

Having a chinese on the Seine

is never so good as when you know
you have an afternoon to suffer
in the office by the computer,

while those other people in the traiteur --
the tourist couple, the mother and daughter --
will wallow in their idleness,

their boeuf thaïlandais lacking the taste
of melancholy, phase-shifted pain
will not be seasoning their riz cantonnais,

for there is nothing my looming sentence
cannot improve, a meal is so much better
if it is also your last.

Gawkers float by on the river,
heroes of foreign lands
paraded for the sleepy crowds;

I wonder if they see me from their boat
as I graze here in my stone pasture,
fattening myself before slaughter,

ready to face my daily death,
the feed of my cowardice.