

# AT THE DOLL CAFE

A free-form conversational game about themed dining and existential dread for 3-8 players

 by Carly Kocurek

do you know where your doll is? —



# HOW TO PLAY

## CONCEPT

A group of 18" dolls surreptitiously gather after hours in the flagship store's café. Each doll has an existential worry they do not want to confess to the other dolls given the imperative to be pleasant company.

## GET READY

**Players:** 3-8

**Time to play:** 1 hour

**Needed to play:**

- A table everyone can sit at
- 1 character sheet per player

- 1 d12
- pens
- hot cocoa or coffee
- name tags (optional)

**Setup:** Each player takes a seat at the table with a mug of hot cocoa or coffee.

## Game on ...

Each player chooses a doll name and writes a brief biography of their doll character using the character sheet. Each player should roll the d12 to determine their existential worry. Players should not share these worries, but rather keep them in mind as they play. They cannot directly express their existential worry.

The players are 18" dolls having coffee together in the branded doll café after hours. Play until the coffee is out or the security guard comes by on his rounds.

### Post-game discussion:

- Does your doll feel better or worse after talking to her fellow dolls?
- How does your doll feel now?
- What was you, the player's, favorite part of the game?
- What would you do differently next game?

## EXISTENTIAL WORRIES

1. Do dolls die?
2. I hate my haircut.
3. Is this the real me? Or am I just playing a part?
4. What was I made for?
5. Does any of this really matter?
6. Do I have even one real friend?
7. Does anyone truly know me?
8. Do I have free will?
9. Who was I before I got here?
10. If no child loves me, do I matter at all?
11. What is it, to be played with?
12. Would anyone care about me, if I was no longer beautiful?



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## Character Sheet

**Doll Name:**

**Is this doll a contemporary or a historical character?**

**Where and when does she live?**

**What is her animal companion and what is this companion's name (if any)?**

**Describe her personality in three words:**

**What five accessories does she come with?**

**What are her two favorite activities?**

**Existential worry (roll to determine):**



# THANKS

At The Doll Cafe utilizes mechanics and concepts from The Porch by Jacqueline Bryk.

The cover graphic utilizes an image from Jim, the Photographer available online at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jcapaldi/6090931847> The usage here is covered by the CC BY DEED 2.0 license that the creator selected for this image.

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