On Literature and Life

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I got a copy of Moby Dick
from my mother. *It's a classic,*
she said, *it's important.*

She didn't say the whale
would be hurt –would not––
could not be saved. I knew

he wasn't real which doesn't mean
it can't happen. My father hunted
his own white whale. I asked him

if he's seen the ocean's skin break
so a whale can breathe; the gentle
curve of her baby's head. Do you

hear the mother click and sing,
how she always clicks and sings?
Father, why don't you listen?

Leonora Simonovis

Leonora Simonovis is a Venezuelan American writer, editor, and educator, and the author of Study of the Raft, winner of the 2021 Colorado Prize for Poetry and Honorable Mention at the 2022 International Latino Book Awards. Her microchap Memorias de un país en peligro de extincion received Honorable Mention at the 2024 Alta California Chapbook Prize. Leonora's work considers the intersections of myth, language, and story in connection to the land and to her experience as an exile. Leonora's poems and essays have been featured in the Poetry Foundation, the Academy of American Poets *Poem-A-Day, About Place Journal, Amsterdam Review, Whale Road Review, SWWIM*, and others. She has been the recipient of fellowships and residencies from The Poetry Foundation, VONA, CalArts, the Vermont Studio Center, Esperimento Sul Respiro and Anaphora. Leonora lives in Western NY with her family and 2 dogs.