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Synopsis for *La Vida Denilda*

La Vida Denilda tells the amazing adventures of **Denilda Lizardo dos Santos**, a true story which reads like the script of an Indiana Jones sequel.

To begin with, Deni's heritage is the fascinating and chaotic heritage of Brazil itself, as her ancestors include a white Portuguese plantation owner, who in a fit of passion runs away with one of her black African slaves, and produces eight sons, including Deni's father. He marries an Indian from the rainforest, and they raise their family in the slums of Rio de Janeiro.

Deni escapes Brazil after her brother is murdered by the Death Squads terrorizing the country, and then still a teenager, she travels alone for more than a year. She retraces the path of millions of European immigrants as she hitchhikes across Brazil's immense interior, sails down the Amazon River, then walks through the jungle into Bolivia and hikes into the Andes. Later, dressed as a nun, the political dissident escapes to Peru, before making her way to Europe. Finally it is in Italy that she rises overnight from washing dishes in a bar, to a successful life as a model, performer and documentary filmmaker.

What most endears is the unique vitality that comes through in Deni's story, her ability to manage this one life, relying on skills which cannot be learned in any school—vitality and joy to live yet another new life, wherever she might land on this earth. This energy to survive and to make a day of it in all kinds of situations comes through in her straightforward, unpretentious language.

Denilda's memoir will be written by the bestselling author **Cathleen Miller**, who wrote **Desert Flower**, an international sensation which has sold 11 million copies in 55 languages, and in 2009 was adapted as a feature film shown around the globe.

La Vida Denilda, the tale of a woman who embodies the wild headstrong spirit of her homeland, comes at a fortuitous time. **Brazil** is more than an emerging market. The fifth largest nation in the world is a booming country run by a female president, and considered to be an example of a successfully striving society. The curious eyes of the planet will focus on Brazil as it hosts the **World Cup in 2014**, and becomes the first South American country to host the **Olympic Games in 2016**.

La Vida Denilda will provide a first-person exploration of this vast and untamed nation, Deni's discovery of the treasures of Italy, and the secrets of a life well lived.