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# The dirt baby

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# The dirt baby

## **Abstract**

A woman has nothing in her hands and she is lonely. She goes outside and the sky is black without stars or planets. In the middle of the yard she kneels and spits on the ground beside her legs. Her saliva mixes.....

## **Keywords**

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## SIX POEMS

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## TARA GOEDJEN

### *The Dirt Baby*

A woman has nothing in her hands and she is lonely. She goes outside and the sky is black without stars or planets. In the middle of the yard she kneels and spits on the ground beside her legs. Her saliva mixes with the dirt and her fingers knead the earth until it is wet and claylike in her fists. She molds the mud into the shape of a child. In the dark, she discovers that she and the child look exactly alike. The mud baby sits in the woman's palms and she is content. *Ah, mine.* The woman presses the child to her breast and the dirt falls away in clumps. First the child's hands fall to the ground, and then both of its arms, and soon its legs. The woman cries out and brings its head to her lips but it rolls off before she can kiss it. A torso of dirt is left in her hands; an earthworm wriggles out of its heart.

### *The Wicker Baby*

A woman is told to collect rocks and wood for the hearth. She walks across a field beside a cliff where she finds a pile of tiny stones. By and by, one begins to move. She picks it up and it cracks open, dousing her hands in water. She tosses the slippery halves into the grass and looks for something more suitable. By and by, she comes

across a larger rock under a tree. She heaves the heavy rock onto her shoulders. The dead branches she plucks from the tree, then ties the bundle to her waist. On her way back, she stumbles over a small basket in the middle of the field. *Oh!* A child is inside the basket. It begins to cry. The basket is wicker and compatible. The woman places them both in her pocket, carrying them to the hearth.

SALLY EVANS is a poet and PhD candidate at the University of Wollongong. Her poetry has previously been published in *Islet*, *TIDE* and *One Horse Town*.

She blogs at [www.tallandignorantservants.tumblr.com](http://www.tallandignorantservants.tumblr.com)

TARA GOEDJEN's fiction has appeared in North American journals such as *AGNI*, *BOMB*, *Denver Quarterly*, *Quarterly West* and *New England Review*, and most recently in *Fairy Tale Review* and *Meanjin*. She is a candidate in the Doctorate of Creative Arts program at the University of Wollongong, where she is at work on a novel about ghosts.

*The Fish Baby* first appeared in *Denver Quarterly*; *The Dirt Baby* first appeared in *Sentence*.



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