



ELEANOR
BOURG
NICHOLSON

MEDIA KIT

BIOGRAPHY

IN ADDITION TO SCHOLARLY PURSUITS, ELEANOR BOURG NICHOLSON occasionally strays into fiction, including her epistolary novella, *The Letters of Magdalen Montague* (Kauffmann Publishing, 2011; Chrism Press, 2021), and her Gothic novels, *A Bloody Habit* (Ignatius Press, 2018) and *Brother Wolf* (Chrism Press, 2021). A former assistant executive editor for *Dappled Things*, she is assistant editor for the *Saint Austin Review* (StAR), as well as the editor of several Ignatius Critical Editions of the classics and has collaborated with other editors to provide footnotes for numerous other works. Her writing has appeared in the *National Catholic Register*, *Touchstone*, *First Things*, *The Catholic Thing*, *The Imaginative Conservative*, and elsewhere.

By day, Eleanor is the resident Victorian literature instructor at Homeschool Connections and with her husband homeschools their five children. By night, she reads the Victorians, writes Gothic novels, and cares for feral offspring.



SAMPLE OF PAST MEDIA APPEARANCES

PODCASTS & RADIO

Fountains of Carrots
Mystery Through Manners
Salt + Light
Radio Maria
The Kyle Heimann Show
Call Me Catholic

REVIEWS

Dappled Things
Catholic World Report
Jacqueline Vick
Domestic Vocation
The Imaginative Conservative

PRINT INTERVIEWS

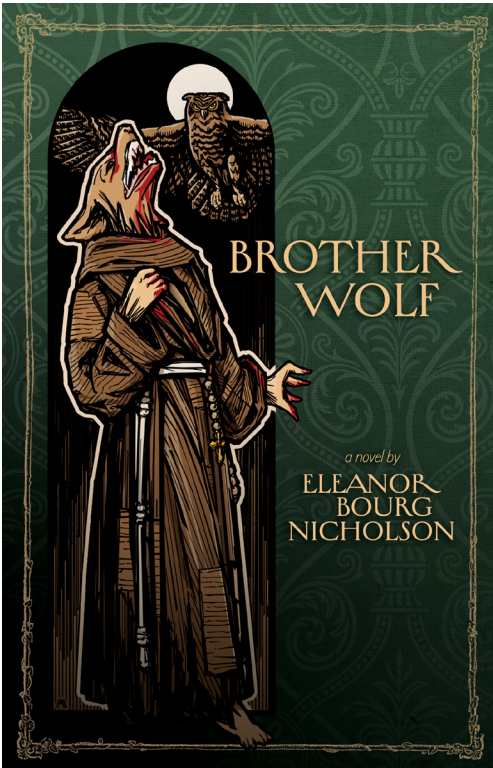
Catholic World Report
Catholic News Service

CONTACT INFORMATION

ebnicholson@protonmail.com
eleanorbourgnicholson.com
www.facebook.com/EleanorBourgNicholson

BROTHER WOLF

ABOUT THE BOOK



FOR ATHENE HOWARD, THE ONLY CHILD OF RENOWNED CULTURAL anthropologist Charles Howard, life is an unexciting, disillusioned academic project. When she encounters a clairvoyant Dominican postulant, a stern nun, and a recusant English nobleman embarked on a quest for a feral Franciscan werewolf, the strange new world of enchantment and horror intoxicates and delights her—even as it brings to light her father’s complex past and his long-dormant relationship with the Church of Rome. Can Athene and her newfound compatriots battle against the ruthless forces of darkness that howl for the overthrow of civilization and the devouring of so many wounded souls? In this sister novel to *A Bloody Habit*, the incomparable Father Thomas Edmund Gilroy, O.P. returns to face occult demons, gypsy curses, possessed maidens, and tormented werewolves, accompanying a charming neo-pagan heroine in her earnest search for adventure and meaning.

ENDORSEMENTS

GENRE

Gothic horror, literary fiction

AUDIENCE

Adult

PUBLISHER

Chrism Press, a division of
WhiteFire Publishing
www.chrismpress.com

PUBLICATION DATE

September 1, 2021

ISBN

978-1-941720-56-1 (print)
978-1-941720-57-8 (digital)

Brother Wolf is a book you don’t just read—you live in it.

It’s a splendid Gothic mystery and a convincing werewolf story with an endlessly intriguing cast of characters.

—TIM POWERS, bestselling author

Even though they love animals, modern Franciscans don’t admit werewolves to their Order. But if they did, they should be prepared in case *Brother Wolf* starts running amuck. That is exactly what happens in this Catholic horror novel set at the beginning of the twentieth century. Add in an attempt to destroy the European economy, an apostate priest, an unlikely romance, and the shocking appearance of the demon known to the Romans as the goddess Diana. Thank goodness those friars were able to enlist the aid of the renowned vampire-hunting Dominican, Fr. Thomas Edmund Gilroy, O.P., first introduced to us in *A Bloody Habit*. Yes, be prepared for a wild ride when the fur starts to fly.

— AUGUSTINE THOMPSON, O.P., author of
Francis of Assisi: A New Biography

THE LETTERS OF MAGDALEN MONTAGUE

ABOUT THE BOOK

WHEN THE AMORAL AND CYNICAL “J” TAKES UP HIS PEN TO DESCRIBE Magdalen Montague, he little realizes the dramatic changes that will soon be wrought in his life. His fascination for this mysterious woman catapults him into a harrowing encounter with Catholicism, conversion, and discipleship. Through the letters, intimate portraits of four souls appear: the loquacious letter-writer “J,” his virulently antireligious recipient, “R,” the weird, silent servant Domokos Juhász, and Magdalen Montague herself. Across the turbulence of the first four decades of the twentieth century, including two world wars, the mysterious correspondents in *The Letters of Magdalen Montague* present a profound portrait of humanity’s quest for God.

ENDORSEMENTS

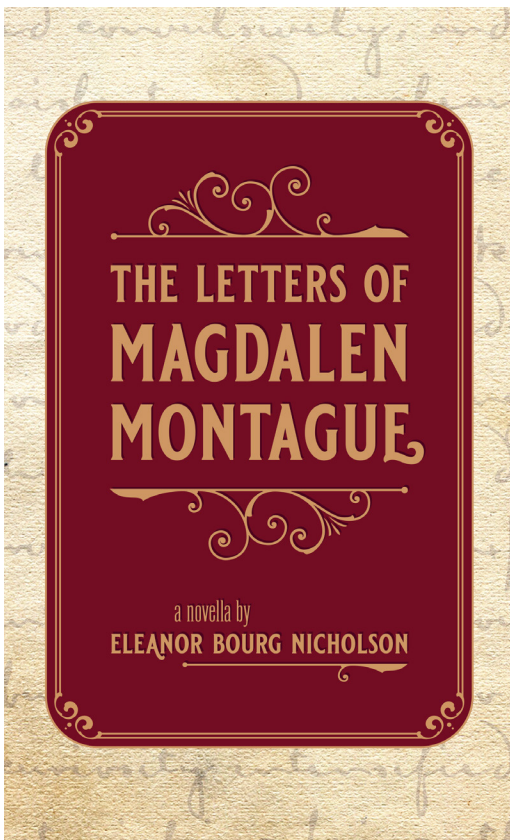
“Eleanor Nicholson has written an old-fashioned epistolary novel of religious awakening and vocation.

Set in the heady intellectual and hedonistic milieu of Edwardian England, it mixes elements of Waugh, Wilde, Bernardos, and even a touch of Francis Thompson to create an intimate account of one skeptic’s decisive encounter with the Hound of Heaven. In this short book, Nicholson recaptures the energy of a great Catholic literary tradition.”

— DANA GIOIA, poet and former Chairman of the National Endowment of the Arts

“*Magdalen Montague* exhales the same exuberant and exotic air as Baudelaire, Huysmans and Wilde; a delicious vignette that illumines the path from debaucherie to the Divine.”

— JOSEPH PEARCE, author of *The Unmasking of Oscar Wilde*



GENRE

Literary fiction

AUDIENCE

Adult

PUBLISHER

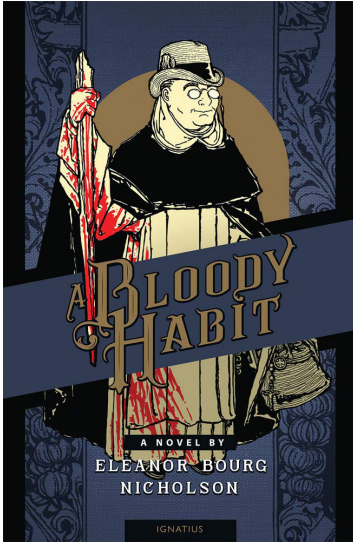
Chrim Press, a division of
WhiteFire Publishing
www.chrimpress.com

ISBN

978-1-941720-50-9 (print)
978-1-941720-51-6 (digital)

A BLOODY HABIT

ABOUT THE BOOK



GENRE

Gothic horror, literary fiction

AUDIENCE

Adult

PUBLISHER

Ignatius Press
www.ignatius.com

ISBN

978-1621642060

IT IS 1900, THE DAWN OF A NEW CENTURY. EVEN AS THE OLD QUEEN'S HEALTH fails, Victorian Britain stands monumental and strong upon a mountain of technological, scientific, and intellectual progress. For John Kemp, a straightforward, unimaginative London lawyer, life seems reassuringly predictable yet forward-leaning, that is, until a foray into the recently published sensationalist novel *Dracula*, united with a chance meeting with an eccentric Dominican friar, catapults him into a bizarre, violent, and unsettling series of events.

As London is transfixed with terror at a bloody trail of murder and destruction, Kemp finds himself in its midst, besieged on all sides—in his friendships, as those close to him fall prey to vicious assault by an unknown assassin; in his deep attraction to an unconventional American heiress; and in his own professional respectability, for who can trust a lawyer who sees things which, by all sane reason, cannot exist? Can his mundane, sensible life—and his skeptical mind— withstand vampires? Can this everyday Englishman survive his encounter with perhaps an even more sinister threat—the white-robed Papists who claim to be vampire slayers?

ENDORSEMENTS

“A real 19th century Gothic vampire story, rich and colorful, and wonderfully full of foreboding. The characters are vivid and convincing, and the historical locales make the supernatural element effective and affecting as it builds to the point where our protagonist must recognize it and confront it.” — TIM POWERS, bestselling author of *On Stranger Tides*

“Imagine a cross between *Dracula* and *The Exorcist*, written with the literary flourish of the former and the Catholic sensibility of the latter, and you will have some idea of how this heavenly hybrid on a hellish theme speaks with such death-defying and grave-shattering power in this work.” — JOSEPH PEARCE, editor of the Ignatius Critical Editions and author of *The Quest for Shakespeare*

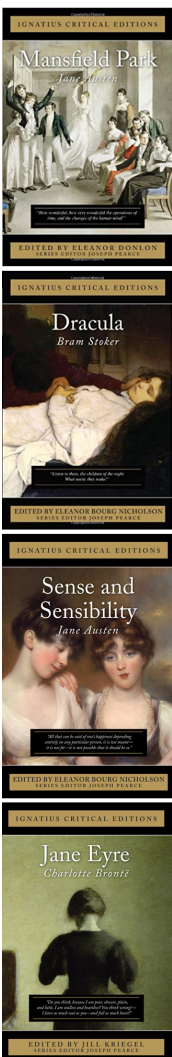
“Nicholson writes with an impeccable ear for turn-of-the-century English and a dry wit worthy of George Bernard Shaw that makes *A Bloody Habit* a brilliant combination of edification and fun.” — KAREN ULLO, author of *Jennifer the Damned* and *Cinder Allia*

(MORE ENDORSEMENTS)

“A dark tale of vampires, mysterious strangers, animated corpses and bloody battles. A *Bloody Habit* is a worthy addition to the genre of Gothic horror. Seen through the eyes of a skeptical Englishman, a motley crew of friars, policemen, lawyers and a reporter pit themselves against the powers of darkness that threaten late Victorian London. Bram Stoker would be proud.” — FIORELLA DE MARIA, author of *The Sleeping Witness* and *Poor Banished Children*

“Although some scant modern writing exists on the mysterious subject of vampires, *A Bloody Habit* is the first real theological examination of the origins of the vampire state and of the classical battle waged by the Dominican Order against the vampire phenomenon. Eleanor Nicholson’s work manages in narrative form both thoroughly to entertain and occasionally to terrify the reader. Her book is an example of magnificent Catholic literature.” —THOMAS JOSEPH WHITE, O.P., author of *The Light of Christ*

IGNATIUS CRITICAL EDITIONS



MANSFIELD PARK (EDITOR)

In all things, Jane Austen was a woman of faith. Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent than in *Mansfield Park*, her most neglected, abused, and misunderstood novel. Like Austen’s other novels, it can be fully appreciated only when illuminated by the virtuous life and Christian beliefs of the author herself.

DRACULA (EDITOR)

Often vacillating wildly between the terrible and the comic, *Dracula* at the same time brings to life a host of compelling themes: tensions between antiquity and modernity; the powers and limitations of technology; the critical importance of feminine virtue; the difference between superstition and religion; the nature of evil; and, perhaps most compellingly, the complex relationship between ancient faith and scientific enlightenment. More vivid than any of its varied film adaptations, and over a century after its first publication, *Dracula* still retains its sharp bite.

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY (EDITOR)

In this, her first published novel, we see the sense and sensibility of Miss Austen herself, which combine to form the brilliance that shines forth in all of her works—a brilliance enlivened by her remarkable sense of humor and the affectionate kindness that could only be born of a gracious Christian spirit.

JANE EYRE (CONTRIBUTOR)

One of the finest novels ever written, *Jane Eyre* is also one of the most misunderstood masterpieces of world literature. Whereas most modern teaching of the text misreads or misinterprets Charlotte Brontë’s devout and profoundly ingrained Christian faith and intentions, this critical edition emphasizes the semi-autobiographical dimension of the novel, exposing feminist critiques of the work as being woefully awry and illustrating Brontë’s belief in the hard-earned, hard-learned blessings of sanctity and reverence.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW

WHERE DID THE IDEA FOR BROTHER WOLF COME FROM?

Werewolves naturally follow after vampires, and the title seemed inevitable. The characters emerged in two phases: first the story of Isabel and her werewolf brother, Jean-Claude, with the heroic Sir Simon Gwynne as a satellite—a Gothic reimagining of some of the themes of Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure*—and second the story of my narrator, Athene Howard. At first Isabel was my narrator, but after a few chapters I was sick to death of her voice. From the first moment Athene popped into my head, she was an absolute joy! She told the story rapidly. I just had to keep up.

WHO IS ATHENE HOWARD?

Athene Howard is the daughter of a Modernist academic. She’s traveling home from America with her father when she runs smack into a group of werewolf-hunting adventurers.

SHE’S VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE NARRATOR OF *A BLOODY HABIT*, ISN’T SHE?

Decidedly. John Kemp, the narrator of *A Bloody Habit*, is horrified at encountering the preternatural, and even more appalled at the appearance of the English Papists. I really enjoyed tormenting him. Athene is so hungry for meaning beyond the dis-enchanted world in which she has been raised that this is all totally thrilling. She yearns for transcendence—or at least more interesting people and experiences than have come her way hitherto!

WE’VE SEEN VAMPIRES; HOW ARE WEREWOLVES DIFFERENT?

Vampirism involves preternatural blood-drinkers who prey on the living. Lycanthropy usually involves living men transformed by the influence of the moon and other forces into wolf form. The term “lycanthrope” comes from the Greek “lykos” (which means “wolf”) and “anthropos” (which means “man”). Traditionally, the lycanthrope has a radical predisposition to this bestial transformation, which can be intensified by drug usage and occult practices. Various traditions have worked in the horrors of midnight orgies, rape, cannibalism—all bound up in the werewolf’s moon-induced form.

WHICH IS MORE POWERFUL, A VAMPIRE OR A WEREWOLF?

In terms of preternatural hierarchy, usually the vampire has greater power than the werewolf. We see this clearly in Stoker’s *Dracula*. The hierarchy matches up with Thomistic moral anthropology (which is important when you’re working with Dominican exorcists). The vampire purportedly strives after the intellectual sins, which Aquinas tells us are less shameful but more grievous than carnal sins. The werewolf is the man reduced to the beast. He’s literally bestial, but he has a greater possibility of redemption than the creature who has given himself over to pride and envy.

ARE YOUR WEREWOLVES REDEEMABLE THEN?

That is the hope. Werewolves are more redeemable than a full-fledged



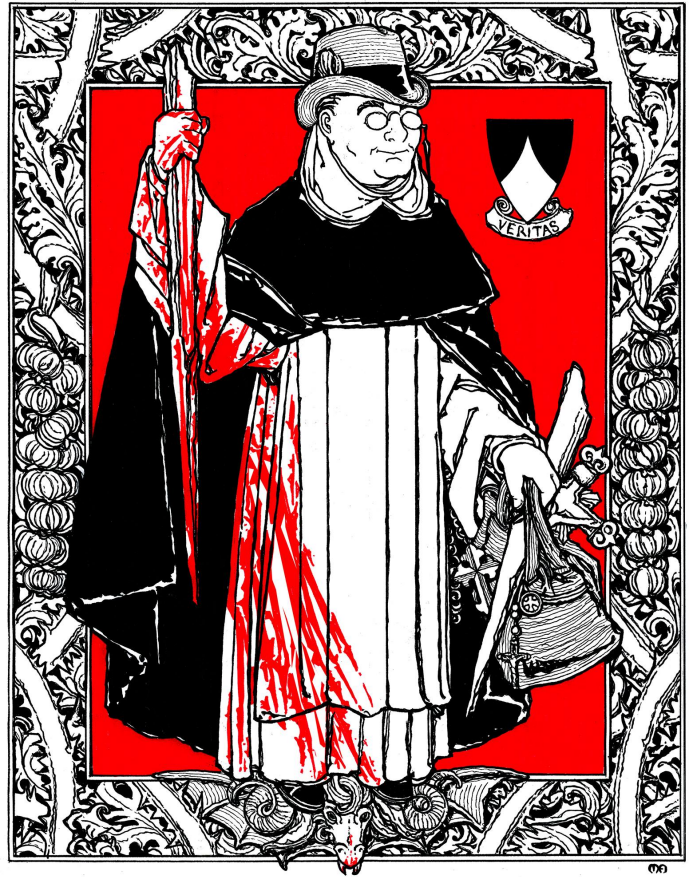
vampire, who is damned. The vampire is undead, which means he has merely suspended the natural order. He's dead and his judgment is decided. The werewolf (except if we are talking about weird undead werewolves—which, in the case of *Brother Wolf*—we may be!) isn't dead yet. In that way the werewolf is rather like an addict or anyone with that radical predisposition to some sort of sin. Until death, the possibility of redemption remains.

TALK TO US ABOUT FRANCISCANS AND WEREWOLVES.

I had to explain my association of Dominicans with vampires; the Franciscan werewolf connection seems less troubling to readers. In fact, if I had handed the werewolves to any other Order, I think readers would have balked! There is, of course, a longstanding tradition associating St. Francis with animals—you may have heard the legend of the “Wolf of Gubbio”. These are largely the result of medieval hagiography. As Fr. Augustine Thompson, O.P. notes in his historical biography *Francis of Assisi*, medieval piety often led to the addition of the touch of legend to stories of the saints. Without presuming to comment on historical questions, the Christ-like gentleness and holiness of the saint and the life and practices of his followers provide a hopeful foundation for lycanthropic rehabilitation.

YOU EDITED THE IGNATIUS CRITICAL EDITION OF DRACULA. WHAT LITERARY RESEARCH IS COMPARABLE FOR WEREWOLVES?

This is a topic I debated a long time with my youngest brother! He insisted there was less folklore with which to work in the case of werewolves. I disagreed. Myth and folklore have both explored metamorphosis at length. Man is transformed by encounter with “things greater than he”. Classical myth tells us that any human who parleys with the gods is going to end up a cow or torn to shreds. The Christian tradition shows this in an even truer light; we cannot encounter the Divine without being radically transformed—“Behold, I make all things new”, we read in Revelation 21:5. The



question is whether we are to be transformed by evil—which is the transformation of destruction—or to be transformed and redeemed by the Divine.

WHAT ADVENTURE WILL FR. THOMAS EDMUND GILROY FACE NEXT?

I'm playing around with some post-colonial voodoo at the moment, and simultaneously re-exploring the particulars of Irish folklore. We will see which avenue proves the most productive—and which challenge the characters agree to accept!

INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE

BIRTH OF A NARRATOR

THE WRITING ROUTINE OF ANTHONY Trollope as described in his autobiography has inspired many to critique him as less than an artist. In me, however, it has always provoked a strong jealousy. I wish I could say that I awaken at 5:30am every morning, roused by an obliging servant bearing a cup of hot coffee, and write for three hours before commencing my “day job”. I can’t even claim to pace myself with my watch, producing 250 words every fifteen minutes. My jealousy extends to many other writers, including Charles Dickens, Agatha Christie, and P.G. Wodehouse, whose output fills shelves upon shelves in my home. My own writing comes in fits and starts, in between other obligations and duties, and requires much polishing and editing.

There are moments, however, when the Muses and the children are all indulgent, my mental preparations of plot and character all “click”, and I am able to write in a fevered rush. The last ten chapters of *A Bloody Habit* came together like that. It was dizzying and thrilling at the same time. The first chapters of *Brother Wolf* came with similar swiftness. Isabel, summoned out of the sanctuary of a convent to search for her relapsed werewolf brother, launched into a tale as dramatic and urgent as any Gothic novelist could wish to concoct. Then everything stalled and I could not persuade the characters to go anywhere or do anything to the purpose. We were at an impasse.

Dismayed, I realized I could not stand Isabel as

a narrator. I balked at the thought of writing (much last reading) chapter upon chapter of repressed emotion and interior torment. Could even my beloved, bespectacled Fr. Thomas Edmund Gilroy survive this voice? Would he not be provoked in the final pages into cleaving the narrator’s skull with a hatchet? I retreated into mental preparations, endeavoring to find an escape from the corner into which I felt I had painted myself.

It was in the early hours of nursing a newborn that I first heard the voice of Athene Howard. As dire and dark deeds transfixed the world in horror, she could scarcely refrain from squealing with excitement. She was the antidote to the emotionless restraint of Isabel, an irritant to the sensibilities of the hero, and the perfect person to laugh at Fr. Thomas Edmund’s puns. Here was joy! Here was exuberance! Here was the potential for wry humor in the face of lycanthropy and the occult! “O brave new world...” cried Athene, and

I echoed the quotation.

In the months that followed, Athene and I got on very well together. I could not torment her as I did John Kemp in *A Bloody Habit* (and such a delightful task it was to make him uncomfortable in every possible way). At every turn, she was as eager as I to unpack new and bloody challenges. The only serious delay we suffered was when I attempted to push the werewolf-hunting cohort somewhere no Dominicans would have been present in 1906. After

IT WAS IN THE EARLY HOURS
OF NURSING A NEWBORN THAT
I FIRST HEARD THE VOICE OF
ATHENE HOWARD. AS DIRE
AND DARK DEEDS TRANSFIXED
THE WORLD IN HORROR, SHE
COULD SCARCELY REFRAIN FROM
SQUEALING WITH EXCITEMENT.
SHE WAS THE ANTIDOTE TO
THE EMOTIONLESS RESTRAINT
OF ISABEL, AN IRRITANT TO
THE SENSIBILITIES OF THE HERO,
AND THE PERFECT PERSON
TO LAUGH AT FR. THOMAS
EDMUND’S PUNS.

a little more research, we picked up the thread again. (Vicious revenants and undead fiends are welcome in my writing; historical anachronisms are not.)

The dramatic urgency of *Brother Wolf* comes from the cursed twins, Isabel and Jean-Claude. Their story, however, would never have been told without Athene, her notebooks, and her bicycle. We played together with the full range of classical mythology, a much-loved area of study I shared with my brothers in my early youth. I am indebted to Athene. I feel tempted to apologize for several

experiences I inflicted on her. She weathered them nobly, however, inspiring me to unleash new terrors with every chapter. Like Fr. Thomas Edmund Gilroy and the High Decadent “J” of *The Letters of Magdalen Montague*, Athene will forever be dear to me, one of those cherished authorial experiences of a character who did most of the hard work for me. For the months of our collaboration, I did not even have to be jealous of Trollope & Co.—though that coffee-bearing servant still sounds alluring.