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The pool baby

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The pool baby

Abstract

A woman swimming laps wants desperately to have a child. She dries off and asks the man doing backstroke if he would like to have a baby. He says no. She continues to ask the other swimmers. No one wants
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SIX POEMS

TARA GOEDJEN

The Pool Baby

A woman swimming laps wants desperately to have a child. She dries off and asks the man doing backstroke if he would like to have a baby. He says no. She continues to ask the other swimmers. No one wants children. They say: The world is overpopulated. They say: Children are messy. They say: I want to be financially secure. They say: I want to own a house. She finds no one, and her stomach is empty. Feeling faint, she begins to eat. She eats and eats and eats. Hand to mouth, hand to mouth, in steady movements. A year later, someone bumps into the woman outside the swimming pool. They point at her bloated stomach: Is there a baby on the way? The woman becomes delighted. Yes, she says. *Oh, yes. It's almost time.* By and by her skin begins to take on a rosy hue. She keeps eating. Her weight gathers around her torso. She speaks to her stomach at night. She plays it classical music. She softly presses her stomach and one day feels them kick. Them – twins! She's delighted. She imagines her belly button as a peep hole to another world. Her stomach is a mound. She rubs and rubs it. Twins! She's delighted - she rubs and rubs. She has such a steady stroke.

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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