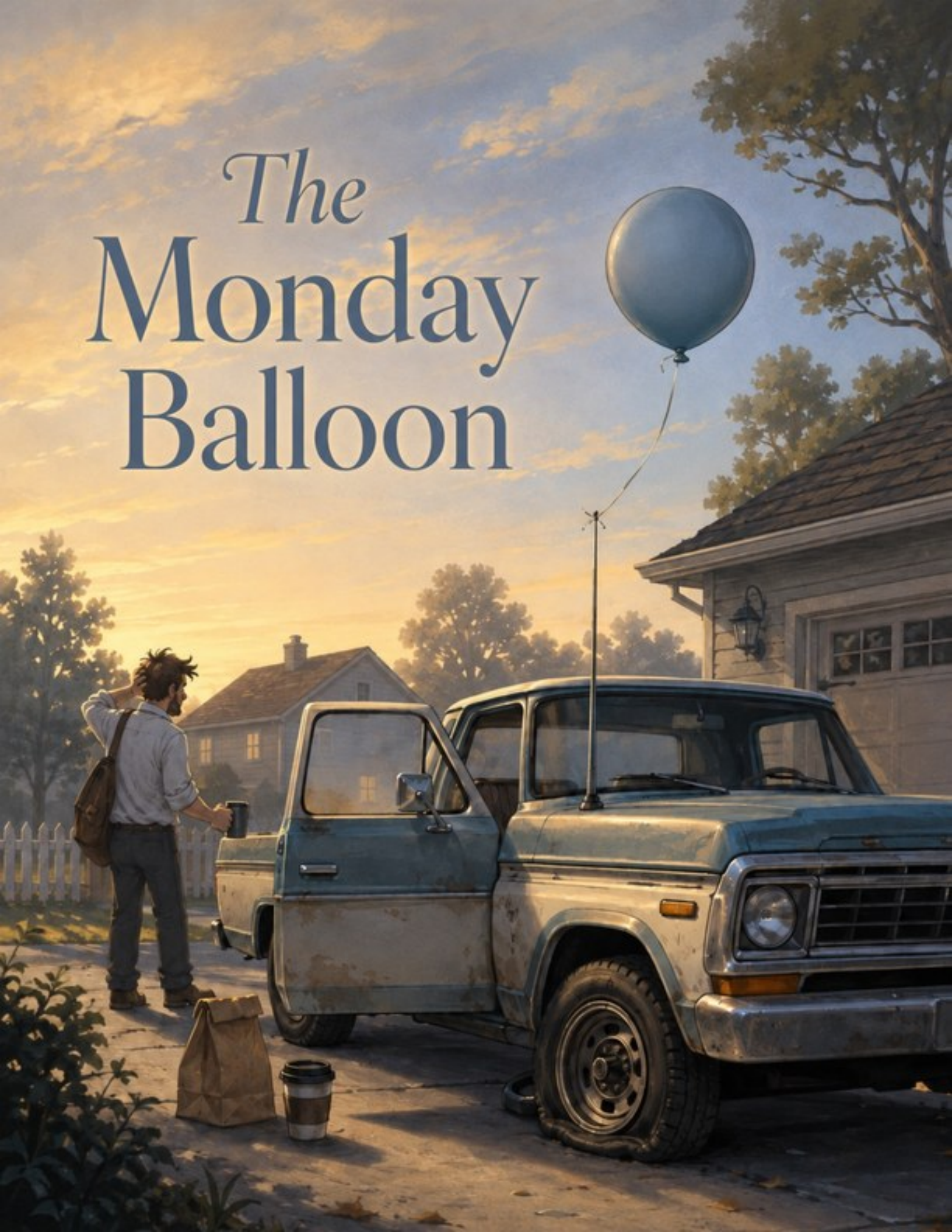

The
Monday
Balloon

The Monday Balloon was tied to the antenna of a truck.

That was his spot.

Every Monday morning, he watched the same man walk out of the house with a

lunch bag, work keys, and the face of someone trying to be positive about it.

The man was not mad.

It was a new week.

A fresh start.

Maybe after work, he would go home, eat dinner, sit down, and do absolutely

nothing important.

That sounded nice.

The Monday Balloon understood.

Mostly.

The front door opened.

The man stepped outside.

He was looking at his phone.

Just for a second.

That was the plan.

Then he looked up.

He saw the tire.

He blinked.

Then sighed.

"Oh no."

The Monday Balloon looked down.

The tire was not a little flat.

It was flat flat.

The man stood there for a moment.

Lunch bag in one hand.
Keys in the other.
Hope leaving his body in real time.
The Monday Balloon swayed gently above the truck.
Not enough to help.
Just enough to witness.
The man sighed.
"Okay. We can fix this."
The Monday Balloon did not know who we was.
The man found the jack.
Then the tire iron.
Then the spare.
Then he stared at all three like they were conspiring against him.
From inside the house, someone called, "You need help?"
"I got it," the man said.
He did not have it yet.
But he had said it.
That mattered.
He knelt beside the tire.
Tried the first lug nut.
Nothing.
Tried again.
Still nothing.
He stood up and looked toward the house.
"Honey, can you grab me the screwdriver?"
A few seconds later, she came outside holding a screwdriver.
The man looked at it.
Then looked at the tire.
Then looked back at the screwdriver.

"Not that one."
She looked at it too.
"The other one?"
"The squinty one."
She stared at him.
"The what?"
The man closed his eyes for one second.
"Never mind. That was on me."
The Monday Balloon swayed a little.
That felt fair.
Eventually, he got the tire changed.
It took longer than expected.
Maybe twenty minutes.
Maybe thirty.
Maybe a whole chapter of his life.
He wiped his hands.
Checked the time.
"Oh no."
Then the morning sped up.
Lunch bag.
Keys.
Phone.
Wallet.
Coffee.
No coffee.
He stopped at the truck door.
"I need coffee."
The Monday Balloon agreed.
Probably.

The truck rolled out of the driveway on the spare tire.
Carefully.
Humbly.
At the coffee shop, the line was long.
Of course it was.
It was Monday.
Everyone in town had been attacked by morning.
The man finally got his coffee.
Large.
Hot.
Extra shot.
He walked back to the truck like things were turning around.
Then the lid popped loose.
Coffee jumped out.
Right onto his shirt.
His good shirt.
The one that said, I tried today.
The man froze.
The Monday Balloon floated above the antenna.
Quietly.
This was not the time to move around.
The man looked down at the stain.
Then up at the sky.
Then back at the coffee.
Still mostly full.
He took a sip.
"Worth it."
By the time he pulled into work, he was five minutes late.
His phone buzzed.

A message from his boss.
Busy day. Buckle up.
The man read it.
Then looked at the coffee stain.
Then looked at the office.
Then picked up the cup and took another sip.
"Good thing I got the extra shot."
The Monday Balloon watched him walk inside.
Lunch bag.
Coffee stain.
Work keys.
Still trying.
The truck sat quietly in the parking lot.
The spare tire looked tired.
The Monday Balloon floated above it all.
Monday had officially started.
Unfortunately.

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THANK YOU FOR READING.

Some balloons chase danger. Some watch Monday happen.

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