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The fish baby

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The fish baby

Abstract

A young mother carries her drooling baby through the parking lot. Shiny cars pass on either side of her as her heels click on the pavement. The baby begins to cry and its face turns red and swollen. The mother hushes.....

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SIX POEMS

TARA GOEDJEN

The Fish Baby

A young mother carries her drooling baby through the parking lot. Shiny cars pass on either side of her as her heels click on the pavement. The baby begins to cry and its face turns red and swollen. The mother hushes it by bouncing it gently with her forearm and tenderly stroking its temples. *Hush, hush*, the mother says. The baby grows louder and begins to spasm. The mother looks at the shiny cars, embarrassed. She covers the baby with its burp cloth and it stops crying, but does not still. It wriggles underneath the towel and grows thin and gray and slick with every movement. Soon the mother is not holding a baby, but a fish. The fish moves its gills wildly and flops in her arms. The mother throws it to the ground where it twirls on its fins for some time until she stomps it with her dress shoe.

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

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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