

## Triptych: Portrait at Fifteen with Dog Swimming in Foreground

Whoever stopped rowing  
took this picture of me  
standing, fists in jacket  
pockets, beside the rotting  
pier, another potential  
failure, feature of the empty  
April beach, new  
companion to surviving cedars  
(that '30s hurricane), lone  
forsythia, wry expositor,  
its natural shape volcanic,  
erupting.

*Kalimérisma*—imploring  
chant Greek women  
offered earthbound for the waterborne,  
fisherman and immigrants alike,  
stroking out to net *lavráki*,  
or sailing in from Maghreb.  
The confused, looping meters  
of pestle and oar.

Subtle  
wake, whirlpools trail  
the loyal animal, whose snout's  
orbit stirs the cove's  
obscurity. I was trying  
to whistle her back to shallows  
believing she could distinguish  
the chromatic melodies of welcome  
from departure, beckoning from  
lament, that she wouldn't follow  
that stern until she sank,  
but return to where I waited,  
roll in sand then shake  
the memory from her pelt.