

Weather Balloon

I had a weather balloon when I was a kid. It was about twelve feet in diameter. I tried to blow it up for about three or four days. I was only about nine years old at the time. I really wore myself out trying to blow that thing up like it was a regular balloon. Every day I would blow and blow just to get it partly inflated and then I would have to go to bed and it would deflate on me.

You see, it had this flap inside the neck which was supposed to act like a valve. When it had enough air pressure in it the pressure would keep the valve closed and the balloon would stay inflated. That's how it was supposed to work but I just couldn't do it with my tiny lungs. I woke up one morning and got a bright idea.

I grabbed my sadly deflated weather balloon and went outside. I stretched the neck of the weather balloon over the tailpipe of my mom's car. I went inside and grabbed mom's keys and was able to start the car. In no time at all it seemed to be actually putting air into the balloon. I was thrilled. I ran out behind the car to watch it inflate. Being just a kid I got rather impatient. It seemed to be taking forever now. I went back inside the car and started revving the engine to make the balloon inflate faster. It was slowly having an effect. I could now see the balloon just rising up over the trunk of the car. I got so excited I started revving the engine more and more. VAROOOMMM!
VAROOOOOOOOMMM! VAVAROOOOOOOOMMM! I was really seeing progress now.

Well as we all know warm air rises. With all the revving I was doing to the engine, I unknowingly was heating up the motor rather severely. All of a sudden it started to have an effect on the balloon. The balloon suddenly flipped quickly into a vertical position directly behind the car. It was about five feet in diameter at this point. I kept revving the engine as my excitement level rose to a fever pitch.

VAROOOMMM! VAROOOMMM! VAROOOMMM! Before I know it the weather balloon was ten feet across. I was ecstatic! I was having the time of my life up to this point. That's when things started going horribly wrong. The balloon started lifting the car off of the ground! It was about eleven feet across by now. I started pressing the gas pedal harder hoping to blow enough air into the balloon to blow it off of the tailpipe. It got BIGGER. The weather balloon was starting to lift the car higher.

I pressed the gas pedal to the floor and put the car in "D", like mom did when she drove, so I could outrun the balloon. I couldn't get away! All the while the car is pumping extremely HOT exhaust into this twelve foot weather balloon. It lifts the car HIGHER, and HIGHER until all of a sudden the car is completely vertical. Well, you know what that did to me? It threw me out of the seat onto the gas pedal. VAROOOMMM!!!!!!!!!!!!!! The engine sounded like it was coming apart. It was going to explode any minute. I decided now would be a good time to start screaming. MOM!!! MOM!!! All the while the motor is screaming VAROOOMMM! MOM!

Then all of a sudden, the inevitable happened. The balloon which was just about ready to take the car off of the ground, popped off of the tailpipe. I could see it all in the rear view mirror and when I turned around to look at it my foot came off the gas pedal. The car must have had enough, because right at that moment it stalled. Picture this... A nine year old boy, staring into space watching his beloved weather balloon which he put so much time and effort into, float into outer space from the front seat of a completely vertical 1970 Ford Maverick which was standing on it's front bumper.

Something had to give. Cars were not made to stand on the bumper. Before I could form a complete thought the car begins it's inevitable fall to a horizontal position. Uh uh! Time to panic again! MOM!!!! By time the car hit the ground I was lying on the floor of the back seat thinking, "Am I dead?"

I tried to collect my thoughts and get back into the house before mom woke up. I guess it's a good thing that the car was so loud she couldn't hear my screams or she would have woke up.

I sneaked back in and she was still sleeping. I sneaked back into my bed and threw the covers over myself, clothes and all. I didn't have time for 'jammies. I was in bed for a few minutes before I heard mom stirring. All of a sudden I heard her shriek. "Mom, what's wrong?" I asked She pointed at the car. I guess I was too panicked to notice at the time of my escape, but the car was about eight feet from it's original location, and the rear shocks had been driven all the way up through the trunk lid. She looked at me and said, "It looks like someone tried to drive my car to the moon in a weather balloon."

My jaw dropped. I looked at my mother and asked in a shaky voice, "What do you mean?" She started laughing at me. She finally admitted to hearing me sneak out of the house and that she saw the whole fiasco from beginning to end. She told me that she got in the bed knowing that I would actually think she never heard all that racket. So, if you ever buy a weather balloon from an ad in the back of a comic book, don't ever, EVER, try to inflate it by sticking it on the tailpipe of your moms car.