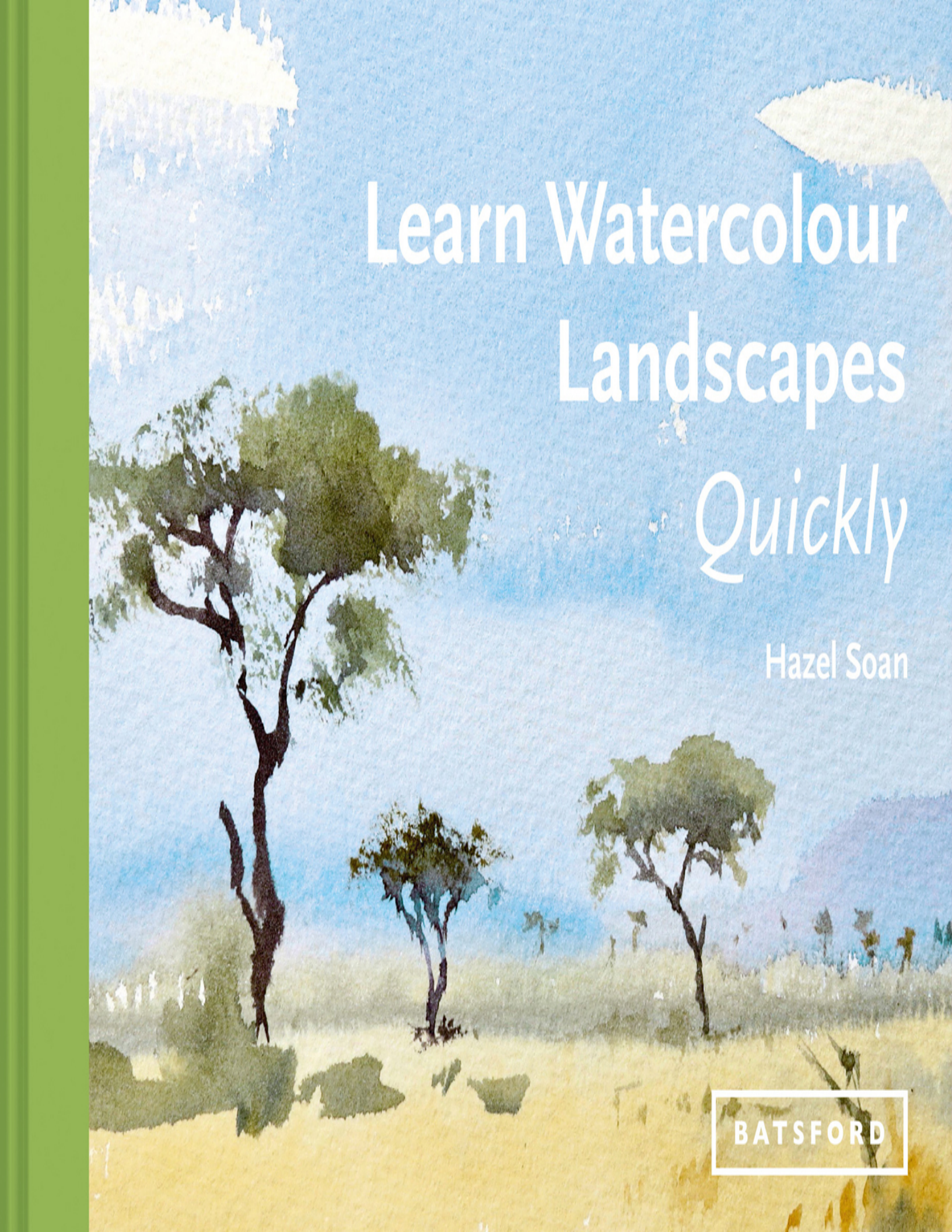
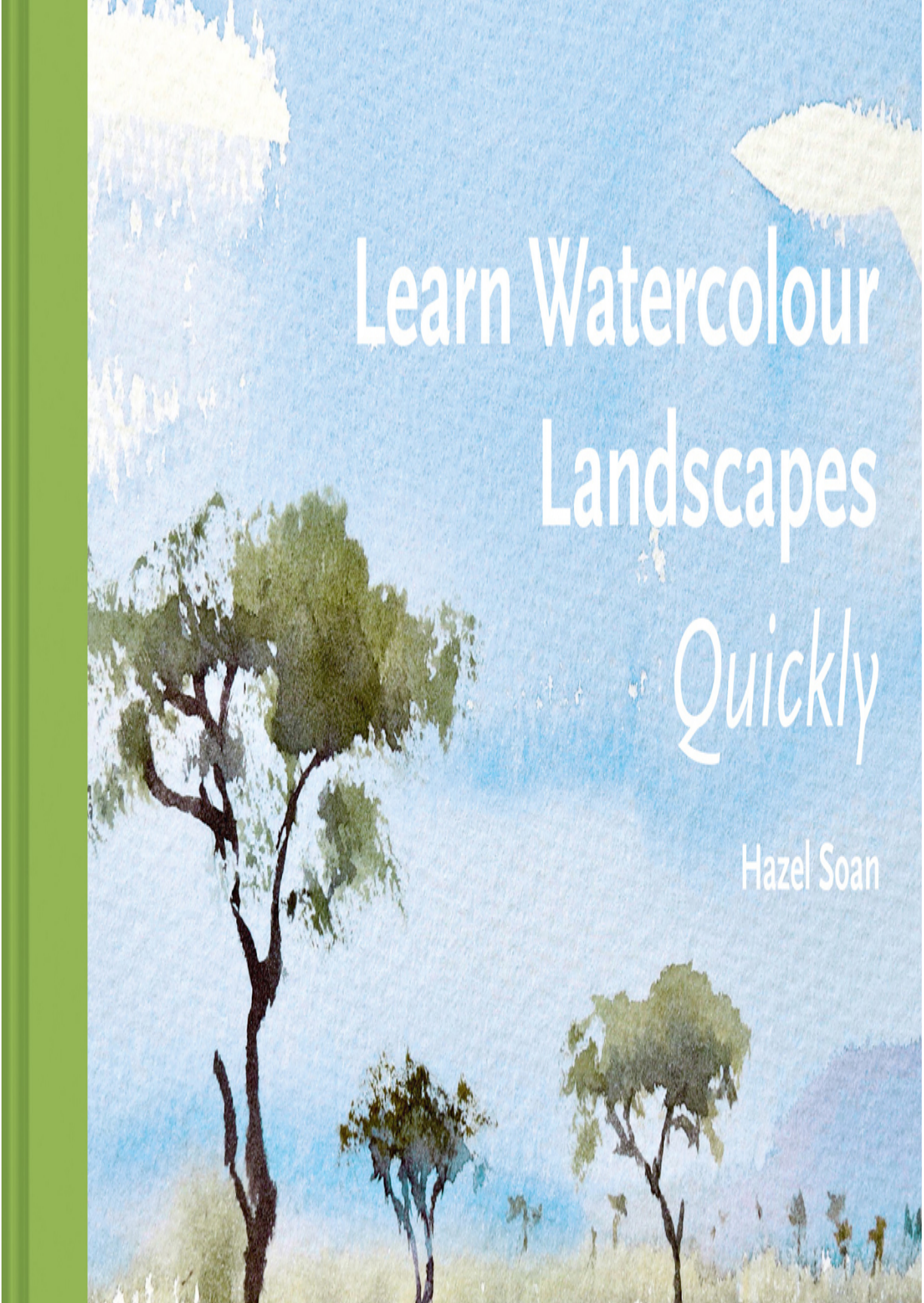


A watercolor illustration of a savanna landscape. In the foreground, there is a field of yellowish-brown grass with some green shrubs. Several acacia trees with dark trunks and green foliage are scattered across the middle ground. The background shows a hazy horizon with more trees and a blue sky with soft, white clouds. The overall style is soft and painterly.

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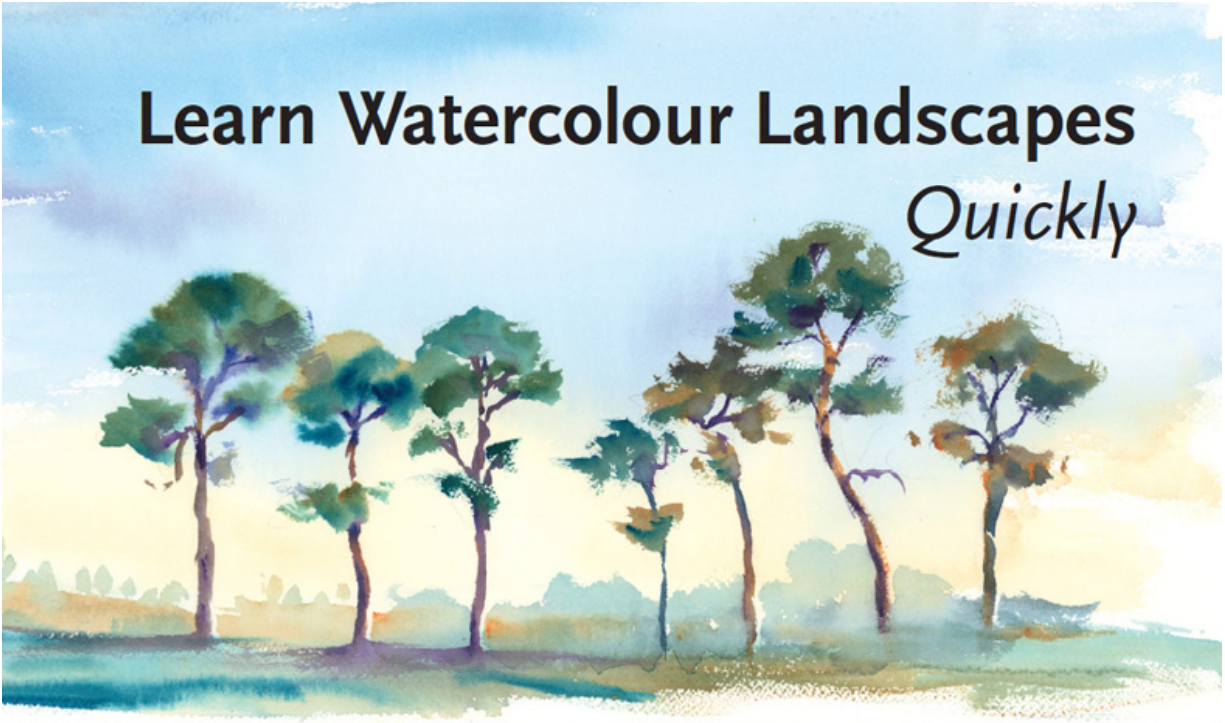
The background of the book cover is a watercolor painting of a savanna landscape. It features several acacia trees with dark trunks and green foliage. The sky is a mix of light blue and white, suggesting clouds. The overall style is soft and painterly. A solid green vertical bar is on the left side of the cover.

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To the Initiator of the Big Bang, for Planet Earth

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Introduction

Watercolour landscape painting is an exciting process. It takes a piece of the huge wide world, shrinks it to paper size, flattens it into two dimensions and creates something that did not exist before. Though it may resemble the landscape the artist sees, it is not the landscape, nor is it a copy – it is a new creation, a watercolour painting. I find this creative metamorphosis rather magical. How is it possible? Read on and find out.



Little is needed to suggest a landscape.



West Virginia Byway

28 x 38cm (11 x 15in)

The characteristics of the watercolour medium are so attractive in themselves that a mundane subject, such as these two roadside sheds, makes an enjoyable painting with just three colours – Alizarin Crimson, Aureolin and Ultramarine Blue – and a play of light and shade.



The art of illusion

The magic that makes landscape painting possible is the art of illusion. With the use of tone, colour and perspective, the artist has the means to convince the viewer that a three-dimensional world is reinvented on the flat surface of the paper. Watercolour is the perfect accomplice in this illusion; lightweight and easy to carry to any location, it is quickly applied and dries fast.

Three-dimensional illusion, however, is only the means to an end. Successful watercolours are not a matter of reproducing exactly what you see on paper – they are about making something new in the form of a painting. A watercolour may be inspired by the landscape but should inherit a life of its own. Before you start, instead of thinking that you are using watercolour to paint a landscape, rather think 'I am using the landscape to paint a watercolour.' This simple adjustment of mindset will free you from imitation and allow you to be creative.

Delete copy

Happily, you can remove the word 'copy' from your painting vocabulary. A painter cannot possibly 'copy' a landscape – no piece of paper would be large enough and the landscape is overwhelmingly three-dimensional!