

The Case for Semicolons

There are very few opportunities in life to have it both ways; semicolons are the rare instance in which you can; there is absolutely no downside.

By Lauren Oyler Feb. 9, 2021, New York Times

For several years I have returned, frequently, to a vague memory of reading an article in which a

magazine; the woman was possibly from France. The darkly pragmatic angle was that regular indulgences head sugar cravings off at the pass. The spiritual angle, and the better one, was that even after breakfast.

This philosophy can be applied to all sorts of low-stakes situations, particularly those burdened by longstanding beliefs about their secretly grave consequences. While I will happily treat myself to a little morning cookie this strikes me as more Italian than French my real indulgence is punctuation, which, despite its unflagging service to the essential project of communication, is often subject to pointless regimes of austerity. The saddest, most unfairly represented victim is the semicolon. I try to eat one after every meal.

first learned about semicolons, nor do I have a mental list of remarkable

ly breeds fear, which in turn

it asserts a link where the reader might not necessarily see one while establishing the fragility of that link at the same time. The world is not accurately described through sets of declarations and mere pauses, without qualification or adjustment; occasionally we are lucky enough to see it many ways, at once.