

Coal's Reply · *Ai Qing*

Where do you live?

In ten thousand years of steep mountain
In ten thousand years of cragrock

And your age?

It is greater than the mountain's
Greater than the cragrock's

How long have you been silenced?
Since the dinosaurs ruled the wilderness
Since the earth felt its first tremor

Have you perished in this deep rancor?

Death? No, no, I'm still alive
Let me have fire, please, let me have fire