

FOR FORTY DAYS OF DROUGHT

The word is "sere," a desert word--
archaic-- out of sync with satellites
and cordless phones-- as alien as dust
on cheek or tongue. The world is blurred,
a curtain hangs from heaven, blights
the view from every window, forms a crust
on rows of rattling crops. Small random sparks
drift down in slants the sun ignites.

Back roads have turned to powdered rust
as red clay cracks, sloughs off. Each layer marks
our calendars, our hopes, then swirls away
on smoking wind and burning gust.
Relent! Please rain your mercy, Lord, today--
before our hearts become too dry to pray!

--Glenna Holloway