

## **Hope is**

Nicôle Lecky

Hope is... not the absence of self-doubt. I struggled with self-doubt for years and yet still somewhere deep down remained hopeful. Hopeful that one day I would find the courage to work on my art. To honour my own voice, and tell the stories I so desperately cared about. Not to be free of the anxiety, and the negative thought process that kept me from writing, but to be able to move through it. To work alongside it, and not run from it. Some people are flying sky high and know who they are fresh out of the womb. I have friends like this; they have luck raining down on them and it's beautiful to see. You know, people that always, always land on their feet. Others, most of us, have a slow but steady curve of figuring ourselves out. The creative within is ever-patient because we don't get it right all the time. Rarely is anyone an overnight sensation. It may seem hard to watch others achieve things you dream of privately, but your time will come. I believe that anybody who works hard at their craft whilst staying true to their most authentic self will shine bright. I don't see any other possible outcome. I grew up in East London and I don't think anyone thought to mention that I could be a writer. And I so badly wanted to write – I was hopeful it could happen. Surely. Yet I didn't really know how. I would attend all the workshops. And then go home unable to write. I knew that whatever I wrote wouldn't be very good. Who on earth would want to read what I had to say? Then I saw plays by inspiring London writers like Levi David Addai, Bola Agbaje and David Eldridge. I saw the world through a lens that felt

familiar, plays where people sounded like me. So I persevered and took small steps, remaining ever-hopeful. Taking whatever opportunities I felt were manageable for me at the time. Trying to focus on my own race, and not worrying about anybody else. This has remained the greatest thing in my toolkit. Not comparing myself. Being ok with the fact that in my early twenties all I wanted to do was go out and drink a gallon of wine and do jack shit. All those nights/weekends of not working on my art, of living my life – well, now those experiences inform my work in a way that I never knew they would. So, it's good not to be too hard on yourself, when you feel like you're not good enough. Somewhere in the depths of that, there will be a tiny seed of hope. This seed won't vanish. I held on to that. We all should. Water it. Protect it. The seed will grow, as you come out of good times and especially dark times, and it will be stronger than before. You will work. You will create. People will listen. Hope never dies, and despite feeling like a giant impostor – that will also fade. Hope and self-doubt are not mutually exclusive. Feel everything. Hope will pull you through the muddy waters.

**Nicôle Lecky** is a writer, actor, and singer-songwriter. Her critically acclaimed stage monologue *Superhoe*, developed with Talawa and the Yard Theatre, played at the Royal Court in 2019. Her six-part television adaptation of *Superhoe*, retitled *Mood* and produced by Bonafide Films, debuted on BBC3 in spring 2022 and airs on AMC in the US in November 2022. Nicôle wrote and executive produced all six episodes of the show, in which she also plays the lead role, and co-wrote and performed the music.

Nicôle's acting credits for television include *Sense8* for Netflix, *Death in Paradise* for BBC1 and *Untold Stories* (for which Nicôle also wrote an

episode) for ITV. Nicole was a recipient of the Creative Skillset and Dancing Ledge Productions High-end Television Levy Writers' Bursary in 2018 and was listed as one of Deadline's '8 British Writers to Watch Out For in 2021'. She is developing new work for film, television and theatre.

A recording of this piece can be found at **[writersmosaic.org.uk](http://writersmosaic.org.uk)**

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