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BY KENDRA TAN



Jasmine Sim Guess the tough love paid off.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY 8 DAYS

Guess the tough love paid off.

“That was when I realised, oh s***, I f***** up,” says Jasmine Sim as she recounted her days on the set of *Doppelganger* where she played couple Fann Wong and Christopher Lee’s pampered, bratty daughter. “My manager fought hard to get me this role and I felt like I disappointed him.”

However, the 26-year-old sure did not disappoint anyone when she was named Best Newcomer at last week’s Star Awards for the role she thought she had screwed up. It’s her first-ever award and chances are, we’ll be seeing more of the lanky actress on the podium in the future.



1 of 12Model material

Before she became an actress, the *Kin* star was best known for being the face and body of local fashion brand, Love, Bonito. The 1.7m-tall beauty is still the in-house model for the brand and her pretty mug is plastered all over their website. Love, Bonito gave the rising star her first big break and Jasmine tells us it all started when her mum “took a lot of photos and sent it to her friends” when Jasmine was modelling for a “charity runway show”.

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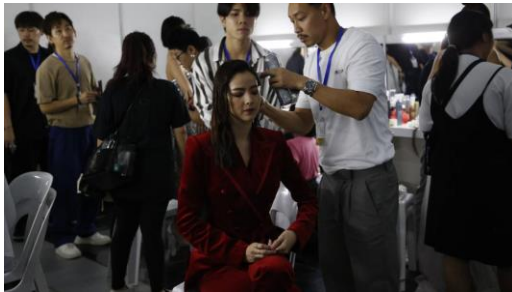
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2 of 12Jasmine in Doppelganger

“One of my mother’s friends happened to be the mother of Rachel [Lim], the owner of Love, Bonito. At that time, her mother mentioned that Rachel was looking for an in-house model, so I went down for casting,” explains Jasmine. After becoming more confident about being in front of the camera, she took part in The New Paper New Face competition in 2014, where she emerged as the first runner-up. She then signed on as an artiste with Ahundred Ants Production, which led to her acting debut in Ch 8’s *Dream Coder*. Prior to her Best Newcomer win, she also had supporting roles in *VIC*, *When Duty Calls* and *The Lead*.



3 of 12Jasmine backstage during the Star Awards 2019

The self-proclaimed introvert may be chatty about her experiences in modelling and showbiz, but she remains tight-lipped about her family, only letting on that she has “an older brother”. Jasmine, who majored in operations at the Singapore Management University, tells us during our 40-min chat that she “rarely shares about [her] problems on set” and “deals with a lot of things [herself]”.



4 of 12Speech therapy

8 DAYS: Congrats on your win! Were you expecting to go on stage that night?

JASMINE SIM: I don't think I was expecting it. I did watch clips of the other nominees and I thought everyone did pretty well considering we are all newcomers. I mean, of course I didn't think that I had

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no chance, but I sure didn't expect to win. I thought it was fair game.

What was your first thought when your name was announced?

In my head I was thinking, “Oh my gosh, I did it!”. *(Laughs)* I had to collect myself and stay calm. I am so surprised I didn't breakdown!

You were very emotional when you gave your Best Newcomer speech though. Did you practice at home?

(Laughs) Yup! I prepared it! Even though there was a chance I might not win, I still feel that it was important not to go completely unprepared and be a mess lah. I mean, it would be iconic if I messed up, but it would be really embarrassing too. *(Laughs)* In fact, I was more nervous about my speech than winning or losing. *(Laughs)*



5 of 12The long walk to glory

Did you manage to say everything you wanted to say?

I think so! I managed to thank everyone I wanted to thank... It's impossible to name everyone lah, But given a chance, I would like to thank them in person.

Who did you think was going to get the award?

I don't know... Personally, I enjoyed Michelle [Wong]'s performance and I thought her character was very different [from everyone else's] because *Blessings 2* was a period drama. But there wasn't someone who I could say had the win in the bag.



6 of 12Look ma, I made it!

Do you think working with such famous and experienced stars like Fann Wong and Christopher Lee has helped you become a better actress?

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Yes, for sure. But it’s not just them, it’s being in this whole production. Everyone was very helpful. They all helped me in different ways. There are people who push you and say things that may not sound very nice, but it was with good intention. And then there are people who are very gentle and supportive. Christopher and Fann’s acting is so good that it helped me get into character. One thing I am grateful about is that they allowed me to feel comfortable enough to be part of their family. If I had been scared of them in real life, I wouldn’t have been able to pull the role off convincingly.



7 of 12The Doppelganger fam

What advice did Fann and Chris give you during filming?

Christopher would take the time to talk to me and Xu Bin (who plays her brother in *Doppelganger*) on how to progress as an actor. He told us about what he has been through and what we could do at this point of our journey as an actor. I thought that was very nice of him to share his personal experience with us so that we don’t have to walk the long road he did. He told me not to rush through the performance and not to be scared to play my emotions out. If the director doesn’t like it, let them adjust from there. Don’t be afraid as a newcomer to do something.



8 of 12She's the best

You mentioned earlier that there were people who said things to you that didn’t sound very nice. What was the worst criticism you’ve gotten so far?

I don’t know if I should say this... But it was something along the lines of me not doing my job well, that I was wasting everyone’s time... I felt very bad and helpless. I just didn’t know what to do at that point of time. I had to apologise to my manager, saying, “Sorry this happened on set today... I really tried my best.”

What happened that day?

We had shot a full day of emotional scenes at the hospital, and it came to a point where I just couldn’t cry anymore. As a newcomer, I’m still learning how to cry. It was a huge pity because when I

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read the scene at home, my tears started flowing naturally. I was very disappointed in myself 'cos I knew I could do it.

So how did you react when you got told off like that?

After the shoot, I met up with a couple of friends who are not in showbiz and let it all out over dinner. But I'm very thankful because I know that the criticism comes from a good place. It helps you improve quickly, especially when you are placed under that kind of pressure.



9 of 12Red Hot

In the spirit of Fann Wong's iconic 1995 Star Awards speech, what award do you hope to win next?

As an actress, you definitely want to win everything you can. I hope to be able win professional acting awards, and to be considered for Best Supporting Actress. But there are a lot of veteran actresses who belong in that category and they are so experienced and so good. So as of now, any award is good. I work towards being better as an artiste. I don't dare to think too much about it lah 'cos I'm very, very new. I just want to do everything to the best of my abilities.



10 of 12Interview process

When you met the media after your win, you said that “These three years have been difficult”. What difficulties have you faced?

Mainly not knowing what I'm doing. (*Laughs*) I wasn't sure if I was going the right way. But so far, I have been very lucky to be given the chance to act. Some roles may not be huge, but I'm still thankful for them. It has been difficult trying to find footing and direction in this industry. I didn't study or learn performance at all, so I really went in with zero knowledge and that was tough.

Have you considered doing something else?

Not really. There were times I felt [I had performed] very lousy [at work], but I had to get over it at the

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end of the day. I won’t give up but if it’s not meant to be, people in the industry will just stop giving me roles.



11 of 12 Still in disbelief

Who are your closer friends in showbiz?

I did get closer to Carrie [Wong]. We knew each other already but we got close during *V/C* and we are getting closer now because of *My One In A Million*. We just magically clicked. *(Laughs)* She has been very supportive of me. We hang out outside filming once in awhile, but artistes like her just don’t have time. She’s very busy.



12 of 12 Ready for the big time

What roles are you hoping to take on next?

Wow, I’ve never really thought about it. I’m very open to new things. I’ve always enjoyed tearjerkers and thrillers, so I would probably like a role in such shows.

You have gorgeous hair. Would you shave it all off for a role?

If the role really, really requires me to, I would. At the end of the day, if I want to, I can always wear wigs. And my hair would grow out eventually too. *(Laughs)* If it’s a good role for me to learn and improve myself, why not? I would try whatever lah. *(Laughs)*

If you had to choose between modelling and acting, which one will you pick?

I would choose modelling over acting. Modelling is something I’m more comfortable with because I’ve been doing it since the beginning [of my career], whereas I’m still working and actively improving on my acting. However, I’m choosing to focus my time on acting now, because I don’t want to waste how far I’ve come. I like what I’m doing, and I like facing new challenges every day.