

**Jar of Clay**  
Sheilah Kelly

I didn't ask to be a bowl or a pot  
or any kind of vessel...  
laying cool beneath the lick of water's edge  
I listened to stream's whispers  
watched sun splatter the world with gold  
watched moon spill silver into the night

sang with owl and coyote and turtle  
sacred songs of being  
in still verses of knowing.

Torn from my space  
by a potter's hands  
squeezed and pounded  
pulled and stretched  
I no longer remember what the buffalo knew  
have forgotten the words of the hunter's prayer

my stories no more than dry salt in a vanished sea  
burned from me in heat that came without sun  
at the end of a dreamless sleep.

Seasoned with desires not my own  
I open to hold ...  
what?  
every grain in me pushes against  
every other grain  
and I taste bitter darkness inside  
smell solitude  
crave touch...

what am I doing here...  
how long before I am home again?

7/22/98