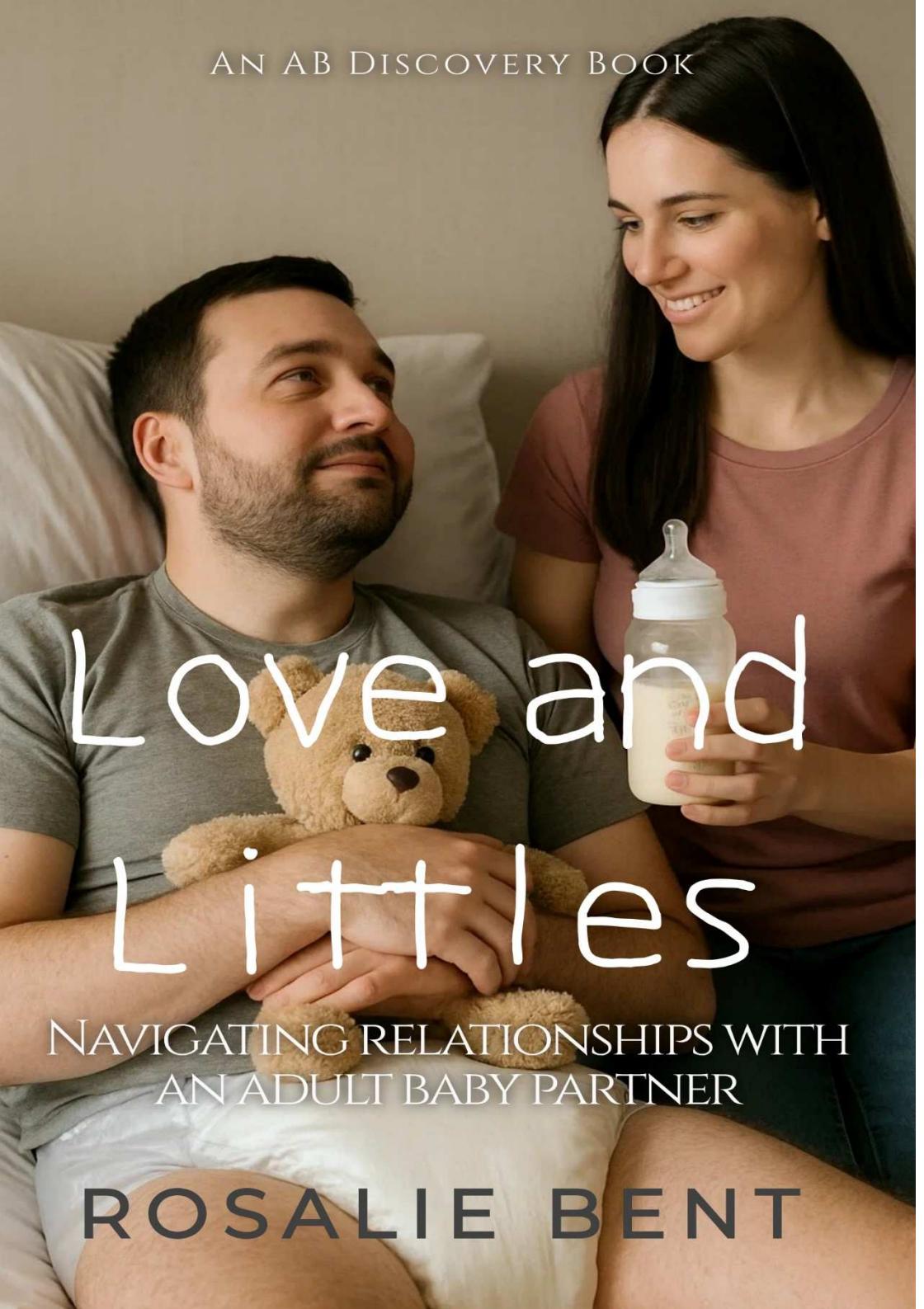


AN AB DISCOVERY BOOK

A photograph of a man and a woman smiling. The man, on the left, has a beard and is wearing a grey t-shirt with a brown teddy bear on it. He is holding the teddy bear in his arms. The woman, on the right, has long dark hair and is wearing a brown t-shirt. She is holding a clear plastic bottle with a white cap. They are both looking towards the right side of the frame.

# Love and Littles

NAVIGATING RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
AN ADULT BABY PARTNER

**ROSALIE BENT**

*Love and Littles:  
Navigating Relationships With An Adult Baby Partner*

# Love and Littles: Navigating Relationships with an Adult Baby Partner

by  
Rosalie Bent

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**FIRST WORDS...**

This book is for two audiences: the adult baby themselves and their partners or even prospective partners and possibly family members and friends. So, for the latter groups, I have one bit of initial advice: DON'T FREAK OUT!

Yes, this book contains a great deal of information, ideas and practical experiences, but remember that the amount of this that you embrace and take with you is up to you entirely.

Think about it this way. You are a young child learning basic arithmetic and you love it. You enjoy it and you are pretty good at it. Numbers relate to you, and you relate to them. Then at about age ten you accidentally pick up a book on calculus, Lorentz transformations and the mathematics of wormholes. Do you freak out and throw arithmetic away or do you (probably with some good parental advice) decide to let life take you ahead step-by-step and see if you quit at high school algebra or decide to take on advanced maths and think of partial differential equations as old friends?

Dealing with something as atypical as adult babies and regression can be the same. You take on board what you need and want and ignore the rest. There might be a lot in here that you will ignore and that is fine. The topic is broad so just go on an adventure and see what you think and feel. If you are honest and serious, the outcome will be great whether you settle for basic algebra or are vying for the Fields Medal.

Enjoy your journey with the person you are or the partner you are connected with. At least, you know life will never be boring! That I can promise you.

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## CHAPTER ONE: A GENTLE BEGINNING

You didn't expect this, did you?

Maybe you found a baby bottle tucked in the back of the cupboard. Maybe it was a pacifier in a drawer, a little outfit that didn't make sense, or a conversation that suddenly became quiet, nervous and unexpectedly vulnerable. Maybe the person you love looked you in the eye one evening and said something like, "There's something I need you to know..."

And now you're here. That statement could be the harbinger of many things – an adulterous affair, an admission of an action that they regret or worse. But this one is different. It is unusual, shall we say.

Let me say something before we go any further: you're not wrong for being confused, surprised, or even overwhelmed. Most people have never even *heard* of adult babies. Fewer still know what it truly means — not just what the internet says or what a joke in a movie might have suggested. The truth is gentler. Much more human. More loving, more emotional.

And so is your partner.

This book isn't about cold facts or clinical definitions. It's about hearts - soft ones. Needful hearts. It's about people who feel things deeply and need to be held — sometimes literally. It's about those moments when someone you care about shows you a tender, fragile truth and trusts you not to laugh, walk away, or try to fix it.

That's what an adult baby is doing when they show you this part of themselves: they're asking you to see them as they really are, under everything.

Let's take a breath together. But it's not just about them. It is also about you and your feelings, your reactions. It is about *their* responsibilities as much as *yours*. This isn't all give and no take. Like every working relationship, it is a mix of giving and receiving. How that works out in practice is the true secret to a successful

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relationship that manages the bumps and hurdles. And make no mistake. This is a hurdle, but it could be worse. They could be admitting to being a serial killer. But instead... well, you know the rest.

### **Say what? Tell me that again.**

You may be wondering, “But why? Why would someone want to be a baby again?”

It’s a fair question to ask. The answer isn’t one-size-fits-all. But let me give you the kind of answer a loving caregiver or partner would give, not a scientist or a stranger on a forum.

Some people feel safest when they’re small. Yep, it is perhaps just that basic. Some people never *had* the comfort and safety they needed as a child. That is unsettlingly common. And some have carried the weight of the world for far too long and are tired — just tired — of pretending to be big and strong all the time. And for others, the reason remains unknown and unknowable and that’s also okay as the reality is that knowing the why, is, in the end, largely unhelpful. The desire to be a baby remains. So, my first bit of advice here is: live the moment. Take charge of the day, not spend time investigating the past. Your future is based on the decisions you make today, not on some trauma or bad parenting in the past that you cannot fix.

Being an adult baby, for many, is not about escaping reality. It’s about finding the part of themselves that still needs gentleness. It’s about creating a world where soft things are okay. Where rules are kind. Where naps and cuddles and simple toys are allowed — not because someone is “acting like a baby,” but because this *is* their truth. At least part of it. Life can be harsh and unbending and babyhood offers an alternative and an escape. But it isn’t simply about escape. If it were, wanting to be a baby again would be a cheap thrill and a tawdry one at that. But to repeat, wanting in some way to be a baby again is about acknowledging an inner truth. Pop

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culture can refer to the ‘inner child’ in weak and often comical ways, but for the adult baby, that inner baby is well-known, often felt and desperate to be the ‘outer child’, not merely the inner version.

They may still pay bills, go to work, look after others, and make jokes at dinner. But behind all that, they long for the chance to be held — not metaphorically, not emotionally, but *really* held, wrapped in care and safety, as if they were small enough to be protected by someone stronger and softer than the world.

You might feel unsure. And you are more than right to feel that way. The honest truth is that wanting to be a baby again can seem weird, odd, strange and all of that. But your task is to go a bit beyond that surface response and seek actual truth. This can be messy and a bit confronting, but truth is like that. Truth will indeed set you free, but first, it will confront you and compel you.

You might ask, “Is this forever? Is this all the time? What does it mean for me?”

Those are fair questions. We’ll get to them, gently, in time. This is just the beginning.

Right now, all I ask is that you don’t try to fix it or push it away. Not yet. Just sit with the truth that your partner has shared something tender with you. Maybe it was clumsy. Maybe it was shocking. Maybe they cried or stammered or left it all unsaid and just hoped you’d notice the signs. These things rarely come out easily or polished. Like many great admissions, they come out raw and exposed and the initial reaction can be to run and hide from it. Don’t do that. I can guarantee this – and I’ve lived this in real life – that after the shock and surprise, you will find that what you thought you knew about adult babies was largely wrong. It was stereotyped and the one thing that is special about each and every baby, adult or newborn, is that they are unique and unpredictable.

But even if you don’t understand it, even if it feels strange, please know this: their need to be a baby doesn’t mean they are broken. It doesn’t mean they want to stop loving you as a grown-up.

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It doesn't mean you are now responsible for everything, or that your life must change beyond what you can carry.

It just means that the person you love has a little version of themselves – a genuine inner child inside who is very real... and very scared of being rejected. And they need some help, the kind of help only a partner or caregiver can give. But the rewards can be remarkable. Trust me, I've been there before, and the flourishing adult baby is a sight to behold compared to what came before.

You'll learn, as we go, that not every adult baby wants diapers. Some do. Some don't. Most do, however. Some feel their baby self in moments of stress. Others live full-time as littles and build their lives around it. Some want a "mummy" or a "daddy." Others just want a safe friend who understands. Some need rules and structure. Others want a quiet, private kind of freedom. But no matter how it looks, the truth underneath is the same: love, safety, comfort, acceptance.

You don't have to be anyone you're not. You don't have to leap into full-time caregiving. In fact, few do, and no one really needs to. This is about working things out for the both of you. You don't even have to fully understand it all today.

But you *can* be curious.

You *can* ask questions with a soft, but firm voice.

And you *can* sit beside your partner, hold their hand, and say, "I might not get it yet... but I want to try."

That means more than you know. And I know that this is not a simple or easy response. You may not really want to 'try' and you may not yet 'get it'. That's fine too. 'Getting it' usually comes later anyhow. Trying, however, is a choice only you can make. Again, the response from a partner who just hears that you want to 'try' is wonderful. Remember, up until now, no one has ever tried to understand them or accept their inner nature. You are most likely, the first one.

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So, take your time. There's no rush here. You don't have to fix anything. Just be here, with an open heart. You're already doing something beautiful. And I'm right here with you, page by page. My tshirt really does say 'Been there, done that'

### **So, what's this look like?**

Let's take a look at some typical examples to get an idea of what might be going on in real-life scenarios.

#### **Meet Sarah and Daniel**

Sarah had been with Daniel for nearly three years when he told her.

“I remember the moment exactly,” she says. “We were lying in bed, and he was so quiet. He kept turning over like he couldn’t get comfortable, and finally, he said, ‘There’s something weird about me.’ My stomach dropped. I thought maybe he’d cheated or done something awful.”

Instead, he took out a small pacifier from the drawer of his bedside table and held it in his hand like a fragile secret. He didn’t put it in his mouth or ask anything. He just let her see it.

“And then he said, ‘Sometimes I feel really small inside. Like I need to be looked after like a baby. I know it’s stupid. I’ve never told anyone before.’”

Sarah didn’t say anything at first. She didn’t know what to say. She wasn’t angry. She wasn’t even scared. Just... unsure.

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“But when I looked at him,” she remembers, “he looked terrified. Like he thought I was about to laugh at him or leave him.”

She didn’t. Instead, she put her hand on his and said, “Is this something that helps you feel safe?”

He nodded.

And that was the beginning of their journey to something that could be wonderful.

Not every story is the same, of course. Some people discover this side of their partner accidentally and feel shocked. Some feel betrayed — not because their partner is wrong for needing comfort, but because the truth came out so suddenly. If that’s how you feel, that’s okay too.

You’re allowed to have questions. You’re allowed to feel whatever you feel. You’re also allowed to take your time. This journey doesn’t require you to become a different person overnight. It asks only for *curiosity, kindness*, and an open and willing heart. It is a shared journey and most journeys have side tracks, bumpy sections as well as some beautiful roads and great scenery.

And it helps to know this one surprising fact: adult babies aren’t pretending. They’re not being childish. They’re not broken, and they’re not trying to manipulate anyone. They are people — gentle, complex people — who experience the world with a part of themselves that is deeply vulnerable, deeply sensitive, and deeply in need of care. If you think it is hard for you, imagine what it is like for them. Give that thought a minute to sink in.

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## What Does “Adult Baby” Really Mean?

Let me tell you what it doesn’t mean first.

It doesn’t mean they want to stop being your partner. It doesn’t mean they want to be babied *all the time*. And it absolutely doesn’t mean there’s anything wrong with you if you’re struggling to understand.

Now, here’s what it *can* mean:

It might mean your partner needs a soft blanket and someone to rock them when the world gets too loud. My partner comes apart in thunderstorms and needs mummy-like comfort. It has always been so. Why? Don’t know and nor does it matter.

It might mean they want to drink warm formula from a bottle, lie in your lap, or wear something that helps them feel little.

It might mean they want clear routines, nap times, cuddles, or even rules like, “No phones during little time.” They want an aspect of childhood meaning supervision and rules.

It might also mean they just want to feel like someone is in charge so they don’t have to be for a period of time.

Some people are adult babies all the time. Others only need it once in a while. Some want diapers. Some never even think about them. Some want a caregiver partner, and others are content simply being allowed to regress in peace on their own.

There’s no one way to be a baby.

But what they all share is a longing to feel safe enough to be vulnerable.

### Jake and Mira: A Different Kind of Strong

Mira was a nurse — practical, focused, deeply loving, but always moving fast. Jake, her partner, had always been a little sensitive, but she didn’t mind. She liked how calm he was, how careful. But one night, after a long shift, she came

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home to find Jake curled up in a blanket on the floor, holding  
a stuffed bunny, watching *Bluey* with his thumb in his mouth.

“I didn’t know what to do,” Mira says. “My first thought was,  
is he okay? Is this a breakdown?”

But when she sat down beside him, he looked at her with  
tearful eyes and said, “I didn’t think you’d be home yet. I’m  
sorry.”

He was mortified. But Mira didn’t yell. She didn’t storm out.  
She just stayed with him.

“I think that was the first time I really saw him,” she says  
now. “Not the adult. The baby inside him. And once I  
understood he wasn’t doing anything dangerous or  
disrespectful — he was just *being small* — I realized I didn’t  
have to fight it. I could learn how to love him in that space  
too.” It was the start of something new.

They started building baby time into their weekends.  
Saturday mornings became “cuddles and cartoons.” She  
even made him a soft little blanket with his name on it. And  
slowly, they both found something new: a softness in their  
relationship that had never been there before.

Not everyone wants to be a caregiver. Not everyone *can* be.  
But sometimes, once the fear fades, what’s left is something  
surprisingly beautiful: intimacy without expectation. Trust  
without performance. A safe place for someone to rest in  
your love.

# Love and Littles: Navigating Relationships With An Adult Baby Partner

## So... What Now?

Now, you breathe. Take a moment to catch your thoughts. If necessary, put down this book and go do some gardening or cooking if it's your thing. Or go for a walk so you can just settle.

Now, you might begin to notice things: how your partner speaks a little differently when they're feeling small. How their eyes light up at a soft toy or a lullaby. How they seem to melt when someone says, "It's okay, baby, I've got you."

Now, let yourself be curious. Ask questions like:

*"What helps you feel safe when you're little?"*

*"Is there anything I can do that comforts you?"*

*"How do you know when you need baby time?"*

You're not required to jump in with bottles and bibs. Just asking the questions tells your partner something huge: *I see you. I want to understand.*

You can be thoroughly ignorant about adult babies but asking questions will mean everything to them. And because you are getting firsthand answers, the rubbish you see and read on so much social media can be dumped in the bin it rightfully belongs in. In a world where so many adult babies hide in shame, your willingness to even ask is an act of love. In fact, if you get not much further than this, then you are doing a remarkable thing.

## From the Caregiver's Heart

There will be other chapters for rules and routines. For conflict and boundaries. For questions about diapers, sex, clothing, bedtime, structure, and life. You don't have to figure it all out today.

But here, in this first chapter, all you need to know is this:

You are allowed to feel uncertain. You are allowed to set your own pace. You are allowed to be the grown-up, even if your partner needs to feel like a baby sometimes. And if you do choose to stay, to

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learn, to explore — your relationship might become something more intimate, more honest, and more playful than you ever imagined.

One little step at a time.

I'll walk it with you because I've walked it before.