

# HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN.

By Lisa Cairns

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*Notes to the reader.*

*There are three timelines in this script: The present, the past and the future. The script alternates between the three but, individually, they remain chronological.*

## **THE PRESENT.**

1.EXT. THE FIELD. DAY.\_

Gold and orange rays of sunlight are defined by the bright blue sky. A vast field of endless grass dances gently in the wind. NICKI, 37, stumbles through the field, bloody and shocked, a ruby necklace hanging from her fingers.

Desperately, she falls to the ground. Complete silence evaporates the noise, whilst images of the whole movie flash from the end to the beginning - taking no more time than ten seconds and giving nothing away.

2.EXT. THE FIELD. DAY

Back to the field. This time we see a ten-year-old Nicki laying flat on her back. Her eyes bright and wide open. Her lips curved in a gentle smile. Her dark blond hair is stretched out messily behind her head. Looking through ten-year-old Nicki's eyes, the sunlight dances on the grass as it sways in the wind. A red kite (bird) glides through the sky, riding the winds. Something twinkles from its claw, shaking it - a necklace drops directly onto Nicki's belly.

Picking it up from her stomach and holding it to the light, she sees it's a necklace with a large beautiful ruby stone. The light cuts and reflects, creating beautiful detailed colours - as if it contains a whole world made of light.

LISSIE (V.O)

Out beyond the ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I'll meet you there.

When we lie down in that grass,  
the world is too full to talk about.  
Ideas, language, even the phrase 'each other'  
doesn't make sense any more.

## **THE FUTURE**

Two years in the future.

3.EXT. THE OUTSIDE OF SHARON'S FLAT. DAY.

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South London. A red brick - run down, council estate block. Eight stories high.

4.INT. INSIDE SHARON'S FLAT. SITTING ROOM. EARLY EVE.

Inside SHARON'S flat there is a mixture of cluttered, dated décor with new age statues, pictures and precious stones.

Daylight is almost gone but Nicki sits in the dark, staring blankly at the wall.

Obviously very beautiful but looking a mess, Nicki is 39 years old, slim, delicate and completely downtrodden. Loosely held in her hand, is a woman's razor. She runs her finger lightly over the blade.

Somewhat out of place, she has a beautiful RUBY necklace hanging around her neck.

LATER. DARK OUTSIDE.

SHARON is heard coming through the front door. She turns the lights on in the sitting room. Nicki is still sat in the same position. Quickly, she hides the razor. Sharon jumps when she sees her.

Sharon (Nicki's mum) is 58 years old, long loose silver hair, hippy clothes.

5.INT. SHARON'S FLAT. NICKI'S BEDROOM. LATER. EVE.

Nicki is getting ready for bed. Sharon knocks on her door and hesitantly enters.

SHARON

You don't want any dinner?

NICKI

Not hungry.

SHARON

Why don't you come and watch some TV.

NICKI

I'm alright.

A moment.

SHARON  
I can't go on like this.

A moment.

SHARON  
Something needs to change.

NICKI  
Mum I've been out three weeks.

SHARON  
And you've just sat there.

NICKI  
What exactly do you expect me to do?

A moment.

SHARON  
I've been talking to DAVE and ALLEN and they think you need to go and get help.

Nicki stares emptily.

SHARON  
Please Nicki - this is killing me to see you like this.

A long pause.

SHARON  
What about Lissie?

NICKI  
Come on.

SHARON  
Okay - will you at least see Doctor Harrison?

NICKI  
Mum - leave it out.

6.INT. DOCTORS' SURGERY. THE NEXT DAY. DAY.

Nicki is checking in to her doctor's appointment at the computerized check in point. Sharon stands next to her. Wearing a baseball cap and sunglasses, Nicki tries not to be recognised by people. She finds a hidden seat in the corner. Sharon follows her.

A LITTLE LATER.

DOCTOR HARRISON walks into the waiting room.

DOCTOR HARRISON  
Nicki Parsons.

She cringes at her name being called, people turn to look at her. She stands up to follow him, people watch. Sharon jumps up as well. Looking at Sharon, Nicki lets out a breath of exasperation. Sharon looks back at her - determined. Giving in, Nicki agrees to her presence.

7.INT. DOCTOR HARRISON'S OFFICE. A FEW MOMENTS LATER.

Nicki and Sharon sit opposite Doctor Harrison.

DOCTOR HARRISON  
So what can I do for you Nicki?

SHARON  
We spoke last week - you told me to bring her in.

A moment - to Nicki.

DOCTOR HARRISON  
You're having difficulty adjusting?

A moment.

DOCTOR HARRISON  
It's understandable after everything you've been through.

SHARON  
It's terrible what they did to her.

DOCTOR HARRISON  
From talking with your mum last week - what it sounds like is - you have post traumatic stress disorder. It's very common in your situation.

Nicki looks away.

DOCTOR HARRISON  
There are medications and therapies that can help you get your life back on track.

A moment.

DOCTOR HARRISON

I am going to refer you to a psychiatrist who will work out a medication for you and a PTSD therapist.

A moment.

DOCTOR HARRISON

In the meantime - I will give you some Xanax to take the edge off.

He writes Nicki the prescription.

DOCTOR HARRISON

Are you sleeping?

Nicki shakes her head 'no' and stays unreactive.

8.INT. SHARON'S FLAT. LATER. DAY.

Nicki is sat on the bed in Sharon's flat looking intensely at the sleeping pills and Xanax that the doctor gave her. She opens the sleeping pills, holds them to her mouth for a moment before downing the whole bottle, followed with a glass of water. She sits reactionless then lays back. As she turns her head gently, her loose blonde hair gets caught in her face. She looks out of the window. Clouds are moving gently over a grey London. A tiny sunbeam leaks through - she closes her eyes.

LATER.

CLOSE UP.

Hand being shoved into a mouth. A toilet. The sound of puking. Water and phlegm pour into the toilet.

9.INT. SHARON'S FLAT, THE BATHROOM. EVE.

Nicki is standing over the toilet making herself sick. Her head bobs, drugged. She tries again, desperate.

10.INT. THE HALLWAY OF SHARON'S APARTMENT. EVE.

Sharon opens the door from the lounge and listens. She hears the sound of Nicki being sick. Sharon looks concerned and walks towards the bathroom.

11.INT. SHARON'S FLAT, THE BATHROOM. A MOMENT LATER. EVE.

Sharon pushes open the door to see Nicki throwing up the pills. Sharon looks horrified. Nicki leans back relieved but frustrated to have thrown up the pills.

She turns her head and sees a very shocked Sharon.

SHARON

How...

A moment.

SHARON

What was that?

NICKI

Nothing. I felt sick.

SHARON

After everything?

A moment.

SHARON

I stood by you.

A moment.

SHARON

I stood by you through it all.

A moment.

SHARON

While I was sat in the other room?

Nicki slurs her words.

NICKI

I didn't do it.

SHARON

You were just going to leave me?

Beat.

SHARON

Like this?

NICKI

You know mum I don't need this now.

Sharon takes out her phone.

SHARON

I'm calling the hospital.

NICKI

No. No. No.

Sharon begins to dial.

SHARON

I'm not doing this anymore. I am calling an ambulance. I am not going to stand around and watch you kill yourself. What if you didn't get them all up?

NICKI

They came up. I'm a chicken - I can't even kill myself. I can't even do it.

Sharon continues dialling. Nicki reaches for her mother, she stumbles and knocks Sharon. Sharon falls back and drops the phone. Nicki grabs it.

NICKI

They came up.

Sharon stares at her daughter - heartbroken.

NICKI

They'll lock me - you want that mum - you want to see me locked up again?

SHARON

I've had it Nicki - I can't do this with you. Not after everything.

A moment.

SHARON

You think I am not suffering to?

Nicki looks at her mum ashamed.

SHARON

Then you have to go to Lissie.

Nicki

No way.

She walks to the hallway and grabs the landline phone.

SHARON

Lissie or I call them.

NICKI

You're a hypocrite , always slagging the system off - now you want their help.

Sharon

Nicki - I will call them.

NICKI

They'll do nothing, I didn't do it. What are they going to do?

Sharon

I mean it.

12.EXT. A LARGE INDIAN STYLE ASHRAM. THE NEXT EVE.

A large beautiful manor house, covered in ivy, transformed into an Indian style ashram just outside London. Buried deep in a vast forest away from public view.

13.INT. A LARGE MEDITATION HALL. EVE.

Filled with colour, flowers and shrines of different gods, 200 people stand, facing the Guru Lissie, who is walking out, followed closely by Jaya.

People are swaying and singing bhajans in devotion to her; fake holiness laces the atmosphere. Dressed in white, Lissie looks very spiritual. As her and Jaya are leaving, Jaya sees Nicki and does a double take. Nicki is sat towards the back, ashamed. Sharon sits next to her, proud to be part of the group and immersed in the bhajan.

14.INT. NICKI'S BEDROOM AT THE ASHRAM. A LITTLE LATER. EVE.

Nicki pulls in her suitcase while Sharon eagerly follows behind. A small, dark, low-ceilinged, typically English room dressed up in Indian spirituality. Bunk beds next to a small bay window. Nicki registers that the bottom bunk is taken.

SHARON

Isn't this fantastic?

A moment.

SHARON

This is really going to do you the world of good. This is going to clear out those cobwebs.

NICKI

You really think this is gonna fix it? - You really think I'm suddenly gonna start singing bhajans and love will emanate from all my orifices?

Sharon looks shocked.

NICKI

You know when dad left you - you mourned for years. You think I don't remember you getting drunk and passing out on the sofa crying. You think I don't remember that?

Sharon doesn't react.

NICKI

I remember. And, I remember listening to you puke in the toilet till all hours and having to pee in the sink cause the puke was all over the toilet where you missed.

Sharon looks ashamed.

NICKI

So don't you stand there and think you have any moral high ground here. If I had any other option, I would do it.

There is an awkward silence. Sharon fights to find words. KELLY bursts in, full of energy.

KELLY

My new roommate.

She runs over and pulls Nicki in for an overly long hug. Nicki is nonreactive, arms dangling.

KELLY

Namaste - welcome.

SHARON

I should go.

## THE PAST

Two years in the past. A little before 'The Present'.

15.INT. A TV STUDIO SET FOR LOOSE WOMAN, TWO YEARS BEFORE THE FUTURE. DAY.

Four middle-aged women host the cliché show. The hosts sit in a semi-circle around a kitchen table. Four cameras surround them, behind a large audience of mostly women.

16.INT. THE WINGS OF THE FILM STUDIO. DAY.

Nicki is stood backstage waiting to be called on to the live show of Loose Woman.

CAROL (O.S)

And next up we have the beautiful...

17.INT. A TV STUDIO SET FOR LOOSE WOMAN. DAY.

CAROL (CONT.)

..the funny... the talented... the little bit naughty... Nicki Parsons.

A runner holds up a card to the audience saying 'APPLAUSE.' Nicki walks out on stage to a huge round of applause. She stops before she walks down the steps towards the hosts and acknowledges, gratefully, the audience. Nicki is 37 years old and well manicured: appearance is everything.

LATER in the interview.

Nicki is sat in a semicircle with the hosts.

CAROL

So a little birdie says that Nicki is 'in-love' again.

Nicki cracks a proud smile.

CAROL

And can we know a name? Or is it top secret?

Nicki smiles and looks at the audience as if to say - 'should I answer'? A runner holds up a card telling the audience to 'WOOOOW'. - they wooow.

NICKI

Okay, okay. My co-star from Just Dick.

We look through the cameras that are recording the show at the hosts and Nicki.

CAROL

Walter Blackburn?

Nicki nods smiling.

CAROL

Now he is a catch, isn't he ladies? One of Britain's best.

Carol looks at the audience in a happy way - encouraging them to clap. A runner holds up a board saying 'APPLAUSE'.

18.INT. BACKSTAGE AT LOOSE WOMAN, THE HALLWAY LEADING TO THE DRESSING ROOMS. DAY.

Pleased with herself, Nicki walks to her dressing room after finishing the interview. She's checking her texts and sees one from MARC saying 'call me'. Annoyed, she calls him.

NICKI

What do you mean you can't pick her up?

A moment.

NICKI

I have an appointment - then I'm meant to be seeing WALTER.

Kicking the door open, she enters her dressing room.

19.INT. NICKI'S DRESSING ROOM ON LOOSE WOMAN. DAY.

NICKI

Fine. Fine. Yeah, yeah - screw you too, Marc - good parenting.

She hangs up. Walter is sat in her dressing room.

WALTER

You were wonderful - I am so proud.

Nicki goes over and gives him a big kiss.

NICKI

I have to cancel tonight, though. Marc just called and guess what? He's not taking India; surprise surprise.

Walter looks disappointed.

NICKI

BUT, I can make it up to you now.

She kisses him in an excited way, straddling him. Walter looks ecstatic.

20.EXT. A LONDON ROAD. DAY.

We see Nicki parking at her cosmetic surgeon's in her BMW sports convertible. INDIA, her daughter, is in the passenger seat.

India is 10 years old, delicate in appearance but wise and intelligent beyond her years. She has large adorable eyes. Nicki finishes parking.

21.INT/EXT. NICKI'S BMW CAR. DAY

NICKI

So what you gonna do?

INDIA

Homework.

NICKI

Are you gonna get out the car?

INDIA

Yes.

Nicki raises her eyebrow at India in an unhappy fashion.

INDIA

This doesn't look like a Doctor's.

India points to the decoration, it looks more like a health club or beauty parlour.

Nicki blushes having been caught out of a lie.

NICKI

India stop trying to get out of the subject of homework.

Nicki kisses India's head and gets out of the car.

NICKI

No getting out.

She walks towards the 'doctor's' office.

22.INT. THE COSMETIC SURGEON'S OFFICE. DAY.

DON, the surgeon must be nearly 60 but looks like a plastic 40. He places a huge needle into Nicki's brow.

23.EXT. THE SURGERY CAR PARK. DAY.

India is sat in Nicki's BMW car, feet up, homework out, tapping her pencil on her lip. She looks out to the cosmetic surgeon's - wondering.

24.INT. THE COSMETIC SURGEON'S (DON) OFFICE. DAY.

Pulling out the needle from Nicki's brow, he begins to refill it with more botox.

DON

I have to say, that nose is perfection.

Nicki smiles.

25.EXT. THE SURGERY CAR PARK. DAY.

India is getting out of the car. She walks towards the cosmetic surgeon's office, wary of getting caught.

26.INT. THE WAITING ROOM OF THE COSMETIC SURGERY. DAY.

Intercut

INT. DON'S (THE COSMETIC SURGEON'S) OFFICE. DAY.

The receptionist goes to the toilet. India walks in and looks around. Posters of women, before and after cosmetic surgery, fill the walls. India looks at them, interested but not shocked, as if she has seen this before. She hovers over one with a large lady in underwear before and after liposuction - she pulls a disgusted face.

She hears her mum in the surgeon's office. She goes to the door and listens.

DON

I know I shouldn't brag about my own work - but your nose is art.

Nicki smiles. India frowns.

DON

I really think it's the best nose I have ever made.

He pulls out the needle.

DON

Right, all done beautiful lady.

Nicki sits up to leave. Don hands her a mirror to look at her face. India runs out of the waiting room and back to the car in time to not be seen by her mum.

27.INT. NICKI'S BATHROOM IN HER KENSINGTON APARTMENT.  
EVE.

28.INTERCUT

THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM. DAY.

Nicki is in her luxury bathroom, pacing. Her lips are swollen, like two slugs.

Phone to her ear, she is calling Don.

NICKI

Can I speak to Don? - It's Nicki Parsons.

Nicki is put on hold. She re-examines her lips in her magnified mirror. India speaks through the door.

INDIA

Mum, what you doing?

NICKI

I am on the phone.

INDIA

In the bathroom?

NICKI

India what do you want?

INDIA

Where is Russia?

NICKI

What?

INDIA

My homework.

NICKI

East of Europe.

India, kneeling, writes this down. Nicki whispers when she speaks to Don and covers the mouthpiece when she speaks to India.

NICKI

Don - my lips are like a baboon's butt.

INDIA

And what language do they speak?

NICKI

Look it up on Google.

INDIA

My teacher says I can't use Google.

NICKI

It's fine? ... Right... Okay... Right.. How long 'til it goes?

INDIA

Mum.

Nicki

Russian.

India writes this down.

NICKI

- I look terrible I am filming tomorrow... Ice? ... Right... Yes.

INDIA

And what is the population?

NICKI

Two or three days - geeze... No okay, I understand, one of those things...

INDIA

Mum?

NICKI

Okay, not your fault... thanks Don.

She hangs up and puts her face in her hands, exasperated.

NICKI

Fuck.

She opens the door to India.

India is on her knees waiting for her mum to answer.

NICKI

How the hell are we meant to know the population without Google?

INDIA

Oh - I have a book I am meant to read on Russia but it's soooo boring. I nearly died reading it.

NICKI

India.

India looks up at her mum sweetly then sees her mum's lips.

NICKI

Well let's go and read it.

INDIA

Mum, your lips.

India looks horrified.

NICKI

I get allergic.

INDIA

To what?

Beat.

INDIA  
I've never seen you allergic.

NICKI  
Radishes.

INDIA  
Radishes?

NICKI  
Yes they make my lips swell.

INDIA  
When did you have a radish?

NICKI  
When we got home.

India rolls her eyes knowing she's being lied to.  
Sarcastically she says:

INDIA  
And did you know mum I love learning about  
Russian history - I begged my teacher for this  
homework.

Nicki double looks at India.

NICKI  
That's nice.

29.INT. WALTER'S DRESSING ROOM AT THE STUDIO OF 'JUST  
DICK'. DAY.

Pictures of Walter cover the walls. Walter is trying to  
get a quickie from Nicki before her next scene.

Walter  
You're so hot in that.

Nicki is bent over reapplying her makeup in his mirror,  
trying to cover her swollen lips. Walter's hands ride up  
her tight pencil skirt, trying to pull down her  
underwear. Nicki giggles, pulling them back up.

Nicki  
I'm on in two minutes.

WALTER

What's it like to be the most beautiful woman  
in the world?

Walter carries on trying to undress her - Nicki is  
applying make up, giggling, pushing him off.

WALTER

Tell me.

NICKI

Wanna come to mine tonight - I'll cook for you  
and then 'he' can get lucky.

WALTER

How can I say no?

NICKI

Shit - no. They asked me to stay late to record  
a Comic Relief sketch, shit.

She turns, walks to put her jacket on, checking her  
reflection in the mirror from a distance.

WALTER

Perfection.

She blows Walter a kiss. He catches it as she turns and  
leaves.

30.INT. THE SET OF 'JUST DICK'. A LITTLE LATER. DAY.

AARON

CUT.

AARON(the director) whispers to TOM (the producer). Tom  
frowns and nods. He then walks over to Nicki, and pulls  
her aside. TOM is a large man; stressed, sweaty.

TOM

It says clearly in your contract - you are not  
allowed to do that within a week of filming.

Nicki

What?

Tom looks pointedly at Nicki's lips.

TOM

What. The director wants you to go home. He is  
pissed with ME now for recommending you.

NICKI

Fuck. Tom - tell them I'm allergic to radishes

Tom looks at her unimpressed.

TOM

Right, and I'm the Pope. - Jesus, you look like Donald Duck.

Nicki surrenders the argument, embarrassed.

31.EXT. THE ROAD OUTSIDE WALTER'S HOUSE. EARLY EVE.

Driving through large, black, automatic security gates, Nicki pulls up to Walter's house. She gets out of the car with a bottle of wine and a Thai takeaway. Walter lives in a large detached 1920's style house in Hampstead - very posh.

Nicki walks up to the overly large front door and rings the bell. Nothing. Frowning, she looks in the window and rings again. Hearing a noise from the garden, Nicki walks round to the back, opening a big grey wooden gate.

32.EXT. WALTER'S GARDEN. EARLY EVE.

She hears voices - it's Walter with another woman. She stops and listens, shocked. Walter is with Rita on excessively large sun chairs, which decorate his little pool and hot tub. Straddling Walter, Rita has a beautiful bikini hugging her perfect size 6 body. Rita is 21 years old and could be a bikini model. Walter looks like he's in heaven. Nicki peers through the bushes.

RITA

So you did it?

WALTER

What do you think?

Rita leans forward pushing her E-cup further towards Walter.

RITA

I think that Walter wants something and will say anything to get it.

WALTER

I don't know what you are talking about.

Rita smiles and rubs her breasts in a sexual way.

WALTER

I promise you will be my new lead woman.

Rita looks at him disbelievingly.

WALTER

Okay I'll show you the mail they sent me.

Walter grabs his phone.

WALTER

How couldn't they want you?

He scrolls through his phone for the email - finds it - shows her.

WALTER

I told Tom, the Producer of Just Dick, and he agreed. He wants a younger woman and they want to see you.

Nicki is in total shock. Rita greedily takes the phone and reads through the message - smiling.

WALTER

You see - Tom wants to see you 5pm Thursday at the studio.

Rita jumps up in joy and does a dance, looking very sexy, irresistible. Walter is almost drooling. She bends over and kisses him. Walter is overwhelmed with excitement, pulling her in, he tries to kiss her but she pulls back.

RITA

And you spoke to JONATHAN?

JONATHAN is Walter and Nicki's agent.

WALTER

Jesus, is this not enough?

RITA

I wanna be on his books.

Rita gently dances - sexy - just out of Walter's grasp.

WALTER

He's full, I told you.

RITA

Tell him to dump Nicki.

WALTER

Come on.

RITA

What?

WALTER

You're out to ruin her life?

RITA

No - I just wanna act - business is business. I can't help it if she's past it. She's not a very good actress anyway.

WALTER

She's good.

RITA

She's FAKE.

Nicki walks out from behind the bushes and straight up to Rita, enraged. Rita and Walter look totally shocked. Nicki thumps Rita in the face. Rita falls back into the swimming pool. Walter jumps up.

NICKI

You fucking asshole.

WALTER

No, Nicki you don't understand.

NICKI

What can I not understand here?

WALTER

I - no... you don't understand.

Nicki walks off. Rita is swimming out of the pool holding her face in pain. Walter looks at Rita and then runs after Nicki. Walter makes sure Rita can't hear.

WALTER

It's just sex. It's sex sweetie. You don't understand.

NICKI

Just sex.

WALTER

It's hard being a famous man.

NICKI

Walter, you got her an interview to replace me.

WALTER

I was lying.

NICKI

You're pathetic.

WALTER

No - Nicki - I. You've got it all wrong, it was a fake email - I knew she'd want to see, so I made it before she came and sent it to myself.

33. EXT. WALTER'S DRIVEWAY. EARLY EVE.

Nicki gets into her car.

NICKI

Fuck you, Walter.

She drives off. Walter kicks the gate as he walks back in.