# TRAVEL AROUND WITH EMPRESS ZOË

# PART 4

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ZOË HERBOTS

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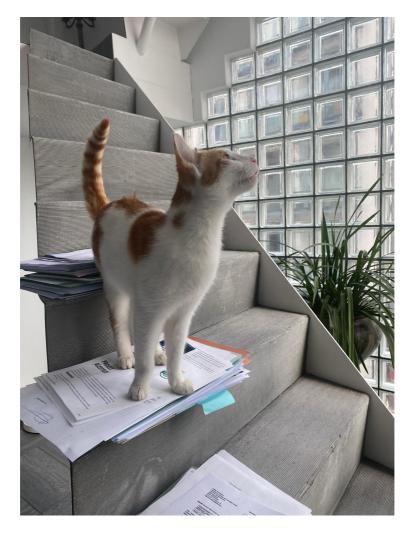
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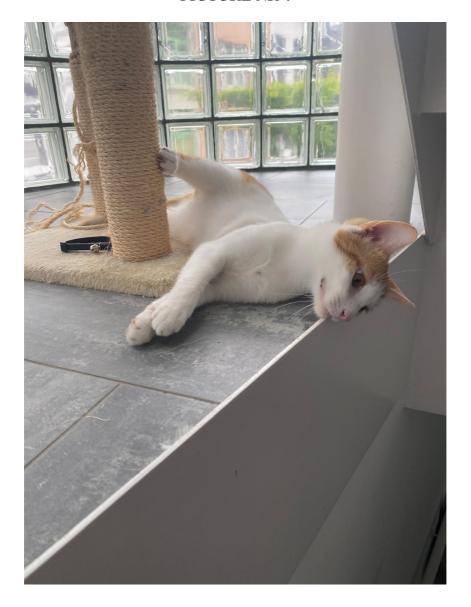
Hi folks, do you remember me from the previous Zoë book? My name is Don Pepe, and today, I have been promoted by Empress Zoë to King of Catdom. Since she's currently very busy, I have been entrusted with representing her on her travels. Oh, and in case you didn't know, I also graduated in law and became a lawyer just like Empress Zoë. That's all you need to know about me for now.



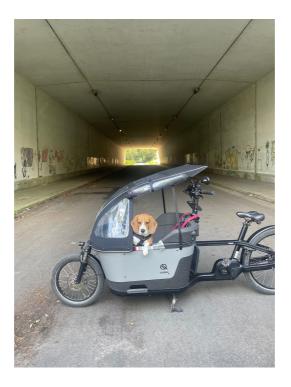
You've all heard of Bart De Wever, right? Well, when King Philippe of Belgium sent him into the field as an informant, the first thing he wanted to know was how deep the budget crater was. Just a matter of checking the state of affairs. I, too, want to assess something - the total number of kilometers traveled by Empress Zoë so far. So, I went through the records. You'll find the results on the next page.



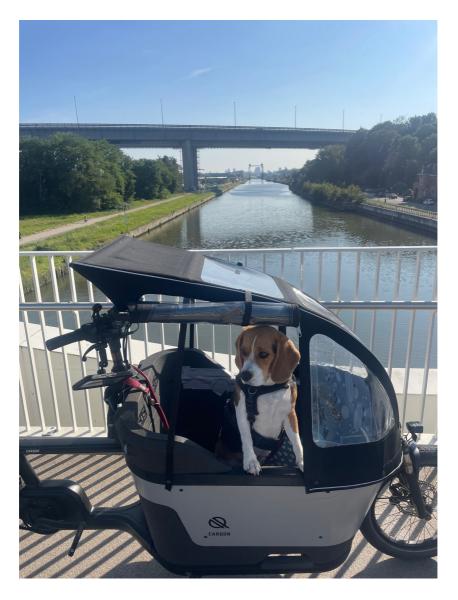
As of now, the mileage stands at 6,225 kilometers. That's simply not enough. My goal is to push this number up to 10,000 kilometers as soon as possible by tripling the number of long-distance trips. Consider this my official government statement if you will. If you've read the Animal Constitution, you'll know that a king isn't just a king - he is also the prime minister. And in that role, I am setting out the government's agenda for the coming months.



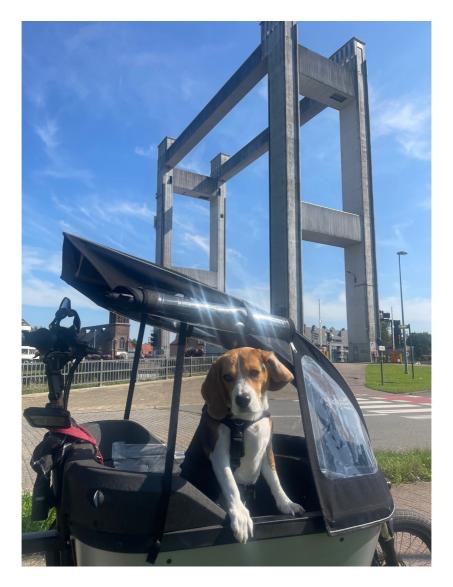
Alright, enough talking for one day. Time to get on our bikes! Are you coming with me?



Dear friends, you probably didn't expect to see me in this book again - and rightly so. Don Pepe may have told you that I was off in China or somewhere else in the world. But in reality, I had to pass through a long tunnel - the very tunnel you see behind me. It may look short, but believe me, it took me a long time to get through it. That tunnel symbolizes my subconscious and the question that kept haunting me: "Should I continue my travels?" I have finally found my answer. Yes. Of course, I must. I must keep traveling for the sake of all animals. Animal rights are essential in our society. The era of anthropocentrism is over. So, I am back on track. A huge thank you to Don Pepe for stepping in as my representative. He will still take over from time to time, but I will continue my life's mission: fighting for animal rights. Yes, tradition can be beautiful but the moment tradition clashes with animal rights, the latter must always prevail. That is what I firmly stand by.



We're jumping right back in with a trip to Brussels. Here I am, standing on the bicycle bridge in Vilvoorde, just before the viaduct I already mentioned in my previous book. We're almost there.



On our way to Brussels, we passed quite a few beautiful bridges. Here's one in Tisselt or was it Oxdonk? I can't remember anymore. We passed through so many villages that I'm starting to mix them up.