

1. **scuttled back** rentrira se  
cacher  
2. **yellin'** hurlies

Lennie put his hands over his ears. "He ain't, I tell ya he ain't." And he cried, "Oh! George—George—George!"

George came quietly out of the brush and the rabbit scuttled back<sup>1</sup> into Lennie's brain.

George said quietly, "What the hell you yellin'<sup>2</sup> about?"

Lennie got up on his knees. "You ain't gonna leave me, are ya, George? I know you ain't."

George came stiffly near and sat down beside him. "No."

"I knowed<sup>3</sup> it," Lennie cried. "You ain't that kind." George was silent.

Lennie said, "George."

"Yeah?"

"I done another bad thing."

"It don't make no difference," George said, and he fell silent again.

Only the topmost ridges<sup>5</sup> were in the sun now. The shadow in the valley was blue and soft. From the distance came the sound of men shouting to one another. George turned his head and listened to the shouts.

Lennie said, "George."

"Yeah?"

"Ain't you gonna give me hell?"

"Give ya hell?"

"Sure, like you always done before. Like, 'If I dis'n't<sup>6</sup> have you I'd take my fifty bucks——'"

"Jesus Christ, Lennie! You can't remember nothing that happens, but you remember ever' word I say."

6. **dis'n't** = didn't

Extrait 11

1. **shook** secoua  
2. **woodenly** avec raideur

"Well, ain't you gonna say it?" George shook<sup>1</sup> himself. He said woodenly<sup>2</sup>, "If I was alone I could live so easy." His voice was monotonous, had no emphasis. "I could get a job an' not have no mess." He stopped.

"Go on," said Lennie. "An' when the enda<sup>3</sup> the month come——"

"An' when the end of the month come I could take my fifty bucks an' go to a . . . cat house . . ." He stopped again.

Lennie looked eagerly<sup>4</sup> at him. "Go on, George. Ain't you gonna give me no more hell?"

"No," said George.

"Well, I can go away," said Lennie. "I'll go right off in the hills an' find a cave if you don' want me."

George shook himself again. "No," he said. "I want you to stay with me here."

Lennie said craftily<sup>5</sup>—"Tell me like you done before."

"Tell you what?"

"'Bout the other guys an' about us."

George said, "Guys like us got no family. They make a little stake<sup>6</sup> an' then they blow it in<sup>7</sup>. They ain't got nobody in the worl' that gives a hoot in hell<sup>8</sup> about 'em——"

"But not us," Lennie cried happily. "Tell about us now."

George was quiet for a moment. "But not us," he said.

"Because——"

"Because I got you an'——"

3. **enda** = end of  
4. **eagerly** avec impatience

5. **craftily** avec astuce

6. a **little stake** = a little money  
7. **blow it in** = spend it in  
8. **gives a hoot in hell** en a quelque chose à faire

"An' I got you. We got each other, that's what, that gives a hoot in hell about us," Lennie cried in triumph. The little evening breeze blew over the clearing and the leaves rustled<sup>1</sup> and the wind waves flowed up the green pool. And the shouts of men sounded again, this time much closer than before.

George took off his hat. He said shakily<sup>2</sup>, "Take off your hat, Lennie. The air feels fine<sup>3</sup>."

Lennie removed his hat dutifully<sup>4</sup> and laid it on the ground in front of him. The shadow in the valley was bluer, and the evening came fast<sup>5</sup>. On the wind the sound of crashing in the brush<sup>6</sup> came to them.

Lennie said, "Tell how it's gonna be."

George had been listening to the distant sounds. For a moment he was business-like. "Look across<sup>7</sup> the river, Lennie, an' I'll tell you so you can almost see it."

Lennie turned his head and looked off across the pool and up the darkening slopes of the Gabilans. "We gonna get a little place," George began. He reached in his side pocket and brought out Carlson's Luger; he snapped off the safety<sup>8</sup>, and the hand and gun lay on the ground behind Lennie's back. He looked at the back of Lennie's head, at the place where the spine and skull<sup>9</sup> were joined.

A man's voice called from up the river, and another man answered.

"Go on," said Lennie.

George raised the gun and his hand shook<sup>10</sup>, and he dropped his hand to the ground again.

1. rustled bruissaient

2. shakily d'une voix tremblante

3. fine = good

4. dutifully diligemment

5. the evening came fast le jour tombait rapidement

6. crashing in the brush brindilles écrasées

7. across = across

8. snapped off the safety enleva le cran d'arrêt

9. the spine and skull la colonne vertébrale et le crâne

10. shook trembla

"Go on," said Lennie. "How's it gonna be? We gonna get a little place."

"We'll have a cow," said George. "An' we'll have maybe a pig an' chickens . . . an' down the flat<sup>1</sup> we'll have a . . . little piece alfalfa—"

"For the rabbits," Lennie shouted.

"For the rabbits," George repeated.

"And I get to tend the rabbits."

"An' you get to tend the rabbits."

Lennie giggled<sup>2</sup> with happiness. "An' live on the fatta the lan'."

"Yes."

Lennie turned his head.

"No, Lennie. Look down there across the river, like you can almost see the place."

Lennie obeyed him. George looked down at the gun.

There were crashing footsteps in the brush now. George turned and looked toward them.

"Go on, George. When we gonna do it?"

"Gonna do it soon."

"Me an' you."

"You . . . an' me. Ever'body gonna be nice to you. Ain't gonna be no more trouble. Nobody gonna hurt nobody nor steal from 'em."

Lennie said, "I thought you was mad at me, George."

"No," said George. "No, Lennie. I ain't mad. I never been mad, an' I ain't now. That's a thing I want ya to know."

1. flat = field

2. giggled gloussa

1. **came close** se rapprochaient

2. **begged** supplia

3. **steadied it** le stabilisa

4. **muzzle** canon

5. **his face set** son visage se durcit

6. **pulled the trigger** tira

7. **jarred** eut un soubresaut

8. **settled slowly**

doucement vers l'avant

9. **without quivering**

sans un frémissement

10. **shivered** fut parcouru d'un frisson

11. **was ahead** était devant

12. **never you mind** = don't worry about it

13. **got to** = has to

The voices came close<sup>1</sup> now. George raised the gun and listened to the voices.

Lennie begged<sup>2</sup>, "Le's do it now. Le's get that place now."

"Sure, right now. I gotta. We gotta."

And George raised the gun and steadied it<sup>3</sup>, and he brought the muzzle<sup>4</sup> of it close to the back of Lennie's head. The hand shook violently, but his face set<sup>5</sup> and his hand steadied. He pulled the trigger<sup>6</sup>. The crash of the shot rolled up the hills and rolled down again. Lennie jarred<sup>7</sup>, and then settled slowly forward<sup>8</sup> to the sand, and he lay without quivering<sup>9</sup>.

George shivered<sup>10</sup> and looked at the gun, and then he threw it from him, back up on the bank, near the pile of old ashes.

The brush seemed filled with cries and with the sound of running feet. Slim's voice shouted, "George. Where you at, George?"

But George sat stiffly on the bank and looked at his right hand that had thrown the gun away. The group burst into the clearing, and Curley was ahead<sup>11</sup>. He saw Lennie lying on the sand. "Got him, by God." He went over and looked down at Lennie, and then he looked back at George. "Right in the back of the head," he said softly.

Slim came directly to George and sat down beside him, sat very close to him. "Never you mind<sup>12</sup>," said Slim. "A guy got to<sup>13</sup> sometimes."

But Carlson was standing over George. "How'd you do it?" he asked.

"I just done it," George said tiredly<sup>1</sup>.

"Did he have my gun?"

"Yeah. He had your gun."

"An' you got it away from him and you took it an' you killed him?"

"Yeah. Tha's how." George's voice was almost a whisper<sup>2</sup>. He looked steadily at his right hand that had held the gun.

Slim twitched<sup>3</sup> George's elbow. "Come on, George. Me an' you'll go in an' get a drink."

George let himself be helped to his feet. "Yeah, a drink."

Slim said, "You hadda<sup>4</sup>, George. I swear you hadda. Come on with me." He led George into the entrance of the trail and up toward the highway.

Curley and Carlson looked after them. And Carlson said, "Now what the hell ya suppose is eatin' them<sup>5</sup> two guys?"

1. **tiredly** d'un ton las

2. **whisper** murmure

3. **twitched** remua

4. **hadda** = had to

5. **eatin' them** les tracasse