

CITY LIGHTS

Written by

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. LONDON CITYSCAPE - NIGHT 1

It is still night but day is lurking on the horizon.

2 I/E. CITY CAFE - NIGHT 2

A small cafe in the city. The clock says it is 6 o'clock.

Inside the cafe is friendly and relaxed. A few PATRONS are having very early morning coffees and pastries.

At a table near the window is:

MICHEL DIOUF (35), West African, in the uniform of a security guard, with coffee and croissant. Tired. But reading a book.

INSERT - BOOK COVER

Nuit et la Ville: Gerald Kersh

BACK TO SCENE

He looks up as a woman enters the cafe. She is:

AMITA SHARMA (32), Indian, naturally smiley and pretty. Dressed in casual clothes. Carrying a bag.

Michel is obviously taken with her.

MOMENTS LATER

Amita sits at a table with coffee and croissant. Pulls out:

INSERT - BOOK COVER

Night and the City: Gerald Kersh

BACK TO SCENE

Michel notices they are reading the same book in different languages. But she remains completely unaware of him.

Michel decides to act. He pulls out an English text book from his bag. Finds the page and the phrase he wants.

He puts the text book away. Stands. Approaches Amita with the novel before him. But Amita doesn't look up.

Michel stands there a moment. Confused. Now panics and pulls out his English text book to check the phrase again.

Amita looks up. But she's also shy. Looks down again.

Michel is aware she looked up. Feels foolish. Pretending to be engrossed in his text book, he wanders away from her.

Michel has gone the wrong way. Has to walk back past Amita on his way to the door. Hiding behind his English book.

Michel exits. Heads away. Hitting himself with the text book.

Amita is watching Michel. Curious.

3 EXT. LONDON CITYSCAPE - DAWN 3

The sun is now rising over the city of London. The very start of a spring day. The promise of summer is in the air.

4 OMITTED 4

5 EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY 5

The streets are bustling with workers in suits. High wage earners who work during daylight hours.

6 EXT. LONDON CITYSCAPE - DUSK 6

Day fades into darkness. The streets empty.

7 INT. FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 - NIGHT 7

Michel is back in his security uniform. He is alone. Waiting for one of the elevators to arrive. It arrives. The doors open. No-one is there. Michel looks to his checklist.

INSERT - CHECKLIST

Puts a tick against the box for "Lift 1". There are boxes for another five lifts and for each hour of the night.

BACK TO SCENE

He moves to the next lift. Presses the button. While waiting for the lift to arrive he glances out to the forecourt.

- 7a MICHEL'S POV: 7a
- Five OFFICE CLEANERS approach the office tower opposite.  
Three women and two men from ethnic minorities.
- Straggling five metres behind, reading her book, is Amita.
- 7 FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 7
- Michel cannot believe he's seeing her again so soon. The lift arrives behind him - PING! - but he takes no notice.
- 7a FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 7a
- Amita puts the book in her bag as she follows the other Office Cleaners into their tower.
- 8 FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 - LATER 8
- Michel is standing at the glass front to his office tower. Staring up at the opposite tower. He espies:
- 8a 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - OFFICE TOWER 2 8a
- Amita cleaning one of the offices on the fourth floor. The office light is on so she can be seen from the outside.
- The office is one of many running along this floor. Another cleaner can be seen cleaning an office on another floor.
- 8 FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 8
- Michel knows he cannot leave his building. He looks to:
- MICHEL'S POV:
- A CCTV camera pointing towards him.
- NEW ANGLE
- Michel is using an umbrella to nudge the foyer's inner CCTV camera so it is no longer pointing at the front doors.
- 9 LATER 9
- Michel is writing something behind the foyer desk.

- 9a LATER 9a  
Digital clock on the desk phone says its 3am.  
Michel is waiting at the foyer desk when he sees:
- 9b FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 9b  
The Office Cleaners are leaving opposite.
- 9a FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 9a  
Michel grabs a checklist sheet and heads to the window. He places the sheet against the window in front of him.
- 9b FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 9b  
Amita is one of the last to leave the building.
- 9a FROM OUTSIDE 9a  
He has written "Hi!" on the back of the sheet. But from a distance the A4 sheet is completely unnoticeable.
- 9b FORECOURT 9b  
Amita continues on. Unaware of Michel and his sheet.
- 9a FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 9a  
Michel pulls the sheet away. Considers it and the distance to the other side of the road. Realises his mistake.  
He holds up the sheet to the foyer lights. The checklist grid is this side but the "Hi!" can be seen through it.
- 10 INT. CITY CAFE - DAY 10  
Michel is back in the cafe with his novel. Waiting. He has been there a while. No sign of Amita. He looks to:  
The wall clock. It's 7 o'clock.
- 11 OMITTED 11
- 12 INT. FOYER- NIGHT 12  
Michel is checking the lifts again when he sees:

12a MICHEL'S POV: 12a  
Amita and the other Cleaners arriving opposite.

13 INT. STAIRWAY - MOMENTS LATER 13  
Michel is running up the stairs.

14 INT. 4TH FLOOR OFFICE Z - TOWER 1 - MOMENTS LATER 14  
Michel enters the upper office and sees:

14a MICHEL'S POV: 14a  
Amita enters the office opposite. Begins cleaning.

14 BACK TO SCENE 14  
Michel flicks the light switch on and off. On and off.  
Repeats until...

14a 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 14a  
Amita looks up and is surprised to see:

14 OFFICE TOWER 1 14  
The flashing office light is the dot in the exclamation mark  
on "Hi!" written using the individual office lights.

14a 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 14a  
Amita goes to the window. Sees it's the funny man from the  
cafe yesterday morning. She thinks he's quite handsome.

14 4TH FLOOR OFFICE Z - TOWER 1 14  
Michel smiles. Does a small, tentative wave.

14a 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 14a  
Amita smiles. Gives a small wave back. A little awkward.  
She's unsure what to do next. So returns to her work.

14 4TH FLOOR OFFICE Z - TOWER 1 14  
Michel is unsure if it was a success. Turns off the light.

15 INT. FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 - SAME TIME 15

Michel is reading at his desk when he spies:

15a I/E. FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 - NIGHT 15a

Amita exits the tower with the other Office Cleaners.

She glances his way.

15 BACK TO SCENE 15

Michel is pleased. Does a spin in his chair.

16 EXT. LONDON CITYSCAPE - DAWN 16

The sun comes up again over a picturesque London.

17 EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY 17

The sunlit streets filled with noise. Office workers.

18 EXT. LONDON CITYSCAPE - DUSK 18

As the sun goes down over the city.

19 INT. FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 - NIGHT 19

Michel is at the glass front of the foyer.

MICHEL

Hi. Are you... are you enjoying...

Practicing his poor English when he sees:

19a I/E. FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 - NIGHT 19a

Amita, book out, arrives behind the other Cleaners.

20 INT. 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 - MOMENTS LATER 20

Amita enters the first office to clean and sees:

AMITA'S POV:

We are looking out with Amita in the foreground. A sun has been created from the lights opposite.

20 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 20  
Amita approaches her window. Smiles. She looks down towards:

20a FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 20a  
Michel watching from below.

20 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 20  
Amita has an idea. Pulls out a pair of sunglasses. Dons them.  
She turns her head as if letting the sun warm her skin.

20a FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 20a  
Michel is amused.

21 INT. FOYER - CITY OFFICE TOWER - NIGHT 21  
Michel is waiting at his desk. The clock reads 3am.

21a I/E. FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 - NIGHT 21a  
Amita is leaving with the Cleaners. She waves at Michel.

21 FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 21  
Michel waves back from behind the desk. He looks up to the  
CCTV camera he moved. It is still pointing towards him.  
He moves to the window and does a little jig.

22 EXT. CITY STREETS - DAWN TIL DUSK 22  
The sun rises and sets on the city.

23 INT. STAIRWAY - TOWER 2 - NIGHT 23  
Amita arrives ahead of the other Cleaners tonight.

24 INT. 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 - MOMENTS LATER 24  
Amita paces into the office so she can see:  
  
AMITA'S POV:  
The lights of the office now depict a flower.



BACK TO SCENE

She approaches the window and looks down to:

24a FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 24a

Where Michel is looking up from the foyer.

24 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 24

Amita reaches out her hand and "picks" the flower. Mimes smelling it. It smells heavenly.

24a FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 24a

Michel is delighted.

24 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 24

Amita returns to her cleaning duties.

24a FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 24a

Michel does a new dance. Suddenly sees that the CCTV camera has been moved back to its original position.

Facing him.

25 OMITTED 25

26 EXT. LONDON CITYSCAPE - DAWN TO DUSK 26

The sun comes up and goes down over london.

27 EXT. OFFICE TOWERS 1 & 2 - NIGHT 27

The office towers immovable in the quiet city.

28 EXT. FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 - NIGHT 28

Michel is standing over the reception desk. He has found an envelope waiting for him. He sits. Opening the letter.

INSERT - LETTER:

We see the phrases "future conduct" and "final warning". It is signed by the "Building Manager".

BACK TO SCENE

Michel pulls out the checklist with "Hi!" on the outside. Unfolds it. Considers it beside the warning letter.

Michel decides he must act. Begins colouring in the squares on the checklist. He is planning a final message.

- 29 MONTAGE - OFFICE TOWER 1- NIGHT 29
- As Michel switches on lights. Runs up stairs. Staples coloured plastic over some of the lights. Runs down more stairs. Checks his checklist. Turns on more lights.
- 30 INT. 4TH FLOOR OFFICE Z - TOWER 1 - NIGHT 30
- Michel switches on a final light. Scans his checklist one last time. Now checks his watch. It's time for Amita's arrival. He paces up to the window and gazes down as...
- 30a I/E. FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 - SAME TIME 30a
- The Cleaners arrive below. Amita isn't among them.
- 30 INT. 4TH FLOOR OFFICE Z - TOWER 1 - SAME TIME 30
- Michel scans for her. But she isn't there. Disheartened. He folds up his checklist. Pockets it. He turns off the light.
- 30a EXT. FORECOURT/OFFICE TOWER 2 - SAME TIME 30a
- As Amita runs towards her office tower.
- 31 INT. STAIRWAY - OFFICE TOWER 2 - SAME TIME 31
- The deflated Michel lumbers down the stairs.
- 30a I/E. FORECOURT/FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 2 - SAME TIME 30a
- Amita enters her tower opposite.
- 32 INT. FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 - NIGHT 32
- Michel slumps in his chair. Picks up his French novel.

- 33 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 33  
Amita enters the office and sees the lights opposite:
- 33a OFFICE TOWER 1 33a  
The office lights have been turned into a mug of steaming coffee. The coffee and steam in a purple hue.  
There is a question mark beside it.  
There is one dead pixel (the light Michel turned off).
- 33 4TH FLOOR OFFICE A - TOWER 2 33  
Amita considers.
- 34 INT. FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 - NIGHT 34  
Michel is still reading his novel when he sees:
- 34a MICHEL'S POV 34a  
The Office Cleaners exit opposite. Amita is not among them.
- 35 INT. FOYER OFFICE TOWER 1 - NIGHT 35  
The digital clock on the desk reads 4.06am.  
Michel is back checking the lifts when he spies:
- 35a MICHEL'S POV: 35a  
Amita exiting the foyer opposite. She smiles and waves at him. She points back towards her office tower.
- 35 FOYER - OFFICE TOWER 1 35  
Michel is confused.
- 36 4TH FLOOR OFFICE Z - TOWER 1 36  
Michel bursts into the office. Runs up to the window:
- 36a OFFICE TOWER 2/CAFE 36a  
In Amita's office lights is written "6AM" [or just "6"] with an arrow pointing towards the city cafe seen before.

36 4TH FLOOR OFFICE Z - TOWER 1 36

Michel is relieved. Happy.

37 I/E. LILY LOUNGE CAFE - NIGHT 37

The wall clock states it is 6 o'clock.

Michel arrives outside the cafe. Peers in.

Amita is inside. Reading the English version of their book.

Michel enters and approaches Amita. She looks up.

MICHEL

Hi. Are you enjoying the book?

His new confidence has improved his English.

AMITA

Etes-vous francais?

MICHEL

Senegalese. Vous parlez francais?

AMITA

Oui. Bien sur.

Michel sees the irony as he sits down. From outside we see Michel and Amita are chatting away and we...

FADE OUT.

END CREDITS ROLL.

38 EXT. OFFICE TOWERS 1 & 2 - NIGHT 38

In a final image we see the two towers from a new angle. They overlap and together their lights form a heart.

THE END