

AB AB DISCOVERY BOOK



MILDRED'S HOME FOR WAYWARD BEDWETTERS

WHERE DO YOU GO WHEN NO ONE WILL TAKE YOU IN?

DIAPER VERSION

ANTHEA MACBRIDE



Mildred's Home For Wayward Bedwetters

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Diaper Version
Anthea MacBride

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Mildred's Home For Wayward Bedwetters

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Chapter 1: A Soft Knock

The rain had stopped an hour ago, but Jeremy's socks were still wet. He stood under the faded awning of the porch, clutching a canvas duffel with one hand and a plastic shopping bag with the other. The bag hung heavy, and it dripped. Inside, his only change of clothes were now damp as well as one package of humiliating adult pull-ups, already opened, half-empty.

He glanced at the brass plaque beside the door. It read simply: M. Hensley – Private Residence. Rooming by Arrangement. Underneath, in hand-painted script, someone had added later: A place to rest. A place to start.

Jeremy didn't know if that line was meant for people like him, but the flyer in his social worker's folder had said she took in "people who needed special care" and that she was "familiar with adult continence issues." That had been enough to make him write. Barely. He had no real desire to share his issues with anyone, but life had conspired to force the issue. He was now... homeless, largely because of his bedwetting. And now he was here, shaking, tired, and painfully aware that the dampness in his pants wasn't only from the rain. He sighed.

He knocked once, very softly. He was tired and sick of everything.

The door opened almost instantly, as though Mildred had been waiting for him. She was older than Jeremy had imagined, mid-sixties maybe, with short silver curls and clear, intelligent eyes. She wore a long cardigan over a floral blouse and small gold earrings shaped like teacups. Her face wasn't smiling exactly, but there was no surprise in it. No judgment either, just... readiness. She looked like she might even... care. That would be a new experience for him.

"You must be Jeremy," she said warmly.

He nodded as he couldn't speak.

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"Come in, love. Let's get you dry."

The entrance hall was quiet and full of warmth with warm lights, warm air, and the smell of warm food and old wood. There was a soft ticking coming from a grandfather clock in the corner, thus confirming to him that this was a 'well-established' home. It had some of the comforts of being old.

Mildred took his dripping bag from him without comment and set it on a mat near the umbrella stand. She didn't flinch at the smell. Didn't even glance down at his pants.

"There's a bathroom just through there," she said, guiding him with a gentle hand. "Fresh towels on the rail. You'll find some dry things on the bench. You can keep them. I guessed at your size, but they might be a bit big."

Jeremy managed a small nod, and his throat burned with his never-ending shame. He turned to go, but she spoke again, gently. "When you're warm and ready, come to the kitchen. I'll have tea and some supper for you. There's no rush. Go at your own pace."

Later, clothed in soft grey trackpants and a slightly too big flannel shirt, Jeremy found his way into the kitchen. Mildred had set a tray with sandwiches, sliced fruit, and a steaming mug with a honey stick on the side. They sat for a moment in silence as he ate. It was the first real food he'd had all day. When he was halfway through the tea, she spoke.

"Jeremy, this house works on a few simple principles. I don't care where you've come from. I care how you treat yourself and how you treat others. That means kindness, honesty, respect and privacy."

She folded her hands on the table. "There's no shame in this house. No shame in wet beds, or daytime accidents, or diapers, or choosing not to wear them at all. You do what helps you feel safe and clean, and good. That's all. Your way is the right way, no matter what it is."

Jeremy stared at her. A lump in his chest swelled until he could hardly breathe.

"You don't have to talk," she added softly. "Not now. You've had a long day."

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"I—" His voice cracked. "I try not to need them. But when I'm scared, or... I've had a long trip, or... sometimes I just don't wake up."

She nodded. "It's alright. You won't be the only one here who needs them sometimes. Or even always. And every morning, there are wet beds in this house. No one judges anyone for how they decide to do things."

He let out a breath like he'd been holding it his whole life.

His room was small and perfect with clean sheets, a pale blue quilt, a dresser with a bowl of wrapped mints, and a waterproof mattress cover that crinkled softly as he sat. He recognised the sound immediately. He had spent his entire life with crackly plastic mattress protectors. Ironically, the sound calmed him as he knew that the plastic protectors were initially quiet and they only got noisy after being wet on hundreds and perhaps thousands of times.

This really is a house of bedwetters! He thought silently.

Mildred set his clean laundry on a chair. "If you'd like to use the nursery wing for naps later, you're welcome. We have a changing table there, but no one has to use it. I can show you tomorrow."

"A nursery wing?"

"Some find it comforting. I built it for people like my brother. He wet the bed until he was fifty-four."

Jeremy blinked. Mildred smiled faintly.

"Our mother tried to beat it out of him. I tried to love it out of him. To be honest, neither worked. What helped was this: having a safe place where he could sleep how he needed, dress how he wanted, and not lie anymore. That's why I opened this home. For him first. And now, for others. For others like you."

Jeremy looked at her quietly.

"You're safe here," she said. "Sleep dry or sleep wet. Sleep in a diaper or without. We'll wash the sheets if they need washing, or even if you don't want to wash them. And no one will raise an eyebrow here. Honesty and freedom are what we are all about."

She turned down the light and left him with a nightlight on the wall shaped like a little bear. It was an odd thing for an adult's room,

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and yet, he smiled as he saw it. He had used a nightlight for many years until it was shamed out of him.

Jeremy curled beneath the covers, flannel warm against his skin, and listened to the faint sounds of the house around him. For the first time in months, he didn't brace for morning. He simply fell asleep, knowing he was protected by not only the plastic protector but also by the clearly welcoming and accepting Mildred.

Chapter 2: Behind Closed Doors

Mildred never knocked unless she needed to. There was a golden rule that Mildred could go anywhere at any time, as if she were a parent and all the residents were young children. In the minds of all of them, the metaphor was stunningly accurate.

She moved quietly through the hallway after Jeremy had settled into bed, checking the soft-glow nightlights, adjusting the hallway diffuser to orange mist, and gently tucking a fresh flower into the glass bottle by the kitchen sink. Small things mattered. A place like this ran not on rules, but on trust. And rhythm.

Behind the bedroom doors, her residents prepared for the night in their own ways, each one different, each one quietly extraordinary.

Ezra's room was the first on the left. His door was always ajar, never quite open. Mildred passed without glancing in, but she knew what was inside: perfect order.

There were three pairs of trousers, four white undershirts and one small suitcase that had never fully been unpacked. Ezra never scattered. He folded his socks with precise symmetry and lined up his slippers under the bed before he laid down.

In truth, his life outside these walls was minimal. He'd once worked in IT but now kept to remote contracts only. He didn't like offices or mirrors. His voice was soft, always careful. His hands lingered a little too long over floral teacups when no one was watching.

Each night, Ezra diapered himself alone, not because he loved them, but because he feared waking up soaked and ashamed. He used medical-grade briefs and stored them in an unmarked drawer. Then

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he laid a second towel over his fitted sheet, just in case. Everything was hidden and controlled. But Mildred noticed, always, that the last thing he did before sleep was press a hand briefly to his chest... as if remembering something, or someone.

She knew his real name wasn't Ezra. Not originally, anyhow. She'd offered him the chance to change it when he moved in. One day, she hoped, he might let her help him find the right one.

From the hallway, Casey's door was impossible to miss. It was covered in haphazard stickers, layers of peeling posters, and a magnet that said "*Come Back Later – I'm in a Mood.*"

Inside, the room looked like a whirlwind had taken up residence. There was laundry in loose piles, music equipment wired together on the desk, a lava lamp slowly pulsing beside a half-eaten cereal bowl. But beneath the chaos, Mildred had discovered something special.

Casey kept a drawer that no one else saw. Inside were three footed onesies in pastel patterns, an adult-size pacifier, and a plush elephant with one ear chewed ragged.

He didn't wear diapers consistently. Some nights, yes, on others, he preferred to wet his briefs and throw them in the corner hamper. There was something defiant in the way Casey was wet, like a protest, or a snarl in the dark. He had grown up being punished for it, being slapped, and even being sent to school in soiled clothes once as "discipline."

At Mildred's, he was the one who laughed the loudest at dinner, made up sarcastic jingles about "pee-pee pals," and insisted he was fine. He wasn't.

But when Mildred left small, folded onesies on the laundry shelf, Casey never said thank you. He just quietly took them and wore them on the nights his anger turned to sadness.

Marta's room had no scent. No clutter. No softness.

She came in from work at the same time each night, her jacket still smelling of oil and factory metal. She hung it precisely on the

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hook. She didn't talk much. She kept a wall around herself thick as stone.

Every night, she drank half a protein shake and took a fast, hot shower. Then she changed into thick cotton briefs, laid an old towel over her mattress, and went to sleep. By morning, the towel was soaked, as was the sheet underneath. She never asked for diapers and never asked for help.

What Mildred had discovered, only because she did the laundry, was that Marta never changed her sheets during the week. Only on Sundays, when she brought out a clean set from the hall cupboard and wordlessly swapped them. Her room smelled faintly of urine. She didn't seem to mind the aroma.

Once, during intake, Marta had said, "I don't need fixing. I just need space. I've wet my bed since I was nine. My ex hated it. I don't."

Mildred respected that and understood it completely. Marta's wetting wasn't shameful. For her, it was part of who she was. She didn't hide it, not really. She just didn't talk about it. At least, not yet.

Mildred sat in her armchair by the fireplace as the grandfather clock chimed softly at nine.

She opened a notebook, her own private log, and noted:

Jeremy arrived. Gentle soul. Anxious but receptive.

Ezra looked at the nursery door again. One day soon.

Casey took the yellow sleeper from the line and didn't joke about it.

Marta left her sheets folded on the bench. Took the white set.

She never spied, and never pried, but she observed the way gardeners observe... watching where the light falls, and how roots spread underground.

The home wasn't perfect, but it was growing something beautiful and doing so slowly. And tonight, for the first time in weeks, all four bedrooms were full.

Interlude: Quiet Things

The house had settled into night. Somewhere, the pipes ticked faintly as warm water cooled. One of the residents stirred in their sleep, probably Casey turning over and pulling his plushie close. In another room, the hush of a crinkly, plastic-backed sheet gave a small, sleepy rustle beneath someone's weight.

Mildred padded softly down the hallway with a cup of English tea in hand. No one saw her after 10 p.m. She moved like a shadow, but a warm one. Her own room sat at the far end of the hall, just past the linen cupboard. The door was simple and white, with no name. Just a small carved rose near the frame.

She entered without turning on the overhead light. A lamp cast a soft golden pool beside the bed, and she set her cup on the nightstand. The room was modest with floral curtains, a few pressed flower prints, and an old rocking chair that had once belonged to her mother. But her bed... that was different.

The mattress was covered in a clear, smooth plastic sheet, fitted perfectly and tucked tightly. Over it sat soft cotton sheets in ivory, with tiny bluebirds, and a pale quilt folded neatly at the bottom.

She ran her hand across the mattress gently, smoothing a faint wrinkle. She didn't need the waterproof cover, not anymore, but she kept it anyway, as a quiet act of memory. Her last wet bed was thirty years before, at the not-so-young age of 33. She had started bedwetting again in her twenties, and it had lasted almost ten years.

She sat on the edge of the bed and picked up the photo on the bedside table of a man in his forties, standing beside a much younger Mildred, both holding ice creams and laughing in sunlight. His shirt was damp around the hem.

It was Thomas, her older brother, and her best friend. Thomas had wet the bed almost every night of his life. Their mother had punished him endlessly. She rubbed his nose in the sheets, made him

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scrub them clean at dawn, slapped him when he cried. For years, Mildred had tried to protect him. She'd tiptoe into his room with extra towels or sneak his sheets into the wash before their mother could find them. Once, when she was twelve and he was sixteen, she told him: *"I don't care if you wet. I care that you're sad."*

That was the first night he slept without crying. When he moved out at twenty-five, he tried to stop. He dated women, got married, and got divorced. The shame never left, and the nightly wettings continued, and when he finally came back to Mildred in his mid-forties, defeated, and carrying only one bag and a tear-streaked face, she took him in.

That was the first version of the home. It was where and how it all began, just a spare room, a waterproof bed, and a sister who washed his sheets with love and never made a face. Over time, his shame began to peel away. He tried diapers and liked them. He slept better in them. Sometimes, on hard days, he asked to be rocked, and Mildred did. She had no pride about it, only love.

He died quietly, not of anything dramatic. Just a failed heart that had carried too much for too long.

Afterwards, she'd looked around the house, still carrying the smell of baby powder and waterproof bedding, and thought: What if there were more Thomases? Where do they go? Who takes care of them?

She sipped her tea now, lukewarm, and sighed. The plastic sheet crackled faintly as she lay back.

She never told the residents she still used one. Never explained. Some assumed it was a precaution, but others didn't ask. But for Mildred, it was ritual. A way of saying: *You are not alone. Even here, in the quietest room, someone understands.*

She turned off the light. In the dark, she whispered softly, as if to her brother, "They're doing alright, Tommy. You'd be proud."

And then, as the house exhaled around her, Mildred fell asleep to the faint, comforting sound of the waterproof sheet beneath her, proof that dignity and gentleness could live side by side.

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