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HONG KONG'S CHINA DOLL



Between her own scenes as a peasant girl, Li Ching delightedly watches the action.

HIGH ON A windswept hill in the mountains behind Hong Kong's crowded city of Kowloon rises a tatterdemalion castle—a rickety sentinel above the South China Sea. A visitor, approaching on the winding mountain road, can see battlements, a temple, village streets and, on certain days, armies of Chinese, in colorful, flowing ancient costumes, jousting.

On this hilltop lives a young Princess. She is beautiful and adored; she can be very serious or very gay. She laughs easily and has never grown stuck-up. In fact, the people on the hilltop believe Li Ching, for that is her name (as it is written above in Chinese characters), is as much pixie as Princess.

Li Ching reminds one of an earlier Hayley Mills, and she, too, is a gleaming movie star. Her hilltop realm is actually the Shaw Brothers' motion-picture studio, Hong Kong's largest, a few miles from Communist China. Not one in a million Americans has ever heard of her, but Li Ching has an endless following of fans among the movie-hungry people of Asia. Last year, at the Asian Film Festival in Kyoto, Japan, she was crowned the best actress of the year. She was 17.

Li Ching works every day in the cavernous studios on this hilltop and lives with her mother in a tiny apartment on the lee side of the hill. She has acquired none of the affectations or pretensions of stardom, and although her English is scrambled, she is learning to make herself understood in the language of womanhood.

Li Ching, donning a wardrobe wig, playacts her impressions of an American teen-ager.

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CHINA DOLL CONTINUED



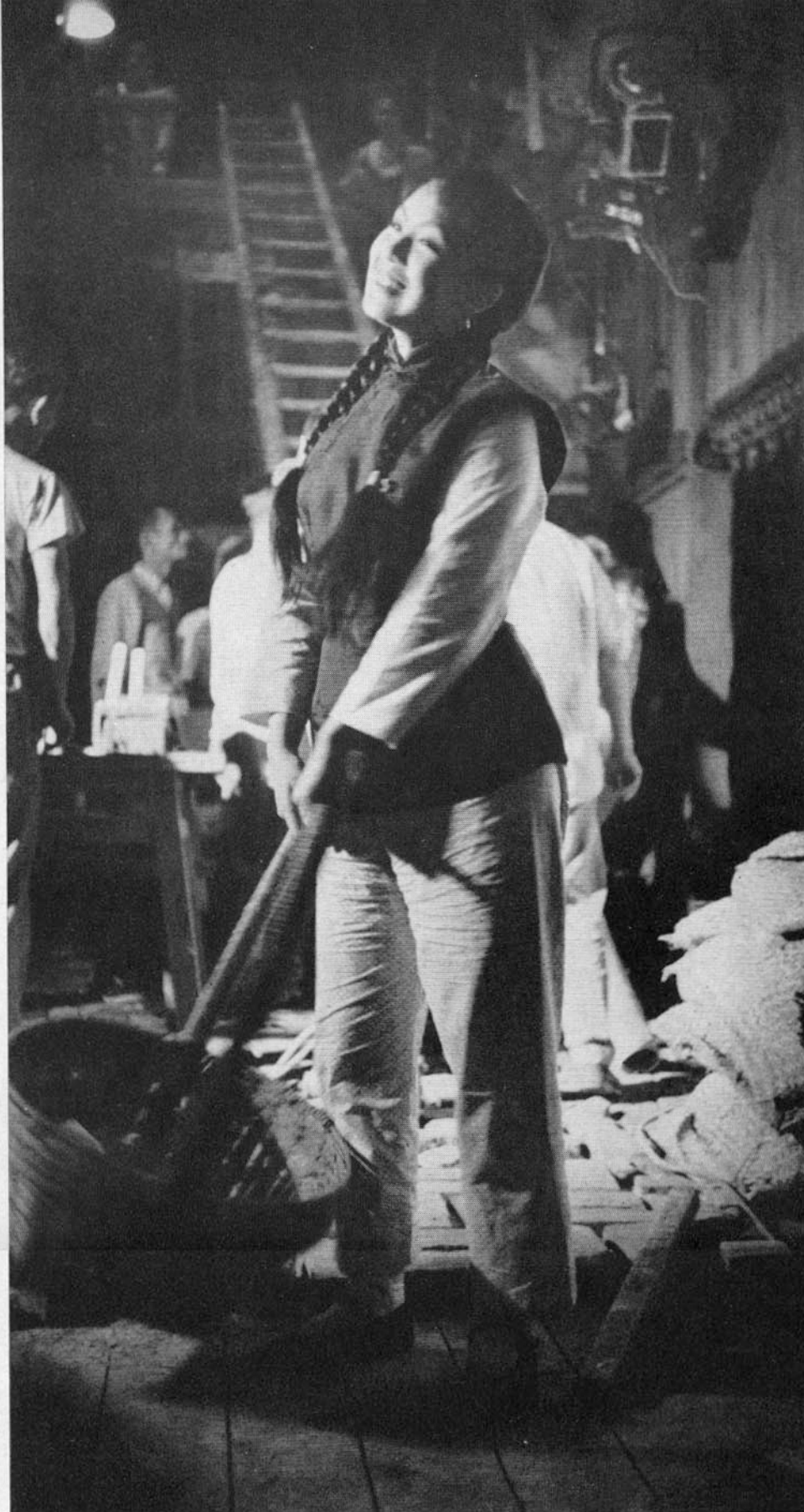
Like a pendulum do, Li Ching swings in studio dancing class.

An extraordinary willingness to work hard, an abundance of green talent and a youthful verve have made Li Ching a star. She was born in Shanghai, youngest of eight; all her brothers and sisters are still there under Communist rule. Her father is a seaman on a British freighter.

Li Ching was five when she was brought to Hong Kong and entered in the Precious Blood Girls School. At 12, she became a Catholic. After her freshman year in high school, she was admitted to the Shaw Brothers' drama school. She wanted to be an actress simply because, "I thought it would be fun."

Li Ching's newest picture is titled *Ching-Ching* to capitalize on her box-office pull. She plays a peasant girl being sold to a matchmaker for marriage to a rich old man. Her rebellion is the heart of the story. Before Li Ching goes on Stage 3 under the eye of Director Yen Chuen, Producer Sam Waung calmly reminds her: "You are playing a teen-ager. You don't have to act. You are yourself."

END



Made up like a country girl, Li Ching goes to work on set resembling a village store.

Will she be sold to marry a rich old man?

She switches into a Western suit and takes tea with her mother before trip into Kowloon.

