Waiting on Officialdom

The government big-wig has not come.

In his office-courtyard kola-trees
Twist from the ground like hurt green dragons
Stiffened in their agonies.

A gaggle of clerks and sub-assistants
Scurries around like who knows what.
Again and again I ask his minions
"Is he coming or is he not?",
And some say nothing, some prevaricate,

Some inspect their nails, and some
Turn away with a sour expression.

His gateway darkens. He will not come.

— Li Ho (791-817)

(Translated by Graeme Wilson)