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Strength

Ayesha Iftikhar

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**STRENGTH** AYESHA IFTIKHAR**The Spell of the Carousel**

JESSICA GONSOULIN

Like a ballerina it pirouettes,
 pivoting in the center cellar of the mall—
 a world, a solar system, a galaxy.
 Up and down gallop the unicorns,
 dragons, giraffes, tigers, and rabbits.
 Cages at the zoo are vacant.
 Lights flash, silver mirrors
 gleam, light bulbs march around.

Crowded storefronts are reflected
 in the kaleidoscope of puzzle pieces
 hurled into the sky with the sound
 of an orchestra of wind chimes.
 The riders in the slowing race,
 trapped in waltz traffic, feel
 dizzy, wait for movement to end.
 Real life's a dream; they're hypnotized to shop.