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Seven Postcards From Solitude

It is becoming more difficult to write a letter
from the slow country of summer.
The light makes a mess of the trees.

A lawn chair broods in a corner way off the map.
*

Dear Tuesday,
On the skyline the buildings are still going up.
The breeze labors like an arcane machine whose fan
fails to keep my mind clean.
*

Big days, small nights decked out in neon.

No need to pitch the limbs beyond
the groove set by the garden wall.
*

Bus #32 pulls away from the corner.
Chokehold of smoke, and evening
lowers its jewelblue wing.
*

Meanwhile the garden breaks down.
The lawn wrenches the trees apart.

The clock gets relentless;
the clock comes passing the hat around.

*

Dear Saturday,
Take heart.
The roses have dropped their lawsuit.
*

Hiss and yowl, a catfight ruptures the silence.
Then air so still you could wash your hands in it.

That's all there is to it: rupture,
and rapture, all the livelong.

This tree requests dedication and patience

Dear Liesl, one day long after I was already a grown man, the sun sank its rudder in the roof of my house and scooped the insides out onto the lawn. The sun shone so fiercely, flaunting its handiwork, the sun worked so hard the bluebirds blacked out.

I know I've been a disappointment. A man has an unlimited ability to disappoint; it sits in direct correlation to his impotence

against oil spills and indoor parking. Mass humorlessness. Margarine. The stick stuck up the collective ass.

When I fill the shaker with salt, grains scramble across the plastic tablecloth, loud as the static in a bad connection. But to get through life you need grit such as this—that and a window shade with a round, dangling tug.

When I get lonely I picture myself sleeping in an airplane. I have a talk with whatever's at hand while I wait to wake up. My book bag, perhaps, hanging from the doorknob:

Oh there you are I thought someone took you.

Planes fly over my house so boisterously I think the sky must be made of aluminum.
But the sky is made of corrugated tin.

Dear Liesl, I miss you.

I got a bonsai at the florist's that comes with instructions: *la coltivazione dei bonsai richiede*

impegno e pazienza.

Is this too much to ask?

Sarah J. Sloat
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Sarah J. Sloat lives in Germany, where she works for a news agency. Her poems have appeared in *Bateau*, *Linebreak*, *Juked*, and *Court Green*, among other publications. Her chapbook, *Excuse me while I wring this long swim out of my hair*, was published by Dancing Girl Press this summer.