



2026-09-12 · 己丑日 · 乙亥时

Begin Where You Stand

合抱之木，生於毫末。

A tree that takes both arms to embrace grows from a slender shoot.

千里之行，始於足下。

A journey of a thousand li starts beneath your feet.

道德經 · Dao De Jing · 第六十四章 · Chapter 64 (節選 · excerpts) ↗

Chapter 64 attends to beginnings and small changes. These two images place a great tree and a long journey beside their modest origins. Li is a traditional Chinese unit of distance.

A blank page can make a beginning feel larger than it is. Let today's mark be the first small trace on that page. Think of something you have been waiting to begin, then bring it down to the scale of this afternoon: one sentence, one cleared corner, one question written honestly. The distant shape can stay unfinished. Give the nearest part your attention. By evening, you may have only a little to show, but it will be something you have actually touched.

A five-minute practice

Minute 1: Look at the mark and choose one line to follow with your eyes. Minutes 2–3: Name one thing you want to begin; write its smallest visible step. Minutes 4–5: Take that step, or make its first concrete preparation.

What did I make small enough to begin today?

Studio example — I made the beginning smaller: one line in my notebook before opening another tab. Today, that was enough to start.