

# MY FIRST TIME WITH LIPSTICK

Introduction by LYNN FURGE. Photography by JASON KIM

*Many consider it a passage into adulthood. Every woman seems to remember the first one they had. Some have been passed down by mothers or sisters, others have been painstakingly saved up for. Lipstick exudes an air of sophistication, from the motion of slipping off the cap to the seductive twisting of the bottom and the sliding of it across your lips. It is a mood lifter, a day brightener, a shape shifter, an identity changer. It can morph an entire look with just one coat.*

*Throughout the Great Depression of the 1930s, a simple lipstick was the least expensive and most popular way for ladies to emulate the glamour of their favorite film stars and satisfy their desire for luxury. It remains a staple in most women's handbags, kits, and cabinets, as timeless as ever.*

*These modern day icons of style explain why they absolutely had to have it.*

NARS *Terre de Feu*, Pure Matte Lipstick.  
 JOUER *Phoebe*, Hydrating Lipstick.  
 BEAUTY IS LIFE *Anbergine*.  
 ESTEE LAUDER *Stay Plumberry*.  
 SERGE LUTENS #6, Refillable Lipstick.

*"YSL when I was 14 a hot pink sheer stain...I was a model in NYC and my best girl friend Lucie had a YSL lippy from her aunt and its smelled and tasted soooo good and I loved it."*

**LIV TYLER**, Actress, Model

*"Village Lip Lickers (peach and bubblegum). I loved collecting all the little gold tins that they came in. They were so badass the way the lid slid to the side to open. That was as girly as I got with makeup"*

**AMANDA DEMME**, Artist

*"My little brother and I used to earn our allowance by collecting recycling and taking it to the city dump in L.A. (this was way before it was cool to be eco, by the way, other kids thought we were totally weird when we asked for their Coke cans). Anyways, I must have been about 10 or 11, and every cent I earned from the trash went straight to the cosmetics counter once I saved up enough to purchase a purple Prescriptives lipstick (which I had to hide from my mum 'cause she was super feminist!). It only got worse from there, once I discovered red lips."*

**LIZ GOLDWYN**, Artist, Author, Filmmaker

*"I'm pretty sure it was Wet n' Wild 502, 'cause it went well with my 'I'm Puerto Rican' look."*

**JEAN GRAE**, Hip Hop Artist

*"When I was young I just had to have a Chanel lipstick, I thought it was the most glamorous thing to have. I bought Coco Red (the classic), I wanted to be like Marilyn Monroe."*

**ALEXANDRIA KWIATKOWSKI**, Make Up Artist

*"Chocolate Raspberry by Fashion Fair... it's a #swats thang."*

**MICHELLE BROWN**,  
Creator of *StraightfromtheA.com*

*"Christian Dior in Graffiti Red, in the early 80s. I loved the color although I wouldn't wear it now, it just seemed a reflection of what was going on and I adored the blue enamel packaging."*

**ANYA HINDMARCH**, Designer

*"It was a bright red tube of Revlon lipstick (my mom gave it to me), in 1978 when I was three years old. It was actually called Really Red. I wanted it because the color fascinated me and I was already obsessed with makeup."*

**SAVANNAH SPIRIT**,  
Gallery Director of *CULTUREfix*



“My two main items that I’d save my allowance to buy were makeup and candy. My first lipstick was special. It was mood lipstick, the virgin color of which was sort of light green as if it would glow in black light, but when applied it magically shifted to either red or purple depending on your “mood”. It was not just magical lipstick; it made me feel that I was magical too. Later when I grew into a young lady and moved to New York I still had a passion for makeup, but I now that I was out of my “No Frills” brand household, I had the power to purchase luxury goods. Ever thrifty on my artist’s budget, I went to the Elizabeth Arden company store with a good friend. I couldn’t believe the smoothness of the rich pink lipstick I bought. It even smelled expensive. That was my rite of passage. When I had the freedom to blow money on expensive cosmetics, I felt as if I really arrived into adulthood.”

**MISS DIRTY MARTINI,**  
*International Burlesque Sensation*

“I can’t remember the FIRST color of lipstick I purchased but I must have been 17. I had my makeup in a little brown paper bag that I hid from my mother. Anyway, I know some of my early lipstick colors were from Kryolan, a theatrical makeup brand. I had this cool red lipstick with gold glitter, and one in black with silver glitter. Lipstick is by far the most sexually overt make-up...from its packaging to how it’s applied, and of course the effect it gives off once the face is done...it’s usually the last item that’s put on, too, which is interesting.”

**MICHAEL T,** *Performer/DJ*

“The first lipstick I ever purchased was MAC’s Russian Red, the type of pillar-box red stain that a brazen hussy might wear, rather than a twelve-year-old girl with gangly limbs and a slight lisp. I imagined it made me look like a silent movie star, and took great pleasure in applying it before school to wear on the bus, only to wipe it off before class. I still wear it now; in fact it’s my makeup bag staple, nostalgia in a tube.”

**PEACHES GELDOF,** *Model*

“When I was 8 or 9, my mom used to let my sister and I sneak her coral shimmering lipstick when my dad wasn’t around. We wouldn’t drink water or eat for hours so it would last longer. When I got older I bought a Wet n’ Wild brand, Coffee Bean...because my older sister had something similar to it and I wanted to copy her.”

**TERESA LEE CHAISIRI,** *Lead Singer of PaperDoll*

“I wasn’t really that much of a girly girl growing up. I wanted to be Kurt Cobain or Michael Stipe, so wearing lipstick (or makeup in general) wasn’t really something I knew about or felt comfortable doing. So at 16 my best friend in high school, Dalia, knew how to put on lipstick like a pro and taught me using some sort of lip liner and “Myth” by MAC. I think that was the first lipstick color I eventually bought. I don’t think I could pull it off now, though.”

**SARAH LEWITINN,** *aka DJ Ultragrrrl*

“My first ever lipstick was from Miss Selfridge of London, Iron Lady Lipstick, named after the British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. At the age of 10 or 11 my girl friends and I would never be seen without it or electric blue eyeliner. The lipstick itself was a kind of a yucky frosty pink color, it was very, very matte, really dry and would never come off, although maybe that was because we never stopped applying it.”

**LISA HOUGHTON,** *Makeup Artist*

“It was a black and gold metal tube of neon magenta pink. I wanted to look like Cyndi Lauper. The brand is unknown. My mom got it for me. It was for dress-up, and I still have the empty tube, I was 6 or 7.”

**ROXY COTTONTAIL,** *DJ*

“The first serious lipstick I purchased was a Helena Rubenstein one called Autumn Red, It was in 1988 and I was 16, the tube was a burnt red and I felt like a 1940s movie star in it (but I had to blot it with a tissue to make it matte because it was very glossy).”

**POPPY KING,** *Makeup Artist and Creator of Lipstick Queen*

“My first lipstick that I purchased was MAC Russian Red. I was 14 years old. I had just seen Gwen Stefani perform on MTV and fell in love. She was so beautiful and I loved her signature red lips, I had to have them!”

**FELICIA ROCHELLE,** *Makeup Artist*

“I bought my first lipstick somewhere downtown, on St. Mark’s Place or Broadway, on a day where I cut school and went shopping with my older brother. I wanted to do something cool and punk rock. Buying makeup seemed so “grown up”. I don’t remember what brand it was but I’m sure it was something cheap and costume-y. Growing up, all my female role models didn’t really wear makeup and I blame them for my lifelong fascination with painting my face. By not wearing any, they made makeup exotic and dangerous.”

**GO-GO AMY,** *Burlesque Bombshell & Sideshow Seductress*