

Hamlet was a Right Whale

By Marilyn Márquez

The thing about Prince Hamlet
of Denmark, stoic and tormented
figment of a Shakespeare's genius,
the thing about his To be or not to be, and his
helpless willingness to sail the sea of troubles
and withstand the sharp arrows
Fortune embedded in his back,
is that he reminds me of Herman
Melville's wondrous creature: the whale.
The whale that was not a part,
not a piece, not a silent victim of,
but the whole universe.
The just, ever present, ubiquitous in time
Deity,
the sacred creature that withstood
harpoons and lances
impelled by greed,
whose blood soaked the sea, murdered
to be robbed of her only possession: Fat
men coveted to lubricate and light
their version of the world.
Moby Dick carried the world
inside him, the universe that fathered
the Earth on which we stand, the one
we pierce and make bleed so we can rob
it of its oil.
This Earth, which stands
the harpoons, the lances and the arrows
we, who are convinced are her fortune,
throw at her for the sake of our own
appetites, that same Earth where we hunt
for space, for gold, for trees,
I wonder
will she choose to die,
poisoned, like Hamlet by the greed of mankind,
or to survive, to become
The Whale, our doom,
and fight back?