All the Sinners Bleed—S.A. Cosby

Titus Crown, former FBI Agent, and the first black Sheriff of Charon County, Virginia is tasked with confronting a shooter at the local high school. The young man, Latrell who has a history of drug use and is doing the shooting is known to Titus and is the son of his childhood friend. As Titus is attempting to talk Latrell down, Latrell is saying a lot of weird stuff about the teacher that he shot and says check the teacher’s phone and then he charges the deputies and two of the deputies shot and kill him. The teacher killed is one of the favorites of the students and was one of Titus’s favorite teachers when he was in high school.

Titus confiscates the teacher’s phone and what he finds is pure evil. There are videos and photos of the teacher, Latrell and another man who is always wearing a wolf mask, torturing and killing black and brown teenagers. When they search the teacher’s home they find thumb drives with more videos and photos of both black and white children being tortured. They also find a canvas titled the The Secret Garden at the teacher’s house that depicts a forest scene that looks familiar to Titus. He feels that if they find that area depicted on the canvas they will find the bodies. They do find the area and they dig and find the bodies of 7 murdered teenagers.

While Titus is investigating the murders and trying to find the masked man he is also dealing with a group called the Sons of the Confederacy who want to march during a fall festival and another group that wants to counter march against them and remove a confederate stature on the town square and an ex-girlfriend comes to town wanting to do a podcast on the murders. Not only that he is having to deal with a councilman who really wants him removed as Sheriff and to hand the murder case over to the State Police. As Titus is dealing with everything else the masked serial killer is not done killing yet and the body count rises.

Cosby’s is considered a “Southern noir” writer and an author to keep an eye on. His writing is tense and gritty as well as poetic. I Highly recommend this book if you are into tough mystery thrillers.