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I Hope This Video Camera Works

by Jane Hicks

"I hope this video camera works," Julie said to herself, being a bit of a technophobe.

The camera was bought second-hand to record some of her daughter's prom night the following evening. She placed it on the dining-room table and decided to wait for her husband to come home and look at it later that evening.

Little did she know that it was going to be the least of her worries.

She had a long journey to work, so she liked to leave quite early in case of bad traffic. She had travelled some of the way when she saw police ahead and the traffic beginning to slow. There had been an accident.

She dug her phone out of her bag.

"Damn, the battery is low. I thought I had charged it."

She tried ringing work, but the line was engaged, so she rang one of her colleagues and explained the situation.

"I think I'll be at least another thirty minutes," she said.

She could see that her battery was running down.

"I mustn't use my phone again until I get to work and charge it."

She fumbled around in her bag. Where was her charger? She had a really old phone, while most of the people she worked with had newer models.

"I hope someone has a charger that will fit this," she said to herself.

She arrived at work an hour later. Her boss was in a bad mood and said that she needed to finish some of the work she had left on her desk before lunchtime.

She looked through the work and switched on her computer. Then the colleague she had managed to contact came to see if she was okay.

As Susan approached Julie's desk, she tripped and knocked Julie's coffee all over her keyboard.

“Oh no!” exclaimed Julie. “Let’s find something to mop this up. I need to get a lot of work done this morning.”

“I am so sorry,” said Susan. “I’ll go and find something.”

Julie got herself a coffee from the machine and started work but after several attempts to get her keyboard working, Julie swapped desks with Susan for a while and used her computer instead. It had already been a long day, and Julie had forgotten all about her mobile phone needing to be charged. She couldn’t wait to get home, put her feet up and have a large glass of wine.

Instead, when she was halfway home, her car’s petrol warning light came on. Unfortunately, it was a little too late. The engine began sputtering before the car finally rolled to a stop.

Her daughter, Kate, had borrowed the car the previous evening and clearly hadn’t filled it up, even though the petrol had been running low.

“Oh no! I really can’t believe this!” Julie wailed, thumping her hands against the steering wheel.

To make matters worse, her mobile phone was dead. She climbed out of the car and stood helplessly beside it, wondering what on earth she was going to do.

Luckily, a neighbour spotted Julie stranded by the roadside. They had a can of petrol in their car and gave her enough to get the engine started again.

By the time Julie finally arrived home, her husband and daughters were frantic with worry.

“Where have you been?” her husband demanded as she walked through the door.

Julie explained everything that had happened that day, including the broken keyboard, her uncharged phone and the empty petrol tank.

Then she turned to Kate.

“You’re not using my car again unless you promise to top it up with petrol,” she said firmly.

Kate apologised, and Julie, too exhausted to argue any further, went into the dining room. That was when she noticed the video camera sitting on the table. She stared at it suspiciously.

After the day she’d had, there was only one thing left that could possibly go wrong.

“I hope that bloody thing works,” she muttered.