Machiavelli “The Prince”

Upon this a question arises: whether it be better to be loved than feared or feared than loved? It may be answered that one should wish to be both, but, because it is difficult to unite them in one person, it is much safer to be feared than loved…

Because this is to be asserted in general of men, that they are ungrateful, fickle, false, cowardly, covetous, and as long as you succeed they are yours entirely; they will offer you their blood, property, life, and children, as is said above, when the need is far distant; but when it approaches they turn against you. And that prince who, relying entirely on their promises, has neglected other precautions, is ruined;

because friendships that are obtained by payments, and not by greatness or nobility of mind, may indeed be earned, but they are not secured, and in time of need cannot be relied upon; and men have less scruple in offending one who is beloved than one who is feared, for love is preserved by the link of obligation which, owing to the baseness of men, is broken at every opportunity for their advantage; but fear preserves you by a dread of punishment which never fails.

Nevertheless a prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred; because he can endure very well being feared whilst he is not hated, which will always be as long as he abstains from the property of his citizens and subjects and from their women. But when it is necessary for him to proceed against the life of someone, he must do it on proper justification and for manifest cause, but above all things he must keep his hands off the property of others, because men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony. Besides, pretexts for taking away the property are never wanting; for he who has once begun to live by robbery will always find pretexts for seizing what belongs to others; but reasons for taking life, on the contrary, are more difficult to find and sooner lapse. But when a prince is with his army, and has under control a multitude of soldiers, then it is quite necessary for him to disregard the reputation of cruelty, for without it he would never hold his army united or disposed to its duties

Steps:

1. Read through this passage. Circle the words you do not know.

2. Look up those words in the dictionary.

3. Read through the passage again, using your understanding of the words you looked up.

4. Read though the passage again, this time slower. Take each sentence and annotate it, piece by piece.

**Questions to answer:**

1. According to Machiavelli, Is it better to be loved or feared according to Machiavelli? How do you know he thinks that? (Use textual evidence in your answer).
2. OPINION: do you agree with Machiavelli? Do you think it would be better to be loved or feared as a leader?
3. What does Machiavelli believe about human nature? Is it good or evil? How do you know he thinks this? (Use textual evidence)
4. What does Machiavelli say about men and their property? How does this reflect Machiavelli’s view of human nature?