

# NIGHTS AND WEEKENDS.COM

Since I'm a new mom, whose life currently revolves around caring for my baby girl's every need (and want), Andy Siegel's debut, *Suzy's Case*, perfectly depicts my worst nightmare: the story of a perfect little girl whose life is changed forever by what her mother is convinced was a doctor's horrible mistake. Still, despite the heartbreaking premise, Siegel manages to give the story an entertaining tone, thanks to its eccentric hero.

Six years ago, Suzy Williams was a precocious little girl with dreams of becoming the country's first African-American female president. Now, she's little more than a vegetable—unable to control her movements or say more than just a few words.

Long ago, Suzy's mother, June, hired Henry Benson to sue the hospital where Suzy had been undergoing treatment for malpractice—but after Benson loses his license, the case is handed over to Tug Wyler. According to Benson's medical expert, Suzy has no case, so Wyler is charged with getting himself and Benson removed as counsel. But June's persistence convinces Tug to explore the case further—and he soon finds that Suzy might have a case after all.

As a personal injury and malpractice attorney, Siegel has seen his share of tragedy and injustice. Now, with his first novel, he's decided to share his world with readers, taking a dramatic story and giving it a surprisingly light tone.

Siegel's main character, Tug Wyler, isn't exactly the usual literary lawyer: the slicked-back, tough-as-nails attorney who exudes an inherent kind of strength and confidence. He's actually more like Michael Connelly's Mickey Haller—still slicked-back and fast-talking yet self-aware, with his share of flaws and weaknesses. At times, his quirks are a bit overdone, but they also make him feel human. He may be insensitive, but at least he knows he's insensitive. He may sometimes be a liar and a cheat—and a bit of a dog, too—but at least he'll admit it. And, deep down, he's a good guy. He cares about getting justice for his clients—because, as the devoted son of a terminally ill mother, he's walked in their shoes. And while he may put up a good front, he's really a hen-pecked husband who would never leave his obnoxious, gold-digging wife (even though his mother suggests—and even recommends—it).

Still, the star of *Suzy's Case* isn't Wyler; it's June Williams. Tough and resourceful, with an unfailing commitment to her disabled daughter, June is the kind of character that you'll love from the beginning. She's convinced that something went horribly wrong at the hospital on that fateful day, and she refuses to accept any information to the contrary, instead doing everything in her power (and calling in a few favors, too) to argue her case. Her dedication and determination prove to be inspiring—both for her lawyer and for the book's readers.

The story is often a heartbreaking one (especially for parents), but the characters—both the quirky ones and the truly likeable ones—make *Suzy's Case* an enjoyable and even entertaining legal thriller. It's a worthwhile debut from a distinctive new voice in legal fiction.