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Whenever you advise a ruler in the way of Tao,
 Counsel him not to use force to conquer the universe.
 For this would only cause resistance.
 Thorn bushes spring up wherever the army has passed.
 Lean years follow in the wake of a great war.
 Just do what needs to be done.
 Never take advantage of power.

Achieve results,
 But never glory in them.
 Achieve results,
 But never boast.
 Achieve results,
 But never be proud.
 Achieve results,
 Because this is the natural way.
 Achieve results,
 But not through violence.

Force is followed by loss of strength.
 This is not the way of Tao.
 That which goes against the Tao comes to an early end.

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Whoever relies on the Tao in governing men
 doesn't try to force issues or defeat enemies by force of arms.
 For every force there is a counterforce.
 Violence, even well intentioned,
 always rebounds upon oneself.

 The Master does his job
 and then stops.

He understands that the universe is forever out of control,
 and that trying to dominate events goes against the current of the Tao.
 Because he believes in himself,
 he doesn't try to convince others.
 Because he is content with himself,
 he doesn't need others' approval.
 Because he accepts himself,
 the whole world accepts him.

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Use Tao to help rule people. This world has no need for weapons,
 Which soon turn on themselves.
 Where armies camp, nettles grow.
 After each war, years of famine.
 The most fruitful outcome Does not depend on force,
 But succeeds without arrogance
 Without hostility Without Pride
 Without resistance Without violence.
 If these things prosper and grow old,
 This is called not-Tao. Not-Tao soon ends.

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The one who uses the Tao to advise the ruler
 Does not dominate the world with soldiers
 Such methods tend to be returned
 The place where the troops camp
 Thistles and thorns grow
 Following the great army
 There must be an inauspicious year
 A good commander achieves result,
 then stops
 And does not dare reaching for domination
 Achieves result but does not brag
 Achieves result but does not flaunt
 Achieves result but is not arrogant
 Achieves result but only out of necessity
 Achieves result but does not dominate
 Things become strong and then get old
 This is called contrary to the Tao
 That which is contrary to the Tao soon ends

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Those who lead people by following the Tao
 don't use weapons to enforce their will.
 Using force always leads to unseen troubles.

 In the places where armies march,
 thorns and briars bloom and grow.
 After armies take to war,
 bad years must always follow.
 The skillful commander strikes a decisive blow then stops.
 When victory is won over the enemy through war
 it is not a thing of great pride.
 When the battle is over,
 arrogance is the new enemy.
 War can result when no other alternative is given,
 so the one who overcomes an enemy should not dominate them.
 The strong always weaken with time.

 This is not the way of the Tao.
 That which is not of the Tao will soon end.