



The Bestiary

and
Visual
Alphabet



Lynne Kelly

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About the Author

Dr Lynne Kelly is a science writer and Honorary Research Associate at LaTrobe University, Melbourne. After spending most of her career teaching at secondary school level, she returned to university to pursue an academic career. Lynne was astonished by the way non-literate cultures manage to memorise and teach a vast amount of practical information without writing. For her PhD, she explored the application to archaeology. She has since implemented many indigenous and medieval memory methods in a contemporary context and been astounded by their efficacy.

Lynne's research on memory methods has been published in an academic monograph, *Knowledge and Power in Prehistoric Societies* and two books for the mainstream market, *The Memory Code* and *Memory Craft*.

This memory aid starts with a medieval idea, the Visual Alphabet. This sequence of creatures gives a sequence of pegs with which to associate your information. You will always get them in order.

The spider goddess Arachne throws her web over the Bird who is being attacked by the Cat being burnt by the Dragon who is also burning the Eagle who is just about to eat the Frog resting on the horn of a Goat being attacked by a Hydra. The Hydra is attacking an Imp who is attempting to kick the hat off a Jester who is attacking a Kitten just about to be eaten by a Lion. On the tail of the Lion hangs a little Marmoset who is secretly being watched by a Neanderthal linked by vine to an Owl who is being stalked by a Panther. The tail of said Panther and Quetzalcoatl are tangled as the feathered serpent attacks a Rat sitting on a Skull being bitten by a Toucan sitting on the tail of a Unicorn. Escaping all this mayhem, the Unicorn has a Vulture resting on its horn. He is eyeing off the Wombat who is being attacked by Xena the warrior woman standing on the horns of a Yak just about to be zapped by Zeus.

This list can be used to memorise anything with a sequence such as a speech, list of winners or even your shopping. It can also be used to memorise people's names. Just note the letter that starts their name and associate that creature with the person in front of you. You may need to make further links to get the rest of the name if you don't think the single letter will be enough.

As lots of names start with Ma or Ja or St, for example, you will do far better to associate the beast with the first two letters of the name using The Bestiary, based on the mediaeval books designed to memorise virtues and vices. You don't need to remember the whole 264 at a single go. Just add in those you need gradually. Meanwhile, if you don't know the relevant beast, use the Visual Alphabet.

As my artwork may well be insufficient for you to identify the beast I have added poetry, of sorts, to include its name. There were many letter combinations for which I could not find any beast and so became creative (or desperate).

The purpose of my Bestiary, fortunately, is not to be a great work of art nor of poetry. It is merely to be memorable and fun.













Aa The Aardvark is proud of
his fleshy nose;

Ab The Abyssinian of her
short fur.



Ac The Acorn displays
both rough and smooth

Ad while Adam's apple
(the Adder claims) is entirely due to her.



Ae

The Aerialist flies with
grace and ease;
The Afghan's tresses shine.

Af



Ag

The Agaric's flesh is poison, yet

Ah



Ai

Ah is the sigh of the Airedale,
as he prepares to dine.



Aj Ajax is armed with
shield and spear;

Ak



The Akita with a smile;
Also grinning is the Alligator;
His countenance masking his guile.

Al



Am

Seek ye the
protection of an
Amulet, or the
warmth of an

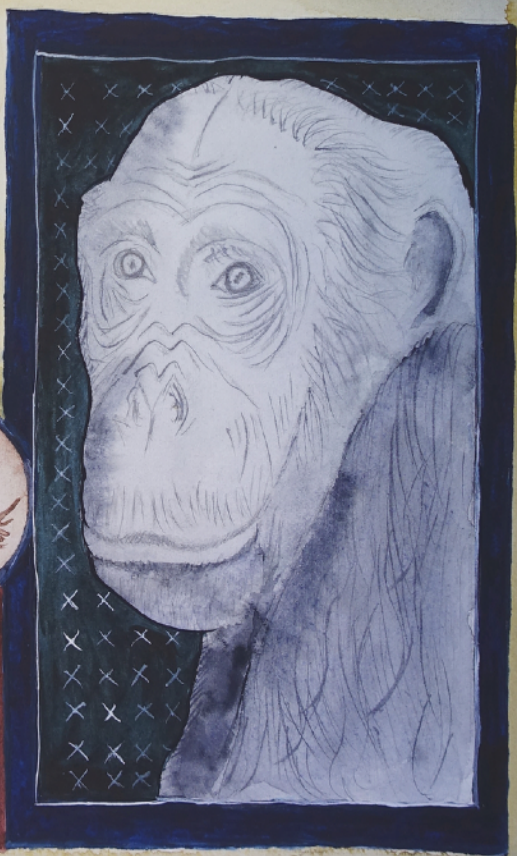
An

Angel's
wing?

Ap

Seek ye the
insight of an
Ape, or the
peace of an
Aquarium?

Aq





Ar The armoured Armadillo accepts
 The thick-necked Asp as friend;
As But Atlas shouldering the world
At Resents the Auroch's horn up his
 end.

Au (No wonder it's
 extinct.)





Av

The Avocet's
upturned beak
is classy;

Ax

The Axolotl's
face is not.



Ay Az

The eyes of the
Aye-Aye stare in
horror at the Aztec's
gory lot.



Ba

Bats do fly
on bended
wings;
Bees do
buzz and
sting.



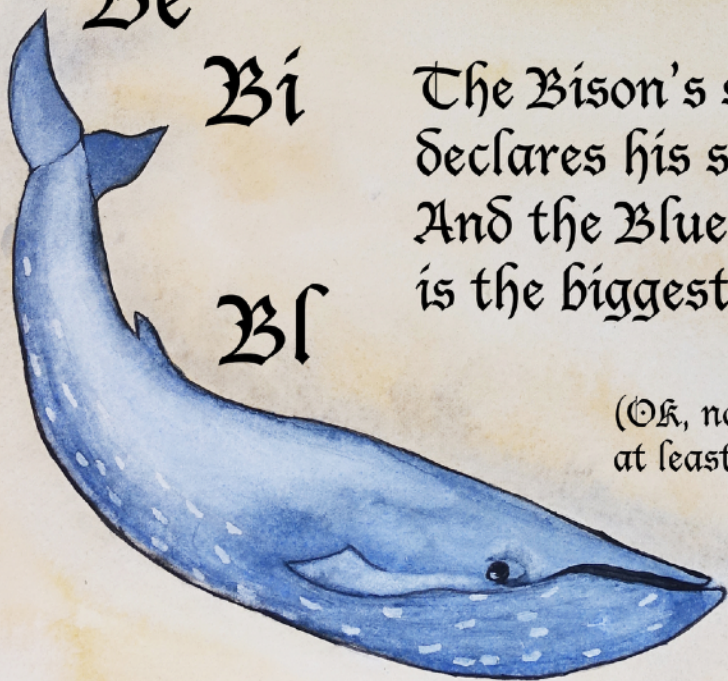
Be

Bi

The Bison's shoulder
declares his strength;
And the Blue Whale
is the biggest thing.

Bs

(OK, not my best, but
at least it rhymes.)



The Bower
Bird Displays
his love of
blue. The
Brontosaurus
seeks a brain.



Bo Br Bu

The Butterfly is
poetry in living
form;

By
And Byron is here
because I couldn't
find anything better
starting with By.



Ca Our Camel and Centaur will
battle do;
Ce The Chipmunk merely munches.



Ch

munch
munch
munch

Ci



Cicadas
peer
through
five
eyes.
it's true;

While Clowns and Cows come
in bunches.

Cl

Co



bunch
bunch
bunch

Cr

The
Crab
will
grab;

Cu



The Cuscus curse;

And the Cyborg,
she will sigh.

Cy

Da
De



The Dalsmation
has dots;
The Deer has
spots;

Di Do

The Diamond
Python's skin's
a gem; But the
Dolphin swims
around adorned
with not a thing.



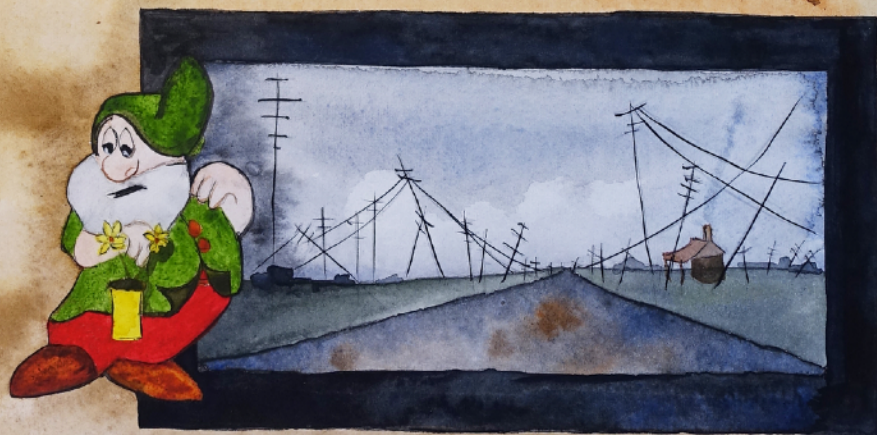


A Dragonfly can fly;
A Duck can duck;
This Dwarf did decry



Dr
Du
Dw
Dy

The Dystopia I was forced to add
for no beast starts with Dy.





The Earwig
sacks both ear
and wig;

£a

£b



£bony
alone sacks
£c ivory.

£c



The Echidna
seeks a meal
of ants,
which I find

most unsavoury.



The Egret
admires the
Eider's
colours.

The latter
thinks the
former is
pure.

But I admire
the Elephant
who leaves
The biggest
blob of
manure.



Eg Ei El



Ed
Ee
Ef



Edelweiss stands
still and white;
The Eel passes
in a flash.
The Effigy is
burnt until
It is but a pile
of ash.



En

An Engraving endures long
An Emu booms loud
And Epaulets are ghastly

Em

Ep





Eq

Er

The Equestrian
seeks out
The Ermine's
soft fur,
While the
Eskimo's fur
is vast (ly).



Es



Et Eu Ev



An Ethereal being from beyond
the earth,
A Eucalypt rooted in it;
Eve plucking an apple from its
limbs
Let's face it, ain't legit.

Ew

Ex



The Ewe rubbed on
Excalibur's stone,
Before Arthur
Did his bit.



Predicted
by prophet
Ezekiel,
As on his
scroll t'was
clearly writ.

Ez

falcons hunt
from the air;
ferrets hunt
on the ground.



fa

fe



fish are hunted in
watery domains,
By flamingoes
(unless they've
drowned.)



fi

fl



fo
fr
fu



The fox employs wily ways
To survive the city's perils.
The frogmouth uses camouflagage
To survive the forest's ferals.
The fuchsia just hangs around.

The Galah is a kind of bird
The Genie is a kind of ghost
The Gharial is a kind of crocodile

Ga Ge



With a lump on the
end of its nose.

Gh



A Giraffe can
reach on high;
A Slider can
glide home.

Gs

Gi



Go Gn



A Gorilla can
walk on his
knuckles;
And the other
one is a Gnome.



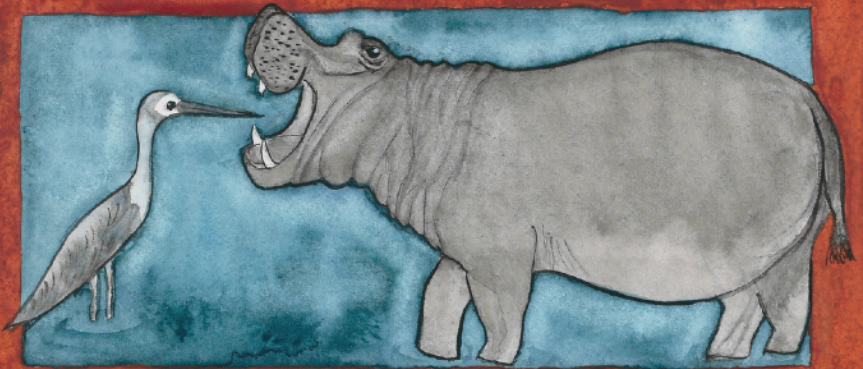
The Griffin challenges the Gull;
Myth challenges reality.
The obscure Gwanda snake
Seeks the Gypsy's spirituality.

Gr
Gu
Gw
Gy





ha
he
hi



hare today, gone tomorrow
Is that the heron's fate?
Cleaning hippopotamus teeth,
Is he soon to be the late ...?



A horse is just a
horse, of course,
And hummingbirds
just tiny birds.
But the hyena is
the one to fear
As she howls with
evil mirth.

Ho

Hu Hy



Shakespeare the Iambic of'ten did use



Ia

Ib



for Ibex to scathe
and scorne
Icarus, who soar'd toward the sun;

Ic



Id

Identical twins left but to mourn.

If only
I could
find a
beast
who
started
with I=f!
Iguana
works,
but I≠
eludes, so
Illusion is
my pref=

[=erence].

The Impala leaps,
The Insect creeps,
And so here ends my
ref= [=erence].



If

Ig

I≠

Im

In





No creature shall grace
this bestiary page
I cringe to here confess.



Ir
Is
Iv

I cannot find the
beasts I seek,
So here's my very best:

Iris, Island and Ivy.

Sorry.





Ja
Je

The Jackass is a donkey;
The Jellyfish floats a lot;
The Jigsaw is a puzzle
The Jonquil
looks like what
it is not.*

Ji Jo

* It's not a daffodil.



Maybe we need
a Juggler
To get us back
on track.*

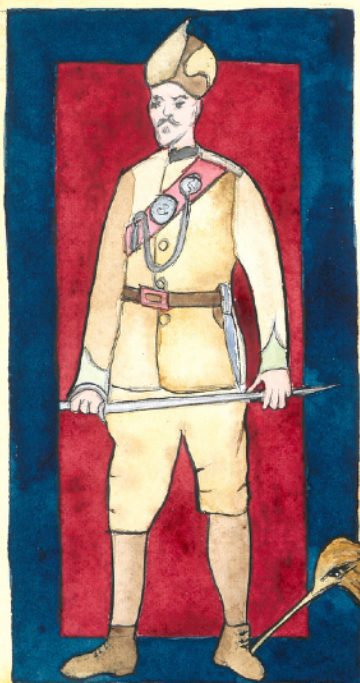


Ka



Ju The Ke
Kangaroo
is doing
his bit,
While the
Kestrel
mounts
an attack.

* In Desperation.
I have resorted
to too many
non-beasts for a
Bestiary.



Oh, no!

I can't find beasts
for the letters here.
Khaki just gets
the job done.

Kiwi you star!

But then I needed
Knight and Star
Trek Klingon.

Kh
Ki
Kn
Kl





Ko Kr Ku



The Kookaburra laughs at
 my feeble resort
 To fantasy and fruiting matter
 The Kraken
 wakes;
 The Kumquat
 drops;
 And now the
 Chinese Kylin
 slips into this
 patter. Ky





La

Starting well, Lapwing's a beast;
A Leprechaun is almost.
A Limpet is a shell, I know
But a beast is there enclosed.

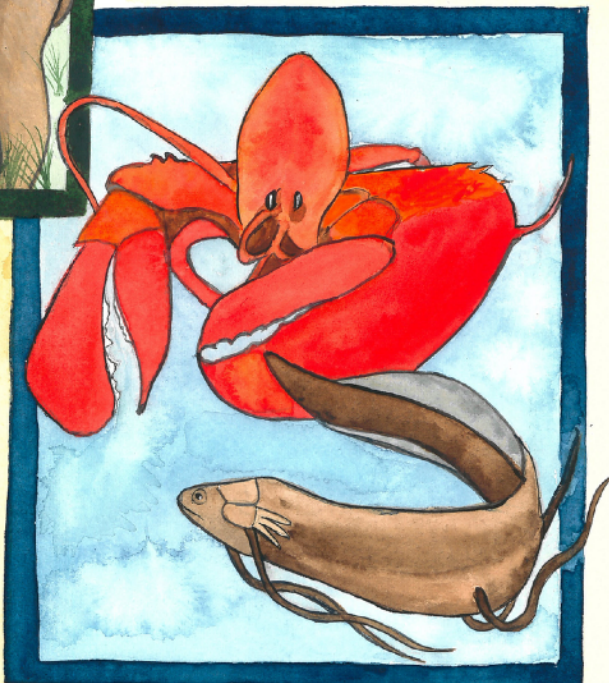


Le
Li



£l £o

Yay!
 I have a page
 of beasts!
 As a bestiary
 shoulð be.
 £lama,
 £obster,
 £ungfish and
 £ynx,
 I am in love
 with thee!



£u £y



Ma Mc
Me Mi

The marvellously
marked Macaw
watches
McScottish Dance.



Medusa shakes
her head of
snakes, At
the Millipede's
glance



Mo

Mu



My

The Monkey observes
from high above,
As the Muskrat and Myna
fall in love.



Na
Ne
Ni



Nautilus craft
their coiled shells,
As spiral oceanic
outfits,



But Neptune has ventured far
from them,
To help a child with her Nits

The Noddy is a
bird of the sea,
The Numbat roams
the Desert.



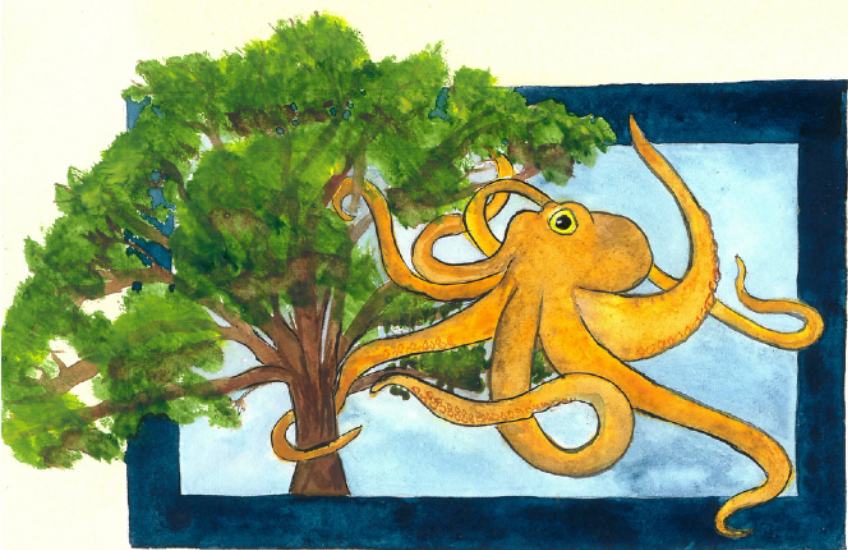
No

Nu



flowers adorn
the leafy tresses,
As the forest
Nymph plays
her part.

Ny



The spreading Oak
in poetry abounds,
In my art, the Octopus
hugs it.

Θα

Θε

Θδ

But much more
is said
In prose and
verse
Of the great
Θδιν,
God of the Norse
Who on a gold
throne does sit.



Artists love Ogres
to wield their
clubs,
While Okapi
bottoms are
cherished.



Og Ok Of



But do they eat
Olives?

I dread to ask,
for that fruit
is next in
my task,
And so reality,
I have
embellished.



On

Or



Op

Os

An Onion stinks,
 An Opossum slinks
 Orangutans are
 known for high jinx.
 Ostriches may trot,
 But fly they cannot,
 Because they're so
 big, me thinks.





Ot

The Otter
Delights in
the water.
The Owlet
Nightjar
hankers for
hollows.

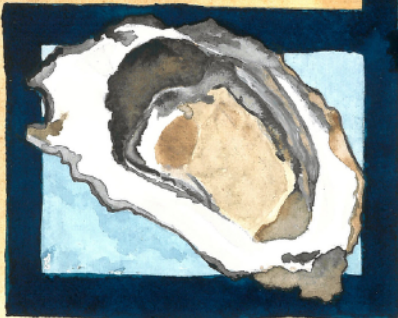
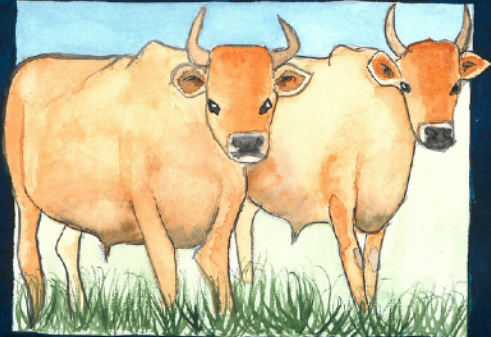
Ow

Ox

Oy



Oxen have
a penchant
for lush green
pastures,



And Oysters are
such boring, slimy
creatures that I
gave up on rhyming.

Please,
Dear
Panda,
let me
share
your
bamboo.



Pa

Pe

Ph

Please, Dear
Penguin, let
me snuggle
next to you.



And please, Dear
Phoenix, let me
regenerate too.

Please,
Dear Pig,
may I kiss
your cute
snout?



Pi

And please, Dear Platypus,
Can we both swim about?



Pl

And oh, please,
please Dear
Polar Bear,
when can we
chill out?



Po

The Praying Mantis fervently prays
That Puffins only eat fish.



Pr Pu Py

While the
prey of the
Python
is hugged
and loved,
As it becomes
the very next
dish.





Qu Is the Quail raving? **Ra**
Re Or the Raven quailing?
Rh Is the Reindeer reigning?
Or the Rhinocerus complaining?



The Ringtail cat isn't a cat;
The Rooster's comb isn't a comb.



Rí

Ru



Ro

The Runner Bean
can't jog a step;
And this Rye isn't
the rhyzome.

(really, trusy)

Ry

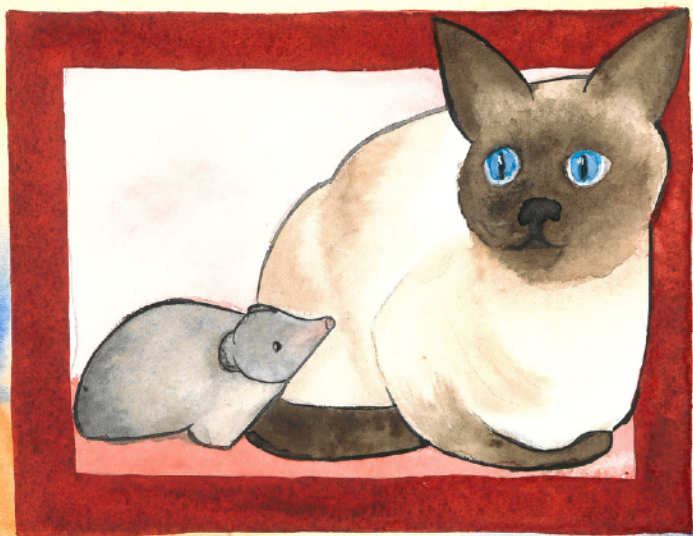
Sa

Sc

Se



A Satyr is known for his
naughty fun;
The Scorpion feared for his sting.
The Seahorse is actually a little fish
for whom egg-hatching's a male thing.



Sh

Si

Sk



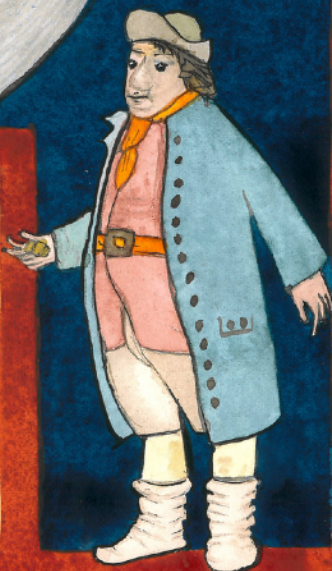
"Is this Shrew
worthy of attack?"
The Siamese cat
doth think.

"No way, when
this close to the
wary Skunk,
I shan't take the
risk of a stink!"

Sf

Sm

The Sloth doth sloth;
The Smuggler doth
smuggle;
The Snail doth plea,
But Sourpuss won't
snuggle.



Sn

So



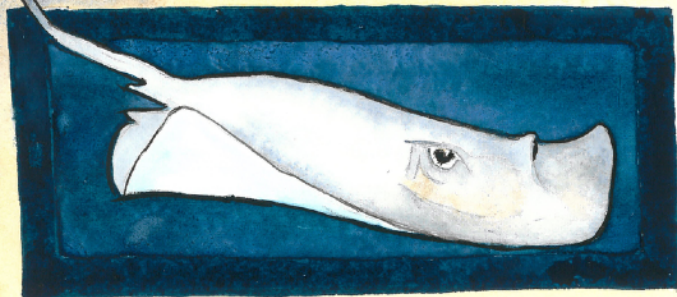


Is the Spaniel's sweet expression
One of love or simply hunger?

As the Squirrel nibbles her acorn
Does she fear its imminent plunder?

And the Stingray, where does he fit?

Well, he's just a picture under.



Sp

Sq

St



And the Sugar
Glider listens
in awe



for the Swallow's
Symphony is a stunner.

Su

Sw

Sy



Ta

Te



The Tapir has somehow stumbled
Upon a Termite
hill.

His floppy nose
a contrast with
The tiny beak of
the Thornbill.

Th



Here is a magnificent Tiger
Upon the grumpy page



Ti

To

With Toad,
and Troll
beneath
the bridge,
I offer a
surly
montage.

Tr





Tu
Tw Ty

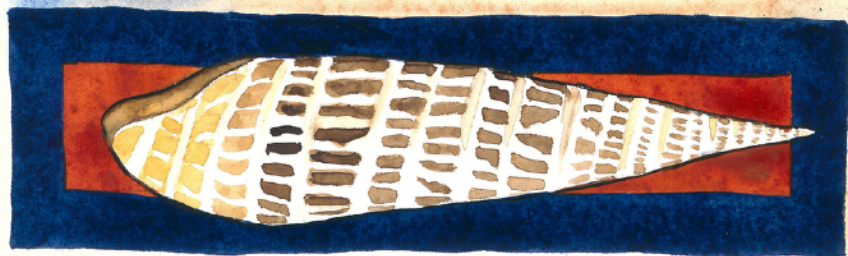
The Turkey is
the sort of bird,
A Twitcher
usually seeks,
But spy a
Tyrannosaurus
in his lens?
Step back -
here come
the shrieks!





Ulysses knew nothing of
 the Umbrella Bird.
 If truth be told, neither did I,
 And just as absurd,
 Did you know that this shell
 Is a Univalve, so tell?

Uf
 Um
 Un



But we all know now, and can name
 These beasts, first, second and third.



The Urchin resides
Beneath the waves,
A tiny, spiny critter.

Ur



While on dry land
The Usher guides
from reality to Utopia.

Us

Ut

A fight is brewing,
You can clearly see,
The Vampire Bat is livid.

Va
Ve



But the Venetian Mask
Cannot respond
Until
with a
human it
is fitted.



Vi

And this is a Viper.

The time has come, the Walrus said
To talk of many things.

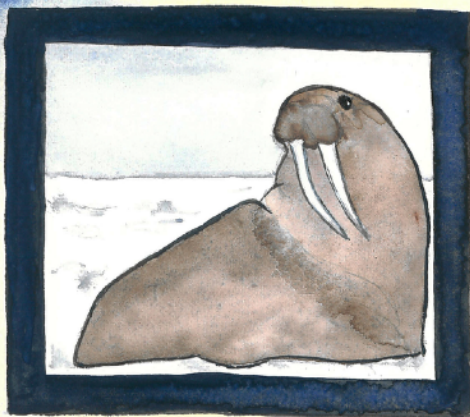


Vo

Vu



Of Volcano spew, And Vulcan's brew
And soaring on
Carroll's wings.



Wa



Is the Weevil very
evil?
And can the Whippet
whip it?

We

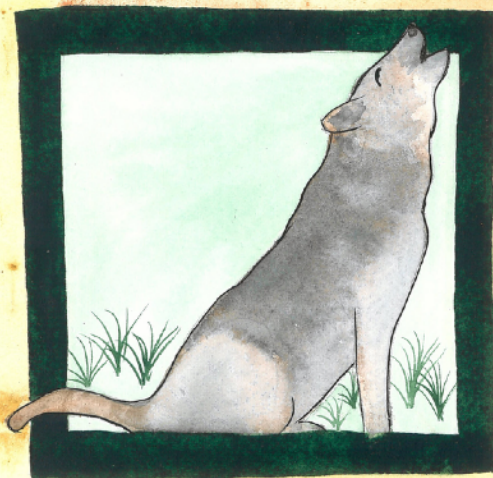
Wh

Wi



Or does that canine itch
To snare that cat and Witch?
Here ends my poetic snippet.

The Wren doth
tweet.
The Wolf doth
howl.



But what of
the heraldic
Wyvern?

I have no idea
what sound it
makes. It's not
a real animal.

Wr Wo Wy



Xanthorrhoea is a prickly plant,
 here because I found nothing better.



Xa

Xe

Ya



Ye



Xerxes was
 a king of
 Persia;
 here to
 serve for
 this lousy
 letter.

The Yachtsman is here because
 no beast could I find,
 And sighting a Yeti's just an
 attention-getter.

The Yorkshire Terrier is a
legitimate beast;

Yo

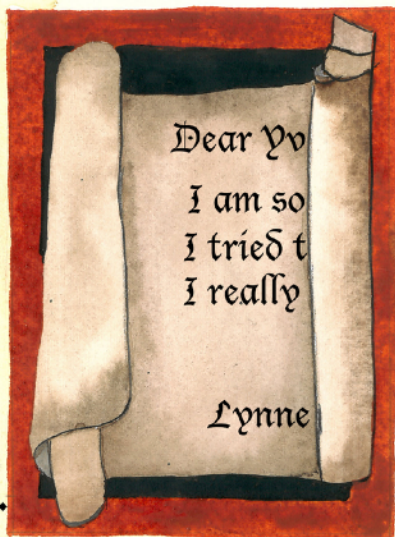
Yu



The Yukka is a plant,
at least.

Yv

But Yv? There
is nothing. Not
a single thing. I
am so sorry,
Yvonne, Yvette...



Dear Yv

I am so
I tried t
I really

Lynne



By the time I reach 3
I must admit,
I am well beyond
my limits.

A Zapotec must serve
3a

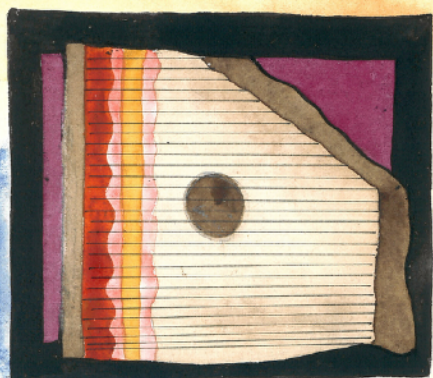
3a

And this Zebra
lifts my spirits.
But then my heart
sinks.

3i? What the ...?



3e



3i

Here's a Zither.

Time for tea
and biscuits.

3o



A Zombíe
emerges
hungry
from his
grave

3u



A Zucchini?
I'm sure that
he'll cherish.

3y

A Zygote is
where you
started your
life;
And where this
bestiary, I'll
finish.



The Bestiary is Designed for remembering names, but can be used for any words.

The Visual Alphabet can be used for anything which has a sequence, such as speeches or lists.



Instructions inside.

