

# Landscapes: the Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language

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Volume 4  
Issue 1 *Peripatetica: The Poetics of Walking*

Article 25

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January 2010

## Sandplain Afternoon

Meg Mooney

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### Recommended Citation

Mooney, M. (2010). Sandplain Afternoon. *Landscapes: the Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language*, 4(1).

Retrieved from <https://ro.ecu.edu.au/landscapes/vol4/iss1/25>

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## Sandplain Afternoon *by Meg Mooney*

I'm walking with my friend Tularda  
Kapangati and Isabel  
we're supposed to be looking for tracks of murrinja  
a little, endangered marsupial  
but even I know we won't find them  
in this burnt country

Tularda's greatgrandchild picks arkatjirri –  
tart yellow raisins  
chases little lizards  
between grass clumps and fan flower bushes  
fireweeds in the red sand

the sun is beginning to go down  
there's no hurry, nothing we have to do  
might be find goanna  
pick arkatjirri

it's hot but somehow the heat suits me  
I don't want to rush back  
go to a waterhole with friends  
like in my younger days here

always at home on this great sandplain  
now I find the rhythm of these women  
hunting easily  
resonates in me too

we look at tracks  
plants growing back after fire  
I carry the little girl  
follow Tularda

**Meg Mooney** is a natural scientist and poet and have been in central Australia for 23 years now, living and/or working in remote Aboriginal communities for most of that time. My poems often have a strong narrative and attention to detail and focus on my association with Aboriginal communities and the landscape. For the dry country: writing and drawings from the Centre, by myself and artist Sally Mumford, was published by Ptilotus Press in 2005, and I have had poems published in a range of journals and anthologies.