

# An Influencer's Dilemma: A Short Story [B2]

I social network stanno trasformando la nostra percezione della realtà? La storia di una influencer.

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Katya refreshed the [browser](#) on her laptop and read the most recent comments on her [vlog](#). "Wow! You look incredible." "Beautiful girl. Beautiful place!" "Inspirational." "Living the dream, Katya!"... The comments were in reaction to her final video from Joshua Tree National Park, where she had spent a week exploring the desert landscape and documenting every moment for her travel [vlog](#), Global Adventures. The name of her [vlog](#) wasn't very [accurate](#). Until now, she'd visited destinations only in the US. But her plan was to visit every national park in the country to attract more subscribers — and [advertisers](#). She wanted to use the money generated by advertisements on her [vlog](#) to begin living her dream of visiting every country in the world. She refreshed her [browser](#) again and more comments appeared. "Oooh, I'm going there next. Can't wait!" read one, from a user called Wendy's World. Katya [cringed](#). Wendy was a [wannabe](#) travel influencer, desperate for attention. She'd been commenting on all of Katya's posts and, to her frustration, had begun replicating her style in videos and visiting the same destinations as her. Katya visited Wendy's [vlog](#) and saw, with a sense of satisfaction, that she had only a few hundred subscribers compared to Katya's [10,000+](#). "How pathetic!" she thought. She was about to disconnect when she saw she had a new direct message. She clicked on it and saw, to her surprise, that it was from an eccentric billionaire she followed named Alison Yang. Alison was one of Katya's idols, an older woman who'd travelled the world. "Make your travel dreams come true," the message read, and it contained a video, a video of Alison Yang, the Alison Yang, speaking directly to her! After introducing herself (as if anyone didn't know who Alison Yang was!), Alison said, "I am here to offer you an opportunity to make all your travel dreams come true. For one year, I will accompany you as you travel to destinations of your choosing, anywhere in the world, all expenses paid. You will decide on the itinerary, where we go, what we do..." Katya paused the video, trembling with emotion. She couldn't believe what she was hearing. She visualised her subscriber numbers

exploding, from [10,000+](#) to millions, to tens of millions. Was it possible to visit every country in the world, almost two hundred countries, in a year? She thought it was, using Alison's money and resources. She could become the first person to do it, as millions watched! She [un-paused](#) the video.

"However...", Alison said. "Oh-oh," thought Katya. "Here comes [the catch](#)."

"There is one [caveat](#). You won't be permitted to document your travels, in video, photography or writing. And you certainly won't be permitted to post about them online. [Ever](#). You will have to sign a very rigorous contract [to this effect](#)." Alison explained that this was a personal experiment, based on her conviction that social media [was warping](#) the perspective of new generations. She was convinced that young people today valued only the perception and response of others to their experiences, and not the actual experiences. She wanted to be [proven wrong](#). "Will you prove me wrong?" she asked at the end of her video. "I hope you will." Katya stared at her laptop in shock and confusion. She could travel the world but not post about it, not take a single photo or video. [What was the point](#) of that? But then, how could she refuse this incredible opportunity? Her dream really was to travel the world, but also to post about it, to become a famous travel influencer. It was a terrible dilemma. She convinced herself to accept, then refuse, then accept... Part of her desperately wanted to accept. But if she traveled for a year, she'd have to abandon her [vlog](#). She'd lose the [10,000+](#) subscribers she'd worked so hard to get. It was nine months later. Katya had almost forgotten all about Alison's video. She'd been to five more national parks and her subscriber numbers were now over 14,000. She went online to research her next destination and saw a repost from a famous travel influencer she followed, of a [vlog](#) by Wendy's World. Wendy's World? How was that possible? Wendy had stopped posting videos months ago. She clicked on the video and saw, to her horror, that it was of Wendy and Alison Yang. "We've been travelling the world for six months," said Wendy, beaming. "I had to agree not to post about it, as part of an experiment by Alison. But now I've convinced Alison to participate in my experiment, so she can experience life as a travel influencer and understand why we do what we do. Our plan is to visit every country in the world in one year..."

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# Glossary

- **advertisers** = inserzionisti
- **cringed** = sentire imbarazzo, farsi piccola
- **browser** = navigatore
- **un-paused** = riprodurre
- **to this effect** = in questo senso
- **vlog** = video blog
- **accurate** = accurato, preciso
- **the catch** = fregatura
- **was warping** = deformare
- **proven wrong** = smentire
- **wannabe** = aspirante
- **10,000+** = più di diecimila
- **caveat** = avvertenza
- **Ever** = mai
- **What was the point** = che senso aveva? qual era il punto?