

CHOOSING A TOY

It's not an easy decision. The toy we choose will define who we are when we put it on; it will define what we do together. So we browse, deciding who we want to be.

Cupid 1 (Beginners' Model) – 3.5" – Lilac

This girl is a poet, or would like to be. She believes in faeries – and she spells it that way too—though she knows this is just a conceit. She likes glitter and always looks too long at people's eyes.

She rides an old-fashioned bicycle with a basket on the handlebars. She imagines riding around a city—Paris maybe, or Florence or Vienna—with a stack of art books and a kitten in the basket. But she lives in the suburbs, and it just wouldn't be the same. She dreams of spending her evenings sighing from a balcony with wrought-iron railings and hanging vines. Sometimes she lights candles and lies on her bed wrapped up in velvet blankets, wishing there really was such a thing as magic. She thinks Tori Amos is the closest thing to a god. She drinks chai lattes and herbal tea. Her hair is henna red and she never wears quite the right colour of lipstick.

She does not believe it's possible to separate love and romance. She closes her eyes when she makes love: even when she's riding lubed silicone, she wouldn't think of it as fucking. She kisses with her eyes closed.

Light-Up! G Glow – 5" – Neon

This girl has issues. She braids hanks of wool into her hair and spends all her wages on dye. She figures that if she can't change herself, she can at least change her hair.

She doesn't hold anyone's gaze. She loves everyone and no-one, except for when it's 4AM on a Saturday and the clubs are spilling out onto the streets and the rain is tapping on her bare shoulders and everything is blurring into the black between the river and the sky and the worst thing she can possibly imagine is the clammy grit of the sheets pressing on her legs. Then she can love anyone.

She only eats foods that come in boxes and there are strands of dirty bleached hair wrapped around her bathroom taps. Her make-up is always perfect: sequins and glitter, thick with gloss, lightning bolts drawn on with coloured eyeliner.

She only has sex in the dark but she's not uptight. If she were uptight, if she were dull, would she have a glow-in-the-dark toy? Would she pick up strangers in bars and ride them wildly for hours, numb between her legs and screaming her joy until the windows rattled? Would she have bought this toy, this item of fun, this hilarious object that she leaves on the bedside table just so everyone passing through can see just how fun she is?

Lola Mirrored (Luxury Model) – 7" – Steel

This girl is not a girl; she's a woman. Her wardrobe is full of the same suit in black, charcoal, navy, and light grey. She has an espresso machine and won't drink from it unless the crema is perfect. She has protein shakes for breakfast, sushi for lunch, and steamed chicken for dinner.

She'd like kids—maybe, one day—but doesn't like the thought of the foetus inside her belly. She does not want to be fed off, anchored down. She's busy. She will, but not now. Not yet. She likes French cinema and translated Polish literature and green olives as a midnight snack and, secretly, ABBA.

She thinks of her toy as a piece of art. It's every bit as expensive and as attractive as the sculptures balanced on spindly tables around her apartment.

She likes her boyfriend to watch her use it, her head tilted back in ecstasy, knowing his eyes are on the joining of slick steel and pink flesh.

She sighs often. She leans back on the aeroplane headrest, closes her eyes, and repeats words over and over in her head. Joy. Fulfillment. Spirit. She feels like the meaning of the words is nuzzling at her edges, but she can't quite grasp them.

Wands Natural Model – 6" – Wood & Urethane

This girl will save the world. She makes her own clothes and doesn't like to wear shoes. She recycles everything and won't buy items with excessive packaging. She drinks herbal tea – she tried to brew her own once from plants she found in the park, but after the resulting bellyache she realized she should have researched what kind of pesticides the park gardeners use. She cries at charity adverts but doesn't feel bad about her lack of donations. She has no time for paid work, she's far too busy starting up the co-op; she can't afford to give anything away. She likes films about pirates, though of course she knows that they are historically inaccurate. She likes to tell people this, often pointing out mistakes while the film is showing.

She thinks she might like to live in Germany, or maybe South America. She collects loose gatherings of people together on the beach or in the woods; a pile of sticks to make a fire and some salvaged booze. She thinks that love is sex and sex is love and love is most definitely a good thing. She still doesn't like it when her love-partner (not boyfriend, never husband) slips away from the fire's heat to stroke the soft bare skin of another girl's calves.

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We choose the pink, with a black leather thigh harness. It has a heart-shaped base, so after I fuck her with it I have a fist-sized heart imprinted onto the skin of my thigh. I lie in bed and rub the imprint, thinking about all the girls that we are not.