

## NEWS FROM

*Gary Gautier, Author*  
*shakemyheadhollow.com press*

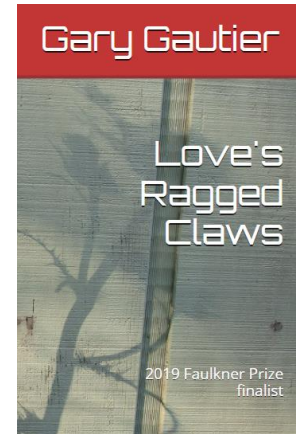
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**February 1, 2021**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Love's Ragged Claws**

Love's Ragged Claws  
Gary Gautier  
Shakemyheadhollow.com press (with KDP)  
637 N Hennessey St., New Orleans, LA 70119  
ISBN 13: 9781098930172, 55 pages  
Price: \$7.12 (Kindle \$3.91)  
Release date: February 1, 2021  
Email: [drggautier@gmail.com](mailto:drggautier@gmail.com)  
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Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08RSNTR2B>



Gabriel enters confession for the first time in 50 years and tells the priest he has only three sins, all sins of the flesh, and the confession opens up the byways of human identity and human relationships as it weaves the tale of the three sins. The account moves back and forth between his youthful life with the three women in the 1970s and his continued contact with them in old age. With Eva, now in the Colorado mountains, Gabriel reflects on their vagabond youth, pulling out the little epiphanies that would become reference points of meaning for the rest of their lives. Then there is the mysterious Penelope and long summer nights on Bayou Teche. Finally, there is Sabine, now in Bisbee. With her, Gabriel commits his third sin, and the relationship themes that have built up over the last 50 years unravel as they piece things together and create a rollicking scene at a Bisbee café.

Award-winning writer Gary Gautier has taught writing and literature at flagship state universities and has published books for adults and children. *Love's Ragged Claws* was shortlisted (top 10) in the William Faulkner Competition. He has had a children's book featured in the *Children's Book Writers and Illustrators Market*, a scholarly book selected for Edwin Mellen Press's Studies in British Literature series, and a screen adaptation of his novel, *Mr. Robert's Bones*, was selected to the second round (top 10%) at the Austin Film Festival.



# Reviews and Endorsements

*Shortlisted for the William Faulkner – Wisdom Prize*

“What happens when a stop at the confessional becomes a life story? — *Love’s Ragged Claws* tells of three sins of the flesh, all of them unique, touching, funny, and remarkably real.”

John Allen Stevenson, Professor of English and author of *The Real History of Tom Jones* and *History of the British Novel: Defoe to Austen*

"The flow and style carry you along, beginning to end"

Michael T. Tusa, Author of *Chasing Charles Bukowski* and *A Second Chance at Dancing*

“A brilliantly woven narrative spanning five decades and three enduring yet elusive relationships”

Robert Okaji, Author of *From Every Moment a Second* and *I Have a Bird to Whistle*

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# Love's Ragged Claws – Sample

There was at first no sound from the other side of the confessional. An absurd idea flashed through Father Angelo's mind that the man on the other side had died. But Gabriel had merely paused again, thinking his own thoughts . . .

\* \* \*

Eva gazed out from her cabin window in Colorado. She could see a few rooftops of the town, and in the distance, the forest, thick with blue spruce and bristlecone pines, rising vertically up to the snow-capped peaks.

Rat-a-tap-tap-tap.

Funny how she knew Gabriel's knock, how deeply embedded it was in the rings of her memory. She opened the door, and there he was, smiling, a little older than the last time she had seen him, but still willowy tall with arms thrown about, a patch of thick white hair on his head. Still smiling the same smile.

"Hallo, love," he said, tossing off his knit hat. Still a spring in his step, she thought.

"How are you feeling, Eva?"

"Good," she said, and she let him hug her.

"More or less," she added.

That's my old Eva, Gabriel thought. In that one phrase, he recognized layers of her psyche at work. She had been a dental lab technician, crafting the tiniest contours of the human tooth, each one unique, in simulacrum. Good at it, too, but crippled by perfectionism. She could never finish anything for fear it would not be good enough. Never be too hopeful. To be hopeful is to be crushed when perfection is missed. She felt good in his presence; he knew that. And through the lens of that goodness he could see all the folds her beauty. Her features themselves, well, all her life she had been known for plainness of features. And look at her now. Still the round boyish face, the pixie haircut, but with more gray. Yet she knew how deeply Gabriel saw in her plainness a pristine beauty. And she loved it. But no, it raised insufferable expectations. She must moderate expectations to avoid the crushing moment of their falling short.

"More or less," she repeated, and they held each other's gaze for one second more, a second in which each recognized the other's penetration, saw their hidden graces and flaws exposed, the little psychological mechanisms that they could not control and that seemed so serious at other times, reduced to mere curiosities when unmasked by trusted eyes.

"Should we go into Boulder?" asked Gabriel.

"Yes, let's," said Eva, and down they went through the winding canyons.

# Love's Ragged Claws

Gary Gautier

## Detailed Synopsis

An old man enters confession for the first time in 50 years and tells the priest he has only three sins to confess, all sins of the flesh. The priest, Father Angelo, is staggered and hungry for lunch, but he soldiers on as Gabriel's confession slowly opens up the byways of human identity and human relationships as it weaves the tale of the three sins.

Gabriel still occasionally sees all three of the women with whom he has lived in sin, and together they have framed the course of his life over the past 50 years. Each of the three tales moves back and forth between the 1970s, when the characters met in their hippie youth, and their present old age.

With Eva, now in the Colorado mountains, Gabriel reflects back on their vagabond journeys in the 1970s, pulling out the little epiphanies that would become reference points of meaning for the rest of their lives. Back in the present, Eva teases Gabriel when he snaps at a street hawker offering a chance for trips to Greece.

With the silent, mysterious Penelope, now debilitated with a courtyard apartment in New Orleans, Gabriel recalls the electric beauty of her youth, the terrible ordeal they weathered together, and the year they spent in a cabin on Bayou Teche. With Sabine, now in Bisbee, Arizona, Gabriel commits his third sin, and many of the themes and relationships that have built up over the last 50 years unravel as Gabriel and Sabine reassemble the threads and create a rollicking scene at a Bisbee café.

The final scene closes in on a nude beach in Greece, where Gabriel has finally overcome his childhood fear of flying, as he and Eva, post-mastectomy and with a few months to live, lie nude in the sand, reminiscing about the California avocado fields and the hitchhiking trip they took in the 1970s.

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Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08RSNTR2B>

## EDUCATION

Ph.D. (English), Univ. of Colo. at Boulder, 1993; M.A. (English), Univ. of Texas at Austin, 1985.

## PUBLICATIONS

### Fiction

*Goodbye, Maggie* (shakemyheadhollow.com press, 2020), view at [www.garygautier.com](http://www.garygautier.com).

*Hippies* (CreateSpace, 2017), view at [www.garygautier.com](http://www.garygautier.com).

*Mr. Robert's Bones* (shakemyheadhollow.com press, 2015), view at [www.garygautier.com](http://www.garygautier.com).

### Children's Literature

*Spaghetti and Peas* (All About Kids Press, 2002), view at [www.garygautier.com](http://www.garygautier.com).

### Poetry

*Year of the Butterfly* (shakemyheadhollow.com press, 2017), view at [www.garygautier.com](http://www.garygautier.com)

Poetry published in *Solid Quarter* (2010), *Natchez Poetry Anthology* (2006), *Concrete Wolf* (2002), *Louisiana English Journal* (1998), *Silver Quill Anthology* (1996) and *The Cannon* (1986).

### Literary Criticism

#### Books

*Landed Patriarchy in Fielding's Novels* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1998), 360 pages.

Intro. to the Random House edition of John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (2001).

#### Selected Articles

"Slavery and the Fashioning of Race in *Oroonoko*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and Equiano's *Life*," *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 42 (2001): 161-79.

"Gothic Villains, Romantic Heroes, and a New Age of Power Relations," *Genre* 32 (1999): 201-34.

"Henry and Sarah Fielding on Romance and Sensibility," *Novel* 31 (1998): 195-214.

"Class, Gender, and the Unreliable Narrator in *Fanny Hill*," *Style* 28 (1994): 133-45.

## AWARDS AND HONORS

### Children's Literature

- "The Angel, the Clown, and the Chinese Dragon." 1<sup>st</sup> prize, Deep South Writers Conference.
- *Spaghetti and Peas*. Featured in the 2002 *Children's Writers and Illustrator's Market* (p. 112).

### Scholarly Books

- *Landed Patriarchy in Fielding's Novels*. Selected for Edwin Mellen Press's Studies in British Literature series.

### Novels

- *Hippies*. 4.2 stars in 47 Amazon ratings. Selected for Oregon Community Radio interview.
- *Mr. Robert's Bones*
  - Screen adaptation of this novel was selected to 2<sup>nd</sup> round (top 10%) at Austin Film Festival.
  - Screen adaptation selected as semi-finalist at Moondance Film Festival.
- *Goodbye, Maggie*
  - Shortlisted (top ten) for the 2019 William Faulkner-Wisdom Prize.
  - Reader's Choice Book of the Month (Literary Fiction), manybooks.net, July 2020.

## PERSONAL

Born in New Orleans, I've hitchhiked through 35 states and 16 countries, run two marathons, and once, due to a series of misadventures, spent six months as the chef at a French restaurant. I hold a Ph.D. from CU-Boulder and have taught writing and literature at several flagship universities. My publications include children's and scholarly books, novels, poetry, and peer-reviewed articles.