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texas NIGHTMARES A MEMOIR

BOOK PROPOSAL 2025
FULL MANUSCRIPT AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

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overview

“I was seventeen, pregnant, and running for my life when the man who promised to love me shot me point-blank in the face.”

texas NIGHTMARES is a raw, unflinching memoir of survival, motherhood, and the fight to reclaim power after suffering violence, addiction, and systemic failures.

Stephanie Ramirez-Pelletier takes readers deep into the heart of Texas and the darkest corners of her past—from the night she was nearly murdered to the relentless years that followed, battling for custody, sobriety, and a future her abuser tried to erase.

But this isn't a trauma tour. It's a story of grit, grief, healing, and hope. Told with unapologetic honesty and streaks of dark humor, *texas NIGHTMARES* is a decisive contribution to survivor literature and a testament to the women who refuse to die quietly.

For readers of *The Glass Castle*, *Know My Name*, and *Somebody's Daughter*, this book will resonate with anyone who's ever had to rebuild from the ashes—and wanted to scream while doing it.



storyteller bio

Stephanie Ramirez-Pelletier is a survivor, mother, artist, and advocate living in San Marcos, Texas. At 17, she survived a point-blank gunshot to the face, an event that left her blind in one eye but ignited a relentless drive to reclaim her life. Overcoming addiction, trauma, and systemic injustices, Stephanie transformed her pain into purpose.

Today, she is the founder of [The Vibe Recovery Co-op](#), a community space dedicated to healing and empowerment. Her murals adorn the streets of Texas, each telling stories of resilience and hope. Through her writing, Stephanie offers an unfiltered look into the complexities of survival and the strength found in vulnerability.

texas NIGHTMARES is her debut memoir, a testament to her journey from victim to victor. Stephanie continues to inspire others by sharing her story, proving that even in the darkest moments, there is light to be found.



target audience

- Women in recovery or surviving domestic violence, addiction, or poverty
- Survivors of trauma who want truth without sugarcoating
- Readers of memoirs by badass, complicated women (*Educated*, *The Glass Castle*, *Know My Name*)
- Fans of true crime—as told by the survivor, not the system
- Advocates, therapists, and people working in recovery, justice reform, or social work
- Anyone who's ever had to rebuild after trusting the wrong man, the wrong system, or the wrong goddamn story
- Anyone who's ever felt “too broken” to heal—and needs proof they aren't alone

texas NIGHTMARES will resonate with readers who crave raw honesty, complex healing, and the reminder that some women weren't made to die quietly.



comparable titles

While *texas NIGHTMARES* fits alongside these powerful works, it also stands apart: a survivor's memoir that doesn't flinch, doesn't sugarcoat, and doesn't apologize for who it makes uncomfortable.

It will appeal to readers of bestselling and award-winning memoirs that blend trauma, resilience, and fierce storytelling. Comparable titles include:

***Educated* by Tara Westover**

A story of escaping familial control and reclaiming identity through truth. Steph's memoir echoes this journey but offers a grittier, more unfiltered voice—not from the ivory towers of academia, but from a battered trailer in Texas.

***Know My Name* by Chanel Miller**

Both memoirs give voice to the silenced. But where Miller faced a courtroom, Steph faced bullets, addiction, and broken custody systems. *texas NIGHTMARES* explores what happens when trauma doesn't end with a verdict—it multiplies.

***Somebody's Daughter* by Ashley C. Ford**

A raw account of growing up under impossible circumstances. Steph's voice is equally vulnerable and electric, but her story cuts deeper into generational trauma, child loss, and survival at all costs.

***The Glass Castle* by Jeannette Walls**

A classic tale of maternal complexity and dysfunction. Steph's memoir takes this further—tracing what happens when a girl becomes a mother before she's even finished being a child, and still fights to break the cycle.

marketing & author platform



Stephanie Ramirez-Pelletier has a dedicated and growing audience—women in recovery, social workers, mothers, and survivors—who’ve followed her story for years through blogs, Facebook archives, and in connection with her community leadership. She is fully prepared to leverage her platform for media, events, and partnerships.

This is not a “pre-launch” platform. Stephanie is already deeply embedded in the communities her book serves.

- Founder of The Vibe Recovery Co-op, an intentional sober living community in San Marcos, Texas providing transitional housing and long-term support for people in recovery from addiction.
- Co-owner of Ramirez Murals, a family-run art business with a strong local presence and active social media following.
- Active speaker, mentor, and advocate for recovery, justice reform, and neurodivergent inclusion.
- Currently developing personal website and blog at www.stephanieramirezpelletier.com, where she will share essays, behind-the-scenes chapters, and recovery resources.
- Currently developing a podcast and speaking tour based on the themes of *texas NIGHTMARES*.



disclaimer

Content Warning:

This manuscript includes references to domestic violence, sexual assault, grooming, child loss, suicide attempts, and addiction. Reader discretion is advised.

Ethical Note:

Every experience in *texas NIGHTMARES* is rooted in truth. The events described—especially those involving abuse, systemic failure, and survival—are based on lived experience.

When necessary, names have been changed, identities blurred, or timelines condensed to protect privacy and maintain narrative clarity. The most serious allegations—rape, violence, coercion—are supported by readily-available documentation, medical records, and eyewitness accounts.

These stories are not told lightly.
But memoir is memory.

And survival requires shape-shifting.

Some scenes blend multiple events into one. Some characters represent more than one person. But every word was written from the body of someone who lived it.

I didn't write this to make peace.

I wrote it because I survived.



X-ray image of Stephanie's head and neck showing bullet fragments lodged in her upper spine.

chapter summaries



intro

Introduction – "Brave"

A seventeen-year-old girl. A newborn baby in her lap. And a bullet to the face that should have ended everything. Instead, it was the beginning of a story she never planned to survive.

01

Chapter 1 – "This Curse"

Steph introduces the legacy of generational trauma she was born into—poverty, abuse, addiction, and silence. Her earliest memories are marked by chaos and harm disguised as love.

02

Chapter 2 – "Little Girl Lost"

Steph was mothering children and being hunted by predators before she could drive. She recounts how abandonment and manipulation shaped her early views of womanhood and worth.

03

Chapter 3 – "The Smallest Man Who Ever Lived"

The man who would later shoot her didn't start with violence—he started with charm. This chapter details how grooming, addiction, and power slowly stole Stephanie's autonomy while she was still a child.

chapter summaries



04

Chapter 4 – "The Shooting"

One moment of horror changes everything when the man Steph trusted points a gun at her face and pulls the trigger. The bullet ricochets seven times inside her skull and lodges in her spine, but she wakes up alive.

05

Chapter 5 – "Runnin'"

After weeks in the hospital, Steph is released back to her abuser's family. She begins planning her escape and clings to faith, desperation, and her babies as her only guides.

06

Chapter 6 – "Just Keep Runnin'"

Arkansas becomes a blurry, broken haven. She finds a flicker of safety—but also addiction, trauma bonding, and the letter that yanks her right back into the hands of the people who nearly killed her.

07

Chapter 7 – "Michelle, Ma Belle"

After losing custody and nearly everything else, Steph begins the slow, brutal climb back. Her family surrounds her like a shield and she begins the long fight to be trusted again—starting with her own children.

chapter summaries



08

Chapter 8 – "Build, Run, Cry, WTF"

Steph tries everything—religion, therapy, cults, AA—to heal her grief and find identity. But nothing sticks because she's still running from the girl who was shot in that trailer.

09

Chapter 9 – "Red Letters, Big Lies"

Jesus feels like a lifeline, but the church fails her again and again. This chapter explores the deep disconnection between organized religion and the realities of trauma, motherhood, and recovery.

10

Chapter 10 – "Da Boiiiiiii"

Steph dives headfirst into high-functioning alcoholism and spiritual exhaustion. She gives birth to Logan, drowns in work, and slowly loses herself under the weight of unresolved pain.

11

Chapter 11 – "Another One Bites the Dust"

Steph marries again—but this time, the relationship is centered on emotional abuse, not physical. The scars are deeper, more invisible, and harder to name. But Logan keeps her anchored.

chapter summaries



12

Chapter 12 – "I Don't Wanna Have to Go to Rehab..."

Everything breaks. Stephanie drinks, rages, breaks furniture, and collapses into detox. Rehab isn't a healing place—it's just another battlefield.

13

Chapter 13 – "You Said What?"

Fresh out of treatment, Steph gets hit with a new diagnosis and a pile of unpaid medical bills. She moves into a tiny apartment, raises Logan alone, and begins rebuilding from the bottom up.

14

Chapter 14 – "Anyone But Her"

Her middle daughter disappears into the same cycle of pain and addiction Steph once knew. What's worse - she disappears into the care of the man who shot Steph—and the family that protected him.

15

Chapter 15 – "Fuck This"

Steph reaches her breaking point when her daughter overdoses and pushes her away. After years of fighting, she decides to stop begging and start protecting herself.



chapter summaries

16

Chapter 16 – "No Fucking Way"

Back-to-back losses—first her grandmother, then her mother—shatter Steph's foundation. She doesn't relapse, but the grief nearly kills her. She begins to rebuild, once again. This time for her grandson's sake.

17

Chapter 17 – "The Last Relapse"

Grief becomes unbearable. PTSD, rage, and trauma drive Stephanie to the edge again. But this time, instead of relapse, she finds Sasha and a chance to choose life again.

18

Chapter 18 – "Icing"

She meets Erich, a man who doesn't flinch at her darkness. Together, they build something soft, stable, and sacred: a blended family, two homes, and a life that finally feels safe.

19

Chapter 19 – "Tiger Lily"

Steph's daughter comes home—but not for long. This is the most fragile chapter: hope, love, and devastation all crash together as her child vanishes again, and Steph spirals...

20

Chapter 20 – "Breathe"

After a suicidal spiral, Steph checks herself into a hospital. What follows is the slow return to self—eating again, breathing again, dancing again. It's not a full recovery, but it's enough. Enough to choose life. Enough to write this book.



sample chapter

INTRODUCTION

brave

"I didn't have it in myself to go with grace 'Cause when I'd fight, you used to tell me I was brave"

Taylor Swift- My Tears Ricochet

I was sixteen years old when it happened.

Well, technically, I was sixteen when they bought the gun. My birthday had been two days before, so I had just turned seventeen when it all went down.

I was sitting at a kitchen table in a rotting trailer just outside Elgin, Texas.

The kind of place that makes you feel dirty just breathing.

The floor creaked with every step, like it resented being walked on. The wallpaper curled and peeled like skin off old wounds. The air stank—old grease, mildew, broken dreams—and cigarettes. Always cigarettes. His mom had a two-pack-a-day habit, and that tar lived in every cushion, curtain, and fiber of that place. You didn't sit on the couch so much as get stuck to it.

There were three smokers in that tiny trailer. It felt less like a home and more like the inside of a bar no one cleaned.

And in my lap, her.

My daughter. My baby. My reason.

Strawberry blonde hair and the face of a porcelain doll. I'd never seen anything so small or so alive.

She weighed 4 pounds, 6 ounces. So small we had to stop at Toys "R" Us on the way home from the hospital to buy Cabbage Patch diapers. Real preemie diapers didn't even exist back then. Nothing about that life was built for her.

Not the crib.

Not the home.

Not the man.

Not me.



sample chapter

And definitely not safety.

I was a baby myself, just a kid with stretch marks and bruises shaped like his fingerprints. He had hurt me the day before. I couldn't move my wrist. I remember holding her with my good arm and trying to keep the bad one hidden, like if I didn't draw attention to it, maybe it would stop throbbing.

I didn't ask to go to the hospital. Not again. Not after the last time when I swore I slipped. There's only so many excuses a person can make before even the nurses stop pretending to believe you.

I was trapped in that trailer, and somewhere in the back of my mind, I knew—I wasn't going to make it out alive.

It wasn't a thought.
It wasn't a fear.

It was a knowing.

Deep.
Bone-deep.
Like my body already understood what my mind wasn't ready to say out loud.

But then there was her.

My Destany.

She didn't just give me hope.
She *made* me hope.
Even with all the shame clinging to my skin like smoke.
She made me want to try.
So I started making calls.
To friends.
To shelters.
To anyone who might know anyone.

Looking for a path a single teen mom and her baby to escape a shitty trailer in Elgin, Texas.



sample chapter

I called a cosmetology school. Baldwin Beauty School. I didn't know what the hell I was doing—I just knew I had to *do* something. I had no diploma, no money, no plan. Just a baby on my lap and the wild idea that maybe, somehow, I could claw my way out.

That's when it happened. I was on the phone with Randy Baldwin.

I didn't know he was still in the house. I thought he'd gone to town. We hadn't spoken since I found out he slept with my friend.

I had told him I was leaving. That was my mistake.

I told him.

I should've just run.
Then I heard it.

Not a bang.
Not a yell.

Just a click.
So small. So sharp.
Like a mousetrap.
Like the snap of something final.

He was "cleaning it," he told the cops later.
That .22 caliber pistol, the new one his parents helped him get, because apparently nothing says "responsible parenting" like handing a loaded weapon to a ticking time bomb.

They knew what he was.
They saw the bruises. Heard the fights.
And they gave him a gun anyway.

The click echoed.

And deep in my chest, so deep it lived below thought, I knew.

He's going to kill me.



sample chapter

I turned and looked at him. He was already looking at me.

Eyes locked.

Gun raised.

That tiny hand gripping that tiny gun with the weight of every rage-filled night behind it.

I didn't scream.

I didn't duck.

I didn't run.

I just stared back.

Took half a breath.

And then,

Flash.

Not fire. Not drama.

Just white light.

And silence.

Then thunder.

A roar in my skull like God had screamed straight into my brain.

My body went still, and everything else moved—too fast, too loud.

It felt like I was driving my own body from somewhere above it. Watching myself move while being nowhere at all.

Then, nothing.

Blank.

Survival mode kicked in.

And somehow, I stood up.

Yeah. I stood.

Shot in the face, and I stood the fuck up.



sample chapter

I looked at him, and my mouth moved before my brain caught up.
“You could’ve shot her.”

He said nothing.

I thought he missed.

I went to put my baby in her crib, and that’s when it hit me -

No depth perception.

No balance.

I nearly dropped her.

That’s when I saw it.
The blood.

Hot. Fast. Pouring.

And pain-god, not even pain, it was pressure.
Like my face was caving in. Like someone had slammed a sledgehammer through my eye.

I had taken beatings before. Black eyes. Busted lips. Bruises that ran like rivers.
But this-this was different.

This was fire and ice and nothing all at once.
I was dizzy.
Spinning.

I turned around, and he threw a dirty bath towel at me like I was an oil spill he needed to mop up. He said “clean yourself up” he said. Like I was being too messy.

And I took it.
Pressed it to my face.



sample chapter

Still no panic. No screaming.

Just a rising fog.

My baby was crying now. She felt it. Knew something was wrong.

The cops didn't come for a while.

Neither did Starflight.

And when they did, I was still standing.

Still walking.

Still bleeding.

They didn't believe I was shot. Maybe grazed. They thought I was high.
Delusional.

I don't blame them.

Who gets shot point-blank in the face and walks to the front door like it's nothing?

But that's the thing about survival.

It doesn't look like you think it will.

It doesn't cry pretty.
It doesn't fall to the floor begging for mercy.

It stands.
It walks.
It *fights*.

Even if you don't know how.

Even if your whole body says you shouldn't be alive.



sample chapter

That's where this story begins.

With a girl.

With a baby.

With a bullet.

And with the first time I realized-
He might've tried to end me,
but I was still here.

Still standing.

Still brave.

notice



The full manuscript of *texas NIGHTMARES* is complete at approximately 44,000 words and available upon request.

Each chapter holds enough depth to stand alone, and I'm open to expanding the work or collaborating further to bring this story to its full potential.

This is the first time I've truly believed someone might want to hear my story, so I kept it a little conservative on length.

The content is raw.
Writing it was brutal.
But it's real.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and, hopefully, your belief in this story.

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