

WHERE I AM AND WHERE I NEED TO GO

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See a lot of interesting things in my line of work. Some good: like earlier this spring when I showed up for a tow call and found a bride in her long white dress and the groom in his monkey suit standing next to the ditch where the bed of their bright red pick-up poked in the air, the long strings of beer cans dangling from the chrome bumper, the “Just Married” scrawled across the back glass barely visible at that angle.

Neither seemed upset. In fact, after I got their truck pulled out of the ditch and loaded on the wrecker, when the two of them climbed in the back-seat of my rig they couldn't keep their hands off each other, like they were in a limo, and I was the chauffeur. Before I knew it, in my rearview mirror I saw the gal working her dress up around her hips so she could straddle her new husband. I half-wished my truck had one of those partitions between the front and rear to give them some privacy, but I kind of wished I didn't have to keep an eye on the road, too. It was something, really, those two. Here they just wrecked their truck leaving their wedding, but it didn't seem to bother them one bit. Hell, my ex and I would've been at each other's throats, even back when we were young and hot for each other. I'll bet the old boy lost control of his truck because his bride couldn't keep her hands off his zipper.

And then there's the bad: like the call I went on a few weeks ago.

There was nothing special about the way the workday started—a couple fender benders in the morning, an illegally parked tow-away in Old Town around lunchtime, and a flat tire out on West Kellogg in the early

afternoon—but then the call before the call I mean to tell you about came in. Ernesto, a cop friend of mine, sent me a text about a breakdown in Eastborough. Protocol is for Ernesto to call it in and for the dispatcher to then call for a tow truck, so Ernesto doesn't get in touch with me directly unless he thinks there's an opportunity. Plus, Ernesto's a Wichita cop. Eastborough is a little village in the middle of Wichita and it has its own city hall and police force (all of three cruisers), and its residents are in a tax bracket I couldn't reach with a rocket ship. Let's just say I'm surprised they don't have gates at the entrance. The people in Eastborough don't drive cars that break down, or at least that's what I thought until I saw the orange and black '69 Camaro sitting on the side of the road, steam billowing out from under its hood.

Ernesto knew better than to stick around and was already gone when I pulled in front of the Camaro. Before I could get out of my truck, a kid, probably seventeen or eighteen, comes to my door. He's got sunglasses on and he's wearing khaki shorts, a yellow golf shirt, and flip-flops. He starts right in on me.

"You're late, you know that? I've been waiting, like, fifteen minutes."

With that, I decided to take my time. Dug around in my console, made like I was looking in the back seat for something, studied a blank form on my clipboard.

"Look, chief, I'm not messing around here. I just might have to make a call to your boss."

It wasn't the threat of calling my boss, it was the "chief" that did it. I do my best not to get into it with people like this, but this kid pissed me off. People like him think people like me don't have anything better to do than sit around waiting for their phone call, like we need them or something. From the looks of things, this kid needed me a whole helluva lot more than I needed him.

I got out of the truck faster than he expected, and he took a couple steps back and looked me over. I could see he hadn't expected me to be so big or to move so quick. It seemed the long hair and fu-manchu, tattoos, and shit-kicker boots made an impression on him. I still hadn't said anything.

After a long moment, the kid took off his sunglasses and said, "The car, all of a sudden it just started smoking." The kid was scared. It was probably Daddy's and he wasn't supposed to have it out. I decided to give the kid a quick test.

"Pop the hood and I'll take a look," I said. The kid opened the driver's door of the Camaro and reached under the dash. His eyes got a little bigger when he didn't find a hood release lever. Here this kid was driving a classic, and he didn't even know how to open the goddamn hood. I stuck my fingers in the front grille, found the lever, and popped it.

When the kid came around the front, he asked, "Well?"

Lots of people assume tow truck drivers are mechanics, and I suppose some of them are, but I'm not. However, even I could see all that had happened was the lower radiator hose had split, and the fan had thrown coolant onto the headers. As long as he'd shut it down soon enough, the car would be fine. A little part of me felt good for the kid—he hadn't done any major damage to his dad's car—but a much larger part thought, Fuck this little shit for getting to drive this car, and fuck his dad for not teaching him anything about it. Probably didn't even know anything about it himself. So, when I leaned in over the engine, the brown sugary smell of the steaming hot antifreeze rising to my nose, I paused just long enough to sell it. "I don't know, buddy, it doesn't look good."

"Oh, shit," he said. "Can you fix it?"

"Me? Hell no. This kind of work is above my pay grade. I mean, if it were just a belt or a hose, then maybe, but what we're dealing with here looks to be internal."

"Fuck. You've got to help me out, man. My dad can't know about this."

"I gotta guy that might be able to take a look at it. He usually only works by appointment, but he owes me one.."

"Please, man, what's it going to take?"

Bingo.

"My guy owes me, but I don't want to just give that favor up for nothing." The kid took out his wallet and handed me a hundred dollar bill quicker and easier than I had anticipated; it seemed he understood perfectly. If you had money, and he clearly did, you could buy your way out

of just about anything. Who am I to disrupt this system? I thought about pushing it, seeing as how easily he forked over the hundred, but I wasn't done with him just yet. There was still some money to be made. I folded the bill and put it in my pocket. "Let's get you hooked up."

The kid was quiet on the drive to Ray's shop. Ray's actually a good mechanic, but like me, he's not above taking advantage when the situation presents itself. And this was one of those situations. Ray and I don't do this a lot, but we've done it enough times to develop a kind of system. I'm sure he knew it was on when he saw me pull in with the Camaro, but I gave him a quick nod in the garage just to be sure. I left while Ray was giving the kid his spiel. I didn't know how much Ray would be able to get out of him, but Ray was good, so I knew it'd be a sizeable sum, forty percent of which was mine—my finder's fee. Even after kicking Ernesto a few bucks, I'd be in good shape.

I was riding pretty high leaving Ray's. A hundred dollars richer, and though I wasn't especially proud of screwing the kid over, I'd scored a few points for the working man. I was thinking about what I'd do with my extra hundred when the call, the one this story is really about, came in. I knew before I showed up that it probably wasn't going to be good because the dispatcher told me the highway patrolman that called it in said it was a multiple car accident. It happened north of town on 254, kinda out in the country. There's quite a bit of traffic out there, though—it runs between Wichita and El Dorado and lots of people take it to avoid the toll on the turnpike. It's a four-lane highway divided by a grassy median, but it's not an interstate so there aren't any exit ramps. Cars have to cross the opposite two lanes if they want to make a left turn down any of the side roads, and the speed limit is 70. When accidents happen out here, they're bad.

On my way to the scene, while I weaved my way through the traffic that had backed up a good quarter of a mile, I heard the Life Flight helicopter before I saw it lifting off the ground. One of those. When I finally got through the traffic, I couldn't actually see anything because the ambulance and police cars, their cherries burning, had blocked both eastbound lanes and one of the westbound ones. While I waited for one of the officers to clear a path around the blockade, I saw a man being loaded into the back of

an ambulance. He was strapped to a back-board and his head was secured in a brace, and an EMT was walking alongside the stretcher, squeezing one of those bags to keep his oxygen flowing. The officer waved me around, and at the back of another ambulance, two emergency workers were loading two black body bags. With close to half a million people in and around Wichita, there are plenty of wrecks, but with the way the city is laid out and the few highways, there just aren't that many fatality accidents. This wasn't the first time I'd seen this kind of thing, but it wasn't something I'd grown used to, either. I don't know how the cops and EMT's deal with it. Then I came upon the wreck, or at least its aftermath. It takes a lot for a couple of wrecked cars to get my attention, but let me tell you, this was something. It was no wonder people died.

I saw what used to be two vehicles, one angled across the two east-bound lanes, and one off in the grass in the median. As I pulled around the front of the vehicle in the highway, I could tell it was an SUV, but it was too smashed for me to recognize the make. From the way it looked, no one inside could have survived. The front half was basically gone from the firewall forward—the engine was sitting out in the middle of the highway in a pool of oil and coolant—and the right side was hit so hard and had caved in so much that the driver's side doors must have jammed because the roof was peeled back on the passenger's side where the firemen had used the Jaws of Life. I got out of my rig to lower the flatbed and hook up the winch and saw the blue oval on the center cap on one of the rear wheels. I figured it to be a Ford Escape. It was too small to be an Explorer. But it didn't matter anymore; the scrap yard wasn't picky.

After I'd secured the winch hooks to the frame and started dragging the Escape up the flatbed, the screeching metal piercing the quiet of the accident scene, something flashed in the backseat area and caught my eye, and I released the lever to stop the winch. The front of the Escape was up on the flatbed but the rear wheels were still on the ground, so I didn't have to climb up to see inside. As I approached the hole in the rear door where the side glass used to be, the silver backside of a Mylar balloon turned in the breeze, and on the front, in bold, blue letters, it said: "It's a Boy!" I leaned my head in. A twisted and broken car seat sat strapped in the center

of the backseat and next to it a fuzzy, stuffed, smiling blue bear with the string of the balloon tied around its paw. I'm a big man and I cast a pretty mean shadow, but I shit you not, it felt like my stomach dropped into my boots. I got lightheaded and had to grab ahold of the door to keep my feet. Though I didn't want to, I looked in the back again. The belts on the car seat harness had been cut, and I thought about the Life Flight. I looked again at the smiling bear, the car was smashed all to hell, yet here in the backseat sat a stuffed bear and a balloon that hadn't been touched. How the balloon didn't pop, I'll never know.

I went through the motions of securing the Escape to the flat bed, trying to keep my shit together, and it wasn't until I saw another wrecker pull up to tow away the other vehicle—a four-door Silverado with the front end crushed in bad—that I remembered the man I saw the EMTs working on. Based on the damage to the two vehicles, if I'd had to guess, I'd have said the man was the driver of the truck. It looked more survivable, but he was still a lucky sonofabitch. At least the ambulance he was riding in had its lights on.

I double checked to make sure the carcass of the Escape was secure before getting back in my rig. I weaved through the collection of police cars and emergency vehicles until my path cleared and the highway opened up before me. I headed back toward Wichita to the city impound lot, but I only made it a couple miles when I noticed in my upper side mirror the balloon dancing around in the back of the Escape. I flipped on my lights and pulled over to the shoulder. In my mirror I watched as the balloon whipped around in the air as cars passed. It jerked against the string so hard when a semi roared by I thought for sure the string would break free from the bear. When it was finally clear, I got out and hustled back to the flatbed and pulled myself up. I reached into the back of the Escape, careful not to cut myself, or the balloon, on the safety glass crumbles, and took the bear and balloon out. I carried it up to the front and put them gently on the passenger side of the bench seat. After what it had survived, I wouldn't have been able to stand seeing that balloon pop now. Or even worse, break loose from the bear and float away. Besides, they belonged to that little boy, and if he survived, then I wanted to return them to him.

On my way back to the city lot to drop off the Escape, I got a call from the dispatcher to pick up a car in the Delano district, but I begged off. I told her I wasn't feeling well, and it wasn't a lie. With the A/C blowing full blast on the drive back, the balloon twisted and bobbed around the cab of the truck, almost playfully, as if it understood its purpose, and there was that bear sitting next to me on the seat, still smiling as if nothing had happened. It got so I couldn't even look at it. I was half tempted to pull off somewhere and toss them in a dumpster or down a storm drain, just to be rid of them, but I knew deep down I couldn't.

After unloading the Escape, I stopped off for a twelve pack of High Life at the liquor store on the corner of Oliver and Lincoln just down the street from my house. I'm not a teetotaler by any stretch, and though I probably look like I'm the kind of guy who ties one on every night, I don't do that either. But after the day I'd had, the few stray beers in the fridge at home weren't going to cover it.

I'd already finished one beer by the time I pulled into my driveway. I tucked the opened box of beer under my arm and got out of my truck. I closed the door and watched as the balloon shifted on the displaced air in the cab of the truck. I made it inside my house without looking over my shoulder. Inside, I put the beer in the fridge next to a couple stragglers that I would have normally drunk first, but they were microbrew that Ernesto left the last time he was over, and I wanted something I could drink fast.

I took out another High Life and twisted off the top. After a long swallow, I had half the bottle finished. I sat on the couch and turned on the TV. I checked the four local news stations for coverage of the wreck. I finished my beer while jockeying between the channels. At the fridge getting a fresh one, I heard the anchorwoman say something about a wreck on 254. I hustled back into the living room, my new beer foaming over the lip of the bottle so that I had to suck hard on the suds to keep them from spilling on the carpet, just in time to see the stock accident footage—the road flares, the emergency vehicles, the backed-up traffic—and hear the off-screen reporter say: *“...three fatalities, two adults declared dead on the scene, and a infant that died at the hospital. The driver of the other vehicle suffered life-threatening injuries. He's currently listed in critical condition at Wesley.*

Police speculate that alcohol may have played a role in the accident. Gina Thompsen reporting from highway 254 in north Sedgwick county." I muted the TV and walked away.

The third beer went down even faster than the first two as I paced the house. Before I knew it, I was standing at my living room window looking out into the cab of my truck. At first it looked like the balloon was still, but the longer I looked at it, I noticed it was turning ever so slightly like it couldn't help moving.

I drank two more beers standing at the window before I finally went outside. When I opened the passenger side door it caused a kind of vacuum and sucked the balloon toward the open door. It pulled taut against the bear's wrist as if straining to break free. I gathered the bear in my arms and made sure to hold the string tight in my hand. When I got inside, I set the bear in the center of my kitchen table, and the balloon bobbed in the air a few times before settling into a calm listing from side to side as I drank my way deep into my twelve pack.

It had gotten dark outside without my noticing and I hadn't bothered to turn on any lights in the house. The TV was still on in the corner of the living room casting its flickering light against the wall in front of me. I looked at the bear and balloon and the shadows they cast on the wall. Then I saw my shadow, a dark, featureless mass. I reached for the bear and brought it to my face, my shadow mirroring my movements. I buried my face in the bear's fur and inhaled deeply. Whatever I was trying to smell was gone. All that was left was the acrid synthetic smell of the soft blue fur.

I woke up at the table with my head on the bear as a pillow, the balloon floating above my head like a thought bubble in the funny papers. It was still early—I hadn't overslept—and my neck was pinched tight and my brain felt loose in my head. I made a pot of coffee after I took a shower, and while I was waiting for it to finish brewing, a police siren blipped outside my house, and I knew it was Ernesto. He stopped by for coffee every now and then at the start of his shift. When I met him at the door, he said, "So?"

"So what?" I asked and stepped aside to let him in. Ernesto wasn't fat—stocky maybe—but at only five-six on a good day, and with the uniform,

Kevlar vest, and police belt, he looked thick. It didn't help that his uniform squeaked when he walked.

"What do you mean *so what?* That kid yesterday with the Camaro. Was I right?"

After the night I'd had, I'd completely forgotten about that kid. "Yeah, you were right."

"Ah-ha! Just leave it to the Mexican to sniff out the chump."

Ernesto is always saying shit like this, and it rarely makes any sense. He's Mexican, all right, dark skin, dark hair, dark eyes, the works. But even though he pronounces words like *tequila*, *guacamole*, and *jalapeño* with an accent, he doesn't speak a word of Spanish.

"So," Ernesto continued, "how much did we get him for?"

"Ray'll let me know the next couple days," I said and thought about the hundred the kid had given me. I probably should've split that with Ernesto, but money he didn't know about didn't really exist.

"I knew it the minute I saw that punk." The coffee maker beeped in the kitchen and Ernesto gestured toward it and I nodded. "Shit, man, you have a party last night?" he asked when he saw the beer bottles in the sink and the ones on the table. Before I could answer he said, "Who had a baby?"

I told Ernesto about the smashed up SUV and the bodies and the twisted and broken baby seat, and how I'd seen the paramedics working on the driver of the other vehicle. Ernesto said he'd heard that call go out over the radio at the end of his shift. I explained to him how the bear and balloon were unharmed, how I couldn't just leave them in the vehicle, and how I'd planned to return them, but the baby died. "Damn," Ernesto said. "Damn."

"I need you to look into this. Find out who the driver is." It wasn't until I said it that I realized I had to know more about the guy who'd been driving the truck. I needed to see what kind of man he was because it was clear I wasn't going to get over this anytime soon.

"You realize what you're asking me to do?"

This from the man who the day before helped me scam a rich kid, and who from time to time pockets the dime bags and half smoked joints he

confiscates from teenagers. I don't mean to make him out to be a bad guy, but I wasn't going to let him get high and mighty on me when I asked a favor of him.

"Yeah I do. I'm asking you to ask around, to punch some shit into a computer, whatever. And don't give me any shit about your job."

Ernesto finished his coffee in silence, and when he left he didn't say he'd look into the accident, but he didn't say he wouldn't, either. When I left for work I grabbed the bear and balloon off the table and carried them out to my truck.

The two rode shotgun with me until I towed a woman and her car from Towne East Mall to a mechanic downtown. When she climbed in the truck and saw the bear and balloon, she said, "Oh." When I brought them with me I hadn't thought about any people riding along. I grabbed them and placed them as gently as I could in the back seat. "Who had a baby?" the woman asked.

"My sister," I said.

"Congrats, Uncle," she said. "Is this your first nephew?"

I nodded. "I'm going to the hospital after work."

"You'll have so much fun being an uncle. You get to spoil 'em, get 'em all riled up and send 'em home to mom and dad." The woman laughed and went on to tell me all about her kids—she had three, two girls and boy—and I did my best to pay attention and act interested.

My ex and I had wanted kids, but hard as we tried we couldn't make it happen. We never went to the doctor or anything. I'm not even sure we knew there was such a thing as a fertility clinic back then. Hell, couldn't have afforded it anyhow.

While I waited for the guy in the office of the mechanic's shop to sign for the woman's car, I got a text from Ernesto: *Glenn Murphy. BAC. 19 1030 S. Capri Ln. Dont make me regret this.*

Early that afternoon after my last tow, I looked up Glenn Murphy's address on the GPS and was surprised to find he only lived a couple miles from me. I didn't know what to expect or what I was going to do when I got there,

but I had to see where he lived. Though I hadn't given it much thought, for some reason I'd expected him to live in a neighborhood like mine—full of houses that were built as temporary McConnell Air Force barracks during WWII, but later sold and converted into low-rent four-plexes. I pulled into the neighborhood and couldn't believe how normal it looked. All the plain brick ranch houses looked the same, like dozens of other post-war neighborhoods in Wichita, yet everything looked nicer than where I lived. When I turned down Capri Lane and the GPS voice told me my destination was on the right, I slowed as I passed the house. In the driveway a tall, thin brunette woman and a small boy were getting out of a beige sedan. The woman said something to the boy before going inside the house, leaving the boy alone in the yard. I looked again at the address above the garage to make sure it matched what Ernesto had given me. It did. I circled the block, and when I came back to the house, I didn't see the boy so I pulled to the curb. Though I'd had little idea what I was doing at the house or what I thought I'd find, it hadn't even occurred to me that Murphy might have a family. The version of him I'd formed in my mind couldn't live in that house or be a husband and a father. My head reeled with thoughts of the wreck, the little smashed SUV, the mangled car seat, and the Life Flight helicopter leaving the scene. I looked over my shoulder at the bear and balloon in the back seat, and when I turned back the little boy had stepped out from behind the large oak tree in the yard. He held a yellow toy dump truck and was staring at me.

I suppose a shrink might call what happened next a kind of temporary mental break or something, and I'm not entirely sure that didn't happen.

I rolled down my passenger side window. The little boy took a couple steps away from the tree, and now that I could see him better, I guessed him to be about six or so. He was a good-looking kid with dark hair and eyes, and I wondered if this was what Murphy looked like.

Because I didn't know what else to do, I waved at the boy. To my surprise he waved back and came up to my truck. "Cool truck you got there," I called through the window. The boy perked up when I mentioned his truck.

"It's a Tonka. My dad got it for me." The boy's voice was deeper and more assured than I expected.

"Mine's a Ford." I tapped hard on the dash with my hand. "Not a Tonka, but it gets the job done."

The boy looked at me and then at my rig for a moment. "What's it do?"

"Well," I said and took a quick look up and down the street. I was nervous. I didn't know what I was doing, but I knew people would be getting off work soon and my being there without a single dead car in sight probably didn't look good. I got out of my rig. "You wanna see how the bed raises up and down?" He nodded quickly. "There's a bunch of levers over here that work it," I said, but he didn't move.

"Okay," I said. "Stay clear." I raised the flatbed and extended it down to the street and then brought it back up. The boy's eyes went wide as he watched the hydraulics working. I kept an eye on the front window of the house. The curtains were open about halfway, but I didn't see any movement inside. "Pretty cool, huh?" I said after the flat bed was back in place.

The boy nodded again.

"My name's Howard," I said. "What's yours?"

The boy looked over his shoulder at his house as if he heard something, and I flinched and started to make for the cab, but he turned back to me and no one came out of the house.

"Alexander."

"Nice to meet you, Alexander." I knew even as I said that it sounded bad, but I had to ask, "Where's your mom and dad?"

"Mom's inside sleeping. Daddy's sick at the hospital."

"Oh," I said and thought about Murphy in his hospital bed and his kid standing here with me.

"What's that?" Alexander said and pointed into the cab of my truck. I got in and slid across and opened the passenger door for him to see. Alexander came and stood in the open space in front of the door.

"This here? It's a GPS computer to tell me where I am and where I need to go."

"Why do you need to know where you are?"

"I need to know where I am so I can know how to get where I'm going," I said and entered in my address. "See, here we are, and this dot

here is where I live. Now I know how to get home.” I waited a moment while Alexander looked at the GPS screen.

“Where’s the hospital?”

“It’s downtown,” I said and scrolled the GPS map to show him.

“Mom says I can’t see Daddy yet. He’s still too sick.” Alexander looked over his shoulder again and then pulled himself up onto the edge of the seat, his hand along the top and his knee on the seat for balance, to get a better look inside my truck. I thought for a moment about Murphy, still alive in his hospital bed, and about this neighborhood, and his house, and his wife and son, and all the other things he probably had that I didn’t and how he’d nearly pissed it away. Then I thought about the brand new family he’d killed and looked at Alexander right in front of me, clueless as to what his father had done. I realized then that I could grab him and be gone before anyone knew the difference. I saw how, with one simple decision, I could take something that Murphy didn’t deserve and ruin his life—or what was left of it. It’d ruin mine too, but at that moment I didn’t care. And I’d be lying if I said I didn’t, for that moment at least, seriously consider it until Alexander said, “You got a balloon.” When he said that, it took everything out of me, like a goddamn punch in the gut. He was just a little kid who thought his dad was sick in the hospital. This little glimpse of Murphy’s life had fucked me up so much I hadn’t even considered how this boy might feel or what it would’ve done to him if I’d taken him. I’d have been worse than Murphy.

I reached into the backseat and pulled the bear and balloon up to the front so Alexander could see them. He gently touched the bear’s fur and looked up at the balloon. “Can I—”

“They’re a friend of mine’s,” I said, and I looked up in time to see Alexander’s mother storming out the front door. She began screaming his name as she barreled across the yard, and he climbed off the seat and stepped a few feet away from the truck. For a split second I thought of getting the hell out of there as quickly as a could, but I was afraid she’d see the name of the towing company on the door. So instead, I tried to stay calm despite the watery feeling in my stomach. I slid across the seat and stepped out behind Alexander. His mother scooped him off the ground and held him

tight, backpedalling several steps. She looked like a woman who had just seen the rest of her life, nearly husbandless and now childless, flash before her eyes.

"Ma'am, I'm a friend of Glenn's," I said as evenly as I could, trying as much to calm myself as her. "We used to work together. I was just showing Alexander here my truck."

Her eyes were wide and searching my face, and she was squeezing Alexander so tightly the veins in her forearms bulged under her skin.

"I heard about the—" I started, but then looked at Alexander in his mother's arms, and continued, "what happened, and I just wanted to stop by and see if there was anything I could do."

"No," she said, breathing heavily. As she began to calm some now that Alexander was safely in her arms, I could see in her face how tired she was. She'd probably spent the last couple days in a hospital watching her husband cling to life. Under normal circumstances she would've been an attractive woman. Seeing her there holding her son, I felt sick to my stomach for what I'd almost done. "We're fine. Now leave us. *Please*."

"Okay," I said and raised my hands to show I meant no offense and walked around the front of my rig. She'd turned and was quickly walking toward the front door as if she thought I might chase them. "Take care of that one," I said before I got in. "He's a good kid."

As I drove away from Murphy's house, the weight of what had just happened, what I'd almost done, came down on me. The first chance I got, I pulled over my rig, opened my door, stuck my head out and retched.

I didn't follow what happened to Glenn Murphy. I assume that if he lived there was or would eventually be a trial of some sort, but I steered clear of all that. And if he died, well... For several weeks following my visit to his house, I expected a phone call from the police. I mean, I nearly kidnapped that child, or at least that's how I'm sure it looked. But I guess his wife believed I was a friend of Glenn's, or I'm sure I'd be answering to someone.

You might not believe this, but it's been almost a month and my balloon is still floating above my bear. The string's got a little slack in it, but it doesn't seem to be going anywhere.