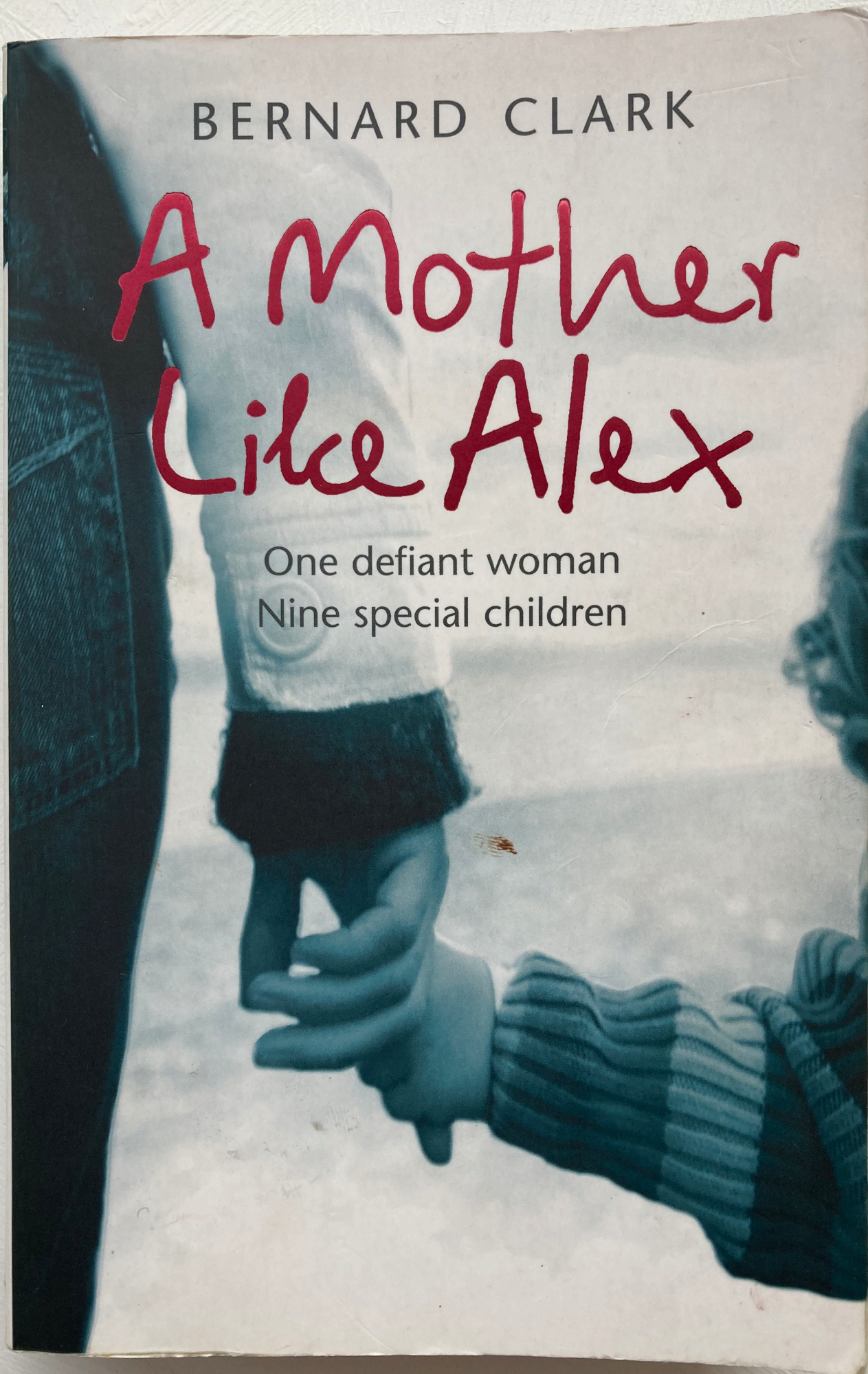


BERNARD CLARK

A Mother Like Alex

One defiant woman
Nine special children





Simon

Simon cannot talk. Yet he can communicate. Indeed, he is very noisy – especially when one of Alex’s kids is up to no good. Then he shrieks to the roof, like an angry goose. Simon is the house prefect, the telltale, the snitch. Because he enjoys being in the middle of things, ever watchful, Alex can leave him in charge, on sentry duty. He lolls in a wheelchair in the centre of the room while the world revolves around him. His head is never still: bowed to one side, then the other, listening, seeing and computing. He loves to touch, shake hands, and lean forward to be cuddled. When he’s excited, he bangs his thighs with his fingers and sometimes tries to clap. But his hands usually miss. Although he can’t frown, a natural radiance comes from deep inside and so he smiles. He lights up a room and everyone in it. And in spite of the pain, he doesn’t cry, because the pain is on the outside, from things that just simply won’t work. Everyone who meets Simon loves him, he’s Alex’s soul mate.

