

Surprising guises of the friend

# About the Friend

PIET JOOSTENS

Using images and texts taken from literature, philosophy, art, the internet and popular culture, Piet Joostens goes in search of the figure of the friend and how it relates to friendship. He touches upon the work of classical philosophers such as Aristotle and Epicurus, Cicero and Augustine, as well as modern philosophers like Derrida and Foucault, Badiou and Blanchot, and literary authors including Kafka, Proust and Beckett. Joostens describes the friend as a shadowy character and a barrel of ambiguities about which it is impossible to write anything both comprehensive and truly coherent.

**Few authors combine that much knowledge with such a pleasant and accessible style.**

ERIK LINDNER

Instead, 'About the Friend' is an adventurous essay in eight distinct chapters without a conclusion. Unlike the blood relative or the spouse, the friend is not defined in law. He or she plays no established part in the life of an adult and must regularly take second place to the lover. Friendship nevertheless lasts until either a rift or death brings to an end the friend's physical presence. This book investigates why it is so difficult to give a friend the place that is his or hers by right.

Over  
de  
vriend.  
essay



Piet  
Joostens



## AUTHOR



**Piet Joostens** (b. 1972) is the author of the novel 'Aladdin in Brussels'. He has been the editor of several literary magazines. He also translates, among others Pier Paolo Pasolini, and he compiles programmes for the Brussels literature house Passa Porta. About the Friend is his first literary essay in book form.

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