Winter’s First Rains

Deer in the green rain,
    Clamber over flood-strewn rocks,
    Quiet as clouds

At dusk,
    Thrushes drop like silent leaves
    To the forest floor

All day, only one sound not induced by water:
    A Dipper, bobbing full-breasted
    At the very edge of all this surging power--

    A single loud trill,
    Briefly pierces the river’s roar

Droplets strike needles,
Crescendo on fallen maple leaves,
Gather in trickles,
Braid into streams

Speechless for three days:
    Discarding words,
    Remembering to listen

All of us here
    Loving rivers
Their irrepressible urge
    Toward the sea

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