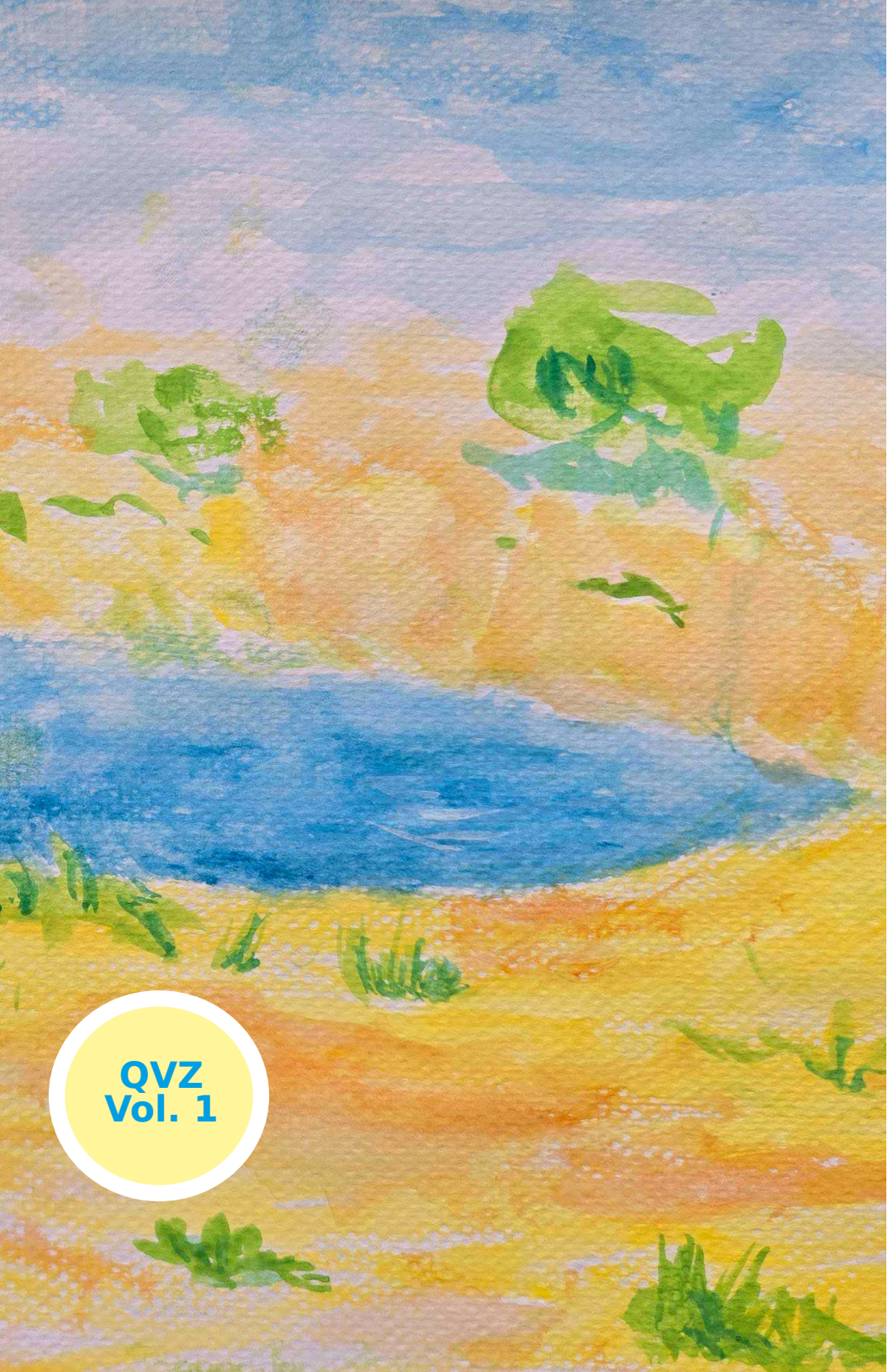




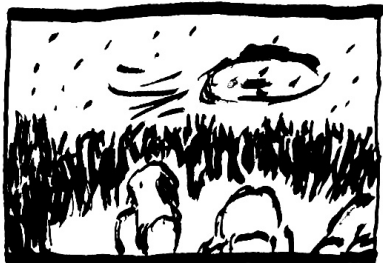
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Works by Ivy Gifford

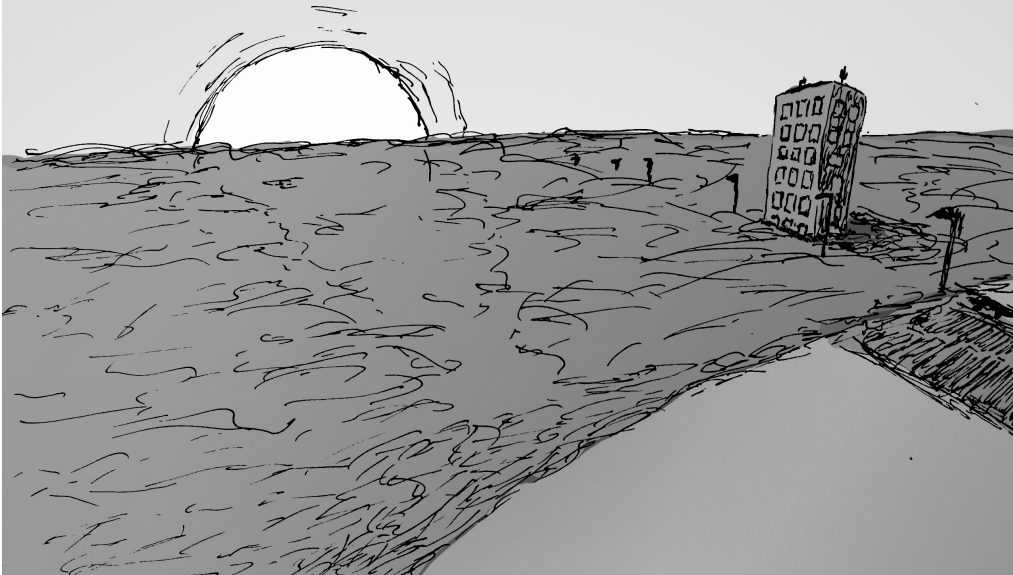


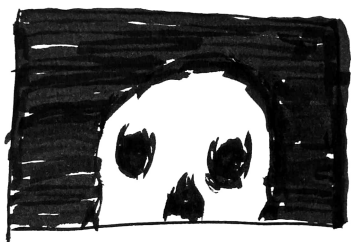
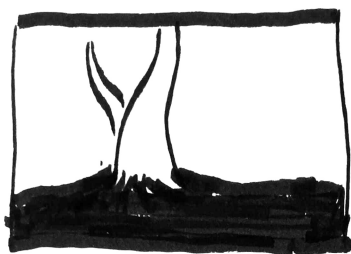






sepia streams across a broken, sullied shore
pungent rot imbues the air with each sickly wave
and yet neither bombs nor war responsible
only a desire for something, someone to blame





Ivy Gifford

She/It



bsky:
@fedi.ivytime.gay

cara:
@ivytime

<https://ivytime.gay>



Works by AK. Yula





AK. Yula

She/It

cara: @audrillary



AK 25

What Makes You Real

a poetry piece about identity
written by Rhannon

Humans are real
They breathe
They give life
They give death
They speak words
They commit actions
They create and destroy
They are real.

People say that I'm human
They treat me like I'm real
They treat me with kindness
With words of gratitude
With hands of gift and affection
With smiles of love
With life and joy
They say I'm real
They say I'm human
They say I'm me
They say I'm good

Am I what they say I am?
Do they speak the truth?
What if I'm not real?
What if you are a figment of my own design?
What if you are just a lie I made up,
To satisfy my needs
To satisfy the sadness
The weight on my heart
Emotions that pierce through me like a dart

I want you to be real
I want to be what you say I am
But I don't think I am
I think the smile I look at is fake
I think the way you talk about me like I am great is false
I think I'm dancing around an illusional waltz
My feet always moving different
Away from you
Away from what I don't believe to be true

I can't be as great as you say I am
Because I do so much wrong
Because I do not sing the right song
Because I can't possibly follow the right tune
As I sit through the winter nights you give
That end up melting away into bitter June
How can I be as good as you say?
I am not the one who rises the day
I am not the one who can bring forth the sun
I am not the one who can make myself undone
I am not the one
I am not real
I am not human

How can I be what you say I am?
What makes me real?
What makes me believe you are real?

Is it your physical being
Your hand in mine
Does it make it fine?

Is it your smile
Your soft glimpses at me
Does it prove that I'm free?

Is it your words
Your twisting melody and your swelling song
Does it prove me wrong?

Is it you
You standing there, holding me tight
Telling me that being real is right
That you are here and so am I
Is that the reason why?

I want to be what you say I am
I know you are real
I do not want to lie
I do not want to say goodbye
Just because I'm afraid
Of losing what I have

I don't need to be the opposite of what you say
I will agree with your way
Because being real is right

Real is the soft sunset glow against ripened snow
Real is the crisp taste of a peach as you lay on the beach
Real is the strum of the guitar and a stolen cookie from
the cookie jar
Real is laughing with a friend, not worrying about the end
Real is breathing, blinking, perceiving and accepting
Real is your hands and your heart
Real is your head and your eyes
Real is what you see
Real is what you feel
Real is what you believe
Real is you

What makes you real is what makes you who you are
You are you
That makes you real
I am me
That makes me real

The way I speak
The way I create
The way I laugh
The way I smile
The way I blink
The way I walk
The way I talk
The way I breathe
Is what makes me real

The people around you are what makes you real too
Your hand in mine
Your jokes right on time
Your gifting hands
Your beautiful heart
Your smile
Your breath
Your life
Is what makes me real

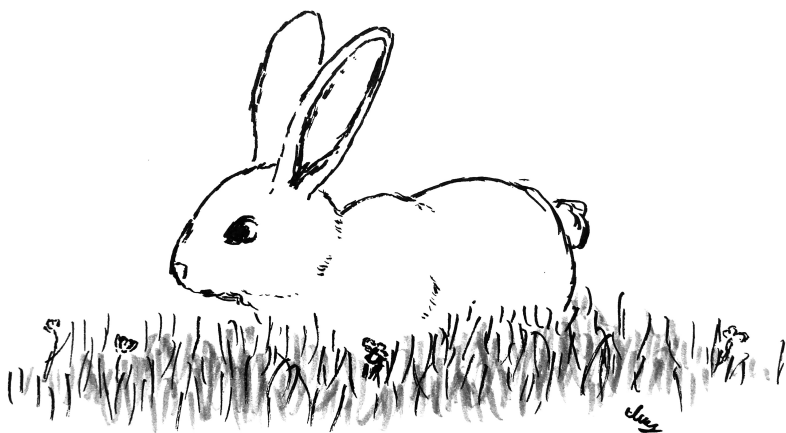
You are what makes me real.

Rhiannon

She/They

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