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New Money

Tom says he is bored of money and has taken to not carrying any around with him - like the Queen. I suggested it might be because he has none left, but he insists he simply finds it more "challenging" to barter. A leg of lamb for some help with his computer. Some truffles in exchange for some honey. Incredibly, someone gives him a three hour massage, simply to hear him talk.

As far as I can work out, one lamb chop is equivalent to about five pounds; a truffle about ten, and one his prints (did I mention that he is an artist?) is worth about £450,000.

"Money is not going to be worth anything by the end of next year - you have no idea," he says confidently. Well, my daughter certainly seems to believe him. She has started dealing in gravel. She gets it from a path outside her school, and comes back every night pockets full of the stuff. The most highly prized pieces are the "rainbows" - where you can see lines in the toffee coloured stones. But there are also "stars" with tiny bits of twinkly quartz in them, and "round ones." What seems to matter more than how they look, however, is who owned them before her. If the piece of gravel was given to her by one of the senior girls in her school, it is slept with under her pillow, kept its own presentation case (old contact lens holder), and cared for as tenderly as a newborn diamond. Me? I'm sticking to Barclays.

[Tartufi hunting](#)

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