

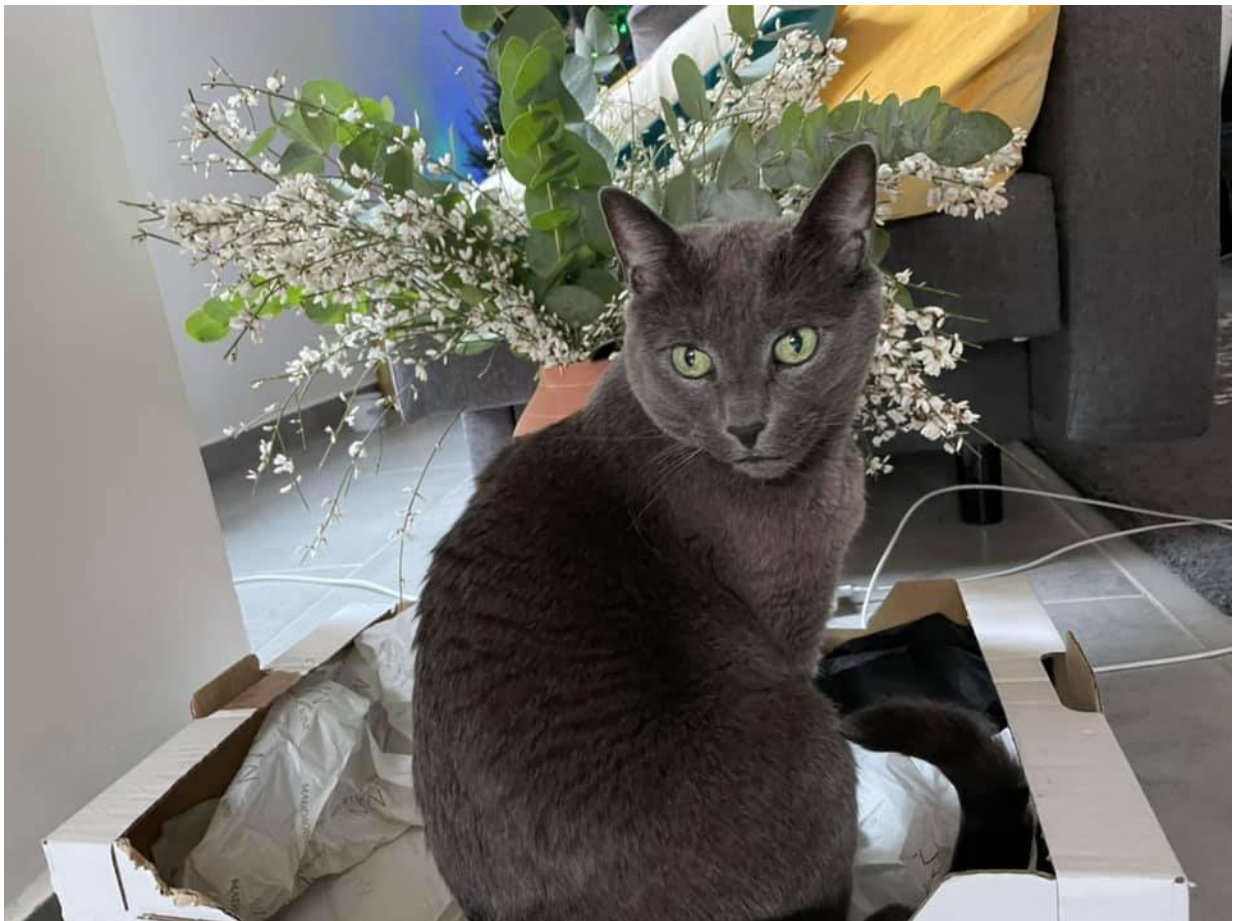
Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

A Long Way for an Allongé

Trista Hurley-Waxali · Thursday, July 8th, 2021

In mid November I decided to take a break from social media. France had implemented a second lockdown requiring anyone leaving their residents to fill out an attestation, a document on their phone as to their purpose. The community here was sure it wouldn't get to this point after the first lockdown and were then surprised by the app's update to downloading a PDF, rather than a simple screenshot of the document. My husband became weary of our slow load time and thought to update our phones, he didn't want a delay if the police requested to see the original form. Our emotions moved further away from the effort to get supplies towards timing one's actions. I became hyper aware of the way my muscle memory reacted to confirming lunch and dinner supplies to then scrolling feeds. I knew I had to cut that out if I was going to make it back within the hour from my attestation time. So I removed the liability from my homescreen. A measure at the time felt would only last until the attestation was over.



Blue.

I spent the first few days enjoying the new screen and downloaded books for home as the library felt like a risk. Unbeknownst to us, this was about the same time a tumor had begun to grow on our cat. He would sit on my footstool by the radiator, leaning on my feet between character developments and then moving onto my stomach when it came time to purr over lunch. It wouldn't be until after the attestation gets lifted that I would feel the hard lump on his spine. Near the eve of my 37th birthday, we were told the attestation was going to be extended. I decided to log back on and get the joy of hearing from friends on well wishes for my birthday. I uploaded a recent picture from a walk we did on one of the few dry nights, going slightly past the 1km boundary to get a view of the mountain. I took the time to respond with personalized messages and began to remove accounts that felt harmful. I wanted everything from this moment to be intentional.

I realized I had to put up better boundaries to my online usage. A technique that I was already implementing in other elements of my life. I began to monitor the emotions I was investing with each post, to even be respectful of my viewership. These are the lessons I intend to practice with this column. To add a note in your feed that can give you a place to contemplate. I will write longer posts if the climate demands it and in turn short ones that could linger after you log off. My hope is to keep this level of respect for our time because in this era, that's the one commodity still up for grabs.

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