I Want It Now!

Whether you buy on impulse or let one purchase trigger others, it helps to have time on your side
by Vanessa Patrick

It’s all about postponement. Getting a sense of the French Enlightenment philosopher Denis Diderot in his essay Regrets on Parting with My Old Dressing Gown, Diderot talks about being presented with an elegant new dressing gown. Upon first wearing it, he became apparent that the threads and furnishings of his study didn’t quite live up to the splendour of his new garment, so he immediately replaced him. He found himself changing the tapes, chairs, desks, bookshelves, and even a clock so his house could match up in symmetry. On reflection, Diderot recognised that a single innocent item, the “scarlet robe that forced everything else to conform with its own elegant tone” had led him to purchase a whole stream of new items, leaving him both financially depleted, uncomfortable and unhappy.

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