

On Change

Fifty-Three

At the Heart of Lao Tzu, by Bruce Fertman

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Deep

There are two kinds of people.

Foxes and Hedgehogs.

Foxes dig lots of shallow holes, spreading out all over the place.

Their coats are silky, shiny, and colorful. They're debonair.

They're sly. They're quick. They're here, there, and everywhere.

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Hedgehogs are a bit pudgy.

They're not real handsome or pretty. They're drab.

They're either still, like a rock, or busy digging away, usually the latter.

They start digging one hole, and once they start you can't get them sidetracked.

They just keep digging one big hole. The hole gets wider and deeper.

And deeper. And deeper.

It seems like they are working their way down to the center of the earth.

It's safe in that deep hole.

Some un-welcomed guests enter and start poking around.

The further in they go, the quieter it gets. Unnerved, they turn around and leave.

The hedgehog keeps digging. Other creatures talk down about them,
Saying how they are just running away from the world.

Very few creatures understand hedgehogs.
They're not digging away from anything, they're digging toward something.
The closer they get, the better they feel.

They never reach the end, which they find rather mysterious.
One day they wake up and understand the truth.
There is no end. There is only the way.
That's fine with them.

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There are a few foxes, usually older foxes, who realize
That they've been running around getting nowhere.
Just how some foxes turn into hedgehogs, no one knows.
Legends abound.

It hurts. It's harrowing. It's humbling.

It is, however, widely known, that the few foxes that do turn into hedgehogs,
Become some of the finest hedgehogs hedgehogs have ever had the privilege to meet.