

# Shirley Kennett



Shirley Kennett has worn a number of hats, including those of corporate analyst, programmer, independent consultant, computer systems designer, and pet store employee (the one who cleans the cages), but her writer's hat is by far the most comfortable - and most satisfying - of them all. She has been a mystery fan as long as she can remember, which may have had something to do with growing up in a converted turn-of-the-century funeral home. The dog-eared pages on her copies of *The Illustrated Man*, *Stranger in a Strange Land*, the *Lazarus Long* novels, the *Tales of Alvin Maker*, and *Dune* make it clear she's also a long-time fan of science fiction.

Shirley has been involved with computers most of her life. In her consulting career, she focused on improving the quality of patient care through computerized clinical applications. Conducting business with clients around the country from her home office, she was a pioneer of telecommuting before the word was invented. She's made the switch to full-time writer but still keeps up with developments in the computing field.

Starting married life as a teenager, she has beaten the odds by surpassing the thirty-seven year mark with her husband. She discovered motherhood not in a maternity ward, but by bringing home an adopted child from Peru, and astounding herself by falling in love with her son Thomas at first sight, changing her first diaper, and floating down the Amazon, all on the same trip. He's been joined by an Ethiopian boy, Timothy. Truly hers is a global family.

The PJ Gray series of suspense novels includes *Gray Matter*, *Fire Cracker*, *Chameleon*, and *Act of Betrayal* (the last one written as Morgan Avery). The fifth PJ Gray novel, *Time of Death*, will be released in December 2005. Each book features Dr. PJ Gray, single mom, psychologist, and pioneer in the field of forensic computer simulations. Her partner Detective Leo Schultz takes a more traditional approach to homicide investigation. After a rocky beginning, the two have developed a bond of mutual respect and a growing personal involvement. The extensive computer background Kennett brings to her writing plunges the reader into exciting virtual reality crime simulations, but the technology never overwhelms the characters, who are front and center in her books.

Shirley's current release, *Burning Rose*, is a departure from the PJ Gray series. It's a stand-alone thriller with high stakes, action, exotic locations, and unforgettable characters.

Shirley Kennett is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. A member of the International Thriller Writers, Mystery Writers of America, Sisters in Crime, Missouri Writers Guild, and the American Crime Writers League, she lives in suburban St. Louis with her husband and sons, some remarkably hardy fish, and several cats, including the real life version of PJ Gray's cat Megabite.

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