



EMPTINESS: The Tao is all that exists, but at the same time it is the nothingness from which everything comes. Emptiness, void, non-being, or nothingness is sometimes a difficult concept to grasp. We can hold onto the tangible but not the intangible.

*There was something formless and perfect
Before the universe was born.
It is serene. Empty.
Solitary. Unchanging.
Infinite. Eternally present.
It is the mother of the universe.
For lack of a better name,
I call it Tao.*

—Chapter 25

This is similar to the creation in the *Book of Genesis* in which “the earth was without form, and void.” It is from nothingness that creation springs. Also related to the concept of emptiness is usefulness. This is a seeming paradox. How can emptiness or void be useful?