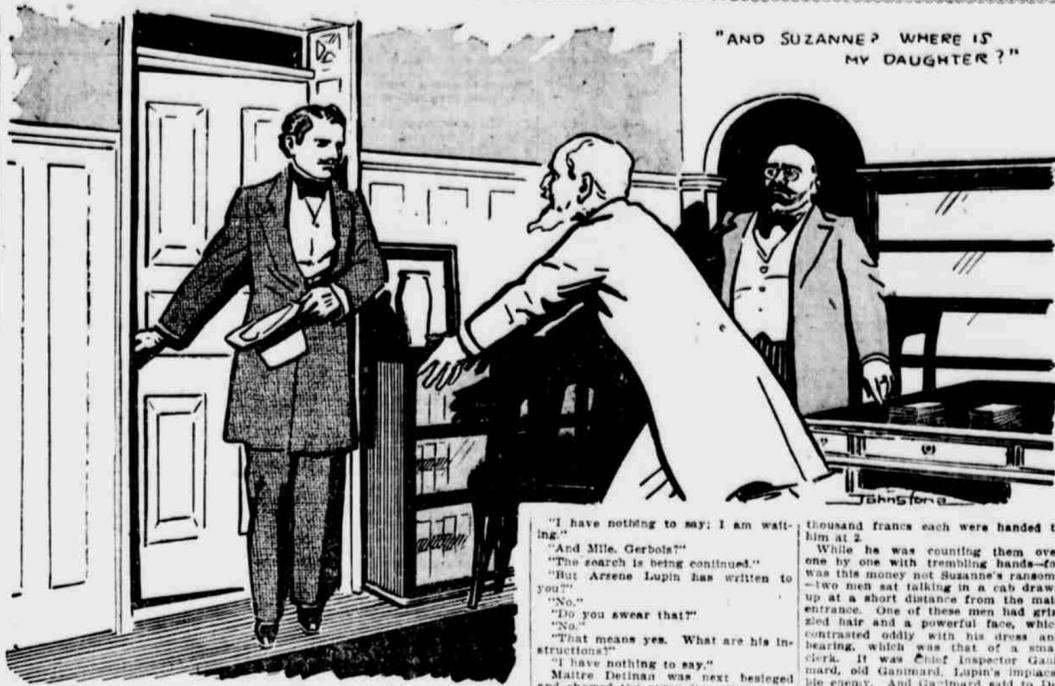


# A New ARSENE LUPIN Story

## The Blonde Lady By Maurice Le Blanc

The Romance of a Duel of Wits Between France's "Thief Genius" and England's Greatest Detective—A "Woman of Mystery's" Odd Love Story and the Puzzle of a Million Franc Fortune That Vanished.

If You Had Bought a Second-Hand Desk and Had Carelessly Tossed a Lottery Ticket Into It, and if, After the Desk Was Stolen, You Found That the Ticket Was Worth \$200,000—What Would You Do?



Copyright, 1910, by Doubleday, Page & Co. SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING INSTALLMENT. Prof. Gerbois buys a second-hand writing desk as a birthday present for his daughter, Suzanne. A lottery ticket is found in the desk. The ticket is worth \$200,000. Gerbois is a millionaire. He is a man of mystery. He is a man of genius. He is a man of power. He is a man of influence. He is a man of fame. He is a man of honor. He is a man of respect. He is a man of admiration. He is a man of love. He is a man of life. He is a man of death. He is a man of everything.

CHAPTER I. (Continued.) Number 513, Series 23. THE gallery was delighted. But were made, some people being certain that Lupin would bring M. Gerbois to terms, others that he would not go beyond threats. And the people felt a sort of apprehension; for the advances were unevenly matched, the one being so fierce in his attacks, while the other was as frightened as a hunted deer.

On Friday there was a rush for the Echo de France, and the agony column on the fifth page was scanned with feverish eyes. There was not a line addressed to "M. Ars. Lupin." M. Gerbois had replied to Arsene Lupin's demands with silence. It was a declaration of war.

That evening the papers contained the news that Mlle. Gerbois had been kidnapped.

The most delightful factor in what I may call the Arsene Lupin entertainment is the eminently ludicrous part played by the police. Everything passes outside their knowledge. Lupin speaks, writes, warns, orders, threatens, carries out his plans, as though there were no police, no detectives, no magistrates, no impediment of any kind in existence. They seem of no account to him whatever. No obstacle enters into his calculations.

And yet the police struggle to do their best. The moment the name of Arsene Lupin is mentioned, the whole force, from top to bottom, takes fire, boils and foams with rage. He is the enemy, the enemy who mocks you, provokes you, despises you, or even worse, ignores you. And what can one do against an enemy like that?

According to the evidence of the servant, Suzanne went out at twenty minutes to go. At five minutes past ten, her father, on leaving the college, failed to see her on the pavement where she usually waited for him. Everything, therefore, must have taken place in the course of the short twenty minutes walk which brought Suzanne from her door to the college, or at least quite close to the college.

Two neighbors declared that they had passed her about three hundred yards from the house. A lady had seen a girl walking along the avenue whose description corresponded with Suzanne's. After that, all was blank. Inquiries were made on every side. The officials at the railway stations and the customs barriers were questioned. They had seen nothing on that day which could relate to the kidnapping of a young girl. However, a grocer at Villard-Avray stated that he had supplied a closed motor car coming from Paris with petrol.

There was a chauffeur on the front seat and a lady with fair hair—exceedingly fair hair, the witness said—inside. The car returned from Versailles an hour later. A block in the traffic compelled the chauffeur to draw the grocer, who was able to perceive that there was another lady seated beside the blonde lady whom he had seen first. This second lady was wrapped up in veils and shawls. No doubt it was Suzanne Gerbois.

Consequently, the abduction must have taken place in broad daylight on a busy road in the heart of the town. How? At what spot? Not a cry had been heard, not a suspicious movement observed.

The grocer described the car, a Peugeot Dmouline, 24 horse-power, with a dark blue body. Inquiries were made on chance of Mme. Bob-Walshour, the manageress of the Grand Garage, who used to make a specialty of motor-car elopements. She had, in fact, on Friday morning hired out a fair-haired lady whom she had not seen since.

"But the driver?" "He was a man called Ernest, whom I engaged the day before on the strength of his excellent testimonials."

"Is he here?" "No, he brought back the car and has not been here since."

"Can't we get hold of him?" "Certainly, by applying to the people who recommended him. I will give you the names."

The police called on these persons. None of them knew the man called Ernest. An every trail which they followed led only to greater darkness and denser fog.

M. Gerbois was not the man to maintain a contest which had opened in a disastrous fashion for him. Inconceivable at the disappearance of his daughter and pricked with remorse, he capitulated. An advertisement which appeared in the Echo de France and aroused general comment proclaimed his absolute and unreserved surrender. It was a complete defeat; the war was over in four times twenty-four hours.

Two days later M. Gerbois walked across the courtyard of the Credit Foncier. He was shown in to the Governor and handed him No. 513, series 23. The Governor gave a start. "Oh, so you have it? Did they give it back to you?" "I found it and here it is," replied M. Gerbois.

M. Gerbois did not speak, nor the Governor either. But there are certain secrets which leak out without any indiscretion having been committed, and the public suddenly learned that Arsene Lupin had had the luck to send No. 513, series 23, back to M. Gerbois. The news was received with a sort of stupefied admiration. What a bold player he must be, to find so important a trump as the precious ticket upon the table! True, he had parted with it willingly, in exchange for a card which equalized the chances. But suppose the girl escaped? Suppose they succeeded in recapturing her and redoubled their efforts. With Arsene Lupin disarmed and despoiled by himself, caught in his own toils, retaining not a single sou of the coveted million? The laugh would be on the other side. But the question was to find Suzanne. And they did not find her, nor did she escape.

"Very well," people said, "that's settled. Arsene has won the first game. But the difficult part is still to come! Mlle. Gerbois is in his hands, we admit, and he will not hand her over without the five hundred thousand francs. But how and where is the exchange to take place? For the exchange to take place, there must be a meeting, and what is to prevent M. Gerbois from informing the police and thus both recovering his daughter and keeping the money?"

The professor was interviewed. Greatly cast down, longing only for silence, he remained impenetrable.

"I have nothing to say; I am waiting." "And Mlle. Gerbois?" "The search is being continued." "But Arsene Lupin has written to you?" "No." "Do you swear that?" "No." "That means yes. What are his instructions?" "I have nothing to say." Maitre Detinan was next beset and showed the same discretion.

"M. Lupin is my client," he replied, "with an affectation of gravity. You will understand that I am bound to maintain the most absolute reserve."

All these mysteries annoyed the gallery. "Lots were evidently hatching in the dark. Arsene Lupin was arranging and tightening the meshes of his nets, while the police were keeping up a watch by day and night round M. Gerbois. And people discussed the only three possible endings: arrest, triumph, or grotesque and pitiful failure."

But, as it happened, public curiosity was destined to be only partially satisfied, and the exact truth is revealed for the first time in these pages. On Thursday, the 12th of March, M. Gerbois received the notice from the Credit Foncier in an ordinary envelope. At 1 o'clock on Friday he took the train for Paris. A thousand notes of a thousand francs each were handed to him at 2.

While he was counting them over by one with trembling hands—for this was money not Suzanne's ransom!—two men sat talking in a cab drawn up at a short distance from the main entrance. One of these men had grizzled hair and a powerful face, which contrasted oddly with his dress and bearing, which was that of a small clerk. It was Chief Inspector Ganimard, old Ganimard, Lupin's implacable enemy. And Ganimard said to Detective-Sergeant Polentant: "The old chap won't be long. . . . We shall see him come out in five minutes. Is everything ready?" "Quite."

"How many are we?" "Eight, including two on bicycles. It's enough, but not too many. That Gerbois must not escape us at any price. . . . If he does, we're diddled; he'll meet Lupin at the place they have agreed upon; he'll swap the young lady for the half-million, and the trick's done."

"But why on earth won't the old chap act with us? It would be so simple; by giving us a hand in the game he could keep the whole million." "Yes, but he's afraid. If he tries to jockey the other he won't get his daughter back."

"What other?"

"Other of his inventions!" "He darted forward and other men at the same time as himself ran round the Madeleine. But he burst out laughing. The motor car had broken down at the beginning of the Boulevard Malesherbes and M. Gerbois was getting out.

"Quick, Polentant. . . . the driver perhaps it's the man called Ernest."

Polentant tackled the chauffeur. It was a man called Gaston, one of the motor-car company's drivers; a gentleman had engaged him ten minutes before and had told him to wait by the newspaper kiosk, "with steam up," until another gentleman came.

"And what address did the second fare give?" asked Polentant. "He gave me no address. . . . Boulevard Malesherbes. . . . Avenue de Messine. . . . give you an extra tip!"

During this time, however, M. Gerbois, without losing a minute, had sprung into the first passing cab. "Drive to the Concordia taxi station!"

"The professor," M. Gerbois told the Place du Palais-Royal, hurried into another cab and drove to the Place de la Bourse. Here he went by tube again before and had told him to wait by the newspaper kiosk, "with steam up," until another gentleman came.

"No. 25 Rue Clapeyron is separated from the Boulevard des Batignolles by the house at the corner. The professor went up to the first floor and rang. A gentleman opened the door.

"Does Maitre Detinan live here?" "Yes, Maitre Detinan. M. Gerbois, I presume?" "That's it."

"I was expecting you. Pray come in."

When M. Gerbois entered the law-

yer's office, the clock was striking 3 and he at once said: "This is the time he appointed. Isn't he here?" "Not yet."

M. Gerbois sat down, wiped his forehead, looked at his watch as though he did not know the time and continued anxiously: "Will he come?"

"The lawyer replied: 'You are asking me something, sir, which I myself am most curious to know. I have never felt so impatient in my life. In any case, if he comes, he is taking a big risk; for the house has been closely watched for the past fortnight. . . . They suspect me.'"

"And even more," said the professor. "I am not at all sure that the detectives set to watch me have been thrown off my track."

"But then?" "It would not be my fault," cried the professor vehemently, "and he can have nothing to reproach me with. What did I promise to do? To obey his orders. Well, I have obeyed his orders blindly; I cashed the ticket at the time which he fixed and came on to you in the manner which he ordered. I am responsible for my daughter's misfortune and I have kept my engagement in all good faith. It is for him to keep his."

And he added, in an anxious voice, "He will bring back my daughter, won't he?" "I hope so."

"Still?" "You've seen him?" "No. He simply wrote asking me to receive you both, to send away my servants before 3 o'clock and to let no one into my flat, but from the time of your arrival and his departure. If I did not consent to this proposal, he begged me to let him know by means of a note. I did not do so. I am only too pleased to do Arsene Lupin a service and I consent to everything."

M. Gerbois moaned: "Oh, dear, how will it all end?" "He took the bank notes from his pocket, spread them on the table and divided them into two bundles of five hundred each. Then he took two out, placed them on the table, and said: 'Your arrival and his departure. If I did not consent to this proposal, he begged me to let him know by means of a note. I did not do so. I am only too pleased to do Arsene Lupin a service and I consent to everything.'"

"For a moment, in fact, the advocate all his composure. He rose as if rapt from his seat: "We shall see him. . . . How can we expect to? . . . It would be madness on his part. He trusts us, no doubt. We are honest men, incapable of betraying him. But the danger lies elsewhere."

And M. Gerbois, shattered, with his feet on the floor, stammered: "If he would only come, oh, if he would only come! I would give all this to have Suzanne back."

The door opened. The professor came in. "Half will do, M. Gerbois."

Some one was standing on the threshold—a young man, fashionably dressed—and M. Gerbois at once recognized the person who had accosted him outside the courtesy shop. He leapt toward him: "And Suzanne? Where is my daughter?"

(To Be Continued.)

## Let George Do It! By George McManus



## Betty Vincent Gives Advice on Courtship and Marriage

"Trifling Attentions." DEAR girls, do not attach too much importance to the trifling attentions of men. Do not imagine because some young man likes to call upon you and seems pleased at having your friendship that he is necessarily in love with you. If a man sends you a few flowers or a book it may merely mean that he likes you. If a man takes you to the theatre or asks you to attend some dance with him, he may only admire you and find you an amusing companion. Such trifles need not mean love. The best thing that a girl can do is not to think of a man as in love with her until he himself has told her that he is. Then there will be no heartbreaks. Girls are too apt to take trifling attentions too seriously, then feel actually wounded—in their pride and their hearts—when they find eventually that the young man who they thought loved them is really in love with another girl. To Call. A YOUNG man who signs his letter "L. N. M." writes: "Several months ago I was introduced to a young lady at a party and afterward I escorted her home. At the lady if you may call. Only do not keep her standing on the street to ask her. Join her and walk with her. An Umbrella. A GIRL who signs her letter "A. L." writes: "A young man used to call upon me and seemed to like me. One evening when he was going home he borrowed my umbrella. Since then I have not seen him. And he did not return the umbrella. What shall I do?" Write the young man a formal note asking for the return of your property. His negligence is unpardonable. Not in Love. A YOUNG man who signs his letter "E. O. M." writes: "A young lady is in love with me. I like her, but I do not love her. I see her almost every evening and I would like to tell her my intentions are not serious. Would this be correct?" It is not necessary to tell the young lady your intentions are not serious. Simply do not see her too often and do not be too impressive in your manner toward her. Probably the young lady is in the least in love with you, anyway. He Writes. A GIRL who signs her letter "M. B." writes: "Last summer I visited the home of a friend where there was a very nice young man. He told me he loved me and I really love him. Now, however, I am home again and he writes only once every two weeks. If the young man loved me would he not write oftener?" It would seem as though the young man should write oftener if he loves you, as you say. But why not suggest to him that you would like to hear from him more frequently.

## "Cheer Up, Cuthbert!"

What's the Use of Being Blue? There Is a Lot of Luck Left. By Clarence L. Cullen

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THERE'S a rainbow somewhere ALL the time: No Jockey ever achieved greatness unless he was a crackerjack Post-Racer. It's the start that counts!

If we thought for a minute that we were never going to make another mistake we'd experience a Mournful Apprehension of a Monotonous Future!

It's queer how stolid and unmoved Luck can remain under the "cussing out" that's being heaped to him at the time!

Adversity has no use for a man who cultivates Adaptability!

How we do begin to Watch the Deal after Fate has Framed One on us and Destiny has eased us a Double Cross!

Maybe you'll be lucky enough to get Her to believe it, but it's hard to get a course into believing that the Morning Head is due to something you'd "earn" me before!

Some Poker Players are so busy with Post Mortems that they forget to notice how many cards the other fellows draw in the New Deal!

The reason why Thackeray wrote so amusingly on "How to Live With Nothing a Year" was because he'd never tried it!

The beauty about "rising from the ashes of your dead self" is that you can't have to wait!

It's odd how easily we slip from White Lies to Whoppers! There never was a Quicker who didn't have a Fat Explanation! There's a fine shade of difference between Being Broke and Being Broken!

Often the Yellow Streak is merely a surface marking. A great old soldier once told us that he'd never gone into battle that he wasn't scared speechless—but he left a leg on a battlefield and had the thanks of Congress for Distinguished Gallantry! The Hard Knock that Raises a Lump isn't half so bad as the one that Leaves a Dent! Don't forget that there's always a Good price The Next Time Out against the Horse that's been Left at the Post! The Easiest Way in is always the Longest Way Out!

## Letters of a Modern Maid

By Alma Woodward.

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ELLI, honey: Just a week since I've written—and this is the first breathing space I've had. Mother is determined not to allow me to draw another peaceful breath till I've landed high and dry, to the accompaniment of the wedding march, a fish with scales of twenty-two-karat gold or one with a tin crown and a couple of moth-eaten estates under its fin!

It was too funny the way one of them proposed to me at my dance last week. The footman kept his promise and left only one light in the conservatory, so the atmosphere was fifty dim and religious—stage settings help a lot, you know! About eleven thirty I led the victim into the net—I wanted to have it over with before twelve so that I would be able to enjoy my supper—Constant error.

As I sank gracefully into a wicker chair screened by a couple of giant palms I laughed a little—I couldn't help it. I was thinking of the blushing, quivering girls of our grandmothers' time, who awaited their first proposal much as they would the Day of Judgment.

And here was I, in a three hundred dollar Paquin gown, pulse seventy-two per cent, and temperature not a fraction over ninety-eight, deliberately pulling the first momentous away from the pale lips of an English lord, with no chin to speak of and a cast in his left eye!

Now I could have overlooked the eye—but not his chinlessness. I adore chinless men—great big strong ones! His lordship didn't quite know whether he was supposed to sit beside me on a chair or pose gracefully against one of the palms. I saw him look doubtfully at the rug at his feet, but he didn't dare trust his blood great trousers!

"Beastly here, isn't it?" began to sort of give him courage. "Ah, but it is always awful where you are, don't you know, Miss Cicely," he blipod.

Some day, Nell, I hope to meet a man who will give me an answer I do NOT expect. That man, if he have a chin into the bargain, will be my husband. Well, after a bit of persistence, about as airy on his part as unheavened bread, he grew to be quite in earnest and, leaning very close to my shoulder, whispered: "You won't let me marry you, Lady Fairfield, Cicely darling?"

You see that was his trump card, in fact, everything from the deuce up just that neatly title—and it wasn't a bit artistic of him to spring it so suddenly. However, I should have refused him gently and sympathetically. I know, if a little goldfish in a bowl nearby hadn't risen to the surface of the water just then. Catching a profile glance of both the fish and his earliness, the resemblance was so striking to be resisted. There was the same woful lack of chin and the corresponding recession above the brows—the same gaping, expressionless mouth—and the same fishy eyes—and I laughed!

He was both amazed and indignant; but even the flash of his anger wasn't a decent, healthy red, but rather a pale lavender hue, originating, no doubt, in the blue corpuscles of his lordly blood. His first American heiress had thrown him down and he was badly rocked about it, don't you know—eh, what! &c. On the way down to supper I whispered to mother: "Lord Fairfield proposed—and I refused him!" Mother gasped between her pencils and said: "Oh, Cicely—just when we could have gotten you married quickly and established in London for the coronation!" And then I got my dander up and said: "Coronations be hanged—chins are more important!" All of which was Greek to her. But I enjoyed my supper anyway—a little like an English lord can't keep down a healthy American appetite! Continued in our next, dear. Lovingly, CICELY.