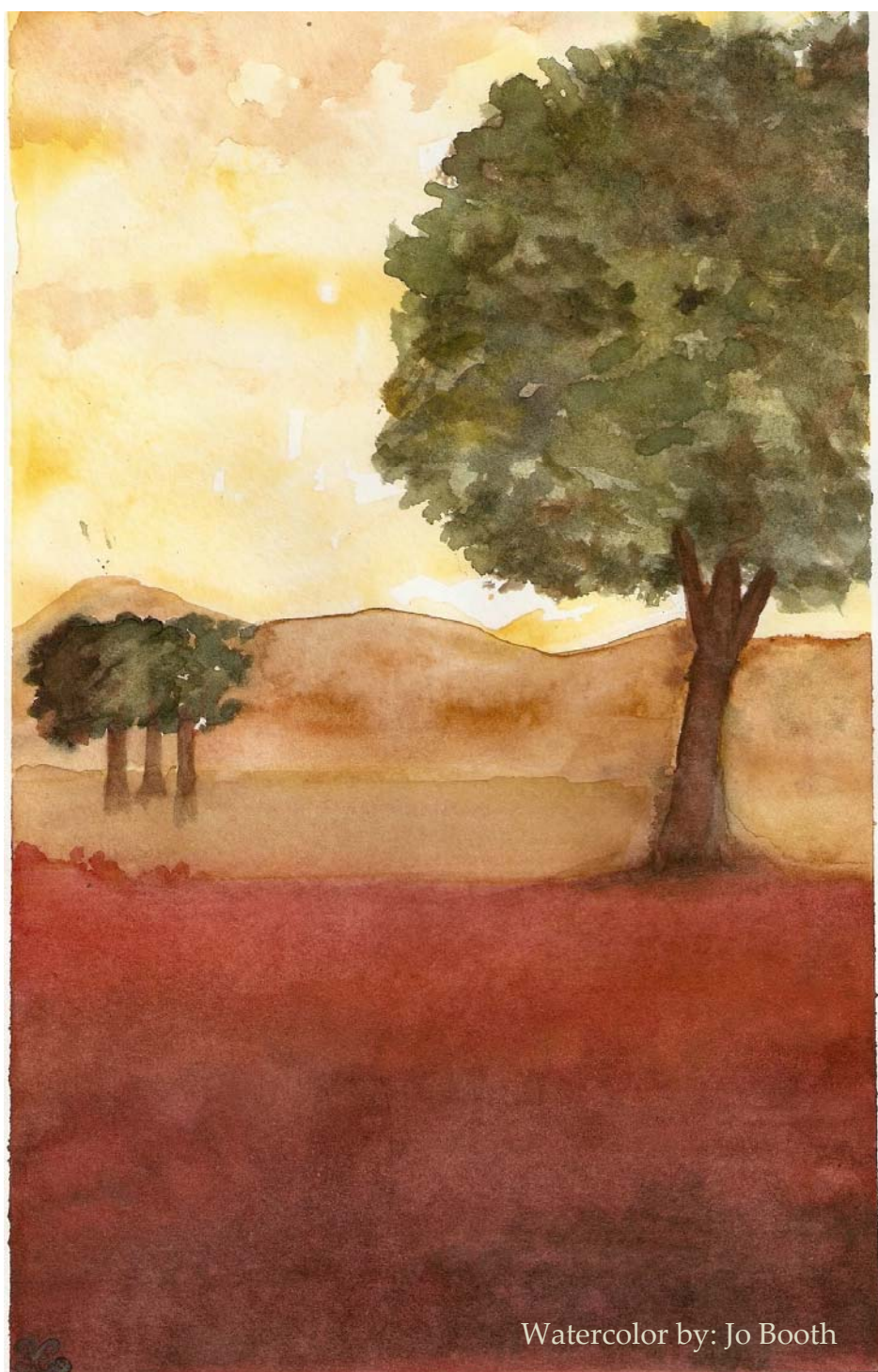


HELICON

WEST

& the USU Writing Center Present



Watercolor by: Jo Booth

Slick Circle

By: Kacy Lundstrom

A silence falls in the circle, a rare break in the rhythm of their usual hum of camaraderie. I feel how they all look at me, sadly, and I shade my eyes with my hand, as if I am shading it from sun. But, really, I finally understand that my mother would not be sad, that these nine pairs of eyes would not look at me this way if I were not leaving for a while. Maybe years.

A child cries a few yards away and the silence is broken. Nina begins talking about the man who has groped her in the break room three days in a row now. Normally my mother would shoo me away with a flick of her wrist, but I look up to see her eyes distanced, her mind occupied. She sits this way, unmoving, as the topics move into even spicier arenas, and she says nothing. Usually, she is flashing her beautiful eyes in every direction, leaving no topic untouched. I frequently heard the other women say, "Summer, let her finish."

A patient painting doomed to waiting

By: Gina Bladen Ricks

In the room upstairs
When the wind blows loud and slow
Paint brushes clink
Against the mason jars
From which
They sprout,
Metal counterparts colliding.
Paint dries on the canvas
In the way I've told it to,
And on the brushes
In a way I wish it wouldn't.
Her burnt sienna hair is gliding
Across the middle, the glass tipping,
Purple liquid suspended
Like commas in
The flat, white, air
Where the brush hasn't
As of yet touched.
Her eyes plead with me
To slip the dirty apron over my head,
Unscrew the sticky lid of alizarin crimson
And give her a smile,
Or at least two feet to stand on.
"I can't": my empty reply,
And I recognize the desperation
I have put in her eyes-

For it is my own.

But there are no interruptions this afternoon and from my pretzel-like position on the concrete floor, I touch her knee and whisper upward, "Mama, do you need something?"

She looks down, leans over to me, her dark soft hair swooping across my face and whispers, "I was just thinking of those fields—they'll be gold when you see them. You'll have a regular playground of gold." I look at her, how intently she is imagining, and I have a hard time believing that it is me running through those metallic pastures; it is easier to picture my mother sprinting, hard, calf muscles flexing, a breeze sifting through soft, dark hair. I have no reason to run from Slick Circle, but it occurs to me for the first time in eight years, that my mother is considering it.

Helicon West invites you to share our open mic nights every 2nd and 4th Thursday
7:00 PM at Citrus and Sage, 130 North 100 East, Logan, Utah.

Broadside Co-editors: Cynthia Harmon and JP Peterson

Sponsored by the Helicon West Planning Committee and the USU Writing Center
For more information on community broadsides contact star.coulbrooke@usu.edu
For more information on the USU Writing Center, log onto writingcenter.usu.edu