

SUN TZU IN THE LANGUAGE OF RUMI



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Introduction

Sun Tzu (which means Master Sun) and Maulana Rumi were two of the most influential thinkers in our planet's recent history.

Sun Tzu was a Chinese military general strategist who lived in the 6th century BC. His book, the Art of War, is one of the most studied and influential military treatises in the world.

Rumi was an Islamic scholar, poet and mystic who lived in the 13th century AD. His poems, which are known for their beauty, wisdom, and spiritual depth, have been translated into dozens of languages and are read by people all over the world.

My book explores some of the similarities and differences between the teachings of Sun Tzu and Rumi through the Art of War. It shows how both men were concerned with the nature of conflict and how to achieve victory. However, they approached these issues from very different perspectives.

Sun Tzu was a realist who believed that war was a necessary evil that should be used only as a last resort. Rumi, on the other hand, was a pacifist who believed that conflict could be resolved through love and understanding.

This book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the history of military strategy, the philosophy of war, or the spiritual teachings of Rumi. It provides a unique perspective on two of the most important thinkers in history.

I hope you enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed writing it.

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in 'Sun Tzu in the Language of Rumi'

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“Every war and every conflict between human beings has happened because of some disagreement about names. It is such an unnecessary foolishness, because just beyond the arguing there is a long table of companionship set and waiting for us to sit down. What is praised is one, so the praise is one too, many jugs being poured into a huge basin. All religions, all this singing one song. The differences are just illusion and vanity. Sunlight looks a little different on this wall than it does on that wall and a lot different on this other one, but it is still one light. We have borrowed these clothes, these time-and-space personalities, from a light, and when we praise, we are pouring them back in.”

Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi

(30 September, 1207 - 17 December, 1273)

“The art of war is of vital importance to the State. War is not just for the military commanders. It is a tool for the state to achieve important goals such as defending the country and influencing others. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.”

Sun Tzu

(544 BC – 496 BC)

Maulana Rumi: An interpretation by Master Sun (Sun Tzu)

You Personify God's Message

You personify God's message.
You reflect the King's face.
There is nothing in the universe that you are not
Everything you want, look for it within yourself--
you are that.

Rumi

"The warrior is a vessel for the divine. They reflect the will of the king and embody the strength of the nation. There is nothing they cannot achieve, for they are the embodiment of all that is good and just. Seek your strength within yourself, and you will find that you are capable of anything."

Sun Tzu

How Long

How long will you think about this painful life?
How long will you think about this harmful world?
The only thing it can take from you is your body.
Don't say all this rubbish and stop thinking.

Rumi

"How long will you dwell on this painful life? How long will you dwell on this harmful world? The only thing it can take from you is your body. So do not waste your time on thoughts that do not serve you. Instead, focus on what you can control: your mind, your heart, and your actions. When you do this, you will find that you are capable of anything."

Sun Tzu

This Aloneness

This aloneness is worth more than a thousand lives.
This freedom is worth more than all the lands on earth.
To be one with the truth for just a moment,
Is worth more than the world and life itself.

Rumi

"To be alone is to be free. To be free is to be one with the truth. And to be one with the truth is to be at peace. This peace is worth more than a thousand lives, more than all the lands on earth, and more than the world and life itself."

Sun Tzu

Out beyond ideas

Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing,
there is a field. I'll meet you there.
When the soul lies down in that grass,
the world is too full to talk about.
Ideas, language, even the phrase each other
doesn't make any sense

Rumi

"Beyond the realm of good and evil, there is a field. I will meet you there. When the soul is at peace, the world is too full to speak of. Words, ideas, even the concept of 'other' lose all meaning."

Sun Tzu

Until you've found pain

Until you've found pain, you won't reach the cure
Until you've given up life, you won't unite with
the supreme soul
Until you've found fire inside yourself, like the Friend,
You won't reach the spring of life, like Khezr.

Rumi

"Pain is the catalyst for change. It is the fire that burns away the old and reveals the new. When we embrace pain, we open ourselves up to the possibility of transformation. It is the fire that burns within us and gives us the power to create. When we find the spring of life, we find the source of our own power."

Sun Tzu

There is a way between voice and presence

There is a way between voice and presence
where information flows.
In disciplined silence it opens.
With wandering talk it closes.

Rumi

"There is a space between words and action where true communication takes place. When we talk too much, we close this space. In silence we create a space where information can flow freely and communication can take place on a deeper level."

Sun Tzu

Master Sun: An interpretation by Maulana Rumi

Pretend inferiority and encourage his arrogance.

Sun Tzu

In the face of arrogance, be humble, there you will find your strength. Arrogance is a mask that hides insecurity, be not afraid to challenge it.

All are on a journey, some further along than others, but we are all on the same path. So be compassionate, and treat everyone with respect, No matter their station in life.

Together, we can create a world Where everyone is valued and respected, A world where arrogance is replaced by humility, and compassion is the norm.

Rumi

There is no instance of a nation benefitting from prolonged warfare.

Sun Tzu

War is a fire that consumes, and leaves nothing but ashes and sorrow. It is a disease that is like cancer, destroying families, communities, and nations.

War is a madness that must be stopped. We must find a way to live in peace, to resolve our differences without violence. We must find a way to build a world Where war is no more.

We must dream of a world Where fathers can come home from work and be greeted by their families. We must dream of a world Where war is no more.

Let us not give up on our dream. Let us work together to make it a reality. Let us build a world Where war is no more.

Rumi

He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.

Sun Tzu

The greatest victory is won without a fight, the wisest warrior knows when to stand down. They fight with all their might when it is time, but they never resort to violence when it is not.

They know that love is the only force that can conquer hate, and they are the true warriors of peace. They fight for a better world, a world where everyone can live in harmony.

They are for the future, the ones who will lead us to a better tomorrow. They are the warriors of peace, and they will never ever give up.

Rumi

If you know the enemy and know yourself you need not fear the results of a hundred battles.

Sun Tzu

If you know your enemy, you will know yourself. And when you know both, you will always be victorious.

So let us strive to know our enemies and ourselves. And let us strive to achieve peace, not victory for one and defeat for the other.

For peace is the way to a better future. It is the only way to a world where everyone can live in accord.

So let us work together to achieve peace. Let us work together to build a better world.

Rumi

The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.

Sun Tzu

The greatest victory is won without fighting, true warriors know love. They understand their enemy, and they show them compassion.

They know violence is no answer, and that love is the only force that can truly conquer hate. They are the true warriors of peace, and they will never ever give up.

They fight for a better world, a world where everyone is in harmony. They are the hope for the future, and they lead us to a better future.

They are the true warriors of peace, and they will never ever give up.

Rumi

Know thy self, know thy enemy. A thousand battles, a thousand victories.

Sun Tzu

Know thyself, and you know thy enemy. With knowledge comes victory, in a thousand battles and more.

But the greatest victory is won without fighting. It is won through understanding, compassion, and love. Violence is a symptom of ignorance. Those who are ignorant, react in fear and anger.

But when we know ourselves and our enemies, we respond with balanced understanding and when we respond with understanding we can create a more peaceful world.

So let us strive to know ourselves and our enemies. Let us strive to create a better world.

Rumi

Chapter 1

Laying Plans: The Art of Strategy

War, a grave affair for nations, Master Sun decrees,
Of life and death, survival, and extinction it speaks with unease.
The Way, heaven, earth, command, and discipline, the pillars of war,
Must be heeded, for victory or defeat they will surely draw.

No bloodthirstiness, no barbarity, can win the day,
War is about protecting peace, in a calculated way.
Yin and Yang, opposing forces, guide the course,
Of leaders' decisions and actions, with consequences of great force.

The ruler with integrity, ability, and wisdom divine,
Will have heaven on his side, a favourable sign.
The general with artful war tactics in his grasp,
Will lead his army to triumph, overcoming every clasp.

Deception is the key, a strategy to employ,
Appear weak when strong, catch the enemy in a ploy.
Draw them out with bait, then strike with chaos unleashed,
Create confusion, surprise them where they least expect, a victory to be seized.

Preparation is paramount, planning is the key,
The side that prepares most diligently will emerge with glee.
More resources, better organization, lead to success,
Lack of foresight, uncertainty, result in distress.

In the chaos of war, nothing goes as planned,
But wise leaders with insight will surely understand,
The outcome can be predicted, victory can be foreseen,
With wisdom, strategy, and planning keen.

Master Sun's lessons, profound and wise,
Guide the way to victory, a treasure to prize.
So, heed his words, and take them to heart,
For in the art of war, they hold the master's part.

Chapter 2

Waging War: The Art of Conflict

In the words of Master Sun, the great sage,
Who spoke of war in a bygone age,
He warned of the cost, both high and dire,
Of battles fought with flames of fire.

An army of thousand chariots, strong,
Pulled by horses, fleet and long,
With wagons clad in hide so tough,
And warriors armed in metal stuff.

For such an army, the daily cost,
Of war, a burden, a heavy frost,
Are a hundred thousand silver taels,
Or more, a sum that surely pales.

And yet, this cost is not the worst,
For war's duration can be cursed,
If it drags on, both long and slow,
The men grow tired, their spirits low.

Sieges drain the nation's might,
Campaigns stretch finances tight,
Exhausted men, depleted treasure,
Leave openings for the enemy's pleasure.

No wisdom can see an army through,
A war that's long, a war that's due,
The only way to win the fight,
Is to strike fast, with all your might.

Before you weaken, before you tire,
Before the enemy fuels their fire,
Strike hard and fast, with skill and guile,
To end the war, and win the smile.

Efficiency is the general's creed,
No wasteful spending, no needless need,
Plunder from the enemy's land,
To feed your troops, with a master's hand.

Supplying from home is a heavy drain,
On the nation's wealth, a burden's bane,
Prices rise, people suffer,
Leaders lose their people's buffer.

War must be dealt with wisdom's grace,
With planning, strategy, and a steady pace,
Plunder from the enemy's hoard,
To keep your troops, well-fed and stored.

For the people's strength is worn-out, true,
Their wealth diminished, through and through,
The treasury weakened, the army strained,
But plunder from the enemy, a treasure gained.

So, heed Master Sun's sage advice,
Win your wars with speed and precise,
Efficient plunder, wise strategy,
To minimize the cost, and set your nation free.

Chapter 3

Attack by Stratagem: The Art of Deception

The wisdom of Master Sun shines bright,
In words that guide us through the art of war's might.

Conquering a state with wisdom and grace,
Preserving its wholeness, not leaving a trace.

True greatness lies not in battles fought,
But in winning without shedding blood, as taught.

Attacking strategies, alliances, and more,
Reducing fallout, victory to restore.

Sieges, a last resort in dire need,
For they cost lives, a wasteful deed.
A general's responsibility, immense and true,
To protect his men, their lives to value.

An experienced general knows the way,
To defeat the enemy without delay.
Returning his men, and their equipment too,
Victorious, with hearts anew.

Numbers matter, as Sun does share,
Ten to one, surround with care.
Five to one, attack with might,
Two to one, divide with sight.

Head-to-head, when evenly matched,
Hide when outnumbered, victory hatched.

Against a stronger foe, find a way,
Stubbornness may lead to capture's sway.

The general, a pillar of the state,
Strength and wisdom, his ultimate trait.

Hobbling an army, a ruler's misstep,
Confusion and chaos, an enemy's prep.

Five essentials, victory's key,
Knowing when to fight, when to let be.
Deploying armies with skill and art,
United officers and men, a united heart.

Prepared for surprises, plans in hand,
A general's autonomy, firm and grand.
Know thyself and enemy, the path to win,
Every battle, victory within.

Strength lies not in physical might,
But in strategy, wisdom's light.
Master Sun's words, timeless and true,
Guide us in war, and peace anew.

Chapter 4

Tactical Dispositions: The Art of Positioning

The skilled general, like a sage of old,
First strengthens himself, his own stronghold.
He waits for the enemy's weakness to show,
For it is their own responsibility to sow.

He does not create weaknesses out of thin air,
But exploits opportunities with strategic flair.
He intensifies any weakness he can find,
And falls back on his strength, if none in kind.

Invulnerability lies in defence, it's true,
While vulnerability is for attack to pursue.
A good defender moves unseen like earth,
While the skilful attacker soars above, like heaven's birth.

The layperson sees an ordinary win,
But true skill goes deeper, lies within.
To lift autumn fur shows not real might,
Nor does seeing sun and moon give true sight.

The heroes of old won victories with ease,
But subtleties of war require wisdom's keys.
The skilled general's victories are flawless and sure,
For he beats a defeated enemy, makes victory pure.

He takes strong ground and pounces on chance,
He seeks victory first, not battles to enhance.
The defeated armies seek battles first, alas,
But the wise general keeps the Way, a master of the class.

Five steps to war, he must measure and estimate,
Calculate and compare, before victory's fate.
Earth leads to measurement, estimating in turn,
Then calculating, comparing, victory to earn.

The victorious army is like a weight so heavy,
Crushing a grain, leaving enemies bevy.
Water smashing through a gorge, swift and strong,
It's all about forms and dispositions, not just playing along.

Studying, understanding, and scheming, the art,
Of knowing the enemy, terrain, and every part.
Throwing his men into battle with certainty of success,
Releasing their innate power, an unstoppable caress.

For the general who knows his men and their ways,
Can engineer victory in strategic arrays.
Like a waterfall, crushing the enemy's might,
By understanding forms and dispositions right.

So, let us learn from Master Sun's wise creed,
To strengthen ourselves and fulfil our need.
To wait for opportunities, and strike with might,
To understand and scheme, to win the war's fight.

For victory lies not just in battles fought,
But in wisdom and strategy, carefully thought.
In the art of war, as in life's every quest,
It's the skilled general who emerges truly blessed.

Chapter 5

Energy: The Art of Momentum

Oh, seeker of wisdom, listen well to Sun's words,
For leadership is an art, a dance of swords.
Like dividing men, it's not in numbers, but in how you organize,
With gongs and banners, a symphony to harmonize.

In war, direct and indirect actions hold the key,
To crush the enemy, like an egg beneath a stone, you see.
Attack directly, but ensure success with indirect schemes,
A general's wisdom, like endless oceans and celestial beams.

Within the Yin and Yang, infinite combinations lie,
Like notes, colours, and flavours that fill the sky.
The skilled general positions his strategy with precision,
On that infinite scale, causing the enemy's submission.

The force of nature, like surging water and diving falcon,
The general's momentum, his timing never fallen.
He harnesses potential energy, with concentrated might,
To break through the enemy, and emerge in victory's light.

In chaos, victory may seem disordered and unclear,
But good organization brings order, without fear.
Strength from weakness, the general's artful play,
Using circumstances to his advantage, in a strategic display.

Give the enemy a target, draw them out and strike,
The general's plan, a masterful insight.
He takes responsibility, for success or defeat,
His interpretation of the situation, a victory's sweetest treat.

He sends his men, like logs or stones down a hill,
Harnessing their natural characteristics with skill.
They move not by their own energy, but by circumstance,
The general's art, a symphony of war's dance.

So, learn from Sun, the wisdom of the age's past,
In the art of war, a general's wisdom must be vast.
To lead with grace, with wisdom and insight,
And achieve victory's glory, in battles day and night.

Chapter 6

Weak Points and Strong: The Art of Adaptation

The wise general, like Master Sun has said,
Arrives at the battlefield first, and fights fresh,
While the latecomer fights with weariness,
For skilful generals move with their own will,
Not forced by circumstances, but luring out the foe.

By occupying the position of strength, the Yang,
He leaves the Yin weakness for his enemy,
Ensuring an easy, efficient win,
Forcing the enemy into the position of weakness,
Undermining their strength, paving the path to victory.

Unpredictable and elusive, the general moves,
Where the enemy least expects, avoiding their sight,
Marching without tiring, a hundred miles or more,
Attacking the undefended, defending the unattacked.

He masters the enemy's fate with formless subtlety,
Silent mystery guiding his every move,
Retreating swiftly, never caught,
His deep knowledge of the world guiding his strategy.

The general leads the war from both fronts,
Rendering the enemy general powerless,
Unable to attack or defend against the unseen,
Reacting only after the general has already moved.

The enemy cannot know the general's plans,
While the general sees the enemy's every move,
Concentrated and focused, while the enemy is spread thin,
Attacking with full force, weakening the foe.

By dividing the enemy troops, the general weakens,
Their whole opposing army, drawing forces away,
Creating weakness in the enemy's defence,
Strength in his own troops, through strategic finesse.

Knowing the time and place of attack,
Preparedness prevails despite hardships faced,
But ignorance leaves troops exposed to manipulation,
Dividing and weakening, a fatal mistake.

Study and know the enemy thoroughly,
Their plans, weaknesses, and desires,
Be formless, invisible to spies and foes,
But know the enemy's form to win the battle.

For the common people see how battles are won,
But not the hidden strategies that secure victory,
The wise general knows both the seen and unseen,
Mastering the art of war, a true visionary.

In the footsteps of Master Sun, the general moves,
With wisdom and foresight, he prevails,
A master of Yin and Yang, the path of least resistance,
Leading his troops to triumph, in battles and beyond.

Chapter 7

Manoeuvring: The Art of Movement

Listen to the wisdom of Master Sun,
Who speaks of war and battles to be won.
The ruler gives the orders, the general obeys,
Assembling armies for the upcoming fray.

But the real work lies in the midst of fight,
Where crooked paths must be made straight and right.
Turn disadvantage into advantage, you must,
Bait the enemy with cunning, gain their trust.

Leave after the enemy, but arrive there first,
This is the way to quench their thirst.
The general serves the ruler's will,
Sharing the same enemy, with strategy to fulfil.

Every opportunity must be seized,
To create an advantage, as war proceeds.
Deception is key, as Sun advises,
Move when advantageous, to claim the prizes.

Know your enemy, know the terrain,
Without this knowledge, all effort is in vain.
Be like the rushing wind, the stately tree,
The ravaging fire, and the still mountain, you see.

Plunder the countryside, share the spoils,
But be sure before you make your toils.
Use gongs, drums, banners, and flags,
To communicate, as the army drags.

Manage many, with organization and skill,
Even in darkness, use torches and drums to fulfil.
Consider the psychological, the spirit of men,
Lead with discipline and calm, again and again.

Counter distance, exhaustion, and hunger,
With closeness, ease, and plenty, no blunder.
Do not attack uphill or with a hill to the back,
Avoid falling for a fake retreat, keep your attack on track.

Do not harass an enemy at bay,
Leave a path for a besieged army to find its way.
These are the axioms, the art of war,
Master them all, and victory is not far.

In the style of Rumi, let us learn from Sun's insight,
To navigate the battlefield with wisdom's light.
Master the crooked and the straight, with grace,
And lead your army to triumph, in every place.

Chapter 8

Variation in Tactics: The Art of Flexibility

The wise general heeds Sun's sage advice,
On terrain, he must tread with keen insight,
Some paths should be avoided, enemies shunned,
Some battles not fought, towns left unbesieged.

He knows the lay of the land, the nine changes,
For mere knowledge alone is not enough,
But insight, perception, and wisdom deep,
To transform knowledge into true success.

He considers both gain and harm alike,
Not focused solely on victory's lure,
But cautious of disaster's looming threat,
Causing his enemy to surrender.

He keeps his enemy busy and distracted,
With devious schemes and cunning plans,
Never hoping for enemy's misstep,
But trusting his own preparations well.

Recklessness, cowardice, anger, honour,
And misplaced compassion for his men,
These excesses lead to failure in war,
The pitfalls a wise general must avoid.

For victory rests not solely on men,
But on the mind and temperament of the general,
A ruler must choose a worthy leader,
And the general must keep his mind in check.

So, heed Sun's counsel, O noble general,
And tread the path of wisdom and insight,
With Rumi's spirit, navigate the terrain,
And lead your men to triumph with grace and might.

Chapter 9

The Army on the March: The Art of Logistics

Listen, my friends, to the wisdom of Master Sun,
Who teaches us the art of war, battles to be won.
He says, "Stay close to valleys when crossing mountains,
And set up camp high, facing the open fountains.

Never fight uphill, it's a losing game,
Cross rivers with caution, don't tarnish your name.
Let half of the enemy's troops cross first,
Then strike from the high ground, quenching your thirst.

For every terrain, there's a Way to pass through,
Consider Yin and Yang, it will guide you true.
The high ground is Yang, strong and bright,
But valleys have water, resources in sight.

Fight downhill, but don't cut yourself off,
Balance your position, it's never enough.
Every approach has its own consideration,
To find the path of least resistance, a wise revelation.

Position yourself with care on level ground,
Take easy terrain, let wisdom be found.
Keep high ground behind and to the right,
With death in front, and life's warmth by your side.

Follow these rules, and you shall prevail,
As the Yellow Emperor, whose knowledge did unveil.

Armies love high ground, and avoid the low,
Survive and thrive, let this wisdom show.

Use the lie of the land to your advantage,
Let the river subside before you take the plunge.

Avoid hellish terrain, get out with speed,
Let the enemy go there, his plans impede.

If you must cross hard terrain with care,
Know every nook and cranny, be aware.
Deception is key, the enemy seeks to fool,
Read the signs, don't be a naïve tool.

Watch for trees that move, and screens in the grass,
Birds suddenly flying up, a signal to amass.
High clouds of dust suggest chariots are near,
Low dust, infantry approaching, make it clear.

Scattered dust, firewood being gathered,
Pockets of dust, a camp being tethered.
Words of humility, but camp preparations show,
An attack is imminent, be ready to go.

Aggression could mean a retreat is in sight,
Chariots arriving first, a formation's might.
Offers of peace but no terms, a deception,
Lots of activity, an expectation.

Retreat and advance, bait being laid,
The general must read between the lines, not be swayed.
Soldiers bent over their spears, hungry and tired,
Thirsty water bearers, an army uninspired.

Missed opportunities, exhaustion revealed,
Empty ground with birds gathering, a secret unsealed.
Shouts in the night, fear in the enemy camp,
Confused men, disrespect for their general's stamp.

Banners and flags moving, disorganization's sign,
The general must observe, with eyes sharp and fine.
Officers often angry, men growing weary,
Feeding meat to men, and horses with grain, an act eerie.

An orderly camp, a sign of strength,
Whispering dissatisfaction, a warning at length.

Excessive rewards, a sign of desperation,
Punishments severe, exhaustion's indication.

So, heed the wisdom of Master Sun,
And apply the teachings, battles to be won.

With Yin and Yang as your guiding light,
You shall secure victory, with wisdom bright.

Chapter 10

Terrain: The Art of Location

Oh, seeker of wisdom and truth,
Listen to the words of Master Sun,
As he speaks of terrains and war,
A wisdom that must be understood.

There are lands of different kinds,
Accessible, entangling, deadlock, enclosed,
Precipitous and distant, each with its challenge,
And the wise general must know them all.

On accessible terrain, the advantage is clear,
He who has the high ground and sure supplies,
Will prevail over the enemy, without a doubt,
For he has the upper hand in this battlefield.

But on entangling terrain, caution is required,
Advancing may seem an option, but retreat is hard,
If the enemy is unprepared, attack with might,
But be wary of the consequences of retreat.

On deadlock terrain, neither side has the edge,
Do not fall for the enemy's bait or move,
But instead, retreat and draw him out,
Then strike when half his men are exposed.

Enclosed terrain demands swift action,
Get there first and block the enemy's way,
Wait for him patiently, and do not follow,
Unless he does not block it, then pursue.

Strategy is the key on difficult terrain,
Mislead the enemy, force him to err,
Then turn his mistakes to your advantage,
Watch your step, and avoid traps that lurk.

On precipitous terrain, take the high ground,
If you arrive first, claim the advantageous spot,
But if the enemy gets there before you do,
Lure him out by retreating, and catch him off guard.

And on distant terrain, where strengths are equal,
It is hard to engage and gain an advantage,
The wise general must study and understand,
The ways of these terrains, and plan accordingly.

High ground is crucial, as Master Sun advises,
But even without it, options still remain,
The general must know them well, be prepared,
So, he is never exposed and unsure of how to act.

The general, not nature, is at fault,
For calamities of flight, impotence, decay,
Collapse, chaos, and rout, that may ensue,
When weaknesses in leadership take their toll.

If strengths are matched but one side is larger,
Flight may be the outcome, Sun warns,
Weak officers with strong men lead to impotence,
And strong officers with weak men, result in decay.

If headstrong officers charge without orders,
Collapse may follow, a disastrous course,
Weak and inconsistent leadership breeds chaos,
And underestimating the enemy leads to rout.

These are the ways of defeat, Sun explains,
The general must learn them well and avoid,
And instead, use terrain as an ally,
Assessing the enemy, the land, and its challenges.

The one who understands and practices this,
Will win in battle, and be called wise,
For the general must not seek fame or fear blame,
But protect the people and serve his lord.

The good general sees his men as his own children,
They will follow him wherever he may go,
And face death by his side, if he is worthy,
Generous and affectionate, yet commanding and wise.

But if he cannot lead or give orders,
Or if he is chaotic in his approach,
His men will be like spoiled children,
A result of his failure as their leader.

So, seeker of wisdom and truth,
Take heed of Master Sun's teachings,
Learn the ways of terrains and war,
And become a wise and worthy general.

Chapter 11

The Nine Situations: The Art of Assessment

Listen, my friend, to the wisdom of Master Sun,
Who speaks of nine kinds of ground, battles to be won.

Enemies on home turf, scattering and dire,
Entering enemy land, but not too far, to avoid the fire.

Strategic ground, where both sides have a chance,
Open ground, where freedom to come and go, enhance.

Crossroad ground, where opportunities arise,
To defeat multiple foes, and claim the prize.

Heavy ground, where towns in enemy hands,
Intractable ground, with tough natural lands.

Enclosed ground, narrow and twisting ways,
Death ground, where survival's the only gaze.

These are the terrains where battles are fought,
Where generals must strategize, and battles are sought.

Don't fight on scattering ground, it leads to defeat,
Don't halt on light ground, it's a dangerous feat.

Don't attack on strategic ground, it's a risky game,
Don't block open ground, it's not where glory's name.

Form alliances on crossroads, diplomacy is key,
On heavy ground, plunder to feed the army with glee.

On intractable ground, keep moving, never cease,
On enclosed ground, focus on strategy, find inner peace.

The skilful general divides the enemy's might,
Stops their support, scatters them in fright.
Moves when there's gain, halts when there's none,
Confronts a well-assembled enemy, and gets the job done.
Takes something dear, to make the enemy obey,
Speed is the key, catch them off-guard, and make them pay.

When invading, penetrate deep, bring cohesion to the men,
Plunder to sustain, conserve energy, and then,
Put the men in places where they must fight for their lives,
They'll give their all, in the face of death, they thrive.
For men facing death, fear knows no bounds,
They stand their ground, when escape is not found.
Alert and ready, without needing instruction,
Loyalty unwavering, without any deduction.

But do not let them consult omens, remove their doubt,
Lead them with confidence, without any clout.
They may prize wealth, but expect to die,
Yet cling to life, with a tearful sigh.
Give battle orders, and they may weep,
But put them where they can't escape, they'll fight, and deep,
Their valour will shine through, with historic might,
For the general's command, they'll fight with all their sight.

So, heed the wisdom of Master Sun, my friend,
In the art of war, these lessons transcend.
Consider the ground, the dynamics of the fight,
Both physical and psychological, with insight.
Lead with wisdom, ingenuity, and trust,
And victory shall come, as generals must adjust,
To changing terrains, and ever-shifting sands,
In the battlefield, where histories made and lands.

Chapter 12

The Attack by Fire: The Art of Destruction

The Way of Fire, as Master Sun decrees,
Is to burn with purpose, setting enemies ablaze.
Five ways to strike, with flames fierce and bright,
Burning men, supplies, and all in sight.

Material and means, the general must possess,
To choose the target with utmost finesse.
Climate and conditions, he must carefully heed,
To ensure the fire will spread with speed.

Hot and dry, the perfect time to ignite,
When winds are strong, and stars are aligned right.
In Sagittarius, Pegasus, Crater, and Corvus,
The four constellations of rising wind, a tactical chorus.

If enemy camp erupts in fire's embrace,
Attack without delay, with swift pace.
But if calm prevails in the enemy's lair,
Observe and wait, for an opportunity rare.

Start a fire in the enemy's midst,
When time is ripe, strike with a twist.
Always upwind, to your advantage seek,
Day winds last long, while night winds are meek.

Fire, a powerful ally in war's array,
Water too, can shape the fray.
Isolating, but not killing outright,
Opportunities must not be wasted in sight.

Good rulers ponder deep and wide,
Good generals follow through with pride.
Move for gain, halt if none to see,
Fighting only in a crisis, a wise decree.

Never mobilize in anger's heat,
Nor fight out of spite, a pitfall to defeat.
Preserve peace, keep men whole,
Prudence for rulers, caution for generals, the ultimate goal.

Joy can rise from anger's slumber,
But once destruction takes its toll, no more to lumber.
Be wise and patient, in actions grand,
To rebuild what's lost, a leader's stand.

Chapter 13

The Use of Spies: The Art of Intelligence

The wisdom of Master Sun shines bright,
As he speaks of war's costly blight,
Of silver taels, a thousand a day,
Lost in battles, chaos's fray.

For war brings misery and pain,
Leaving families in sorrow's chain,
Seven families for each brave man,
Who joins the war, the nation's plan.

So why begrudge the smaller cost,
Of paying spies, no battle lost,
For knowledge of the enemy's way,
To end the conflict without delay.

The spies, mysterious and sly,
With information that can't deny,
Local, internal, double, dead,
And live spies with secrets spread.

The general must be wise and just,
To manage spies, a rightful trust,
For they hold secrets that are rare,
To gain advantage, beyond compare.

The enemy's names, the general must know,
To plan his moves and deal a blow,
Double agents, a risky game,
But necessary for victory's claim.

The ruler, too, must know it all,
Relying on the double agent's call,
As Yi Zhi and Lyu Ya have shown,
Dynasties risen; foes dethroned.

But only the worthy can employ,
Spies to their advantage, with great joy,
For spies are vital in the war's art,
Guiding the army's every part.

So let us heed Master Sun's wise word,
And use knowledge, like a sharp sword,
In warfare, let us be adept,
With spies as allies, wisely kept.

For victory comes to those who see,
The value of knowledge, as the key,
To win the battles, end the strife,
And lead with wisdom, in this game of life.

