

BALLOON GUY

By

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EXT. ISOLATED FIELD - DAY

A small white house stands alone in a green field.

A man exits. He wears a long raincoat, a three-pointed hat and wellies.

And he's carrying a large balloon. The massive white sphere tugs and pulls, trying to escape.

Striding purposefully out into the field, he stops in the exact spot he always stops in. Looks at his watch.

10:59am. The small hand counts the seconds until 11am.

4...3...2...1

His hand opens. The balloon floats away.

He pauses for a moment, half-expecting some kind of response.

CLOSE UP on an eccentric, thoughtful man (30s).

TITLE: BALLOON GUY.

He walks back into his house.

TIMELAPSE: Day turns to night, somehow we see the balloon getting smaller, travelling further, melting into the moon as it rises, then disappears, as night turns back to day.

EXT. ISOLATED FIELD - TREES - DAY

GEORGE and FRANCESCA (10), hide within the treeline, watching the mysterious man leave his house.

George wears an oversize suit jacket that has no place with his trousers, a cowboy hat and an expression of fascination. She wears a leopard print jacket and cool, dark, sunglasses so big they hide her face.

A couple of everyday charity shop heroes.

GEORGE

Start the clock.

FRANCESCA

It will be the same as it always is.

GEORGE

Let's hope so. Or our operation is blown.

Francesca rolls her eyes at this, while George takes a cassette player out of a rucksack and hits rewind.

GEORGE

Supplies?

Francesca produces a children's lunch box and matching flask.

She pours hot tea. And takes out a single sandwich, cut into two halves.

GEORGE

Do you think we'll always be friends?

FRANCESCA

Of course we will silly.

GEORGE

Not if your parents send you away.

FRANCESCA

(Mimics an adult)

One last chance Francesca.

A beat as they revel in the impression.

GEORGE

If I get you a balloon, you have to stay -- Deal?

She holds out her little finger. And he does the same, shaking on a childhood pact that can't be broken.

FRANCESCA

Deal.

The cassette player CLICKS to a halt. George presses play. We hear NOTHING IN THIS WORLD by THE KINKS.

They both launch into their sandwiches.

INT. VILLAGE POST OFFICE - DAY

Balloon Guy pauses in front of a mailbox. Swallows his heart like his life depends on what's inside. And turns the key.

A hand rattles around the innards, finding emptiness.

An eye peers in, confirming the vacancy.

Deflated, he picks up more white envelopes than anyone could ever need and goes to the counter to buy the lot.

EXT. ISOLATED FIELD - DAY

A pink bubble expanding until POP - gum explodes and reveals Francesca's delighted face.

George takes up the challenge. Breathing out a white bubble that seems like it will never stop growing.

Then bursts, covering his face. Francesca laughs, impressed.

FRANCESCA

I like it when they pop.

She picks some of the white gum from his face. They regard each other through older eyes for a second.

Francesca quickly pecks George on the cheek. Of course, he likes it, but doesn't want to say so.

In the distance, Balloon Guy returns, breaking the moment.

GEORGE

Stop the clock.

FRANCESCA

10:55am. The same.

GEORGE

So we'll have two hours till he gets back and --

GEORGE & FRANCESCA

Releases the balloon.

FRANCESCA

Jinx.

George and Francesca start to pack up their rucksacks.

He wants to say something, but Francesca puts a finger to his lips. He's jinxed.

She straightens his hat. Stands back and admires.

In the distance, Balloon Guy is releasing another balloon.

FRANCESCA

I wonder where it goes?