

A sample of twelve pieces
from Nic Askew's

SHORT WORD SERIES

Part of the Soul Biographies Project

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pieces may be published as part of a review
with appropriate acknowledgments

[this is part of the Soul Biographies Press Kit]

1. 'the boy who would leap'
2. 'the inch & the mile'
3. 'the tree of dreams'
4. 'the man in the cash flow face'
5. 'perpetual summertime'
6. 'ten'
7. 'the meaning of cake'
8. 'north, east, south & west'
9. 'man's best friend'
10. 'catching sight'
11. 'lighter, or darker'
12. 'this, and that'

'the boy who would leap'

He's somewhere between
thirty & forty. Perhaps
fifty. Maybe sixty.

He wants to play. Without
prescription.

He wants to stamp. And to
stomp. And to run. And to
leap from chair to chair.

He wants to shout. And to
scream words he just made
up. At the top of his
voice.

And not to look at who's
looking.

He wants to tell his best
friend it's OK to *make*
believe. And to tell his
parents that he loves them.

Perhaps he will. Tomorrow.

-

'the inch & the mile'

A woman lived a busy life.

A life full of the events
we presume to be important.

A life a mile wide.

But a life an inch deep.

And in a small house on the
other side of the same
town, another woman of a
similar age lived a simple
life.

A life full of the routine
we presume we must escape.

A life an inch wide.

But a life a mile deep.

-

'the tree of dreams'

Many had gathered under the
tree of dreams.

All but one stood shaking
its branches for dreams to
fall.

Dreams that had been
whispered to them by the
voices of others.

Dreams that would fade with
time.

But one sat quietly,
waiting for a dream to
recognise his soul.

And to consume him with no
doubt.

-

**'the man in the cash flow
face'**

He wore his *cash flow face*.

A face that changed the
world around him.

A face that blinded him in
both eyes. And obscured the
point of his own life. No
matter how hard he looked.

But his *cash flow face* felt
important. And it made
others feel important. With
their *cash flow faces*. Held
together with makeup and
fear.

But in a single moment, the
makeup would wash away and
the fear would turn to
love.

And the point of his life
would become clearer.

And the cash would flow.

-

'perpetual summertime'

A man lived perpetually in
the summer time of his own
life.

He lit up the world that
surrounded him.
Unannounced. And
unintentional.

Some who met him would
wonder where the light came
from.

And of those who wondered,
some would realise that it
had nothing to do with the
outward circumstance of his
life.

And of those who realised,
some would recognise that
the very same light waited
for the chance to shine
from deep inside
themselves.

And for the brave who'd let
it shine. It would.

-

'ten'

In a dream more real than
his daytime, a grown man
meets himself.

Himself at just ten. With
the light in his eyes. And
the world in his heart.

He sets out to explain to
his young self why he's
taken the road to someone
else's somewhere.

But he can't.

And in the deafening
silence he shakes
uncontrollably. As the
years of an unconsidered
life spill over.

And in that silence
everything changes.
Forever.

Perhaps the ten year old
had been his very soul in
disguise.

Come to shake him from the
prison of his daytime.

-

'the meaning of cake'

She stared into the slice
of cake, as it sat
unenthusiastically beside
her coffee.

It seemed cake was
everywhere.

And cake had been her
downfall. Or so she'd
thought.

It had been a while since
she'd seen her toes.

She remembered back to a
time when cake was rare.
When the very mention of
cake lit her smile. When
cake meant something.

But now there was too much.
There was too much of
everything.

And the too much had numbed
her to the experience of
the world.

As she stared into the
slice, she dreamed of a
time of *'not too much'*.
Where, once again, cake
would mean something.

-

'north, east, south & west'

Four friends set out from
where they stood.

One went North. One East.
Another South. The last
one, West.

Each in search of meaning.
Each in search of the point
of their own life.

Three would continue along
the *never ending road* of
becoming someone. Each of
them assuming they needed
to be somewhere other than
where they were.

But one would come to know
the significance of
standing still.

-

'man's best friend'

A man sits quietly with his dog.

He often sits quietly with his dog. She, with her *'this is enough'* face. He, with his matching *'nothing need be different'* expression.

He thinks it's because the dog is just a dog.

She knows that it's because nothing need be different.

And if she could speak, she might tell him that the very same possibility for friendship exists between any two *potential dog walkers*.

Between all *potential dog walkers*.

And if he were to listen, who then might be man's best friend?

-

'catching sight'

He & she, and you & I,
seldom catch sight of the
space.

Of the space in which to
notice where we stand.

In which to draw meaningful
breath.

Or simply catch a glimpse
of the beauty shining out
from each & every face.

So what are we to do?

You & I.

What are we to do?

-

'lighter, or darker'

Each encounter holds the
capacity to render us
lighter.

Or to colour the experience
of our world darker.

Each encounter holds the
capacity to engage our
sense of wonder.

Or to help us hide from
noticing the experience of
being human.

Each encounter holds the
capacity for us to
recognise our sameness.

Or to escape into the
experience of separateness.

And with each encounter
comes a decision.

To make our world lighter.
Or darker.

-

'this, and that'

She looked straight past
this. Assuming she needed
that.

Straight past *here*,
preferring to be over
there.

It seemed *this* was here and
that was over there.

And when she looked at
that, she completely missed
this.

But the best way to *that*
has always been to notice
this.

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It is estimated that a first volume of around fifty pieces from the Short Word Series will be published by early 2010.

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More about the short word series at

soulbiographies.com/short-words