

## Getting Even

"I can't believe he did that! I'll get even for what happened." Revenge. Hot blooded or cold and calculated. Everyone has had occasion to seek revenge; to retaliate for some wrong, real or perceived. For some, retaliation takes the ultimate and final form. Death. But for most people, just knowing that something was done, no matter how small, is enough to cool the desire to "get even." There are multitudes of ways to redress wrongs; however, in this paper I will just be talking of three ways satisfaction may be achieved.

Due to the advent of caller id and caller return, phoning someone at all hours of the night is no longer an option. However, I knew that if I asked, a local company that leases beepers would give me the three digit prefixes for their little pagers. After I got the numbers, I started to methodically call one number after another. Sometimes I reached an inactive number, but for the most part, the number I dialed reached an active beeper. When I did, I left my victims phone number. At least a hundred people called him, wanting to know why he called them. So many messages were left on his answering machine that he didn't bother to listen to it any more when he came home from work.

Another way I gained revenge was more destructive and costly to the person involved. The manager of the apartments my family and I lived in were set back away from the main road. One day the manager decided to put up a gate across the main entrance road. He used a simple chain and lock to secure it and gave a key to all the tenants. He did this without consulting anyone, or considering the consequences. After night fell, the gate was locked and the tenants would have to get out of their cars and unlock the gate by hand. If it were raining, tough. Cold? Too bad! After asking repeatedly for the gate to be removed, I finally decided on a course of action. Late one night I filled the key hole with super glue. The stuff hardened and a key couldn't be put in. The manager had to break the lock. But he just bought a new one, which I filled up again. After five more locks were ruined, he finally gave up on his idea of a locked gate.

The last type of revenge I'll talk about, was more of a joke that went a little too far. When our daughter was in the hospital, our friends brought her some gifts. Among them was an egg of Silly Putty. Pretty harmless stuff really. But our little girl managed to get it everywhere. On the nurses call button, her clothes, and the carpet at home. No harm was intended, but I felt a little pay back was in order. Waiting patiently for Christmas, I had bought for their three year old hellion, the biggest and best Pla-Doh set I could find. A huge "yuck factory." I even bought extra cups of neon colored Pla-Doh. After fifteen minutes of, their daughter had managed to get that devilish stuff on the kitchen table, the floor, walls, and even in her hair! For all that, I did feel a little guilty. Also I'm a tad fearful of what form our friends' revenge might take, for our daughter is about to have another birthday.

The need for revenge seems to be tied to our basic need for

closure. When wronged by some clod, we feel the need to strike back. In the end, nothing changed the hurt that was caused. Very little is seldom accomplished except closure. But hot damn, didn't it feel good to "fix his wagon!"