

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Sandi Mendelson
Hilsinger-Mendelson East
212-725-7707
smendelson@hmieast.com

“The odds confronted in Silverstein’s memoir, *Sick Girl*, are daunting, and the crowning miracle is that she wrote this feisty, insightful, improbable book at all. Silverstein has cheated death to thrive in her post-transplant existence and to write about it with incredible courage, determination, self-scrutiny, and verve.”

—*Elle*

“[A] mesmerizing human drama of living life as a heart transplant recipient . . . an Ivy League-trained lawyer and superb writer with a wry, biting sense of humor, Silverstein is a natural raconteur with a story so compelling readers won’t want to put this book down.”

—*Library Journal* (starred review)

SICK GIRL

By Amy Silverstein

An incredible journey into the life of a young heart transplant patient, **SICK GIRL** (Grove Press; October 2007; US \$24.00/CAN \$29.95), is extraordinary both for its gripping story of a “crazy kind of amazing” medical miracle and for its surprisingly irreverent and occasionally fierce narrator, Amy Silverstein. Her bold, unforgettable self-portrait will forever change your perspective on life, health, and medicine.

At just twenty-four, Amy Silverstein was your typical type-A law-student: smart, driven, and highly competitive. Adroitly juggling a budding romance and a heavy academic schedule, Amy did not have time for illness—even one that caused violent and erratic heartbeats, shortness of breath, blackouts, and temporary blindness. When her family doctor suggested that her symptoms were due to stress and diet, she was more than happy to drop a few classes, think calm thoughts, and eat fistfuls of salt. At such a young age, vibrant and energetic, how could she have guessed that her heart was about to fail?

--MORE--

With grace and wit, in her debut book **SICK GIRL**, Silverstein chronicles her astounding medical journey from the first misdiagnosis to her astonishing and ongoing recovery, experiencing an unheard-of and ever-tenuous longevity without additional transplants—she has healthily surpassed her doctors’ life expectancy predictions by more than nine years. Distrustful of her doctors and insistent in her refusal to be the “grateful heart patient” she is expected to be, Silverstein presents a point of view that is truly eye-opening and sometimes controversial.

“What happened to me demonstrates that there are illnesses that can outsmart and outperform even the best doctor gods,” writes Silverstein in her riveting, keenly observed, wryly humorous look at a full-throttle life-threatening disease.

Told she is a “sick girl” by her physician, Silverstein makes every effort to live as a “normal” person, despite immunosuppressive medicines that are actually poisons that keep her body from attacking her new heart and the unrelenting danger of transplant-related death. Her remarkable account is made all the more dramatic by the deliriously romantic bedside courtship with her devoted boyfriend, Scott (now her husband), and a single, uncompromising desire. Although two cardiologists render definitive *nos* on the issue of pregnancy, no one ever told her she could not be a *mother*. For Silverstein, her miracle and the heart of her recovery is a baby boy.

Among the topics Silverstein explores in **SICK GIRL** are:

- The complex dance of patient-doctor communication—evasive white-coat white lies and frank discussions, alike;
- The terrible price paid for dumbing herself down, the miscalculation of risk, and how smart, savvy patients create themselves;
- Living as a sick person, always on the edge of a medical emergency that she hides from her young son and friends, and often, even her husband;
- How patients think—about physicians as “friends,” or not, a tremendously intimate relationship with limits;
- The promise and power of motherhood and how significantly it changed her life;
- Medicine as a best guess, not an exacting science;
- Organ transplant winners and losers and the mind-bending delicate balance between being sick enough to receive what you need in order to live and living long enough to receive what you’ve been waiting for, and much more.

--MORE--

A riveting memoir, **SICK GIRL** is fundamentally about relationships—between patient and doctors, wife and husband, mother and son, sick friend and well friends—and how all these strengthen or shatter under the pressure of a freakish illness. Buoyant and ultimately triumphant, Silverstein’s is a compelling and courageous new voice that will stay with you long after you have turned the final page of **SICK GIRL**.

#

About the Author:

Amy Silverstein’s new heart has been beating strong for nineteen years, despite a ten-year prognosis. After practicing law and performing music, Silverstein has discovered a new passion, writing. She has also been elected to the board of directors of UNOS (United Network of Organ Sharing), a federally contracted transplant network. Amy lives with her husband and son in New York.

SICK GIRL By Amy Silverstein

Grove Press; October 2007; US \$24.00/CAN \$29.95

ISBN-10: 0-8021-1854-2; ISBN-13: 978-0-8021-1854-7