

Books

Finding Her Voice

SCHUYLER'S MONSTER

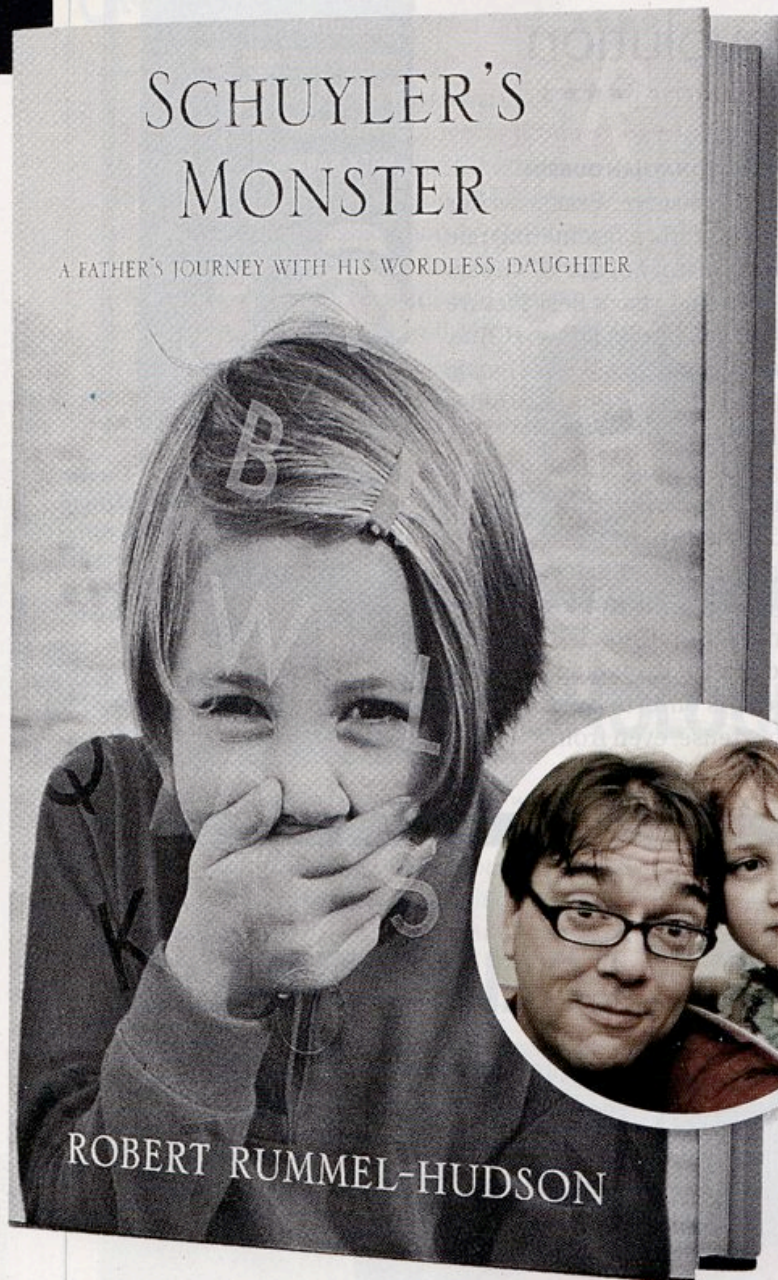
by Robert Rummel-Hudson | ★★★★★

REVIEWED BY VICK BOUGHTON

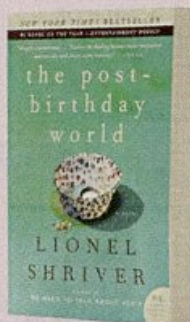
MEMOIR

“Special needs parents are fools, every one of us,” writes Rummel-Hudson. “We tilt at windmills and charge into battle with the monster, rubber swords drawn.” The monster here is a rare brain malformation, polymicrogyria, which makes his daughter Schuyler, now 8, unable to speak. Based on his blog, Rummel-Hudson’s memoir offers a moving account of his and wife Julie’s unrelenting efforts to give their buoyant little girl a way to communicate. Nothing comes easily. While she’s a toddler, Schuyler’s condition, which also accounts for some motor delays, is misdiagnosed as a type of autism. Later, her parents butt heads with ill-informed educators. Meanwhile, a lack of funds for top-notch care and sophisticated communication tools is a constant worry. But today, thanks to aggressive intervention and Schuyler’s own determination, she attends a Plano, Texas, elementary school, where she relies on what’s known as an Alternative and Assistive Communication device. By punching onscreen keys, Schuyler can form sentences that are translated into an age-appropriate electronic voice. To her family’s delight, she has plenty to say.

“Schuyler wasn’t like most little girls . . . She couldn’t articulate a single word”



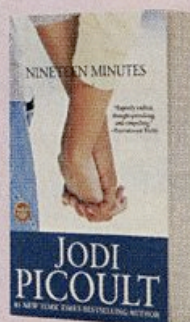
GREAT READS



THE POST-BIRTHDAY WORLD
by *Lionel Shriver*
Shriver imagines alternate lives with two very different men for her wandering-eyed heroine.



THE WILD TREES
by *Richard Preston*
Like climbing? Preston’s book about adventurers who scale California’s immense redwoods will make you feel bush league.



NINETEEN MINUTES
by *Jodi Picoult*
Picoult’s gripping 14th novel illuminates both the victims and the shooter in a Columbine-like massacre.