

Creatures

**These perfect, inverse cones:
tapped overnight in the soil
by a bandicoot's snout.**

**Falling from the sky: mutton birds.
Too fat to stay airborne
for Alaska, they crash onto the roof.**

**An echidna,
in need of water, waddles round
and round an unreachable bird bath.**

**Bronze as an antique bed-warmer,
the stag beetle whirs into a somersault,
slams against a gum tree
jerking the barbs on its fish-hook legs.**

**Grappling through December's sticky flowers
it twists on the edge of a leaf,
claws upward to the black-tipped spike
of a butcher-bird's beak.**

**Nothing unexpected
has happened;
just a potoroo,
hopping
to a verdant corridor,
fallen
on the road.
There is silence
in the scrub,
an absence
of paws holding roots,
an emptiness
among the wounded trees.**

**A woodlouse,
stretching its ovaline slate-plates,
climbs an apple tree to find a codling-hole.**