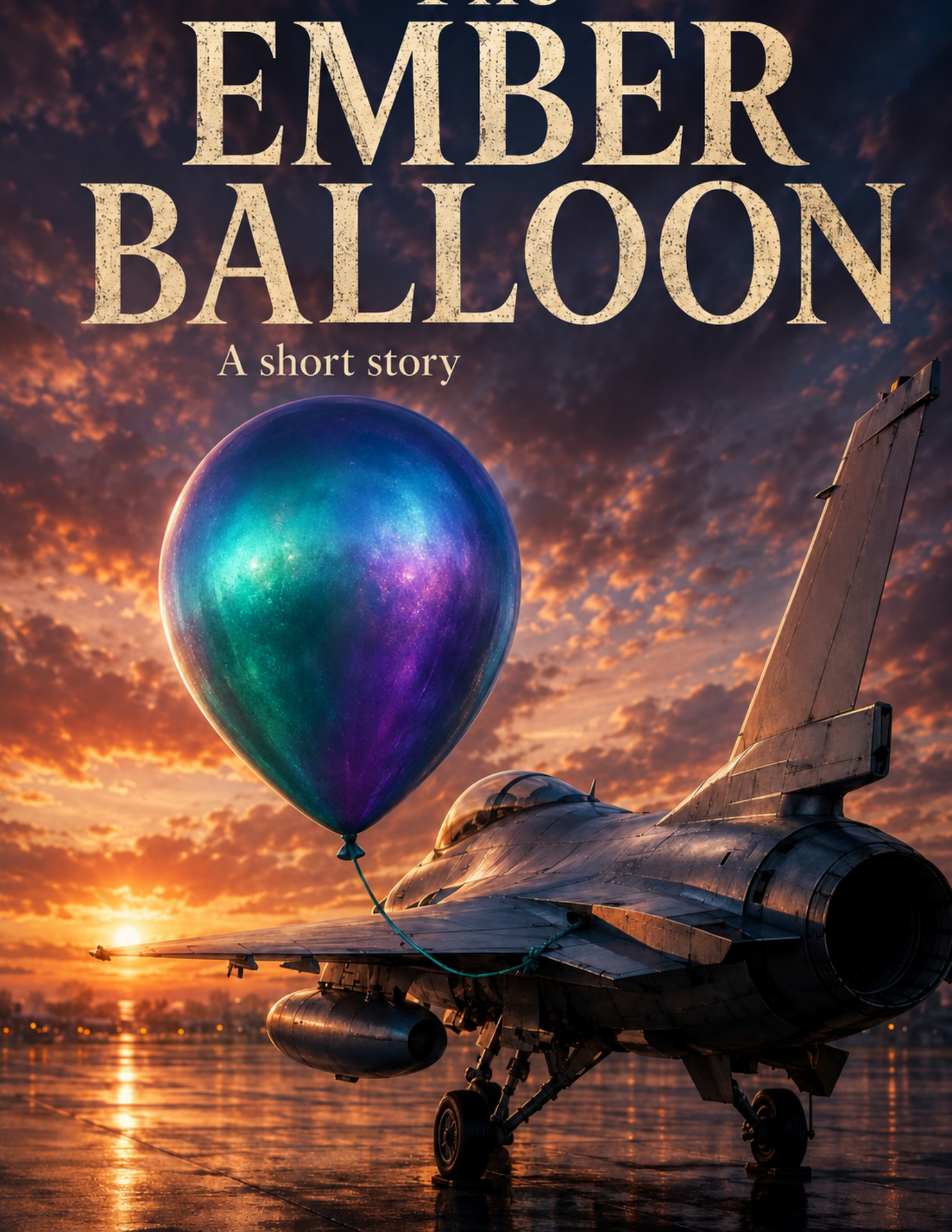
THE EMBER BALLOON

A short story



The Ember Balloon was tied to a fighter jet.

Not near it.

Not beside it.

To it.

His string was wrapped around a small metal piece near the wing, which was

probably not where a balloon was supposed to be.

But the Ember Balloon did not know that.

He had been waiting for this.

The ground trembled.

The engine began to whine.

Low at first.

Then louder.

Then deeper.

The Ember Balloon shook in place.

This is it.

The engine's whine deepened into a growl.

Heat rippled through the air.

The jet began to hum like something alive.

The Ember Balloon trembled with excitement.

The runway stretched out ahead.

This is what I've been waiting for.

Then the jet launched.

The Ember Balloon snapped backward.

Wind slapped against his round side.

The runway blurred.

The sound swallowed everything.

YES.

The jet screamed forward.

The Ember Balloon whipped and shook and pulled against the string like he had

been born for this exact bad idea.

They lifted off the ground.

The earth dropped away.

The sky opened.

The Ember Balloon was flying faster than any balloon had any business flying.

He loved every second of it.

The jet climbed.

The wind roared.

The string held.

The Ember Balloon shook with joy.

This is awesome.

Far above the runway, a bird flew across the sky.

In its beak was a small shiny button.

It was the kind of button that looked like it had already caused problems somewhere else.

The bird flapped higher.

The button caught the sunlight.

Just for one second, the whole world seemed to zoom in on it.

Then the bird let go.

The button fell.

Down.

Down.

Down.

It spun through the air.

The jet roared beneath it.

The Ember Balloon was still laughing in the wind.

The button kept falling.

Down.

Down.

Down.

The sunlight flashed off its edge.

The Ember Balloon pulled against his string.

The button dropped straight toward him.

Pop.

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THANK YOU FOR READING.

Some balloons should probably not be near engines.

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Written with curiosity.

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