

Curley's Wife
Side #1

CURLEY'S WIFE. Listen: The guys got a horseshoe tenement out there. It's on'y four o'clock. Them guys ain't gonna leave that tenement. They got money bet. You don't need to be scared to talk to me.

LENNIE. (*Weakening a little*) I ain't suppose to.

CURLEY'S WIFE. (*Watching his buried hand*) What you got under there?

LENNIE. (*his woe comes back to him*) Jus' my pup. Jus' my little ol' pup. (*sweeps hay aside*)

CURLEY'S WIFE. Why! He's dead.

LENNIE. (*explaining sadly*) He was so little. I was jus' playin' with him an' he made like he's gonna bite me – an' I made like I'm gonna smack him – an' –I done it. An' then he was dead.

CURLEY'S WIFE. (*consolingly*) Don't you worry none. He was just a mutt. The whole country is full of mutts.

LENNIE. It ain't that so much. George gonna be mad. Maybe he won't let me what he said I could tend.

CURLEY'S WIFE. (*sits down in hay beside him, speaks soothingly*) Don't you worry none about George or any of the others. They ain't gonna leave their horseshoes so they won't know we're talkin'. And tomorra I'll be gone. I ain't gonna let them run over me. (*In following scene it is apparent that neither is listening to the other and yet as it goes on, as a happy tone increases, it can be seen that they are growing closer together.*)

LENNIE. We gonna have a little place an' raspberry bushes.

CURLEY'S WIFE. I ain't meant to live like this. I come from Salinas. Well, a show come through an' I talked to a guy that was in it. He says I could go with the show. My ol' lady wouldn't let me, 'cause I was on'y fi'een. I wouldn't be no place like this if I had went with that show, you bet.

LENNIE. Gonna take a sack an' fill it up with alfalfa an' –

CURLEY'S WIFE. (*hurrying on*) 'Nother ame I met a guy an' he was in pitchers. Went out to the Riverside Dance Palace with him. He said he was gonna put me in pitchers. Says I was a natural. Soon's he got back to Hollywood he was gonna write me about it. (*looks impressively at LENNIE*) I never got that letter. I think my ol' lady stole it. Well I wasn'tgonna stay no place where they stole your letters. So I married Curley. Met him out to the Riverside Dance Palace too.

LENNIE. I hope George ain't gonna be mad about this pup.

CURLEY'S WIFE. I ain't tol' this to nobody before. Maybe I oughtn't to. I don't like Curley. He ain't a nice fella. I might a stayed with himbut last night him an' his ol' man both lit into me. I don't have to stay here. (*moves closer and speaks confidentially*) Don'ttell nobody all I get clear away. I'll go in the night an' thumb a ride to Hollywood.

LENNIE. We gonna get out a here purty soon. This ain't no nice place.

CURLEY'S WIFE. (*ecstatically*) Gonna get in the movies an' have nice clothes-all them nice clothes like they wear... An' I'll set in them big hotels and they'll take pitchers of me. When they have them openings I'll go an' talk in the radio...an'it won't cost me nothing 'cause I'm in the pitcher. (*puts hand on LENNIE'S arm for a moment*) All them nice clothes like they wear... because this guy says I'm a natural.

LENNIE. We gonna go way...far away from here.

CURLEY'S WIFE. 'Course, when I run away from Curley, they'll think I ain't decent. That's what my ol' lady will say. (*defiantly*) Well, we really ain't decent, no matter how much my ol' lady tries to hide it. My ol' man was a drunk. They put him away. There! Now I told.

LENNIE. George an' me was to the Sacramento Fair. One time I fel in the river an' George pulled me out an' saved me, an' then we went to the Fair. They got all kinds of stuff there. We seen long-hair rabbits.

CURLEY'S WIFE. My ol' man was a sign painter when he worked. He used to get drunk an' paint crazy pitchers an' waste paint. One night when I was a kid, him an' my ol' lady had an awful fight. They was always fightin'. In the middle of the night he come into my room, and he says "I can't stand this no more. Let's you an' me go away." I guess he was drunk. (*Her voice takes on a curious wondering tenderness*) I remember in the night, walkin' down the road, and the trees was black. I was pretty sleepy. He picked me up, an' he carried me on his back. He says, "We gonna live together. We gonna live together because you're my own little girl, an' not no stranger.

No arguin' and fightin', he says, "because you're my little daughter." (*Her voice becomes soft*)
He says, "Why, you'll bake little cakes for me, an' I'll paint pretty pitchers all over the wall."
(*sadly*) In the morning they caught us...an' they put him away. (*pause*) I wish we'd
'a' went.