



Gwen's lesson for Threepenny University, 7.29.10 – *toma notas*



“Fly,’ Chamcha shrieked at Gibreel. ‘Start flying, now.’ And added, without knowing its source, the second command: ‘And sing.’”









The sun on its way down round
 glances off the eastward towers and
 floodlights through your bedroom window like a trickster dawn.
 Up the Union soldiers blueblaze in their shadowbox.

Above, on the shelves, red spines of your twenty-odd commonplace books
 lined up shoulder to shoulder –
 and the copper pipe sections, the Vietnamese jewsharp.
Ex occasus lux

Within the wider illumination, certain rays conspire to pinlight, make white of the
 gray metal trade tower souvenir a fan once sent you.
 Lost in the glare off picture glass: the photo of a galvanic crowd,
 Malcolm X and Muhammad Ali
 rising from their midst,
 taken somewhere down south in maybe '65.
 A pair of portraits, drawn by Gwen at 7 – her utopic landscapes in rainbow paints
 and spiral collage, multi-hued like a gameboard snake –
 receive gentler treatment,
 as does Katie's penciled bust of Voltaire, drawn from Houdin's stone.
Ex occasus lux

Highest up on the wall, the Venetian mask shakes off morbidity
 And Jorge's photo of el gallo Borinqueño, scarlet comb and wattles, springs twice
 alive
 to the left of and behind the dust coated elephant mother and child.

It's all there, permanent as swept away
 Whatever's stuck up with pushpins flaps
 as easy sways the summer shirt, its hanger hung from an upper shelf,
 the ice cream shirt
 bought a spinning season past at Century 21
 for less than an Andrew Jackson song –
 yes even now brighter
Post occasus lux



Ardhanarishvara: composite of Shiva and Parvati. Represented quite literally as half male, half female to indicate *shakta-shakti* relationship of unified whole. If you look closely at the forehead, you'd see half a third eye on the Shiva side.

*But there's never been a mermaid here
On Mermaid Avenue...*





Clay figures of seated youth and shaman, Xochipala, ca. 1500 B.C., Guerrero, Mexico, The Art Museum, Princeton



What did we begin to make, in the earliest glow of illumination, and perhaps even before a bare minimum had been scratched out? And what have we made all along, at every turn, even now, mostly uncomprehending?