

The Murder of the Century: The Gilded Age Crime That Scandalized a City & Sparked the Tabloid Wars



In Long Island, a farmer found a duck pond turned red with blood. On the Lower East Side, two boys playing at a pier discovered a floating human torso wrapped tightly in oilcloth. Blueberry pickers near Harlem stumbled upon neatly severed limbs in an overgrown ditch. Clues to a horrifying crime were turning up all over New York, but the police were baffled: There were no witnesses, no motives, no suspects. The grisly finds that began on the afternoon of June 26, 1897, plunged detectives headlong into the eras most perplexing murder. Seized upon by battling media moguls Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst, the case became a publicity circus. Re-creations of the murder were staged in Times Square, armed reporters lurked in the streets of Hells Kitchen in pursuit of suspects, and an unlikely trio - an anxious cop, a cub reporter, and an eccentric professor - all raced to solve the crime. What emerged was a sensational love triangle and an even more sensational trial: an unprecedented capital case hinging on circumstantial evidence around a victim that the police couldnt identify with certainty - and that the defense claimed wasnt even dead. The Murder of the Century is a rollicking tale - a rich evocation of America during the Gilded Age and a colorful re-creation of the tabloid wars that have dominated media to this day.

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