened chattering. Revolvers ready, one officer flashed his light around the little room.

He shut the door with a bang.

"It ain't a man!" he shouted. "Get a big crate."

A heavy crate was found and pushed against the door. One of the policemen climbed on top of it and stood in front of it. The others, clustered behind, saw a dark figure rise upon its feet and hands and shamble toward him. As the figure approached the officer retreated, finally leaping upon the back of the crate and back into the living room. As he did so the Thing which followed him passed into the crate and sank down, whimpering and nursing a bleeding breast.

It was a great ape!

The animal was weak from loss of blood and made no resistance when the crate was fastened and carried away to police headquarters.

Astonishingly similar to Edgar Allan Poe's world known and gruesome story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," had been its exploits—lacking only the tragic end of that classic.

Even while the police were searching for its owner, J. K. Seeman, manager of an oil concern, made report that a large ape belonging to him had escaped the night before. He came to the police station and identified the animal there as his own. Mr. Seeman told the police that he had bought the monkey a few days previously from a man whose name he could not recall. The creature had attracted him by its unusual intelligence.

It had been docile and exceptionally well behaved, he said, until the previous night. Then it had been sitting at a table on which was a decanted filled with whiskey. While its master's back was turned the ape had poured out from this decanter a glass full of liquor and Seeman, as he turned, saw it drink this down. A window was open behind it and it had leaped through it, apparently to escape an expected punishment. He had called and searched for it in vain.

Mr. Seeman's home is a good mile from the Grossmans' apartment. The ape had made its way unseen through the streets between. It is probable that when Mrs. Grossman stood at the window looking out at the tree that it was even then crouching on the opposite side of the street and was attracted by the white of her robe. It might even have been in the tree at the time. Certainly something drew it up to that particular window.

If the ape had succeeded in entering the Grossman apartment without having awakened the occupants, what would have been the result? Would Poe's story of the Rue Morgue have then found its parallel in fact and the bodies of husband and wife been discovered next morning torn and mutilated, as were the women in that dark romance?

What was its purpose in entering that flat?

The Detroit police began to be aware of some very unusual elements in the matter. If the animal had spied young Mrs. Grossman when she opened the window, then it showed after that a cunning or a training before it climbed up. Furthermore, the opening of the window had been silent and guarded. Again, the fact that it had sought shelter not in some alley or hole, but had knocked at the door of another apartment, seemed to the police highly significant.

All this implied training—but training for what? Well, for instance, an ape by

reason of its agility and habits could scale walls and other places that a man could not. It would make a perfect "second-story" burglar.

With that thought in mind detectives made an examination of window sills, bureau drawers and jewel cases in houses and apartments recently robbed. To their disappointment they showed no prints that could be compared to the finger prints of the ape.

But under the bedroom window of one apartment that had been looted a few weeks ago they found an opal ring, part of the jewelry which had vanished on the night the place was entered. It was thinly covered with earth which only recently had been mud. Its position showed that it had been thrown from the window.

"Just where we would expect to find it if the animal's master, waiting below, had failed to get it, as, with a shower of other articles, it had been thrown down by the monkey," said the detectives.

The police then decided to test out their theory. They gave the animal a drink of liquor and placed it alone in a room containing a set of bedroom furniture. Watch through holes they saw the ape go through the dressing-stand. It wasted no time on the larger drawers, which usually are filled with wearing apparel, but opened quietly the smaller drawers at the top.

Anything metallic caught its attention. It fumbled with all boxes and cases, but only when there was no spring catch did it succeed in opening them. Then, with a few small articles in each hand, it crept to the open window and tossed these out without even looking to see where they landed. After that it slipped back and got more, repeating the action. After several trips it was just about to slip out of the window itself when the detectives rushed in and overpowered it.



A Drawing by Aubrey Beardsley Illustrating Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue" Which Mrs. Grossman's Experiences So Closely Paralleled.

The tests were made again and again. Only after the animal had been given a drink of liquor did it go through with the burglary. At other times it was exceptionally timid.

Whiskey made of it a real monkey Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde!

It was now plain that the beast had received a careful education in crime. It had been taught to like liquor and had been given drink both before going out to rob and, no doubt, after the robbery, as a reward!

Death was at first suggested by the Police Department, but finally, because of his new master's standing in the community, they allowed the monkey to be released in his custody. But it is stipulated that Mr. Seeman must guard against having the ape stolen, and most of all by the unidentified man from whom it was purchased. Also he must never sell or give away the monkey without the consent of the Police Department.

And he must never allow it even to smell liquor!