

The Gold and Chocolate Merry-Go-Round

Imagine yourself standing before a giant merry-go-round. It is made of glistening gold, with sparkling, star-like stones set in it. You climb red satin stairs to the platform, and there you see beautiful horses, with shiny coats of all colors... Why don't you mount one?

No, wait... First look over there, at those crystal bowls, set all around the edge of the music box. Let's go closer. Yes, you're right. They are overflowing with milk chocolate candy, molded into all shapes and sizes. Go ahead, help yourself and try one... Isn't it delicious? Why not fill your pockets? It's free! Don't be shy. This candy won't hurt your teeth or ruin your dinner.

Now you can find your favorite horse. That's right, pat his head and talk to him first. Here's an apple to give him. Good, you're friends now. Hurry! The music box is starting. Let's climb on. Hold on to the reins. Isn't my horse gorgeous too? Have you ever heard such beautiful music? Can you feel the sweet notes rippling over your heartstrings?

Can you feel the soft breezes blowing through your hair? Doesn't it feel wonderful? And look at the scenes flashing past us: fields of waving grass, with trees in blossoms of yellow, peach, and lavender; clear, blue sky with a dozen rainbows painted across it; purple and green mountains with glittering waterfalls adding even more rainbows to the radiant light show.

So, how do you feel? Maybe like it's the first day of spring? You step out the door -- the cold is gone, flowers are peeking out of the earth, warm breezes carry the scent of new life, a new beginning. Birds are singing spring carols. Can you feel that warm tear on your cheek?...

Go ahead! Take another bite of the scrumptious chocolate. Listen to the tinkling bell music. Feel the soft spring breeze, and breathe in its sweet perfume. And relish the most beautiful landscape painting you've ever seen, whirling slowly around you -- sky, rainbows, mountains, blossoming trees, waterfalls!

Does this merry-go-round ride remind you of anything? Is it just like *past* springs and birthday parties, Christmas and Easter celebrations? Or does it remind you perhaps of... the *future*... of something we are *all* looking forward to and yearning for? A time when and a place where some of the best sensations and experiences of this world will be multiplied and magnified a thousand -- no -- a million times.

Can you feel it?! The merry-go-round box is slowing down. The music is growing fainter. The blossoms on the trees have fallen, and green leaves have changed color and fallen to the ground to shrivel up. The warm breezes have become cold, and snow is falling. The waterfalls have frozen, and the sky is gray. The tears on our cheeks have turned to ice! We are back in the *reality* of this dying, crying world. *Why* couldn't the wonderful dream we just lived in last?!

Because it was, of course, just a dream... just fantasy... our runaway imaginations. It was just a bright shadow, lighting the path, so we could see what's *really* coming, and what we will *really* experience, and *where we are really going*!!!

