

The Circle Game

Joni Mitchell

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

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.

**And the seasons, they go round and round,
And the painted ponies go up and down.
We’re captured 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 lost to car wheels in the town,
And you tell him, “Take your time, it won’t be long now
Till you drag your feet to slow the circles down.”

The boy who dreamed tomorrow now 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.

And the seasons...