



**Tonya Maxwell** began working as a Mitigation Specialist in North Carolina after spending much of her professional life as a newspaper journalist, reporting for publications that included the Chicago Tribune and USA Today. She honed her storytelling by writing crime and courts stories as well as investigative pieces. Her writing and reporting awards include a team effort that was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Investigative Reporting. She finds that the work of a mitigation specialist is nearly identical to that of her work as reporter: She still gathers records. She still tracks down people who sometimes don't want to be found. She still chats up attorneys. She likes most of them. She is somewhat obsessed with flushing out the enlightening details in a client's story, growing the tastiest Cherokee Purple tomatoes and hiking in National Parks.