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STELLA DAILY

In the months since I left London, I haven't missed it

Katie ups sticks to a barn where vintage vinyl and the odd friendly local are the only company

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'At night, the moon floods the valley and I fall asleep to the hoots of an owl, which never happened in Dalston'
CREDIT: Jooney Woodward.

The cottage in Mousehole has building work scheduled, so I have no choice but to pack up my car and move again, this time just a few miles down the coast to a barn I can rent for two weeks.

The barn is built from granite and divided into two. In one half is the vinery where, in summer, the owners produce wine. The other half is my tiny studio, with its small kitchen area, a table, a sofa bed and a record player with a collection of old 45s.

The barn is nestled in a damp valley brushed with more shades of green than I knew existed. Lime green moss clings to khaki trees. Cornish hedges bloom with emerald leaves. A forest of dark ferns, crisp underfoot. Perhaps now I'm in the country I'll finally learn the actual names for these plants? Is 39 the age when you stop turning off Radio 4 when Gardeners' Question Time comes on?

There is literally nothing to do in the valley, which suits me. When the postman comes by, it is an event. Sometimes, helicopters flying to the Scilly Isles whirr overhead and I run out to see. It is hard to imagine now that, less than a year ago, I was living on one of London's busiest streets, screeching 24-7 with sirens and hipsters in '80s jumpers having fights in Turkish restaurants. Here, I relish the silence. People may joke about disapproving locals – not keen on 'outsiders' – but at least now I'm not walking home past police tape and news of a stabbing on our block.

Perhaps when the theatres open again in London and my friends start calling me from parties, I will long for the city. But so far, in the months since I've left London, I haven't missed it. When it is sunny, which it isn't often, I sit outside by the old pony trap, watching birds. Mostly it rains and I press against the oil heater, listening to rain tap the slate roof and playing records – Roy Orbison cooing Only the Lonely or Simon & Garfunkel strumming Mrs Robinson.

At night, the moon floods the valley white and I fall asleep to the hoots of an owl, which never happened in Dalston. Though one hipster did buy a cockerel that woke the whole street up at 5am.

Head left from the barn and there's a flower stall selling bunches of pink heather for £1.50. Turn right up the hill, and a fridge offers bottles of milk to buy; yellow as hay with creamy swirls in.

Past Treen is the cliff where the Coast Path crosses where I go to watch sunset begin, running back before it gets dark because I am such a townie I still only have the torch on my iPhone.

Mostly, I see no one. One day, on a walk, I bump into a man who seems so startled to see another human that he thrusts a bunch of pink heather into my hands. 'For you', he says, then disappears. Another day, a man knocks at my barn door and asks if his children can deliver me a pizza. So much for the scary locals.

For a week, life feels quieter. But still not being settled makes me anxious and I am impatient to get on with my life. So I keep house-hunting like it's a full-time job: scanning Rightmove, registering with estate agents, compiling shortlists and booking viewings. I ended in Cornwall on a whim, but if I have any chance of making it work here – or hitting the stamp duty deadline – I need to keep searching...

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