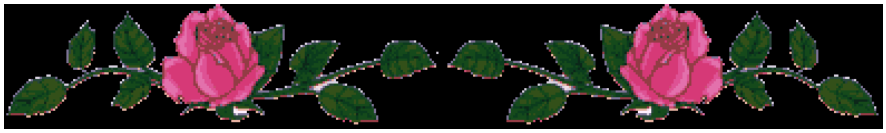
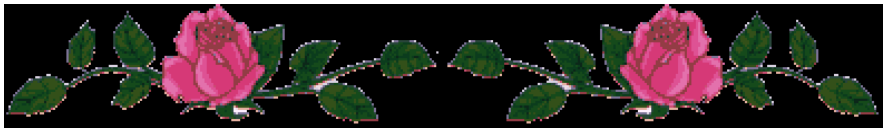


“UNEDITED” AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR
&
“UNABRIDGED” INTRODUCTION TO:

LOVE'S JOURNEY TO AWAKENING

By
Laurel Cain Haws



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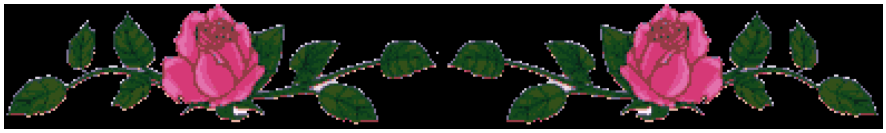

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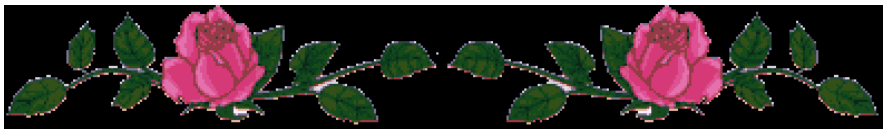
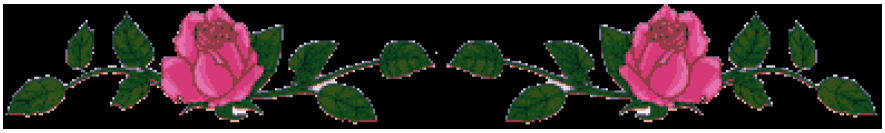




AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR
MY STORY IN BRIEF

I am Karen Laurel Cain Haws, and this is another small snippet of information about my life. I was born on June 25, 1956 in Pontiac, Michigan. So, I am grateful to my very smart parents for providing me with the perfect birthday, exactly six months before and six months after Christmas! My parents are Dr. Paul S. Cain, a native of New York, with a PhD in agriculture, and Dr. Rolene B. "Bunny" Cain, a native of Florida, with a PhD in statistics. My family and I joined The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the "Mormons") on January 31, 1970 when I was thirteen years old.

I attended University Breckinridge School in Morehead, Kentucky through my junior year, and then was graduated sixth in my class of two-hundred-ten from Jessamine County High School in Nicholasville, Kentucky in May of 1974. I was a member of the track team, specializing in the 660 yard dash, played the French horn as first chair in our school stage band, won numerous superior music competition awards on the piano, owned and rode horses, and had a menagerie of pets which Daddy built elaborate homes for. I also enjoyed swimming, hiking with my German shepherd, biking, reading, archery, and making all of my clothing.

My incredible parents supported every endeavor I ever embarked on and never suggested that I might be too young to try anything. A case in point was when I showed my mother the dress patterns advertised in the American Girl magazine to which my parents had subscribed for me, and I simply made the comment that it might be fun to make my own clothes. I wasn't even sure Mother had heard me. Being a dedicated career woman without a domestic bone in her body, Mother came home a few days later with a stack of sewing text books. She had borrowed them from the Home

Economics department of Morehead State University in Morehead, Kentucky, where both of my parents taught. I began reading immediately and studied those textbooks for six months. Then I made my first dress on an antique Singer sewing machine my mother had. I was ten years old at the time. On my eleventh birthday, Daddy brought home a new Brother Zigzag sewing machine for me, and I continued to make all of my own school clothes on that machine.

I was married in 1974 and divorced in 1982. That was an unhappy chapter in my life but one I learned a lot from. The children that came with me to the new chapter in my life made the one I was leaving worth it. During that unfortunate marriage, I authored an article entitled, *We Fought Cancer and the Side Effects of Chemotherapy…So Far We've Won*, published in Well-Being Magazine in January of 1980, about one of my daughters who was born with cancer, and who is now cured.

I was married on January 1, 1983 to Dr. Gary L. Haws, a native of Utah, with a PhD in Ibero American Studies. He was born on April 12, 1935, and he died on November 13, 2002. He is the author of the book, El Prometeo Uruguayo: Carlos Sabat Ercasty (The Uruguayan Poet: Carlos Sabat Ercasty), which he wrote in River Plate Spanish. He was a full professor for many years in the Foreign Languages department of Murray State University in Murray, Kentucky.

I owned Honey Tree Natural Foods in Murray, Kentucky from January 1983-March 2003 and Lemon Tree Natural Foods in Paducah, Kentucky from May 1987-March 2003. My beloved late husband and I enjoyed working in the stores with our customers together following his retirement in 1993. The stores were invaluable to us in prolonging the lives of two of my children who were dying from hereditary diseases from my ex-husband's side of the family when Gary and I married. They also aided us in protecting the health of the other children that I brought to that marriage.

We have twelve children, six boys and six girls:

Romelle (deceased)
Nadine (currently residing in Kentucky)
Cindy (currently residing in Utah)
Marcelo (currently residing in Tennessee)
Brian (currently residing in New York)
David (currently residing with me in Kentucky)
Chrystal (subject of the article about cancer—currently residing in New York)
Tanya (deceased)
Paul (currently residing in Kentucky)
Katherine (currently residing in Kentucky)
Sterling (currently residing in Utah)
Marlowe (currently residing in Utah)

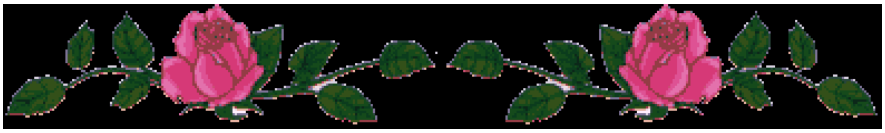
As of 2008, we have twenty-eight grandchildren and three great-grandchildren including identical twin boys!

I currently live on our three acre family home in Murray, Kentucky with my son, David, who is an Iraqi War Veteran, three indoor cats, Bear, Kitten, and Garfield, an outdoor cat, Demon, a Shetland Collie, Maxie, a wild opossum named Polly and a wild deaf raccoon named Rickie, who both come in the cat door at night and eats with the cats. I also have a very happy yellow hibiscus tree named Bessie who inhabits the sunny spot in front of my picture window in the kitchen with her jungle of satellite plants given to me by my adoring children over the years.

I now enjoy reading, sewing, writing, playing the piano, and hiking in the backyard forest with my animals to visit the Enchanted Tree where Inspiration lives. I also enjoy visiting my little yellow delicious apple tree named Annie. Yes, I am very eccentric!

I am 5' 7 ¾" tall with waist-length silver hair and dark grey eyes. I never dye my hair because I am comfortable with my age. The last time I had a crisis over my age was when I turned thirty. My dear late husband just looked at me, smiled, and said, "Well, I'd like to be thirty again, or even forty, or even fifty!" That very quickly put my own age into proper perspective, and I have never cared how old I was ever again.

Well, there you have it, all of the basics about me. Now, let's move on to the Introduction, with more of the reasons why I was compelled to write Love's Journey to Awakening—Beauty and the Beast—Happily Ever After.



"UNABRIDGED" INTRODUCTION

This story was born of grief, my inconsolable grief over the death of my extraordinary husband, Gary. My relationship with him closely parallels Catherine Chandler's relationship with Vincent Wells, the "Beast." I have never been able to properly grieve over my husband. I can't face the pain it would cause, so I've kept it carefully locked away inside of me, and I am as yet unwilling to open that door, partly to protect my very empathic children. They love each other and me so much, and they have inherited strong empathic gifts, which happens to be one of the key elements in this amazing series. My children are even aware when one of us has an headache! The pain of my grief, if I allowed myself to experience it, would distract and distress them, so I'm keeping it locked up for now.

At the time that the television series, Beauty and the Beast, was airing in the late 1980s and early 1990s, I was busy with two health food stores I owned in two cities for twenty years, while my husband was a professor at our local university. Because I was so busy, I only caught two episodes of the series, the pilot and the last episode of the first season. I never thought anything more about it until my son, David, a veteran of the Iraqi War, brought home the first season of Beauty and the Beast on DVD in April of 2007. I was totally captivated by the story. I had been a widow for four-and-an-half years at that point, and the relationship that unfolded in the series was so close to my heart, because of my passionate love affair with my late husband, that I wanted to see the other two seasons.

I went online to look for the other two seasons to purchase, and ran across a description which stated bluntly that Catherine was killed during the second season. It felt like an hot knife had sliced through my heart! I burst into tears and grieved for days over that stark news. My buried grief

over losing my husband had spilled out over fictional characters. I finally managed to shove that grief door closed again, and did buy the other two seasons. Then, I was in terror every time I watched a new episode, fearing that this was the one in which Catherine would die. When she finally was killed, early in the third season, not the second season as the review had stated, and Vincent was agonizing in grief over losing her, an emotion masterfully portrayed by Ron Perlman, I couldn't bear it. I was in so much emotional distress and physical pain that I couldn't function for days. Then, suddenly, I got up one morning with a joyous thought! I couldn't bring my husband back, but I could surely save Catherine and restore her to Vincent! I managed to get my back against that grief door, barely got it shut again, and then went to work. Early in July of 2007, I began studying the episodes, developing the main plot and subplots, and working with the timeline, in order to weave together a new ending for this fairytale, and perhaps the beginning of a whole new series of stories about these beloved characters.

Fairytales are never supposed to end with the heroine being killed and the hero suffering the agony of the loss of the love of his life! They are supposed to end with everyone getting married and living happily-ever-after. This series is, after all, a modern day fairytale. It starts out, "Once Upon a Time in the City of New York." If this book never sees the light of day, and I am the only one on the planet who knows that Catherine is not dead, and that everyone does eventually live happily ever after, I will be able to live with that, and feel really good about it! In fact, since I have been an isolated recluse, never leaving my home for the past three years, the thought that others might find this book appealing is actually a little frightening. It would be nice, though, if fans who love this series and its characters could be comforted as well.

Writers are wise to stick to what they know, and I know romance, because I basked in its warmth for the twenty years I was privileged to be rescued, adored, and pampered by my late husband. This was a man with

an incredibly broad education and brilliant mind, a university professor of foreign languages, an author of a distinguished Uruguayan book, a musician who could play the piano and guitar by ear, a farmer and gardener, an international cuisine chef, an high priest in our Church, a loving father, and a very attentive romantic husband with a soothing sexy bass voice. Gary was never wishy-washy and had a very strong personality with definite opinions. But, he allowed me to wrap him around my little finger. It was thrilling to have that much influence over him, and to know that he really cared about what I thought. It was also a sobering responsibility not to abuse the power I had over him.

I know the difference between a bad relationship and a good one. When my husband found me, I was suffering both the physical and psychological aftermath of a divorce from a very selfish man, who was physically, verbally, and sexually abusive. My late husband was more than twenty-one years older than I, and I was a scared, malnourished, skinny little kid. I ran, but he didn't let that deter him. With each gentle, romantic letter, penned in his elegant flowing handwriting, with perfect grammar and spelling, and never a crude or vulgar word, he wooed me. Then, when he sent me a beautiful poem he wrote for me entitled, "The Princess and the Knight," about an aging knight in rusty armor on a white charger that rescues and loves a beautiful young princess, I came to realize that I wanted to be caught by this man. I thought his armor was perfectly brilliant! I slowed down, and he swept me off my feet. The lovely theme song for Beauty and the Beast, *The First Time I Loved Forever*, reminds me so much of my relationship with Gary. The melody haunted me until I finally had to buy the sheet music for myself, so I could play it on the piano and sing it. It has been a real comfort to me.

I couldn't believe the difference in husbands! This one always put me first, even at the expense of his own welfare, which I was continually fussing at him about. He was 6' 2" tall and powerfully built, with broad shoulders, long arms, and huge hands. I sprained my ankle once at an auction we

attended when I was eight months pregnant with one of our children, and by the time we arrived home, I was in agony. We had guests, and he couldn't park near the house. So, he just picked me up out of the truck, pregnant and all, and carried me a quarter mile into the house, and then soaked and wrapped my ankle, and held me in his arms until the pain killer took effect and I finally fell asleep. He often serenaded me, playing the guitar and singing to me with his soothing bass voice. When I was unhappy for any reason, or even crying for no reason I could think of, he cared enough to search for the cause, instead of just getting impatient with me. In many ways he knew me better than I know myself, and he never failed in his attempts to fix me. He would just talk to me for hours, and he listened to me, really listened. He was always telling me that every man was in love with me and envied him. I never believed that was really true, but it did wonders for me to hear him say it, and to know that he really believed it.

Then there was the fishing incident. When I was pregnant with our first child together, we would often go fishing when he came home from teaching at the university. There was a beautiful creek on our property, and fishing helped Gary to unwind. I didn't really care about fishing, but I loved being with him, and I enjoyed baiting his hooks, and then taking the fish off the hooks as he caught them. Well, one day I managed to hook my finger, and although I was more surprised than hurt, I burst into involuntary tears before I could catch myself. Gary was devastated! He wanted to take me home immediately and baby my hurt finger. I finally managed to convince him that I was all right, and that his kisses had magically healed it, but he never let me near an hook again! Overly capable women have no idea how much romance they are cheating themselves out of when they deny their men the opportunity to show off their masculinity by assisting and protecting them. These are just a few of the unforgettable romantic things Gary did for me.

Gary's heroism wasn't just limited to what he did for me, his little broken empath, but he also took on responsibility for the four distressed children I

brought to the marriage. He legally adopted them as well as my ex-sister-in-law, who loved me and hated her brother, and came with me to help with the children. Gary was the father she never had. She and my baby girl from that marriage were both dying from an inherited disease syndrome from my ex-husband's side of the family, and another daughter was in remission from it. One of my sons was severely traumatized from continually watching me take beatings for interfering when he would have been beaten by my ex-husband. The other son was autistic. The three of the five who lived are now much better off, thanks to Gary, who loved them as if they were his own. On the day my baby girl, Tanya, died, Gary sang her to sleep on his shoulder, from which sleep she passed peacefully away. I couldn't have survived the death of my children without him to comfort me and grieve with me. This quality of unselfish love is also beautifully portrayed in this television series.

The other aspect of Beauty and the Beast with which I am well acquainted is empathic connections between loved ones. I come from a family of empaths on both sides. First there is my mother, who was driving ten minutes ahead of me, and told my father that she had to turn around and go back to me. I had, in fact, been forced off the Appalachian Mountain road in Virginia I was driving on, and had turned over, because an oncoming driver was taking his share out of the middle of the road. Then there is my father, who quite often calls me after I've put a letter in the mail to him, and days before he ever gets it, to see what I need to talk to him about. Thanks to their strong empathy for others, my parents have the marvelous ability to make everyone around them, no matter what their social, economic, or educational background, feel comfortable. I also have been blessed, and sometimes cursed with the gift of empathy, along with an unhealthy dose of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. This empathic gift was very helpful in my health food stores. I love to listen to people, and my customers needed that almost more than anything I sold to them. Sometimes, however, the cacophony of feelings emanating from others

would be so overwhelming I would end up like a rabbit in the headlights, almost paralyzed by anxiety. Then my dear husband would put one of his big warm hands on me, and all of the tension would drain out of my body, and I would stop shaking. He was a very effective tranquilizer for me.

Gary said numerous times during the early part of our relationship that his only fear was that he might not be capable of loving me the way he felt that I needed to be loved. I told him not to worry about that, because I could feel the power of the love he had for me. I felt everything he felt, from the sublime to the terrifying, but his love for me always remained constant and ever growing. I can feel it still, even beyond the veil of death. In the series, when Vincent suffered a mental breakdown brought on by the psychological cruelty of Paracelsus, which caused him to wage a raging battle against the Beast within him, a poetry quote became increasingly important to him. This important quote was taken from the Welsh poet Dylan Thomas' poem entitled, *And Death Shall Have No Dominion*. It became even more significant when he finally found Catherine dying, and thought that she was forever lost to him in this life. The quote, "Though lovers be lost, love shall not, and death shall have no dominion," gave him great comfort during those heartbreaking times. I can tell you with great conviction, that these words are so very true of an eternal relationship. (If you would like a free copy of this complete poem for yourself, it can be found online at:
www.famouspoetsandpoems.com/poets/dylan_thomas/poems/11394)

When Gary finally collapsed with a massive stroke and the effects of congestive heart failure, he was unconscious in the hospital for two full months, and I never left his side. When he finally woke up, and I was able to take him home, I spent the next year-and-an-half caring for him around the clock, while my two health food stores failed. After his death, I faced bankruptcy and my own disability, but it was so very worth it. There is no way to describe the utter joy of spending time with someone who completed me, and also having the time to be able to say good-bye. It rebuilt my self-

confidence to belong to a man whose attention never wandered from me. He was romantic to the end, expressing every day how much he loved me, and how thankful he was that I had married him. After having his heart broken twice by two previous wives who had rejected and divorced him, he felt that I was his third charmed wife. I am so grateful that those other two silly women were dumb enough to leave him, so I could have him!

Gary was my mentor, my psychologist, my teacher, my best friend, and my lover. I lost my shield against the world when he died, so I am a recluse now, but I am a very happy recluse, and I am still able to help people with their problems when they come to me for a sounding board. Individually, in the safety of my home, I can still listen and reflect back what they are feeling, which aids them in solving their own problems. My children are extremely attentive, and I've never minded being alone anyway, so life is great! All of these experiences have contributed to the development of my story, and I hope that you will enjoy reading it as much as I have enjoyed writing it. This type of relationship is not just for fictional characters. It can happen for anyone willing to put some effort into their relationship. For me, it is very real. It truly is possible to have Satan open the gates of hell and throw every conceivable catastrophe in your path, and come through it all still in love. The mortal part of our journey has ended. Our eternal journey has only just begun. I'm in love, and always will be.

You really must watch the entire series before you read this book, in order for it to make complete sense. The series is such a wonderful study in how to develop a lasting relationship. Its theme is "Don't be selfish!" Don't demand that your partner be responsible for your happiness. Do make every effort to make him or her happy, even if you need to make sacrifices to do so. Don't think of your partner as a project which needs constant improvement. I know I am not the only person out there who is sick to death of "one night stands" and "casual sex" being passed off as genuine love and satisfying passion. Those are very poor counterfeits for the real thing, and this poignant series portrays the real thing in such romantic

majesty.

I seriously doubt that the team that created Beauty and the Beast wanted it to end this way. From the blogs I've seen posted on the Internet, if interest in the series at the time it was airing had waned by the beginning of the third season, it is now taking on a life of its own as a new audience is discovering it, and the loyal fans from the original airing are demanding to have it. From another report I read, a very untimely strike by the Writer's Guild also may have contributed to its premature demise. I've managed to bring Catherine back from the dead. Perhaps the series can be resurrected as well.

I have written a short synopsis of each of the characters which I used in this story, which are original characters from the series. New characters I have added are not included in these descriptions. This will be a review for those who have watched the series in its entirety, but it will spoil the plots by giving information away for those who haven't watched it, so please don't read them until you have watched all 3 seasons. I have treated these wonderful characters very carefully. I can hear their voices in my head. They have been the friends and family of my imagination.

This story begins where the television series ends—and it continues.