

Delicate Maneuvers

by [Sarah Gordon](#) in the [August 2024](#) issue

Published on July 23, 2024

On the internet old couples
are dancing in hazardous moves,
back and forth, around each other,
to pop music, loud.

You don't really want to watch.

**

You carefully pull away the fingers
of the child who's grasped your leg
in longing for something
not yours to give

**

You read that every year
hundreds of millions of birds die
from flying into glass, breaking
into neighborhood homes.

You don't really want to know.

**

Soon you will raise your small,
trembling hand to say
you have the answer
or think you do

**

Yet you avoid the eyes of the stranger
walking toward you on the path
as though you're blinded

by headlights

**

That sideways breath on a cat's ear.

Your breath.

You don't really want such power.