About the Postcard Above My Desk

Helen Wickes
I’m sure it was meant to get me writing, but I don’t think Mr. Samuel Beckett cares if another word gets written. He makes me want to break every pen in the house, put on a hat, and walk. For years. Until my shoes wear out, until everyone I know has died, until the world is completely unrecognizable.

I didn’t give him this power. He took it word by word. I tell him, Look at your funny ears, your coat’s too big, your hair’s a wreck.

Some days I call him Sam, or Monsieur. Or to get his goat, which someone’s got to do, Macushla, the Irish for dear, but mostly it’s Beckett. I like the coldness. And the echo of Peter O’Toole bowing his head at the altar. Knowing they’re coming to get him. Of course I could remove the card, but this guy would haunt me from any drawer or pocket. This character thinks he runs the show. He stares down, bemused, unmoved if I read a cheesy magazine or go to the window to mourn the robin’s egg crushed on the pavement. I tell him the sky is blue, but what’s a sky to a guy in eternity. Look at the world you left, old man. We’re here, your lost children, listening for a sign.