

## Breastmilk and Theorems

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### Recommended Citation

Bonnie Jacob, "Breastmilk and Theorems," *Journal of Humanistic Mathematics*, Volume 8 Issue 2 (July 2018), pages 301-303. DOI: 10.5642/jhummath.201802.35. Available at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/jhm/vol8/iss2/35>

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# Breastmilk and Theorems

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2 AM

Four days old  
Tiny nostrils  
Skin-to-skin and open mouth wide  
Latched on now  
Sharp pain, toes curl  
Easing now, fish lips, sucking and swallowing  
If  $G$  is a graph  
Make all neighbors distance two  
Make all distance two distance one  
What happens? What is it?  
Amazing little creature, fluttery sucking now  
Ease her down  
Will it be one hour? Two? Four or six?  
Lay down  
Blissfully asleep

10 PM

Four weeks old  
So frantic, clawing  
Latching on, one hand in the air, then a cry  
Switch sides  
Again and again  
Six-pack of formula on the dining room table, just in case  
Still hungry? Too full? Too tired? Gas? Diaper dirty?  
Latching and unlatching  
Switching sides again and again  
Bouncing, rocking, walking, singing, crying and screaming  
No room for theorems, just what to do next, and what to do then,  
Latch on again  
Switch sides again and again  
12 midnight and exhaustion sneaks up  
Floppy arms and legs  
Flop into bed, so tired, asleep

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3:30 AM  
Nine weeks old  
Eyes firmly shut, mouth searching  
“Does she sleep through the night yet?” they ask so innocently  
Suppressing a laugh, stay quiet and soothing  
Placed just right  
Tiny little back  
Tiny little head near my breast,  
Mouth opens wide, can’t see in the dark  
A gentle tug  
Rhythmic sucking  
I close my eyes  
Try to rest but don’t fall asleep  
Baby still sucking, still breathing  
Blankets far away  
 $C_5$  works, it gives back itself  
If a graph works, does it always give back itself?  
Stay relaxed, go to sleep graphs, get out of my head  
Sleep baby, sleep me

9 AM  
5 months old  
Time for nap already  
Flop in the chair,  
Unhook  
Head’s so fast, and she’s latched  
Rhythmic sucking  
Sleepy now  
Other side  
Fluttering eyes, fluttering mouth  
Paley graphs  
Self-complementary graphs of diameter two  
Oh, for a paper and pencil  
 $G^2 \setminus E(G)$   
Do it again and again  
Does it converge?  
Paths to isolated vertices  
Trees too? No, wait, that’s wrong  
Gently lay her down, hand on her tiny tummy  
Her head to side, arms stretched out wide  
Ease my hand off  
Can’t help but gaze just for a moment  
Then creep away

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8 PM  
18 months  
Little head relaxes against me  
Don't try to bite, silly girl  
For once she sleeps, still latched, still sucking  
Eyelids heavy, then closed  
Trees do not work  
*G* must be diameter two or three  
*G* always gives back itself?  
Try this when there's time and pencil and paper  
Ease baby down  
But dishes to do  
Emails to send  
Papers to grade  
Arms flopped out wide  
Blanket on now  
No song tonight, already asleep