



CHAPTER ONE



Disdain things you cannot have:
ignoring them is the best revenge



Chapter Summary

In Law 36, Robert Greene illustrates the power of disdain and ignoring what you cannot have, suggesting that acknowledging pettiness only strengthens it. He emphasizes that showing contempt for your unattainable desires confers a sense of superiority and can infuriate rivals.

Through historical anecdotes involving figures like Pancho Villa and Henry VIII, Greene cautions against the folly of direct confrontation and engagement. Instead, he advocates for a strategic withdrawal, leveraging indifference to undermine enemies. Ultimately, by refusing to acknowledge bothersome issues, one retains power and evades needless entanglements.



The Power of Indifference



To acknowledge a small problem is to give it power.
Indifference not only minimizes its impact but
elevates your own status. By withholding attention,
you render the issue insignificant.

The Mistake of Engagement

Engaging with petty or unresolved issues can amplify them, making them larger than life. Instead, choose to turn away and ignore the trivial; this retains your strength.



Successful Disdain

Showing disdain for the unattainable portrays an image of confidence and superiority. When you act as if something does not matter, you diminish its value.

Pancho Villa's Cleverness

Pancho Villa became a folk hero not through his military actions but by eluding capture, turning the tables on formidable forces. His disdain for his foes fueled his notoriety.



Ignorance as a Strategy

Ignoring an adversary can be a powerful weapon. It infuriates them and shows that they are unworthy of your time. The less you acknowledge them, the more powerless they become.

Historical Lessons

The failure of the Punitive Expedition to capture Villa illustrated the dangers of direct confrontation. The longer the pursuit lasted, the more it focused attention on American incompetence.

Emotional Control

Learning to control your emotional responses can enhance your power. When insulted or belittled, displaying indifference can leave your opponent frustrated and futile.

"Your pride is not involved; contempt is the right response."

Choosing Disdain

Choosing to ignore annoyance or irritation can often resolve issues more effectively than direct confrontation or retaliation could. Many grievances diminish when left alone.

"Letting things be is not just wisdom—it's power."

The Fine Line of Disdain



While disdain can protect your power, it must be wielded carefully. Some issues require vigilance to ensure they do not escalate beyond control.


Consolidate Your Power



The most effective way to retaliate against those who affront you is through strategic indifference. Oblivion is the greatest revenge against the unworthy.



Recap

- "What you do not react to cannot drag you down."
 - "The harder we try to fix mistakes, the worse they often become."
 - "Ignore him and he'll hate you."
 - "What was supposed to subdue became an embarrassment."
 - "Your pride is not involved; contempt is the right response."
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Thank You

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