



They say the Plague created the conditions for the renaissance. The surviving population, reduced by half, said fuck this toil, where's the fine wine, life is sick. A cool breeze blows from the west. The peasant folk turn their mudcaked faces upward, they find a night sky fretted with golden fire. Time again for art, and pleasure. Reality is the lake: art, the tankard. Retake the murmuring stream, the dappled hollow. Rest in arboreal splendour. Dream again of the Plateau Suisse, the winter chalet. Cowbells and chocolate. Ice baths and saunas. Warm beer and Bavarian sausage. Dried fruits and bircher muesli. Take the air. Paint some lines. Sing folk hymns, eat kipper and bream. Recall songs of the seasonal pastures, of the Jura and the Alps, the Rivers Ouse and Foss. Sing of the spring droving of lambs and ewes. The slosh of whey in the bucket, dancing in clogs, alphorns and lederhosen. Abide the distant yodel. Evoke Helvetia! Aryan braids, garlands, the detritus of plenty. Stroll Renaissance-strasse, beneath arching spruce and wet, dun pine. Return to nature's beauty.

-Fergus Porteous

