

*AN AB DISCOVERY BOOK*

# FLORENCE GRANT

*BESTSELLING PRO-BEDWETTING AUTHOR*

Growing Up  
A Bedwetter:  
*My Own Story*

*Growing Up A Bedwetter*

# **Growing Up A Bedwetter: *My Own Story***

**By Forrest/Florence Grant**

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*Growing Up A Bedwetter*

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# Introduction



There is a reason why this book has taken so long to write. I have completed many other books while this one remained partially done and not progressing very fast. Fiction is one thing where you can make pretty much anything happen, but autobiographies are about real life. There are no excuses or options for what you write in those whereas in fiction, it is just a story, a made-up tale that is nothing like your own life. Or is it? Do my heavily pro-bedwetting tales spring from wishful thinking or simple fantasy or are they a mirror of my real life in some way?

In many ways, it is the latter. Somewhat dialled back of course, but still uncomfortably close to how things were and in fact, still are.

I am a bedwetter. Not just recently but for 55 of my 55 years. Yes, there have been dry nights, random occasions of waking up dry or – no wetter than when I went to bed – but they are rare and with no fore-signalling. They just happen and both surprise and displease me. I am a bedwetter and waking up dry feels like a real betrayal of who I really am. That will surprise some but to others, makes perfect sense. Is it a dysfunctional aspect of me? You could argue that, but the clinical definition of ‘dysfunction’ is that it causes disruption, failure and disorder in your life. Bedwetting like I do certainly needs planning and management but once you do that, the disorder is nearly nil and so there... not dysfunctional. Well, for me at least. For others, it may not be so.

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If I am to tell my tale, then the reader needs to understand that I have *never* in my entire life considered bedwetting to be a bad thing or even a negative thing. Despite all the opinions of others, I always found bedwetting a positive experience and not something to be stopped. As you can only imagine, this caused a lot of conflict, complications and strife for me because bedwetting is not really tolerated by society in general past about age 5 or 6. And even more so, wet *sheets* are not tolerated when nappies are available – even for older kids, teens and adults. But I wanted the experience of wet sheets and so even now, generally sleep nappyless when possible and enjoy the full experience of bedwetting – the look, the feel and full body wonder.

Yes, I understand that very few people are like me – or so I thought. I know that people who have read my books and enjoyed them can *imagine* sleeping regularly in wet sheets but most rarely do for reasons that need little explanation. The book “The Bedwetters Travel Guide” was written with the long-held wish that there were, in fact, places that not only permitted but *encouraged* wet sheets.

I accept my weirdness and understand that most think this is really odd, but for those with an open mind, I submit the story of my life and how it was to grow up soaking wet with no shame and no desire to be dry. Ever.

I am happy to be considered weird... but sane and safe. May it ever be thus.

So, let's begin...

# Chapter 1 – staying in nappies



I could bore you with the details of my early babyhood other than to say that it was like everyone else at the time. I was the first and ultimately, the only child to my parents and at that time, wore cloth nappies, pinned on with classic nappy pins and covered in plastic pants. As a boy, the plastic pants were mainly white with some blue offerings at times while girls, of course, had some pink. I am still annoyed that photos of me as an infant did not feature pink plastic pants or even better, the awesome, pink frilly plastic pants that seemed to be the province of girls only. It is no coincidence that pink frillies are my plastic pants of choice to this day and only budgetary constraints limit them at all. They speak not only to my gender but also to my infancy. And they are so pretty! And to see them is to never be confused as to who is wearing them. It is not a boy. It is not an incontinent adult. It is a big baby girl (aka me!)

Between my first book and this one, I have adopted the name, Florence. I consider myself to be essentially female although that is unsurprisingly, rather complicated. My gender questioning began early on although it tended not to disrupt my life in any significant way. In my toddler years, I just believed I was actually a girl but without any distress or confusion. My penis was of little concern. As I grew older, I understood there was a discrepancy between what was hidden in my nappy and how I felt, but it was not really a conflict, just a discrepancy. I am generally pretty easy to get on with and not easily flustered and so being both a girl and a

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boy at the same time seemed okay to me just as being both a baby and a teen and then a baby adult also seemed okay. If I am being honest, I was somewhat unaware that everyone wasn't also just like me inside, probably because I wasn't distressed or confused by it. My identity was unique and unusual, and it took a few years at school to truly discover that I was quite different to other boys. Being a bedwetter at age 6 was no big deal and I had school friends who still wet their beds at that time. But by ten years of age, it was very apparent to me that I was different. I still wore nappies. I still wet the bed and I still had no real desire for that to change.

But back to growing up as a baby and toddler.

I was a typical single child to typical English parents of the time. As I understand now, we were considerably better off financially than many although not anywhere close to wealthy. We had a nice, detached house, a nice British (poorly made!) car and I never felt like I lacked anything. I went to a kindergarten at age three and a half and I was still in nappies. You need to understand the era and it was a time when children were usually toilet-trained early, no matter the issues or difficulties associated with it. It was just *done*. It was the era that made so many kids unnecessarily traumatised by the potty training that they weren't really ready for. It was a travesty and a mini-tragedy. I was lucky to avoid it by the combination of more understanding parents and a personal total lack of desire to toilet train.

There was only one other toddler still in nappies at kindergarten and it was a rather obvious difference. The irony was that there were multiple wet and dirty pants among the other children almost every day because toilet training doesn't always follow the government-approved schedule. On a tangent, I recently read Gwendoline Summers book – *"An Argument For Rejecting Potty Training"* and I concur with the primary premise that toilet training is not something that should *ever* be enforced without the child's participation and informed consent. I am very much a pro-choice



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person and by that, I mean choice with toilet training, choice with nappies or not and choice with wetting the sheets or wetting nappies at night. Oh, I am pro-choice in its more common understanding too.

So, were my parents more attuned to their child than others? Well, yes, perhaps, but they were also very well educated, and I think it enhanced their ability to *think* and perhaps understand that if their son was still wetting and soiling his nappy as frequently as I was and with no apparent awareness of it and importantly, *with no distress*, that toilet-training at the commonly accepted 18 months of age was not only unlikely to succeed but probably inappropriate. They probably didn't really think it through as such but rather saw the lack of drama and chose the 'less drama' path... which was staying in nappies. Worked for me! It reminds me even today that the ability to *think* rather than simply replicate what others say and do is rarer than we wish for. I can only imagine the disaster and trauma that early enforced potty training would have been for me especially since I was untrainable at the time.

The 'no awareness' bit though was untrue. I was in fact, fully aware of my need to poo my nappy and during the day, mostly (but not fully) aware of needing to pee. The problem (a problem for others, not for me) was that I saw no issue with wetting and dirtying my nappy. None at all. It made perfect sense to me to do this. And so, I did. Whenever I felt the urge to poo, I would do so. Wetting my nappy simply didn't enter my mind and so while I was probably able to stop it, I didn't. It wasn't that I *enjoyed* wetting and dirtying my nappy. That would come later. It just seemed natural, normal and not at all uncomfortable. The part of my brain that connected staying dry as normal, desirable and comfortable... isn't there and probably never has been. I don't miss it. Nappies make perfect uncomplicated sense to me and even now, I struggle with why others don't see that.

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But surprise, surprise, nappies are not acceptable at school and especially not back then. It's not really acceptable now either although it does still occur (to much complaint). Toilet training was now firmly on my agenda, and it did not go well.

My mum was a stay-at-home mum and at that time this was fairly common although the working mother was then growing in popularity. My mum and I 'synced', especially as a young child. She understood to a meaningful degree that I did *not* want to be toilet trained. I would cry and sometimes scream and rather than just spank me or discipline me in other harsh and absurd ways (as some parents did and still do) she said something that I can still recall in perfect clarity as a tearful four-year-old boy with a damp nappy hanging around my ankles and sitting on a potty chair trying to 'learn'.

"I know you don't want to stop wearing nappies, sweetie. And I'm not making you stop. You only have to be out of them for school, that's all."

To describe that statement as pivotal would be to understate it massively. It altered not only my present but also my future. There was no implied time limit for wearing nappies even though Mum confirmed some years later that she expected that I would be out of nappies at some point in the relatively near future. She had given me an escape route. There was also that implication that I remember feeling at the time.

*Mummy knows I want to wear nappies. She understands.*

I was only four, but I felt I had someone who understood how I felt. Fathers of the day were a little standoffish, especially with child-rearing and mine was no real exception but at the same time, there was none of the 'be a man' crap or the 'big boys don't wet the bed' rubbish. He didn't say much on the topic of my nappies, but it was what he *didn't* say that was his real evidence of support. Or at least ambivalence. Of course, since then I have come

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to understand just how rare understanding (or ambivalent) parents are on matters like this. I was exceedingly lucky in this regard, and I appreciate more with every new year. I eventually told them that before changing to safer topics!

And so, I started school out of nappies.

It was an undistinguished first two years.

I wet my pants many times. If you recall your own first couple of years at school, you will probably remember that occasional kid who wet their pants. I wasn't just that kid. I was *all* of those kids. Wet pants were very regular in my first few months and even into my second year, I had the occasional accident. I was the worst by far and my problem was one of confusion and contradictory experiences.

By virtue of tears and a compliant mum, I was allowed to wear nappies outside of school. And by that, I mean that nappies came off in the morning *after* breakfast and when getting ready for school. And when I came home, I always asked Mum to put me in a nappy again straight away and she generally complied. If she was cranky at something, then she might make me wait a little while. And if I had wet pants at school and she had to pick me up... I came home and was right back in nappies again. You can therefore imagine my conflict about wetting my pants at school. They got me back into nappies even earlier than after school. So, did I deliberately wet my pants at school? Yes, a few times, but there was a degree of teasing and mocking that acted as a counterargument to that and so I tried genuinely to stop wetting my pants at school. But home was an entirely different experience.

Nappies at home in those days were a curious experience because they were not intended to simply handle 'slight accidents'. I was not expected to try and use the toilet (which I hated) and for nappies to be there when I couldn't make it. There were no pullups or training pants worthy of the name. My mum seemed to

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understand that I wanted not only to wear nappies but also to *use* them. And so, I did just that. I know it sounds bizarre and when I look back, I realise that it was both uncommon and yet very loving. At home, I only ever wet and soiled in my nappy. Many will relate to my developing understanding at the time which was that when I was wearing a nappy, I was effectively incontinent. I would wet without much awareness and yet, when out of a nappy, I *could* control it (mostly) and so by the age of 7, wet pants at school were gone but nappies at home were still wet and dirty.

But Mum was no dummy. She knew something was up with me and was seeking to make my transition to 'fully toilet trained' as painless as possible and allowing nappies was some kind of transitional tool. The first conflict came unsurprisingly over soiling. I almost *never* used a toilet for pooing, preferring to use my nappy either awake or while asleep. I would 'hold on' at school until I got home when I could poo in my nappy as was the 'right and proper' thing. I still feel this way despite knowing how everyone else feels.

And there it was again. Toilets made no sense to me, but nappies did. I couldn't quite grasp the concept or the need for them. I was a smart kid academically, but toilet training simply bypassed me entirely. My mind never saw 'the point' of toilets. To be honest, I still don't. Potty training should be far less rigid and even voluntary, but I accept that my way will never become society's way. 50 years later I still view the toilet as a voluntary thing and nappies as a perfectly acceptable alternative.

But using the toilet for poo did become an issue and so during an extended - and sometimes argumentative - period in my life, my parents *required* me to use the toilet to poo in but still, allowed me to wear nappies. It was a compromise of sorts.

My rebellion was short-lived and I eventually agreed to this 'compromise of sorts'. And the compromise was one of give and take. My father actually took point on this as negotiation was part of his job and he decided to weigh in on 'negotiating' an end to dirty

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nappies. Yes, I was 8 and yes, I still had a dummy at night and while it was never allowed out of my bedroom, it was becoming a subject of discussion with a view to taking it away. Yes, it was 4-5 years later than the average child using a dummy but just like nappies, I fought for one and it was amazing what night-time tears could achieve. Yes, I played on that one and I am a little ashamed to admit that. But it worked and a night dummy was retained for many years. And of course, I am almost dummy-dependant now and see no issue with it. Why would I?

So, what was I offered in return for pooing in the toilet as an 8-year-old boy? A train set of course. What boy wouldn't like one of those?

Well, this one, for starters. When my unenthusiastic response to the offer was obvious, I was asked to make a counteroffer. Well, not quite that formally! It was more along the lines of an exasperated, *Well, if you don't want a train set, what do you want?*

"A doll set and a stroller," was my answer.

I was too young and unobservant to appreciate the shock and chill that fell upon the room with my words. I blithely figured that it was a fair and uncomplicated request.

It was neither.

A long time later, I asked my mother what she thought when I asked for that and she said, "I wasn't all that surprised, but your dad was devastated."

The 1970s was not a good decade for budding 'sissy boys' or whatever other derogatory term was in use around the world. My father really had not seen anything like this coming along. Both my parents knew that at age 8 I was not asking on a whim or like a three-year-old boy who would play with girls' toys as well as boys' toys with no concern. My continued wearing and use of nappies,

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and my insistence on a dummy hinted at something inside me being considerably different. Parents don't actually want 'different'. They might be happy – and even excited - with variations on a theme but 'different' is something else entirely. And I was different. Very different and perhaps at times, scary different.

But I got my doll along with a stroller and several changes of doll clothes. My mum was solely responsible for the purchase, and she did make sure I got the best. And I did eventually make the move to pooing in the toilet. I still had accidents from time to time and even as I slept it took time for my mind to process the new rules. I thought it was a stupid idea to poo in the toilet but was smart enough not to complain because I had my doll (soon-to-be *dolls*) and the discussion on still having a dummy was put to one side.

And so, I went on, still wearing nappies at home but not at school. I was also taken out of nappies on any trips out of the house such as visiting distant family, shopping or going to parks and so on. As I was getting older, I was becoming more and more aware of my difference from others and so more and more compliant with my parents over it, trying to make sure I never had to completely give up nappies. I understood that I had to decide on what was *really* important and go for that rather than trying to get everything and annoying my parents so I would end up with little or nothing.

I was (and remain) a smaller-than-average person. I was in fact, the shortest in my class when I started high school which embarrassed me until my mum said this:

“Be grateful you are not too big for nappies. It's already getting harder to get your plastic pants.”

That ended my complaints about my size. Looking back, I also now see that my mum had fully clued in that nappies were more than an affectation but were integral to who I was and my identity. And in the decades since, I've learned to appreciate just

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how rare that understanding is. It will surprise you little that my mum was also a part-time counsellor and while not formally qualified in Psychology, she certainly understood a lot of the principles innately. It doesn't mean she didn't yell at me for my wetting and nappies because she did. But that was mainly when I got to be a bit much for her. And every parent knows that their kids routinely get 'too much' for them and this bedwetting, nappy-wearing, probably sissy boy pushed the boundaries a lot simply by being who I was.

This is the time I now offer my praise to tertiary education that teaches students to actually think and not simply regurgitate and not to blindly accept societal norms as mandatory. My mother was very well educated, and it allowed her to accept – if not understand – that I was different and perhaps not in a common way. I excelled at school, usually in the top few and occasionally topping everyone. It helped soothe the angst and sometimes pain of my curious and complicated internal identity.

I was a personable sort of kid if a bit of a loner preferring the company of a small group of friends. Looking back, I concede that we were kinda the 'nerds'. We were good at schoolwork and not so much in PE or sports. I was slow to understand the social rules and so as a preteen, I let on to my friends that I still wet the bed. As an 8-year-old it was perhaps foolish but not terribly bad since one later admitted to me on my own that he still wet the bed as well and also wore nappies. I felt like I had found a kinsman! It wasn't really true, but our mutual bedwetting did however allow a couple of sleepovers at each other's places which was a lot of fun. Both of us were independently instructed on how to put our own nappies on since neither of us had been doing that up until then. When I slept over at his place, I was still struggling with not being in nappies after school and so wet my pants. Luckily, my prescient mother had delivered me with extra clothes suspecting that such a thing might happen.

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My other friends accepted my bedwetting admission, and we moved on as a group. I did not admit it ever again even though I never actually stopped wetting the bed. I was starting to realise belatedly that discretion was necessary. It was a slow and painful lesson. Like so many other lessons, it came on the back of multiple disasters. Even now, I tend to learn things 'the hard way'.



## Chapter 2 – still a baby



I first told my mum that I was still a baby when I was perhaps 3, maybe 4. I repeated that at least once a year until I was 13 at which point, saying that I was still a baby meant something very important. I was in high school and still wearing nappies to bed and needing them. Nappies at home had become more limited but still permitted. And I still had a dummy and played with dolls. Telling her that I was still a baby could no longer be shrugged off. So, she asked me to explain what it meant to 'still be a baby'.

I was 13 years old and it was complicated.

"What do you mean when you say you are still a baby?" she asked.

It was not a passing comment. She was sitting on my bed after school, and I was back in a nappy. The discussion of late had been whether or not she should change my nappies or if I should do it myself. It would come as no surprise to anyone that I still wanted her to change me. But puberty was making a quite slow and belated entrance and erections were more common and while I thought they were stupid and annoying, my mum didn't feel very comfortable with nappy changing any more. Puberty was slow and delayed a bit for me and while other boys were happily masturbating away, I was – as best I can judge – a couple of years behind them in that regard. But Mum was insistent, and I ended up having to do *all* of my own nappy changes. Ironically, that day was the last time my mum changed my nappy.