



Everyone needs friends. Friends stand by you when you are in trouble, but tell you the truth about yourself. Friends defend you against those who might wish to hurt you, either physically or mentally. They are there when you need them in fair weather or foul and they know when you need to be alone as well.

Civilization can only function with the assistance of friends, friends we may call colleagues, associates, family, acquaintances or countrymen, but all, in their own way, are friends.

Then there is the **special**, personal friend. This is a little different, because this friend may be very important to you, one you trust to **never** let you down! A special friend becomes almost part of you, an extension of your own needs and requirements, almost an extra arm.

I have a special friend. My friend is with me virtually all the time, always ready to help me in every way possible. My friend would defend me, possibly to the death if necessary and without question.

But my friend would also be prepared to perform small tasks for me as well, like sharpening a pencil for me if I am working, or even scraping dirt from the treads of my shoes. My friend has opened cans and bottles of beer for me. My friend has unscrewed difficult door handles and the lids of electronic equipment, when I've forgotten to bring along a screw driver.

My friend has taken corks out of wine bottles, something I would find impossible on my own. My friend has even handled very personal little tasks for me, like cutting my nails and, with a small pair of tweezers, removing splinters of wood from my fingers if I should be so clumsy as to get some there.

My friend also keeps a toothpick handy which I am permitted to use to help keep my teeth clean, (*how personal is that!!*).

My friend originally came from Switzerland, and was a member of the army there, which I guess is a primary reason for all the skills I have mentioned. My friend has a steely personality, is

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unbending and unwavering in any endeavor and always dresses in red and carries the cross of Switzerland, prominently displayed at all times so no-one can fail to recognize who my friend is, or where from.

In fact, my friend is quite famous, not for an association with me, but for deeds performed in the past.

Despite all this, my friend just hangs about most of the time, doing nothing, but always ready to leap into action, should the need arise.

In fact, one could say my friend is always at my fingertips, as close as one could get without causing comment!

My friend has other advantages too – never butting in when I'm doing anything, unless asked; being completely unobtrusive unless I really need some assistance and, unlike some other friends, doing nothing to try to change the way I think or act.

My special friend is a friend indeed, working for me, boosting my confidence, helping with the little tasks and making the big task of life just that little bit easier from day to day.



Photo: Brian Lee

It's a fact that I just wouldn't feel complete if I had to go out into the world without my

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friendly Swiss Army Pocket Knife hanging from my belt!

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