

# SUSAN KEARNEY

**USA Today Bestselling Author**

Dear Readers and Friends,

Once again, your support has been overwhelming, and my publisher is extremely pleased with my sales. This means I get to write more books like ISLAND HEAT and more romantic suspense like KISS ME DEADLY. During the year I'll also have the pleasure of meeting many of you personally. I'll be in Houston at the upcoming Romantic Times Convention in April. In addition, I'm attending the BEA in New York in June. Please come over and say hello. I look forward to meeting all of you.

Your continued enthusiasm for me and my books is awesome and inspires me to keep writing. My newest book, ISLAND HEAT, will be hitting the stores during the first week of February. I've posted excerpts and a book trailer on my web site at [www.susankearey.com](http://www.susankearey.com). My just completed book trailer for ISLAND HEAT was fun to make but also a lot of hard work. I thought you might enjoy a few pictures where you can see I became personally involved in all levels of this production and these are posted inside my member section on the web site. Be sure to visit my web site [www.susankearey.com](http://www.susankearey.com) and let me know what you think. I'd love to hear from all of you.

I've always written romantic suspense and after more than twenty Harlequin Intrigues, I'm pleased to be writing single title romantic suspense for Tor. I love KISS ME DEADLY's cover and believe it will attract romantic suspense readers who enjoyed my Intrigues as well as new readers of my paranormals. KISS ME DEADLY is fast paced, sexy and set near my home town in Tampa, Florida. Enjoy the enclosed advanced reading copy and I'd love to hear from all of you. If you want to reach me, my address is [susan@susankearney.com](mailto:susan@susankearney.com).

Thank you again for your continued support!

With Warmest Regards,  
Susan Kearney



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USA Today Bestselling Author

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# SUSAN KEARNEY

# KISS ME DEADLY

"From the first page, Kearney captures the reader."  
—Affaire de Coeur

Tor Romance June 2007 ISBN: 0765356678

Read excerpts at  
[www.susankearney.com](http://www.susankearney.com)



tor romance

"Kearney is a master storyteller."

—Virginia Henley

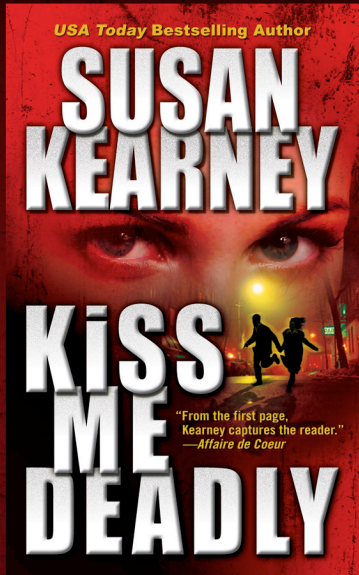
Mandy Newman won the biggest lottery in history. She and her coworkers picked the right numbers and hit the jackpot... and then someone stole the ticket.

Now Mandy's fellow winners are being murdered one by one and an attempted drowning convinces Mandy she's next on the killer's hit list. In urgent need of protection and help to recover the ticket, she finds both, wrapped in the sexy form of DEA agent Zachary Taylor.

But Zack abandoned Mandy once before, so relying on him doesn't come easy. If she's going to trust him, he needs to start telling her the truth. And she must do the same--since Mandy has a secret that could devastate them both. While on the run, Mandy and Zack struggle between sparkling sensuality and latent distrust. But can they overcome their past as a killer attempts to destroy their future?

# SUSAN KEARNEY

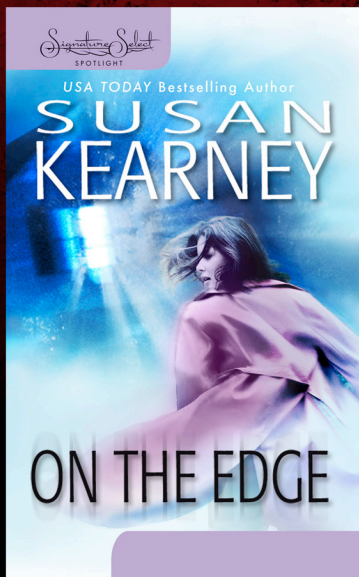
USA Today Bestselling Author



Susan Kearney used to set herself on fire four times a day, now a USA TODAY BESTSELLING author, she does something really hot—she writes paranormal romance for Tor and will launch Tor's first venture into romantic suspense with KISS ME DEADLY in 2007.

She can apply the old rule of "write what you know" and never run out of ideas for characters and plots. An All-American and professional diver, expert in martial arts, sailor, real estate broker and owner of a barter business as well as women's fitness and three hair salons, she has enough material for a lifetime.

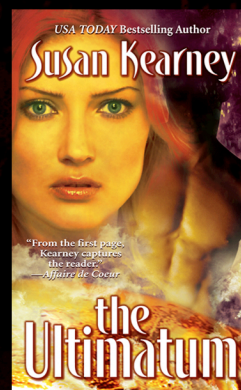
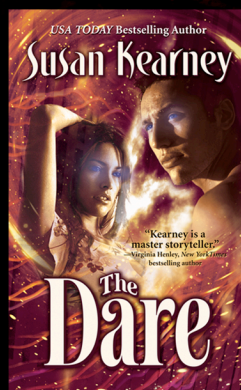
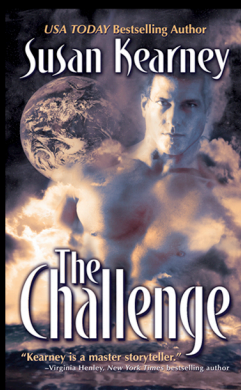
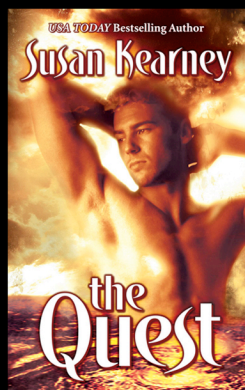
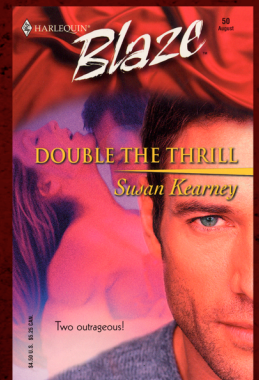
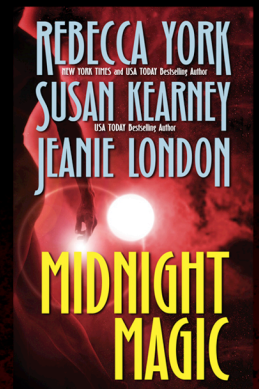
Susan Kearney has become very involved in her book trailers and was the executive producer and screenwriter for Island Heat's trailer. In addition, she cast the talent, helped direct and edit the production. She enjoys promoting her books and meeting book sellers and her fans.



## Conferences and Appearances:

Romantic Times - Huston, Texas  
BEA - NYC, New York  
Ladies Home Show - Detroit, Michigan  
Dragoncon - Atlanta, Georgia

A graduate of the University of Michigan, Kearney, a native of New Jersey, writes full time. She resides in a suburb of Tampa with her husband, kids and Boston Terrier. Currently she's plotting her way through her 42nd work of fiction. You can reach her through this web site: <http://www.susankearney.com>



# SUSAN KEARNEY

**USA Today Bestselling Author**

## Key Selling Points

- 1) Susan Kearney is a USA Today Bestselling Author with over 40 published books to her credit
- 2) Over 5 million books in print in 18 languages
- 3) Walden Books Series Bestseller list—top 10
- 4) Speaker at National and Regional conferences
- 5) Sells consistently in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, England, Japan, Italy, France, Germany and Sweden
- 6) Has written for Tor, Harlequin, Simon & Schuster, Berkley and Leisure.
- 7) Writes or has written suspense, paranormal, contemporary, futuristic, historical and science fiction
- 8) Career Achievement Award for series romantic suspense
- 9) Book trailers on website
- 10) [Http://www.SusanKearney.com](http://www.SusanKearney.com)



## Quotes

A darn good read! *—Stella Cameron NYT Best Selling Author*

Kiss Me Deadly sizzles with a steamy mix of passion, danger, and intrigue. Susan Kearney takes you on a wild ride, keeping you guessing until the very end. *—Karen Rose USA Today Best Selling Author*

Kearney is a master storyteller. Searing sensuality, rich detail and action that grabs you and won't let go. *—Virginia Henley NYT Best Selling Author*

Four & 1/2 Stars! From the first page, Kearney captures the reader . . . the tension builds, the danger quickens . . . *—Affaire de Coeur*

Romantic suspense with a well-woven, intricate plot. Once you start you not be able to put it down. *—About Romance Fiction*

Kearney catches the reader unawares. *—Southern Book Trade*

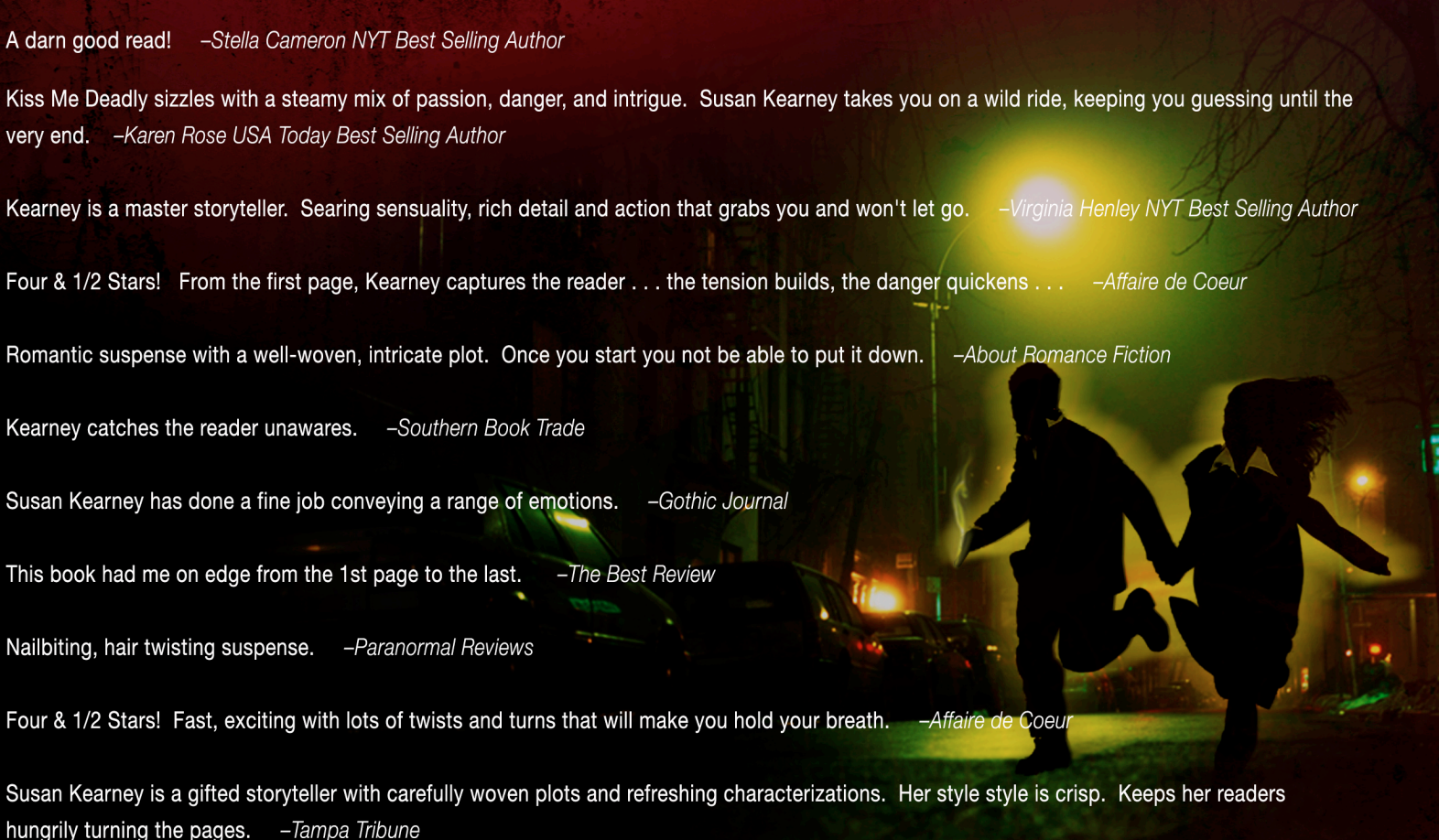
Susan Kearney has done a fine job conveying a range of emotions. *—Gothic Journal*

This book had me on edge from the 1st page to the last. *—The Best Review*

Nailbiting, hair twisting suspense. *—Paranormal Reviews*

Four & 1/2 Stars! Fast, exciting with lots of twists and turns that will make you hold your breath. *—Affaire de Coeur*

Susan Kearney is a gifted storyteller with carefully woven plots and refreshing characterizations. Her style is crisp. Keeps her readers hungrily turning the pages. *—Tampa Tribune*



# SUSAN KEARNEY

**USA Today Bestselling Author**

## **Tor Romance**

ISLAND HEAT	ISBN# 0-765-35666-X
UNLEASHED	ISBN# 0-425-21211-4
THE QUEST	ISBN# 0-765-35449-7
MIDNIGHT MAGIC	ISBN# 0-765-35485-3
THE ULTIMATUM	ISBN# 0-765-35448-9
THE DARE	ISBN# 0-765-35192-7
THE CHALLENGE	ISBN# 0-765-34891-8

## **Harlequin Intrigue**

PROTECTOR S.O.S.	ISBN# 0-373-22814-7
HIJACKED HONEYMOON	ISBN# 0-373-22808-2
OUT FOR JUSTICE	ISBN# 0-373-22774-4
SAVING THE GIRL NEXT DOOR	ISBN# 0-373-22713-2
DEFENDING THE HEIRESS	ISBN# 0-373-22709-4
DADDY TO THE RESCUE	ISBN# 0-373-22705-1
ROYAL PURSUIT	ISBN# 0-373-22690-X
ROYAL RANSOM	ISBN# 0-373-22686-1
ROYAL TARGET	ISBN# 0-373-22682-9
THE HIDDEN YEARS	ISBN# 0-373-22636-5
HIDDEN HEARTS	ISBN# 0-373-22640-3
LOVERS IN HIDING	ISBN# 0-373-22644-6
LULLABYE AND GOODNIGHT	ISBN# 0-373-22594-6
LITTLE BOYS BLUE	ISBN# 0-373-22590-3
CRADLE WILL ROCK	ISBN# 0-373-22590-3
A NIGHT WITHOUT END	ISBN# 0-373-22552-0
PRIORITY MALE	ISBN# 0-373-22478-8
DECEIVING DADDY	ISBN# 0-373-22456-7
SWEET DECEPTION	ISBN# 0-373-22428-1
LULLABY DECEPTION	ISBN# 0-373-22410-9
A BABY TO LOVE	ISBN# 0-373-22378-1
TARA'S CHILD	ISBN# 0-373-22340-4

## **Harlequin Blaze**

BEYOND THE EDGE	ISBN# 0-373-79222-0
UNCONTROLLABLE	ISBN# 0-373-79189-5
A BURNING OBSESSION	ISBN# 0-373-79054-6
BORDERING ON OBSESSION	ISBN# 0-373-79100-3
DOUBLE THE THRILL	ISBN# 0-373-79054-6
ENSLAVED	ISBN# 0-373-79029-5

## **Harlequin National Consumer Promotion**

UNDER WRAPS	ISBN# 0-373-83595-7
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## **Harlequin Special Projects - Anthology**

ESSENCE OF MIDNIGHT	ISBN# 0-973-83614-7
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## **Harlequin Reprint**

FIVE TIMES TROUBLE	ISBN# 0-373-23019-2
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## **Signature Select Collection**

ON THE EDGE	ISBN# 0-373-83648-1
THE HOPE CHEST	ISBN# 0-373-83645-7

## **Pocket Books**

THE BATTLE OF BETAZED	ISBN# 0-7434-3434-X
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## **Leisure Books**

CONQUER THE MIST	ISBN# 0-8439-4437-4
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## **Red Sage Publishing**

SECRETS I - Anthology - THE PROPOSAL by Ivy Landon (pseudonym)
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# Love & Rockets

A Brandon author combines sexy romance with spaceships, laser guns, psychic powers and time travel.

By KEVIN WALKER  
The Tampa Tribune

**TAMPA** — Life-changing moments never arrive on a schedule.

For Susan Kearney, a Brandon resident who has sold millions of books in the past decade, the moment arrived 11 years ago as she sat poolside, reading a book while her children took swim practice.

Since childhood, Kearney loved to read, usually science fiction or mysteries.

"I always had my nose in a book," she said.

At 40, she still did.

So, as the kids splashed in the pool, she read. And suddenly thought: "You know, I could do this." And unlike most book readers who have this thought, Kearney actually did it, even if her ambition outweighed her skill.

"I had no background in this whatsoever," she said. "I also had no idea how hard it was going to be."

She ended up writing a 600-page manuscript that was "almost all dialogue." Still, it felt good completing it.

Some 40 novels later, Kearney, 51, recalls that first effort fondly. It might not have been all that great, but it led, eventually, to her making a living as a writer combining romance stories with the paranormal, suspense and science fiction.

The latest, "Island Heat" (Tor, \$6.99), comes out Tuesday. The paperback is about a lonely actress who meets a traveler from another world who is looking to save his enslaved people. The promotion, however, reads: "Read It and Burn."

"I write hot," said Kearney, laughing. "I think it's important to let people know what they are going to get before they buy it. I really believe that the most exciting time in people's lives is when they are falling in love, and people want to read about that."

Sex, Kearney said, is part of that experience.

"It isn't all about the physical. It's about the emotions two people are going through, about conflicts between them," she said. "If you skip a sex scene in my books, you are missing out on the story."

So how did the New Jersey native — a former dive champion, real estate agent, hair salon owner and suburban mom with no experience — get so good at writing fast-paced, sexy novels that have been translated into Japanese, French, German, even Icelandic?

The old-fashioned way: She worked her tail off.

## Nowhere Near Ready

A decade ago, after finishing that 600-page opus, Kearney faced the problem of any beginning writer: What now?

You know how networking always seems an important part of any success story? Well, you have reached that part of this story.

Armed only with the manuscript, Kearney looked for help in an issue of Romantic Times magazine. She saw a listing for St. Petersburg author Virginia Henley and wrote her a letter.

Fortunately for her, Henley replied. She also asked Kearney to come with her to a book convention in Miami. Once there, "within 10 minutes, I met Virginia's agent and publisher — I

was just nowhere near ready for this," Kearney said.

No one bought the book, but the agent was encouraging. Kearney kept writing. She completed five manuscripts in 18 months.

How did she manage this with kids who were, at that time, about 14 and 11 (daughter Tara and son Logan)? She wrote three to four hours a day, requested privacy, and they gave it.

"They were told not to bother Mom while she was writing unless the house was on fire," Kearney said. "They learned to do their own laundry; they knew where the food was. They grew up to be very self-sufficient."

What did she get for her labors? "About 200 rejections," she said.

But then she managed to sell a historical romance. Unfortunately, the publisher folded, and the book never saw the light of the day.

Refusing to give up — "I can be very stubborn," Kearney said — she switched to romantic suspense novels. She sold one to Harlequin Intrigue, which specializes in that genre. She went on to write 25 of them.

Along the way, she met fellow Tampa Bay writer Charlotte Douglas, who has achieved her own success with the Maggie Skerritt mystery novels set in Pinellas County. Douglas and Kearney — who to this day send early drafts to each other for feedback — were hired to write a "Star Trek: The Next Generation" novel, "The Battle of Betazed" (2002), in which starship Enterprise counselor Deanna Troi returns to her home planet to ... well, just read the book.

## Success And The Future

With the "Star Trek" book and her Harlequin success, Kearney has moved to Tor publishing. She also

has realized a dream. When she was 13 or 14, her grandmother gave her a romance book. She read it and thought, "This is what I was missing in those science fiction books!"

She longed for someone to combine the genres. She ended up doing it herself. In novels such as "The Quest" and "The Ultimatum," Kearney combines spaceships and time travel with sexy romance, often between antagonists. She'll move back to suspense in June, when Tor publishes "Kiss Me Deadly," about Tampa office workers who win the lottery, but then the ticket is stolen and people start dying.

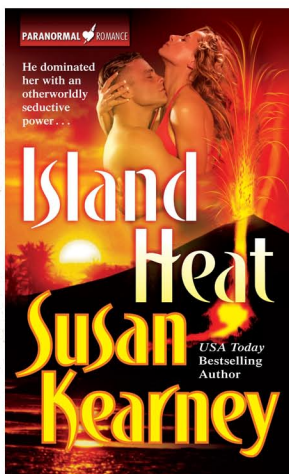
No matter the genre, Kearney always thinks first of giving readers a story full of twists and turns, reversals and surprises.

"I'm always thinking about pacing. Movies are quick; the Internet is quick; people want the story to keep moving," Kearney said. "I don't spend two pages describing a house."

Things have come together nicely for Kearney. Her daughter, now 24, shot the cover photograph for "Island Heat." And that first 600-page manuscript? She turned it into a novel, "The Challenge," in 2005.

"It was the first book I wrote, and the 38th I got published."

Read more about Kearney and all of her books at [www.susankearney.com](http://www.susankearney.com).



The latest book by Susan Kearney, pictured at top, comes out Tuesday.

## She's got romance covered

By NANCY LAWSON  
Tribune Staff Writer

BRANDON — She sank coyly into her plush daybed, her sea green eyes staring mischievously out at all those who dared to enter. Her heart raced at the intrusive camera flashes, and she tried not to complain too loudly about the hot studio lights invading her private chateau in the country.

Outside, two Boston terriers yelped and fought and cried to get into the house. But Susan Kearney would not let them in. She had no room for dogs in her life now. She was posing and preening for the portfolio that would take her straight to the top, already an international model on the brink of fame and fortune ...

Oops! We've gone too far. OK, OK, so she's not exactly an international model, or any model for that matter. She doesn't live in the country, and she really does love her dogs. The daybed isn't quite that plush, and the only photographer around is the one from the local newspaper.

But it's easy to fantasize when you're writing about a Harlequin romance novelist. Especially a married one who lives in Brandon with two kids, two dogs, two computers, a fax machine and a passion for all things passionate.

Kearney (not a pen name) is always plotting, inventing characters with soap opera monikers like Brooke Evans and Logan Stone — that one is actually named after her 10-year-old son.

On her Word Perfect program in the den of her spacious home on Gornto Lake, she makes test-tube babies, gives women amnesia, kidnaps children.

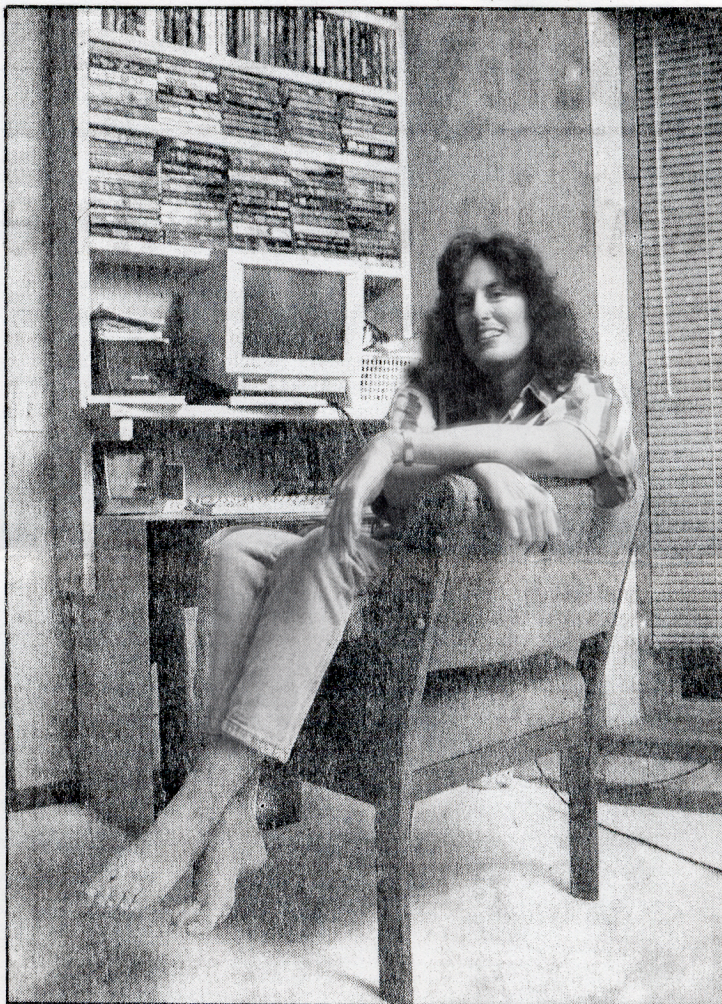
Playing with other people's lives — however fictional — can be dangerous, especially when the guys installing your carpet overhear your discussions with your writing buddy, Charlotte.

"I said to her, 'We've got to kill him off now,' and these men looked up at me like 'Uh-oh, she's going to murder somebody,'" Kearney said.

"And then we were thinking, 'Should we poison him, or should we shoot him?'"

Sounds like a nice life, but if you think you can just retire and get rich off penning your wildest fantasies, check this out:

Harlequin takes only one in every 1,000 submissions. And they're very picky about their characters, too. As the author of one published Harlequin Intrigue novel and another



JAY NOLAN/Tribune photo

**Sue Kearney lounges in front of the computer in her Brandon home. Kearney's latest book "Tara's Child" has been published by Harlequin.**

er on the way, Kearney can practice only limited mind control in her stories.

She can't kill animals, or even wound babies. She can't use spies, espionage, gems or drugs. And though she writes her books on a computer, she has to steer clear of writing about computers.

She must adhere to a certain length, a certain type of plot, a certain level of sensuality and violence. C'mon, these Harlequin novels are wholesome — full of committed men and faithful women, stable lives and happy endings.

"You could not have this woman marry a guy, and then fool around with another man, and then divorce the first one. ... Absolutely not," Kearney said. "They really stress family values. There's no adultery ... They push marriage, they push commitment."

And this stuff sells?

It sells so well, Kearney says, that Harlequin won't buy anything that doesn't fit the mold. They're just giving women what they want to read, she said.

This is not to say that all her characters are fading femme fa-

tales — an image that makes Kearney cringe. None of this walking-straight-into-danger stuff, clad in a too-tight nightgown to see what noises are lurking in the basement.

No, Kearney's characters are smart enough to call the cops.

"I hate stupid women in these books. My women are intelligent," she said.

Harlequin keeps many books on the shelves for only a month, so Kearney's first book, "Tara's Child," is hard to find. But Bill's Prescription Center on State Road 60 is still selling them, she said.

Working on a third novel for Harlequin, Kearney tries to convince us she's just a regular 40-year-old New Jersey native/championship diver who's churning out books and coaching diving at Durant High School, all the while entertaining aspirations to write TV movie-of-the-week scripts.

But in her off-time, she lives a secret life of international intrigue, leaving behind her two Boston terriers to fly to glittering foreign cities with bright lights and mysterious underground tunnels. ... Oops! We're getting ahead of ourselves again.

# Brandon author's new novel hits bookshelves

Susan Kearney will autograph her latest romantic suspense novel at B. Dalton Booksellers Friday at 2 p.m.

By **JOYCE MCKENZIE**  
Staff Writer

As a youngster, Susan Kearney lacked interest in her English classes, even though she had a passion for reading.

"I wasn't crazy about grammar and I especially hated classical literature," said the Brandon resident.

Ironically, Kearney is now a successful novelist for the Harlequin Intrigue, the world's largest publisher.

After her first romantic suspense story, "Tara's Child," was published in 1995 and received rave reviews, Kearney went on to write "A Baby to Love," the No. 1-selling Harlequin Intrigue of 1996.

Her 10th published novel, which debuted this month, "Lullaby and Goodnight," is the final in the three-book Sutton Baby Series that also includes "Cradle Will Rock," released in October and "Lit-



Kearney

tle Boys Blue," printed last month.

In addition, Harlequin Intrigue plans to release her second miniseries in the fall.

Kearney, a business graduate from the University of Michigan, credits her accomplishments to her past professional experiences, her athletic achievements and her travels throughout the world.

The three-time All-American diver, partner in a barter business, real estate appraiser, and once-owner of three hair salons, she's traveled

throughout the U.S. and to 14 countries in Europe. She even spent weeks on a sailboat with her husband in the Bahamas.

"Each part of the U.S. has its own kind of romantic charm and interesting possibilities," Kearney said. "I like taking my characters overseas, too."

She learned the discipline required for writing during her sports training.

"My goal is to complete a book every two months, so I write six days a week," said the mother of a teen-age son and daughter. "Thanks to a very supportive husband and family, I don't cook and I don't clean, I just write ... it's not what's for dinner, but where."

The key to having her novels published, she said, was learning to give her editors the specifics they are looking for.

"You've got to write to the market," she said. "It's a very iffy business in that you must have a happy ending, no infidelity and not too bloody. Harlequin really wants a celebration of life and they want the reader to feel good."

Published novels, translated

in different languages and sold throughout the world, only have a retail shelf life of one month. If they sell, often they are repackaged, re-edited, recovered and re-introduced to the public at a later date. According to Kearney, it can take up to 2 1/2 years for the author to receive royalties.

"Writing has been good for her because she is very disciplined and she's always conjuring up something," said Barry, her husband of 20 years. "I'm used to eating out. It's impossible to tie her down and keep her attention in the kitchen without the smoke detector going off."

Fellow writer and friend Charlotte Davis of Dunedin is often asked to critique Kearney's work.

"We both write commercial fiction, not literary art, and it's meant for pure entertainment," Davis said. "However, she's one of these writers who is continually looking for ways to improve her writing."

Kearney is planning a book signing of "Lullaby and Goodnight" at B. Dalton Booksellers in Brandon TownCenter Friday at 2 p.m.



# THE TAMPA TRIBUNE

## Romance, self-discovery and even some action

**TARA'S CHILD.** By Susan Kearney. Harlequin Intrigue.

Reach deep into your soul. What really scares you? What would make you face that fear without hesitation? To many women, danger to a child inspires the most powerful protective response. No, no peril is too great to face if a child's safety is at stake.

Plugging in to this reality, romantic suspense newcomer Susan Kearney has woven a fast-paced tale of jeopardy and conspiracy guaranteed to run a few shivers up your spine. "Tara's Child," a Sep-

tember release from Harlequin's Intrigue imprint, delivers a high dose of mystery, enhanced with a shot of sizzling romance.

Tara Larson grows up in a carefully controlled household. Even when she marries, she chooses a man who dominates her so completely that she fears her ability to care for her own child. After her husband's accidental death, Tara resolves to take over the reins of her life. In a new home and with a new job, Tara seems to be on her way to providing a stable and happy home for her son, Nicholas.

But then someone tries to steal

her baby. Only the quick reactions of the contractor fixing her house save the child. Logan Stone, the contractor and a cousin to Tara's best friend, feels immediately compelled to help protect Tara and Nicholas. Yet despite his honest intentions, Tara is wary. She's had too many men try to dominate her life — from her deceased husband to her wealthy father-in-law. Can she learn how to share responsibility and fear? If she can, she might learn a little about love in the process.

Kearney's first published work is a delightful summer read. Her style is crisp and her handling of

action sequences is particularly astute. Kearney's gifts as a storyteller are evident, particularly in her carefully woven plot and refreshing characterizations. "Tara's Child" contains numerous twists and turns. But unlike many other romantic suspense novelists, Kearney manages to scramble a few mystery clichés along the way to keep her reader hungrily turning pages.

— JULIE LETO-KLAPKA

*Julie Leto-Klapka, a Tampa native, teaches writing and literature at St. Pius X High School in Atlanta.*

The Tampa Tribune-Times, Sunday, August 20, 1995