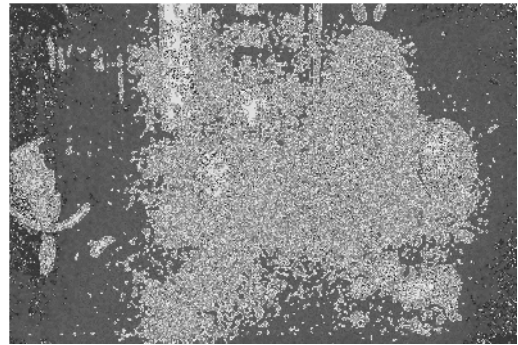


## Chapter 6: **Strange Beasts from the Beyond** **Story of Franek Kluski**

- Nandor Fodor –

THE FAMILIARS against whom Moses warred, who loom uncannily in witch trials and old tales of mystery, have been rehabilitated, and tamed, under the name of "controls" by Psychological Research. The ghost world, however, does not always respect the discipline of science, and occasionally investigators are visited by terrors of the dark which would chill the spine of the most hardened adventurer.

There are instances on record in which the visitants, who appear to be born into temporary existence through the agency of a materializing medium, were not human beings. They were the "beasts that perish"; animals whose presence inspired fear. To Franek Kluski, a Pole, whom the late Dr. Gustave Geley, Director of the Institut Metapsychique International of Paris, called the King of Mediums, we owe the most incredible experiences of this kind which scientists ever had the good fortune to share.

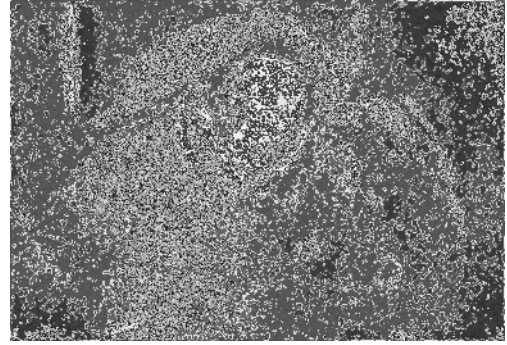


The phantom apeman of Kluski photographed.

For the consideration of those who would accuse them of temporary insanity there are flashlight photographs, which demand an explanation. The best of these pictures (which is reproduced in Dr. Geley's classical *Clairvoyance and Materialization*(1) was taken in 1919 in Warsaw. A bird, described by Prof. Pawlowski, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, as a hawk or buzzard, was heard to stretch its wings with a whirring sound, accompanied by blasts of wind. It "flew round, beating its wings against the walls and the ceiling; when it finally settled on the shoulder of the medium it was photographed with a magnesium flash, as the camera was accidentally focussed on the medium before, and was ready".

(1) Pp. 266-267.

There was no possibility, we are assured, of introducing that bird surreptitiously into the room or hiding it after the manifestation. It appeared and vanished in the way of human phantoms.



Phantom bird photographed by Flashlight on Kluski's shoulder.

There was another, more dangerous customer in charge of a completely luminous old man. Prof. Pawlowski describes the man (an Afghan native who called himself Hirkill) as a column of light. He illuminated all the sitters and even the more distant objects of the room. The light appeared to be focussed in his hands and in the region of his heart.

"Accompanying him always was a rapacious beast, the size of a very big dog, of a tawny colour, with slender neck, mouth full of large teeth, eyes which glowed in the darkness like a cat's, and which reminded the company of a maneless lion. It was occasionally wild in its behaviour, especially if persons were afraid of it, and neither the human nor the animal apparition was much welcomed by the sitters. The lion, as we may call him, liked to lick the sitters with a moist and prickly tongue, and gave forth the odour of a great feline, and even after the séance the sitters, and especially the medium, were impregnated with this acrid scent as if they had made a long stay in a menagerie among wild beasts."(1)

(1) "Psychic Science", April, 1926.

The acrid scent was very pronounced with the weirdest of all these apparitions - the Pithecanthropus, which showed itself several times. "One of us," writes Dr. Geley, "at the séance of November 20th, 1920, felt its large shaggy head press hard on his right shoulder and against his cheek. The head was covered with thick, coarse hair; a smell came from it like that of a deer or a wet dog. When one of the sitters put out his hand the Pithecanthropus seized it and licked it slowly three times. Its tongue was large and soft. At other times we all felt our legs touched by what seemed to be frolicsome dogs."

According to Col. Norbert Ocholowicz, "this ape was of such great strength that it could easily move a heavy book-case, filled with books, through the room, carry a sofa over the heads of the sitters, or lift the heaviest persons with their chairs into the air to the height of a tall person. Though the ape's behaviour sometimes caused fear, and indicated a low level of intelligence. it was never malignant. Indeed, it often expressed goodwill, gentleness and readiness to obey... It was seen for the last time at the séance of December 26th, 1922, in

the same form as in 1919, and making the same sounds of smacking and scratching."

Of another small animal, reminding the sitters of a weasel, the following description was quoted by Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, widow of the founder of the British College of Psychic Science:

"It used to run quickly over the table on to the sitters' shoulders, stopping every moment and smelling their hands and faces with a small, cold nose; sometimes, as if frightened, it jumped from the table and rambled through the whole room, turning over small objects, and shuffling papers lying on the table and writing-desk. It appeared at six or seven seances, and was last seen in June, 1923."

Kluski's animals are unique in species but not as phenomena. Two other Polish contemporaries, Burgik and Guzyk, demonstrated similar apparitions. Prof. Richet, the world-famous physiologist of the Sorbonne, writes of a séance with Burgik(1):

"My trouser leg was strongly pulled, and a strange ill-defined form that seemed to have paws like those of a dog or small monkey climbed on my knee. I could feel its weight very light, and something like the muzzle of an animal (?) touched my cheek. It was moist and made a grunting noise like a thirsty dog."

(1) "Thirty Years of Psychical Research", London., 1923.

Other investigators with other mediums have also testified to such amazing adventures. Gambier Bolton, Fellow of the Zoological Society, writes in his *Ghosts in Solid Form*:

"Materialization of both beasts and birds sometimes appeared during our experiments, the largest and most startling being that of a seal which appeared on one occasion when Field-Marshal Lord Wolseley was present.

"We suddenly heard a remarkable voice calling out some absurd remarks in loud tones, finishing off with a shrill whistle.

"'Why, that must be our old parrot,' said the lady of the house. 'He lived in this room for many years, and would constantly repeat those very words.'

"A small wild animal from India which had been dead for three years or more, and had never been seen or heard of by the

Sensitive, and was known only to one sitter, suddenly ran out from the spot where the Sensitive was sitting, breathing heavily and in a state of deep trance, the little creature uttering exactly the same cry which it had always used as a sign of pleasure during its earth life. It had shown itself altogether on or about ten different occasions, staying in the room for more than two minutes at a time and then disappearing as suddenly as it had arrived upon the scene, but on this occasion the lady who had owned it during its life called it to her by its pet name, and then it proceeded to climb slowly up on to her lap. Resting there quietly for about half a minute it then attempted to return, but in doing so caught one of its legs in the lace with which the lady's skirt was covered. It struggled violently, and at last got itself free, but not until it had torn the lace for nearly three inches. At the conclusion of the experiment a medical man reported that there were five green-coloured hairs hanging in the torn lace, which had evidently become detached from the little animal's legs during its struggles. The lady at once identified the colour and the texture of the hairs, and this was confirmed by the other sitter-himself a naturalist - who had frequently seen and handled the animal during its earth life. The five hairs were carefully collected, placed in tissue paper, and then shut up in a light-tight and damp-proof box. After a few days they commenced to dwindle in size, and finally disappeared entirely."

To return to our Poles, Burgik and Guzyk had questionable reputations. They were professional mediums. Kluski, on the other hand, is a distinguished professional man, a poet and writer. His real name has not been made known. In him powers of "physical" mediumship co-exist with remarkable intellectual psychic gifts; which is a rare combination. Strange presentiments, visions of distant events, and the facility of seeing phantoms, were his endowment from early childhood, but his "physical" powers were only accidentally discovered in a sitting with Guzyk in 1919. Their manifestation annoyed him, but his curiosity was aroused and he consented to experiments. Like Mme. d'Esperance, he preserved consciousness during the phenomena of materialization, and could give invaluable subjective accounts of his own sensations to men of science, whom he was always very willing to oblige. There was no facet in his strange gifts which did not lend itself to the fullest and most rigorous scientific examination. An instance of his luminous phenomena, as recorded by Dr. Geley, is the following:

"A large luminous trail like a nebulous comet, and about half a metre long, formed behind Kluski about a metre above his head and seemingly about the same distance behind him. This nebula was constituted of tiny bright grains broadcast, among which there were some specially brilliant points. This nebula oscillated quickly from right to left and left to right, and rose and fell. It lasted

about a minute, disappeared and reappeared several times. After the sitting I found that the medium, who had been naked for an hour, was very warm. He was perspiring on the back and at the armpits; he was much exhausted."

At the Institut Metapsychique of Paris there are eloquent proofs of Kluski's supernormal powers on view. They include plaster casts of human hands with fingers bent and joined. The mould is fine and delicate, and the texture of the skin perfect. But whose skin? That question cannot be answered. For the hands which alternately dipped into buckets filled with hot paraffin and cold water ended at the wrist. They had no visible owner. When the paraffin shell thickened the hand faded away, vanished, dematerialized and left a perfect glove behind. The operation only took three minutes. Normally, it would take twenty minutes to produce a paraffin glove. But the hand, withdrawing from it, would burst the shell at the joints if the fingers were bent, and at the wrist. The Kluski gloves defied normal human production. They showed blue spots, traces of cholesterol which Dr. Geley, unknown to all, mixed with the paraffin to have further evidence that the gloves were made on the spot.

The excellence of Kluski's phenomena is due to his economy in the use of his mysterious power. Not being a professional medium, he only sits for those he cares for, and at comparatively long intervals. Thus he easily recuperates from the drain on his vital forces. When, after an interval of rest, he agrees to sit again, he knows that his pent-up psychic energies will produce startling manifestations.