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### The new filthy rich

As a truffer's wife, I often wonder what will become of our family business during this financial storm. Will we, in five years time, be living in the hollow of a tree, eating earwigs and lichen? Or, could it be that truffles, like gold bars, become one of the few assets that still hold value? Few items in the natural world are as valuable, ounce for ounce, as truffles. And so if things get really dire and we enter a barter economy, when the electrician is paid in porridge oats and the plumber in carrots, then I am assuming we trufflers - the real hedge fund managers - will become the new plutocrats. Perhaps then I will be able to take the children to school on a horse (a black one with blinkers on, natch), while everyone else has to walk. I'll be able to eat lamb and beef where everyone else has to make do with eggs; to go on exotic family holidays to places like Wales, when everyone else has to stay at home to till the soil. But most importantly, I'll be able to adopt a look of faint ennui with everyone who is less rich than me; a snail farmer for instance, or the rat man, or even dare I say it, an investment banker.

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