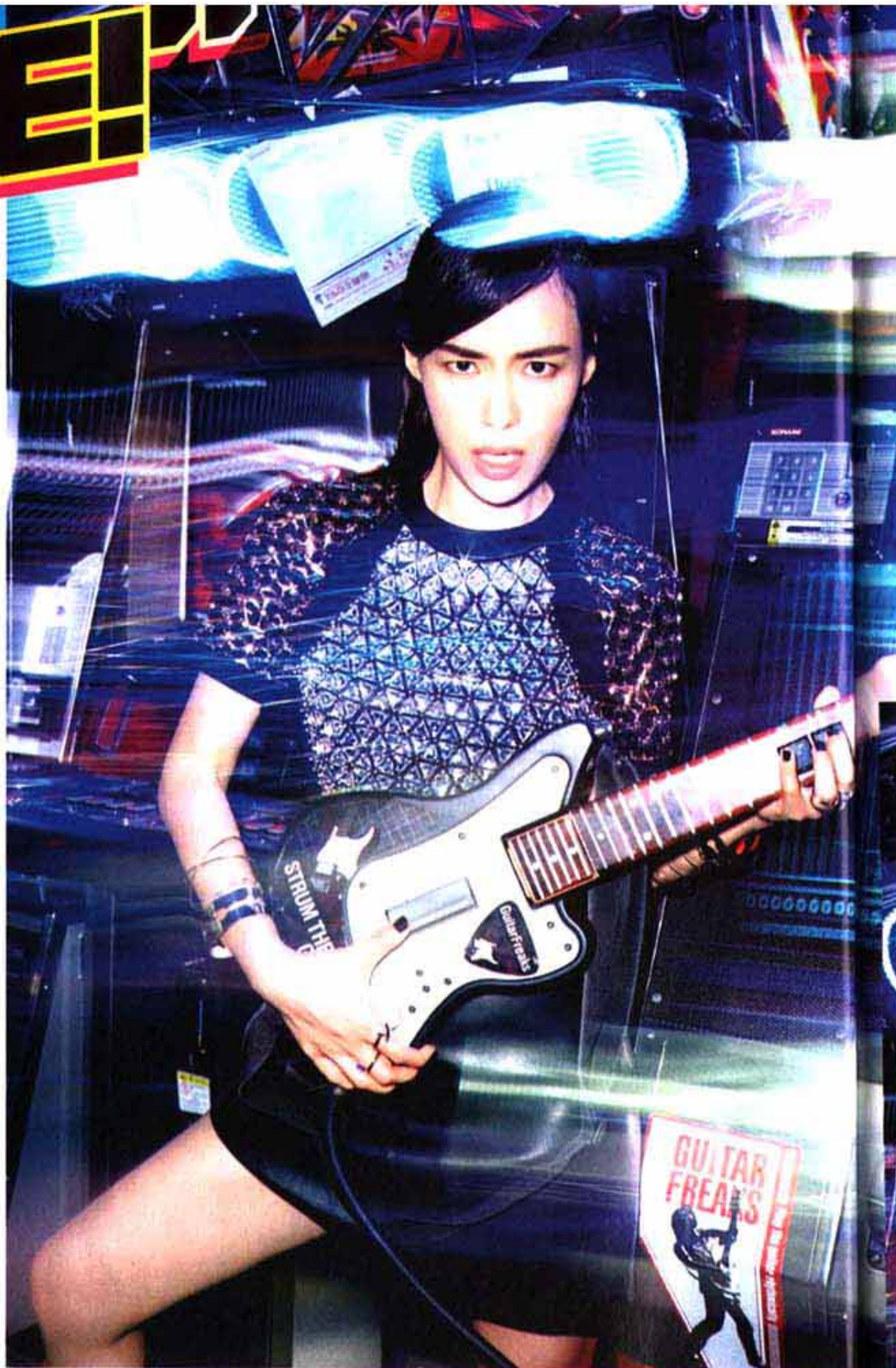


SURE!

Rebecca Lim says with a smile, trying to hide the fact that she's bone-tired. It's almost midnight, and someone's just yelled "It's a wrap!" on a four-hour 8 DAYS cover shoot. Before this, she was on the *Mata Mata 2* film set, probably since early this morning. If it were some other actress, we might not have asked. But it's Rebecca. She's so nice. She won't mind, right? So we ask. "Can we take a video of you dancing on the Para Para dance machine for our Instagram?" Waving your hands in the air to cheesy music and acting cute is undoubtedly the last thing you want to do when your body is wracked with fatigue from weeks of continuous filming and you've just peeled off a heavy metal-studded dress and vampy heels. But she does it, with just the right amount of self-conscious aplomb and endearing cutesiness. It's no wonder that wherever she goes, these words follow her in a sparkling trail: "Nice." "Down-to-earth." "Genuine." "Gracious."

In an alternate universe, this 27-year-old actress may have been left to fade into obscurity, lost among feistier types with boob jobs, back-stabby ambitions and delicious scandals. But in this universe, she's an A-list star with acting awards, three Top 10 Most Popular trophies, 103K Instagram followers and thousands of likes from colleagues both in front of and behind the screen. How did she do it?

Ask her and Rebecca shrugs in embarrassment. "I don't know, you know," she giggles, eyes narrowing in mirth. To say that she simply lucked out would be unfair. After all, she languished at the bottom of the celebrity heap for a few years on a part-time MediaCorp contract after placing fifth in Miss Singapore Universe 2005, then struggled for a bit more as a B-lister after signing on full-time upon her graduation from SMU in 2010. That year, she graced



her first solo 8 DAYS cover ("I'm so thankful that you guys put me on the cover when I was nothing!" she tells us), and in 2012, her fortunes began to really change, when she snagged major roles in *Unriddle 2* and *Poetic Justice*. And now, two years later, her stars have truly aligned. At this year's Star Awards, she bagged her second acting trophy (her first was a Best Actress nod for *The Pupil* at the 2010 ATV Awards) for her memorable turn as a flirty sales exec in *The Dream Makers*, and took

home her third popularity award. And just like that, Rebecca Lim was hot stuff. She was giving the likes of Rui En, Jeanette Aw and Joanne Peh a serious run for their money. Even though it's not like she came out of nowhere, her rapid ascendance in the past two years, and especially the last few months, took some by surprise. Basically, the homey, low-key girl, so down-to-earth-to-the-point-of-almost-ordinary, zoomed from endorsing nothing to plugging shiny Mercedes-Benz coupés.

And so, as Rebecca giggles sportingly through a performance of "Dance Revolution" in the arcade where we just shot her posing like the Goddess of Video Gaming (incidentally, her fans call her "nu shen" or Goddess), one gets the sense that her game is far from over, that she will continue levelling up, that she hasn't yet used her Special Attack or Power Up. Guess we'll just have to wait for the bonus stage.

8 DAYS: To use a video game analogy, you've really levelled up as an actress and a celeb over the past couple of years. Did you have some sort of grand plan, or did it just happen?

"Relaxed! That's always how I feel when I work with Rebecca. She gives me a very 'comfortable' feeling. Maybe there is trust between us. I don't have to break the ice or think too much before I communicate with her. With action scenes, we always get it done fast. Please pair us up more!"



ROMEO TAN, who played Rebecca's love interest in *Yes We Can!*

REBECCA LIM: I honestly didn't have a plan. I guess things started getting better after I became a full-time actress four years ago, after graduating from SMU. In the first few years [on the part-time contract], I hardly got any roles — it was really that bad. My managers had to fight to have my contract renewed, 'cos I didn't hit my quota [for number of shows]. I failed my KPI terribly! Things were slow at the start 'cos I

didn't believe in myself and lacked confidence. I used school as an excuse — to explain to myself as well as to other people why I wasn't getting roles. But in the past few years, my career has really levelled up. A lot of people gave me chances. But no, it wasn't like I planned any of this.

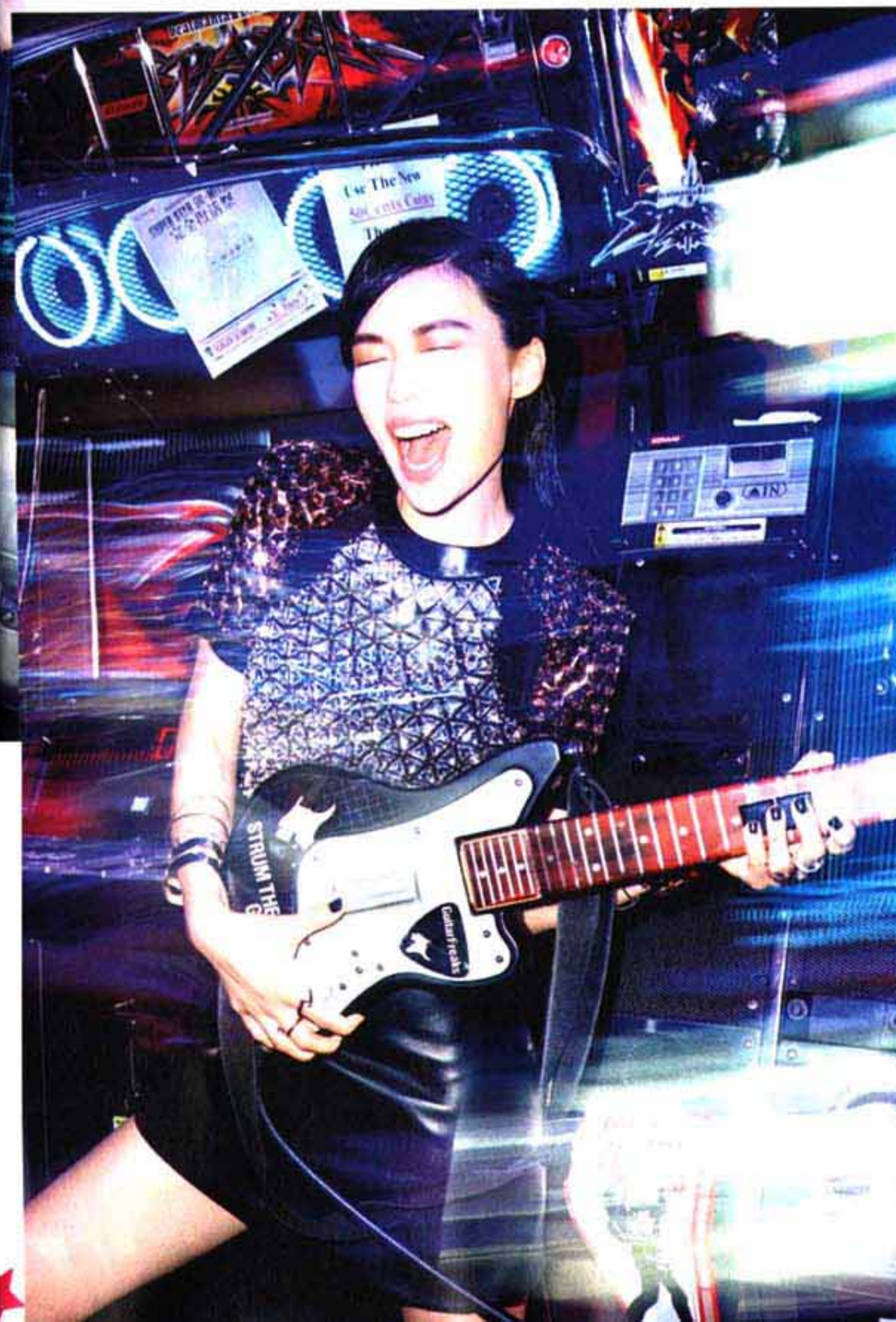
In an interview with us in 2012, when you won your first Top 10 Star Award, we said that after waiting for years in the back seat, your career was finally revving up. Right now, it looks like you're speeding through the fast lane...

And I'm driving a Mercedes-Benz! (Laughs)

Yes! From being a low-key actress two years ago to a Best Supporting Actress win, three Top 10 popularity awards, a prestigious new endorsement with Mercedes-Benz, and 103K Instagram followers. You've come a long way in a short time.

I honestly did not expect this. I was driving with my sister — yes, in my midnight metallic "Northern Lights" Mercedes-Benz (Laughs) — and I saw my picture on a bus, on the cover of a magazine. When I was studying, I would see my colleagues' pictures on the bus, and I would be taking that bus home. (Laughs) Back then, I thought, "How I wish it was my picture on the bus!"

So you did have lofty dreams. Of course there was ambition lah. I just didn't dare to verbalise my dreams — I was afraid people would make fun of me. I'd never dream of being in a shoot where I'd get to wear stuff that was so branded and expensive, you know? I always get misunderstood for being too laid-back and *chin chye* (easy-going), like I'm not hungry enough to be in showbiz. But my belief is that if stuff



LEATHER DRESS WITH STONE EMBROIDERY FROM GUCCI. INFINITY BRACELET, BODY BRACELET, BLADE BRACELET & RINGS ALL FROM CARRIE K. NOMAD LEATHER. STUDDED SANDAL FROM ASH