

From the author of the
INTERNATIONAL
BESTSELLER

*The 48 Laws of
POWER*

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ROBERT
GREENE

A JOOST ELFFERS BOOK

the art of Seduction

ROBERT GREENE, author of *The 48 Laws of Power*, has a degree in classical studies and has been an editor at *Esquire* and other magazines.

He is also a playwright and lives in Los Angeles.

JOOST ELFFERS is the producer of *The Art of Seduction* and also of

The 48 Laws of Power

The Secret Language of Birthdays
with Gary Goldschneider

The Secret Language of Relationships
with Gary Goldschneider

Play with Your Food
with Saxton Freymann

the art of Seduction

Robert Greene

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To the memory of my father

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Finally, I would like to honor my father. Words cannot express how much I miss him and how much he has inspired my work.

Contents

[Acknowledgments](#)

[Preface](#)

[Part One](#)

[The Seductive Character](#)

[The Siren](#)

A man is often secretly oppressed by the role he has to play—by always having to be responsible, in control, and rational. The Siren is the ultimate male fantasy figure because she offers a total release from the limitations of his life. In her presence, which is always heightened and sexually charged, the male feels transported to a realm of pure pleasure. In a world where women are often too timid to project such an image, learn to take control of the male libido by embodying his fantasy.

[The Rake](#)

A woman never quite feels desired and appreciated enough. She wants attention, but a man is too often distracted and unresponsive. The Rake is a great female fantasy-figure—when he desires a woman, brief though that moment may be, he will go to the ends of the earth for her. He may be disloyal, dishonest, and amoral, but that

only adds to his appeal. Stir a woman's repressed longings by adapting the Rake's mix of danger and pleasure.

The Ideal Lover

Most people have dreams in their youth that get shattered or worn down with age. They find themselves disappointed by people, events, reality, which cannot match their youthful ideals. Ideal Lovers thrive on people's broken dreams, which become lifelong fantasies. You long for romance? Adventure? Lofty spiritual communion? The Ideal Lover reflects your fantasy. He or she is an artist in creating the illusion you require. In a world of disenchantment and baseness, there is limitless seductive power in following the path of the Ideal Lover.

The Dandy

Most of us feel trapped within the limited roles that the world expects us to play. We are instantly attracted to those who are more fluid than we are—those who create their own persona. Dandies excite us because they cannot be categorized, and hint at a freedom we want for ourselves. They play with masculinity and femininity; they fashion their own physical image, which is always startling. Use the power of the Dandy to create an ambiguous, alluring presence that stirs repressed desires.

The Natural

Childhood is the golden paradise we are always consciously or unconsciously trying to recreate. The Natural embodies the longed-for qualities of childhood—spontaneity, sincerity, unpretentiousness. In the presence of Naturals, we feel at ease, caught up in their playful spirit, transported back to that golden age. Adopt the pose of the Natural to neutralize people's defensiveness and infect them with helpless delight.

The Coquette

The ability to delay satisfaction is the ultimate art of seduction—while waiting, the victim is held in thrall. Coquettes are the grand masters of the game, orchestrating a back-and-forth movement between hope and frustration. They bait with the promise of reward—the hope of physical pleasure, happiness, fame by association, power—all of which, however, proves elusive; yet this only makes their targets pursue them the more. Imitate the alternating heat and coolness of the Coquette and you will keep the seduced at your heels.

The Charmer

Charm is seduction without sex. Charmers are consummate manipulators, masking their cleverness by creating a mood of pleasure and comfort. Their method is

simple: They deflect attention from themselves and focus it on their target. They understand your spirit, feel your pain, adapt to your moods. In the presence of a Charmer you feel better about yourself. Learn to cast the Charmer's spell by aiming at people's primary weaknesses: vanity and self-esteem.

The Charismatic

Charisma is a presence that excites us. It comes from an inner quality—self-confidence, sexual energy, sense of purpose, contentment—that most people lack and want. This quality radiates outward, permeating the gestures of Charismatics, making them seem extraordinary and superior. They learn to heighten their charisma with a piercing gaze, fiery oratory, an air of mystery. Create the charismatic illusion by radiating intensity while remaining detached.

The Star

Daily life is harsh, and most of us constantly seek escape from it in fantasies and dreams. Stars feed on this weakness; standing out from others through a distinctive and appealing style, they make us want to watch them. At the same time, they are vague and ethereal, keeping their distance, and letting us imagine more than is there. Their dreamlike quality works on our unconscious. Learn to

become an object of fascination by projecting the glittering but elusive presence of the Star.

The Anti-Seducer

Seducers draw you in by the focused, individualized attention they pay to you. Anti-seducers are the opposite: insecure, self-absorbed, and unable to grasp the psychology of another person, they literally repel. Anti-Seducers have no self-awareness, and never realize when they are pestering, imposing, talking too much. Root out anti-seductive qualities in yourself, and recognize them in others—there is no pleasure or profit in dealing with the Anti-Seducer.

The Seducer's Victims—The Eighteen Types

Part Two

The Seductive Process

Phase One: Separation—Stirring Interest and Desire..

1 Choose the Right Victim

Everything depends on the target of your seduction. Study your prey thoroughly, and choose only those who will prove susceptible to your charms. The right victims are those for whom you can fill a void, who see in you

something exotic. They are often isolated or unhappy, or can easily be made so—for the completely contented person is almost impossible to seduce. The perfect victim has some quality that inspires strong emotions in you, making your seductive maneuvers seem more natural and dynamic. The perfect victim allows for the perfect chase.

2 Create a False Sense of Security—Approach Indirectly

If you are too direct early on, you risk stirring up a resistance that will never be lowered. At first there must be nothing of the seducer in your manner. The seduction should begin at an angle, indirectly, so that the target only gradually becomes aware of you. Haunt the periphery of your target's life—approach through a third party, or seem to cultivate a relatively neutral relationship, moving gradually from friend to lover. Lull the target into feeling secure, then strike.

3 Send Mixed Signals page

Once people are aware of your presence, and perhaps vaguely intrigued, you need to stir their interest before it settles on someone else. Most of us are much too obvious—instead, be hard to figure out. Send mixed signals: both tough and tender, both spiritual and earthly, both innocent and cunning. A mix of qualities suggests depth, which fascinates even as it confuses. An elusive, enigmatic aura will make people want to know more, drawing them

into your circle. Create such a power by hinting at something contradictory within you.

4 Appear to Be an Object of Desire—Create Triangles

Few are drawn to the person whom others avoid or neglect; people gather around those who have already attracted interest. To draw your victims closer and make them hungry to possess you, you must create an aura of desirability—of being wanted and courted by many. It will become a point of vanity for them to be the preferred object of your attention, to win you away from a crowd of admirers. Build a reputation that precedes you: If many have succumbed to your charms, there must be a reason.

5 Create a Need—Stir Anxiety and Discontent

A perfectly satisfied person cannot be seduced. Tension and disharmony must be instilled in your targets' minds. Stir within them feelings of discontent, an unhappiness with their circumstances and with themselves. The feelings of inadequacy that you create will give you space to insinuate yourself, to make them see you as the answer to their problems. Pain and anxiety are the proper precursors to pleasure. Learn to manufacture the need that you can fill.

6 Master the Art of Insinuation

Making your targets feel dissatisfied and in need of your attention is essential, but if you are too obvious, they will see through you and grow defensive. There is no known defense, however, against insinuation—the art of planting ideas in people’s minds by dropping elusive hints that take root days later, even appearing to them as their own idea. Create a sublanguage—bold statements followed by retraction and apology, ambiguous comments, banal talk combined with alluring glances—that enters the target’s unconscious to convey your real meaning. Make everything suggestive.

7 Enter Their Spirit

Most people are locked in their own worlds, making them stubborn and hard to persuade. The way to lure them out of their shell and set up your seduction is to enter their spirit. Play by their rules, enjoy what they enjoy, adapt yourself to their moods. In doing so you will stroke their deep-rooted narcissism and lower their defenses. Indulge your targets’ every mood and whim, giving them nothing to react against or resist.

8 Create Temptation

Lure the target deep into your seduction by creating the proper temptation: a glimpse of the pleasures to come. As the serpent tempted Eve with the promise of forbidden knowledge, you must awaken a desire in your targets that