I was born in fabulous country...

And I've always been so glad I was...

On that edge of Florida where it joins Georgia.
At 17, we moved to the mountains in northeast Georgia.
My parents started Laurel Falls Camp in 1920.

It was the first private camp for girls in Georgia.

When my parents got ill in 1925, I came back from China and became the camp director.
I learned more from the campers themselves because I tried not to put barriers between me and them and we talked together about everything...
OUR BODIES, SEX, DEATH, LIFE, GOD, OUR PARENTS, HATE, LOVE, FEAR, ANXIETY, GUILT, AND BEAUTY.

WE TALKED MUSIC AND POETRY, WE WATCHED THE MOUNTAIN AND ITS WILD BIRDS, WE DANCED, WE CREATED THINGS TOGETHER.

THEY ASKED QUESTIONS, AND THOSE QUESTIONS REMAINED WITH ME.
"If we had been in Hiroshima at a summer camp with other children that bomb would’ve fallen on us, wouldn’t it?"

"Yet we didn’t have a thing to do with this war, nor did those children over there either."

"Did the men and women who were lynched have children? How are the children feeling? Who’s looking after them?"

"What can we do?"
AFTER TWENTY-EIGHT YEARS, I CLOSED THE CAMP. THE REACTION TO MY FIRST NOVEL, STRANGE FRUIT, AND THE UPCOMING RELEASE OF KILLERS OF THE DREAM PARTLY LED TO THE DECISION.

I HOPED THAT THE IDEA OF LAUREL FALLS WOULD NOT DIE. I WANTED TO BELIEVE THAT WE HAD STARTED A CHAIN REACTION . . .

. . . OF DREAMS THAT WOULD GO ON TOUCHING CHILD AFTER CHILD IN OUR SOUTH.
Killers of the Dream

"Talk about your devious demagoguery not only is this claptrap but very badly done claptrap." --Jack Tarver

"A woefully unsound book. Miss Smith is a prisoner in the monastery of her own mind." --Ralph McGill

The book made quite a blaze—but the blaze practically destroyed the author and her writing career.
This loss of one's old psychic defenses, one's old image of the self, is the price that mankind pays and has always paid for profound cultural change. And this loss is often the cause of the violence that change sometimes brings forth.
Cancer is the only big fear I had ever had. Always I felt I could take anything but that... And that is what I had to take.
THE TRAGIC FACT IS, NEITHER CANCER NOR SEGREGATION WILL GO AWAY WHILE WE CLOSE OUR EYES.

BOTH ARE DANGEROUS DISEASES THAT HAVE TO BE HANDLED QUICKLY AND SKILLFULLY BECAUSE THEY SPREAD, THEY METASTASIZE THROUGHOUT THE ORGANISM.

WE HAVE SEEN THIS HAPPEN TOO OFTEN, TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE DELAYED DOING ANYTHING ABOUT CANCER.

WE HAVE ALSO SEEN SICK RACE RELATIONS METASTASIZE THROUGHOUT OUR COUNTRY— AND INDEED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH.
DURING MY LIFE, I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF TRAVELLING AND CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE.

BUILDING BRIDGES TO OTHER PEOPLE: TO ONE, THEN TO ONE MORE, THEN ON AND ON.

WHETHER ACROSS THE GLOBE, ON MAIN STREET, OR IN MY OWN BACK YARD . . .

I CONFRONTED AND WORKED TO KILL THE GIANTS AND PYGMIES OF MEMORY, OF BELIEF, PULLING US THIS WAY AND THAT . . .

THE ONES THAT WORK TO GET US TO BELIEVE IN FALSE HOPES AND FALSE FEARS, IN WHITE SUPREMACY . . .

THE ONES THAT HINDER US FROM CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER AND OURSELVES.
"WE ARE DEEPLY SADDENED TO LEARN OF THE LOSS OF OUR DEAR FRIEND, LILLIAN SMITH...."

HER WRITINGS, HER EXEMPLARY LIFE AND HER COMMITMENT TO PEOPLE AND HUMANITY INSPIRED MILLIONS....

SHE WAS ONE OF THE BRIGHTEST STARS IN THE HUMAN FIRMAMENT....

PROBABLY NO SOUTHERNER SEALED THE CONSCIENCE OF WHITE SOUTHERNERS ON THE QUESTION OF RACIAL INJUSTICE THAN LILLIAN SMITH.

SHE CARVED FOR HERSELF AN IMPERISHABLE NICHE IN THE ANNALS OF AMERICAN HISTORY."--MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SEPT. 29, 1966
LILLIAN SMITH
DECEMBER 13, 1897 - SEPTEMBER 29, 1950

"Death can kill a man; that is all it can do to him: it cannot end his life, because of memory...."