

The Circle Game

Harry Belafonte

Yesterday a child came out to wonder,
Caught a dragonfly inside a jar.
Fearful when the sky is full of thunder,
And tearful at the falling of a star.

And the seasons, they go 'round and 'round,
And the painted ponies go up and down.
We're captive on the carousel of time.
We can't return, we can only look behind
From where we came,
And go 'round and 'round and 'round in the circle game.

Then the child moved ten times round the seasons,
Skated over ten clear frozen streams.
Words like "when you're older" must appease him,
And promises of someday make his dreams.

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And the painted ponies go up and down.
We're captive on the carousel of time.
We can't return, we can only look behind
From where we came,
And go 'round and 'round and 'round in the circle game.

Sixteen springs and sixteen summers gone now,
Cartwheels turn to car wheels through the town.
And they tell him, "Take your time, it won't be long now,
'Till you drag your feet to slow the circle down."

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And the painted ponies go up and down.
We're captive on the carousel of time.
We can't return, we can only look behind
From where we came,
And go 'round and 'round and 'round in the circle game.

So the years spin by and now the boy is twenty,
Though his dreams have lost some grandeur coming true.
There'll be new dreams, maybe better dreams, and plenty.
Before the last revolving year is through.

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And the painted ponies go up and down.
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