Leslie, Amy, Judy

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This series of three paintings is my response to rereading L.M. Montgomery's novels and life-writing. I am searching for hidden narratives and the undercurrents of women's lives in the socio-political reality of nineteenth-century Canadian life in the Maritime provinces.

Each painting is accompanied by a quotation from one of Montgomery's works, and this quotation is an integral part of the final piece.

The paintings are not illustrations specific to a particular story but are broader social commentaries. I have not included the source of each quotation in order for each to be an expression of the universality of the female experience of Montgomery's era and beyond.



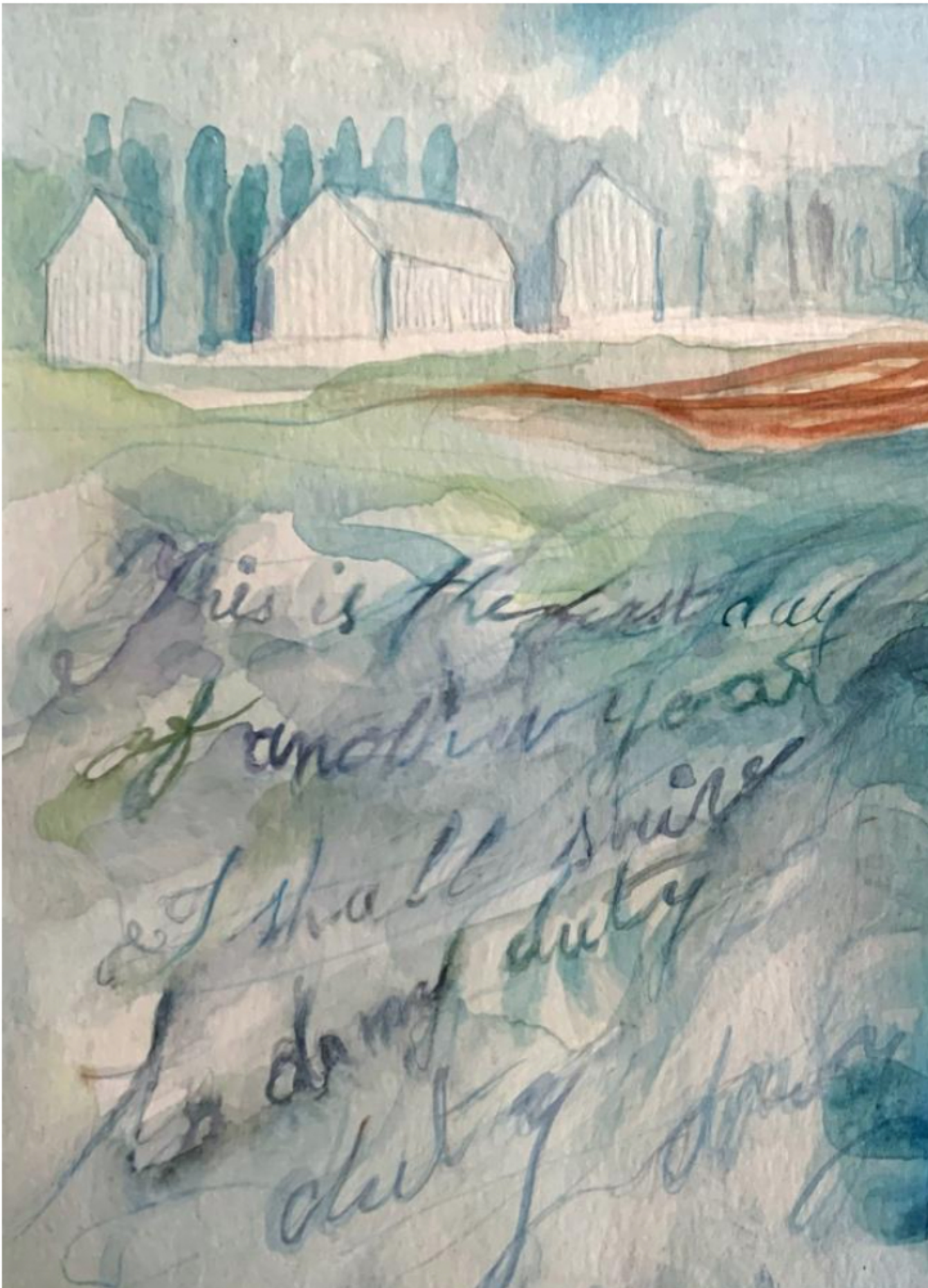
Leslie, Watercolour

“Abner Moore held the mortgage on the West farm, and the interest was overdue some years, and Dick just went and told Mrs. West that if Leslie wouldn’t marry him he’d get his father to foreclose the mortgage ... And Leslie gave in—she loved her mother so much she would have done anything to save her pain. She married Dick Moore.”



Amy, Acrylic on panel

“She hadn't the spirit to argue ... her heart was broken. Oh, I know what she went through, my poor pretty darling ... she couldn't have a flower-garden ... she couldn't even have a kitten ... I gave her one and he drowned it.”


This is the first day
of another year
& I shall strive
to do my duty

Judy, Watercolour

“She was tired and she did not like it because it meant that she was growing old. Judy had just one dread in life ... that she might grow too old to be of use.”

Bio: Ewa Henry-Dawson is a painter known mostly for her vibrant watercolours. Since immigrating from Poland to Canada in 1989, she has pursued her passion for everything related to L.M. Montgomery and has popularized her research among Polish and English-speaking audiences via magazine articles, paintings, and social media. A graduate of York University, she is a visual artist and writer with a keen focus on women’s published and unpublished life-writings. Ewa examines women’s lives through the lens of societal and legal expectations and limitations. The results of her research find an artistic outlet in her creative non-fiction, poetry, and paintings. She is genetically linked to the race that knows Joseph. Ewa shares her time between Ontario and Nova Scotia. All quotations from the work of L.M. Montgomery: *Anne's House of Dreams* (1917), *Anne of Ingleside* (1939), *Pat of Silver Bush* (1933).

Article Info

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