

Toy

by Landon Manucci

In the store, multi-color kites dance along the ceiling.

And in the costume aisle, a young mother shows her daughter how to tie her shoe. "Bunny ears, around the corner..."

Glass animals shine in rows on high shelves.

A boy examines lengths of string. The boy knows he can win the Flying Cup. He can do it. He chooses the strongest width of rope, coarse hemp, and grips a hand-full of it.

An old lady smiles into a book she's reading, a book of jokes.

The young mother watches her daughter play by her feet, but the mother looks concerned. The father has not called her back.

Rows of lollipops line one wall.

A man walks in. His niece's birthday is tomorrow. He sees a twirling windmill, a pony clock that neighs the hours. He thinks she might like a pony clock.

A basket of hula-hoops sits near the sail cloth.

The man with the niece picks up a small guitar, plucks a string. When he was young, he used to have one just like this. He puts his ear to the guitar.

The young mother fidgets with her ring. Will he forgive her? The young mother hates what she said to him. Bastard. She looks at her daughter, her daughter making a stuffed monkey clap.

The old lady touches the rainbow wheel and remembers what her friend had told her earlier over tea, "Old age has been a water-slide." The old lady smiles and whirls the wheel. Listen to the wind chime sound it makes.

