



No Way

An American *Tao Te Ching*

DAVID ROMTVEDT

David Romtvedt's *No Way: An American "Tao Te Ching"* explores the art of living in the fast-paced, dangerous, unpredictable contemporary world. Lucid and wise in the spirit of its ancient Chinese predecessor, *No Way* functions as a kind of offbeat-yet-deadly-serious manual on the conduct of life. This slightly tongue-in-cheek take on the Tao's advice acknowledges that nobody likes being told how to live, least of all the author himself.

With an openness to complexity and mystery, in tones that range from cool to passionate, *No Way* brings the Tao into the social turmoil of a twenty-first-century United States beset by political strife, mass shootings, and financial greed. Romtvedt combats cynicism and malaise with wry verse that positions itself in the role of the trickster. The voice of these poems can be serious and contradictory yet also humorous and welcoming. By suggesting that the days of the ancient Tao are gone for good, *No Way* offers readers an invitation to guide themselves forward, free of sages and rulers.

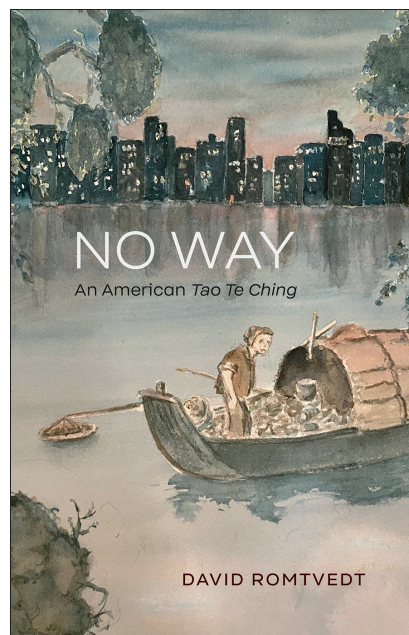
DAVID ROMTVEDT is the author of a dozen books of fiction, essays, and poetry, most recently *Dilemmas of the Angels*. His many honors and awards include fellowships in poetry and music from the National Endowment for the Arts. A winner of the National Poetry Series, he served as the poet laureate of Wyoming from 2003 to 2011.

PRAISE FOR *NO WAY*:

"Never were we more in need of the clarity and wisdom of *No Way: An American Tao Te Ching*. Romtvedt is a disarmingly playful Lao Tzu, skilled in the sleight of hand necessary to jolt us into sudden wonder regarding contemporary life. Every poem begins in the familiar and ends in the unexpected. This is not easy to achieve, as it is the fruit of a lifetime of paying attention. Read this as a guide to equilibrium and survival in our perilous times."—Carolyn Forché

"In *No Way*, David Romtvedt transforms what we've been hearing. He takes it out of its familiar manner and into something more open that surprises even itself. Malcolm X said, 'Anything I do today, I regard as urgent.' Romtvedt's poems are the very starting point of activist poetry."—Sandra McPherson

"*No Way* is as gratifying and appealing as the Tao Te Ching itself. Huge thanks to David Romtvedt for his always perfect touch in poems—spot-on humor, startling swerves and layerings, machete-chop inquiries into the mysteries of being. With a voice always honest and freshly present to moments as well as memory, he offers here a deeply comforting text for our weird time."—Naomi Shihab Nye



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