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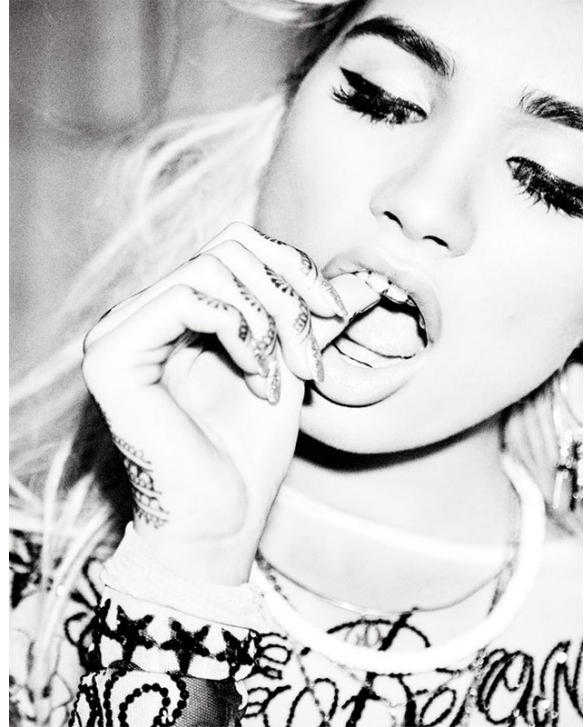
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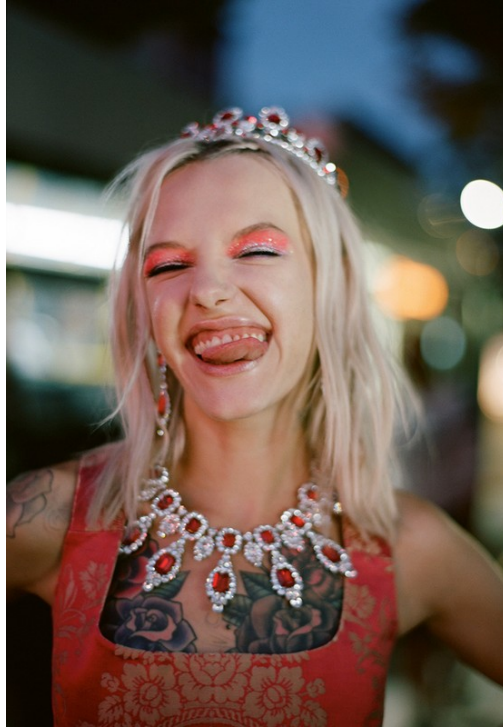
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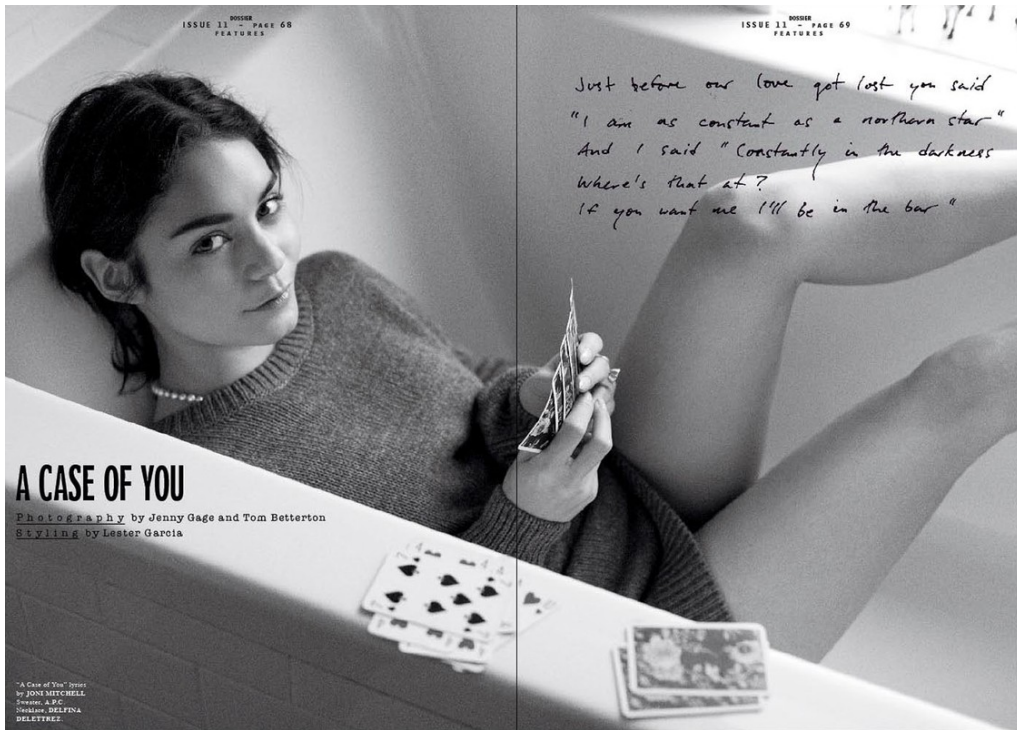
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'I'm lost for words when
I talk about Miuccia Prada.
She's another level'



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On a chilly Los Angeles morning, Victoria Beckham is in her element. The luxury American department store, Neiman Marcus, is hosting a private view of the designer's latest collection, straight from the catwalk, for 50 of its most prolific customers. The event is a lesson in PR from the master herself. Beckham enters the room - trailed by her eldest son Brooklyn and husband David, who is clutching their Chloé-clad daughter Harper - a snapshot of her picture-perfect family on display alongside a catwalk show of the collection. I watch as Victoria struggles up to David, puts her arm around him, rests her head on his shoulder... Afterwards, she gives a little speech - charming, informal, self-deprecating. By now, the crowd - who go on to spend thousands in pre-orders - are as in love with Victoria as they are with the clothes.

She tells them she's going to hang around for a bit, and proceeds to pose for photos and chat. As they mill, David circles the room, chasing Harper through a minefield of sillettes, occasionally throwing her up in the air, blowing raspberries on her bare tummy or dancing with her. If any proof was needed that Victoria Beckham knows how to work her market, it is all here.

So I know that Victoria can be charming to strangers - a skill much in evidence at the trunk show - but it's not something she finds so easy with journalists. Or, more specifically, British journalists, who-

Carter Smith

270



'I love fashion. I'm proud of
what I do. And I could talk
about it day in, day out'

Cotton mix top by
Chapman. Semi-
prof. by art team.
Ring, Victoria's own.
Carter Smith

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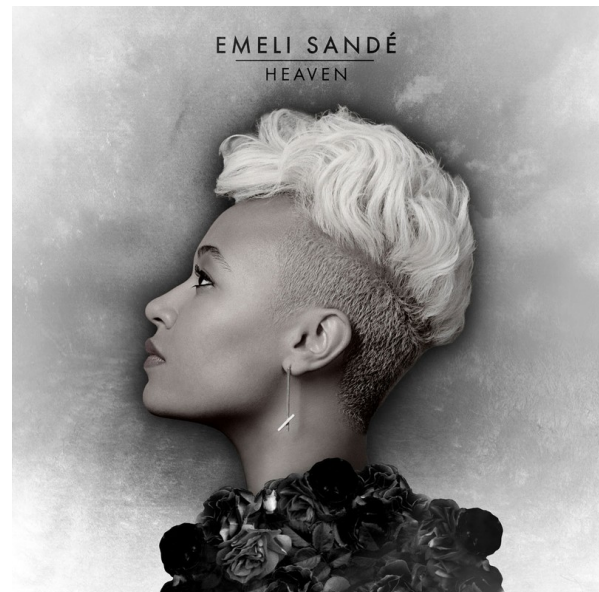
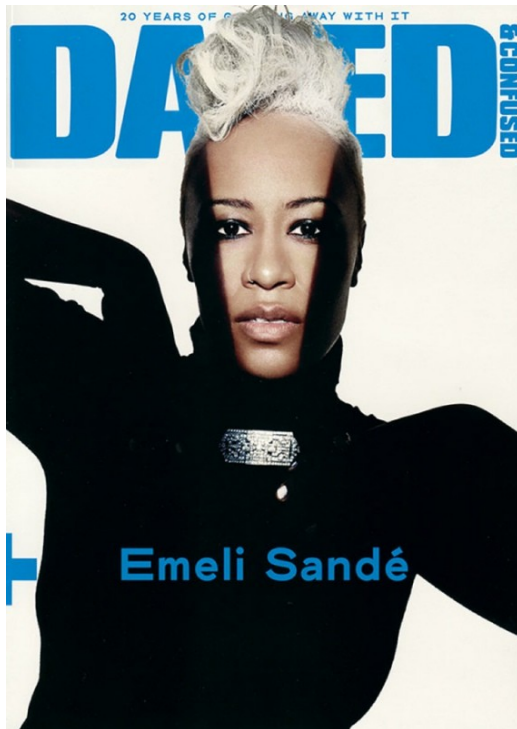
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