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*Gwen Stefani*

shares the love lessons she learned the hard way

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ACP



# Glamour GIRL

She insists she's "just a girl". Yeah, but these days, Gwen Stefani's just a girl with her own fashion label, budding movie career and a rep as the most stylish woman on the circuit. Oh, and a hot new solo album that'll blow your mind

**G**wen Stefani walks into a trendy New York hotel wearing an old pair of Levi's, a Vivienne Westwood belt, a funky Libertine jacket and sexy-as-hell, green Christian Dior snakeskin stilettos. Today, no one is left wondering why the 35-year-old singer is regarded as a leading style icon. Of course, the ensemble is made even more striking by Gwen's signature porcelain-pale face, platinum-blond hair and saturated red lips. **The girl is a vamp!**

But there's a transformation afoot. Well, at least as far as her music goes. On her debut solo album – *Love, Angel, Music, Baby* (yep, the same name as her fashion label) – out in November, this pin-up girl is giving the whole '80s-inspired retro dance style a whirl. Think dance tunes sexed up with hip-hop beats. Her inspiration? Prince. But, warns Gwen, she's not trying to rip him off. "If you're not Prince, you're never going to sound like Prince," she says. "Especially if you're a white girl from Orange County (in California)."

And ladies, expect big things. The calibre of her producers is impressive: Andre 3000 of Outkast; Pharrell Williams of N.E.R.D.; Martin L Gore from '80s pop band Depeche Mode. She's also teaming up with old pal Eve for another duo. Although working with other people has taken a bit of getting used to for Gwen. "It's hard to take someone else's words and sing them," she says. "Pharrell's great, but our styles are really different. He'd say, 'Try this line: da da da I wanna taste you!' and I'd change it to: 'I wanna make you!' Not to sound stuck-up, but I needed an attitude song." Glad to hear that hasn't changed.

## **So is No Doubt officially splitting up?**

I thought it would be a good publicity stunt to say that we were breaking up, but really we're not. After our album *Rock Steady* we decided to take some time apart to pursue independent projects. And I really wanted to do a movie.

## **You play the role of Jean Harlow in the**

## **upcoming film The Aviator. Tell us more ...**

It's very small. I was only shooting for four or five days, so I'll barely be on screen for two minutes, which is so hilarious, because they're making it sound like I'm the star of the movie (it also stars Leonardo DiCaprio and Cate Blanchett).

## **So there'll be more acting gigs?**

I've wanted to do films for years, but it's hard to find the right roles. I've decided to wait until the next good part comes up and develop my own album in the meantime.

## **Was it hard making the album?**

It's been hard to focus. Coming off the tour and having my first year of being married ... I'm kind of lazy. I like to lie around with my husband (Bush lead singer, Gavin Rossdale) and watch TV and stuff like that. It takes a lot of selfish time to make music. That's ▶



PHOTOGRAPHY BY PATRICK DEMARCHELIER

◀ the reason why the band has been so successful all these years – that's all we ever did.

### **Wasn't that tough on all your relationships?**

Girlfriends and boyfriends were always secondary. Tony (the bass player) was my boyfriend for years, so that made it easy. Then I met Gavin and both of us have been on tour constantly for the past seven years. It was really hard for us, but when we're apart, we get more work done.

### **You've been the only girl in an all-guy band for 17 years. Are you more of a guy's girl, or do you have a girlie side?**

I'm totally a girlie girl. But I can definitely hang with the guys in the band because we have music in common. They're like brothers.

### **What's it like being on tour for a year at a time?**

Reality becomes totally skewed, but it's such an amazing time because you get lost in your own world, and that is what's hard about coming off a tour. All of a sudden you go, "Oh my God, I have to have keys. I need money in my purse. Someone's not going to do every single thing for me."

### **One of the great back stories of No Doubt is that you and Tony remained friends and bandmates after you split. How did you manage that?**

I think it was probably our passion for the music. We loved the band so much and I guess we just knew

it was worth it. But him breaking up with me was the most incredible thing because before that, I was a very passive person who was dependent on him for my happiness. I was only 17 when I started seeing him and had never had any serious boyfriends before that, so I glamorised the relationship and I was so in love. After we broke up, I started writing all these songs and I found my talent, which was the most empowering thing that ever happened to me.

### **Was it weird for him that you were using the break-up in your songs?**

I think it probably was, but we were always such good friends and he was so happy for me that I was discovering my writing talent. But I'm sure that he went through some pain too. And then when I met my husband, it was really hard for him to see me with someone else.

### **Do you now use Gavin when you're writing songs?**

Yeah, I'm definitely inspired by him. He's the one who gets to me and turns on my feelings, and when my feelings are turned on, I can write songs. He's my muse.

### **Are you each other's biggest fans or worst critics?**

When we first met, we weren't into each other's bands at all. I know he didn't like No Doubt that much; he liked one song. But he's grown to like it more. And the rock music he does wasn't something I was big on. But then I realised how talented he is, and he's such an amazing writer, so now I'm totally his biggest fan. ▶ 110



## Did you legally change your name when you got married?

Yeah, to Rossdale. I'm traditional and so is he. I kept Stefani as my stage name.

## Do you struggle to maintain privacy in your relationship?

I've never been very secretive about who I am. My songs are basically my diaries. But when we got married, our relationship became even more sacred. If I talk about it, suddenly it's out there for people to criticise and have an opinion about, and, no, people don't get to do that.

## Are you domestic?

I'm not and it's embarrassing. I'm not good at cleaning up and doing the homemaker thing. One thing that makes me feel lucky about my financial success is that I have a housekeeper. And if that got taken away, I'd be bummed.

## You're so busy. Do you have time to work out?

I have to work out really, really hard to be as hot as I am. I think I went on my first diet in

sixth grade. It's in my genes to be a little bigger and I don't like that, admittedly. I want girls to know that I work at it – it's not easy, and it doesn't come naturally, unfortunately.

## It doesn't seem like you care what people think of what you wear ...

Ever since I hit puberty, I've been really into having my own look. I would buy old men's pyjama bottoms and peg them, and wear boots and tank tops. I was also really into Hollywood glamour: skinny eyebrows, lots of powder with red-black lips and tons of mascara. And if you look back, I've been doing it since I was 17.

## Why did you decide to start a clothing line?

My stylist, Andrea, and I were making so many outfits so one day we decided to do a clothing line together. It's every girl's dream. We were going to keep it small and just sell our stuff at a few boutiques, but then I met this guy who said he wanted to do a clothing line with me and pay for everything. The best part was he said I could do whatever I wanted creatively. I was like "Are you kidding me? OK."

## How did you come to call the line L.A.M.B.?

I had a dog for 16 years and I called her Lamb because she was like the lamb in *Mary Had a Little Lamb* – she followed me everywhere I went. So then I thought Lamb would be a cool name for my clothing line – it would be like my dog living on in my clothes. We decided that the L should stand for Love, A for Angel, M for Music, and B for Baby. So there are a few meanings to it.

## What's the biggest perk of being a star?

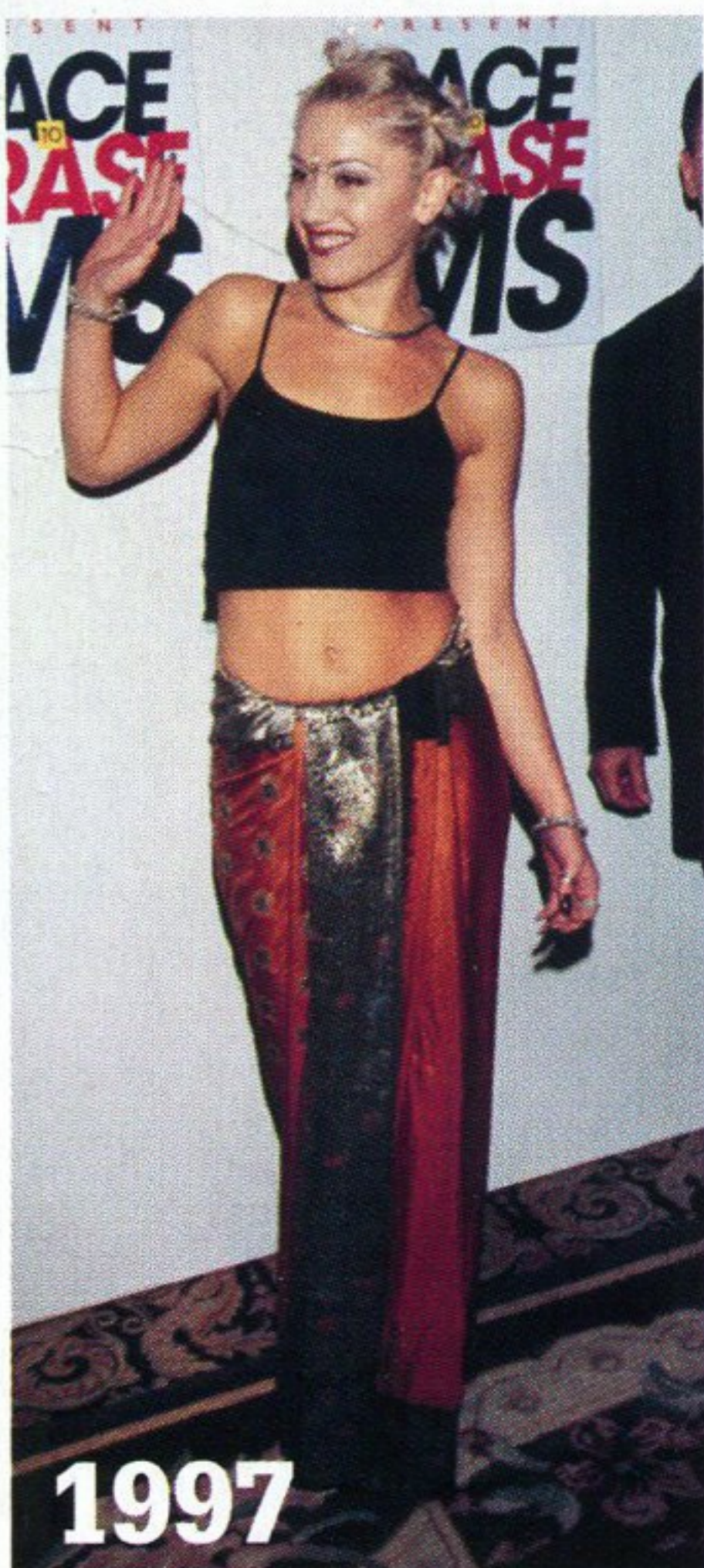
You always get great tables in restaurants.

## Have you ever had a great encounter with a fan?

I was driving down Hollywood Boulevard one day and I saw this guy wearing an old No Doubt shirt, so I knew he was a die-hard fan. I rolled down the window and I yelled out to him, "Hey, cool shirt." He was probably about 19. The guy nearly fell over. He totally tripped. It was so cute. **Jennifer Kastle Furmaniak and Elaine Lipworth** **COSMO**

# Gwen on her many looks

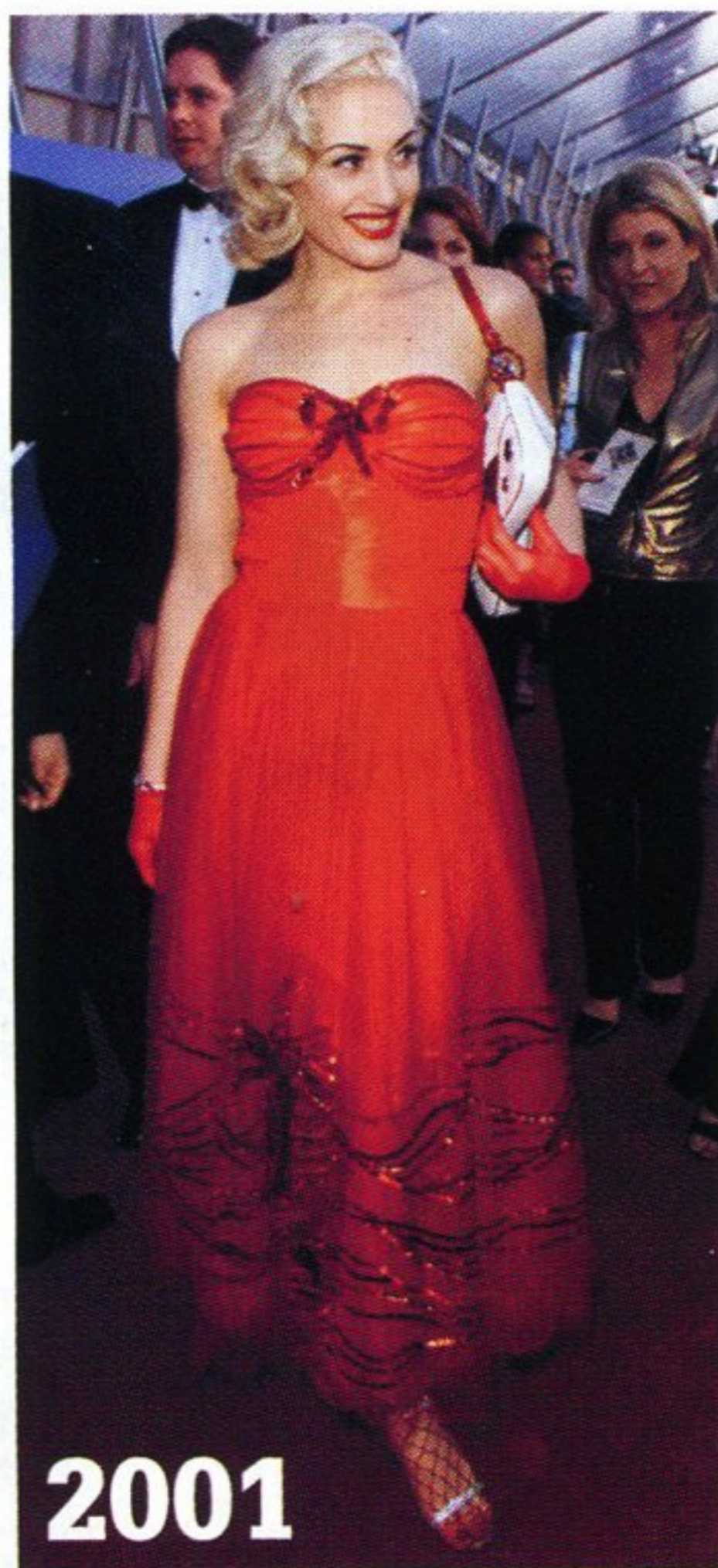
Cosmo asked this style icon to reveal the thinking behind some of her most famous fashion choices.



1997

### RACE TO ERASE MS EVENT

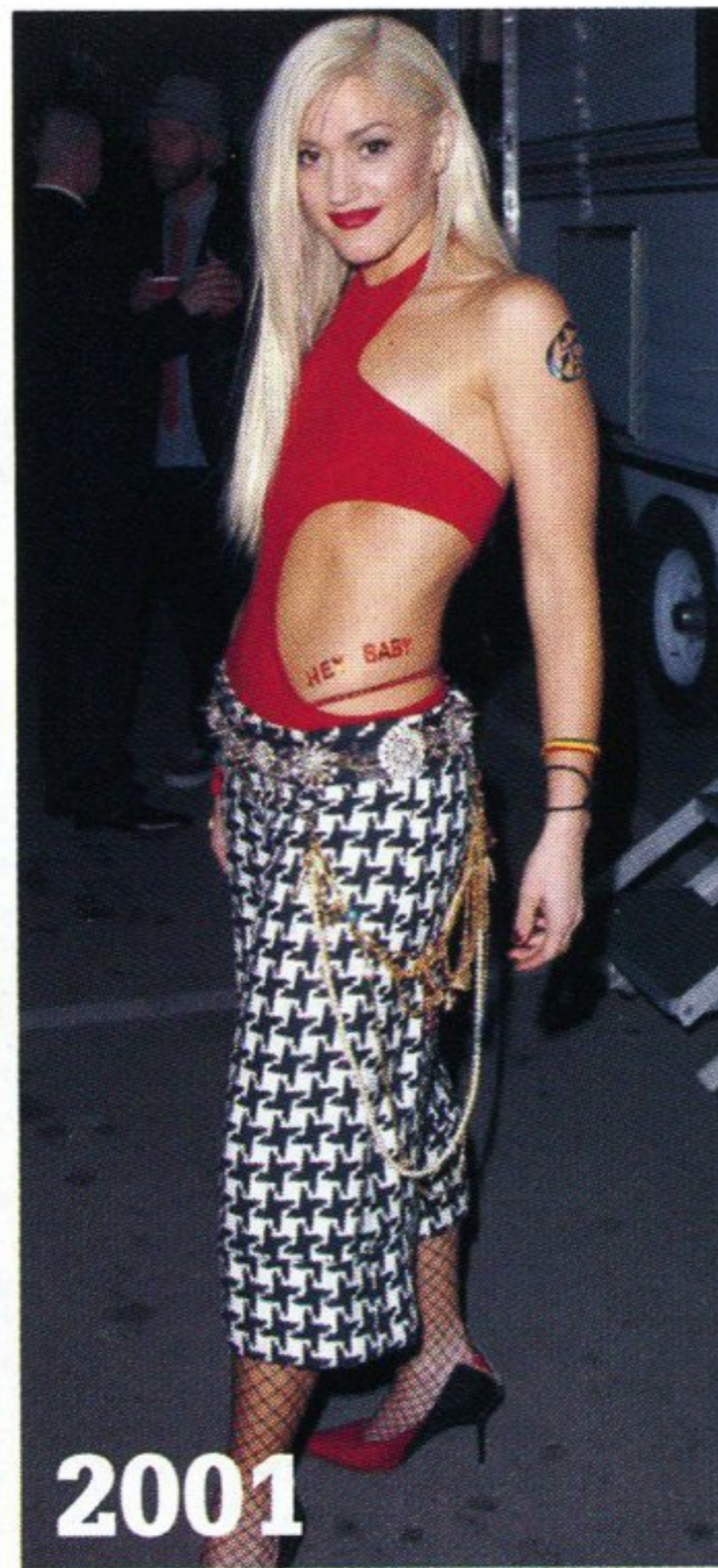
"I did these little buns since my hair had started falling out from overbleaching. The bindi was from India, the last place we played on tour. I love that culture."



2001

### GRAMMY AWARDS

"For my prom, my mum made me a dress that looked like Grace Kelly's in *Rear Window*. I wanted to do that again, so John Galiano made this dress for me."



2001

### MY VH1 MUSIC AWARDS

"This is when *Rock Steady* came out. I did this whole red-black-and-white thing – on the album cover too. It was my favourite time period for my clothes."



2004

### GRAMMY AWARDS

"This is L.A.M.B. It's all one piece. I had the fabric copied from a Jean Harlow dress. It's circles on a modern version of white chiffon. It turned out really well."



2004

### GOLDEN GLOBES

"Some people didn't like my look; I thought it was classic. My hair is '60s Hitchcock. The dress is vintage Valentino. I think I looked pretty."