

PARTNERS IN MOTION

CRIME STORIES 8050:
The Long Stemmed Killer

Writer: Dan Minsky

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CRIME STORIES

THE LONG STEMMED KILLER EPISODE

BLOCK ONE

NARRATION

(00:59) Known as the 'Beverley Hills of the South', this beautiful, quiet, upscale neighbourhood of Atlanta, Georgia is home to the privileged and the wealthy. (1:08)

NARRATION

(01:10) Socialite Lita Sullivan lives alone in her Buckhead townhouse just down the road from the Georgia Governor's Mansion. Lita is the first-born daughter of a prominent, politically active Atlanta family. At 34 years of age, she is a spirited organizer of local charity events and fund-raisers. (1:29)

BRAD MOORES (01:30) Well, Lita was a reflection of her parents. Emory and Jo Anne McClinton are phenomenal people, perhaps the most principled people that I've ever had the pleasure of representing. Lita was a very attractive, very positive, upbeat person, always had a smile on her face, always left a room with friends behind. (01:53)

NARRATION

(01:54) On a rainy Friday morning in January, Lita wakes up early and puts on her robe. At 8:20 am, her houseguests, long-time friend Poppy Marable and Poppy's three-year-old daughter, are still asleep. Lita hears a knock at the front door. (02:10)

NARRATION

(02:11) Looking out the window, she sees a flower deliveryman standing on her porch. She goes to the front door and opens it. (02:20)

BILL MONTGOMERY (02:22) Well, what Lita had seen was this man appearing to be in his late 40's, early 50's maybe, with a flower box. He pulls out a gun, fires two to three shots. (02:41)

NARRATION

(02:43) Gunshots ring out across the quiet neighbourhood. The first bullet misses Lita. She stumbles back away from the door, holding up the flowers in front of her face as a shield. The next bullet passes through the box and strikes her right temple. Lita and the dozen long-stemmed roses she is holding fall to the floor. (03:05)

NARRATION

(03:07) Poppy Marable wakes up to the sound of gunfire. Unsure of the intruder's intentions, she grabs her three-year-old daughter out of bed and hides with her in a closet. (03:17)

WELCOME HARRIS (03:18) There was a woman, later identified as Margaret McIntyre, was driving down Slayton Drive, and he exits so fast he ran into the path of a vehicle, and she saw the shooter as he left. (03:30)

NARRATION

(03:31) The perpetrator now disappears into the neighbourhood on foot.
(03:35)

WELCOME HARRIS (3:37) And Bob Christensen, the next-door neighbour to Mrs. Sullivan, got a good look at the subject he was also the first to relate to the victim, Mrs. Sullivan. (03:47)

NARRATION

(03:48) Bob Christensen discovers his neighbour lying in a pool of blood. She is barely alive. (03:54)

BILL MONTGOMERY (03:56) Bob Christensen runs to the phone in her house, dials 911. (4:02)

NARRATION

(04:04) Lita Sullivan is still alive by the time first responders get to her. She is immediately rushed to the hospital. Poppy Marable, shaken and stunned, calls Lita's parents, Emory and Jo Ann McClinton. She tells them that their daughter has been shot. (04:20)

WELCOME HARRIS (04:21) She was later pronounced dead that morning at Piedmont Hospital. I do believe her mother was with her at the time. (04:28)

BRAD MOORES (04:31) We're not supposed to have our children die before us, and then when you look at the particular facts of this case and why this murder was committed, then you take the normal loss that somebody has when they lose a child and magnify it and multiply it a thousand times. (04:53)

NARRATION

(04:55) The murder of Lita Sullivan that morning sets into motion an investigation that will span nearly two decades. The circumstances of her death will plague the McClintons and others close to Lita for the rest of their lives. (05:08)

NARRATION

(05:10) Major Welcome Harris of the Atlanta P.D. is the first investigator to arrive on the scene that morning. (05:16)

WELCOME HARRIS (05:17) The townhouse complex is in an exclusive area of Atlanta and a quiet area also and everyone in that complex was aroused by the gunshot. (05:27)

NARRATION

(05:28) Eyewitnesses tell Major Harris what happened. Bob Christensen and Margaret McIntyre offer the best descriptions of the suspect. He is a tall man in his mid 40s wearing a green jacket and grey pants. (05:44)

NARRATION

(05:47) Harris and his partner go to work on the crime scene. (05:50)

WELCOME HARRIS (05: 51) The first thing I noticed when I entered the condo was the flowers laying at a distance from the doorway in a pool of blood. Also there were several shell casings. In front of the open door, there was a shell casing and immediately behind the door there was another one, so it was obvious to us, became obvious, that Mrs. Sullivan had retreated from her attacker. (06:14)

NARRATION

(06:16) No evidence of a robbery is found. All of Lita's belongings, including her collection of expensive 19th century French antiques, are all accounted for. (06:25)

NARRATION

(06:29) Police focus their efforts on the most tangible piece of evidence they have, the blood soaked box of long-stemmed roses. (06:36)

WELCOME HARRIS (06:38) The flowers had no markings, but obviously came from a florist, so what we did was started canvassing and putting a look out, to canvas all the florist shops in the immediate area of Slayton Drive. (06:50)

NARRATION

(06:52) Police arrive at a flower shop just half-a-mile up the road from the crime scene. They question the clerk who tells them that two 'seedy-looking' men arrived at the store between 7:30 and 8am that morning. One remained in the car out front while the other entered the store and purchased a box of long-stemmed roses – the same kind that were found at the crime scene. (07:14)

WELCOME HARRIS (07:15) He gave us a description of the driver of the vehicle, a white Toyota, and the purchaser of the flowers. Both were white males, both were bearded, and the Toyota, he remembered that it seemed to be road weary it that it had a lot of, appeared to have been travelling through ice and snow. (07:34)

NARRATION

(07:37) The clerk at the flower shop works with a police composite artist to produce two sketches of the men he saw. Along with the Bob Christensen's description, police soon release the composite drawings to the public. Authorities begin searching for the three men. (7:53)

NARRATION

(07:55) Meanwhile, Poppy Marable tells investigators about an incident that occurred three days before the murder. (8:01)

WELCOME HARRIS (8:02) From my understanding, Mrs. Sullivan had advised a friend that on Tuesday night, prior to the shooting, that someone tried to gain entry, that she heard a loud knock on the door; however, she did not open the door. And it's my opinion, based on my investigation, that it appears that could have been possibly the first attempt to do her harm. (08:25)

NARRATION

(08:27) Poppy Marable also tells police about Lita's on-going divorce proceedings with her wealthy husband, Jim. In fact, Lita was scheduled to appear in court for a divorce trial hearing the very day of her murder. (08:39)

NARRATION

(08:42) Jim Sullivan co-operates fully with police. (08:45)

WELCOME HARRIS (08:46) The point of interviewing Mr. Sullivan the first time he said he didn't have any idea of anyone who might want to harm his wife. (08:52)

NARRATION

(08:55) But Sullivan behaves oddly following his estranged wife's death. Although their separation had been difficult, Jim does not contact Lita's family or attend her funeral. (09:05)

WELCOME HARRIS (09:06) Mr. Sullivan appeared to have a strained relationship with his in-laws, and we theorized that partially could be because the divorce procedure went ongoing and, but even at that, that still didn't make him a murderer. (09:20)

NARRATION

(09:22) The next few months of investigating yield few new leads. (09:25)

WELCOME HARRIS (09:26) You go with what you got when you initially start investigating any crime, and we were particularly concerned about the telephone records of Mr. Sullivan. So, what we did, we requested these telephone records through the Florida authorities, and, upon getting those records, we were able to examine them, and we found certain things that kind of jumped out at us. (09:49)

NARRATION

(09:51) What police discover in Jim Sullivan's phone records will soon steer the case in a startling new direction. (09:58)

BLOCK TWO

NARRATION

(10:20) On the morning of January 16th, 1987, Atlanta socialite Lita McClinton Sullivan opened her front door to a man carrying a box of long-stemmed roses. No sooner had she accepted the flowers than the man produced a 9mm handgun and shot her once in the head, leaving her to die. (10:38)

AIDA FLAMM (10:40) She was a great person. Lita was full of life. She was bubbly and had her whole life ahead of her. (10:50)

NARRATION

(10:52) Lita LaVaughan McClinton was born into wealth and privilege in 1952. She had dreams of a career in fashion and soon after college was managing an upscale clothing boutique in Atlanta. It is here, in 1975, that she met a charming, young businessman by the name of James Vincent Sullivan. (11:12)

BRAD MOORES (11:14) Everyone who ever met Lita was impressed with her, and Jim Sullivan apparently was too because after a chance meeting of her at the department store where she worked, he returned and asked her out for a date. (11:28)

AIDA FLAMM (11:30) He immediately charmed her with his money and trips and all that he could provide for her, and she was looking for the perfect love. (11:43)

NARRATION

(11:45) Jim Sullivan was a witty and intelligent Boston Irishman who owned a successful liquor distribution company. He came from modest roots but had always dreamt of living a life of wealth and privilege. Lita fell for Jim quickly. (12:03)

BRAD MOORES (12:04) Jim Sullivan was described as being 150 pounds of unbridled ambition and greed. (12:10)

NARRATION

(12:12) On December 29th, 1976, Jim and Lita were married in Georgia. They moved into a spacious, columned mansion in Macon. (12:21)

NARRATION

(12:22) In 1983, Jim sold his business for approximately five million dollars and purchased a \$2 million, 17 thousand-square-foot mansion in the elite neighbourhood of Palm Beach, Florida. (12:34)

NARRATION

(12:34) But soon after leaving Georgia, Jim and Lita's marriage began to

deteriorate. (12:40)

BRAD MOORES (12:41) In the short period of time after Lita and Jim were married, he began to run around and have affairs. (12:47)

BILL MONTGOMERY (12:48) She was getting reports from friends that Jim was cheating on her. Lita made the discovery of blonde hair in their bed, in the marital bed, in fact. (13:13)

BRAD MOORES (13:02) Despite being quite wealthy, Jim Sullivan could be very stingy and cheap and used his money to control people. Lita eventually got to her saturation point and just got fed up and sick and tired of Jim and his antics. (13:19)

BILL MONTGOMERY (13:20) After that, she packed her belongings into a U-Haul and drove to Atlanta, to the townhouse. Her townhouse was in Buckhead, which for years has been very expensive and kind of an elite neighbourhood in the city of Atlanta. (13:43)

BRAD MOORES (13:45) Well things were not going well for Jim Sullivan in the divorce. In fact, the day that Lita was murdered there was to be despositive motion on the postnuptial agreement, and, by all accounts, Sullivan was not expected to win. At one point, Jim Sullivan told mutual friends of he and Lita that he was going to pursue scorch tactics and do everything he could do to make sure she didn't get a nickel. (14:15)

NARRATION

(14:17) Atlanta investigators now look to Sullivan's phone records on the day of the murder. (14:22)

WELCOME HARRIS (14:23) Upon examining the telephone records, we were able to see that on the 16th of January he had received a phone call from Atlanta that was one minute in duration within 45 minutes of the initial alarm of her being shot. So that sent up a red flag as far as we were concerned, and we needed to find out where that phone was located in Georgia. And upon making that phone call, a male answered the phone, and then we gave him some type of bogus name and he said, "Well you got the wrong number, this is a rest stop, this is a rest stop west up of up 85 North of Atlanta. And we took the most likely route to the telephone to the rest stop and it took us approximately 45 minutes to get there. It was north of Atlanta. (15:10)

NARRATION

(15:12) The timing of the call to Jim Sullivan from the pay phone after the murder is highly suspect, so the police confront him as to the nature of the call. (15:19)

WELCOME HARRIS (15:20) My understanding that he did not remember the call and he did not when confronted with his wife's death he did not have anything to do with his wife's death. (15:32)

BILL MONTGOMERY (15:34) Most of the people close to Lita, including her parents, suspected, many of them knew in their gut, that Sullivan had done the killing, but the police couldn't prove it. They didn't have enough. (15:49)

NARRATION

(15:53) Sullivan continues to live the high-life in Palm Beach. In August of 1987, just 8 months after Lita's death, he re-marries. His new wife is a Palm Beach divorcee named Suki Rogers. As the months go by, Atlanta police become more and more determined to solve Lita's murder. They ask both the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and the FBI for help. Special Agent John Kingston of the FBI is assigned to the case in 1988. He begins by re-interviewing several key witnesses. (16:29)

JOHN KINGSTON: (16:30) Bob Christensen ended up being the most important of those. He lived right next door to Lita, and he told me a very interesting piece of information which is, James Sullivan called him 3 days before the murder and asked him whether he had seen anything suspicious in and around Lita's house. As it turned out, James kept saying, "Hey I think someone was knocking at her door at 4 in the morning." And so on and so forth. (16:52)

NARRATION

(16:54) Special Agent Kingston then decides to take a closer look at Sullivan's phone records. (16:59)

JOHN KINGSTON (17:00) About the same time he was calling Bob Christensen, actually just about an hour later, he called the Howard Johnson's Hotel in Sandy Springs, which is just 15 miles North of Lita's home. I knew that that was going to be an important piece of information. I knew I had to get there and find out who he called and whether they called him back. (17:18)

JOHN KINGSTON (17:20) I get the records from the manager, and they've got not only the registration records but they've got the phone records as well. So I start looking over the registration card, and I notice there's three people in the room, they're from North Carolina, and they're driving a Toyota, which is the type of car we were looking for. It's in the name of Johnny Fur, but that's an obvious alias, and from room 518 a call was made to Sullivan's home number at 7:44am. It lasted 2 ½ minutes, again from room 518 where these folks are staying in. So I know that they called him and he called them and they're connected somehow to this murder. (17:57)

JOHN KINGSTON (17:59) What I'm putting together is that these guys came to do an attempt on Lita Sullivan's life. It didn't work out so well. They knocked on her door. She didn't come to it, so now they're trying to get him to find out if anyone saw anything, or heard anything, or if they've been made, and so they ask him to call around. He does, he calls Christensen, as a matter of fact, and then Christensen doesn't know any thing at that point, so he calls them back and tells them, 'Hey, you know you didn't get spotted, so we got to go to Plan B and figure out what we're going to do from here.' (18:28)

NARRATION

(18:30) Investigators compile their evidence and present it to the Fulton County District Attorney. (18:35)

BRAD MOORES (18:37) If Jim Sullivan was going to be prosecuted for murder, it was going to have to be the State of Georgia that brought the charges, and up until the time that other witnesses started to

come forward, that wasn't going to happen. The District Attorney had taken the position that he was not going to prosecute Jim Sullivan until he had the identities of all the participants in this crime. (18:59)

NARRATION

(19:02) As the decade draws to a close, no charges have been laid in the murder of Lita Sullivan. In June of 1990, Suki Rogers Sullivan, Jim's current wife, suddenly leaves him and files for a divorce. What she tells the court in her divorce hearing will provide investigators with their next big break in the case. (19:21)

BLOCK THREE

NARRATION

(19:42) Palm Beach millionaire, James Vincent Sullivan is investigators' number one suspect in the brutal murder of his wife, Lita McClinton Sullivan in 1987. Although authorities have evidence of a string of phone calls made between Jim Sullivan's home in Florida and Lita's suspected murderers in Georgia, they cannot prove who exactly made the calls, or discern what was said in them. (20:04)

NARRATION

(20:06) In June of 1990, Suki Rogers Sullivan, who Jim had married just 8 months after Lita's death, files for divorce. She makes a stunning allegation. (20:16)

NARRATION

(20:18) Suki claims that late one evening in May of 1990, Jim told her that he had arranged for the murder of his ex-wife, Lita. He explains that Lita was after his hard-earned money – that in the divorce, he would have lost his property, his savings and his lifestyle. (20:34)

NARRATION

(20:36) Suki's story is heard by the federal grand jury, which had begun investigating Sullivan for the murder of Lita earlier that year. (20:43)

NARRATION

(20:45) Sullivan denies Suki's claim. He states that his comments were made in the heat of an ugly separation. News of her story, however, spreads through the Palm Beach community. (20:56)

BILL MONTGOMERY (20:57) At the start of the case, some of his close friends in the Palm Beach society kept their distance from him. (21:07)

NARRATION

(21:09) In 1992, Sullivan is forced to sell his prized mansion and moves into an apartment complex north of Palm Beach. He is also indicted by the Federal Grand Jury. (21:20)

JOHN KINGSTON (21:22) The exact charge Sullivan was charged with in the Federal System was use of interstate commerce facilities in the commission of murder for hire. As crazy as it sounds the statute of limitation in the Federal system is just 5 years for contract murder, but luckily that's just in the federal system. (21:36)

BRAD MOORES (21:37) The Federal government pursued a case against Jim Sullivan in federal court partly, I believe, because the state had not decided at that time to go forward and prosecute Jim Sullivan for murder. (21:50)

JOHN KINGSTON (21:52) Well, the case was only about a 6.5 or 7 out of 10, but we're out of time. We're at our statute of limitations. We got to go forward. (21:59)

NARRATION

(22:01) If convicted, Sullivan could face life imprisonment and up to one and a quarter million dollars in fines. (22:08)

NARRATION

(22:10) The federal case begins on November 2nd of 1992. The prosecution presents Suki Rogers Sullivan as their star witness. They also offer evidence of the long-distance phone calls made between Jim Sullivan's home in Florida and the alleged hit-man squad in Georgia. (22:26)

BRAD MOORES (22:26) Well, Jim Sullivan went out and hired 2 of the best lawyers that he could have possibly have found. (22:32)

NARRATION

(22:34) Defence attorney, Ed Garland argues that the prosecution has nothing to go on but 'innuendo, suspicion and the desire to end an unsolved crime'. He then points to the fact that there exists no clear evidence as to the nature, or content, of the telephone calls in question. (22:50)

NARRATION

(22:53) It does not take long for the defence to discredit Suki's testimony. She is called a 'gold-digger', and in the wake of her hostile divorce to Jim, deemed an unreliable witness. (23:03)

NARRATION

(23:04) The defence moves for a full dismissal and U.S. District Court Judge Marvin Shoob agrees. (23:09)

BRAD MOORES (23:11) It's important to remember that the federal indictment was not for murder. It was a very technical charge and the judge, in granting the directed verdict in favour of Sullivan, declared in his order that the government had proven that Sullivan was probably involved in the murder. I think that's something that's very hard for the average person to understand. (23:33)

NARRATION

(23:34) The case was dismissed on November 23rd, 1992. Sullivan left the courthouse without talking to reporters, but his attorney, Ed Garland, told the press that the defendant, upon hearing the ruling, 'said a prayer of thanksgiving for the fine judicial system we have'. (23:51)

BRAD MOORES (23:53) When the federal indictment case went to trial, Jo Ann and Emory were there in the courtroom day in and day out. And when the judge threw out those charges, it was an extremely difficult and devastating experience for them. (24:08)

NARRATION

(24:12) Lita McClinton's parents had no intention of letting Jim Sullivan escape justice. Since 1991, along with their attorney Brad Moores, they had been planning a civil suit against Sullivan. (24:24)

BRAD MOORES (24:25) One of the principle differences between a civil wrongful death case and a criminal murder case is in the civil case the burden of proof that must be established is the preponderance of the evidence or the greater weight of the evidence. In a criminal case the prosecutor must prove their case beyond and to the exclusion of all reasonable doubt. (24:45)

NARRATION

(24:47) Their civil trial against Sullivan takes place in 1994. (24:51)

NARRATION

(24:52) The prosecution once again puts Suki Rogers on the witness stand, and this time her testimony has a strong impact on the jury. So too does the overwhelming weight of investigators' accumulated evidence against Sullivan. (25:06)

NARRATION

(25:08) On February 23rd, 1994, the jury finds Jim Sullivan guilty of the wrongful death of Lita McClinton Sullivan. (25:16)

BRAD MOORES (25:17) The result of the civil wrongful death case is we got the 4 million dollar verdict against Jim Sullivan. The very next day Sullivan hired a new team of lawyers who pursued appeals all the way to the Supreme Court. (25:29)

NARRATION

(25:32) Sullivan's attorneys argue that the civil charges were filed too late. The McClinton's case was brought forward well after the 2-year statute of limitation imposed by the state of Florida. (25:43)

NARRATION

(23:44) On September 13th of the following year, the Florida Supreme Court overturns the verdict. (25:50)

BRAD MOORES (25:51) Remember that this murder was committed January 16 of 1987 was certainly very upsetting to Joanne and Emory and it didn't seem very just that, at least for a period of time, the courts held that the statute of limitations had expired and this case could not be brought. Justice delayed is justice denied and that's a long time for anyone to have to wait for justice. (26:23)

NARRATION

(26:26) The McClintons and their attorney now turn to the media for help. (26:30)

BRAD MOORES (26:31) The media kept an interest in this case, which in turn kept the case alive, and if the media had not been dedicated to following this case as many years as they did, who knows what would have happened. (26:45)

JOHN KINGSTON (26:46) Sure enough, one of these TV shows comes up with an incredible important clue that hands us the break that we've been needing. And I mean no one could have seen this coming. (26:55)

BLOCK FOUR

NARRATION

(27:18) Nearly a decade has passed since socialite Lita Sullivan was shot to death in her upscale, Buckhead, Georgia home. Lita's friends and family along with authorities are convinced the man behind her murder is none other than her millionaire ex-husband, James Vincent Sullivan. Sullivan has spent ten years denying any involvement in Lita's death and has twice called upon his high-priced legal team to avoid both criminal and civil convictions. (27:46)

AIDA FLAMM (27:47) It was unbelievable to me that Jim was going to walk away; that was, that everything else that the prosecution had, things that pointed to him, just weren't going to put him in jail because they didn't have the triggerman. (28:01)

NARRATION

(28:03) Having explored almost every angle of the investigation and coming up empty-handed, authorities needed a solid break. In March of 1998, that break comes from a woman living in Beaumont, Texas named Belinda Trahan. (28:17)

JOHN KINGSTON She told the attorney she worked for as a receptionist this story. The attorney told

his wife the story, and, before he could finish telling the story, his wife finished the story, and he says, “How did you know that?” And she says, “I saw it on *Extra*, the TV show.” (28:32)

NARRATION

(10:28) Out of the blue, Georgia Bureau of Investigation's Bob Ingram receives a phone call regarding the Sullivan case. (28:40)

BOB INGRAM (28:42) In interviewing Belinda, when I heard what she had to say, her detail raised a red flag, very intricate and specific with names, dates, and places all leading up to the conclusion that she knew exactly who was involved in this crime. And she specifically stated that her boyfriend was the killer, Tony Harwood. (29:05)

NARRATION

(29:07) Ingram shares the news with fellow investigator John Lang Jr. (29:11)

JOHN LANG (29:13) Belinda Trahan told us that her former boyfriend, Tony Harwood, told her that he was hired by a Florida millionaire to kill his black wife that lived in Atlanta. (29:25)

NARRATION

(29:31) Belinda Trahan is living in North Carolina and dating a long-haul trucker by the name of Phillip Anthony Harwood. (29:38)

BOB INGRAM (29:39) Belinda described Tony to be just a guy from North Carolina who by trade was a mover and what she described as just a rugged roughneck type individual. (29:50)

NARRATION

(29:52) Harwood loves to brag, and on one occasion he tells Belinda a strange story. (29:58)

JOHN LANG (29:59) Tony Harwood told Belinda that he had moved a millionaire from Macon, Georgia to West Palm Beach and that during the move that he, the millionaire, discussed having his wife killed in Atlanta and he would get a pretty good pay check out of that. (30:18)

NARRATION

(30:20) Belinda humours her boyfriend but does not truly believe he is capable of organizing a murder. Harwood then tells Belinda even more details about his plan. (30:30)

BOB INGRAM (30:32) Harwood tells her after his trip to Atlanta repeated attempts to get Lita to the door. He returns, and she said if you want to get a woman to the door merely deliver flowers and she'll respond. (30:44)

NARRATION

(30:47) When Tony Harwood next returns home to North Carolina, he tells Belinda her idea worked. (30:53)

BOB INGRAM (30:55) Harwood, after returning the second time, told her that delivering the flowers

worked, and Belinda blew him off and said, “Yeah right.” To which he responded, “Oh it was right. I did kill her.” (31:08)

NARRATION

(31:12) Strangely compelled to convince Belinda of his actions,
Harwood then takes her on an all-night drive to a roadside diner. (31:18)

BOB INGRAM (231:19) Harwood left North Carolina after the crime and Sullivan left Florida and they met at a Denny’s between the two points and Harwood and Belinda were sitting in a booth and when Sullivan arrived he questioned Harwood and Harwood vouched for Belinda and before departing Harwood received a folded newspaper from Sullivan containing an envelope with \$25,000 that he showed Belinda and at that time she said this is real, he is the killer and I’m right in the middle of this. (31:59)

NARRATION

(32:00) A frightened Belinda now leaves Tony Harwood for good,
moves to Texas and starts over. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation
now assigns John Lang to the task of apprehending Harwood. (32:14)

JOHN LANG (32:14) I took a trip to Texas and interviewed Belinda Trahan in person. Tony Harwood had been in touch with Belinda Trahan and had in fact corresponded with her through the mail, and she had his return address in Albemarle, North Carolina, and when I discussed her contacting Tony I thought perhaps that she could throw a little bait out there for him in hopes of getting him to talk about the murder on the telephone in the meantime while I was recording the conversation. (32:48)

NARRATION

(32:50) Trehan is more than willing to co-operate with investigators and
makes a series of recorded phone calls to her ex-boyfriend. (32:57)

JOHN LANG (32:59) And Tony Harwood was a little bit apprehensive at first to discuss aspects of the case, and he merely told her, he said: ‘Look, you know if the police come to you, you don’t know anything.’ So we knew at that time after those conversations that we were on the right track and we had the right person, but we wanted some additional connection between Harwood and Sullivan so that’s when I found out that Tony Harwood had worked at this moving company in Greensboro, North Carolina and I contacted the owner of the company and found some archived records in his attic we went up there and then the first box I opened about the 2nd or 3rd invoice down there was a contract between North American Van lines between Tony Harwood as the driver and Jim Sullivan as the mover so I knew at that time that we had the solid connection we needed linking Jim Sullivan and Tony Harwood. (34:05)

NARRATION

(34:08) On the 19th of April 1998, Tony Harwood is arrested at his home
in North Carolina. He is charged with felony murder. (34:16)

JOHN LANG (34:18) We went to Harwood’s house initially and had an arrest warrant in hand; however, told him we needed to talk to him at the police department and as he was coming out of the

house he made the statement, “I’ve been waiting for you guys for a long time.”(34:33)

JOHN LANG (34:35) He gave us everything we needed for the case. (34:37)

NARRATION

(34:41) Harwood admits to the details of Belinda's story. He tells investigators that he met Jim Sullivan while making a delivery to his mansion in Palm Beach in 1986. It was here that Sullivan told Harwood about his problem. (34:55)

BOB INGRAM (34:50) Sullivan met Harwood as a result of Harwood moving him, and Sullivan approached Harwood to take care of a problem - his wife back in Georgia who was about to take him for all his worth. Sullivan clearly played the victim in this, and Harwood said that he would eliminate the problem for Sullivan. (35:15)

NARRATION

(35:17) Tony Harwood also corroborates and fills in many of the details of the initial murder investigation. He had enlisted the help of 2 others and travelled to Atlanta with them. It was his writing on the Howard Johnson's registration book and they had in driven a white Toyota. Most importantly, Tony provides the contents of the call made from the rest area that day, 40 minutes after Lita was shot. (35:44)

BILL MONTGOMERY (35:46) Harwood does the shooting, calls Sullivan’s mansion. It’s about 9 o’clock in the morning and used just 2 words, Merry Christmas, which was a pre-arranged code message that the job had been done. (36:03)

NARRATION

(36:05) For all the information Tony Harwood provides, he never does reveal the names of his accomplices. He does, however, agree to testify against Jim Sullivan in court in exchange for a reduced sentence in the killing of Lita Sullivan. He pleads guilty to voluntary manslaughter and receives a sentence of 20 years in prison. (36:24)

JOHN LANG (36:25) After Harwood gave his confession to us, we knew we had enough probable cause for Jim Sullivan. (36:32)

BILL MONTGOMERY (36:32) The district attorney’s office called Sullivan’s attorneys and said, “Hey we have the triggerman and we’re proceeding with an incitement.” (36:45)

NARRATION

(36:46) Sullivan's attorneys respond by saying that since Sullivan still had nothing to hide, he would promptly and willingly turn himself over to investigators. (36:54)

JOHN LANG (36:55) Sullivan was supposed to turn himself in to authorities on a Monday; however, he never did appear and the hunt was on at that time. (37:07)

NARRATION

(37:09) The hunt won't be easy. Jim Sullivan has fled the country and with his resources of cash, and charisma, he could be anywhere in the world. (37:18)

BLOCK FIVE

NARRATION

(37:40) 11 years have passed since the murder of Jo Ann and Emory McClinton's first-born daughter, Lita. Lita's millionaire husband Jim Sullivan is authorities' number one suspect, but, for years, the McClinton's watch as their ex-son-in-law uses his money and influence to manoeuvre around the law. (37:58)

NARRATION

(37:59) In 1998, investigators find the evidence the McClintons had been hoping for. Long-haul trucker, Phillip Anthony Harwood, is arrested and confesses to being hired by Sullivan to murder Lita in 1987. A warrant is issued for Sullivan's arrest and upon hearing of it, he flees the country. (38:18)

NARRATION

(38:19) Fulton County Assistant District Attorney, Sheila Ross is preparing the case against Sullivan when she hears of his disappearance. (38:26)

SHEILA ROSS (38:27) So at the time that Tony Harwood identified Jim Sullivan to GBI in 1998, we believe that he was in Costa Rica. He had a house in Costa Rica that was his last known address was in Costa Rica. However, we searched for him in Costa Rica; he was not there, he had fled Cost Rica and we really had no idea where he had gone from there. (38:49)

NARRATION

(38:51) James Sullivan, the working-class boy from the south side of Boston, had spent his entire life jealously and viciously protecting his financial achievements. Police understand that a man who could put his ambition and wealth above all else, even the value of human life, would never willingly turn himself in. (39:08)

NARRATION

(39:10) The search for Jim Sullivan is turned over to the FBI. (39:14)

MIKE GREENE (30:15) Well we were initially contacted by the Atlanta Police Department with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation that requested our assistance in attempting to locate James Sullivan who they had recently obtained a murder warrant for. We had an initial meeting with both agencies, obtained all the information that we needed. We were also told that he may have fled to the country of Costa Rica. I obtained a federal fugitive warning for Mr. Sullivan charging him with leaving the state

of Georgia after being charged in this state with a felony. (39:43)

NARRATION

(39:44) The FBI move in on Sullivan's residence in Costa Rica but he is not at home. Costa Rican locals, neighbours and Sullivan's associates are questioned. (39:53)

NARRATION

(39:54) Police learn that Sullivan paid a local bartender to drive him out of Costa Rica and into Panama. (39:59)

MIKE GREENE (40:00) Further investigation with our individuals that cover Panama, they were able to determine that he had fled by commercial airline from Panama City to Caracas, Venezuela. (40:11)

JOHN LANG (40:12) Once we found Sullivan had gone to Caracas, he virtually disappeared and we had no contact with him. (40:20)

NARRATION

(40:12) Police lose Sullivan's trail in Venezuela. (40:24)

SHEILA ROSS (40:25) We knew Sullivan had 2 passports, he had a valid United States passport and he also had an Irish passport. We knew he also had vast means to travel and get about different parts of the world. We had flagged his passports through Interpol but we were not getting any hits off of his passports through Interpol, so we knew he had a lot of resources and he could use those resources to flee, to change his identity, to do many things that would allow evade capture. (40:54)

NARRATION

(40:55) Sullivan now leads authorities on a four-year manhunt around the globe. (40:59)

MIKE GREENE (41:00) We used many different techniques in attempting to locate Mr. Sullivan. They included putting his name and picture in the media, we used *America's Most Wanted*. Another technique that we attempted to use was to check and investigate his monetary background trying to see where he had money stored, how his money was spent. We also made contact with his attorney. His attorney was not corporative with us and claimed attorney client privilege and would not provide us any information. (41:27)

NARRATION

(41:29) Finally, after four years of searching, Mike Greene gets the break he's been looking for. (41:34)

MIKE GREENE (41:36) In early April 2002, I received a phone call from our agent who was covering leads for us in the country of Thailand and he said, "you won't believe it, but we were able to verify through the Thai authorises that Mr. Sullivan had made official entry into Thailand." (41:51)

NARRATION

(41:52) To generate more information, Greene arranges for Sullivan to be featured on a TV show,

America's Most Wanted. This time, including an update as to a suspected location. (42:03)

MIKE GREENE (42:04) We featured Mr. Sullivan on *America's Most Wanted*, and the night that we featured him I received another phone call from an agent in Thailand as well as from an anonymous caller, both verifying a specific location for Mr. Sullivan. (42:17)

JOHN LANG (42:18) Sullivan was living with his fourth wife that he had married and they were living about 100 miles from Bangkok, living down there somewhere near the water. (42:29)

NARRATION

(42:30) Thai authorities begin watching Sullivan while the State Department prepares for his arrest. (42:35)

NARRATION

(42:37) On the 2nd of July 2002, FBI agents and Thai police descend upon Sullivan and his wife as they return home from a walk on the beach. (42:27)

NARRATION

(42:28) Sullivan, now 63 years of age, is taken to an overcrowded prison in Bangkok where he spends the next 19 months desperately fighting his extradition back to the United States. (42:59)

MIKE GREENE (43:00) In March of 2004, I was asked by our agent that works in Thailand to come to Thailand to assist in extraditing Sullivan back to the United States. When I first met Mr. Sullivan, he made some mention that this was all a lie and a big mistake; he didn't appear to be very happy. I think he realized that the conditions in the Thai prisons compared to the United State prisons are very much different. During that time, I realized he had contracted gout wearing a slipper, or a sandal, on one of his feet and that was one of his big complaints was his treatment while in the Thai prison. (43:37)

NARRATION

(43:39) On March 26th, a dishevelled Jim Sullivan lands in Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport in Atlanta. He is wearing a surgical mask and only one shoe. After 6 years of running, Sullivan is back on American soil. (43:54)

SHEILA ROSS (43:55) There was an overwhelming motive for him wanting his wife dead. He had 4 million reasons to want her dead. We also had Belinda Trahan identifying Sullivan from a six person photographic line-up. We had Tony Harwood who said Sullivan hired him to kill his wife and that he indeed took money from Sullivan to kill his wife. We also had phone records corroborating Belinda's testimony and Harwood's testimony that connected Sullivan and Harwood in 1987. We also had moving records, records from Tony Harwood's moving company, which connected and put together Tony Harwood and Jim Sullivan two months prior to the murder. And we also had Jim Sullivan's flight evidence of guilt meaning the moment that he gets captured, the moment that he hears that Tony Harwood is in custody he flees all the way around the world to avoid facing a Fulton County jury on these charges. (44:48)

NARRATION

(44:50) On March 14th, 2006, James Vincent Sullivan is sentenced to life in prison without parole. His great ambition, and his long rise to the top', will end here. (45:01)

BRAD MOORES (45:02) I have no doubt that Jim Sullivan thought that he was going to get away with this crime. But those days are over, obviously, because he will spend the rest of his life waking up every morning on a steel cot in an isolated cell in a maximum-security penitentiary in Georgia. (45:22)

BILL MONTGOMERY (45:24) Credit definitely goes with the feds and the Atlanta police and the Fulton County District Attorney's office. The key word is perseverance. They never let it go. They kept pursuing it wherever it needed to be pursued. (45:39)

BRAD MOORES (45:41) Emory and Jo Ann waited almost 20 years for justice in this case. And they will never get over the loss of their daughter especially in circumstances like this. There's nothing that is ever going to ever bring Lita back. It's hard to understand how anyone can get through a loss like this without thinking about this loss every single day and I'm sure Emory and Jo Ann think about Lita every single day of their lives. (46:21)

CREDITS