

**THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF ARSENE LUPIN #3:**  
**THE ESCAPE OF ARSENE LUPIN**

A radio play by Jake Lewis  
Based on the story by Maurice Leblanc

CAST:

Radio Announcer

Guard

Dieuzy

Folefant

Judge

Waiter

Gatekeeper

Voice 1

Voice 2

Desire Baudru

Dudois

Ganimard

Introduction

**1 ANNOUNCER:** Greetings, radio listener, and welcome once more to the JVTC Radio Hour! Tonight's broadcast is the third adventure found within the pages of Maurice Leblanc's *The Extraordinary Adventures of Arsene Lupin*, entitled "The Escape of Arsene Lupin"!

In our last episode, Lupin confessed to inspector Justin Gaminard that, despite his occupation in the Sante Prison, he would soon be a free man once again...but not by any court case finding him not guilty!

Let us now join Inspector Dieuzy and Folefant as they explore Lupin's prison cell, Lupin having been led away by the warden under the guise of time in the mostly fresh air of the prison yard!

Scene 1

1     **GUARD:** Here is Lupin's cell, sir.

2     **DIEUZY:** Look under the bed there, Folefant! Check under the flagstones! We must not leave any nook or cranny untouched!

3     **FOLEFANT:** You don't honestly expect Lupin to leave his prison escape plans out in plain sight, do you?

4     **DIEUZY:** Folefant! You are a genius!

5     **FOLEFANT:** I am?

6     **DIEUZY:** Yes! Plain sight, indeed! Lupin would think it too obvious to hide his escape plans in so obvious a place! The drawer there! Open it!

*Sound of a desk drawer being pulled open.*

7     **DIEUZY:** Well??

8     **FOLEFANT:** Some press cuttings about Lupin -- he does love his name in print! -- next, a tobacco pouch, a pipe, some foreign post paper, and two books.

9     **DIEUZY:** Books, eh?

*Sound of him flipping through pages.*

10    **DIEUZY:** Underlined passages. A code, perhaps...

11    **FOLEFANT:** By Jove, this fellow does himself well! A Henry Clay cigar!

12    **DIEUZY:** Let me see that!

*Sound of the cigar cracking in half.*

**1 FOLEFANT:** Sir!

**2 DIEUZY:** Calm yourself, Folefant! (*Beat.*) Give me your pin, there.

**3 FOLEFANT:** Yessir...

*Sound of rustling.*

**4 DIEUZY:** A ha! It's as I suspected!

**5 FOLEFANT:** A note! Inside the leaves of the cigar! Genius! What does it say?

*Sound of unrolling paper.*

**6 DIEUZY:** "Maria has taken the other's place. Eight out of ten are prepared. On pressing outside foot, metal pane moves upward. H.P. will wait from 12 to 16 daily. But where? Reply at once. Have no fear: Your friend is looking after you."

**7 FOLEFANT:** Whatever does it mean?

**8 DIEUZY:** Why, it's all very clear! Maria is the prison van, as it's called in England. Eight of out ten are prepared clearly refers to the compartments within the van. Twelve to sixteen, that's of course twelve o'clock to four o'clock.

**9 FOLEFANT:** But who the devil is H.P.? Who is to wait for him, for that matter?

**10 DIEUZY:** Folefant! H.P. is horsepower! A motor-car!

**11 FOLEFANT:** Yes, of course. Silly me for not seeing that!

**1 DIEUZY:** The cigar being whole when we found it is proof he has not read this latest message yet. Therefore, we must determine how he would communicate his response to the accomplice on the outside!

**2 FOLEFANT:** His dinner is still whole. Might he somehow smuggle it out when the tray is removed?

**3 DIEUZY:** You may be onto something. But where? In the bread? The macaroni?

*Sound of something being unscrewed.*

**4 DIEUZY:** The stem of the knife! The perfect-sized sheath for a slip of paper! Quickly, Folefant, go to the restaurant where Lupin receives his daily meals, and find his accomplice!

**5 FOLEFANT:** Yes sir!

**6 DIEUZY:** Guard! Lupin will know we have been here. Even if the broken cigar could be mended, I fear he is as keenly aware of the exact presence of every mote of dust here that we have disturbed. However, I do not think that will stop him from corresponding with his source. Let him.

**7 GUARD:** I hope he doesn't slip through your fingers.

**8 DIEUZY:** One can hope. But I hesitate before thinking that I, of all people, have outsmarted Arsene Lupin!

*Music: Mystery flourish*

## Scene 2

*Sound of a gavel being banged.*

**1 JUDGE:** Monsieur Lupin, attorneys of the court, it has come to my attention that missives have been exchanged between the accused, Arsene Lupin, prisoner number 8574, and a person of unknown identity. Would you care to explain, Monsieur Lupin, what these notes pertain to?

**2 LUPIN:** My escape. Have you not read them?

**3 JUDGE:** You stand here before a judge of the court and confess to plotting an escape from the Sante?

**4 LUPIN:** Well. Yes. I thought that was perfectly clear.

**5 JUDGE:** Monsieur Lupin, you are remanded to the custody of the Sante until your trial begins. Please escort the prisoner to the salad-basket for his return to his cell!

*Sound of the gavel banging.*

*Sound of footsteps being led away.*

*Sound of a large vehicle starting*

*Sound of a door opening.*

**6 GUARD:** Lupin, you continue to amaze me! Telling the judge you plan to escape! I thought you were smarter than that than to play right into his hands!

**7 LUPIN:** I suppose I aim to shock.

*Sound of the door closing.*

*Sound of vehicle accelerating.*

*ARSENE is heard whistling and tapping his feet.*

*Sound of something being slid open.*

**1 LUPIN:** Just my luck! I ended up in one of the eight compartments with an escape hatch! And what's this? We're slowing? Guard! What goes on up there?

**2 GUARD:** A horse and carriage blocks us! Like it's any concern of yours! Idiot animal. Stay there, Lupin, while I go speak to the driver!

*Sound of the Guard exiting the van.*

**3 LUPIN:** But wherever could I go? *(Beat.)* Of yes. Of course. Out!

*Sound of him jumping through the trapdoor onto the road below.*

*Sound of him rolling, brushing himself off, and hurriedly walking.*

**4 LUPIN:** A fine day for a fine escape! I think this warrants a celebratory drink!

*Sound of him approaching a cafe.*

**5 WAITER:** Good afternoon, sir.

**6 LUPIN:** Dear garcon, I have left my purse at home. But perhaps you know my name and will not mind trusting me for a day or two.

**7 WAITER:** You must be mad!

**8 LUPIN:** Arsene Lupin, recently escaped prisoner of the Sante. I venture to hope that my name inspires you with every confidence.

**9 WAITER:** Arsene Lupin? *(Bursts into laughter.)* Very well! For the laugh I shall allow you one drink.

1     **LUPIN:** And a pack of cigarettes, if you please.

2     **WAITER:** Arsene Lupin! *(Walks away laughing.)*

3     **LUPIN:** I'm never taken at my word. More's the pity.

*Music: Mystery flourish.*

### Scene 3

*Sound of footsteps approaching.*

1     **LUPIN:** Good evening, Gatekeeper! Is this the Sante Prison?

2     **GATEKEEPER:** What do you want?

3     **LUPIN:** Why, I am Arsene Lupin. Recently escaped from this very prison! But I should very much like to return. You see, the van dropped me off, and after a few drinks at the city's best cafes, plus a leisurely walk, I should not want to abuse--

4     **GATEKEEPER:** Look here, man, just go on your road and look sharp about it!

5     **LUPIN:** But my road lies through this gate!

6     **GATEKEEPER:** Arsene Lupin?

7     **LUPIN:** I apologize, I do not have a card on me.

*Sound of a gate being opened.*

8     **LUPIN:** I shall recommend your exceptional service to the prison warden.

*Sound of Lupin walking into prison.*

**1 GUARD:** Lupin! What are you doing here?

**2 LUPIN:** Am I not a prisoner of this institution? What! You take the precaution to bring me back alone in the van, you prepare a nice little block in the traffic, and you think that I am going to take to my heels and rejoin my friends! And what about the twenty detectives escorting us on foot, on bicycles, and in cabs? They'd have made short work of me: I should never have got off alive! Perhaps that was what they were reckoning on?

**3 GUARD:** You...you *knew* we had planned that?

**4 LUPIN:** I beg you sir, don't go to any trouble about me. When I decide to escape I shall want nobody's assistance. (*Beat.*) Have I amazed you yet again? Well, let that be enough for tonight. I shall retire to my cell for the evening!

**5 GUARD:** Close the gates!

**6 LUPIN:** Wise move. You never know who might just slip through your fingers.

*Sound of gate closing.*

#### Scene 4

*Sound of pouring rain.*

*Sound of many voices speaking in quiet tones.*

**7 VOICE 1:** Do you think Lupin will show up at his own trial?



**1 VOICE 2:** He hasn't escaped yet! It would be in all the papers, including the Echo de France, which he is said to be a partial shareholder in!

**2 VOICE 1:** Everyday there's something! Just this morning, I read how his cell has been changed weekly for these past two months, and how he sleeps facing the wall!

**3 VOICE 2:** His spirits are crushed! It's reported he hasn't seen his counsel since first entering the Sante, and hardly exchanged words with the guards!

**4 VOICE 1:** Arsene Lupin always keeps his promises!

*Sound of door opening.*

*Sound of crowd hushing.*

*Sound of shuffling feet.*

*Sound of gasps escaping from spectators.*

**5 VOICE 2:** Is that him? He looks so...

**6 VOICE 1:** Torpid.

**7 VOICE 2:** Passive, indifferent.

*Sound of a gavel banging.*

**8 JUDGE:** Prisoner at the bar! Give your name, age, and occupation!

*There is no response.*

**9 JUDGE:** Your name!

**1 BAUDRU:** Desire Baudru.

**2 JUDGE:** Desire Baudru? Is this a new incarnation? As it is about the eighth name to which you lay claim, and no doubt as imaginary as the rest, we will keep, if you don't mind, to that of Arsene Lupin, under which you are more favorably known.

*Sound of the judge looking through his papers.*

**3 JUDGE:** For, notwithstanding all inquiries, it has been impossible to reconstruct your identity. You present the case, almost unparalleled in our modern society, of a man without a past. We do not know who you are, whence you come, where your childhood was spent — in short, we know nothing about you. You sprang up suddenly, three years ago, from an uncertain source, to reveal yourself as Arsene Lupin — that is to say, as a curious compound of intelligence and perversity, of criminality and generosity. The data which we have concerning you before that time are of the nature of suppositions. It seems probable that the so-called Rostat, who, eight years ago, was acting as assistant to Dickson, the conjurer, was none other than Arsene Lupin. It seems probable that the Russian student who, six years ago, used to attend Dr. Altier's laboratory at St. Louis' Hospital, and who often astonished the master by the ingenious character of his hypotheses on bacteriology and by the boldness of his experiments in the diseases of the skin — it seems probable that he too was none other than Arsene Lupin. So was the professor of Japanese wrestling, who established himself in Paris long before jiu-jitsu had been heard of. So, we believe, was the racing cyclist who won the great prize at the Exhibition, took his ten thousand francs, and has never been seen since. So, perhaps, was the man who saved so many people from burning at the Charity Bazaar, helping them through the little dormer window... and robbing them of their belongings. Such was that period which seems to have been devoted entirely to a careful preparation for the struggle upon which you had embarked against society, a methodical apprenticeship in which you improved your force, your energy, and your skill to the highest pitch of perfection. Do you admit the accuracy of these facts?"

*There is no reply.*

**1 JUDGE:** Do you admit the accuracy of these facts, Monsieur Lupin?

**2 BAUDRU:** Desire. Baudru.

**3 JUDGE:** I fail to follow exactly the system of defence which you have adopted, Arsene Lupin. If it be to play the irresponsible imbecile, you must please yourself. As far as I am concerned, I shall go straight to the point without troubling about your fancies. Defense attorney Dudois, call your first witness!

**4 DUDOIS:** Inspector Justin Ganimard!

*Sounds of murmurs from the crowd.*

**5 DUDOIS:** Inspector Ganimard, did you not follow Arsene Lupin across Europe, finally apprehending him in New York?

**6 GANIMARD:** I...yes...that is correct.

**7 DUDOIS:** And, Inspector, have you not conducted several interviews with Lupin during his incarceration at the Sante?

**8 GANIMARD:** Interviews? The Sante?

**9 JUDGE:** Monsieur Ganimard, are you feeling alright? If you are ill, you can step down and finish your testimony later.

**10 GANIMARD:** No...I'm sorry...it's just...

**11 JUDGE:** Just what, my good man?

**12 GANIMARD:** I swear before the court that the man in the dock is not Arsene Lupin.

*Sound of gasps and reactions from the crowd.*

*Sound of the gavel.*

**1 JUDGE:** Come, come! Explain yourself!

**2 GANIMARD:** At first sight one might be deceived by a likeness which, I admit, exists; but it needs only a momentary examination. The nose, the mouth, the hair, the color of the skin: why, it's not Arsene Lupin at all. And look at the eyes: did he ever have those drunkard's eyes?

*Sounds of murmurs from the crowd.*

**3 GANIMARD:** He must have substituted in his place and stead some poor wretch who would have been found guilty for him... unless this man is an accomplice.

*Sounds of an uproar from the courtroom.*

*Sound of the gavel banging, to no avail.*

**4 JUDGE:** Gentlemen, in my chambers!

*Music: Mystery fanfare.*

### Scene 5

**5 JUDGE:** Gentleman, as the warders of the prison, who have the responsibility of watching Lupin, is this an imposter?

**6 GATEKEEPER:** There is a slight resemblance...

**7 GUARD:** I think it's the man. But...

*JUDGE draws in a breath.*

**1 JUDGE:** What do you mean, “but”?

**2 GUARD:** Well, I saw very little of him these past two months since his cell was moved to my block. He was only handed over to me at night, and his face was always to the wall.

**3 JUDGE:** If it is not Lupin, then the substitution was made two months ago. How is that possible?

**4 GATEKEEPER:** I do not know!

**5 JUDGE:** Prisoner, explain to me how and when you came into the hands of the law?

**6 BAUDRU:** Mmm. Well. I was, two months ago, taken to the police station. Yes, that’s right. The charge was vagrancy, which could not be denied. I therefore, as is the custom, spent the night in the cells. A most surprisingly sound sleep, I had. Yes...

**7 JUDGE:** And?

**8 BAUDRU:** And? Oh, and! And...well, upon my release, I was strong-armed by two of your men who shut me up in a van. I would gladly have gone had I known how soundly I’d sleep, and how well I’d be fed. Yes, these past two months have been beyond protest! I should very much like to go back now.

**9 JUDGE:** We cannot hold you longer, sir. You have committed no crime.

**10 GUARD:** But sir, he may be an accomplice!

**1 JUDGE:** We have no evidence! In fact, you and your colleague may very well be conspiring with Lupin!

**2 GATEKEEPER:** Us? Never!

**3 JUDGE:** While your tenure at the Sante speaks of your legitimacy, you may be the very ones who performed the swap between Lupin and this man!

**4 GUARD:** In all likelihood, Lupin suborned this man!

**5 JUDGE:** Monsieur Baudru, did Lupin coerce you into taking his place?

**6 BAUDRU:** Coerce? Lupin? I'm sorry, I've lost the thread.

**7 GATEKEEPER:** I think that settles that question.

**8 GANIMARD:** He was correct, you know. Lupin.

**9 JUDGE:** Ah, the detective speaks. Correct about what, Ganimard ?

**10 GANIMARD:** He would not be present at his trial.

**11 JUDGE:** But he will be found! And you must be the man to do so.

**12 GANIMARD:** When last he and I spoke, he told me when and where he would meet me when he freed himself. I took it as just one of his usual boasts, yet I did wait for him at the appointed place and time. He did not join me on that date...much to my disappointment. Now, though, perhaps I will find him there.

*Music: Mystery flourish.*

Scene 6

*Sounds of a park.*

**1 DIEUZY:** Ganimard! How long must we crouch in these bushes watching that man Baudru? I'm beginning to think he indeed has no connection to our man!

**2 FOLEFANT:** We have given chase to him all over Paris, but not once has he indicated he knows Lupin!

**3 GANIMARD:** You are right, gentleman. He is aware we've been watching him. I must confront him before this goes any further!

**4 DIEUZY:** We will be right behind you.

**5 GANIMARD:** No, I'm afraid the truth will only come out if Lupin knows I've called off the dogs.

**6 FOLEFANT:** If you insist. I could do for some lunch anyway.

*Sound of GANIMARD walking.*

**7 GANIMARD:** A cold day.

**8 BAUDRU:** Hmm? (*Silence, then a laugh begins bubbling up, eventually turning into hysteria.*)

**9 GANIMARD:** What? Why do you laugh? (*Beat.*) Oh! Oh! I recognize that mocking expression! Underneath that wizened skin and those sunken features...it is you, Arsene Lupin!

*BAUDRU continues to laugh.*

**1 GANIMARD:** Stop your laughing! I will strangle you here and now for once more using me as a pawn in your game!

*Sounds of a choking nature followed by a brief scuffle.*

*GANIMARD yelps in pain.*

**2 LUPIN:** This movement is called uh-shi-ji in Japanese. Learned it while studying jiu-jitsu.

*GANIMARD exhales in relief as he lets go.*

**3 LUPIN:** Had I held it a second longer, your arm would be broken and you'd have been highly deserving of it, too!

**4 GANIMARD:** It is all my fault! I was the one who mislabeled you in court! I let you get away!

**5 LUPIN:** Why, goodness me, Ganimard, don't take on like that! If you hadn't spoken I should have arranged for someone else to speak. Come, come, how could I have allowed them to find a verdict against Desire Baudru?

**6 GANIMARD:** But...your face! Your eyes!

**7 LUPIN:** It is as the worthy judge said; one needn't more than a dozen years or so to be ready for such an eventuality.

**8 GANIMARD:** You...you....

**9 LUPIN:** Yes, !! You can understand that when I worked for eighteen months at St. Louis' with Dr. Altier it was not for love of art. You can modify your appearance as you please. A hypodermic injection of paraffin puffs up your skin to just the extent desired. Pyrogallic acid turns you into a fellow of a darker complexion than my own. Celandine juice adorns you with



blotches and pimples of the most pleasing kind. A certain chemical process affects the growth of your hair and beard, another the sound of your voice. Add to that, two months of dieting in Cell 24, incessant practice at opening my mouth with this particular grimace and carrying my head at this angle and my back at this stoop. Lastly, five drops of atropine in the eyes to make them haggard and dilated, and the trick is done!

1     **GANIMARD:** But the warders must have--

2     **LUPIN:** The change was gradual. Too slow for most people to notice.

3     **GANIMARD:** And Baudru?

4     **LUPIN:** Baudru is a real person. He is a poor, harmless beggar whom I met last year, and whose features are really not quite unlike my own. Foreseeing an always possible arrest, I placed him in safe-keeping, and applied myself from the first to picking out the points of dissimilarity between us, so as to diminish these in myself as far as I could. My friends made him pass a night at the police-station in such a way that he left it at about the same time as I did and the coincidence could be easily established.

5     **GANIMARD:** It was necessary that Baudru's passage should be traceable, else the lawyers would have wanted to know who you were.

6     **LUPIN:** Whereas, by offering them that excellent Baudru, I made it inevitable that they should jump at him, in spite of the insurmountable difficulties of a substitution, thus preferring to believe in that substitution rather than admit their ignorance.

7     **GANIMARD:** True, true.

8     **LUPIN:** And then, I held a formidable trump in my hand, a card which I had prepared from the start: the universal expectation of my escape! Again, you thought that I was bragging, that I was intoxicated with my

successes, like the veriest greenhorn! Fancy me, Arsene Lupin, guilty of such weakness! It was essential that people should believe beforehand in my escape, that it should be an article of faith, an absolute conviction, a truth clear as daylight! And that is what it became, in accordance with my will. Arsene Lupin intended to escape, Arsene Lupin did not intend to be present at his trial. And when you stood up and said, 'That man is not Arsene Lupin,' it would have been beyond human nature for all those present not at once to believe that I was not Arsene Lupin.

**1 GANIMARD:** But if only one person had said it was you--

**2 LUPIN:** --that very moment I should have been lost. They had only to bend over and look at me, not with the idea that I was not Arsene Lupin, as you and the rest did, but with the idea that I might be Arsene Lupin, and, in spite of all my precautions, I should have been recognized.

**3 GANIMARD:** The prison van?

**4 LUPIN:** What fun! My friends rigged that up, but it only served the purpose of making my actual escape all the more valuable.

**5 GANIMARD:** I assume you scooped out the cigar, then, and the secret communique--

**6 LUPIN:** Myself, written in one of many hands I've acquired.

**7 GANIMARD:** What are you going to do now?

**8 LUPIN:** Now! I am going to take a rest, feed myself up and gradually become myself again. It's all very well to be Baudru or another, to change your personality as you would your boots, and to select your appearance, your voice, your expression, your handwriting. But there comes a time when you cease to know yourself amid all these changes, and that is very sad. I feel at present as the man must have felt who lost his shadow. I am going to look for myself... and to find myself.

*Sound of LUPIN standing and beginning to walk away.*

**1 GANIMARD:** One thing more...do you plan to publish the true nature of your escape?

*Sound of footsteps stopping.*

**2 LUPIN:** And the mistake you made? No one will ever know that it was Arsene Lupin that was released. I have too great an interest to serve in heaping up the most mysterious darkness around me, and I should not dream of depriving my flight of its almost miraculous character. So have no fear, my dear friend; and goodbye. I am dining out tonight, and have only just time to dress.

**4 GANIMARD:** But I thought you were anxious for a rest!

**5 LUPIN:** Alas, there are some engagements I cannot escape. My rest must begin tomorrow.

**6 GANIMARD:** Oh, is that so? And where are you dining, if I may inquire?

**7 LUPIN:** You may! But I must hold the answer for a later time! Until we meet again, dear Ganimard!

*Sound of LUPIN's footsteps moving further off and fading from earshot.*

*Music: Mystery flourish.*

### Epilogue

**8 ANNOUNCER:** And so, Ganimard is pinned in place, watching with a feeling of shock and wonderment, as his rival disappears once more into

The Escape of Arsene Lupin

the crowd. Where will he next find Arsene Lupin, if that is his real name? And what devious plots does the gentleman-burglar have in store for his dear detective next?

Find out next time on the JVTC Radio Hour as we continue on the trail of *The Extraordinary Adventures of Arsene Lupin!*

***To be continued...***