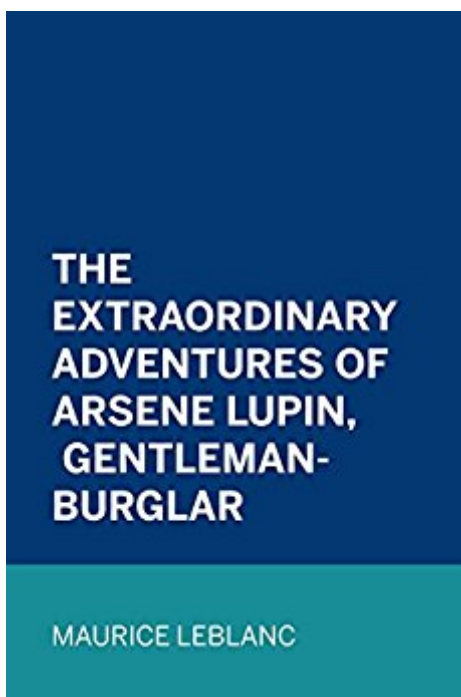


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The Extraordinary Adventures Of Arsene Lupin, Gentleman-Burglar



Synopsis

Maurice Leblanc was a 20th century French writer best known for his short stories.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Published in 1907, Maurice leBlanc's book introduces Arsene Lupin, the gentleman burglar: thief of exquisite country houses; master of disguise; friend to the royal and rich; a man of impeccable taste who will only snatch items of 'artistic value', and from those who can afford it. His wit, style and daring make him the unquestioned hero of the book, easily out-dazzling his two detective rivals, the plodding Ganimard and the brilliant logician Herlock Sholmes. Safes, secret passages, jewels, high windows, impenetrable castles, 'impossible' prison breakouts, sensational courtroom dramas, romances on luxury cruises, nocturnal murders, chases through forests and empty streets - so many crimes and incidents and personae proliferate, Lupin seems to become omnipotent. Although these nine loosely-connected mysteries are pure fantasy, their detail and context open out the Belle Epoque milieu in which they are set. One of the major themes is that the 'respectable' bourgeoisie Lupin robs are often as dishonest and even criminal as he, indulging in the illegal speculations/swindles rife at the time or organising elaborate charades to conceal financial decline. The invidiousness of social inequality is a factor in Lupin's psychological make-up. The antiquity of

French history and national character is in conflict with the disruption of modernity (telephones, photographs, automobiles etc.). The vulnerability of the bourgeoisie contrasts with a democratising popular press avidly chronicling Lupin's every move, making him 'our national thief'. I don't want to get too solemn, such is the breezy pleasure of this book, but I believe 'Lupin' is more than simply an engaging riposte to Sherlock Holmes; Lupin is more than someone who pilfers from the rich.

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