

MOM'S JOY ROOM

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CERTIFICATE OF DESCRIPTION & VALUATION

1968 Ideal "Little Lost Baby" Three-Face Doll

MARIGOLD

Ideal Toy Corporation | Circa 1968 | Three-Face Rotating Mechanism

"Turn her just so, and she tells you exactly how she feels — because even a doll deserves to have more than one face for the world."



MARKET VALUE

\$85 – \$150

Realistic quick-sale price for a working three-face example in nice condition

ESTIMATED WORTH

\$175 – \$275

Ceiling among character/mechanism doll specialists for a well-preserved example



"Marigold" — 1968 Ideal "Little Lost Baby" Three-Face Doll
Rotating Head Mechanism — Smiling, Crying & Sleeping Expressions
Ideal Toy Corporation — Approx. 21–24 Inches

DESCRIPTION

A wonderfully quirky and increasingly hard-to-find Ideal "Little Lost Baby" doll, produced in 1968. Her most distinctive feature is her rotating three-face head mechanism, activated by a lever at the back of the neck, which turns the head inside its fixed hood to reveal one of three sculpted expressions: a smiling, happy face; a crying, distressed face; and a peaceful sleeping face with closed eyes. The doll originally paired laughing and crying sound effects with her expression changes, reinforcing the emotional "mood" concept that gave the doll her name and her charm. She retains crisp, well-preserved facial detail and sculpting across all three faces, with no notable paint loss or damage observed.

NOTABLE INFORMATION

- ◆ Produced by Ideal Toy Corporation, 1968 — an increasingly scarce mid-century mechanism doll
- ◆ Three rotating sculpted expressions: smiling, crying, and sleeping — activated by a rear neck lever
- ◆ Original design paired laughing/crying sound effects with the face-change mechanism
- ◆ Hood is factory-fixed in place and permanently covers the head on genuine examples — a key identifying feature
- ◆ Doll herself presents in very good condition, with clean, well-preserved facial detail on all three faces
- ◆ Current outfit is a later replacement, not the factory original (see Outfit Authenticity Notes below)



"Marigold" — 1968 Ideal Little Lost Baby
Three Rotating Faces: Smiling / Crying / Sleeping
Floral Replacement Snowsuit (see Outfit Notes)

◆ MECHANISM DOLL ◆

A lever at the back of her neck rotates her head inside the fixed hood, revealing one of three sculpted expressions — smiling, crying, and sleeping. An early talking mechanism paired laughing and crying sounds to her mood.

OUTFIT AUTHENTICITY NOTES

Documented original 1968 "Little Lost Baby" examples were dressed in a **factory-sewn, non-removable snowsuit** — permanently attached to the doll's body, with a hood fixed in place that always covers the head. Every confirmed original example located in research uses solid pink or pink/blue **tweed or corduroy fabric with faux fur trim**; none use a floral print or lace trim. This

doll's charming rose-and-lace floral snowsuit, closed with a front zipper, does not match any documented factory pattern, fabric, or fastening method. Based on this comparison, the outfit is almost certainly a **later home-sewn replacement** — a lovingly made recreation rather than an original Ideal factory piece. This is disclosed here in the interest of full transparency and does not affect the doll's authenticity or the genuineness of her mechanism and sculpting, which remain fully consistent with an authentic 1968 Ideal production.

HISTORY & CONTEXT

The "Little Lost Baby" doll was introduced by the **Ideal Toy Corporation** in 1968, arriving at the tail end of a mid-20th-century fascination with multi-faced "mood" dolls that had first captured the public imagination decades earlier with dolls like the 1946 Trudy (Three-In-One Doll Corporation) and the 1951-52 Trilby (Ideal). Where those earlier three-face dolls relied on a simple rotating knob or head mechanism, Little Lost Baby refined the concept for a new generation of children, adding synchronized laughing and crying sound effects to reinforce the emotional storytelling behind each face change. The doll's name and marketing leaned into a narrative concept that was novel for its time: a baby doll who had been "lost" and cycled through genuine emotional states — distress, comfort, and rest — inviting the child playing with her to nurture and soothe her through each mood, much as a real caregiver would respond to a real infant's shifting emotional states.

Mechanically, Little Lost Baby operates via a lever positioned at the back of the neck. Turning this lever rotates the doll's head within a fixed, non-removable hood, cycling between three distinct sculpted faces: a happy, smiling expression; a distressed, crying expression, often with more furrowed brows and an open crying mouth; and a peaceful sleeping expression with closed eyes. This hooded, fixed-headwear design was a deliberate engineering choice — by permanently attaching the hood and snowsuit to the body, Ideal ensured the internal rotating mechanism stayed protected and concealed from view, with only the face itself changing as the child operated the lever. This is why every well-documented original example uses a factory-sewn, non-removable outer garment rather than a doll that could be dressed and undressed like a conventional baby doll.

Standing between approximately 21 and 24 inches depending on the specific production variant, Little Lost Baby was manufactured largely in Hong Kong during Ideal's late-1960s production era, a common practice for American toy companies of the period seeking manufacturing efficiency. She was constructed primarily of vinyl and polyurethane foam-filled components, with a soft-bodied feel typical of Ideal's late-1960s baby doll lines. Original factory snowsuits were produced in solid pink or pink-and-blue color schemes, typically in a tweed or corduroy-weight fabric finished with faux fur trim around the hood opening — a cozy, wintry aesthetic consistent with the doll's "lost baby out in the cold" narrative concept.

Today, Little Lost Baby occupies a beloved but comparatively under-the-radar niche within the broader category of vintage multi-face "mood" dolls. She is less widely known than her spiritual predecessors Trudy and Trilby, yet collectors who specialize in mechanism dolls and unusual mid-century character toys prize her for the ingenuity of her rotating-face engineering and the genuine emotional storytelling built into her design. Well-preserved examples — particularly those with crisp, undamaged facial sculpting across all three expressions and functioning internal mechanisms — have become increasingly difficult to locate on the secondary market, as many surviving examples show wear from decades of childhood play, including scuffed paint, discolored vinyl, and non-functioning lever mechanisms.

Collector's note: Comparable 1968 Ideal Little Lost Baby dolls have recently traded across a wide range depending on condition and completeness — from well under \$50 for heavily played-with examples, up through \$100–\$110 for dolls described as being in excellent, "ahh-mazing" condition, with truly exceptional examples occasionally reaching over \$200 among dedicated mechanism-doll collectors. This doll's clean, well-preserved facial sculpting across all three expressions places her toward the stronger end of that range. Her replacement snowsuit — while a charming and clearly lovingly made piece in its own right — is not the factory original, which is reflected in these values; an example with a documented original pink tweed or corduroy snowsuit and matching faux fur trim would command a further premium above the ranges shown here.