

From *The Mermaid Postcard* by Cole Bellamy

**The Mermaid Postcard**

Between the worn-out edges  
Of a glossy piece of card  
The mermaid is weightless and alone  
Auburn hair drifts through the blue impossible  
She sneers through candy apple lips  
With teeth sharp and white as a shark's  
And a hose in her hand for breathing

When we found her  
She was twirling  
A baton in the Memorial Day parade  
Marching down Main Street  
In white boots and sequins  
She woke up the next day  
In an unfamiliar bed  
With a silver chain  
Of wire stitched around her waist  
And the tail of a tarpon  
Where her legs should have been

Even after all these years  
Nobody knows what happened  
To the top half of the tarpon  
And the bottom half of the girl  
We made her into one of those  
Postcard mermaids  
That you see sometimes  
Dragging a dead tail through the cypress stumps