

Summerset

by [John Davis](#) (August 2025)



Image of An English Country Scene No.2 (Edward Burra, 1970)

To Whomever Broke into my Car

Let us be civil for a moment in the dismal gray
of morning when rain softens the exhaust of cars
whisking to jobs, whisking carpools of kids to school
and let us bargain in the semi-dark garage

of the apartment complex. You wanted what we
all want which is something special for free.
Jimmy a lock. Wrench a screwdriver and you're in.
Toss the maps and matches, pens, pencils,

empty cups of coffee. Where is it. What is it.
Got to be here. It was there: the stains and stench

of spilled milk. Granola bits. Slips of paper
with half-finished poems. You skipped the roll

of quarters and commuter tickets. But it was there
in that red car above thousands of miles of tread where
songs were sung, stories told, gossip gossiped. My smell.
The echo of my belches. They were rubbed in

the worn seats and they weren't enough nor were
my Leonard Cohen and Quincy Troupe tapes. You left
the light on. Were you afraid of the dark. Afraid
I might emerge in a karate gi and whup

your ass. I have no whup and no gi. You might
have said, *There's nothing here* and slammed
the door. But it was there among the books
and wads of Kleenex. I was there.

Worry Farm

I shouldn't like to but I like to worry.
I spend time on the Worry Farm,
plant seeds in the vegetable garden

before I pull on my wide brim hat and overalls,
grease up the John Deere and plow the back 40.
There's nothing more handsome than nourishing

rows and rows where worry can germinate, sprout,
blossom and grow, take hold of my body.
Feel the root. Coddle it. Cuddle it. Work the farm.

And then to breed it like rabbits. Litters of worry.
So doggone cute. Mama, Daddy and the little
worries leaping, scampering with big ears.

Gosh I can farm. The worry chickens lay
white-on-white eggs, brown-on-brown eggs.
Mother chickens sit on them until worry chicks

bust out into the world and how proud the hen house
is producing its share. *Cock-a-doodle do*
brings on a moo from the milk barn. Proud

farmer I am with worry filling me up yielding
bumper crops. When the sun sets and the weathervane
twirls, I can keep 'em down on the farm.

Steak Break

How about a break from the bland
tofu sandwich that tastes more like
mush than anything fun. Give yourself
a steak break, a medium rare
T-bone on the barbecue.

Hear it sizzle and spit while you
flip it with a spatula on to the plate
you've warmed in the oven.

Remember yum. Have some fun.

Slice that steak knife through. Ooze
the pink juice. Dip the meat into au jus.

Love that sauce with butter.

I'll bet butter is not on your diet.

Go on. Dip and chew. It's good for you.
Chew. Feeling bad feels good

before you nod off or take an oath
to the vegan cookbook. I won't
tell. Place a second tenderloin
on the grill for me. I'll bring
the baked potatoes, the butter, the chives

and we'll lop on sour cream.

A Skier's Slap in the Face

I have stumped-to-splat, snapped
my body in two, been the front
plunge cliff drop. Every skier

knows the burn of snow.
Either glacier. Either balance.
Either air will puff the slope.

Either I was a tree well
or the frozen waterfall
fell through me. Either I

tomahawked down a couloir
or a mushroom tip of powder
snagged my baby-pillow line.

Deep and dense the plop. Either
fresh tracks or fall line
no stunt like a faceplant.

[Table of Contents](#)

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