Keep a firm hold of the recollection of God

Patristic reading

The saints who keep a firm hold of the recollection of God and are borne along, as it were, with their steps

suspended on a line stretched out on high

I should say then that the saints who keep a firm hold of the recollection of God and are borne along, as it were, with their steps suspended on a line stretched out on high, may be rightly compared to rope dancers, commonly called funambuli, who risk all their safety and life on the path of that very narrow rope, with no doubt that they will immediately meet with a most dreadful death if their foot swerves or trips in the very slightest degree, or goes over the line of the course in which alone is safety. And while with marvellous skill they ply their airy steps through space, if they keep not their steps to that all too narrow path with careful and anxious regulation, the earth which is the natural base and the most solid and safest foundation for all, becomes to them an immediate and clear danger, not because its nature is changed, but because they fall headlong upon it by the weight of their bodies.

John Cassian, *Conferences 23,9*