

THEY are the steamiest sex books around, packed with passion and erotica – and written by women. Now the literary queens of raunch have stepped into the twilight zone of kinky, brutal sex. Here two best-selling authors reveal why their latest novels break all taboos to explore the dubious delights of sado-masochism.

SEX

I had lots of real keyboard turn-ons dreaming up kinky love and violence

HILARY Norman lives alone in a drab little flat with only her cat for company. She also pens some of the most pulsating sex scenes in print.

Now best-seller Hilary — who endured years of celibacy to concentrate on spicing up her characters' love lives — has gone a shocking step further with her latest novel.

In *Laura*, the beautiful heroine is devastated to discover that her sophisticated husband wants sadistic sex and is speechless when he gets out a small black box of sex aids.

Back in the real world, Hilary gets letters from all over the world telling her how well she writes about *The Act*.

But she knows instinctively when it is working — she gets turned on at the typewriter.

"There has to be a high level of excitement in me to write good sex scenes," she says. "I have to be turned on myself and involved and convinced. I can't write sex on automatic.

"I had many typewriter turn-ons writing those violent, sadistic scenes in *Laura*. Some of them were quite appalling. I haven't had personal experience of abusive sex but I did a bit of research into sex aids.

"I also have a friend who writes soft porn books and he gave me a very useful little book and I just went for it."

Hilary, an attractive, well-groomed woman in her early forties, admits: "All the time I've been writing these dynamic sex scenes, I've had long periods when I was celibate — sometimes three years at a stretch.

Magical

"I don't know how I get the inspiration. That's the magical part and that's the bit I'm constantly touching wood about.

"Sex comes into my books when it has built up to the right moment, whether that be on page one or on page 300.

"One of my favourite scenes is in my novel *Shattered Stars*, where I have two characters making love on horse-

The best bits came when I was celibate



RAPTURES: Hilary thrills to her work

By SHARON FEINSTEIN

back. It was enormous fun to write and generally I like sex to be enjoyable at the typewriter.

"I never say things like: 'Right, I'm going to have my character doing it in the wardrobe now or on the dining room table.'

Hilary, who lives in North London, has never married.

She says: "There just wasn't a right time, right person and right place.

"I had a 10-year transatlantic love affair with a man 20 years older than me who was married for some of that time.

"We had some wonderful years and a lot of sadness too.

"It was a great love and I don't regret any of it.

"But now we have absolutely cut off all communication between us. I

finally just turned round around and said goodbye."

Last year, while she was signing novels in Harrods, she was struck by a man buying her books.

They started chatting and eventually become lovers.

Hilary says: "It's a lovely, warm relationship and we live round the corner from each other.

"We've kept our own flats, but are having an affair."

Success

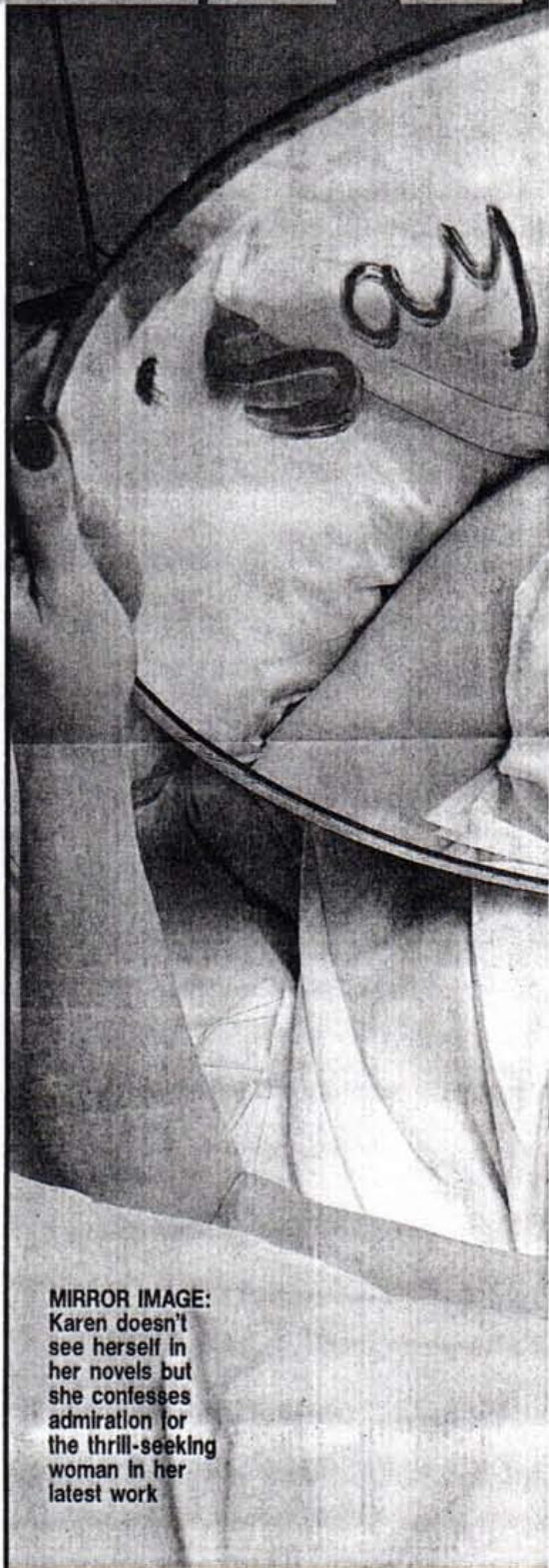
"He is kind, funny and intelligent and very impressed by my success and not afraid to say so.

"I've never had a great yearning to be a mother but could still have a child.

"The idea scares me. I've heard people tell horror stories that it stops creativity and I don't want anything to interrupt my writing.

"That's probably meant that I've missed out on other aspects of life — but you can't have everything."

● *Laura* is published in hardback this month by Hodder & Stoughton, price £15.99.



MIRROR IMAGE: Karen doesn't see herself in her novels but she confesses admiration for the thrill-seeking woman in her latest work

I wrote all

YOU wince at every whiplash, squeal at every slap. Never has sado-masochism been written about so droolingly.

Where polite, slightly neurotic Karen Moline, author of the taboo-breaking *Lunch*, find such depths of sexual violence?

"It was an exorcism," she says. "I wrote the sex scenes in a trance." As

the book is one long sex scene, Karen must have been out of it for some time.

Even her boyfriend was shocked

"His face dropped — it was priceless," says Karen. "This is the person I am in bed with and he's stunned."

The main male character is a bad boy actor

sadism and the single lady writer



the hot scenes in a trance

who never knew how to be loved so filled the void with causing pain.

The female character is a painter.

Karen says: "I would love to have had the courage to have had this relationship.

"I have never had anything this extreme but I have had men who are capable of devastat-

ing cruelty and exquisitely tuned mental torture.

"Emotional violence is equally devastating as physical violence."

Erotica

But is it erotica or pornography?

American Karen insists: "My book is not pornography. People re-

act so strongly to it because they don't understand their own sexual feelings.

"Leading feminists don't talk to anyone who has half a brain, two breasts and likes sex.

"A lot of women get turned on by a lot of things they think are offensive. People are desperately uncomfortable with their own sexual de-

sires, so when they are confronted with this, instead of feeling bad they feel turned on and are disgusted with themselves.

"The actual sex in my book is not anatomical and graphic, it's intellectual. People can apply their own sexual fantasies." Only one scene in the book - an explicit rape in a car - dis-

turbed Karen as she wrote it.

"I was ashamed of myself," she says.

"It took me three weeks to write one page because I was so worried about it.

"I don't want anyone getting pleasure from such violence against a woman."