

*[In light of recent events, it is time to look again at the case of the **Murders in Rue Morgue**. The following document is the final, translated confession of Monsieur Floue-Visage and was obtained with the aid of the enigmatic amateur detective Auguste Dupin: the man widely credited with the beast's apprehension. The deposition – unsealed after more than a century locked away in the vaults of the Parisian Law Courts – forces us to ask the question: was Monsieur Floue-Visage truly the cold-blooded murderer that history and Darwinian theorists paint him to be, or merely a victim of circumstance and his own primeval instincts?]*

## **MOORINGS MADAME MURDERED & MASHED BY MAD MONKEY!**

A most distressing headline to be sure, and one that does not reflect my normally placid and amenable nature.

Furthermore – anthropologically speaking – I am *not* a monkey.

This whole sorry tale began not a day ago, as a direct consequence of my belief that, even in captivity, one must endeavour to look one's best. Indeed, whilst observing the denizens of Paris from my enforced home behind the first mate's cabin, it occurred to me that the men of this fair town have adopted a less than hirsute appearance as their *mode du jour*. Well, I have always believed that when in Rome ... so taking my master's razor this night, I began the task of relieving myself of not more than one half inch of facial fur. However, before I had the chance to put razor to chin, my aforementioned master returned from the ship's galley and, to his extreme consternation, found myself poised before the mirror with his razor in hand. As you can imagine, there is no greater crime than to take a man's razor

without his express permission, so fearing a beating (which have become increasingly common of late), I took advantage of the natural agility inherent in my species to effect a hasty and wise retreat through the cabin's single portal.

And so it was on this fateful night, I found myself armed and free in a strange city. Armed, you say? Why did you not simply drop the razor? As I have explained, I was in a town unknown to me, and fearing that some may not be predisposed towards a large primate roaming the streets, I deemed it best to carry the blade so that I could wave it in a threatening fashion to see off any young ruffian who saw fit to accost me.

And thus I wandered, until an uncommon thundering within my abdomen took me on a path seeking sustenance. Two minutes past and driven near mad with hunger, my nose wrinkled to the scent of baking. Not two storeys above, from an open window, did I detect the unmistakable odour of freshly-prepared fruit bread. Oh, joy and heaven! My heart leapt – and my ravenous body followed.

And here, you cry! Still you did not drop the razor! And yes, this is true; an error of judgement that will haunt me to my final day.

The baking was most welcome, but I feared that I would not be greeted so; the razor was my only means of presenting a threatening defence, so I placed it carefully between the fingers of my lower right appendage (for evolution has blessed my species with hands at both ends) and then taking pillar, lamppost and sill to the focus of my desire, I stole into the premises – which I found to be tastefully decorated, considering its proximity to the moorings – and made my way to the kitchen.

And it was at this moment that Lady Fortune proved herself to be a most harsh and fickle mistress! For it is here that I encountered the mademoiselle whose fair hand had

prepared the succulent titbits that were to prove to be my undoing. On seeing my person standing in – or rather swinging from – the doorway, she put capacious lungs to good use and emitted a scream that would have woken Luciferous himself. I attempted to calm the woman through a customary, time-honoured gesture of friendship; alas, the handful of faeces that struck to the right of her small and delicately upturned nose did little but heighten her distress still further. I saw no other course of action; the woman was irretrievably hysterical, and so I made my way across the room and struck her soundly across the cheek. Horrors! The force of my blow rotated her head some three hundred and sixty degrees and with a snap and a pop I found myself looking – again – into her somewhat surprised eyes. Afraid that the blood running from her nose and mouth would matte my fur, I dropped the grisly cadaver to the floor and then consumed a small piece of the fruit bread whilst I considered my position.

The room was devoid of hiding places save the chimney outlet, and so I made the first of three attempts to force the body into the opening. It soon became apparent that the task was made all the more difficult by the woman's unusual height and narrowness of girth; for all my strength I could not force her high enough to conceal her from sight, nor could I purchase her within the chimney in such a way that she would not fall onto the hearth the moment I released my grip. It was in my most desperate hour that a solution to my predicament presented itself. I took the good lady and broke her back across my knee, thus allowing me to fold her neatly in two – halving her height whilst doubling her width. My third attempt to secure her within the chimney would have succeeded if not for the sudden and unwelcome appearance of the mother, who demonstrated a capacity for screaming that surpassed that of her daughter. Oh, Gods!

A hop, a jump, a handspring, and I was moving with the velocity of a musket ball. Now it is vitally important that you understand – I had no desire to cause the good lady any permanent injury; it was my wish to simply stun her, allowing me time to escape the premises with the remains of the fruit bread. But yet again, Madame Fortune was to prove a harsh and unyielding harpy. As my left foot struck her squarely on the jaw, she reeled as had been my desire. My right foot – the one which, you will remember, carried the razor blade – landed below her chin, opening her throat to expose the column of bone beneath. Horror of horrors! The machinations of Mistress Fate had become unbearable! Was my damnable luck ever to change this cursed night?

Madame's eyes bulged from their sockets in a way most repugnant, and she gripped her throat in a notably brave attempt to stem the flow of her life's blood. I decided that the razor blade had brought me nothing but misfortune, so discarded it as I bounded forward in an attempt to save the poor woman from staggering back through the open window. Alas! The events of this night had taken their toll on my already delicate nerves, manifesting in a loss of the sure-footedness that is notable amongst my kind. I tripped and upset a number of items of furniture before barrelling headlong into the unfortunate woman, thereby hastening her exit, as well as my own, from the upstairs window.

I still possessed the faculties which allowed me to land with some semblance of grace, though I fear that I would have inflicted great injury upon myself if I were still in possession of the razor blade. Madam herself was not so fortunate: she met the pavement with some considerable force, and in conjunction with the weight of myself landing on top of her, did sunder with no more resistance than an overripe melon.

And it is here that my story strays into realms that you, dear sir, may find hard to believe. As I looked upon the broken form of Madame, I found myself taken by a primeval blood-lust. An ancient, uncontrollable urge of ancestry, if you will. A red mist fell before my eyes, and before I realised the implications of my actions, I found myself pounding my fists mercilessly upon the poor woman's skull! Within short order I had reduced her head to a mass of pulped, bloody flesh and splintered bone. And still I continued! Gods have mercy! I carried on! Pounding and pounding, grinding her to such a state that she was barely recognisable as human! I sought rocks and stones and used them as crude implements of destruction, inflicting further injury upon the crimson wreckage at my feet; until spent and covered in a thick layer of sickly-smelling gore, I pressed one foot down upon her remains and roared like some wild beast as I pounded my blood-stained fists upon my breast.

And it was then that I heard my master's voice! Gods of mercy! I was all but undone! And yet, I still found the wits to steal away into the night and seek a hiding place from where I would find temporary respite from my inevitable fate!

This document is the true deposition of

Monsieur Floue-Visage  
(esq.)

Monsieur Floue-Visage (esq.)

And was obtained without coercion or duress.