

On which day does **Pawn** find himself locked in battle over a graven image, only to lose to priority and prosperity, yet discovers a different wealth in humility and a sanctity in perseverance. Further, upon accepting this loss, engages more fully in the game of life and in the possible rewards of that engagement. All whilst discovering the true nature of place, time and home.

Started the day online. This is the new normal, as they say in this post-911 world, where everything has to have a name, even acts and normalities. Online is the new normal for when one is separated from the old normal by thousands of miles and several time zones one seizes on whatever threads still connect to the homeland. London is my home, too. I have made that a part of my life these past two years, this effort to establish myself on two fronts, on two continents and two countries. I feel an intense, personal, intimate attraction to this other home of mine. It matters not that I rent temporary accommodations when here, home is not the house, home is the surrounds.

Online, too, is a home. It is a non-temporal and non-Euclidean, non-geographical location. It obeys different rules of contact and different time lines and systems of decorum. This morning it takes me to work, and while I enjoy my breakfast of quiche, streaky bacon and crumpet I am also trolling through my client's troves of support requests and stalking their servers and systems for signs of malady. I am able to complete a couple of hours of work before X even arises from slumber. It helps that she is narcoleptic and I am insomniac, but that would be splitting hairs.

"I am off to the galleries to see if I can get my hands on that Dryden Goodwin photo," I announce when X has finally roused herself and is nodding in and out of consciousness over her crumpet. "I am going to Leicester Square to score some theatre tickets for tonight, then up to Piccadilly Circus and Mayfair to check in at the Stephen Friedman Gallery and try to get that Dryden Goodwin piece. Then over to Hamilton's Gallery on Carlos Place, and then I'll be back."

It was an ambitious plan. I knew that the Goodwin piece was likely beyond my reach. His technique is such that there would likely be no prints, just the original, and I guessed that it would fetch somewhere between \$10,000 and \$15,000. I hoped for a print which I could afford, but really it was an act of gall to go walking into a St. James gallery and ask to buy work by a listed artist. I was right about the cost, A£7,000 (\$10,500) but that hardly matters as the piece was already spoken for. No prints, this is a one-off. So, I have to be satisfied with a "Detail" print from the Photographers' Gallery, and the memory of having been in the hunt of so grand a piece of art as this.

Onward, then to Hamilton's Gallery, in Mayfair, to see Miles Aldridge's latest portfolio. This is really High Fashion stuff, lots of make-up and anorexic models. There are a couple of interesting images, but all in all it reads like a work portfolio rather than art. That may sound harsh, but after just immersing myself in Dryden Goodwin's inspired work, this is just advertising and little else.

At the Photographers' Gallery, Katrina is happy to see me, and we quickly settle the deal and the print is mine. It will make a great addition to my collection, and every time I look at it I will see the whole, the greater piece of which it is a detail, and I will remember this day in St. James, Mayfair and Soho - my quest for an image. Back to the flat and a well deserved nap. X is off the the British Museum to lolly-gag with the Elgin Marbles for a spell while I nap. I have had a hard time sleeping for more than a few hours every night, and I am weary of being weary.

Tonight brought us to *The Last 5 Years* which was five years too long if you ask us. This was a two person concert, American Idol (or X Factor, for you Brits) version. Not so much a musical, *5 Years* is the telling of the falling apart of a relationship told in retrospect through a series of songs sung by the two actors, the man and the woman (their names, Kathy and Jamie, are immaterial). They only ever interact once or twice during the 1:40 one act show, and even

then the distance between them is palpable. The songs are, by and large, good. And the performances, singing (not enough acting to judge anything by) are good as well. This format is different, the book, such as it is, could fit on a bev-nap; it is probably no longer than ten or twenty lines.

In total, good thing we came on what appears to have been "Friends and Family" night, as they held up our end in the over-the-top ovation. The ovation which masked our hurried retreat. Take a pass on this one.

Ta!