



# CHAPTER ONE



**Keep your hands clean**





# Chapter Summary

In Law 26, Greene emphasizes the importance of maintaining a pristine image of authority by never getting your hands dirty. Instead of taking responsibility for mistakes, successful leaders utilize scapegoats to deflect blame and create an impression of flawless leadership. The chapter details historical examples, including Ts'ao Ts'ao and Cesare Borgia, who strategically employed scapegoats to evade accountability. This manipulation showcases the duality of power dynamics, allowing leaders to operate behind the scenes while preserving their reputations. Ultimately, Greene illustrates that power is about appearances and influence, not necessarily direct actions.





# Appearances Matter Most in Power

In the world of power, maintaining a pristine reputation is crucial. Your public persona must reflect civility and efficiency, and your hands should remain clean from mistakes and unsavory deeds. Perception can often overshadow reality in the eyes of the masses.

"Your reputation relies more on what you conceal than what you reveal."



# The Scapegoat Principle

To protect your image, it helps to have a scapegoat ready. By shifting blame to others, you can manage public perception while preserving your own authority. Well-planned scapegoating can be a masterful strategy in times of crisis.

"Keep a convenient scapegoat around to take the blame."



# The Tale of the Cobbler

Consider the story of Chelm, where a cobbler was nearly hanged for a crime due to a mistaken sentence. The townspeople rallied to protect their only shoemaker, resulting in a scapegoat being chosen instead, exemplifying the collective importance of maintaining a useful figure.



# Historical Examples of Power Play

Leaders throughout history, like Ts'ao Ts'ao, have effectively used scapegoats to maintain control. In moments of peril, quick decisions to condemn an innocent can prevent unrest among the masses and restore order.



# Cesare Borgia's Tactics

Cesare Borgia famously distanced himself from the brutal actions of his lieutenant, Remirro de Orco, by publicly executing him after achieving order. Borgia's calculated distancing allowed him to cleanse his reputation while maintaining power.



# The Ritual of the Scapegoat



Scapegoating has deep roots in history, where ancient cultures, like the Hebrews, transferred guilt to a goat symbolically before banishing it. Such rituals serve to relieve societal burdens, demonstrating the potent psychological effects of blame.



# The Importance of Delegation

Successful leaders master the art of delegation, ensuring that others absorb the risks of unpleasant tasks. This not only keeps their own hands clean but also builds a layer of protection around their leadership.





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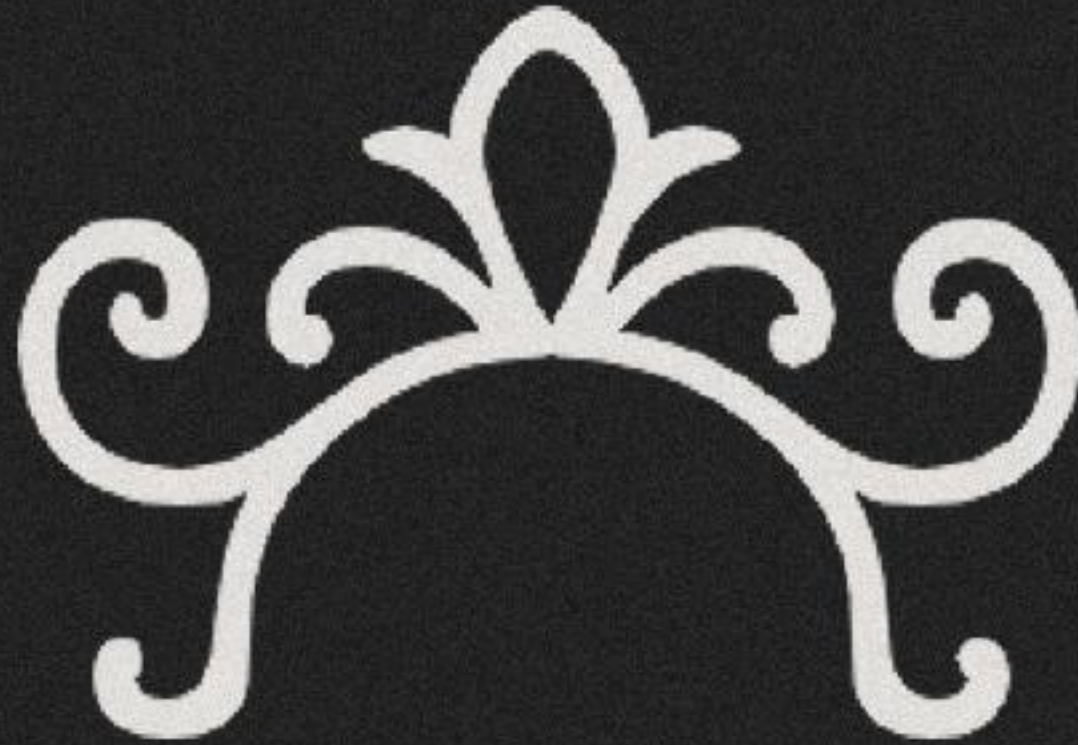
# Playing the Long Game



Thinking several moves ahead is paramount in power dynamics. By carefully planning the use of scapegoats and cat's-paws, leaders can maneuver themselves out of difficult situations while others do the heavy lifting.



# The Art of Indirect Action



Mastering the subtlety of indirect actions secures not only your image but can also enhance your influence over others. Learn to manipulate the reactions and movements of your rivals through others, maintaining your clean façade.





# Recap

- "Your reputation relies more on what you conceal than what you reveal."
- "Keep a convenient scapegoat around to take the blame."
- "To rise, sometimes you must sacrifice those who do your bidding."
- "The ancient practice of the scapegoat illustrates humanity's innate desire to deflect guilt."
- "Delegate the dirty work to maintain your authority unscathed."





# Thank You

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