

MEETSPACE

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Some things are real but not true.
Some things are true but not real.

Cyberspace is half mind and half metal,
a dimension spun from the interface
of self and silicon, neurons and electrons.

Here I am, a soul in a body –
a body female in form,
a soul more masculine than feminine –
and do not forget that sex is not binary
and souls are not precisely gendered.

Here I am.
In the flesh,
people meet the meat of me
and are surprised when I jump up and hit things
or prop my foot on my knee. These are
things that make them say,
“Wow, you really are a guy under there”.

Here I am.
In cyberspace,
people meet the mind of me
and when I begin to talk of fishing
or the history or atrocities
people are wont to say,
“Hey! You're a guy masquerading as a girl”.

Well.
What am I supposed to say to that?

¹ Elizabeth Barrette writes poetry, fiction and nonfiction in the fields of gender studies, speculative fiction, and alternative spirituality. Recent poetry publications include “Chance Process” in *Noneuclidean Café* and “Golden Opportunities” in *Star*Line*. Her poem “One Ship Tall” won first place in the SFPA 2007 poetry contest. She serves as Dean of Studies for the Grey School of Wizardry (<www.greyschool.com>), where she teaches a four-part course in poetry. Her book *Composing Magic* was published in July 2007 by New Page Books. Her newest study is cyberfunded creativity. Her favorite pastimes include suspension-of-disbelief bungee-jumping and spelunking in other people’s reality tunnels. Visit her blog at: <<http://ysabetwordsmith.livejournal.com>>

My female flesh is real but not true.
My masculine spirit is true but not real.
So who sees more of me –
those who meet the meat or the mind?

All I can say is –
here I am.
This bodysoul is surfing along the spectrum
between polarities. Electrons flash
on a screen, neurons flicker
like lightning in gray matter thunderheads.
Cyberspace is made of
things that exist only because
we believe in them.

Some things are true but not real.
Some things are real but not true.