

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! Rain down your mercy, Lord, today--  
before our hearts become too dry to pray!

--Glenna Holloway