

November 10th, 2021

Dear John Steinbeck,

I would like to sincerely thank you from the bottom of my heart for writing *Of Mice and Men*. This piece of literature has impacted me in numerous ways. The story itself is alluringly written; the use of repetition among each chapter is astonishing. Not only is this story one of the best harmoniously written ones I've read, but I connect with it, too.

Lennie and George's relationship relates much to myself. They are both extremely conflicted with internal struggles, as am I. Lennie and George's dependence on each other, for me, signifies the inevitable feelings of obligation towards those closest to me. I have always struggled greatly with my mental health, being diagnosed with bipolar 1 and anxiety. With bipolar, it's easy to fall in and out of mania so quickly. It's nearly unfeasible to deal with alone, so you're left constantly searching for someone, something, to put all of your focus into. I feel as though George struggles with that too, putting all of himself into Lennie. I find a lot of comfort in him, as he has the same crippling feelings of constant exhaustion as I do. It absolutely shattered me when George killed Lennie. Neither one of them had the level of vulnerability and affinity they shared with each other with anybody else. George would probably never overcome his death. However, I must be led to think that somehow you've reflected your feelings into that scene. As much as George acted like he couldn't bear the idea of Lennie, he loved him. He loved him with everything he had, because he was all he ever had. They functioned around each other, and the thought of losing him was unthinkable; insufferable, even, which made it hurt all the much worse when the hand that was holding the gun of which had killed Lennie was George's. The regret he must have felt in that moment is outrageous, for the amount he has forsaken Lennie.

I wish with everything they could've had a "happy" ending, the one they had always hoped for. The most soul crushing part is that Lennie had virtually no idea what he was doing; he didn't know what would come from it. He did what George told him, what would save him, and still died at the hands of the person he trusted the most. I know he didn't really have a choice in killing him, and that might very well be the most tragic part of a book filled with deep-cut tragedies. It really takes on the idea of how quickly things can change, and how you always value every moment with them.

Your book is my favorite because I relate to the feelings of the characters so deeply, and sometimes the most comforting things aren't comforting to others at all, but it's so relieving to know someone else may just feel the same way as you do. I wish I could thank you and tell you personally how deeply your book has impacted me.

Yours truly,

Elyse Haslam