

Feline surreal: Belgians tweet cat photos for #BrusselsLockdown

November 23 2015



Instead of taking pictures of what they have seen or describing police operations, Belgian Twitter users have responded by posting pictures of cats

When Belgian police requested social media silence during a series of anti-terrorism raids, they might have expected a catty response from the Internet.

In fact people politely complied but with a surreal twist, as thousands

tweeted pictures of their feline friends when the hashtag #BrusselsLockdown went viral.

It began when Defence Minister Steven Vandeput tweeted: "Police are asking the public not to report their movements on social media, please support & rt ."

Frustrated and anxious after the city spent a second day on its top state of alert as authorities intensified their hunt for a key Paris attacks suspect, Belgian Twitter users responded bizarrely.

Instead of taking pictures of what they could see or describing police operations, they posted pictures of cats.

"I think in one hour I've seen more #lolcats than I've seen in the rest of my life," said social media specialist Mateusz Kukulka, or @Mateusz.

He said he believed the first to have the idea was a cameraman for the Dutch television channel NOS, Hugo Janssen, or @Hoguhugo, who tweeted: "Instead of tweets about police activity in Brussels, here's a picture of our cat Mozart".

As the theme caught on, some posted photos of cats looking suspicious, others of cats looking scared.

Others in the country of famed surrealist Rene Magritte took a truly surreal tack: user @jaycelight posted a picture of two Star Wars stormtroopers riding hover scooters shaped like cats.



Belgian troops patrol at the Royal Galleries of Saint-Hubert in Brussels on November 22, 2015

As more and more users joined in, there was soon international support too:

"Absolutely loving the hashtag! Amazing. Belgium is awesome.

Citation: Feline surreal: Belgians tweet cat photos for #BrusselsLockdown (2015, November 23) retrieved 18 April 2024 from

<https://phys.org/news/2015-11-feline-surreal-belgians-tweet-cat.html>

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