Curley’s Entrance

At that moment a young man came into the bunk house; a thin young man with a brown face, with brown eyes and a head of tightly curled hair. He wore a work glove on his left hand, and, like the boss, he wore high-heeled boots, "Seen my old man?" he asked. The swamper said, "He was here jus' a minute ago, Curley. Went over to the cook house, I think. "

"I'll try to catch him, " said Curley. His eyes passed over the new men and he stopped. He glanced coldly at George and then at Lennie. His arms gradually bent at the elbows and his hands closed into fists. He stiffened and went into a slight crouch. His glance was at once calculating and pugnacious. Lennie squirmed under the look and shifted his feet nervously. Curley stepped gingerly close to him.

"You the new guys the old man was waitin' for?"
"We just come in, " said George.
"Let the big gay talk. " Lennie twisted with embarrassment. George said, "S'pose he don't want to talk?" Curley lashed his body around.
"By Christ, ' he's gotta talk when he's spoke to. What the hell are you gettin' into it for?"
"We travel together, " said George coldly.
"Oh, so it's that way. " George was tense, and motionless.
"Yeah, it's that way. " Lennie was looking helplessly to George for instruction.

Pugnacious = quick to argue/ fight

"An' yon won't let the big guy talk, is that it?"
"He can talk if he wants to tell you anything. " He nodded slightly to Lennie.
 "We jus' come in, " said Lennie softly. Curley stared levelly at him.
"Well, nex' time you answer when you're spoke to. " He turned toward the door and walked out, and his elbows were bent out a little. George watched him out, and then he turned back to the swamper.

"Say, what the hell's he got on his shoulder? Lennie didn't do nothing to him. " The old man looked cautiously at the door to make sure no one was listening. "That's the boss's son, " he said quietly. "Curley's pretty handy. He done quite a bit in the ring. He's a lightweight, and he's handy. " "Well, let him be handy, " said George, "He don't have to take after Lennie. Lennie didn't do nothing to him. What's he got against Lennie?" The swamper considered..... "Well.... Tell you what. Curley's like a lot of little guys. He hates big guys. He's alla time picking scraps with big guys. Kind of like he's mad at 'em because he ain't a big guy. You seen little guys like that, ain't you? Always scrappy?" "Sure, " said George.

"I seen plenty tough little guys. But this Curley better not make no mistakes about Lennie. Lennie ain't handy, but this Curley punk is gonna get' hurt if he messes around with Lennie. " "Well, Curley's pretty handy, " the swamper said skeptically. George was watching the door. He said ominously, "Well, he better watch out for Lennie. Lennie ain't no fighter, but Lennie's strong and quick, and Lennie don't know no rules. "