

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

Volume 4
Issue 2 *Sustabilia*

Article 31

January 2011

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Recommended Citation

Clennell, S. (2011). Salt on my lips. *Landscapes: the Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language*, 4(2).

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Salt on my lips *by* Sue Clennell

Salt on my lips
from the land
and I think of farmers
trying to spin straw into gold.
“That’s the risk they take,”
said one young blood,
talking of the unseasonal rains
decapitating the crops.

Salt on my teeth,
the sheep as grey as the paddocks
huddle around the dams.
“We’ve been brought down
to our knees,”
she said as we looked over
a CWA stall and licked
jam and cream off fingers.

Salt on my cheeks.
The butcher proved his skill
with throwing knives at balloons,
the MC fiddled to piano
accompaniment and youngsters
livened the country folk up by
singing impromptu rap,
all aimed at forgetting
salt in their blood.

Sue Clennell has recently released the poetry CD ‘The Van Gogh Café.’ Her poems have appeared in *Poetry NZ*, *Westerly*, *Studio* and *The Weekend Australian*.