

---

## **The Fictional Novella Of Mice and Men by John Steinbeck: Analysis of Characters**

The fictional novella *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck is about two migrant workers, George and Lennie. They travel everywhere with each other and they go to the country to try and find work. Steinbeck best demonstrates the topic of loneliness through the characters Lennie, Crooks, and Curley's wife. Lennie is one of the characters that go through loneliness in the story due to alienation because of his childlike nature. Another character that faces loneliness is Crooks, he faces loneliness due to isolation because of his skin color. Another character that goes through loneliness is Curley's wife, she faces it due to discrimination because she is a woman.

One of the characters that go through loneliness due to alienation is Lennie. He goes through that because of his childlike nature. Lennie has a mental disability and because of his child-like mind, he is alienated from other people and activities. He is also unable to control his strength and he underestimates how strong he is which is also what George alienates him from people. Such as in the first chapter, George tells Lennie not to speak when they went to go see the boss. Lennie said, "I ain't gonna say nothing" but he forgets and he speaks (Steinbeck 6). He is also told to stay away from Curley's wife and to not speak to her, but he ends up talking to her because she kept talking to him when Lennie clearly said he couldn't talk to her. He said, "George says I ain't to have nothing to do with you, talk to you or nothing" (Steinbeck 86). This leads to Lennie underestimating his strength in chapter 3 when he broke Curley's hand. Another time Lennie's strength took over is when he was being too rough with his puppy and ends up killing it. Lennie said, "You ain't so little as mice. I didn't bounce you hard," he blamed the puppy for dying. Also when he was touching Curley's wife's hair and didn't want to let go. When she started screaming, he got scared and was trying to keep her quiet but he snapped her neck and killed her.

Another character that faces loneliness is Crooks. He faces loneliness due to isolation because of his skin color and disability. Since Crooks is black, he doesn't sleep in the bunkhouse with all the other workers. He has a "little shed" that's in the barn as a room. Crooks' disability is having a crooked back so he is limited into the work he can do. He is the stable hand who works with the ranch horses. Crooks is the most open about his loneliness. In chapter 4, When Lennie comes into Crooks' room because he saw the light plus everyone was gone and they were left behind. At first, Crooks wanted Lennie to get out of his room but later on, Crooks expresses his loneliness and feeling of isolation to Lennie. Crooks said, "S'pose you didn't have nobody. S'pose you couldn't go into the bunkhouse and play rummy 'cause you was black. How'd you like that? S'pose you had to sit out here an' read book" (Steinbeck 68).

Another character that goes through loneliness is Curley's wife. She goes through loneliness due to discrimination because she's a woman. She is the only female on the farm and Curley has prohibited anyone to talk to her. She deals with her loneliness by flirting with the other men that work on the farm. Such as when she entered the barn and Lennie was in there. She said, "I get lonely... You can talk to people, but I can't talk to nobody but Curley. Else he gets mad. How'd you like not to talk to anybody?" (Steinbeck 43). She just tries to have as much social interaction as she can because she's not allowed to talk to anyone besides Curley. She also

---

isolates herself by saying rude comments to others. Such as when Crooks told her to leave his room. She threatens Crooks with him being lynched. She said, "No one will listen to the old swamper"(Steinbeck chapter 4).

Those are three characters that go through loneliness in the novella *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. Lennie goes through loneliness in the story due to alienation because of his childlike nature. Crooks faces loneliness due to isolation because of his skin color. Curley's wife, faces it due to discrimination because of the fact that she's a woman.