our attacks if we attack positions which aren’t defended. We will be secure in our defense if we hold positions that can’t be attacked.

A general has mastered the attack if his enemy doesn’t know what is vital to defend, and he has mastered the defense whose enemy doesn’t know what is vital to attack. Excel in the art of spying and secrecy. Through them we learn what to keep secret, what to leak out and what to broadcast. In that way we hold the enemy’s behavior in our hands. We may travel with absolutely no resistance if we move through what we know are the enemy’s undefended places. We may move about and not be pursued if our information is more accurate than the enemy’s. If we choose to fight, the enemy can be forced to leave his fortress by an attack on some other place which we have discovered he will defend. If we choose not to fight we can prevent him from attacking us even when we are exposed and vulnerable. We simply throw something in his way which we know he will be unable to account for.

By spying out the enemy’s plans and keeping ours hidden we may concentrate our forces and divide his. We can form a concentrated unit while his army is split up and scattered. In this way we bring a whole and complete army to bear against the fragmented pieces of an army.