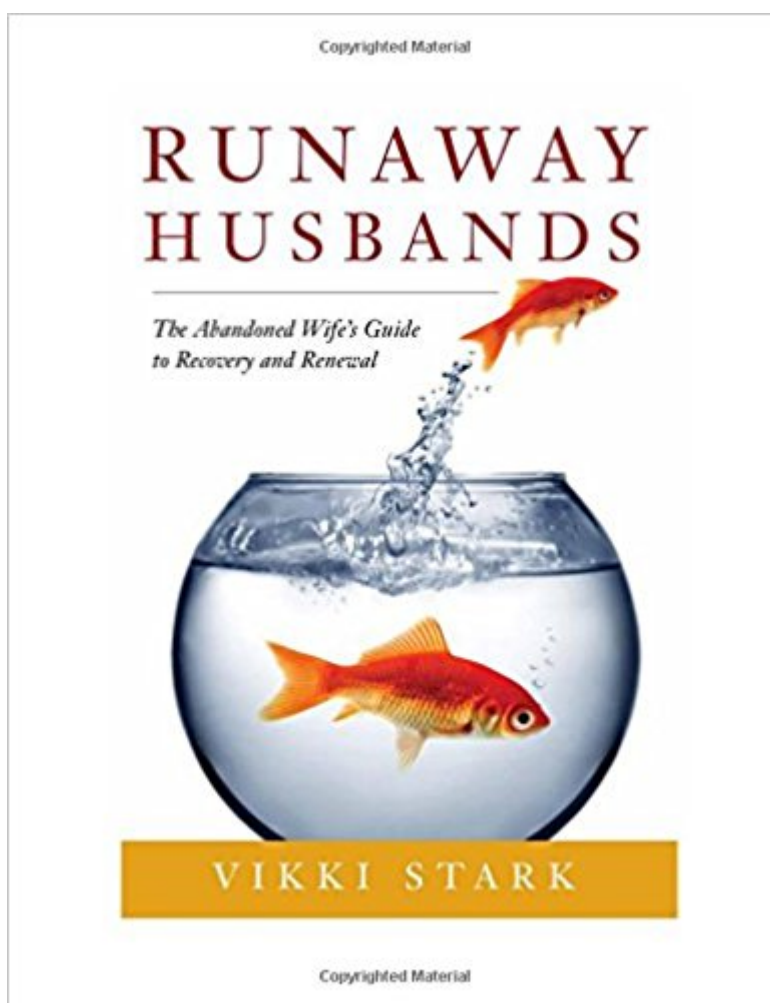


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# Runaway Husbands: The Abandoned Wife's Guide To Recovery And Renewal



## Synopsis

Based on a study of over 400 women worldwide, *Runaway Husbands: The Abandoned Wife's Guide to Recovery and Renewal*, is the first book to explore and offer healing strategies to women whose lives have been turned upside down by Wife Abandonment Syndrome. Wife Abandonment Syndrome is a pattern of behavior on the part of a husband who leaves his wife out-of-the-blue from what she believed was a happy marriage. Following his sudden departure, he replaces the caring he'd typically shown her with anger and aggression. He often moves directly in with a girlfriend, leaving his bewildered wife totally devastated. Written by family therapist Vikki Stark who was herself affected by Wife Abandonment Syndrome, *Runaway Husbands* helps women understand what motivated their loving husbands to turn into uncaring strangers and provides them with the tools they need to move forward and rebuild their lives in new and unexpected ways.

## Book Information

Paperback: 204 pages

Publisher: Green Light Press; 1.2.2010 edition (February 1, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0986472107

ISBN-13: 978-0986472107

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.5 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 191 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #49,848 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #49 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > New Age & Spirituality > Reincarnation](#) #60 in [Books > Parenting & Relationships > Family Relationships > Divorce](#) #1188 in [Books > Self-Help > Relationships](#)

## Customer Reviews

On Mother's Day last year, my husband of nearly 24 years brought me flowers and gifts. At the same time he was telling me he loved me, he indicated that he didn't want to spend time with me because he had other obligations. I was confused, hurt, and very worried. He would hardly look me in the eye. Later that night, he indicated that he was contemplating a separation. The next day, he said he did want a separation and that there was to be no discussion about it. He wouldn't give me any valid reasons for the sudden separation. I pressed the issue. He said he had been unhappy for a long time. This was the first I heard of this. In fact, I had asked him on a daily basis if he loved me, if everything was okay between us, etc. His reply was always "everything is fine." We were having

what my therapist and minister assured me were normal long-term couple problems. I was dedicated to working through these and thought he was on the same page. Instead, he threw the issue up in my face as if I was the only one to blame. He took absolutely no responsibility for any part of it. None. He made me believe, for a long while, that I was completely to blame for the demise of our marriage. When I asked if there was someone else, he angrily lied to my face and said there wasn't. When I later asked him if all the cards, flowers, text messages, and affections were even real, he replied "Some of it." He let me know that he had been pretending to love me for quite some time. I begged him to consider marriage counseling. He refused. I was devastated. My two grown children watched me pack my things as I fell apart. At one point, I started to faint and fell into a chair. He never moved to help me. He showed no compassion, no emotion, no remorse, nothing. He stood there, steel faced and cruel. He later told me he wanted our separation to be permanent. He wouldn't even say the word "divorce." I later learned that he was, indeed, leaving me for a woman he had been seeing behind my back for some time. He lied to our children about her, too, even after multiple witnesses came forward and confirmed what we all suspected. The really sick part is that I suspected his affair several months before and asked him about it. He was furious with me. I felt really bad for doubting him and, in tears, apologized for it. He stood motionless and glared at me. And, this wasn't the only woman he had cheated with. There were at least 2 others that I know about. I had to see my doctor and get tested for STDs as a result. I was mortified. The day he dropped this bomb on me and for months afterward I was in shock. I felt like a thousands knives were sticking in me. I couldn't breathe. I couldn't eat. I lost 45 lbs. I tried to cope with the grief which was especially difficult since I had just 3 months before lost my brother in a tragic accident. How could he change like he did? How could he do this after 24 years of marriage, a nearly 30 year relationship, two children, and what I thought was a happy history together? Didn't any of this matter to him anymore? I sent email after email hoping that if I said the right things he would at least talk to me. He ignored me completely. I offered my heartfelt apology for hurting him and asked him, again, if he would consider marriage counseling. He told me our marriage wasn't worth saving. I read dozens of books, sought help from a therapist, and spent time with my minister to try and understand what happened. I was gradually getting better. I moved back to my home state. I picked up the pieces and tried to move on. But, I desperately needed to know why. It kept haunting me. I replayed those terrible scenes over and over in my head praying that I would find the key to what went wrong. I must have missed something. But, I got nowhere. Then, after a night of prayer for answers, I found this book. I read it in a matter of hours. I couldn't put it down. I was, once again, shocked because this book WAS my story. This very same thing happened to me, just like all the

other women whose stories were included in the book. I could barely breathe. Right there on these pages was the answer I had been seeking. I was just another victim of Wife Abandonment Syndrome. I didn't even know such a thing existed. With each page, the fog cleared away a little more. By the end of the book, I finally had a sense of peace. I finally knew the "why" and could let it go once and for all. I am so very grateful to Ms. Stark and the hundreds of men and women whose stories were incorporated into the book. Without you, I would still be on an endless quest to figure out what happened to the man I believed to be my husband and best friend. When I closed the book, I closed that chapter of my life permanently. I felt lighter, more free, and extremely grateful that he was no longer in my life. It terrifies me to know that the man I trusted for so long, whom I had believed to be a good, moral, honest and loving husband, could do something so sinister and so cruel. Looking back on my marriage with my therapist and minister, I now see the patterns that I missed. I now see the clues I didn't want to acknowledge. I now see that I am truly happier and safer without him. I cannot recommend this book enough to any man or woman whose world was suddenly and inexplicably turned upside down. This book is a life-changer. It helped me get unstuck from the past and embrace my remarkable new life.

For over 2 years I have been looking through books and websites to find advice on living through divorce. Every single one I've found (until now) has assured me that an affair doesn't have to be the end of the relationship, if you're willing to try to forgive and work hard to get through it together. But like the other women depicted in this book, I wasn't given that choice. My fate was decided by the one person I loved, respected and trusted beyond all others. The person I had spent 2 decades with. The person I was thoroughly convinced was my best friend, closest confidant, and greatest supporter. To say I was devastated when he walked away to pursue a relationship with a woman who lives on another continent is an understatement. Every descriptive word I know is an understatement. When the person you trust most betrays you and all your future plans have evaporated into the ether, it's shocking and painful, but it's nothing compared to the realization that your past was an illusion. The man you thought you knew better than anyone else has proven himself to be a stranger. And what I discovered, along with the vast majority of the women who participated in the study that led to this book, is that he is a cruel and utterly uncaring stranger. He not only takes absolutely no emotional or financial responsibility for his unilateral decision to end a loving, decades-long shared relationship, but he places the blame for that ending squarely at the foot of the person who desperately wants to try to save the marriage. And you will be met with steely eyes and stinging, callous words when you attempt to call him on this bullshit. This

twist of the knife, this cowardly and excruciatingly painful act by this stranger wearing a mask of your beloved's face, turns logic and reason upside down, it turns victim into perpetrator. And the victim is left in such a surreal, utterly unrecognizable landscape, suffering such profound shock, that for a long while she is likely to believe it. The man she knows so well, who loved her so completely is simply incapable of intentionally inflicting such pain so it must be her own damn fault. I found this book, *Runaway Husbands*, a few days ago and it is the only example I've found thus far that clearly shows that not all divorces are created equal. The horrific pain, the unequaled confusion, the foaming-at-the-mouth fury, the bottomless sense of shame and humiliation, the powerful shock and the profound sense of loss that comes from being utterly left out of the decision-making process, of realizing that the destruction of your marriage is a fait accompli can break you. It can quite literally drive you insane. Your happy, secure world is forever changed, and it's a cruel, cold, unreliable one, void of love and trust, that you now have to face alone. With this study, you will at least learn that thousands of other women have experienced the same thing, and that there are a whole lot of men (and a few women, too), who simply have no compunction about shattering the lives of the people who love them. You will learn that your spouse emotionally checked out long ago (he just didn't bother to tell you or indicate to you that he was gone or he simply lied outright about an affair or his growing disinterest in you when you questioned him after sensing that something was not right), and as such, they now find your emotional response utterly distasteful and puerile. They have moved on. Why can't you? You will learn that, despite decades of actions and words to the contrary, they never truly loved you, and now would you kindly move aside so they can embrace their shiny, new future full of exciting, sexy possibilities? They step over you as you lay on the floor in the fetal position, sobbing in shock and disbelief; they throw a love with an amazingly strong, supportive, nurturing pedigree into the nearest trash can and they don't look back. They are narcissistic, short-sighted, and cowardly. They care about their own future; they have no energy or interest to spend considering the past. But this book does not let you wallow in your victimhood for too long. Yes, you have been wronged, yes you have lost significant amounts of weight because the experience has rendered food tasteless and half of what you do manage to choke down makes you want to vomit, yes, it's painful to even take the next breath and it seems impossible some days to get out of bed, and yes, you have suffered what is probably the most profound loss of your entire life. But your grief and shock is a NATURAL reaction to the whiplash-like pain you have just experienced. You are NOT going crazy, and you are NOT under any obligation to ANYONE to dry your tears and move on after some arbitrary length of time. You

are NOT weak and you are NOT being lazy by staying in and licking your wounds. You are not a freak because you're not "over it" yet. It takes time to deal with such strong emotions and such profound loss of trust, loss of happiness, loss of security, loss of future plans, loss of love. And you are NOT to blame for your partner's devastating actions. THEY ARE. It's going to take months, even years, but one day you will be able to start enjoying your present and planning for a better future. The advice and coping tools offered up here will help. You CAN get through it and you can even build a better life out of the rubble. You might even be able to trust someone again and open yourself up to the possibility of love. I'm not that far along myself, but this book has helped me tremendously already, and I hope that if you have been in a similarly heart-wrenching situation, you will read it and let it help you, too.

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