

The Sea in You

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Iron Circus Comics (Mar 14, 2023)

Softcover \$15.00 (224pp)

978-1-63899-111-3

A teenage girl and a sea creature find love in *The Sea in You*, an inspired, modern LGBTQ+ twist on *The Little Mermaid*.

In Ocean City, Maryland, Corinth encounters a creature that resembles a mermaid, except with fangs and bad intentions. The creature spares her life, though. Using spoken words and sign language, they soon become friends—with sparks of a potential romantic relationship. The creature, Skylla, wants to grow closer to Corinth; through magic, she transforms into a human girl. The cost is Skylla's voice and a mysterious task that needs to be completed. When Skylla balks at the task, her life is threatened, and Corinth risks everything in a desperate attempt to find a solution, leading to a surprising, satisfying conclusion.

Though based on a classic story, the plot is fresh, exciting, and unpredictable. Corinth is a convincing, vulnerable heroine, and Skylla shows an intriguing combination of wild animal instincts and gentle curiosity. Corinth's mother is deaf, and the use of American Sign Language is an innovative yet natural fit for the story of a mermaid-turned-girl who has otherwise lost her ability to communicate.

Some of the book's most gripping moments are the complicated interactions between Corinth and Seth, her boyfriend, whose behavior toward her can be sweet, manipulative, and outright abusive. The art uses precision linework and a varied palette to create immersive imagery in land and sea-based scenes alike; of special note are the intricate details and kaleidoscopic colors of the book's climax.

The Sea in You is an exciting, dramatic, and tender tale of adolescent self-discovery—above and below the ocean.

PETER DABBENE (March / April 2023)

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