

Guy Mansini, "Aristotle on Needing Friends," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 72 (1998), pp. 412-13, comments on a passage in *Death in a Family*, in which the author James Agee describes a friendship between a boy named Rufus and his father. The father and son have gone to a drive-in movie and are watching it together:

"The chief object of satisfaction and enjoyment is not the contentment Rufus feels in the mood of the spring night, or knowing that his father is enjoying a similar contentment, but the knowledge that his father knows his, Rufus' contentment, and he knows his father's, and that they know that they know. This makes for an altogether 'peculiar' contentment. It consists in a mutual knowing of a knowing. . . . It is not that the other helps me have the perception and understanding in question, or even helps me to sustain my perception and understanding; though friends do these things for one another, too, and Aristotle recognizes it, it is not the point here. The savoring of the other's exercise of perception, the awareness of his wit, intelligence, *nous*, an exercise I share with him, is the point." [My comment: We might say that this is an distant, fragmented imitation of the separate mind's knowing itself.]

New York Times, March 13, 1995, p. A1: "Argentine Tells of Dumping 'Dirty War' Captives into Sea."

" 'I am responsible for killing 30 people with my own hands,' Mr. Scilingo said in an interview after his account was published. 'But I would be a hypocrite if I said that I am repentant for what I did. I don't repent because I am convinced that I was acting under orders and that we were fighting a war.'" p. A8: " 'I have spent many nights sleeping in the plazas of Buenos Aires with a bottle of wine, trying to forget,' he said. 'I have ruined my life. I have to have the radio or television on at all times or something to distract me. Sometimes I am afraid to be alone with my thoughts.'"

Remarks by Samuel Johnson in Boswell, *The Life of Dr. Johnson* (New York: Modern Library, n.d.), p. 520:

"Sir, you know courage is reckoned the greatest of all virtues; because, unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other."

Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), pp. 143-44. "Where there is no joy there can be no courage; and without courage all the other virtues are useless."

Back to Samuel Johnson, p. 613. "Why, Sir, a man is very apt to complain of the ingratitude of those who have risen far above him. A man when he gets into a higher sphere, into other habits of life, cannot keep up all his former connections. Then, Sir, those who knew him formerly upon a level with themselves, may think that they ought still to be treated as on a level, which cannot be; an acquaintance in a former situation may bring out things which it would be very disagreeable to have mentioned before higher company, though, perhaps, every body knows them." Boswell: "He placed this subject in a new light to me, and showed, that a man who has risen in the world, must not be condemned too harshly, for being distant to some former acquaintance, even though he may have been much obliged to them."

p. 642. "Though many men are nominally entrusted with the administration of hospitals and other public institutions, almost all the good is done by one man, by whom the rest are driven on; owing to confidence in him, and indolence in them."

p. 744. "As his generosity proceeded from no principle, but was a part of his profusion, he would do for a dog what he would do for a friend. . . . If a profuse man, who does not value his money, and gives a large sum to [a disreputable person], gives half as much, or an equally large sum to relieve a friend, it cannot be esteemed as virtue."

p. 758. "The world has few greater pleasures than that which two friends enjoy, in tracing back, at some distant time, those transactions and events through which they have passed together. One of the old man's miseries is, that he cannot easily find a companion able to partake with him of the past. You and your fellow-traveler have this comfort in store, that your conversation will be not easily exhausted; one will always be glad to say what the other will always be willing to hear."