

# 12

## BESTIARY

- John Charles Ryan (Australia)

### *balga*

its slow-growing stalk  
ascends to arid heavens  
carrying breath prints

### *fern drops*

metallic water  
poised like gutter rain backed up  
to burst on mind thatch

### *giant kelp*

in Tassie waters  
seaweed waves of purple pale  
the ocean breathes out

### *reticence*

vased kangaroo paws

emboldened greatly to red  
by draughts of dewsap

***olfaction***

this garden fragrant?  
nay, I detect acrid notes  
of rubbish and bleach!

***lumen***

oracular blooms  
index the pitch, pull, and pulse  
of the desert moon

***fractured***

honeypot flowers  
gathered up the pieces and  
salved his sore sutures

***bruised***

is this a hip bone,  
a welt to give, to bemoan  
a tomahawk thrown?

*first*

new faint lemon tufts  
under trident banksia  
were dandelions

*landing*

someone has fallen  
outside five thresholds to grace  
tilting like treetongues

*making sense of bestial forms*

calamari tube?  
a lighthouse at head of land?  
stick caught in a flume?

*bestiary*

golden snail parade  
anthers dizzied in storm light  
leaning left—cackle!

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