

## A Different Summer

Getting fat- it's glorious isn't it?  
I just love sucking raspberry pips from my gnashers and dripping maple syrup  
on my already matted and jammy coat. Do you dream of plum cobbler with  
curry sauce and cheddar biscuits?  
Because, I certainly do.  
Oh, to roll in the grass with a belly-full of pesto tortellini, utter bliss.  
Anyway, one can dream I suppose.

The word 'Winter' is a waste of breath, waste of time, waste of energy.  
It'll be December and at the crack of dawn, I'm up, steering through every high  
street and back alley, with only a lick of coffee to keep me going.  
And the complaints are endless, it's almost like people don't *want* their bins  
emptied.  
Sticking their powdered noses out Venetian windows, shouting every  
bombastic scorn under the sun, like I'm some greasy little urban badger. I will  
not have it!  
Just you wait and smell the fragrance of Jasmines drifting into their dinner  
parties with scraps of skillet fried cod tipped on their branches.

The life of a bin collector.

The life of a city fox.

I've had skinny-soy, caramel drizzle lattes launched at my whiskers, for  
what, polishing off the last of that risotto?  
I very much doubt it, it's because I 'skulk' on four legs and occasionally urinate  
on their wrought iron sundials. Equality they say. Yeah. Right. Hypocrites the  
lot of them.  
I slurped that caramel latte, anyway.  
Delicious, what a waste.

Now, I *know* you're wondering how I maintain my patience and  
composure.  
Well in truth, Its my longing for summertime suppers.

Cafes are heaving and the August bins are just dripping with gooseberry  
compote, dribbled onto stale but irresistibly plump doughnuts. The cubs love

Kitty Fisher

those. Their tiny dewy eyes tripling in size as I return bearing discarded delicacies.

This year, 2020. June arrived. I awoke in a cold sweat, with visions of cool basil bruschetta and coconut-lime slaw. Today was the day of feasting, so close I could taste it.

This sunlit prowl had been etched in my mind with razor sharp anticipation, roaming the dual carriageway and slinking into town. Towards the 'Café de Paris,' the most opulent venue in town.

By the roads, I'm dreaming of that summer bod, a round belly and silky paws, only used for sliding chicken off its bone. Effortless.

I slipped down the hill, my fur bleached in the streaming sun, my mind like hot treacle, so heavy with anticipation. So heavy, that I didn't notice. The empty roads. Those deserted pavements.

I didn't notice that 'CLOSED DUE TO COVID' sign on the café's door.

Those clean bins were as visible as my protruding ribs. Empty as my stomach. Getting fat – the glory that I would never taste.

Defeated, I crumpled onto the pavement my eyes trained on that hollow rubbish bin. The sunshine beaming, hot into my flesh.

And as I lay there, one single trickle of muddy, sourdough starter dribbled out onto the tarmac. My dinner.