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## American Dipper

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ELIZABETH DODD

AMERICAN DIPPER

Office politics  
and the pettiness of each day—

the mind thickens and dries,  
a whorl of driftwood.

I keep trying to picture  
the American Dipper, to remember

its ordinary body plunging under  
the water's surface;

the Dipper walks upstream, tiny climber  
of mountains, traveller between worlds.

I stare across the long  
emptiness of the desk.

The river is moving,  
memory must

be breathing a specific  
afternoon of alpine

light, the rapid  
Rio Hondo all motion

and matter—the battered stones'  
slow stumble seaward,

and the nondescript, unmistakable bird  
who dives into the cold

factual current, eyes open.