

# NIRODHA POINT

By

James I. Roper

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FADE IN:

Sunlight flickers through the leaves of a tree as the branches move in a gentle breeze. In the foreground a larger branch comes into view and a small bird hops along it.

Out of nowhere something crashes into shot and we see an eagle grab the smaller bird in its talons and fly off.

We follow the eagle through the clear blue sky. Eventually it descends and lands.

As the eagle starts to rip the small birds insides out with its beak we pull out to see that it has landed on what seems to be a large white letter 'H', and it becomes apparent as we pull out further it has perched on the 'HOLLYWOOD' sign...

EXT. HOLLYWOOD HILLS - MORNING

We glide over the Hollywood hills, over houses, gardens and swimming pools and out into L.A.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AMBER'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Amber (late twenties, skinny, tanned, platinum blonde dyed hair) is lying in bed, asleep. A cellphone starts to ring and Amber's arm reaches limply over to pick it off the bedside table. She answers it.

AMBER

(groggy)

Miko, it's my day off, go away.

She hangs up. Amber checks the time on her bedside clock and drags herself out of bed grabbing her cellphone.

We follow her through the expensive looking apartment and into the kitchen where she switches on a TV. She flicks through the channels, past some serious news reports on war, famine and natural disasters and stops on an entertainment news channel. As Amber makes a coffee we hear some inane celebrity gossip headlines.

Amber's cellphone rings, she picks it up and looks at the caller's name. She doesn't look pleased but answers anyway.

AMBER

(annoyed)

What did I tell you? No work calls, it's my day off... I don't care if you're bored... What?... God. I don't know, tell him I'll call next week.... Of course I won't, he's not going on our books... No... Why? 'Cos he's a dick, tell him

that.... I'm sure we can cope without his 'prestige' Miko, he's not exactly A-list is he... Z-list? I think they'll have to invent more letters to find the list he's in babe.... Whatever, just don't call again okay! It's my day off.

She hangs up.

INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING LOT - DAY

Amber walks up to her red Ferrari 360 Spider convertible and it unlocks with a press on her key ring, she gets in. Her cellphone rings again and she takes it out from her white Louis Vuitton Alma Murakami hand bag and answers.

AMBER

(constrained annoyance)

Yes!.... What about it?.... How can we organize the opening of a bar when they don't even have a bar yet?!.... Well until building site chic comes back into fashion tell them to contact someone else... It's about quality babe not quantity, we can do without it... And Miko... It's my day off. Stop calling.

Amber hangs up and puts on a pair of Gucci metal aviator sunglasses. She starts the engine and the noise roars as it echoes around the parking lot. She pulls out and the car goes up and out into daylight.

EXT. AMBER'S CAR, HOLLYWOOD BLVD. - DAY

As Amber drives her cell phone rings again. She sighs heavily and puts it on speaker phone.

AMBER

What did I say?

MIKO

(o.c.)

I know, it's your day off. If you're that bothered turn the damn thing off!

AMBER

I'm expecting an important call from you know who, what is it now?

MIKO  
(o.c.)

Dean?

AMBER  
Dean couldn't be important if he tried. I dumped his sorry ass last week, and you better tell me something important or I'm hanging up.

MIKO  
(o.c.)

Can I come?

AMBER  
To the party tomorrow?

MIKO  
(o.c.)

Yes!

AMBER  
No. Unfortunately for you Miko, you're the most reliable member of my team so you're going to have to stay put.

MIKO  
(o.c.)

I don't think I can stand another night here with Yuuji, Amber. I can be unreliable.

AMBER  
Not if you want to keep your job. I'm going to need you for the Oscar party next week anyways so get some rest, let the office deal with work calls.

MIKO  
(o.c.)

There's nothing else to do out here Amber, please...

AMBER  
The answers no and it'll stay no...and Miko.

MIKO  
(o.c.)

Yes?

AMBER

Stop calling me. It's my day off.

She hangs up and then turns on the radio and we hear yet more entertainment news.

RADIO DJ

Are celebrities above the law? That's our topic today...(etc.)

INT. NEWS AGENT - DAY

Amber enters and walks along the rows and rows of glossy magazines. She picks several up (Vanity Fair, Vogue, Hollywood reporter, Interview, Bazaar, Premiere) and she exits screen right as we carry on tracking across the magazine covers with sexy, moody models and perfect smiles glaring out at us from each cover.

INT. DINER - DAY

Amber enters with the magazines under one arm and a paper coffee cup in her hand which she throws into a bin. She sits down at a table, one row in from the window seats. She flicks through her magazines. A waitress comes up to her and as Amber orders her third coffee of the morning we move over to a table by the window where a girl is sat reading.

This is Grace (early twenties, long unkempt Brunette hair, bookish but not too frumpy, she is inadvertently pulling off geek chic). She is the ying to Amber's yang. Instead of glossy magazines a small pile of dull colored hardback books sits on her table.

Grace writes some notes on the book she is reading and puts her pencil down. She looks over at Amber and at the pile of magazines she has.

GRACE

You haven't got Vogue by any chance?

Amber looks up.

AMBER

Sure. You want to borrow it?

GRACE

If I could? Thanks.

Amber hands it to her.

AMBER

Just catching up on some reading?

GRACE

It's not exactly reading is it? Just gossip. New is the new old, white is the new black. It's pretty compulsive all the same.

Amber looks at Grace's pile of books.

AMBER

What have you got in your pile then?

GRACE

You wouldn't be interested.

AMBER

Why not? Let me see.

Grace hands her one of her books and Amber looks at the cover: 'Integral Representations for Spatial Models of Mathematical Physics by Vladislav V Krivchenko'.

AMBER

My god. You're not from around here are you? (laughs)

GRACE

Is it the book or my pasty complexion that gave it away? I'm from Illinois.

AMBER

What brought you all the way out to Tinsel town then?

GRACE

My friend's here for a 'shoot'. She's a model. She got spotted on the street when we went to New York a few months back by some model agency woman and...

AMBER

They're called scouts.

GRACE

Yeah, that's it.

AMBER

Who for, IMG?

GRACE

Yeah, I think, how did you know?

AMBER

It's my job to know.

Amber moves over to sit opposite Grace. She takes out a silver business card holder from her hand bag and gives Grace her business card. Grace looks at it: AMBER KINKAID P.R. (embossed in gold)

GRACE

I'm Grace Paxton.

AMBER

Nice to meet you Grace Paxton.

GRACE

I'm afraid I left all my business cards at home...I hope you don't mind me saying, I don't know you, but, this place, it doesn't really seem...you, ya know?

AMBER

You're right, it isn't me, that's why I'm here, the last thing I want to do is go to the Ivy and end up talking business, it's my day off.

Grace holds up Amber's card and smiles.

AMBER

Yeah, well, I guess I can't help myself. So, what's your friends name?

Grace gives Amber the Vogue magazine and points at one of the open pages.

GRACE

Third from the right. Calli Clark....

We see Calli (early twenties, natural blond, almost perfect looking) in a group of models. Amber looks up at Grace, the name has somehow resonated with her.

GRACE

(cont'd)

...although she just goes by the name Calli in the modeling world.

AMBER

Calli...Calli Clark?

GRACE

Yeah, you probably wont of heard of her,  
she doesn't do a lot of modeling.

Amber looks intently at the picture of Calli.

AMBER

Why are you out here then, are you like  
her entourage?

GRACE

I wanted to go to Disneyland and  
Universal Studios.

AMBER

What do you do then?

GRACE

Me? My life isn't as glamorous I'm  
afraid. I'm a research scientist.

AMBER

Are you famous in your field?

GRACE

God no. I just lost my first proper job  
due to cut backs in funding, guess I was  
a disposable asset, not that I loved it  
or anything. That's why I'm here, nothing  
better to do.

All my friends seem to get the lucky  
breaks. They've all written well received  
papers, been published, got grants.  
Modeling contracts. Unlike little old me.

AMBER

Fame's overrated anyway.

GRACE

A little success wouldn't go a miss  
though.

The waitress puts Amber's coffee down.

AMBER

You couldn't look after my stuff while I  
make a quick call outside could you?

GRACE

Yeah, sure.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Amber walks outside and round the side of the diner. She dials a number into her cellphone. Amber walks up and down waiting as it rings. Someone picks up.

YUUJI

(o.c.)

Jello! Whose speaking please?

AMBER

(sarcastically)

That was quick Yuuji, that must be a record.

YUUJI

(o.c.)

Ahhh! The lovely Amber Kincaid. How's sunny L.A. this fine morning?

AMBER

(abruptly)

Just put me through to Mara.

YUUJI

(o.c.)

No small talk?

AMBER

(angry)

Do it now Yuuji!

YUUJI

(o.c.)

Sure thing sweet cheeks.

Amber sighs wearily. The phone rings again and is then picked up...

MARA

(o.c.)

Hello Amber, how are you?

Mara's voice is measured and slightly imposing.

AMBER

Great thanks. Just trying to relax on my

day off, you know how it is.

MARA

(o.c.)

You should cut down on the coffee Amber,  
it's not good for you.

AMBER

Nothing's good for you nowadays, what's  
new?

MARA

(o.c.)

I thought I was supposed to be calling  
you.

AMBER

I'm sorry but this couldn't wait. I want  
you to go to the spread on page 33, 34 in  
the new copy of Vogue...

INT. MARA'S BEDROOM - DAY

We see a large bed covered in expensive embroidered silk sheets  
sprawled across which is an array of fashion and movie industry  
magazines. Mara's hand comes into shot and picks out the new  
copy of Vogue. She opens it up and finds the right page. Mara's  
face is out of shot.

MARA

And?

AMBER

Third girl in from the right...Guess  
who.

There's silence for a moment. Mara's hand lingers near Calli's  
picture.

EXT. DINER - DAY

MARA

(o.c.)

How did you find her?

AMBER

I got lucky, that's what you pay me for.

MARA

(o.c.)

Invite her to your party tomorrow.

AMBER

(dismayed)

You're going to ask me to tell her, aren't you?  
She's not even famous, she's a nobody!

MARA

(o.c.)

Are you questioning my judgment?

AMBER

No. Of course not.

MARA

(o.c.)

She'll be famous soon enough, despite her  
antipathy for such a thing.

AMBER

How do you know?

MARA

(o.c.)

(beat)

I can see it in her eyes.

INT. DINER - DAY

We start on a close-up of Calli's eyes in the photo in Vogue and pull out until we see Grace counting small change on top of the magazine in the diner. Amber comes back in and sits opposite Grace again.

GRACE

(sarcastically)

I must have left my Prada handbag when I  
went to that Versace store this morning,  
either that or it's in my Ferrari round  
the corner.

AMBER

I'll pay if you want, as long as you do  
me a favor in return.

GRACE

Okay, what is it?

AMBER

I've organized a little house party,  
tomorrow night at eight, nothing big just  
a few friends.

She picks up Grace's pencil and writes something on the back of  
her business card that she gave Grace.

AMBER

Here's the address. I want you and your  
friend to come, it'll be fun.

GRACE

Really? How's that a favor?

AMBER

Someone I know would like to meet your  
friend Calli.

EXT. STREET, BEVERLY HILLS - NIGHT

We follow behind Grace and Calli as they walk. Grace pulls out  
Amber's card and looks at the address on the back.

GRACE

This is it.

They walk up to some closed gates to a driveway.

GRACE

Do we buzz the intercom or, oh...

The gates just open of their own accord and Grace and Calli  
walk in. The drive is long and they come across a purple  
Lamborghini driving down towards the front gate. We see  
other expensive cars parked up in front of a large house, a  
typical Beverly Hills mansion.  
There is a faint sound of music coming from the party inside.

CALLI

Is this Amber's house?

GRACE

It's her dad's place apparently.

They come up to the front door and Grace knocks.

CALLI

(anxious)

I shouldn't have come. She knows, I know

it.

GRACE

She doesn't know, stop being so paranoid.  
It's a modeling thing, that's it, she  
said so herself.

(beat)

I should have worn the blue top shouldn't  
I. What do you think?

CALLI

When did you start bothering about your  
appearance?

GRACE

I'm bothered!

CALLI

Why didn't you brush your hair then?

Calli starts combing bits of Graces hair through with her  
fingers.

GRACE

Hey! Back off L'Oréal, stop messing it  
up.

CALLI

I don't have to mess it up, it already  
is.

GRACE

Didn't you know messy was the new  
straight.

CALLI

Try ringing.

Grace rings the door bell.

CALLI

Get ready for some serious air kissing in  
here by the way.

GRACE

What's wrong with a good old fashioned  
hand shake?

CALLI

We're in L.A.

The door suddenly opens and the music and light from inside floods out. An attractive girl stands in the door way.

GUEST#1  
Password please.

GRACE  
(perplexed)  
I, er, didn't...

GUEST#1  
I'm joking. Come in. It's Calli right?!

Calli nods. Guest#1 opens the door wider and Grace and Calli follow her in.

INT. HALLWAY - NEXT

Many people are stood around talking and drinking. We catch glimpses of famous faces as Calli and Grace walk through the house. Everyone seems either young and beautiful or mature and wealthy.

Amber comes out from a crowd of people.

AMBER  
Grace! Calli Clark I presume!? You're even more stunning in the flesh.

Amber air kisses with Calli. When Amber does it with Grace, Grace keeps her head still and doesn't return the greeting at all. Calli looks amused.

AMBER  
C'mon over here, I want you to meet some friends of mine. Grace, grab yourself some wine. Go mingle.

Amber pulls Calli away and Grace is left behind on her own.

GRACE  
(to herself, apathetically)  
Mingle.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NEXT

Amber introduces Calli to a group of models. Calli looks around for Grace.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NEXT

Grace sits down on a sofa, and swirls the wine around in her glass. She looks out of place.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Calli is stood with another group of people listening, she's bored.

GUEST#2

It's not really that glamorous. The lights on the catwalk are so bright you can see nobody in the audience, not that you're allowed to look around anyway. And it's all over in fifteen minutes.

GUEST#3

Sounds like easy money to me darling.

Everyone laughs, Calli fakes a smile and moves away. Amber comes up to Calli and she says something to her we don't hear. Calli puts her glass of wine down and she walks off with Amber.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NEXT

Grace is still on her own. She catches sight of Amber and Calli through the crowd. We see them go up a staircase. Grace walks over and stops, looking up the stairs. Amber then reappears and comes back down again, talking on her cell phone. She passes Grace and they exchange a smile. Grace then goes up the stairs.

INT. CORRIDOR - NEXT

Grace walks down the corridor and sees a door slightly ajar. She walks up to it and opens it carefully.

INT. STUDY - NEXT

Grace enters the large study and closes the door behind her. We move over to Calli stood on the opposite side of the room. She is looking at a wall on which there are lots of framed photographs.

GRACE

Finally, the eye of the storm.

Calli turns.

CALLI

Grace! You okay? Sorry I got kind of dragged away down there.

GRACE

That's fine. Just try and remember me when you become famous, that's all I ask.

CALLI

Very funny....Amber said she wanted to speak to me in private, you should probably go.

GRACE

What about?

CALLI

I don't know.

GRACE

You think she knows?

CALLI

I don't know. I don't see how.

Grace looks at the photos on the wall. We see they all have Amber in them, in each one she is next to a different celebrity.

GRACE

I'm so out of my depth down there it's unreal.

CALLI

What are you on about, Miss. Physics PhD?!

GRACE

Oh, yeah! I'll just go down there and warm a few of those male models up with a bit of Bell's theorem on quantum mechanics. They're not just out of my league Calli, there out of my stratosphere. No doubt you've had a little more luck.

CALLI

Not really...Once you look beyond the surface it's all the same. Just a glamorous attempt to desperately hold back the boredom.

(beat)

Come on, you need to scam before Amber gets back.

GRACE  
You'll tell me what she says wont you?

CALLI  
Everything, I promise. Now go.

CLICK. The door opens. Grace and Calli's heads turn quickly. The door stays only slightly ajar and we hear talking. Grace thinks fast and walks quickly across the room.

CALLI  
(whispers)  
What are you doing?

Grace puts her finger to her mouth as if to say 'Ssh', and disappears behind one of the closed curtains, which hangs down to the floor.

We hear Amber finish talking and she comes in through the door and closes it behind her, locking it. She turns off her cellphone and puts it on a table.

AMBER  
Sorry about that. Now, where were we?

Calli looks over at the curtains and back at Amber.

AMBER  
(cont'd)  
Look, let me be honest with you. I deal with very high profile clients. That is why I work for your new benefactor and I trust her judgment completely, but clearly she knows something I don't.

CALLI  
Benefactor?

AMBER  
You must have done something more than just get your photo in some magazines to arouse her attention. So, before I tell you my secret, you tell me yours.

CALLI  
Why is fame such an important prerequisite for knowing your big secret?

AMBER

You'll know once you tell me yours!

CALLI

It must be the modeling thing, that's all I can say.

AMBER

That's it?

CALLI

That's it.

AMBER

Listen, modeling contract or not you're still a nobody, no offense.

CALLI

None taken.

AMBER

All the actors down there who pull in over 7 figure salaries per film aren't allowed to know what I'm about to tell you. Most young wannabes come to L.A. to see their name up in lights and end up seeing it on a plastic name tag at McDonald's, but you're about to get a free backstage pass to a place they will never get to see and as far as I'm concerned, so far, you've done nothing to earn that right.

CALLI

Whatever your secret is, it sounds intriguing, really, but there's nothing else I can tell you. Sorry.

AMBER

Who's Charles Cooper Bennett?

Calli turns to face the curtain Grace is hidden behind.

CALLI

I wish Grace knew how to keep her big fat mouth shut.

CUT TO: Grace behind the curtain looking annoyed by the comment.

GRACE  
(whispering to self)  
Fat mouth? Bitch!

CALLI  
Okay then. It seems whoever you're  
working for did their homework.

AMBER  
Well?

CALLI  
He's an author, his debut novel was 'The  
Blind Prism'. Have you heard of it?

Amber clearly hasn't.

CALLI  
Well, it may have been critically  
acclaimed but it didn't exactly sell a  
lot of copies. Despite that it was  
recently optioned by a major Hollywood  
studio and is currently in pre-production  
with a very famous director at the helm.  
The film adaptation written by Bennett  
himself.

AMBER  
And you come into this where?

CALLI  
Charles Cooper Bennett more commonly  
known as C.C. Bennett....It's a  
pseudonym. C.C. actually stands for...

AMBER  
Calli Clark.

CALLI  
Right. Bennett is my mother's maiden  
name.

AMBER  
You're a real dark horse aren't you.  
Mara said you were more than just a  
pretty face. What's with the  
pseudonym? Don't you want credit for  
your work. Model-slash-author-slash-  
screenwriter, that's a hell of a  
hyphenate.

CALLI

The fame game isn't my thing I'm afraid.  
Once you step over that breach where  
everyone knows who you are there's no  
going back.

AMBER

Hello!?! If you hadn't noticed already,  
you're a model.

CALLI

There are two types of models. One you  
see plastered over every celebrity gossip  
magazine in which they are either the  
bearers of false worship or hideous  
ridicule, neither of which seem that  
appealing. The second type are the  
majority whose time in the limelight  
begins and ends with the flash of the  
fashion photographers bulb and the few  
seconds on the catwalk. Then they go  
backstage and lead normal lives,  
remaining nameless and unrecognizable to  
the general public. I would prefer to  
remain the latter of the two.  
Critical success in the literary world  
doesn't always pay very well.

AMBER

Okay, I get it, but I don't know what  
Mara will have to say about that.

CALLI

Mara? Is she this benefactor you  
mentioned?

AMBER

She said you were going to be  
'influential'.

CALLI

(dismissive)

Really? Don't believe the hype.

AMBER

Mara does not say things lightly, believe  
you me.

CALLI

That's enough about me, now you have to  
tell me your big secret.

AMBER

Okay then. Have you ever heard of Nirodha Point?

CALLI

No.

AMBER

Well, if you had, you probably would have heard only the rumors that spread privately within the lower echelons of the Hollywood elite. You are about to join a select few who have full access to Nirodha Point.

CALLI

What is Nirodha Point?

AMBER

Take a seat and all will be revealed...

Amber picks up a remote control and presses a button. All the lights dim at once as Calli takes a seat on a sofa. From a thin gap in the ceiling a ten foot wide cinema screen descends.

CALLI

Do we get popcorn?

Amber sits next to Calli and the projection comes on. Grace looks out from behind the curtains. We move in on the black screen...