

Book 8

CHAPTER ONE

It would follow, after these matters, to go through what concerns friendship. For friendship is a certain virtue or is accompanied by virtue; and, further, it is most necessary with a view to life: without friends, no one would choose to live, even if he possessed all other goods; and indeed those who are wealthy or have acquired political offices and power¹ seem to be in need of friends most of all. What benefit would there be in such prosperity if one were deprived of [the opportunity to perform] a good deed, which arises and is most praiseworthy in relation to friends especially? Or how could one's prosperity be guarded and preserved without friends? For the more prosperity one has, the more precarious it is. In poverty as well as in other misfortunes, people suppose that friends are their only refuge. And friendship is a help to the young, in saving them from error, just as it is also to the old, with a view to the care they require and their diminished capacity for action stemming from their weakness; it is a help also to those in their prime in performing noble actions, for "two going together"² are better able both to think³ and to act. 1155a5
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By nature, friendship seems to be inherent in a parent for offspring and in offspring for a parent,⁴ not only in human beings but also in birds and most animals; it is inherent too in those that are alike in kind to one another, and especially in human beings, which is why we praise people who 20

1 · The term here translated as "power," *dunasteiai* (dynasties), is omitted in the best MS.

2 · Homer, *Iliad* 10.224.

3 · Or, "to perceive by the mind," "to apprehend" (*noēsai*).

4 · The first phrase "in a parent for offspring" is omitted in some of the MSS; the second, "in offspring for a parent," is omitted in others.

are “lovers of humankind.”⁵ One might see in one’s travels too that every human being is kindred to every other human being and a friend⁶ to him.

It seems too that friendship holds cities together and that lawgivers are more serious about it than about justice. For like-mindedness⁷ seems
 25 to resemble friendship, and lawgivers aim at this especially and drive out discord because it especially produces hatred. When people are friends, they have no need of justice, but when they are just, they do need friendship in addition; and in the realm of the just things, the most just seems to be what involves friendship. Yet friendship is not only necessary but
 30 also noble, for we praise those who love their friends,⁸ and an abundance of friends is held to be a noble thing. Further, people suppose good men and their friends to be one and the same.

But not a few things about friendship are in dispute. For some set it down as a certain likeness and friends as those who are alike, which
 35 is why they assert that “like is to like,” “jackdaw to jackdaw,”⁹ and such things. Others, to the contrary, assert that all such persons are “pot-
 1155b ters” to one another.¹⁰ And concerning these very points, people seek out something higher and pertaining more to nature, Euripides claiming that “the parched earth loves the rain” and that “the august heaven,
 5 when full of rain, loves to fall to earth,”¹¹ Heraclitus that “opposition is advantageous,”¹² that “the noblest harmony comes from things that differ,” and “all things come into being in accord with strife.” Contrary to

5 · *Philanthropoi*, from which is derived our *philanthropic*.

6 · Or, “dear” (*philos*), a term that can be translated either by an adjective, “loved,” “beloved,” “dear,” or by a noun, “a friend.”

7 · *Homonoia*, “oneness of mind.”

8 · *Philophiloi*, “those who love their friends,” though some MSS read simply *philo*, “friends.”

9 · This phrase has the same meaning as our proverbial saying “birds of a feather flock together.” For the phrase “like to like,” see in particular Plato, *Lysis* 214a3–b4.

10 · That is, each vies with each, just as potter does with potter. Aristotle here alludes to Hesiod, *Works and Days* 25–26; this particular strife, according to Hesiod, is good for mortals. The line is also quoted in Plato’s *Lysis* 215c8, but the context in that case is the question of whether the good are most hostile to the good.

11 · These verses of Euripides come from a play no longer extant, fragments of which are preserved by Athenaeus. The verb for “love” in these passages is not *philein* (see n. 15 below), the root of “friendship” (*philia*), but *eran*, generally signifying passionate or erotic love.

12 · Or, perhaps, “what is in opposition holds together”; according to Grant, this saying reflects the “oracular style” of the famous Heraclitus of Ephesus (ca. 540–475). Only the last fragment is preserved by another source (Origen) apart from Aristotle.

these are still others, including Empedocles, who claim that like aims at like.¹³

Now, let us leave aside those perplexing questions bound up with matters of nature (for they are not proper to the present examination), and let us examine instead those that are bound up with what is distinctively human and that involve characters and passions: for example, whether friendship arises in all people or whether it is impossible for the wicked to be friends; and whether there is one form of friendship or more. Those who suppose that there is only one form, because it admits of degrees, the more and the less, have trusted in an insufficient indication, for things different in form also admit of more and less. But what pertains to them was spoken of before.¹⁴

CHAPTER TWO

Perhaps what concerns these matters would become apparent if what is lovable¹⁵ should become known. For not everything seems to be loved but only what is lovable, and this seems to be what is good, pleasant, or useful. But what is useful would seem to be that through which something good or pleasant arises, with the result that what is good as well as what is pleasant would be lovable as ends. Is it the good, then, that people love or is it the good for themselves? For sometimes these conflict, as is the case also with the pleasant. For it seems that each person loves what is good for himself and that, while in an unqualified sense the good is what is lovable, what is lovable to each is what is good for each. Yet each in fact loves not what *is* good for him but what *appears* so. Yet this will make no difference at all, since it will be what *appears* lovable [that each will in fact regard as good and so love].

While there are three things on account of which people love, friend-

13 · Empedocles of Agrigento (ca. 494–434) attempts the reconciliation of Eleatic and Heraclitean thought; according to Diogenes Laertius, the Sophist Gorgias was a student of Empedocles. This saying is preserved also by Athenaeus and Stobaeus.

14 · There is no direct or obvious discussion of this in the *Ethics*; Burnet refers the reader to Aristotle's *On Sense Perception and Perceptible Things*, chap. 6.

15 · Or, "what elicits friendly feeling" (*to philētos*), an adjective (here used substantively) derived from the word for "friend" or "dear one," *philos*. We will always translate the verb *philein* as "to love" (or "to be loved," in the passive voice), while noting Aristotle's use of other verbs closely associated with *love*: *eran* (to love [in the erotic sense]), *stergein* (to feel affection for), and *agapein* (to be fond of).

ship is not spoken of when it comes to loving inanimate objects, since in that case there is no reciprocated love or wish for the good of the inanimate thing: it is perhaps laughable to wish for good things for the wine, but, if anything, one wishes that it be preserved so that one may have it. But people assert that a friend ought to wish for good things for his friend for that friend's sake. Yet people speak of those who do wish for the good things in this way as having "goodwill" if the other person involved does not return that same wish, for they say that goodwill in those who reciprocate it is friendship. Or perhaps we must set down in addition "goodwill that does not go unnoticed," for many people have goodwill toward those they have not seen but whom they assume to be decent or useful, and one of the latter might feel this same thing toward the former. These people, then, appear to have goodwill toward each other—but how could one say that they are friends when they are unaware that they each have this feeling for the other? Friends must, therefore, have goodwill toward each other and not go unnoticed in their wishing for the good things for the other, on account of some one of the [lovable] things mentioned.

CHAPTER THREE

These things differ in form from one another; so, therefore, do both the kinds of friendly love and the friendships that result. The forms of friendship, then, are three, equal in number to the things that are lovable; in accord with each is a reciprocal love that does not go unnoticed, and those who love each other wish for the good things for each other in that respect in which they love each other.

Those who love each other on account of utility, then, do not love each other in themselves, but only insofar as they come to have something good from the other. Similar too is the case of those who love on account of pleasure, for people are fond of¹⁶ those who are witty, not because they are of a certain sort, but because they are pleasant to them. Therefore, those who love on account of utility feel affection¹⁷ for the sake of their own good, just as those who love on account of pleasure feel affection for

16 · Aristotle uses *agapein* rather than *philein* here (from which *philia* comes). According to LSJ, the former, as distinguished from the latter, implies regard rather than affection. In the Christian tradition, the noun *agapē* is typically used to denote the love of God for humankind, as well as the kind of selfless love of one person for another that is without sexual implications.

17 · *Stergein*, typically used to describe familial love.

the sake of their own pleasure. He who is loved in each case is not loved for himself but only insofar as he is useful or pleasant. And these, then, are friendships incidentally; for it is not for being what he is that the person loved is loved, but only insofar as he provides (in the one case) something good or (in the other) pleasure.

These sorts of friendships, then, are easily dissolved when the people involved do not remain the same as they were. For if they are no longer pleasant or useful, those who love them will cease to do so. And what is useful does not remain constant but is different at different times. When that on the basis of which they were friends is nullified, then so too the friendship is dissolved, since the friendship exists with a view to the thing in question. This sort of friendship seems to arise especially among the old (for those of such an age pursue not what is pleasant but what is beneficial to them) as well as among all those in their prime, or the young, who pursue what is advantageous. And such people do not frequently live with each other either, for sometimes they are not even pleasant to each other. They therefore have no additional need of this sort of association if they supply no benefit to the other, for they are pleasant to each other only insofar as they foster hopes of obtaining something good from the other. It is also among these sorts of friendships that people place the kind connected with foreigners.¹⁸

But the friendship of the young seems to be based on pleasure, for they live according to passion and most of all pursue what is pleasant to them and at hand. But since this time of life is prone to undergoing change, the pleasures too come to be different. Hence the young swiftly become friends and cease being so: the friendship changes together with what they find pleasant, and change in this sort of pleasure is swift. The young are given to erotic love as well.¹⁹ For the greater part of erotic love is bound up with passion and is based on pleasure, which is why they love²⁰ and swiftly cease loving, often changing in the course of the same day. But the young do wish to pass their days together and live together, for in this way they attain what friendship for them involves.

18 · *Xenikos* (from *xenia*), that is, the friendship between host and guest, an important relationship in ancient Greece, which carried obligations of hospitality and the protection of Zeus. It also had a political dimension, in the hosting of and giving gifts to foreign guests or ambassadors.

19 · *Erōtikoi*, derived from *erōs*, sexual love, the fourth term for “love” in the discussion of friendship.

20 · Here *philein*, “to love” in the sense of friendship.

But complete²¹ friendship is the friendship of those who are good and alike in point of virtue. For such people wish in similar fashion for the good things for each other insofar as they are good, and they are good in themselves. But those who wish for the good things for their friends, for their friends' sake, are friends most of all, since they are disposed in this way in themselves and not incidentally. Their friendship continues, then, while they are good, and virtue is a stable thing. Each person involved is good simply and for the friend, since good people are good simply and beneficial to one another. So too are they pleasant, for the good are both pleasant simply and pleasant to one another. To each person, his own actions and those like them accord with his pleasure, and the actions of those who are good are the same or similar.

It is with good reason that this sort of friendship is stable, since it combines in itself all those things that ought to belong to friends. For every friendship exists on account of a good or pleasure, either simply or for the person who loves, and in accord with the likeness involved.²² And in this complete friendship, all that has been spoken of is present in the friends themselves, since in this respect the friends are alike and the remaining [reasons for forming friendship] are present as well—both the good simply and the pleasant simply²³—and these things are lovable most of all. So it is among these people that both loving and friendship are especially prevalent and best.

Yet friendships of this sort are likely to be rare, since people of this sort are few. Further, there is also need of the passage of time and the habits formed by living together;²⁴ for as the adage has it, it is not possible for people to know each other until they have eaten together the

21 · Or, “perfect” (*teleia*).

22 · There is disagreement among commentators concerning the meaning of this last clause: does the “likeness” refer to the likeness of the friends, or does it indicate that friendships based on a good or pleasure relative to the one who loves are friendships only in their likeness to complete friendship?

23 · With Burnet, we accept the reading of the best MS and Aspasius, against Bywater and others, who read: “for the remaining [kinds of friendships] are alike to this one, and what is good simply is also pleasant simply.” If one accepts the former reading, it would seem to support the argument that the “likeness” Aristotle refers to in the previous line is the likeness of the friends.

24 · The phrase “the habits formed by living together” translates a single word (*sunētheia*) that suggests both living or dwelling together and the habits or customs acquired thereby. We will sometimes translate the term more simply as “living together” or “the habit of living together.”

proverbial salt, nor is it possible, before this occurs, for them to accept each other and to be friends until each appears to each as lovable and is trusted. Those who swiftly make proofs of friendship to each other wish to be friends but are not such unless they are also lovable and know this about each other. For a wish for friendship arises swiftly, but friendship itself does not. 30

CHAPTER FOUR

This friendship, then, is complete, in regard to both time and the remaining considerations [namely, the good and pleasure]; and in every respect each friend comes to possess from the other the same or similar things, which is just what ought to be the case with friends. Friendship based on what is pleasant bears a resemblance to this one, for in fact the good are pleasant to one another as well. Similar too is the case of friendship based on utility, for the good are also useful to one another. But among those who seek pleasure or utility, friendships endure especially whenever each attains the same thing from the other—for example, pleasure—and not only this but whenever it comes from the same type, as in, for example, those who are witty, and not as in the case of lover and beloved.²⁵ For lover and beloved are not pleased by the same things; rather, the lover is pleased by seeing the beloved, the beloved by being attended to by his lover. And sometimes when the bloom of youth fades, so too the friendship fades (since for the lover, the sight of the other is not pleasant, and for the beloved, the attention of the lover is no more). Many in turn do remain friends, however, whenever, as a result of their living together, they feel affection for their characters, if they are of the same character. But in the case of lovers whose mutual exchange is not for pleasure but utility, they are and remain friends to a lesser degree. And those who are friends on account of utility dissolve the friendship at the same time as the advantage ceases, for they were friends not to each other but to the profit involved. 35 1157a 5 10 15

In the case of pleasure and utility, then, it is possible even for the base to be friends with one another and for the decent to be friends with the base, as well as for those who are neither [base nor decent] to be friends with any sort whatever. Yet it is clear that only the good can be friends on account of who they themselves are. For those who are bad do not delight

25 · The terms for “lover” and “beloved” here are based on *erôs*: *erastês* and *erômenos*.

20 in one another,²⁶ unless some benefit should accrue to them. Moreover, only the friendship of the good is secure against slander, for it is not easy to trust anyone when it comes to slander about someone who has been tested by oneself over a long time; and in the case of these people, one finds such statements as “I trust him,” “he would never commit injustice,” and all those other things deemed worthy of true friendship. In the case of
 25 the other sorts of friendships, there is nothing to prevent such bad things from arising.

Now, since human beings call friends both those who are friendly on account of the utility involved (as in the case of cities, for alliances struck by cities seem to be for the sake of what is advantageous), and those who feel affection for one another on account of pleasure (as in the case of children), perhaps we too ought to say that these sorts of people are
 30 friends, but that there is more than one form of friendship; and that the friendship of good human beings, insofar as they are good, is friendship in the primary and authoritative sense, the remaining friendships being such only by way of a resemblance. For insofar as there is some good involved and some likeness,²⁷ they are friends. And in fact what is pleasant is a good for the lovers of pleasure. But these kinds of friendship do not often go together, and those who become friends on account of utility
 35 are not the same as those who do so on account of pleasure, for incidental things are not often yoked together.

1157b Given that these are the forms into which friendship has been divided, base people will be friends on account of what is pleasant or useful to them, since it is in this respect that they are alike, whereas the good will be friends on account of who they themselves are, in that they are good. The latter, then, are friends simply, whereas the former are friends incidentally and only by resembling the latter.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 Just as in the virtues, so too in friendship: some people are spoken of as good in reference to the characteristic they possess, others as good in reference to the activity they engage in. For those who live together

26 · Or, perhaps, “in themselves.”

27 · Here and in what immediately follows, commentators again disagree about the nature of the “likeness”: is the likeness to one another, in the respect in which they love, or is it to complete friendship, that is, insofar as these friendships are like the friendship of the good?

delight in and provide good things to one another, whereas those who are asleep or separated by location are not active, though they are so disposed as to be active as a friend. For location dissolves not friendship in the unqualified sense but rather its activity. Yet if the absence lasts a long time, it seems to make even the friendship forgotten, which is why it has been said that “indeed, many friendships the lack of contact dissolves.”²⁸

But neither the old nor the sour types appear disposed to form friendships, for there is little that is pleasant in them, and no one is able to pass the day together with someone who causes him pain or who is not pleasant: nature appears to avoid most of all what is painful and to aim at what is pleasant. But those who approve of one another without living together are more like those with goodwill than like friends. For nothing so much belongs to friends as living together (those in need long to be benefited, and even the blessed long to spend their days together with others, since it belongs to them least of all to be solitary). But it is not possible to go through life with one another when people are not pleasant or do not delight in the same things, which is in fact what seems to characterize the friendship between comrades.

The friendship of those who are good, then, is friendship most of all, just as has been said many times. For what is good or pleasant in an unqualified sense seems to be lovable and choiceworthy, whereas what is good or pleasant to each individual seems to be such only to that person. But a good person is lovable and choiceworthy to a good person on both accounts.

Friendly affection is also like a passion, whereas friendship is like a characteristic: friendly affection exists no less toward inanimate things, whereas people reciprocate love as a matter of choice, and choice stems from one’s characteristic. People also wish for good things for those who are loved, for the sake of the loved ones themselves, not in reference to a passion but in accord with a characteristic. And in loving their friend, they love what is good for themselves, since the good person who becomes a friend becomes a good for the person to whom he is a friend. Each one, then, both loves what is good for himself and repays in equal measure what they wish for the other and what is pleasant.²⁹ For it is said,

28 · The source of this saying is unknown, and this is the only known instance of the word for “lack of contact” (*aprosēgoria*) in the extant Greek literature.

29 · Some MSS read “in form” instead of “what is pleasant,” that is, those who are good repay either the same or proportional things.

“friendship is equality,” and these things belong most of all to the friendship of those who are good.

CHAPTER SIX

1158a Friendship arises less among those who are sour or old, inasmuch as they are surlier than others and delight less in their associations. For being without surliness and delighting in one’s associations seem especially to
5 be marks of friendship and productive of friendship. Hence the young become friends swiftly, but the old do not, since people do not become friends with those in whom they do not delight, and neither, similarly, do those who are sour. But such people do have goodwill toward one another, for they wish for good things for one another and meet one another’s needs. Yet they are still not quite friends, because they do not pass
10 their days together or delight in one another, the very things that especially seem to be marks of friendship.

It is also not possible to be a friend to many, at least not when it comes to complete friendship, just as it is not possible to be in love³⁰ with many at the same time either (since such love is akin to an excess, and such a thing naturally arises in relation to one person). It is also not easy for many people to be very pleasing to the same person at the same time or, perhaps, for many to be good. Also, one must acquire experience of the
15 other person and be in the habit of living together, which is altogether difficult. But when it comes to what is useful or pleasant, it is possible to be pleasing to many, since people of that sort are many and their services are rendered in a short time.

Of these friendships, the one based on what is pleasant is more like friendship properly speaking, whenever the same things come from both
20 parties and they delight in each other or in the same things; such are the friendships of the young, since they have more of what is liberal³¹ in them. But friendship based on utility belongs to those who frequent the marketplace. And although the blessed have no need of useful people, they do of pleasant ones: they wish to live with certain people, and although they might bear what is painful for a short time, no one could endure

30 · Here *eran*, to love in the erotic sense.

31 · The adjective (*eleutherios*) refers most generally to the quality or qualities that distinguish a “free man” (*eleutheros*)—above all, in the *Ethics*, the freedom from any undue or slavish attachment to money; hence the virtue of “liberality” (*eleutheriotēs*).

it continuously—not even the good itself, should it be painful to him. Hence they seek out friends who are pleasant. Yet perhaps they ought to seek out the sorts of people who are good as well, and, further, good for them themselves: in this way all that ought to belong to friends will be theirs. 25

But people in positions of authority appear to make use of friends who are divided into two groups: some are useful to them and others pleasant, though the same people are not often both. For those in authority seek out neither those who are pleasant and have virtue, nor those who are useful with a view to noble things. Rather, they seek out the witty, when they aim at pleasure, and the clever to do their bidding, and these qualities do not frequently arise in the same person. It has been said that the serious person is at once pleasant and useful; yet such a person does not become a friend to someone who exceeds him [in power], unless [the person in power] is also exceeded [by the serious person] in virtue. But if this does not occur, [the serious person] is not rendered equal [to the person of greater power], since he is exceeded in the relevant proportion. Yet [those in positions of authority] are not much accustomed to becoming these sorts [of friends to the virtuous].³² 30 35

The friendships that have been spoken of, then, involve equality. For the same things come from both people involved, and they wish for the same things for each other, or they exchange one thing for another—for example, pleasure in exchange for a benefit. That these latter are friendships to a lesser degree and endure less has also been stated. Yet on account of their likeness and unlikeness to the same thing, they seem both to be and not to be friendships: given their likeness to the friendship that accords with virtue, they appear to be friendships (for they involve either pleasure or utility, and these belong also to the friendship that accords with virtue); but insofar as the friendship of the virtuous is secure against slander and is stable, whereas these friendships change quickly and differ in many other ways, they appear not to be friendships, given their unlikeness to this friendship. 1158b 5 10

32 · We follow Aspasius's generally accepted interpretation of this passage, but the Greek is obscure, and more recent commentators suggest the following: "such a person does not become a friend to one who exceeds him [in power], unless he is exceeded [by the powerful] also in virtue. But failing that, [the serious person] is not equalized by being exceeded in proportion. Yet [those in positions of authority] are not much accustomed to becoming such [i.e., virtuous]."

CHAPTER SEVEN

A different form of friendship is that which is based on a superiority— for example, the friendship of a father for a son, and, in general, an older man for a younger, a husband for a wife, and every ruler for one who is ruled. These friendships differ from one another as well: the friendship of parents for their children is not the same as that of rulers for the ruled. Yet the friendship of a father for a son is not even the same as that of the son for the father, nor is that of a husband for a wife the same as that of a wife for a husband. For in each case there is a different virtue and work involved, and different too are the reasons why they love each other. Both the feelings of friendly affection and the friendships, then, are different.

Each person, therefore, does not come to possess the same things from the other, nor ought each to seek the same things. But whenever children render to their parents what they owe to those who have begotten them, and parents [to their sons]³³ what they owe to their children, the friendship of such people will be stable and equitable. And in all friendships based on a superiority, the feelings of friendly affection too ought to be proportional—for example, the better person ought to be loved more than he loves, and so also with the more beneficial person, and similarly with each of the others. For whenever the friendly affection accords with merit, at that point equality somehow arises, which of course is held to belong to friendship.

But what is equal in matters of justice does not appear to hold similarly in the case of friendship. For in matters of justice, what is equal is, first, what accords with merit, and, second, what accords with a certain quantity; in the case of friendship, however, what accords with a certain quantity is first, what accords with merit second. And this is clear whenever a great difference arises between the friends in point of virtue, vice, resources, or some other thing; for not only are the parties involved no longer friends, but they do not even deem themselves worthy to be. This is most apparent in the case of the gods, for they exceed [human beings] in all good things to the greatest degree. But it is clear too in the case of kings. For those who are much inferior to kings do not deem themselves worthy to be friends with them, and neither do those who are worthy of nothing, with the best or the wisest.

33 · A phrase that is omitted in the best MS.

In these sorts of cases, then, there is no precise definition regarding the point up to which friends remain friends. For although many things may be taken away, the friendship still endures; but when someone is separated from the other to a great degree, as is the god, then the friendship no longer endures. This is also why the perplexity arises as to whether friends perhaps never wish for the greatest goods for their friends—for example, for them to be gods—since then they will no longer be friends to them, and neither will they therefore be goods, for friends are goods. So if it has been nobly said that a friend wishes for the good things for the friend for his friend's sake, the friend would need to remain as whatever sort he is. For the one friend will wish for the greatest goods for the other *as a human being*—and perhaps not all such goods, since each wishes for the good things for himself most of all.

CHAPTER EIGHT

But the many seem, on account of their love of honor,³⁴ to wish to be loved more than to love. Hence the many are lovers of flattery. For the flatterer is a friend who is inferior, or at any rate he pretends to be inferior and to love more than he is loved. Moreover, being loved seems to be close to being honored, which is indeed what the many aim at. But they seem to choose honor not on its own account but only incidentally. For the many delight in being honored by those in positions of authority, on account of the hope thus fostered (for they suppose that they will obtain what they need from them; they delight in honor, therefore, as a sign of their faring well).

But those who long for honor from people who are decent and who know them aim at confirming their own opinion of themselves. They delight in honor, therefore, since they trust that they are good as a result of the judgment of those who say so. But they delight in being loved in itself. Hence being loved would seem to be better than being honored, and friendship would seem to be choiceworthy in itself. But friendship seems to consist more in loving than in being loved. And a sign of this is mothers who delight in loving their children: some mothers give away their own children to be raised, and though they love them just because they know who they are, they do not seek to be loved in return if both are not possible. Rather, it seems to be enough for mothers if they see their chil-

34 · *Philotimia*, the term translated as “ambition” in 4.4.

dren doing well; and they love them even if their children, in ignorance of who their mothers are, may render to them nothing of what is proper to a mother.

35 Since friendship consists more in loving than in being loved and those who love their friends are praised, loving seems to be a virtue of friends. As a result, those in whom this arises in accord with merit are
 1159b stable friends, as is their friendship. It is in this way especially that even those who are unequal might be friends, since they could be rendered equal [by a difference in the love offered on each side]. Equality and likeness constitute friendly affection, and especially the likeness of those who are alike in point of virtue: since they are stable in themselves, they
 5 remain the same also in relation to each other, and they neither need base things nor offer aid of this sort; rather, they even obstruct it, so to speak, for it belongs to good people neither to err themselves nor to permit their friends to do so. Those who are corrupt are without steadiness, however, for they do not remain alike even to themselves; yet for a short time they do become friends, when they delight in each other's
 10 corruption. But those who are useful and pleasant remain friends for a longer time, for however long they provide pleasures or benefits to each other.

It seems that friendship based on utility arises especially from opposites—for example, the friendship of a poor person with a wealthy one, that of an ignorant person with a knower: because the one aims at what
 15 he happens to need, he gives something else in return for it. Someone might bring in here both lover and beloved, or the beautiful and the ugly. Hence lovers in fact appear laughable sometimes, when they deem themselves worthy to be loved as they themselves love.³⁵ Perhaps those who are similarly lovable ought to be deemed worthy of such reciprocal love, but if they are nothing of the sort, it is laughable.

20 Yet perhaps one opposite does not aim at the other opposite in itself, except incidentally. Rather, the longing involved is for the middle term, since this is good—for example, what is good for the dry is not to become wet but to come to the middle condition, and similarly in the case of heat and the rest. Now, then, let us leave aside these considerations, for indeed they are rather foreign to our purpose.

35 • Although Aristotle is speaking of the lover and the beloved in the erotic sense here, *erastēs* and *erōmenos*, the verbs he uses are the passive and active of *philein*.

CHAPTER NINE

But it seems, as was said in the beginning, that both friendship and the just are concerned with the same matters and are present among the same persons. For in *every* community, something just seems to exist, and friendship as well. At any rate, people address their shipmates and fellow soldiers as friends, just as those in other communities do. And to the extent that people share in community, there is friendship, since to this extent there is also what is just. The proverb “the things of friends are in common” is correct, since friendship resides in community—for brothers and comrades, all things are in common, whereas for others, only certain definite things are in common, to a greater or lesser degree. In the case of friendships as well, there is greater and lesser community.

The just things too differ, since these are not the same for parents in relation to children and for brothers in relation to one another, or for comrades and for citizens, and similarly in the other friendships. The unjust things also differ in relation to each of them, and they increase the more they concern friends—for example, it is more terrible to steal money from a comrade than from a fellow citizen, not to aid a brother than not to aid a stranger, and to strike a father than to strike anyone else. It is natural³⁶ for what is just to increase together with friendship, on the grounds that justice and friendship are present among the same persons and are coextensive.

But all communities are like parts of the political community, for people come together for a certain advantage, namely, to provide some of the things conducive to life. And the political community seems to come together from the outset, and to continue to exist, for the sake of what is advantageous; lawgivers aim at this and claim that the advantage held in common is what is just. The other communities, then, aim at a partial advantage—for example, sailors aim at the advantage of making money from sailing or some such thing; soldiers at the advantage bound up with war, since they long for either money, victory, or a city; and similarly too in the case of members of the same tribe or district.

But some communities seem to arise on account of pleasure—like communities of Bacchic revelers and members of a dinner club, for these exist for the sake of performing a sacrifice and of getting together with

36 · One MS reads, “what is just *appears to* increase together with friendship . . .”

others. But all these seem to fall under the political community; for the political community aims not at the present advantage but at that pertaining to life as a whole, [since those engaged in political life] perform sacrifices and host gatherings concerning them, thereby distributing hon-
 25 ors to the gods and providing a pleasant rest for themselves.³⁷ For the ancient sacrifices and gatherings appear to take place after the harvest—for example, the “first fruits”—because people used to have leisure especially in these seasons. All communities, therefore, appear to be parts of the political community, and the sorts of friendships will correspond with the
 30 different sorts of communities.

CHAPTER TEN

There are three forms of regime and an equal number of deviations that are like corruptions of the former three. The regimes are kingship, aristocracy, and a third that is based on property assessments [*timēma*],
 35 which it appears proper to speak of as “timocracy,” though most people are accustomed to calling it “polity.”³⁸ And the best of these is kingship; the worst, timocracy.

1160b The deviation from kingship is tyranny, for while both are monarchical, they differ the most because the tyrant looks to what is advantageous for himself and the king to what is advantageous for the ruled. A king is not someone lacking in self-sufficiency or superiority in any goods; he is,
 5 rather, the sort of person who is in need of nothing. He would look to what is beneficial, then, not for himself, but for the ruled. Were he not of this sort, he would be a kind of king appointed merely by lot. But tyranny is in this respect the opposite, for the tyrant pursues the good for himself; and it is quite manifest in this case that tyranny is the most inferior regime, since the opposite of the best is the worst.

10 The change from kingship is to tyranny, for tyranny is the base form of a monarchy, and the corrupt king becomes a tyrant. From aristocracy the change is to oligarchy as a consequence of the vice of the rulers, who dis-

37 · The text appears to be corrupt. Bywater brackets and some editors consider an interpolation the lines “But some communities . . . getting together with others,” since a version of this claim is restated a few lines later. The textual difficulty is tied to an interpretive question: is it the city as a whole, as opposed to a partial community, that attends to the gods and the proper sacrifices?

38 · The Greek is the same as the general term for “regime,” *politeia*. It is the name that Aristotle gives to the third of the good regimes in his *Politics* (see, e.g., 1279a22).

tribute what belongs to the city contrary to merit—that is, they distribute all or most of the goods to themselves and the political offices always to the same people, since they make being wealthy their greatest concern. A few corrupt people rule, therefore, instead of the most decent. From timocracy the change is to democracy, for they share a defining feature: timocracy too wishes to be [rule] of the multitude, and all those who meet the property assessment are considered equal. Democracy is the least corrupt, for it deviates only slightly from the form of “polity.” The regimes change especially in this way, then, since in this way they change least and hence most easily.

One could find likenesses and, as it were, models of the regimes in households too. For the community of a father in relation to his sons bears a resemblance to kingship, since the father cares for his children. And this is why Homer too addresses Zeus as “Father,”³⁹ since kingship tends to be paternal rule. But among the Persians, the rule of the father is tyrannical, for he uses his sons as slaves. Tyrannical too is the rule of a master over slaves, since it is the advantage of the master that is achieved in it. This latter kind of rule, then, appears to be correct, the Persian in error; for over those who differ, the kinds of rule differ.

The community of husband and wife appears to be aristocratic: the man rules in accord with merit regarding the things over which a man ought to rule, whereas all things suited to a woman, he hands over to her. The man who takes control of *all* things turns his rule into oligarchy, for he does this contrary to merit and not inasmuch as it is better. Sometimes women rule, when they are heiresses. Their rule, therefore, arises not in accord with virtue but on account of their wealth and power, as oligarchies.

The community of brothers is like timocracy, since they are equals, except insofar as they differ in their ages, which is exactly why the friendship is no longer brotherly if there is a great difference in age. But democracy is found especially in households where there is no master (since in these households all are on an equal footing) and in those where the ruler is weak and each person has license to act as he likes.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Friendship appears in each of the regimes to the extent that what is just does as well. In a king in relation to those over whom he is king, friend-

39 · See, e.g., Homer, *Iliad* 1.503.

ship consists in superiority in granting benefactions, for he benefits those over whom he is king—if in fact, being good, he cares for them so that they fare well, just as does a shepherd for his sheep. So it is that Homer too spoke of Agamemnon as the “shepherd of the people.”⁴⁰ But a paternal friendship is also of this sort, though it differs in the magnitude of its benefactions; for a father is the cause of one’s very being, which is held to be the greatest thing, as well as of one’s rearing and education; ancestors too are credited with these things. For the rule of a father over his sons is by nature, as is that of ancestors over their descendants and that of a king over those whom he rules as king. These friendships involve superiority; hence parents are also honored. And what is just in these cases, therefore, is not the same for both, but it does accord with merit, since the friendship does as well.

The friendship of a husband for a wife is the same as that in aristocracy, for it accords with virtue, and to the better person goes more of the good and to each what is suited to each. So also in the case of what is just. The friendship of brothers is like that of comrades, for they are equals and similar in age, and such people for the most part have the same feelings and habits. Also resembling this friendship is the friendship pertaining to timocracy, for the citizens wish to be equals and equitable⁴¹—to rule in turn, therefore, and on an equal basis. Such too, therefore, is the corresponding friendship.

In the case of the deviations, in the same way as what is just exists there to a small degree, so too does friendship, and it exists least of all in the worst one: in tyranny, there is little or no friendship. For where there is nothing in common for ruler and ruled, there is no friendship either, since what is just does not even exist, as in the cases of an artisan in relation to his tool, the soul in relation to the body, and the master in relation to his slave. For all these are benefited by those who use them, but there is no friendship for inanimate things and nothing just pertaining to them. But neither is there friendship for a horse or an ox, nor for a slave insofar as he is a slave: there is nothing in common, since a slave is an animate tool, and a tool an inanimate slave. Insofar as he is a slave, then, there is no friendship in relation to him, but only insofar as he is a human being, since there seems to be something just for every human being in relation to everyone able to share in law and compact. There is friendship, then,

40 · See, e.g., *ibid.* 2.243.

41 · Or, “decent” (*epieikeis*).

inssofar as the slave is a human being. So to a small degree, friendships and what is just exist even in tyrannies; but in democracies, they exist to a greater degree, since those who are equal have many things in common. 10

CHAPTER TWELVE

Every friendship, then, involves community, as has been said. But one might separate out both the friendship of kinfolk and that of comrades. For the friendships of fellow citizens, tribesmen, sailors, and all of that sort seem more like communities [than friendships], since they appear to be based on a certain agreement among the parties—and with these sorts of friendships one might also assign the friendship connected with foreigners.⁴² 15

But the friendship of kinfolk appears to have many forms, though every one of them appears to depend on the paternal sort: parents feel affection for their children on the grounds that they are something of their own, whereas children feel affection for their parents on the grounds that they themselves are something that comes from them. But parents know what issues from them to a greater degree than their offspring know that they issue from their parents; and the begetter feels more united in kinship to its offspring than does the offspring to its maker, for what comes from the begetter itself is its own—for example, a tooth, a hair, or anything whatsoever in relation to its possessor—but the begetter is not at all the offspring's own, or is such only to a lesser degree. The length of time involved also makes a difference, for parents immediately feel affection for those who are born, whereas offspring feel affection for their parents after a period of time, once they acquire comprehension or perception. From these considerations too it is clear why mothers are more loving [than fathers]. 20

Parents, then, love children as they love themselves (for those who come from them are like other selves separately existing), whereas children love their parents on the grounds that they are born from them, and brothers love each other because they were born from the same parents. Their sameness in relation to these parents constitutes the sameness brothers share with each other, which is why people claim to be of the same blood, the same root, and such things. They are in some way the same thing, therefore, even though this same thing resides in separate 30

42 · See n. 18 above.

persons. But it is a great matter, when it comes to friendship, for both to have been brought up together and to be of similar age: “like age [gladdens] like age,”⁴³ and those who live together are comrades. Hence too the
 35 friendship of brothers is like that of comrades. First cousins and the other
 1162a descendants are also bound by ties of kinship as a result of these things, since they come from the same persons. Some are closer in kinship, while others are more foreign by dint of being nearer to or farther from the family founder.

5 The friendship of children for their parents, and that of human beings for gods, is a friendship with what is good and superior. For they have produced the greatest benefits: they are the causes of a child’s being and his rearing, and of the education of those born. And this sort of friendship affords both what is pleasant and what is useful to a greater degree than does that between unrelated⁴⁴ persons, inasmuch as their lives have
 10 more in common. There are qualities of the friendship of brothers that are found also in the friendship of comrades. These qualities are present even more among those brothers who are decent and generally alike, insofar as there is a closer kinship among them and they begin having affection for one another from birth, and insofar as they share more of the same habits, coming as they do from the same parents and having been reared and educated together. Also, their testing of one another over time
 15 is greatest and most certain. And what conduces to friendship is present in proportion also among the rest of those who are kin.

The friendship between a husband and a wife seems to be in accord with nature. For a human being is by nature more a coupling being than a political one, inasmuch as a household is earlier and more necessary than a city and the begetting of children is more common to animals. Among
 20 the other animals, then, community exists to that extent; but human beings live together not only for the sake of begetting children but also for the sake of the things that contribute to life, for the tasks involved are divided immediately, those of the husband being different from those of the wife. They assist each other, then, by putting their own things in the service of what is in common. For these reasons, both what is useful and
 25 what is pleasant seem to be found in this friendship, though there would be such a friendship also on account of their virtue, should they be decent. For there is a virtue belonging to each, and they would delight in a

43 · A proverb that is quoted in its full form in the *Eudemian Ethics* (1238a33) and *Rhetoric* (1371b15) as well as in Plato, *Phaedrus* 240c1–2.

44 · Literally, “strangers” or “foreigners,” but here opposed most directly to “kin.”

person of a comparable sort. Children too seem to be a common bond; hence childless couples break up more readily, since children are a good common to both parents, and what is common holds things together.

How a husband must live in relation to his wife, and, in general, a friend in relation to a friend, appears no different a thing to inquire into than how it is just to do so, for the just does not appear to be the same thing for a friend in relation to a friend as it is in relation to a foreigner, a comrade, or a schoolmate.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Now, friendships are threefold, as was said in the beginning; and in each case, there are friendships consisting in an equality, others based on a superiority. For those who are similarly good become friends, or a good person befriends a worse one; and those who are pleasant and those who are useful become friends in like manner, whether they are equal in the benefits they confer or different. Those who are equal ought to love each other equally, in accord with the relevant equality, whereas those who are unequal ought to render to each what is proportional given the relevant superiorities.

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1162b

But accusations and blame arise in the friendship based on utility, either in it alone or in it especially, and with good reason. For those who are friends on account of their virtue are eager to benefit each other (for this belongs to virtue and to friendship); and since they compete with a view to this, there are no accusations or fights: no one is annoyed by someone who loves and benefits him, but if he is refined, he retaliates by doing some good to his friend. And since he who surpasses in doing good obtains what he aims at, he would not level an accusation against his friend, for each longs for the good. There are also not many accusations in the friendships based on pleasure either, since both parties come to possess simultaneously what they long for, if they delight in going through life together. In fact, he who would accuse the other of not pleasing him would appear laughable, since it is possible for him not to spend his days together with him. But friendship based on utility is prone to accusations. For those who use each other with a view to some benefit always want more and suppose they obtain less than what is proper. And so they blame the other because they do not obtain as much as they want and think they merit, and those who perform the benefactions are not able to supply as much as the recipients want.

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It seems that, just as there is a twofold distinction in what is just—what is unwritten and what accords with law—so also in the friendship based on utility, there is the moral⁴⁵ friendship and the legal one. Accusations arise, then, especially when people do not dissolve the friendship on the same basis on which they entered into it. And the legal type of this friendship depends on stated terms: one kind belongs wholly to marketplace transactions that happen immediately; another is more liberal as regards the time to pay but depends on an agreement that one thing is exchanged for another. The debt is clear and undisputed in this latter case, but it bears the mark of friendship because of the deferral of the payment to the seller. For this very reason, there are no legal arbitrations of these agreements in some places, but people suppose instead that those who entered into agreements on trust ought to feel affection for each other.

The moral type of this friendship, on the other hand, does not depend on stated terms. Instead, a gift (or whatever else) is given as to a friend; but the giver thinks he deserves to receive what is equal, or more than that, in return, on the grounds that he has not given anything but lent it. Yet if someone dissolves the friendship in a way different from that in which he entered into the agreement, the other friend will level an accusation. This happens because all or most people wish for noble things but choose the beneficial ones instead. It is a noble thing to perform a benefit without expecting it to be requited, but it is of course beneficial to receive a benefaction.

He who is able, therefore, must give in return the worth of what he received, and do so voluntarily⁴⁶—for he must not make a friend of someone who is not voluntarily one. On the grounds that he erred completely in the beginning and was done a good deed by someone by whom he ought not to have been done one—for it was not done by a friend or by someone doing this for its own sake—he must therefore dissolve the relation, just as if he had received a benefaction on stated terms. And a person

45 · This is the same adjective, *ēthikē*, that Aristotle uses to speak of “moral virtue.” The “moral” type of friendship Aristotle goes on to discuss is a category within friendship based on utility and is not to be confused with friendship based on character simply.

46 · Bywater brackets “and do so voluntarily,” with some manuscript support. Moreover, commentators dispute whether the phrase refers to the person who is returning the benefit—that he must do so “voluntarily”—or to the one who is receiving it—that he must accept it “voluntarily.”

ought to agree to repay whatever he is able to,⁴⁷ whereas if he should be unable to repay something, not even the giver would expect him to do so. As a result, he must repay it if he can; yet at the outset, he must consider the person from whom he receives a benefaction and on what terms, so that he may submit to these terms or not.

There is also a dispute regarding whether one ought to measure the benefit to the recipient and make repayment with a view to this, or to measure the good deed of the person who performed it. For the recipients assert that they received from those giving the benefaction such things as were small to the givers and which it was possible to receive from others, thus depreciating what they received. Conversely, the givers assert that the recipients received their greatest things, that it was not possible to get them from others, and that they gave them amid dangers or comparable situations of need. Since the friendship is based on utility, then, is the relevant measure the benefit to the recipient? For the recipient is the one in need, and the other aids him on the grounds that he will get back what is equal to the aid. The amount of aid, then, is as much as the recipient has been benefited; and so he must repay as much as he has partaken of, or even more, since doing the latter is nobler.

But in friendships that accord with virtue, there are no accusations; and the choice made by the person performing the benefaction is like a measure, for what is authoritative in matters of virtue and character resides in the choice involved.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

But differences arise also in friendships based on a superiority, since each thinks he is worthy of having more; and when this happens, the friendship is dissolved. For he who is better supposes that it is proper that he have more, since it is proper to distribute more to a person who is good. Similar too is the case of the greater benefactor. For people assert that someone who is useless ought not to have what is equal: the relation becomes a matter of charitable service and not a friendship if what comes from the friendship will not accord with the worth of the friend's deeds. For people suppose that just as in a financial partnership, those who con-

47 · Bywater and others suggest the following emendation: "he must repay what he would have agreed to repay if he was able."

tribute more receive more, so it ought to be in friendship too. But he who is in need and is the inferior asserts the converse—that it belongs to a good friend to aid those in need; for, they assert, what advantage is there in being a friend of a serious or powerful person if there is no benefit to be enjoyed from the friendship?

It seems, then, that each partner correctly deems himself worthy of something—that is, that one ought to distribute more to each of them from the friendship, but not more of the same thing. Rather, to the person who is superior, one ought to distribute honor, and to the one in need, gain. Honor is the reward of virtue and of benefaction, whereas aid is the gain appropriate to need.

It appears to be this way also in the regimes. For he who provides nothing good to the community⁴⁸ is not honored, since what is held in common is given to the person who benefits the community, and honor is held in common. For it is not possible to make money from the common affairs and at the same time to be honored [by the community]. No one puts up with having the lesser share in all things, and so people distribute honor to the person who [, in performing a benefaction,] suffers a monetary loss, and they give money to the person who accepts gifts.⁴⁹ For what accords with merit equalizes and preserves friendship, as has been said. It is in this way too, therefore, that one must associate with those who are unequal; and someone who is benefited in money or virtue must give honor in return, thus giving back what he can. For friendship seeks what is possible, not what accords with the merit [of the giver]. In fact, it is not even possible in every case to do so, as in the honors directed toward the gods and parents; for no one could ever repay what they merit, though he who does service to them to the extent of his capacity is held to be decent.

Hence too it would seem impossible for a son to renounce his father, but possible for a father to renounce his son. For the son must repay the debt, but nothing he may do is worthy of what was done for him, with the result that he is always in debt. But those who are owed have the capacity to discharge the debt, and certainly the father does. At the same time, perhaps, it seems that no father would ever cut off a son who was not of exceeding corruption. For even apart from their natural friendship, it is

48 · The Greek here and in the following line is *to koinon*, literally “the common.”

49 · The term (*dōrodokos*) often has the negative connotation of one who accepts not just gifts but bribes.

characteristically human not to reject aid. Yet for the son who is corrupt, aiding his father is something he avoids or does not eagerly pursue. For the many wish to be done a good turn, but they avoid doing one on the grounds that that is unprofitable. 25

Let what concerns these matters, then, be spoken of to this extent.

Book 9

CHAPTER ONE

In all heterogeneous¹ friendships, what is proportional equalizes and preserves the friendship, as has been said—for example, in a political [friendship], the shoemaker is given in exchange for his sandals what accords with their worth, just as is the weaver and the rest. Here, then, a legal currency has been brought in as a common measure, and so everything is referred to this and measured by it.

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1164a

But in erotic [love or friendship], the lover sometimes levels the accusation that although he loves² beyond measure, he is not loved in return, though it may so happen that he possesses nothing lovable; the beloved, on the other hand, often levels the accusation that his lover is not now fulfilling anything of all that he had earlier promised. Such accusations arise when the lover loves the beloved for the pleasure involved, the beloved his lover for his usefulness to him, and when both parties do not have what each wants. For the friendship based on these concerns is dissolved when that for the sake of which they loved each other is not attained. The affection they felt was not for what each in himself was, but for the things each supplied, which are not stable; hence the friendships too are not stable. But the friendship based on character, being for its own sake, endures, as has been said.

But people are at odds whenever they come to have something other than what they long for. For whenever somebody fails to obtain what he aims at, it is akin to his attaining nothing. For example, a person promises

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1 · *Anomoioeidēs*, that is, friendships in which the two parties seek different kinds of objects; for example, one seeks pleasure, the other something useful. This is the first and only time Aristotle uses this term to describe these sorts of friendships.

2 · Although Aristotle is speaking about erotic love or friendship and a “lover” (*erastēs*), here and in what follows he uses *philein* (and related terms) rather than *eran*.

a cithara player that the better he should play, the more pay he would get; but at dawn, when the player demanded the fulfillment of what he had been promised, the other said that the player had been given pleasure in return for pleasure. If, then, this had been the wish of each party, it would have sufficed; but if the one person had wished for enjoyment and the other gain, and the former had received his wish whereas the latter had not, the terms of the partnership would not have been nobly carried out. For what a person happens to need, he is also intent on, and for the sake of the satisfaction of this need, at any rate, he will give what he does. 20

But to which of the two parties does it belong to assess the worth of what is given: to the person who takes the initiative in giving, or to the one who is first in receiving? For he who takes the initiative in giving appears to entrust this assessment to the receiver, which is in fact what they assert Protagoras used to do. For when he would teach anything whatever, he used to bid the learner to estimate how much he held these things to be worth knowing, and that is the amount he used to take.³ Yet in such circumstances, some people are content with the “[fixed] wage for a man.”⁴ But as for those who take money in advance and then do nothing of what they claimed, because their promises were excessive, they appropriately become subject to accusations because they do not fulfill what they agreed to. The Sophists are compelled to do this, perhaps, because no one would pay money for what they know. 25 30

Those who fail to do what they took a wage for, then, are appropriately subject to accusations. But in the circumstances in which there is no agreement about the service, it was said that those who take the initiative in giving, for their partner’s sake, do not give cause for accusation (the friendship that accords with virtue is of this sort); and one must make the repayment accord with the choice [involved in the giving] (for this is the choice that is the mark of a friend and of virtue). So too in the case of those who share in philosophy. For the worth involved is not measured in monetary terms, and honor could not be evenly balanced with it. But perhaps whatever it is possible to repay would be sufficient, just as it is with 5 35 1164b

3 · A version of this story is told in Plato, *Protagoras* 328b1–c2.

4 · The saying, given in part here, comes from Hesiod, *Works and Days* 368. The context is:

Let a wage that has been stated for a man who is a friend be fixed,
And even with your brother, while laughing, set things down before a witness,
For, mark you, trust and mistrust alike destroy men.

gods and parents. Yet when the giving is not of this sort, but is done on some condition, then perhaps especially in this case the repayment ought to be what accords with the worth of what is given in the opinion of both parties. But if this should not happen, it would seem not only necessary
 10 but also just that he who was the first to receive assess it. For if the giver receives as much as the recipient is benefited (or however much in return the recipient would have given in choosing the pleasure involved), the giver will have received what was merited from the recipient in question.

In fact, this is what manifestly happens when it comes to goods bought and sold. In some places there are laws to the effect that voluntary trans-
 15 actions are not subject to legal adjudication, on the grounds that it is fitting, with someone one has trusted, to dissolve the transaction [or partnership] on the same terms on which one entered into it. The supposition is that it is more just that the person to whom something was entrusted assess its worth than that the one who entrusted it to him do so. For many things are not valued equally by those who possess them and by those who wish to receive them, since what is one's own and what one gives ap-
 20 pears to everyone to be worth a great deal. Nevertheless, repayment is determined with a view to the amount that the recipients assess, though perhaps one ought not to value what something's worth appears to be when the recipient possesses it, but how much he valued it before possessing it.

CHAPTER TWO

But there is perplexity too regarding such questions as whether one ought to render everything to one's father and obey him in everything, or
 25 whether, when a person is sick, he ought rather to trust a doctor, or again whether one ought to elect as general someone with military skill. Similarly, there is also perplexity as to whether one must serve a friend more than a serious man, and whether one must repay a favor to a benefactor rather than give away something to a comrade, if both are not possible. Is defining all such matters precisely, then, no easy thing? For there are many and various differences at issue, connected with whether what is in-
 30 volved is great or petty, noble or necessary.

That someone ought not to give back everything to the same person is not unclear; nor is it unclear that, for the most part, he must repay good deeds more than gratify his comrades, just as a person must pay back a loan to someone he owes, more than he must give away something to a comrade. But perhaps not even this is always so. For example, must a per-

son who has been ransomed from pirates pay in return the ransom of his ransomer, regardless of the sort of fellow he may be, or, if the ransomer has not been kidnapped, must he pay him back anyway if the fellow demands repayment? Or must he ransom his father [first, even if he owes his ransomer money]? For it would seem that a person should ransom his father even in preference to himself.

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1165a

Just as has been said, then, a person must in general pay back a debt. But if an act of giving outstrips in its nobility or necessity the repayment of a debt, one must incline toward these noble or necessary acts. For sometimes the repaying of a previous service is not even equal [or fair]—when someone benefits a person he knows to be serious, but the repayment is to one whom the serious person supposes to be corrupt. And in fact sometimes a person should not make a loan even to someone who has given him a loan, for the original lender, supposing that he would recover the money, made the loan to a decent person, whereas now the decent person has no hope of recovering it from his original lender, who is base. Accordingly, if the original lender is base in truth, then his claim to worthiness to receive a loan is not equal [or fair]; or, if he is not of this character, but people suppose him to be, they would not think it strange to refuse him. So it has been frequently stated, then, that arguments concerning passions and actions possess the same definiteness as those things with which they deal.

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It is not unclear, then, that one should not give back the same things to all people or all things even to one's father, just as one does not offer all sacrifices even to Zeus. But since different things go to parents, brothers, comrades, and benefactors, one must distribute to each what is properly his and fitting. People appear to do this in fact: they invite their relatives to weddings because the family line is something they share in common, as are the actions pertaining to their family. People also suppose that relatives ought to gather especially at funerals for the same reason. It would seem as well that one ought to provide sustenance especially to parents, on the grounds that we are in their debt and that it is nobler thus to provide for those who are the causes of our being than to provide for ourselves. Honor too we owe to parents, just as to the gods—though not every honor. For we do not owe the same honor to a father as to a mother; nor, in turn, do we owe them the honor proper to a wise man or general; rather, we owe them the honor due a father and a mother respectively. To every old man is due the honor that accords with age, in rising and giving him a seat at the table and such things. To comrades, in turn, and to

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30 brothers is due frankness and the sharing of all things in common. And to relatives, fellow tribesmen, citizens, and all the rest, one must always try to distribute to them what is properly theirs and to compare what belongs to each, given their nearness in kinship and their virtue or usefulness. Now, such a comparison involving members of the same family is easier, whereas that involving people of different ones is more of a task. Nevertheless, one must not, on this account, give up the attempt but rather
35 make the relevant distinctions, to the extent possible.

CHAPTER THREE

1165b But there is perplexity also concerning whether or not to dissolve friendships with those who do not remain the same as they were. Since people are friends with a view to what is either useful or pleasant, is it nothing strange to dissolve the friendship when these no longer exist? For they used to be friends of these things; when they lose them, it is with good reason that they no longer love each other. But someone could level an
5 accusation if another who was fond of him on account of utility or pleasure was pretending to be fond of him on account of his character. For as we said in the beginning, most differences arise among friends when the sort of friends they suppose themselves to be is not the same as the sort of friends they actually are. When someone is deceived, then, and assumes that he is loved on account of his character, even though the other person
10 does no such thing, he should blame himself. But when he is deceived by the other who is pretending, it is just to accuse the deceiver, and more so than to accuse those who are counterfeiting currency, insofar as the wrongdoing concerns a more honorable thing.

But if someone accepts another person as good, and that other becomes corrupt or seems so, must he still love him? Or is it not possible, if
15 indeed not everything is lovable but only the good? For what is base is neither lovable nor ought to be loved, since one must not be a lover of what is base or make oneself like a base person; and it has been said that "like is friend to like." Must one, then, immediately dissolve the friendship? Or should one not do this in every case, but only in the case of those whose corruption is incurable? And as for those who can be set aright, one must come to their aid, more as regards their character than their property,⁵
20 insofar as doing the former is better and belongs more to friendship.

5 • *Ousia*, one's "substance" or (in other contexts) "being."

But he who dissolves the friendship in such a circumstance would not be held to be doing anything strange, for he was not originally a friend to a person of this sort. When it is not possible to rehabilitate someone who has changed, he keeps his distance.

But if one person in the friendship should remain the same, while the other becomes more decent and in fact greatly surpasses him in virtue, ought the latter to treat the former as a friend? Or is this impossible? And where the difference is great, this impossibility becomes especially clear—for example, in childhood friendships. For if the one person remains a child in his understanding, whereas the other should be a most excellent man in this very respect, how could they be friends if they neither are pleased by the same things nor delight in and are pained by the same things? For they will also not find these things in each other; but without such shared pleasures and pains, they would not be friends, since it would be impossible for them to live together. But what concerns these matters was spoken of. 25 30

Must one, then, behave no differently toward the fellow than if he had never been a friend? One ought rather to remember the life lived together with him; and just as we suppose that a person ought to gratify friends more than foreigners, so too he must, on account of their prior friendship, render something to those who were once friends, when its dissolution was not due to excessive corruption. 35

CHAPTER FOUR

But the marks of friendship in relation to those around us,⁶ and by which friendships are defined, seem to have arisen from things pertaining to oneself. For people set down as a friend someone who wishes for and does things that are (or appear to be) good, for the other person's sake, or as someone who wishes for his friend, for the friend's own sake, to exist and to live. This is just what mothers feel toward their children, as do even those who have quarreled with their friends. Some also set down as a friend someone who goes through life together with another and who chooses the same things as he does, or who shares in sufferings and joys with his friend. This too happens especially in the case of mothers. It is by certain of these criteria that in fact people define friendship. 1166a 5 10

But each of these criteria is present in the decent person in relation to

6 · We follow the reading of one MS, though several MSS read: "in relation to friends."

himself (and in the rest insofar as they understand themselves to be decent; and it appears, just as has been said, that virtue and the serious person are the measure in each case). For this decent person is of like mind with himself and longs for the same things with his whole soul. Indeed, 15 he both wishes for the good things for himself, that is, the things that appear such to him, and he does them (since it belongs to a good person to work at what is good); and he does them for his own sake, since he acts for the sake of the thinking part of himself, which is in fact what each person seems to be. He also wishes that he himself live and be preserved, and especially that [part of himself] with which he is prudent. For existence is a 20 good to the serious person, and each wishes for the good things for himself. Yet no one chooses to possess every good by becoming another⁷—for even now,⁸ the god possesses the good—but rather by being whatever sort he is;⁹ and it would seem that it is the thinking part that each person is or is most of all. Such a person also wishes to go through life with himself, since he does so pleasantly: the memories of what he has done are 25 delightful, his hopes for the future are good, and such things are pleasant. His thought is also well supplied with objects of contemplation. He shares pains as well as pleasures with himself above all, since what is painful as well as pleasant is always the same for him and not different at different times. Hence he is without regret, so to speak. And so, because each 30 of these belongs to the decent person in relation to himself, and because he stands in relation to a friend as he does to himself—for the friend is another self—friendship too seems to be a certain one of these qualities and friends, those to whom these belong.

As to whether or not there is friendship in relation to oneself, let us 35 set this question aside for the present, though it would seem that there is friendship in this way insofar as [each person is] two or more, on the

7 · We follow here several modern editors and commentators, who bracket a difficult phrase in the Greek that would give the following translation: “no one chooses, by becoming another, that this one who has come into being possess every good.”

8 · The phrase (*kai nun*) may be translated as “even now” in the sense of “now and always” or as “as it is,” to indicate that what is wished for already exists (if not necessarily for the person who is wishing for it).

9 · Some commentators punctuate this last line differently to suggest that the remark regarding the god is not parenthetical and that what follows applies to the god. The line would then read: “for even now, the god possesses the good, but by being whatever sort he is . . .”

basis of the points stated, and that the peak of friendship is like friendship toward oneself.¹⁰ Yet the qualities spoken of appear to belong also to the many, even to those who are base. Insofar, then, as they are pleasing to themselves and assume themselves to be decent, do they share in these qualities? For these certainly do not belong to any who are thoroughly base or act impiously; nor do they even appear to. They scarcely belong even to base people, for they differ with themselves and desire some things but wish for others—as do those who lack self-restraint, for instead of what seems to be good to them, those lacking self-restraint choose harmful pleasures. Others, in turn, through cowardice and idleness, avoid doing what they otherwise suppose to be best for themselves. And those who have done many terrible things and who hate themselves on account of their corruption, even flee living and do away with themselves. Corrupt people seek to pass their days with others, but they flee themselves because, when by themselves, they are reminded of many odious things and anticipate still others. When they are with others, however, they forget. And since they possess nothing lovable, they feel in no way friendly toward themselves. Such people certainly do not share in either joys or sufferings with themselves, since their soul is torn by faction: one part, on account of its corruption, feels pain when abstaining from certain things, while another part feels pleasure; one part drags them here and the other drags them there, as if tearing them asunder. And if it is not possible for someone to feel pain and pleasure simultaneously, the base person can, after a little while at least, be pained because he felt pleasure, and he would wish that he had not gotten pleasure from those things. For base people teem with regret.

The base person, therefore, does not appear to be disposed in a friendly way even toward himself, because he possesses nothing lovable. If, therefore, to be thus disposed is to be extremely miserable, a person must flee

10 · The Greek term for the “peak” of friendship is *hyperbolē*, which we elsewhere render as “excess”; in this context it can mean the extreme of friendship in its perfection or preeminence, the “best and noblest friendship” (LSJ). It is not clear what “two or more” refers to, and some commentators think that the sentence is an interpolation, in which case the phrase may refer to the soul’s having two or more parts. Other commentators, who reject the idea that the sentence is an interpolation, argue that the phrase refers to the conditions of friendship that have just been discussed. It may mean simply that any given person is “two or more,” particularly in light of what follows concerning those who are corrupt.

corruption with the utmost effort and attempt to be decent, since in this way he would both be disposed toward himself in a friendly way and become a friend to another.

CHAPTER FIVE

30 Goodwill resembles something friendly, but it is surely not friendship. For goodwill arises even in relation to those whom one does not know and without their being aware of it, whereas friendship does not. (These points too have been spoken of earlier.) But goodwill is not even friendly affection, because it is without intensity or longing, things that accompany friendly affection. And friendly affection goes together with the
 35 habit of living together, whereas goodwill arises suddenly—for example,
 1167a it even arises for competitors, since people come to have goodwill for competitors and share their intent, though they would do nothing to assist them. For, just as we said, people feel goodwill suddenly and so feel only superficial affection.

Goodwill seems, therefore, to be the beginning of friendship, just as the pleasure stemming from sight is the beginning of erotic love. For
 5 no one falls in love who is not first pleased by someone's appearance—though a person who delights in another's looks does not for all that fall in love,¹¹ except whenever he also yearns for the person who is absent and desires his presence. In this way, therefore, it is not possible for those without goodwill to become friends, but those who have goodwill do not
 10 for all that feel friendly affection.¹² They merely wish for the good things for those they feel goodwill toward but would do nothing actively to assist them, nor would they even be troubled over them. Hence by way of a metaphor, someone might claim that goodwill is friendship that lies idle; but if that goodwill is prolonged over time and carries over into the habit of living together, it becomes friendship—though not a friendship based on what is useful or pleasant, for goodwill does not arise in these cases.
 15 For he who has received a benefaction renders goodwill in return for what he has received, thereby doing what is just. And he who wishes that another fare well because he hopes to be well taken care of by this person does not seem to have goodwill toward him but rather toward himself—

11 · The term for “falls in love” is *eran*, rather than *philein*. Aristotle also uses here the terms *idea* and *eidōs* to designate outward “appearance” and “looks,” terms that also have a technical meaning in the philosophy of Plato; see, e.g., 1.6.

12 · Here the verb is not *eran*, to love in the erotic sense, but *philein*, to love as a friend.

just as he is also not a friend if he attends to that other person because that person is of some utility to him. On the whole, goodwill arises on account of virtue and a certain decency, whenever someone appears to another as noble or courageous or some such thing, just as we said in the case of competitors as well. 20

CHAPTER SIX

Like-mindedness¹³ too appears to be a mark of friendship. Hence it is not merely likeness of opinion, since this could belong even to those who do not know one another. But people do not claim that those who are of like mind concerning just anything whatever are like-minded—for example, 25 those who are of like mind concerning the things in the heavens (for it is not a mark of friendship to be like-minded about these). Rather, they claim that cities are like-minded whenever people are of the same judgment concerning what is advantageous, choose the same things, and do what has been resolved in common.¹⁴ It is about matters of action, therefore, that people agree, and in particular about what is of great import and admits of belonging to both parties or to all involved. For example, 30 cities are like-minded whenever it is resolved by all to make the political offices elective, or to conclude an alliance with the Lacedaimonians, or to have Pittacus rule when he too was willing to do so.¹⁵ But when each person wishes that he himself rule, as do those in *The Phoenician Women*,¹⁶ there is civil faction. For to be like-minded is not for each to have the same thing in mind, whatever it may be, but to have it in mind in the same 35 way—for example, when both the *demos* and the decent have it in mind 1167b for the best persons to rule—since in this way what they aim at comes to pass for everyone.

Like-mindedness, therefore, appears to be political friendship, just as it is also said to be, for it concerns advantageous things and those that

13 · Or, “oneness of mind” (*homonoiia*); see also 8.1.

14 · Here and below, we translate the verb *dokein* in its political sense, “it is resolved,” which was the form in which Athenian laws were given: “It is resolved by the people that ...”

15 · Pittacus (ca. 640–569), considered one of the Seven Sages of Greece, was elected dictator of the Mytilineans during a period of civil strife. He governed for ten years, after which he voluntarily stepped down. Aristotle refers to the “elected” dictatorship or tyranny of Pittacus also at *Politics* 1285a35.

16 · Aristotle here refers to the brothers Eteocles and Polyneices in Euripides’s play.

relate to life [or livelihood]. But this sort of like-mindedness is present
 5 among the decent, since they are like-minded both with themselves and
 with one another, being on the same page, so to speak (for with these
 sorts of people the objects of their wishing remain constant and do not
 ebb and flow like a violent strait); they also wish for what is just and what
 is advantageous, and they aim at these also in common. But it is impos-
 10 sible for base people to be like-minded, except to a small degree, just as
 it is impossible for them to be friends: their aim is to grasp for more of
 what is beneficial to them; but when it comes to performing labors and
 public services, they are deficient. While wishing for these beneficial
 things for himself, each of them scrutinizes his neighbor and obstructs
 him [from pursuing his wishes]. For when people do not keep watch over
 the commons, it is destroyed. It results, then, that they fall into civil fac-
 15 tion, compelling one another by force and not wishing to do what is just
 themselves.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Those who perform a benefit seem to love those who receive this benefit
 more than those who are the recipients of the benefit love those who per-
 form it, and this is investigated on the supposition that it occurs contrary
 20 to reason. So, to most people, it appears that one party owes a debt and
 the other is owed. Just as in the case of loans, then, where debtors wish
 that those whom they owe did not exist, whereas lenders even care for the
 preservation of their debtors, so also those who perform a benefit wish for
 the existence of those who receive it, on the grounds that they will, out of
 25 gratitude, do favors for them in turn, whereas the recipients are not anx-
 ious to repay the debt.

Now, perhaps Epicharmus¹⁷ would assert that those who say these
 things take a base view, though it seems characteristically human. For
 most people are forgetful [of favors done them] and aim more at being
 done some good than at doing it. The cause would seem to have more to
 do with nature and is not at all similar to the case of lenders: lenders feel
 30 no friendly affection toward their debtors but only wish that they be pre-

17 · A Greek comic poet from Megara, of the sixth and fifth centuries. The context of the saying is lost, and thus it is not entirely clear whether the “base view” is a result of external obstacles, such as being in a bad seat in the theater, or the result of base character.

served so they may recover the debt. Those who have done others some good, on the other hand, love and are fond of those who are the recipients of it, even if these recipients are not useful to them and might not be such later. This in fact happens with artisans, for every one of them is fond of his own work more than he would be loved by that work, should it come to have a soul; and this happens especially, perhaps, with poets, since they are exceedingly fond of their own poems and feel affection for them just as if they were their children. The case of those who perform a benefit is like this too, for what has received the benefit is their own work. Therefore, they are fond of this more than the work is of its maker. A cause of this is that to exist is for all people something choiceworthy and lovable, and we exist by means of activity (for this consists in living and acting). And in his activity, the maker of something somehow *is* the work; he therefore feels affection for the work because he feels affection also for his own existence. This is natural, for what he is in his capacity [or potential], the work reveals in his activity.¹⁸ But at the same time too, what pertains to the action involved is noble for the benefactor, so that he delights in the person who is its object. For the recipient, however, there is nothing noble in the person doing it,¹⁹ but, if anything, something advantageous, and this is less pleasant and lovable. What is pleasant is the activity of the present moment, the hope of what is to come, and the memory of what has been. Most pleasant, and lovable too, is what pertains to the activity. For him who has produced it, then, the work endures (for what is noble is long lasting), whereas for the recipient, its usefulness passes away. And the memory of noble things is pleasant, but that of useful ones is not at all or less so, though the reverse seems to be the case with anticipation.

Friendly affection also resembles an active “making,” whereas being loved resembles a passive “undergoing,” and loving and the qualities of friendship attend those who excel in the action [rather than those who undergo it]. And further, all feel more affection for what arises through painful labor, just as those who have themselves acquired their money feel more affection for it than do those who have inherited it, for example. Being done some good seems to be without toil, whereas doing someone some good is troublesome. For these reasons too, mothers love their chil-

18 · Aristotle uses terms here, for “capacity” (*dunamis*) and “activity” (*energeia*), that have a technical meaning in his *Metaphysics* (consider *Metaphysics* 1050a7), and are often translated as “potential” (or “potentiality”) and “actuality.”

19 · Or, perhaps, “there is nothing noble in the deed done.”

dren more than do fathers, for giving birth is of greater pain to them, and they know to a greater degree that their children are their own. And this would seem to be the case also with those who are benefactors.

CHAPTER EIGHT

But there is perplexity too as to whether one ought to love oneself most or someone else. For people censure those who are fondest of themselves, and on the grounds that these sorts of people are in disgrace, they stigmatize them as “self-lovers.” The base person is held to do everything for his own sake, and the more corrupt he is, the more he does this: people
30
accuse him of doing nothing apart from what concerns his own [good].²⁰ The decent person, by contrast, acts on account of what is noble; and the better a person he is, the more he acts on account of what is noble and for
35
the sake of a friend, while disregarding himself.

Yet the deeds are discordant with these arguments, and not unreason-
1168b
ably. For people assert that one ought to love one’s best friend most and that one’s best friend is someone who, when he wishes for good things for a person, does so for that person’s sake, even if no one will know about it.²¹ But these are qualities present especially in the person in relation to him-
5
self, and indeed so are all the other things by which a friend is defined, for it was said that all that characterizes friendship stems from oneself and extends toward others. Moreover, all the proverbs are of the same judgment, such as “one soul,” “the things of friends are in common,” “friendship [is] equality,” and “the knee is closer to the shin.”²² For all these things would
10
belong to the person in relation to himself most of all: he is most a friend to himself, and so one ought to love oneself most. Therefore, there is understandably perplexity as to which view it is right to follow, since both have credibility.

Perhaps, then, one ought to take apart such arguments and determine the extent to which, or in what respect, each is true. If, therefore,

20 · Burnet suggests that the meaning of this line is that the self-lover “does nothing of himself,” that is, he does nothing that does not concern himself.

21 · There is an alternate reading: “one’s best friend is someone who wishes for or someone for whom is wished the good things for that person’s sake.”

22 · For the first of these proverbs, see Euripides, *Orestes* 1045–46. The last is given in inverse form, “the knee is farther off from the shin,” in Theocritus, *Idylls* 16.18. Aristotle has referred to the two other proverbs earlier: “the things of friends are in common” at 8.9 (1159b31) and “friendship is equality” at 8.5 (1157b36).

we should grasp how each side is speaking of the self-lover, perhaps the matter would become clear. Now, then, those who bring self-love into reproach call “self-lovers” those people who allot to themselves the greater share of money, honors, and bodily pleasures, for the many long for these things and are serious about them on the grounds that they are what is best; hence too such things are fought over. Those who grasp for more of these things gratify their desires and, in general, their passions and the nonrational part of their soul. Such is the character of the many. Hence too this familiar term of reproach has arisen from the case that mostly prevails, which is indeed base. Those who are self-lovers in this way, therefore, are justly reproached.

It is not unclear that the many are accustomed to saying that those who allot such things to themselves are self-lovers. For if someone should always take seriously that he himself do what is just, or moderate, or whatever else accords with the virtues, and, in general, if he should secure what is noble for himself, no one would say that he is a “self-lover” or even blame him. But this sort of person would seem to be *more* of a self-lover; at any rate, he allots to himself the noblest things and the greatest goods, he gratifies the most authoritative part of himself, and in all things he obeys this part. Just as a city and every other whole composed of parts seem to be their most authoritative part above all, so too does a human being.

A self-lover, therefore, is especially that person who is fond of and gratifies this authoritative part; and he is said to be either self-restrained or lacking in self-restraint depending on whether or not his intellect is in control,²³ on the grounds that this part *is* the person himself. And those deeds that are accompanied by reason seem above all to be the ones done by people themselves, and done voluntarily. It is not unclear, then, that each person is this [rational] part, or is this above all, and that the decent person is fond of this especially. Hence he especially would be a self-lover, but in reference to a different form of it than the one subject to reproach. In fact it differs as much from this latter form as living in accord with reason differs from living in accord with passion, as much as longing for what is noble differs from longing for what is held to be advantageous.

Now, all approve of and praise those who are preeminently serious about noble actions. And if all compete with a view to what is noble and

23 · Elsewhere translated as “overpowers,” the verb Aristotle here uses (*kratein*) is linked to “self-restraint” (*enkrateia*).

exert themselves to the utmost to do what is noblest, then in common
10 there would be all the necessities and for each individually the greatest
goods, if in fact virtue is of such a character. As a result, the good person
ought to be a self-lover—he will both profit himself and benefit others
by doing noble things—but the corrupt person ought not to be—he will
harm both himself and his neighbors, since he follows his base passions.

15 In the case of the corrupt person, then, what he ought to do and what
he actually does are in discord, whereas the decent person does what he
ought to do. Every intellect chooses what is best for itself, and the de-
cent person obeys the rule of his intellect. It is true, in the case of the seri-
ous person, that he does many things for the sake of both his friends and
20 his fatherland, and even dies for them if need be: he will give up money,
honors, and, in general, the goods that are fought over, thereby secur-
ing for himself what is noble. He would choose to feel pleasure intensely
for a short time over feeling it mildly for a long one, to live nobly for one
year over living in a haphazard way for many years, and to do one great
25 and noble action over many small ones. This is perhaps what happens to
those who die for others; they thus choose some great noble thing for
themselves. They would also give away money on the condition that their
friends will receive more of it, for while his friend gains money, he gains
what is noble. He assigns to himself, therefore, the greater good. And the
30 same holds regarding honors and political offices: he will give up all these
things to his friend, for doing so is noble for him and praiseworthy. Un-
derstandably, therefore, he is held to be serious, since instead of all the
things mentioned, he chooses what is noble. But it is possible too that he
forgo, in favor of his friend, the performance of certain [noble] actions,
and that it is nobler for him thus to become the cause of his friend's ac-
35 tions than to perform those actions himself. In all praiseworthy things,
therefore, the serious man manifestly allots more of the noble to himself.
1169b In this way, then, one should be a self-lover, as has been said; but in the
way that the many are, one must not be.

CHAPTER NINE

There is a dispute too regarding the happy person, namely, whether or
not he will need friends. For people assert that those who are blessed and
5 self-sufficient have no need of friends, since the good things are theirs al-
ready; and that, since the happy are self-sufficient, they have no need of

anyone in addition, whereas a friend, since he is another self, provides only what someone is unable to provide on his own—hence the saying, “when a *daimon* gives well, what need of friends?”²⁴

Yet it seems strange to allot all that is good to the happy person, but not to give him friends, which are held to be the greatest of the external goods. If it belongs more to a friend to do some good than to be done it; if it is also a mark of a good man and of virtue to be a benefactor; and if it is nobler to do good to friends than to strangers, then the serious person will need those who may be done some good. Hence too it is a matter for investigation whether one needs friends more in good fortunes than in bad, on the grounds that in bad fortunes a person needs those who will benefit him, in good fortunes those to whom he may do some good. It is perhaps strange also to make the blessed person solitary: no one would choose to have all good things by himself, since a human being is political and is disposed by nature to live with others. So this too belongs to the happy man, for he possesses the things good by nature, and it is clear that it is better to pass the days together with friends and decent people than with strangers and people at random. For the happy man, accordingly, there is need of friends.

What, then, are the first set of people speaking of, and in what respect are they stating what is true? Or is it that the many suppose those who are useful to them to be their friends? The blessed person, then, will have no need of these sorts of friends, since the good things belong to him. Nor, indeed, will he have need of those who are friends on account of what is pleasant, or he will only to a small degree: since his life is inherently pleasant, he has no need of pleasure from without. Yet because he has no need of these sorts of friends, he is held not to need friends at all. But this is perhaps not true. For it was said in the beginning that happiness is a certain activity, and an activity is clearly something that comes into being and not something that belongs to us like a sort of possession. But if being happy consists in living and being active; if the activity of a good person is serious and pleasant in itself, as was said in the beginning; if what is his own also falls among the pleasant things; and if we are better able to contemplate those near us than us ourselves, and their actions better than our own, then the actions of serious men who are friends are pleas-

24 · Euripides, *Orestes* 667. A *daimon* was, at least in Plato, a sort of divine being inhabiting the realm between human beings and gods; the Greek word for “happiness” (*eudaimonia*) suggests the condition of having a good *daimon* on one’s side.

1170a ant to those who are good (for both have things pleasant by nature).²⁵ So the blessed person will need these sorts of friends, if indeed he chooses to contemplate actions that are decent and his own, and such are the actions of a good man who is a friend.

5 People also suppose that the happy person ought to live pleasantly. For a solitary person, then, life is hard, since it is not easy to be active continuously by oneself, whereas it is easier with others and in relation to others. The activity of the happy person, then, will be more continuous, since it is pleasant in itself, which it ought to be in the case of the blessed person. The serious person, insofar as he is serious, delights in actions that accord
10 with virtue and is disgusted by those that stem from vice, just as the musical person is pleased by beautiful melodies and pained by bad ones. And a certain training in virtue would arise from living with those who are good, just as Theognis too asserts.²⁶

15 But to those examining this in a manner more bound up with nature, the serious friend seems to be choiceworthy by nature to a serious man, for what is good by nature was said to be good and pleasant in itself to the serious person. They define living in the case of animals as a capacity for perception, and in the case of human beings as a capacity for perception or thought.²⁷ But a capacity is traced back to its activity, and what is authoritative resides in the activity. So it seems that living is, in the authoritative sense, perceiving or thinking. And living is among the things
20 in themselves good and pleasant: it is determinate, and the determinate is a part of the nature of the good. What is good by nature is also good for the decent person, on account of which it seems to all to be pleasant. But one ought not to take the case of a corrupt and ruined life, or a life lived in pain, for this sort of life is indeterminate, as are its attributes. (In the
25 remarks that follow, what concerns pains will be more apparent.)

But if living is itself good and pleasant—as it seems to be also from the fact that all people, and especially the decent and blessed, long for it, since

25 · Commentators debate the meaning of *both* in this sentence, some arguing that it refers to the serious man and his friend, others (e.g., Aquinas) that it refers to the good and the lovable, still others (e.g., Grant) that it refers to actions that are both decent and one's own.

26 · Theognis of Megara was a poet of the latter half of the sixth century who wrote didactic poems. At the end of the discussion of friendship (1172a13–14), Aristotle quotes a line from the verse to which he here refers; see also 1179b6.

27 · Some commentators (e.g., Aquinas and Gauthier and Jolif) prefer “capacity for perception *and* thought,” but there is no basis in the extant MSS for this reading.

to such people life is most choiceworthy and their life is most blessed; and if he who sees perceives that he sees, he who hears that he hears, he who walks that he walks (and similarly in the other cases), then there is something that perceives that we are active. The result is that if we are perceiving something, we also perceive that we are perceiving; and if we are thinking, that we are thinking. And to perceive that we are perceiving or thinking is to perceive that we exist—for to exist is to perceive or to think. Moreover, perceiving that one lives belongs among the things pleasant in themselves, for life is by nature a good thing, and to perceive the good present in oneself is pleasant; and living is a choiceworthy thing, especially to those who are good, because existing is good for them and pleasant, for in simultaneously perceiving what is good in itself, they feel pleasure. And if as the serious man stands in relation to himself, so he stands also in relation to a friend (for a friend is a different self)—then, just as one's own existence is choiceworthy to each, so also is the existence of a friend, or nearly so. Existing is, as we saw, a choiceworthy thing because of a person's perception that he is good, and this sort of perception is pleasant on its own account.

Accordingly, one ought to share in the friend's perception that he exists, and this would come to pass by living together and sharing in a community of speeches and thought—for this is what living together would seem to mean in the case of human beings, and not as with cattle, merely feeding in the same place. So if, for a blessed person, existing is something choiceworthy in itself, since it is good by nature and pleasant, and nearly so too is the existence of a friend, then the friend would be among the choiceworthy things. But that which is choiceworthy for him ought to be his, or else in this respect he will be in need. Accordingly, he who will be happy will need serious friends.

CHAPTER TEN

Must one, then, make as many friends as possible? Or—just as it seems to have been said appropriately concerning hospitality,²⁸ “be a host neither to many guests nor to none”²⁹—will it be fitting in the case of friendship too, neither to be without a friend nor in turn to have excessively many friends? In the case of those who are friends with a view to their useful-

28 · See book 8, n. 18 on *xenia*.

29 · Hesiod, *Works and Days* 715.

ness, the point stated would seem very fitting indeed. For it is laborious
 25 to serve many in return, and in fact a lifetime is not sufficient for doing
 so. Having more friends than is sufficient for one's own life, accordingly,
 is superfluous and an impediment to living nobly. There is then no need
 of them. And with a view to pleasure too, a few friends are enough, just
 as with seasoning in food.

But ought one to make friends with the greatest number of serious
 30 human beings, or is there some measure here too of the quantity con-
 ductive to friendship, just as there is in a city? For a city could not come
 into being from ten human beings, yet when there are ten times ten thou-
 sand, it is no longer a city either. The quantity in question is perhaps not
 1171a some single number but anything between certain limits. Accordingly,
 the number of friends too is limited and is perhaps the greatest number
 someone would be able to live together with (for living together seemed
 to be most conducive to friendship). That it is impossible to live together
 with many people and to distribute oneself among them is not unclear.
 5 Further, one's friends ought to be friends with one another, if all are go-
 ing to spend their days with one another, but it is a task for this to happen
 among numerous people. It is also difficult for many to share intimately
 in both joys and sufferings, for it is likely to happen that one shares simul-
 taneously the pleasure of one person and the grief of another.

Perhaps, then, it is good not to seek to have as many friends as possi-
 10 ble but only as many as are sufficient with a view to living together, for it
 would seem that it is not even possible to have an intense friendship with
 many. Hence in fact it is also not possible to be passionately in love with³⁰
 more than one person, since this love tends to be a certain extreme³¹ of
 friendship and is directed at one person. Intense friendship, accordingly,
 is only with a few people. This also seems to be what is actually done:
 many do not become friends in the manner of close comrades, and friend-
 15 ships of that sort, celebrated in hymns, are spoken of in terms of pairs. But
 those who have many friends and who fall in with everyone as familiars
 seem to be friends with no one—except as fellow citizens—and people
 in fact call these types “obsequious.” Now, as fellow citizens, it is possible
 to be a friend to many without being obsequious but as a truly decent per-
 son. Yet it is not possible to be a friend to many if the friendship is based

30 · That is, to love erotically (*eran*).

31 · Or, “peak”: see also n. 10 above.

on virtue and on what the people involved are in themselves, and it is desirable enough to find even a few people of this sort. 20

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Does one need friends more in good fortune than in misfortune? For people seek them out in both cases: those who are unfortunate need aid, and those who are fortunate need to live together with those whom they will benefit, for they wish to do some good. This is more necessary, of course, in misfortunes; and so, in these cases, a person needs those who are useful to him. But friendship is nobler in good fortunes, and so it is that people also seek out those who are decent: it is more choiceworthy to benefit the decent and to pass through life with them. For the mere presence of friends is pleasant in both good fortunes and misfortunes, the pain of those who are suffering being alleviated when their friends share it with them. Hence too someone might be perplexed as to whether people share in the friend's suffering as though taking up a load, or, rather, whether the presence of friends, which is pleasant, and the thought of their sharing in the suffering lessen the pain. But whether it is for these reasons, then, that those who suffer are relieved, or something else, let us leave aside, though the point mentioned does appear to happen. 25 30

But the presence of friends seems to be some mixture of these considerations. For seeing friends is itself pleasant, especially for someone suffering misfortune, and is some aid in not feeling pain: both the sight of a friend and his speech are apt to console one, if he is tactful, since he knows his friend's character and in what ways he is pleased and pained. Yet to perceive a friend's being pained by one's own misfortunes is itself a painful thing, for all avoid being a cause of pain to their friends. Hence those who are manly by nature are cautious of making friends share their grief, and unless such a person is excessively insensitive to pain,³² he does not tolerate becoming a source of pain to them; on the whole, he does not allow them to mourn with him, since he himself is not given to lament- 5 10

32 · The reading and translation of this phrase have occasioned much dispute among commentators. We adopt the suggestion of Stewart that Aristotle refers here to the potentially callous side of a manly nature, but other suggestions include those of Burnet, "even if he is not exceptionally resistant to pain," and Grant, "unless there be a great balance of relief." Gauthier and Jolif accept an emendation, which would produce the translation "unless he does not exceed in misfortune."

ing. But women, and men of such a sort, delight in laments, and they love their friends as friends who share in their suffering. But it is clear that one ought to imitate the better person in everything.

But the presence of friends in good fortunes involves both the pleasant conduct of one's life and the thought that they are pleased by the good things that are one's own. Hence it would seem that a person ought eagerly to invite friends to share his good fortunes (for it is a noble thing to be beneficent), but to hesitate to invite them to share his misfortunes, since one ought to share the bad things as little as possible. Hence the saying, "that I suffer misfortune is enough."³³ But a person must summon friends especially whenever they will be put to little trouble and yet will greatly benefit him. Conversely, it is perhaps fitting to go to a friend without having to be summoned, and indeed to go eagerly to those who are unfortunate. For it belongs to a friend to do some good, especially for those in need who do not expect it: for both parties, this is nobler and more pleasant. It is fitting also to cooperate eagerly in the friend's good fortunes—for even in these there is need of friends—but to be slow to request being done some good, since it is not noble to be eager to be benefited. Yet in refusing aid, one perhaps must beware of a reputation for unpleasantness, for sometimes this happens. The presence of friends, therefore, appears choiceworthy in all cases.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Just as, then, lovers are fondest of seeing [the beloved] and choose this sense perception more than the rest on the grounds that love exists and arises especially in reference to sight, so is it similarly the case for friends that living together is most choiceworthy? For friendship is a community, and as someone is disposed toward himself, so he is disposed also toward a friend. The perception a person has about himself—namely, that he exists—is choiceworthy, just as is the comparable perception about the friend as well. The activity of this perception arises in living together, and the friends understandably aim at this as a result. Whatever existing is for each, or whatever the goal is for the sake of which they choose living—it is while being engaged in this that they wish to conduct their lives with their friends. So it is that some drink together, others play at dice, still others exercise and hunt together or philosophize together, all and

33 · The source of this saying is unknown.

each passing their days together in whatever they are fondest of in life. For since they wish to live with their friends, they pursue and share in those things in which they suppose living together consists.³⁴

Now, the friendship of base people is corrupt: they share in base things and, being unsteady, they come to be corrupt by becoming like one another. But the friendship of decent people is decent and is increased by their associating with one another. They also seem to become better by engaging in activity together and by correcting one another, for they take an imprint from one another of the qualities they find pleasing. Hence the saying “noble things from noble people.”³⁵

Let what concerns friendship, then, be stated up to this point. Following next in order would be to go through what concerns pleasure.

34 · There is some dispute among commentators about the final phrase, “in which they suppose living together consists,” which Gauthier and Jolif argue is a pleonasm. Burnet, for example, argues for the reading of one MS: “they do these things and share in them as they are able.” Gauthier and Jolif suggest: “they do these things and share in those in which they suppose life consists”; Bekker: “they do these things and share in those in which they suppose living well consists.”

35 · Theognis, v. 35, referred to by Aristotle also in 9.9. The term translated as “noble” here is not *kalos* but *esthlos*, which can also mean (morally) “good.”