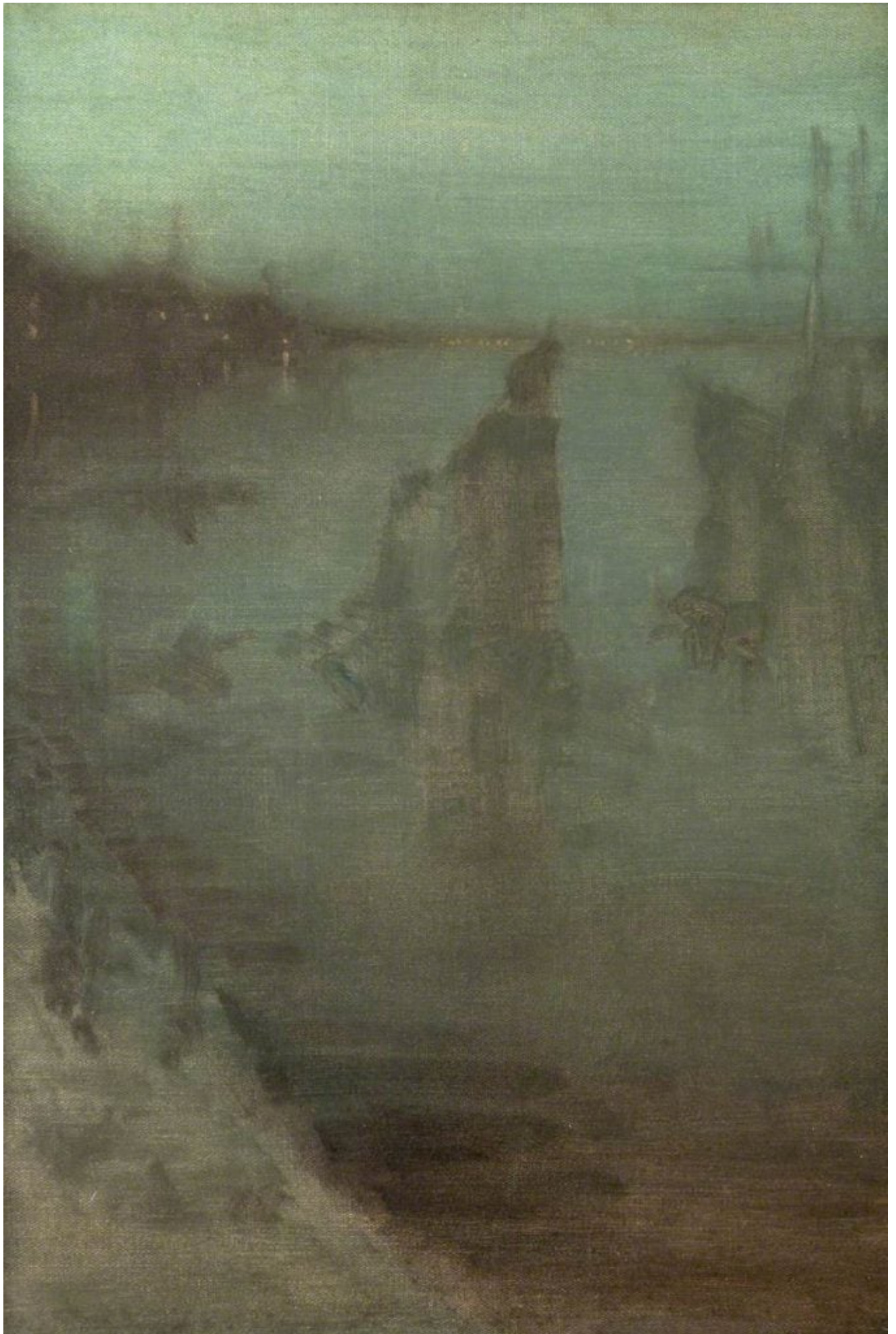


# With Unclenched Fingers

by [Cristina Nehring](#) (October 2023)



*Nocturne*, James McNeill Whistler, 1875-77

**You release** the god  
You never grasped.  
To host a deity

Takes a gift for ignorance,  
A touch so light  
It hurts the eyes.

You cannot doubt  
The eventual loss  
Nor question the vision

Of black feathers  
Beating back into night.  
He cannot stay for supper.

He has no taste for bread.  
He only turns the wine to blood  
And then departs.

## [Table of Contents](#)

**Cristina Nehring** is publishing *The Child Who Never Spoke: 23 1/2 Lessons in Fragility* with Heliotrope Books on October 24, 2023. She is the author of *A Vindication of Love: Reinventing Romance* for the 21st Century which was reviewed glowingly on the cover of the *New York Times Book Review*. She writes regularly for the *Atlantic*, *Harper's*, the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal* and many other publications. She lives in Paris with her daughter.

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](https://twitter.com/NERIconoclast)