

## **DROUGHT**

1. the want ads are consistently blank pages  
I am not a certified or accredited  
  
nurse or a prep chef, nor do I have 5+  
years of experience at being  
  
firm & loving with at-risk youth, or  
serving cranky breakfasting Texans  
  
my fingertips turn black with futility  
I give up the classified section to its dowel  
  
leave the public library & wander  
beautiful dark streets of people  
  
locals cross to the shady side  
move with their well-behaved leashed dogs  
  
along miraculous dim trajectories
  
2. this morning, having slept 13 hours  
after 4 & 1/2 bitter, miserable phone calls  
  
having shovelled my way out of dream-rocks & dirt  
bloodstream grungy with Xanax  
  
I weave around my half-planted garden  
in my husband's red paisley pajama bottoms  
  
dampen new seedlings  
with containers of brown rainwater saved  
  
from the monsoon which sluiced unconcernedly  
out of the canals while I tried wet & laughing  
  
to collect any I could in wastepaper baskets  
pots & pans, yogurt containers, juice cans  
  
not sure if I wanted him to come home, or when

3.           so I thought, okay, if this is how it's going  
              to be, fighting & hanging up, as long as

              we keep calling each other back why not just go  
              ahead & live, one calorie away

              from extinction like this robin, a lanky  
              desert-dusty redbreast who scans

              my flowerbeds for any alyssum or vinca  
              seed left ungerminated in the ground

              watching me sharply with half a head while  
              the other steers itself toward the next inch

              of earth, neither eye for an instant ever closing  
              to savor the crunch, the nourishment, the morsel

              of what she has managed to find here