

SEVEN 'LITTLE FICTIONS' BY NICK NORTH

L'ENVOI

I died and came back. To my wife and kids it's everything. I like it but sometimes you'll find me sitting by myself with my head down. I miss where I came from. What I notice is it's so dark here. Even at high noon under a blazing sun...it's so dark.

OH WHAT I WOULD DO!

In Piranesi's impossible prison the jailers tortured their prisoner. They cut his flesh with whips; they threw a cauldron of boiling water in his face; they broke his fingers and toes with hammer blows. He cried out during his torment, 'You've got the wrong man! I'm innocent!' At last, he died. 'Heart attack,' grumbled the prison doctor who was there to witness the atrocities. Later, when it came time to harvest the prisoner's organs for sale on the black market, his scalpel slipped. When he cut through the heart, he found a note inside. 'I felt everything,' it read. 'I ended up attacking him but what I really wanted to do was attack you. I just couldn't get out.'

POINT TAKEN

Pam was always a thin woman. She ate like everybody else but never gained weight. After a while she started losing. She got thinner and thinner. Her clothes went from size

small to XX Small. 'Next thing you know, I'll be shopping for infants!' When she died a few weeks later she was no bigger than a speck.

People looked everywhere for Pam but it was me who eventually found her. If you look very closely she is the dot at the end of this sentence though you may need a magnifying glass to see it.

NICK SAID (Metafiction)

Nick said...'They are here (like all of us) for the sole purpose of building an edifice to their own grandeur. And that's OK, that's cool, as long as you remember there isn't enough morality in the Universe to save us.'

'And edifice to their own grandeur?'

'A structure mal-appropriate to the immaculate conscience.'

'L'architecture megalomania, La tour diabolique.'

'Uh-huh. Not every apple is an orange.'

HUIS CLOS

I shot him dead, just like I wanted. Then I shot myself. But it never leaves. I shoot myself every morning and every evening and I'm still here.

HERE IT IS

The slaver awoke from a dream of redemption. He got up and unlocked his shackled workmen.

‘Redemption!’ he cried. He released one man who was forced to squat in a cramped cage.

‘Redemption!’ he cried. ‘I have seen the light!’ He shoveled the earth away from a slave he had buried up to his neck. ‘Can you not see it?’ he asked. ‘It is the light of the soul!’

At dawn he fed all his hands a lavish breakfast. His men, disbelieving, ate without speaking. When the sun rose he ordered himself to be hitched to a plough. He said, ‘Goad me with whips and scourges.’ He was giddy and fire-headed. He pulled and grunted. He sweated and groaned under the weight of the heavy yoke. He screamed, ‘Harder!’ when the lashes came down upon his bloodied back. The slaver closed his eyes to better see. With each stroke the light grew brighter.

UNCERTAIN

X: It’s still dark out.

Y: It’s only three a.m. It’s dark everywhere.

Z: I bet it’s not dark in Australia.

Y: No. It’s not dark in Australia.

X: Is so. It’s dark in Australia.

Z: What if we run out of light bulbs?

Y: We won’t run out.

Z: Are candles as good as light bulbs?

Y: Yes.

X: What if it stays dark?

Y: It won't.

X: But what if it does? It did yesterday.

Y: I know.

X: What if it will be dark forever?

Y: No. The sun will be up in a couple of hours. You two try and go to sleep.

X: (after waking up)...What time is it?

Y: Six o seven.

X: It's still dark.

Y: I think it is lighter. I think I can see the smallest bit of light. The sun is beginning to rise.

Z: I don't see it.

Y: It's just beginning,

X: How long do we have to wait?

Y: Not long.

Z: What if it doesn't come up?

Y: It's getting lighter.

X: But what if it doesn't?

Y: The sun is all set to rise now.

Z: But what if it doesn't rise like it didn't yesterday or the day before?

X: ...What if it doesn't rise again?