

OF MICE AND MEN  
George Steinbeck

(LENNIE - A HUGE, VERY STRONG, BUT MENTALLY SLOW AND APATHETIC FIELD HAND RETURNS TO A PREDESIGNATED MEETING PLACE BY THE RIVER, AFTER ACCIDENTALLY MURDERING HIS EMPLOYERS WIFE. HE HIDES IN THE BRUSH. GEORGE - AN AVERAGE BUT INTELLIGENT MAN AND LENNIE'S CLOSEST FRIEND AND SELF DESIGNATED GUARDIAN LEAVES THE SEARCH PARTY AND SEEKS LENNIE OUT AT THEIR SECRET PLACE. AS HE FINDS LENNIE HE IS SADDENED BY THE ORDAINED TASK HE KNOWS HE MUST CARRY OUT...

GEORGE

(MOVES WOODENLY TOWARD THE BANK AND THE TULE CLUMP AND SITS DOWN) Lennie!

LENNIE

Where's them guys goin'? (LONG PAUSE)

GEORGE

Huntin'.

LENNIE

Whyn't we go with em? I like huntin'. (WAITS FOR AN ANSWER. GEORGE STARES ACROSS THE RIVER) Is it 'cause I done a bad thing?

GEORGE

It don't make no difference.

LENNIE

Is that why we can't go huntin' with them guys?

GEORGE

(WOODENLY) It don't make no difference...Sit down, Lennie. Right there.

LENNIE

George!

GEORGE

Yeah?

LENNIE

Ain't you gonna give me hell?

GEORGE

Give ya hell?

LENNIE

Sure...Like you always done before. Like - "If I didn't have you I'd take my fifty bucks..."

GEORGE

(SOFTLY AS IF IN WONDER) Jesus Christ, Lennie, you can't remember nothing that happens. But you remember every word I say!

LENNIE

Well, ain't you gonna say it?

GEORGE

(RECITING) "If I was alone I - could live - so easy. (HIS VOICE IS MONOTONOUS)  
I could get a job and not have no mess..."

LENNIE

Go on, go on! "And when the end of the month come..."

GEORGE

"And when the end of the month come, I could take my fifty bucks and go to a -  
a cathouse..."

LENNIE

(EAGERLY) Go on, George, ain't you gonna give me no more hell?

GEORGE

No!

LENNIE

I can go away. I'll go right off in the hills and find a cave if you don't  
want me.

GEORGE

(SPEAKS AS THOUGH HIS LIPS WERE STIFF) No I want you to stay here with me.

LENNIE

(CRAFTILY) Then tell me like you done before.

GEORGE

Tell you what?

LENNIE

"Bout the other guys and about us!

GEORGE

(RECITES AGAIN) "Guys like us got no families. They got a little stake and  
then they blow it in. They ain't got nobody in the world that gives a hoot in  
hell about 'em!"

LENNIE

(HAPPILY) "But not us." Tell about us now.

GEORGE

"But not us."

LENNIE

"Because..."

GEORGE

"Because I got you and..."

LENNIE

(TRIUMPHANTLY) "And I got you. We got each other," that's what, that gives a  
hoot in hell about us. (A BREEZE BLOWS UP THE LEAVES AND THEN THEY SETTLE BACK  
AGAIN. THERE ARE THE SHOUTS OF MEN AGAIN. THIS TIME CLOSER)

GEORGE

(TAKES OFF HIS HAT; SHAKILY) Take off your hat, Lennie. The air feels fine!

LENNIE

(REMOVES HIS HAT AND LAYS IT ON THE GROUND IN FRONT OF HIM) Tell how it's gonna be. (AGAIN THE SOUND OF MEN. GEORGE LISTENS TO THEM.)

GEORGE

Look acrost the river, Lennie, and I'll tell you like you can almost see it. (LENNIE TURNS HIS HEAD AND LOOKS ACROSS THE RIVER) "We gonna get a little place...(REACHES IN HIS SIDE POCKET AND BRINGS OUT A GUN. HAND AND GUN LIE ON THE GROUND BEHIND LENNIE'S BACK. HE STARES AT THE BACK OF LENNIE'S HEAD AT THE PLACE WHERE SPINE AND SKULL ARE JOINED. SOUNDS OF MEN'S VOICES TALKING OFFSTAGE)

LENNIE

Go on! (GEORGE RAISES THE GUN, BUT HIS HAND SHAKES AND HE DROPS HIS HAND ON TO THE GROUND) Go on! How's it gonna be? "We gonna get a little place..."

GEORGE

(THICKLY) "We'll have a cow. And we'll have maybe a pig and chickens - and down in the flat we'll have a little piece of alfalfa..."

LENNIE

(SHOUTING) "For the rabbits!"

GEORGE

"For the rabbits!"

LENNIE

"And I get to tend the rabbits?"

GEORGE

"And you get to tend the rabbits!"

LENNIE

(GIGGLING WITH HAPPINESS) "And live off the fat o' the land!"

GEORGE

Yes (LENNIE TURNS HIS HEAD. QUICKLY) Look over there, Lennie. Like you can really see it.

LENNIE

Where?

GEORGE

Right acrost that river there. Can't you almost see it?

LENNIE

(MOVING) Where, George?



GEORGE

It's over. You keep lookin', Lennie. Just keep lookin'.

LENNIE

I'm looking, George. I'm lookin'.

GEORGE

That's right. It's gonna be nice there. Ain't gonna be no trouble, no fights. Nobody ever gonna hurt nobody, or steal from 'em. It's gonna be - nice.

LENNIE

I can see it, George. I can see it! Right over there! I can see it! (GEORGE FIRES. LENNIE CRUMPLES; FALLS BEHIND THE BRUSH. THE VOICES OF THE MEN IN THE DISTANCE)