



# The Fall of the House of Walworth: A Tale of Madness and Murder in Gilded Age America

*Geoffrey O'Brien*

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**In the tradition of *The Devil in the White City* comes a spell-binding tale of madness and murder in a nineteenth century American dynasty**

On June 3, 1873, a portly, fashionably dressed, middle-aged man calls the Sturtevant House and asks to see the tenant on the second floor. The bellman goes up and presents the visitor's card to the guest in room 267, returns promptly, and escorts the visitor upstairs. Before the bellman even reaches the lobby, four shots are fired in rapid succession.

Eighteen-year-old Frank Walworth descends the staircase and approaches the hotel clerk. He calmly inquires the location of the nearest police precinct and adds, "I have killed my father in my room, and I am going to surrender myself to the police."

So begins the fall of the Walworths, a Saratoga family that rose to prominence as part of the splendor of New York's aristocracy. In a single generation that appearance of stability and firm moral direction would be altered beyond recognition, replaced by the greed, corruption, and madness that had been festering in the family for decades.

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