

ANDREA JACKSON

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The King

The king, entering the cobbled courtyard  
in a coach drawn by sturdy horses,  
looks up at the banners hanging from the balcony  
and sees only danger in those cunning handworks:  
danger in the way his eye is drawn toward each design  
as if it is a maze and a tunnel into which he might fall  
if he lets himself.

The king is young and still takes his duties seriously,  
yet the harder he tries to be a conscientious monarch,  
the more he encounters those little blips and tunnels,  
mysterious doors opening suddenly,  
escape routes from the known world,  
flaws in the fabric of existence. A square on a quilt  
might contain a door that opens for half a second,  
fully long enough to sweep him inside  
and spirit him away.

He clings to the armrests in his golden coach  
while doors like knowing eyes  
open and shut around him.



## ABOUT ANDREA JACKSON

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Andrea Jackson has an MFA in creative writing from the University of Missouri - St. Louis. Her work has appeared in *MARGIE*, *RHINO*, *Superstition Review*, *Alligator Juniper*, and *A Quiet Courage*. She lives in St. Louis, Missouri.

