



## Merry-Go-Round Broke Down

by David Woo and Margalit Shinar



Fiction - Anthology

288 Pages

Reviewed on 02/01/2026

### Book Review

#### Reviewed by Grant Leishman for Readers' Favorite

Merry-Go-Round Broke Down by David Woo and Margalit Shinar is a fascinating collection of nine short stories that share a tenuous yet recognizable link in the exploration of greed and links brought about by globalization and the freeing up of the world economy that allows funds to flow seamlessly across the entire world. The story begins at the prestigious Waldorf Astoria in New York City in the fall of 2008, where two armed men have stormed the bar and are holding several people hostage. From this auspicious beginning, the journey then crisscrosses the globe to China, Japan, England, Norway, Cuba, Brazil, and more. Along the way, we are introduced to many characters who are affected both positively and negatively by the outcomes of globalization, but are all subtly linked to each other. This is not just a story about the impact of globalization; it also explores the characters' hopes, dreams, loves, and losses in a way that makes for compelling reading.

Merry-Go-Round Broke Down is the perfect literary expression of the old tenet of chaos theory that when a butterfly flaps its wings in Brazil, it can set off a chain of events that will eventually cause a tornado to strike in Texas. David Woo and Margalit Shinar have perfectly illustrated how even a tenuous connection between individuals can have a profound, far-reaching effect across the world that could never have been predicted. Although each section is exceptionally well-written, as with any collection, some will resonate with readers slightly more than others. The story of how Japanese housewife Tomoko Watanabe, cast in the traditional role of housewife, mother, and supporter of her husband, decided that she would get the family out of financial difficulty after her husband lost his supposedly "lifetime" job was an absolute winner. Vying with this story is that of Birgit, who went to the Amazon merely to check on her activist sister and ended up becoming committed to saving the rainforest from destruction. I loved how the authors never lost track of the intertwining threads of connection through these stories. This is a clever, well-researched, and exceptionally readable collection, which I greatly enjoyed. I highly recommend it.