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## Foreword

"What's this you're writing?" asked Pooh, climbing onto the writing table.

"The Tao of Pooh," I replied.

"The how of Pooh?" asked Pooh, smudging one of the words I had just written.

"The Tao of Pooh," I replied, poking his paw away with my pencil.

"It seems more like the ow! of Pooh," said Pooh, rubbing his paw.

"Well, it's not," I replied huffily.

"What's it about?" asked Pooh, leaning forward and smearing another word.

"It's about how to stay happy and calm under all circumstances!" I yelled.

"Have you read it?" asked Pooh.

That was after some of us were discussing the Great Masters of Wisdom, and someone was saying how all of them came from the East, and I was saying that some of them didn't, but he was going on and on, just like this sentence, not paying any attention, when I decided to read a quotation of Wisdom from the West, to prove that there was more to the world than one half, and I read:

"When you wake up in the morning, Pooh," said Piglet at last, "what's the first thing you say to yourself?"

"What's for breakfast?" said Pooh. "What do you say, Piglet?"

"I say, I wonder what's going to happen exciting today?" said Piglet.

Pooh nodded thoughtfully.

"It's the same thing," he said.

"What's that?" the Unbeliever asked. "Wisdom from a Western Taoist," I said. "It sounds like something from Winnie-the-Pooh," he said. "It is," I said. "That's not about Taoism," he said. "Oh, yes it is," I said.

"No, it's not," he said.

"What do you think it's about?" I said.

"It's about this dumpy little bear that wanders around asking silly questions, making up songs, and going through all kinds of adventures, without ever accumulating any amount of intellectual knowledge or losing his simpleminded sort of happiness. That's what it's about," he said.

"Same thing," I said.

That was when I began to get an idea: to write a book that explained the principles of Taoism through Winnie-the-Pooh, and explained Winniethe-Pooh through the principles of Taoism.

When informed of my intentions, the scholars exclaimed, "Preposterous!" and things like that. Others said it was the stupidest thing they'd ever heard, and that I must be dreaming. Some said it was a nice idea, but too difficult. "Just where would you even begin?" they asked. Well, an old Taoist saying puts it this way: "A thousand-mile journey starts with one step."

So I think that we will start at the beginning...

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