

If you have a choice, to be feared is much safer than to be loved. For it is a good general rule about men that they are ungrateful, fickle, liars and deceivers, fearful of danger, and greedy for gain. While you serve their welfare, they are all yours, offering their blood, their belongings, their lives, and their children's lives, as we noted previously—so long as the danger is remote. But when the danger is close at hand, they turn against you. Then, any prince who has relied on their words and has made no other preparations will come to grief; because friendships that are bought at a price, and not with greatness and nobility of soul, may be paid for but they are not acquired, and they cannot be used in time of need.<sup>6</sup>