

Troublesome Technology

By:

Ami Patel

FADE IN:

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

PENNY, 11, bubbly, is swinging on a swing while AMBER, 16, maternal, pushes her from behind to help her keep going.

PENNY

I remember when Mom used to push us
on the swings.

AMBER

I remember the pillow fights we
used to have and waking up every
Saturday morning to her pancakes.

PENNY

She made the best pancakes, didn't
she? I miss her, Amber.

AMBER

Yeah, me too. Me too. But don't
forget. You're not alone. I'm here.
And I bet Mom's watching us from
above too.

Penny looks up at Amber and smiles at the thought. Amber
smiles back.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amber and Penny are standing on their beds and having a
pillow fight. Penny spots a present left on their dresser.

PENNY

(pointing at present)
Hey! Look at that?

AMBER

(turning around)
What?

Amber walks closer to the dresser and picks up the gift.

AMBER

It's from Dad for me. Maybe a late
birthday present?

PENNY

Open it! Open it!

Amber pulls the ribbon and opens the gift. Inside is a brand new, cell phone.

AMBER
(her face lighting up with joy)
Cool! Dad got me a cell phone!
Finally! Oh, my first cell phone!

PENNY
Don't get addicted to it. Remember what happened to Emma?

AMBER
(smiling)
Ha, don't worry. I won't.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Amber and Penny are waiting for the bus. Amber is busy texting on her new phone.

PENNY
(looking at Amber)
Amber, can you help me with my science project? I can't think of a good idea. I want to do something original, not another volcano. What do you think I should do?

Amber continues texting on her phone.

PENNY
Amber?

Amber doesn't react.

PENNY
Amber!

AMBER
(looks over at Penny)
Huh? What? Oh, sorry. I didn't hear you.

PENNY
(exasperated)
Forget it...

Amber goes back to texting. Penny stays silent for the rest of their wait.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

Penny is swinging on the swing. Amber stands nearby the pole closest to the swing but she's busy texting.

PENNY

Hey, Amber! Give me a push, will you?

AMBER

Yeah, just a second.

Amber fidgets with her phone for a few more seconds and puts it in her jacket pocket. She gets behind Penny to push her and gives her a single push. Her phone rings again.

PENNY

(a little irritated)

Amber? Come on! A few minutes away from your phone won't kill you.

AMBER

(her face still immersed in her phone)

Penny, you're a big girl. You can push yourself.

PENNY

I know, but this is our special time together. It's not as much fun without...

Penny slows down on the swing and looks back at Amber, but Amber isn't paying attention.

PENNY

(disappointed)

you.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amber is sitting on her bed texting on her phone and Penny approaches her with a pillow.

PENNY

Pillow FIGHT!!

Penny hits Amber on her head with the pillow.

AMBER

No, not now. I'm busy.

PENNY
Only a few minutes.

AMBER
No, I'm busy.

PENNY
(gets angry)
Amber, you're always busy! All you care about anymore is that stupid phone! You can't go a minute without checking it.

Penny starts crying. She drops the pillow, gets off the bed, and walks out the door, slamming it shut. Amber sits speechless and looks down at her phone and back up towards the door.

AMBER
That's not true. I don't check my phone every minute.

Amber puts down the phone and after a few seconds, it rings. She reaches towards it, but her hand stops mid-reach and she recovers herself. She stares at the clock, moving her hands around in nervousness and impatience. The second hand moves 30 seconds and she caves in and picks up the phone.

AMBER
(rubs her temple in frustration and sighs)
Crap. She's right.

Amber puts the phone face down on her bed.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Amber is getting ready to head to the bus stop. Penny has already left without her. Amber leaves her phone on her bed and heads out the door.

EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING

Amber reaches the bus stop.

AMBER
(looks over at Penny)
Look, I thought about what you said and you're right. I'm trying to stop being so addicted to the phone.

PENNY

Really?

AMBER

Yeah. I left it at home today. See?

Amber pats her jacket pocket and is a little surprised. She reaches inside and pulls out her phone. She looks shocked.

PENNY

(nodding her head from side to side)

Left it at home, huh?

AMBER

No, I swear. I did! I don't know how it got in my pocket.

PENNY

Having your face in your phone is one thing, but now, you have to start lying?

Penny turns away from her and stares off into space.

AMBER

I'm not lying, Penny. I promise.

Penny continues to ignore Amber. Amber leaves the bus stop and goes back home.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

Amber puts the phone on a little table in her bedroom.

EXT. SIDEWALK - MORNING

Amber walks to school.

INT. SCHOOL BATHROOM - DAY

Amber unzips her backpack to get something and she finds her phone inside. She gasps suddenly. She takes out the phone and holds it with an astonished expression on her face.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amber places the phone inside the box that her Dad originally wrapped it in. She straps two rubber bands on it. She then takes some ribbon and wraps it around the box tightly. Penny walks into the room and lays down on her bed, turning away from Amber.

AMBER

Penny? Let's go to the park tomorrow.

PENNY

Yeah, sure. Whatever.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Amber gets ready to go to the park. Before she leaves, she shakes the gift box and the phone rattles inside. She sighs in relief and gives a slight smile.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

Amber is pushing Penny on the swings. Penny's smiling.

PENNY

You really are trying to quit your phone, aren't you?

AMBER

Yeah, I am. Look, Penny, I'm sorry. I got a new toy and I guess I got lost in it.

PENNY

You sure did. It's like that phone was your first love.

AMBER

(giggling)

Oh, be quiet. I'm trying, ok. I promise it won't happen again.

PENNY

All right. If you say so...

AMBER

I promise!

As Amber pushes Penny on the swing, the phone reappears in her jacket pocket.

7.

:FADE OUT