

Peace Dreams of a Body

Laurie Klein

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A ten-fingered womb
bears down, centering
clay on the kicked
wheel, the overlapped
palms birthing a venerable
means to contain,
to conserve or carry— as in
urn. Or bowl. As in the first
jars, luring nomads
to settle. One can
shoulder only so much.

Exponentially squared,
Abram's stars gave way to roofs
and goatskins to walls,
raised with earth's dough.
There's an uprising now,
in the potter's hands. A throat
opens, attuned to the ruinous
potsherds from old wars
shifting underground, death
nosing through dirt: someone's floor,
a road, the neighbor's garden. Time
to straighten that neck and

re-encompass emptiness.

A grain-in-progress, the body,

shelved, hopes even the unfeeling

air gradually proves itself

an ally. Grit and water

mastered by drought and fire,

in the name of the wheel

be the next vessel.

Laurie Klein's work appears widely in Christian and secular journals, anthologies, hymnals, and recordings. Grateful winner of the Thomas Merton Prize for Poetry of the Sacred, the Predator Press Chapbook Prize (for *Bodies of Water, Bodies of Flesh*), and New Letters's Dorothy Churchill Cappon Essay Prize, Laurie also wrote the classic praise chorus "I Love You, Lord." Her day job as an audio book reader for Books in Motion supplies funds for the writing life. Other times, you'll find her kayaking, biking, and playing bluegrass with her husband, or jogging with their numbskull labrador, who answers to the nickname Lugnut.