

Motherhood

by [Paul Martin Freeman](#) (August 2025)



On the Water (Mary Cassatt, 1895)

for Georgiana Mustata

Oh darling baby sleeping there
So delicate I hardly dare
To stroke you hair or touch your ear
In case you die or disappear.

How precious is your life to me:

A wonder only I can see!
And I am yours and you are mine
And all of this is God's design.

This peace, this blessed union,
This world of quiet communion
Is something only mothers know
Who watch their tiny babies grow.

It seems as though it's our reward
For what too often seems ignored
And recompense from Mother Earth
For woman's pain in giving birth.

For what is there that can compare
With what so cruelly women bear
When patiently we play our part
And feel our bodies ripped apart?

But then that punishment of Eve's
With rapture Mother Earth relieves
From love for suffering womankind
For so by God it's been designed.

And yet I fear it cannot last
With every day you growing fast
As each will steal some more of you
And take away what once I knew.

No longer in my arms you'll lie—
How quickly thieving Time will fly!
Another world you'll then explore
And all too soon will leave my door.

For once again the wheel will turn
When all this joy will sorrow earn
As what I have I then shall lose

For none can Nature's laws refuse.

Thus Time will tear this world apart
And with it, too, this mother's heart.
No longer then will you be mine,
But this as well is God's design.

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Paul Martin Freeman's book of whimsical verse, *A Chocolate Box Menagerie*, is published by New English Review Press and is available [here](#). The poem is from the author's unpublished work, *The Bus Poems: A Tale of the Devil*.

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