

Title: No iPhone Today

A Short One Act

By Doreen F.

Setting:

A busy NYC train car, a generic office

Characters:

Katelyn

Alex

Actor 3: Office Manager Ken/ City People/Passengers

Actor 4: Michael/City People/Passengers

Synopsis: Katelyn is a young woman who has to struggle through one day of being without her cell phone. She navigates the day without a phone while taking the train and dealing with work issues at the office. The absence of her phone is making her miserable until there is an unexpected meeting with a stranger on the train ride at the end of the day.

SCENE 1

Lights up on KATELYN as she rushes to get ready for work, wrestling to put on her socks. They're two different colors. Please feel free to improvise the rest, it should live in a space similar to this: She frantically gulps down a cup of coffee as she pulls on a pair of shoes and downs a hard-boiled egg. She packs up her bag, tugs on her jacket, decides she doesn't want to wear that jacket, and pulls on another one. She runs a comb through her hair and then runs out the door, quickly re-entering a moment later. She forgot to put on her other shoe. She throws on the shoe and runs out of the door.

SCENE 2

KATELYN gets on the train in the nick of time, sliding into a seat next to another passenger scrolling on his phone. She takes a beat to catch her breath and then reaches into her pocket for her phone. It's not there. She rifles through her purse, her other pockets, and realizes-

Damn it!

KATELYN

The man sitting next to her jumps in surprise.

Sorry! Sorry. I uh- I forgot my phone.

KATELYN

She tries to give him a smile. He ignores her and goes back to his phone.

Right, anyway - have a good - have good day.

KATELYN

Does she not know how to talk to people anymore? She looks around, trying to put her attention anywhere other than the awkwardness between her and the man. She fiddles with her hands, squints to read the train signs. Her discomfort is palpable. Her stop arrives finally, and she bolts for the exit.

SCENE 3

KATELYN hurries into her office. Her boss, KEN, stands to greet her, looking impatient. He paces throughout the scene, looking down at his phone, sending emails.

KEN

Katelyn, you're late.

KATELYN

I know, I'm so sorry, I-

KEN

I don't need to hear it, just get your sales pitch for the digital marketing team up please.
(checking his watch)
They're going to be here in five minutes.

KATELYN

Of course, of course.

She goes to reach for her phone, and winces when she realizes again that it's gone.

KEN

This is my first time giving you this kind of responsibility, don't blow it.

KATELYN

Um, Ken? I-

KEN

What, Katelyn?

KATELYN

I'm so sorry, I don't have it.

KEN

What do you mean you don't have it!

KATELYN

It's - it's on my phone, and I left it at home -

KEN

Your phone? What - what about your laptop?

Commented [AW1]: Comment: I would say because she comments multiple times she has an iphone, I would ask if it was possible that it was backed up on the cloud.

KATELYN

No, I just always have these things on my phone because my phone is always on me and-

KEN

This is so disappointing Katelyn.

KATELYN

I know, I know, I'm so sorry. In the future I'll be much more cognizant of keeping important projects more accessible and I-

He throws a hand up.

KEN

Enough, just, please leave. I need to figure this out-

KATELYN

I can help-

KEN

You've done quite enough. Please go - take a lunch. We'll discuss this later.

Commented [AW2]: Question: How late is she that it is now lunchtime? What time was she supposed to start work?

She exits in defeat.

SCENE 4

A breakroom. It is lunchtime and KATELYN is talking to a coworker, MICHAEL who is eating his lunch and playing a game on his phone. He doesn't look up throughout the conversation.

Hey Michael.

KATELYN

Hey.

MICHAEL

Gotta go get some lunch-

KATELYN

Don't you always just DoorDash?

MICHAEL

Yeah, I can't though. No iPhone today-

KATELYN

It's good to unplug.

MICHAEL

Commented [AW3]: Comment: Take your own advice Michael!

Not really, I just had the roughest meeting. I think Ken is really upset with me and I feel so stupid, it's all my fault. Listen to what I did-

KATELYN

She trails off as she watches MICHAEL stare at his phone and answer a text. She realizes that he isn't listening to her.

Anyway. I'm gonna go get a burrito or something. Have a good lunch.

KATELYN

Enjoy your DoorDash.

MICHAEL

SCENE 5

KATELYN is walking the city streets, feeling dejected and searching for something to get for lunch. She is in a rush, but she looks up and notices the sky, which makes her pause and smile for a moment.

She looks at the CITY PEOPLE rushing around on their phones. No one else is looking at the sky. She looks down and notices pigeons everywhere. At first, she smiles and laughs.

KATELYN

How cute!

She turns to see even more pigeons and starts.

KATELYN

Oh-

She keeps turning and seeing more pigeons, her delight slowly turning to something like fear.

KATELYN

Since when are there pigeons literally everywhere?!

She decides it's funny, laughing as she continues her search for lunch.

Commented [AW4]: Comment: This is such a tiny thing, but it could be funnier if she leaves in fear but trying to cover it in laughter.

SCENE 6

KATELYN is back at her office, and MICHAEL is still sitting finishing his lunch, head in his phone. He doesn't even notice her come in. She sits and eats in silence, while he continues scrolling.

Commented [AW5]: Comment: This scene is almost superfluous unless she has another conversation with him. Perhaps bring up the amount of pigeons she encountered and he says something like "I've never seen a pigeon in this city ever". You really want to drive home the disconnect.

SCENE 7

KATELYN is sitting in the bathroom on the toilet, hands clutching her stomach. Lunch clearly isn't sitting well. She looks around, then up to the ceiling. She flips some of her hair over her face and tries to blow it off loudly. She then clamps her hand over her mouth, realizing how weird this must sound to anyone who can hear her. She throws her head back, exclaiming in a heated whisper-

KATELYN

GOD since when has this been so boring!

She drums her fingertips against her cheeks.

KATELYN

Can't even scroll through my awful Tinder matches...

She looks around once more and sees a stack of magazines on the floor. One has "Find love where you least expect it" on the title. She lifts it up gingerly with two fingers, interest piqued.

Commented [AW6]: Comment: No! This is horrible! Paired with no phone (or book in my case), this is a nightmare!!!!

SCENE 8

KATELYN enters KEN'S office timidly. He's speaking on the phone but puts it on hold with a loud beep.

Yes?

KEN

I just wanted to apologize for earlier-

KATELYN

Not now Katelyn, not now.

KEN

Yeah, sure - sorry. Have a good evening.

KATELYN

KEN takes his phone off hold with a loud beep, carrying on his conversation and ignoring KATELYN. She's clearly sad as she goes to gather her things and leave.

SCENE 9

KATELYN is on the train, and all the PASSENGERS are looking at their phones. Again, she doesn't know what to look at, so is checking her nails, maybe adjusting her clothes. She's tired and lonely after a day of no one wanting to speak to her. She rests her head on the rail, looking up at the ceiling.

ALEX, a man around her age, comes in and finds a seat next to her. He also looks around awkwardly, fidgeting with his hands, looking at train signs, messing with his hair. She catches his eye and amusement dawns on his face. He takes a book out from his coat pocket and tries to read. A HOMELESS MAN on the other side of the train starts humming a love song. ALEX keeps glancing over to KATELYN. Finally, he says-

ALEX

Nice socks.

KATELYN

What?

ALEX

Fun colors!

She looks down and realizes she's wearing two different socks. She looks exhausted with herself.

KATELYN

Oh God, I never even noticed.

ALEX

Rough morning?

Rough day.

KATELYN

Sorry to hear that.

ALEX

Thanks.

KATELYN

Beat. KATELYN now glances over at ALEX.

I love that book.

KATELYN

Oh yeah?

ALEX

Yeah, I'm a big science fiction fan.

KATELYN

Me too! I'm only a couple chapters into this one. I'm Alex by the way.

ALEX

Katelyn! You'll enjoy it - the book. It really picks up in a few chapters-

KATELYN

Oh, good to hear!

ALEX

They smile at each other and go back to minding their business, smiles lingering.

Actually, do you mind telling me the time? I forgot my phone-

ALEX

Stop, really?

KATELYN

ALEX
Yeah-

KATELYN
Me too!

ALEX
No way. Did this day completely suck for you as well?

KATELYN
Yeah, it was awful I had a whole presentation on there and everything-

ALEX
Oh no...That's the worst!

KATELYN
Thank you! It really was. My boss was so angry.

ALEX
It happens, he'll get over it.

KATELYN
I really hope so.

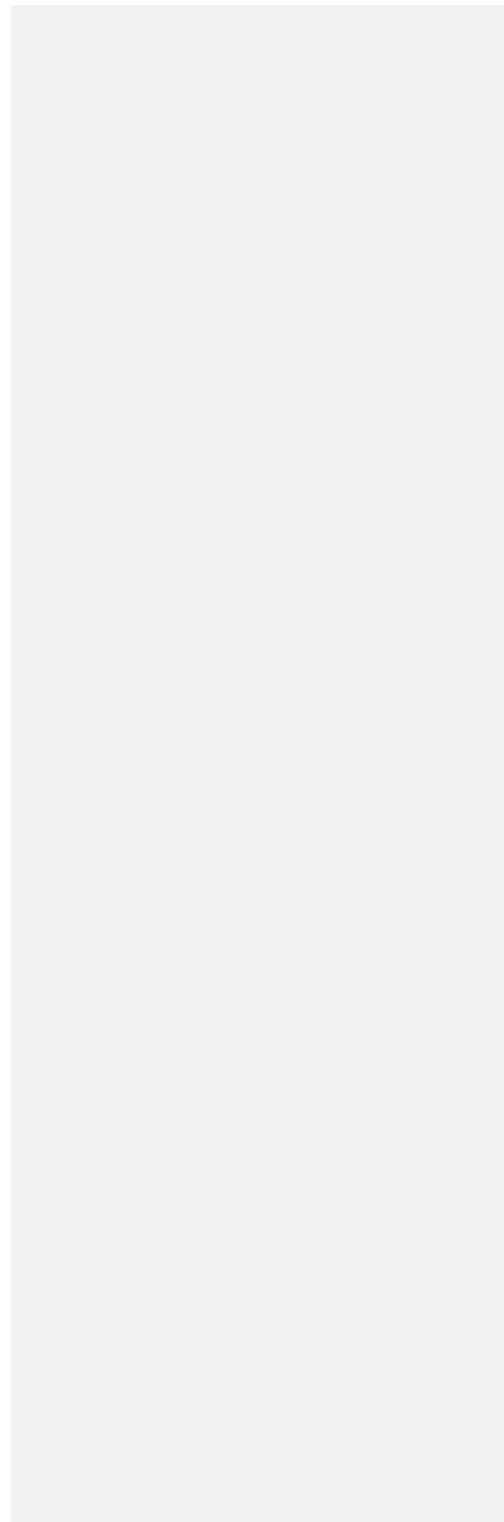
ALEX
If he doesn't, he's just miserable.

KATELYN
You're right.

ALEX
I truly did not know what to do with myself today-

KATELYN
Oh my God TELL me about it!

ALEX



And like no one seemed to look me in the eye all day-

KATELYN

Or pay attention - always just looking down!

ALEX

It's like I lost my voice!

KATELYN

Like no one could see me-

ALEX

It was really kind of...

KATELYN/ALEX

Lonely.

They look at each other in pleasant surprise.

ALEX

Tell you what though, haven't seen a sky so blue in a long time.

KATELYN

I totally agree.

ALEX

Katelyn, guess what?

KATELYN

What?

He lifts up the bottom of his pants to reveal he too has mismatched socks. Katelyn laughs and genuinely smiles for the first time.

KATELYN

Rough morning?

Rough day.

ALEX

I'm sorry.

KATELYN

They grin.

ALEX

I think I know how to turn our days around.

KATELYN

Yeah?

ALEX

Yeah.

KATELYN

Tell me.

ALEX

How about a slice of pizza, on me?

KATELYN

Now that could work.

ALEX

I think so too. You know, this was such a long day with no iPhone to connect us to anything.

They sit quietly and happily.

KATELYN

Yes, that's true, but I think we found a better connection without our phones today!

The train stops, they get off together, smiling.

Fin.