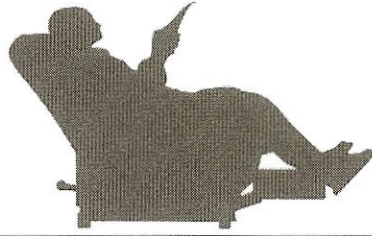


# BOOK REVIEW



by J-D

Whenever I start a new novel I expect it to pass the 'Page 5 Rule'. This means that if my interest has not been grabbed by page 5 the novel has taken too long to 'get going' and is unlikely to take me with it.

Sheila Lowe's intriguing thriller set in Hollywood managed to rope me in by page 1. We are immediately introduced to graphologist Claudia Rose and it soon becomes clear that she is about to become personally embroiled in an exciting murder mystery.

It was a real treat to read a novel about a graphologist - a refreshing change from the usual non-fiction books on graphology.

Someone asked me if I found it 'corny' and I have to admit the inevitable elements were there: vile celebrities, corrupt politician, love-interest with the investigating officer, red herrings ... but it is a novel which fits very neatly into the genre of crime thriller with a most original slant being the graphological aspect.

In fact, the graphology makes it unique and highly readable from the point of view of a graphologist.

As a tortuously slow reader I welcomed the format of short chapters in *Poison Pen*. I always

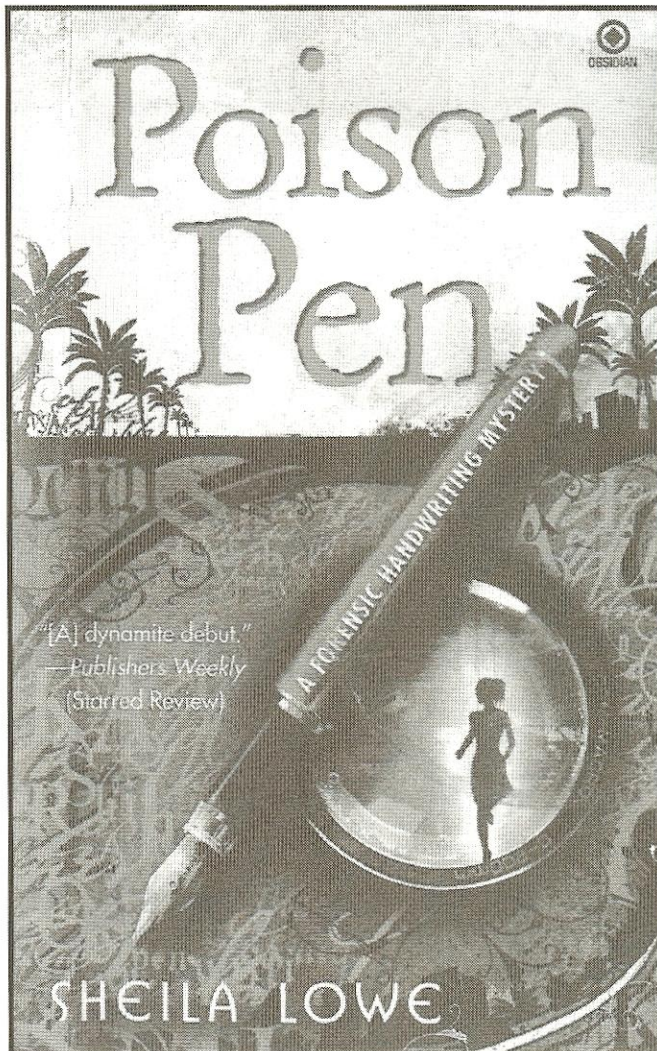
manage to read a book with ease when I can promise myself to 'just read to the end of this chapter' and then, of course, I read the next and the next.

I found myself turning page after page longing for the likeable Claudia to analyse some handwriting but the questionable suicide note is

teasingly brief and the only graphological clue Claudia has to go on: *It was fun while it lasted.*

This book, by its very nature, will delight graphologists and regular crime readers alike. The colourful characters are introduced naturally, the narrative progresses fluently and the plot reaches an exciting climax. The good news is that more novels featuring Claudia Rose the graphological crime-solver are on the way. "*Written in Blood*" is next. I can't wait!

*"The well-paced plot develops from uneasy suspicions to tightly wound action."* - Front Street Reviews.



*"[A] fast-paced, crisp, and gritty novel that penetrates the world of celebrity and the dark appetites of those who live in that world."* - Armchair Interviews.