

**Selves**

I've been, no doubt, both cow and horse  
At different times along my way,  
With my whole being bent upon  
Bundles of bean-stalks, hods of hay;  
And, no doubt too, I've been a woman  
Finding my needs fulfilled in men.  
Indeed, if I am truly I,  
Over and over and over again  
The wheel of change must alter me.

But if, impassioned, one resists,  
Pinning oneself by love or hate  
To such fool things irrealists  
Consider real, then one becomes,  
Thus thing-enslaved, oneself a thing.

Things are not Self. The wise must wait  
Through endless years of hoof and wing,  
Through fin and fur and cloven flesh  
For Nothing; for enlightening.

—*Wang An-shih (1021-1086)*  
(*Translated from the Chinese*  
*by Graeme Wilson*).