



The Blonde Lady

Maurice Leblanc

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This early work by Maurice Leblanc was originally published in 1908 and we are now republishing it with a brand new introductory biography. "The Blonde Lady" sees Arsène Lupin (the gentleman-burglar) once again meeting his enemy, the English detective Herlock Sholmes. These two great intellects are bound in opposite directions, where one chooses to abide to the law and the other uses his power and wits to crime. Maurice Marie Émile Leblanc was born on 11th November 1864 in Rouen, Normandy, France. He was a novelist and writer of short stories, known primarily as the creator of the fictional gentleman thief and detective, Arsène Lupin. Leblanc spent his early education at the Lycée Pierre Corneille (in Rouen), and after studying in several countries and dropping out of law school, he settled in Paris and began to write fiction. From the start, Leblanc wrote both short crime stories and longer novels – and his lengthier tomes, heavily influenced by writers such as Flaubert and Maupassant, were critically admired, but met with little commercial success. Leblanc was largely considered little more than a writer of short stories for various French periodicals when the first Arsène Lupin story appeared. It was published as a series of stories in the magazine 'Je Sais Trout', starting on 15th July, 1905. Clearly created at editorial request under the influence of, and in reaction to, the wildly successful Sherlock Holmes stories, the roguish and glamorous Lupin was a surprise success and Leblanc's fame and fortune beckoned. In total, Leblanc went on to write twenty-one Lupin novels or collections of short stories. On this success, he later moved to a beautiful country-side retreat in Étreat (in the Haute-Normandie region in north-western France), which today is a museum dedicated to the Arsène Lupin books. Leblanc was awarded the Légion d'Honneur - the highest decoration in France - for his services to literature. He died in Perpignan (the capital of the Pyrénées-Orientales department in southern France) on 6th November 1941, at the age of seventy-six. He is buried in the prestigious Montparnasse Cemetery of Paris.



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