

Author Bio:

Deb Miller Landau first began investigating Lita McClinton Sullivan's murder for *Atlanta Magazine* in the early 2000's and has since become an authority on the case. Her article on the murder was anthologized in Harper Perennial's *Best American Crime Writing*, and her work has been cited by news stories and TV documentaries, including *America's Most Wanted*, *Dateline*, Dominick Dunne's *Power, Privilege & Justice*, *FBI: Criminal Pursuit* and, most recently, Oxygen Network's 2022 *Real Murders of Atlanta*. Additionally, she appears as a primary on-screen expert in BET's 2019 docudrama, *Murder in the Thirst*.

Book Synopsis:

2025 Edgar Award finalist

Oprah Daily ranked #1 of the “best true crime books of all time.”

A riveting narrative that pieces together the life and murder of Black socialite Lita McClinton Sullivan—and the journey to bring her true killer to justice.

The 1987 murder of Lita McClinton Sullivan sent shockwaves through the affluent Atlanta suburb of Buckhead, Georgia like few other crimes before it. The neighborhood, with its stately mansions and top-tier schools, was simply not the kind of place where women were gunned down in cold blood in broad daylight. How many socialites had enemies so dangerous they would be murdered by a hitman pretending to deliver roses on an early winter morning?

Lita was an intelligent, accomplished, and stunning Black woman from a respected Atlanta family. Her interracial marriage to white millionaire Jim Sullivan, who hailed from working-class Boston, was a newsworthy occurrence in 1970s Georgia. For a while, the couple made the marriage work, but it wasn't long before Jim's roving eye and controlling nature put Lita on edge. When he bought a mansion in Palm Beach, Florida (without telling her), the façade of their life together began to crumble. Finally, after a decade of marriage, she loaded her belongings in a U-Haul and never looked back.

But as the legal battle over the divorce raged and Jim's financial outlook grew precarious, he had a chance encounter with a long-haul trucker, a smooth-talking ex-con who said he could he'd "take care" of Jim's wife problem...

In *A Devil Went Down to Georgia*, award-winning writer Deb Miller Landau details the shocking events that followed Lita's murder in 1987, including the surprising lack of evidence, racial bias in the justice system, and the international manhunt for Lita's killer. Full of twists and turns, legal battles, and the McClinton family's unrelenting dedication to justice, Landau's rigorous investigation is the first complete account of this tragic American crime.