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"Rot"

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Good "moderns" have worked hard to banish rot. We burn and bury our waste. We renovate our houses, treating wood, painting, and papering over the mold and cracks. We douse the world with a chemical armory; bleach, weed killer, pesticides—familiar domestic products through which we seek to escape rot's degenerative force. Often with good reasons, we hold rot at bay, sanitizing and pasteurizing to secure human health.

Rot even seems amiss in some of our designated wilds, at least in Western Europe. In parks and nature preserves that conservationists trim and tidy. To the chagrin of stag beetle enthusiasts and rewilders, old trees are grubbed up and dead wood chipped and burned. Shit is bagged. Carcasses are collected and rendered. In the modern European pastoral, nature is green, not brown, and life is disconnected from aesthetics of death and decay. Unruly wilds are entrained to linear geometrics or the wholesome, sanitized curves of heritage tourism. (Adapted from author's text)

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