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**Comparing John Steinbeck's Novellas *The Red Pony*  
and *Of Mice and Men* with the Film Adaptations**

**Porovnání novel Johna Steinbecka *The Red Pony*  
a *Of Mice and Men* s filmovými adaptacemi**

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Lenka Heřmánková

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## **Anotace**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá významným americkým spisovatelem Johnem Steinbeckem a jeho novelami *Ryzáček* (1937) a *O myších a lidech* (1937). Hlavní cíl zahrnuje porovnání těchto Steinbeckových děl s jejich filmovými adaptacemi, a popis podobností a rozdílů. Mimo jiné se práce věnuje i tomu, do jaké míry jsou tyto filmy vhodné pro použití pro děti a mladistvé ve školách.

## **Abstract**

The focus of this bachelor thesis centres upon the remarkable American author John Steinbeck and his novellas *The Red Pony* (1937) and *Of Mice and Men* (1937). The primary aim involves comparing these Steinbeck's works with corresponding film adaptations and pointing out similarities as well as differences. Additionally, the thesis examines appropriateness and potential use of these films for children and young adults who are learning English at public schools.

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# 1. Introduction

Reading fiction and watching films provide people with a way to escape to another world. Readers can travel to a fictional world based on a story as well as their imagination. Because the plot in a novel is often described in detail (and on occasion there can even be a few illustrations), people use their imagination while reading. As far as films are concerned, watching them leaves much less room for imagination because specific details accompanying the narrative are shown on a screen.

In film making, novels and films coexist since their mutual relationship lies in the fact that novels have been adapted for the screen for the last 125 years and make visually and audibly concrete what the reader merely imagines during the reading process. However, even though a book and a film share the same plot, it does not necessarily mean that it would be impossible to find differences between them. Although a book is ultimately used as the source for the film adaptation, the genre is different and consequently the final film cannot be completely identical to the narrative of its literary source. Hence, there can always be found similarities as well as differences between books and their film adaptations.

This thesis focuses on finding these similar and different features in selected books by John Steinbeck and their respective film adaptations. An outstanding American novelist who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature (1962), Steinbeck is best known for *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) which won the Pulitzer Prize. However, the following text orients towards two novellas by this remarkable author – *Of Mice and Men* (1937)<sup>1</sup> and *The Red Pony* (1937) and films adaptations of these novels. The aim of this thesis is to analyse these two narratives and compare the books with their film adaptations by looking for and consequently explaining the modifications such as additions, cuts, altered character dialogue, differences in characters appearances from Steinbeck's descriptions, altered settings et cetera.

The analytical section of the thesis will consist of two chapters comparing and contrasting the two novellas with their film adaptations. The introduction includes a brief biography

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<sup>1</sup> Steinbeck also wrote a play with the same title.

of John Steinbeck along with other additional facts regarding this topic such as the theory of film adaptation.

Lastly, I will consider the appropriateness of these film adaptations for children and young adults learning English at public schools and if they might be used in classrooms.

## **2. Film Adaptation**

Over the past 120 years, the quality of films has improved rapidly in many ways. Special effects can be made employing smart technologies by technical experts in the field of photo animation interfacing computer software. Creating films based on a book (fiction or nonfiction) continues unabated. Many films made by mainstream cinema have their roots in dramatic or literary stories and it has continued since the start of film making.<sup>2</sup>

The number of films based on novels differs year to year, although according to research made by the Publishers Association produced by Frontier Economics, 35 % of English language films released worldwide between 1968 and 2002 were based on books and 46 % represented the amount of adaptations of one type or another such as plays, comics and games. The aforementioned research also found that film adaptations of books generated 53 % more revenue than films from original screenplays worldwide from 2007 to 2016.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, film adaptations have been extremely profitable which implies that transforming a book into a film continues to dominate the film industry. Often films then generate interest in a novel, reversing the standard order of the adaptation process by the audience.

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<sup>2</sup> Van Parys, T., Welsh, J. M., & Lev, P. *The Literature/Film Reader: Issues of Adaptation*. Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Frontier Economics Ltd. *Publishing's contribution to the wider creative industries*. The Publishers Association, 2018, p. 5. <https://www.frontier-economics.com/media/2503/publishings-contribution-to-the-wider-creative-industries.pdf>. Accessed 17 April 2023.

## 2.1 Fidelity

When adapting a novel into a film, creators come across a few thorny issues. The main issue associated with film adaptation or, to be more precise, evaluating a film adaptation, is fidelity. Fidelity, or how precisely accurate and loyal a film adaptation stayed to its literary source, may affect audience reception. On the other hand, when a film fails to meet the reader's expectation and it does not remain faithful to the original, some readers tend to feel disappointed. Fidelity should not be ignored because it can be problematic whether it is even possible to remain completely accurate since just the transformation from a book to a film can be described as change of medium and genre, therefore a different work of art. Strict fidelity is often not possible due to not having the exact same characters in the book and actors in the film adaptation or a novel's omniscient narrator cannot be replicated in film, or that a film lasting over three hours always fails at the box office. Even though writers can describe their story, characters, objects in detail, readers might imagine it differently from the director of the film adaptation. Sometimes a writer can fail to include a few details about a person or an object which concretely appears in the film and, as a result, leaves it to the reader's imagination. For example, the description of the bunk house, and the shelves within it in particular, in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937) may be distinguished in reading imaginatively and as adapted in the film:

Against the walls were eight bunks, five of them made up with blankets and the other three showing their burlap ticking. Over each bunk there was nailed an apple box with the opening forward so that it made two shelves for the personal belongings of the occupant of the bunk. And these shelves were loaded with little articles, soap and talcum powder, razors and those Western magazines ranch men love to read and scoff at and secretly believe. And there were medicines on the shelves, and little vials, combs; and from nails on the box sides, a few neckties. Near one wall there was a black cast-iron stove, its stovepipe going straight up through the ceiling. In the middle of the room stood a big square table littered with playing cards, and around it were grouped boxes for the players to sit on.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 19.



Although the cited section describes a lot about objects in the house, it is insufficient for directors of the film adaptation to remain strictly faithful to the book. John Steinbeck mentions soap or a comb, but not in such detail so it is up to Gary Sinise and Lewis Milestone, who directed their adaptations of this book, to select a specific soap and a specific comb used from this period in USA, or not bother to include these objects in the film. A better example includes the reference to the square table in the middle of the room. It was up to the directors to select which specific table made of a specific material and a specific size because this information cannot be found in the novel. Beside these specific aspects of setting, the way a film is edited as well as individual scenes shot and composed makes films different from their book sources since any of those characteristics are not literally described in the novels.<sup>5</sup>

Fidelity is not the only issue regarding accurate film adaptation. It is the length of a book that in a way makes the transformation of a literary source to a film more complicated. However, this problem, mainly associated with novels, can be solved by adapting the novel into a series. Examples include TV miniseries adaptation of the great novel *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) by Jane Austin and *Bleak House* by Charles Dickens. Both adaptations were made by Andrew Davies and became popular.<sup>6</sup>

Although Steinbeck's novellas *The Red Pony* and *Of Mice and Men* are shorter in length compared to novels such as *Bleak House* (1853) by Charles Dickens, they still contain additional scenes and elements that are omitted from their film adaptations. In the case of *The Red Pony* (1937), which consists of four stories, significant portions of the novella were condensed and trimmed in the film adaptation to prevent the film from being too long. Moreover, considering the novella's structure of four stories, a faithful adaptation could possibly be achieved through a miniseries, with episodes portraying every chapter of the book in detail.

In addition, some believe that films cannot touch the issues of emotional consciousness and psychology as well as books do. However, achievements by creators all over the world have countered these charges. What is more, techniques such as changes

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<sup>5</sup> Stam, Robert. *Beyond Fidelity: The Dialogics of Adaptation*. New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2000, p. 55-56.

<sup>6</sup> Van Parys, T., Welsh, J. M., & Lev, P. *The Literature/Film Reader: Issues of Adaptation*, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 17.

of nuance in voice and tone that are treated as unfilmable, have also been adapted into films.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.2 Sound

With regard to voice and tone, sound is essential in film making as it enriches the cinematic experience by spoken dialogs, music, surrounding sounds and other kind of sounds. Human ability to see is limited to just a single direction, whereas the hearing ability extends multidimensionally, as people can hear sounds coming from any direction. Additionally, hearing is spatial since it allows us to hear not only the dialog we are engaged in on a street, but also the noise of cars passing, people behind us chatting or an artist singing in the distance.

This concept is not limited to the movie theatre's room where audio technologies such as Dolby and THX have improved spatial presence in films, producing a multidimensional audio experience that visuals cannot achieve on their own, but it also extends to a film's space referred to as diegetic.<sup>8</sup>

Within the context of film theory, diegesis establishes the connection between image or sound and the virtual world depicted in a film. Diegetic sound serves as a fundamental element within the film's world, taking the form of an acoustic signal. Conversely, non-diegetic sound is not a part of the characters' reality as it exists outside the film's world. Non-diegetic sound includes inner voice, voiceover, film music or sound effects.<sup>9</sup>

Sound can facilitate communication, convey meaning, contributes to atmosphere and storytelling but it also has the potential to disrupt as it is capable of distortion such as noise and interference. There is thin line between significance and nonsense since cries may turn to screams or whispered words risk fading into background sounds. Therefore, sound can constantly change its shape, making the sound more malleable than the image.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Van Parys, T., Welsh, J. M., & Lev, P. *The Literature/Film Reader: Issues of Adaptation*, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2007, p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Elsaesser, T., Hagener M. *Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses*, Routledge, 2010, p. 129-130.

<sup>9</sup> Görne, T. *The Emotional Impact of Sound: A Short Theory of Film Sound Design*, Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, 2007, p. 25.

<sup>10</sup> Elsaesser, T., Hagener M. *Film Theory: An Introduction through the Senses*, Routledge, 2010, p. 137.

## 3 Brief bibliography

### 3.1 John Steinbeck (1902-1968)

John Ernst Steinbeck was an American writer who is considered not just one of the greatest American writers, but also one of the world's best. His writing spanned almost four decades included short stories, novels, screenplays, journals, travelblogs and newspaper articles. Works by this Nobel Prize awarded writer were translated into many languages and met with world-wide success. Steinbeck is best known for the *Grapes of Wrath* (1939), a novel about the Joad family's struggles during the Great Depression. What is more, this novel was made into a famous film, and after watching it President Roosevelt asked Steinbeck to visit him at the White House. Other notable works by Steinbeck adapted for the screen include *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *Tortilla Flat* (1935), *The Moon is Down* (1942), *The Pearl* (1947), *The Red Pony* (1937), *East of Eden* (1952), *The Wayward Bus* (1947), *Cannery Row* (1945), *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961) and *In Dubious Battle* (1936).

John Steinbeck was born on February 27, 1902, to the family of John Ernst Steinbeck, his father, and Olive Hamilton Steinbeck, his mother, in Salinas, California. His parents had already had three daughters together, so he was their only son as well as their youngest child.

His family has German roots as Steinbeck's grandfather from his father's side, John Adolph Grosssteinbeck, who then changed his last name to Steinbeck, was originally from Düsseldorf, Germany, before he left for the U.S. in the 1860s. Later they moved to California where he and his family settled and established a dairy farm. Additionally, the writer's maternal grandfather, Samuel Hamilton, came from Ireland to New York City and eventually, he and his family moved to a ranch near King City, California, which served as an inspirational setting for *The Red Pony* (1937) and *East of Eden* (1952). Even though Steinbeck's personal experience with his grandparents was limited due to their deaths during his early childhood, their family history and legacy had a profound influence on his literary works and inspired ideas for his books.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Schultz, Jeffrey D., and Luchen Li. *Critical Companion to John Steinbeck: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*. Infobase Publishing, 2005, pp. 3-4.

Additionally, John Steinbeck once recounted a childhood memory which included receiving a book, *Morte d'Arthur* by Thomas Malory, from his aunt, and reading it repeatedly. Despite his German surname, he considered Irish heritage having great influence on him.<sup>12</sup>

Steinbeck's father, John Ernest Steinbeck, dedicated most of his life to being the official treasurer for Monterey County. However, he preferred being outdoors and spending time on the Hamilton ranch to working at the office. His love for nature was passed down to his son, who spent summers working on the ranch. Steinbeck's mother who worked as a teacher enriched Steinbeck too, as she gifted him with a vivid imagination, Olive Steinbeck made it a priority to fill their family home with a large collection of books, introducing Steinbeck to Western literature.

By early acquaintances Steinbeck was described as both a loner and a leader. As he grew older, those who knew him affirmed that his paradoxical nature of alternating between introversion and sociability was a constant aspect throughout his life. Despite these complexities, he excelled academically and even became class president in his senior year of high school.

In 1919, Steinbeck studied at Stanford University near San Francisco, California with a determination to become a writer. He often took breaks from school to work in order to support his education. His manual labour jobs instilled in him empathy for laborers such as cotton pickers or workers on farms, an element evident in his fiction. In 1925, he decided to give up his pursuit of a college degree and after earning enough money, he went on a ship to New York City with a desire to develop his writing. Once in New York he worked as a labourer participating on the building of Madison Square Garden, which was very time-consuming, leaving him almost no time to write. After that he worked as an advertising executive in Chicago and even though this job was closer to his field, he did not maintain it for long because he failed to complete assignments on time. Steinbeck occupied a various range of jobs while writing before his novels gained

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<sup>12</sup> McElrath, Joseph R., Crisler, Jesse S., Shillinglaw Susan. *John Steinbeck: The Contemporary Reviews*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 74.

recognition. In 1926, as he returned to California, he became a caretaker for the Brigham family's summer residence at Lake Tahoe. In the winter he had fewer obligations which allowed him to spend more time on writing. This created a writing routine that he would follow throughout his life. During that time, Steinbeck finished the manuscript for *Cup of Gold* (1929), which became his first published novel, and he married his first wife Carol Henning.

The first novel as well as the story collection entitled *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932) and *To a God Unknown* (1933) were critically acclaimed but did not achieve popular success. However, he gained recognition with *Tortilla Flat* in 1935, a novella about Mexican Americans, for which he received his first rewards. Unfortunately, he did not share the success with his parents, given that his mother passed away in 1934 and his father a year later. He proceeded with working by writing several short stories for the *North American Review*, for instance *The Red Pony* (1937), *The White Qual* (1935) and *The Murder* (1934). His success kept growing as he continued receiving first of his awards such as a Commonwealth Club Gold Metal for Best Novel by a Californian for *In Dubious Battle* (1936), and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for the Broadway version of the novella *Of Mice and Men* in 1938. One book that really stood out, as far as honours and excellent rating is concerned, is *Grape of Wrath* (1939). This novel centres around a dispossessed family's journey from the Oklahoma Dust Bowl region to California, shedding light on the exploitative nature of the agricultural economic system that takes advantage of the vulnerable migrants. *Grapes of Wrath* published in 1939 was awarded the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award and what is more, it was also made into a film in 1940.

The writing process of *Grapes of Wrath* (1939) had left him drained, while an undiagnosed strep infection alongside with marital troubles with Carol added to his suffering. Steinbeck eventually started an affair with Gwyndolyn Conger which later led to a split between him and Carol Henning with whom he was married for eleven years. In 1940, seeking a fresh direction in his career, John Steinbeck went on a journey to Mexico with Edward Fricketts, a freelance biologist, to explore marine life. This expedition resulted in their collaborative non-fiction book, *Sea of Cortez* (1951), about exploring the Gulf of California.

Steinbeck spent most of his middle years in California, especially central and northern parts and he was often referred to as a western writer since the majority of his books were set in California. However, Steinbeck hardly ever returned to his home state after 1941 so more than half of his literary career was subsequently spent on the East Coast. Steinbeck and Gwyndolyn Conger moved to New York and in September, they left for Washington, D.C. to meet President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who wanted the writer's involvement in countering Nazi propaganda through the newly established Foreign Information Service (FIS). Steinbeck, alongside other notable writers contributed to the FIS by writing scripts for radio broadcasts that usually contained pro-American and pro-Allied countries information. His novel *The Moon Is Down* published in 1942 focuses on this topic too, as it concerns Norwegians living under Nazi occupation.

In addition to his writing, John Steinbeck also served as a war correspondent. After the World War II, he published *Cannery Row* (1945), *The Pearl* (1947) and *The Wayward Bus* (1947) which continued to include aspects of his social criticism. He married his second wife Gwyndolyn Conger in 1943 and their marriage lasted until 1948, during which time they had two sons, Thomas, and John. After the divorce he spent a lot of time recovering from their separation by engaging in manual and mental labour and working on a movie script for *Viva Zapata!* which was filmed in 1952. Steinbeck started writing short stories as well as the initial drafts of what would turn into his *East of Eden* (1952). Steinbeck had also found love again during that time that would later become his wife. He married Elaine Anderson Scott, an American actress and stage manager, in 1950 and their marriage lasted until Steinbeck's death in 1968, his longest marriage.

Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962, but the decision was met with criticism. Accused of being a mediocre talent whose writing style was considered outdated, Steinbeck himself expressed doubt about deserving the award<sup>13</sup>. Deserved or not, the Swedish Academy explained the basis for the Nobel Prize accordingly:

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<sup>13</sup> Schultz, Jeffrey D., and Luchen Li. *Critical Companion to John Steinbeck: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*. Infobase Publishing 2005, pp. 4-15.

For his realistic as well as imaginative writings, distinguished by a sympathetic humour and a keen social perception.<sup>14</sup>

Despite delivering a graceful speech at the awards ceremony in Stockholm, Steinbeck never wrote another book of fiction. A year before receiving the Nobel Prize, he published what would become his last novel *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961). This major novel set in Sag Harbour, Long Island, was, as many of his works, made into T.V. film in 1983, and did not concern itself with lower-class Americans. Steinbeck also wrote a best seller, *Travels with Charley* (1962), a travelogue through America with his dog in a truck for a number of months.

In May 1963, Steinbeck had surgery for detached retina which made him stop writing personal correspondence that he had always managed to do even during his writer's block. Later that year, to facilitate a brief welcoming of relatives in the Cold era, President Kennedy invited Steinbeck to go on a comprehensive tour behind the Iron Curtain, he agreed so together with his wife, Elaine. They embarked on a challenging journey through the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and West Berlin that lasted two months and was a part of the cultural exchange program in which Saul Bellow, John Updike and a few other authors also participated. Later with the encouragement of President Johnson, he travelled to Vietnam as a war correspondent during the Vietnam war. His son John also served as a military journalist there. After six weeks in Vietnam, they went to Japan where he, unfortunately, injured himself which led to surgery six months later.

Although the operation initially seemed successful, it strained his heart causing a notable decline in his health. A year of full of seizures and hospitalizations followed and on December 20, 1968, he passed away in a New York City hospital with Elaine by his side.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Award ceremony speech. *NobelPrize.org*. Nobel Prize Outreach AB, 2024. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/literature/1962/ceremony-speech>. Accessed 9 August 2023.

<sup>15</sup> Schultz, Jeffrey D., and Luchen Li. *Critical Companion to John Steinbeck: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work*. Infobase Publishing 2005, pp. 15-16.

## 4. The Red Pony

### 4.1 Summary of the book

*The Red Pony* by John Steinbeck is a collection of four interrelated stories originally published separately from 1933 – 1936, while the full book was published in 1937. The stories include *The Gift*, *The Great Mountains*, *The Promise* and *The Leader of the People*.

Each of the related chapters unfolds a different story, but all concerns the Tiflin family and primarily a young boy, Jody Tiflin who lives on a ranch near Salinas with his parents and Billy Buck, the ranch hand. Throughout the novella young Jody learns important lessons in resilience, responsibility, patience, and empathy.

The first chapter portrays Jody receiving a red pony from his father. This raw story depicts Jody caring for the pony, assisted by Billy Buck who understands horses deeply. The story takes a tragic turn when the pony, whom Jody names Gabilan, short for Gabilan Mountains, is left outside while it rains. Despite Billy Buck's certainty that a little rain cannot harm horses, the pony contracts the strangles. Despite Billy's efforts to cure the pony, the pony dies.

In the second chapter, Jody expresses his fascination with the mountains that are near their ranch and the family is visited by an old Mexican man. This man's name is Gitano, and he returns to the ranch, his birthplace, to die. After spending a night on the ranch, Gitano leaves with old Easter, the first horse of Jody's father. Together they embark on their journey to the mountains where Gitano is to die, marking a theme of death again. In the third chapter *The Promise*, Jody learns patience as he accepts his father's offer to raise a foal. After a long wait for the mare to show any signs of pregnancy, a dreadful labor ensues given the foal is born twisted. Subsequently, Billy Buck kills the mare in order to save Jody's foal since Billy is determined not to disappoint Jody again after the tragedy with the red pony. The book concludes with a chapter regarding the visit of Jody's grandfather.

### 4.2 Film Adaptation

The 1973 film *The Red Pony* is an adaptation of the John Steinbeck's novella. This film adaptation is divided into acts and the screenplay was written by Ron Bishop



in collaboration with the director of the film, Robert Totten. The main character, Jody Tiflin, is portrayed by Clint Howard, while Henry Fonda, who starred in the film *The Grapes of Wrath* about 30 years earlier, takes on the role of his father, Carl Tiflin, and Maureen O'Hara depicts Jody's mother, Ruth Tiflin. In this 101-minute film, Jess Taylor is portrayed by Ben Johnson, with Jack Elam playing Jody's grandfather and Julian Rivero appearing as Gitano. Additional characters not depicted in the book are portrayed by actors such as Roy Jenson, Lieux Dressler, and Richard Jeackel.<sup>16</sup>

## **5. Comparison of the novella *The Red Pony* and its film adaptation**

### **5.1 Jody and his father**

Steinbeck's *The Red Pony* (1937), along with its four stories, serve as the foundation for its film adaptation from 1973. However, there are noticeable differences between the film and the novella, beginning with the opening scene.

Chapter One entitled *The Gift* begins with Billy Buck, the ranch-hand, looking after the horses whom he understands deeply. Billy plays a key role in assisting Jody with his pony and later with the mare and her foal.

The film, however, does not start with a scene with Billy Buck. Instead, his character has been entirely omitted from the film<sup>17</sup>, despite his importance to the narrative and his presence in every chapter of the novella. This notable derivation leaves its mark on various aspects of the story, altering key elements and leading to different consequences, especially regarding the father – son relationship in the film.

After the description of Billy Buck in the novella, Billy goes to the barn where he brushes two horses while the triangle rings as a sign that breakfast was ready, so he heads to the dining room. Nevertheless, he does not enter as it would not be right for him, a cow-hand, to step in as the first person. The ringing of the triangle wakes up Jody Tiflin who is described accordingly.

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<sup>16</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*. Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (1:42:14).

<sup>17</sup> The film includes only references to Billy Buck, although he is never present in the film.

He was only a little boy, ten years old, with hair like dusty yellow grass and with shy polite gray eyes, and with a mouth that worked when he thought. The triangle picked him up out of sleep. It didn't occur to him to disobey the harsh note. He never had: no one he knew ever had. He brushed the tangled hair out of his eyes and skinned his nightgown off. In a moment he was dressed--blue chambray shirt and overalls. It was late in the summer, so of course there were no shoes to bother with.<sup>18</sup>

Jody's appearance in the film closely aligns with the description in the novella. Henry Fonda, who portrays Jody in the film, embodies a youthful boy with blond hair who is dressed in a blue shirt and overalls corresponding to the novella. Additionally, he is barefoot in the film just as in the book. Afterwards, Jody and Billy make their way into the dining room and have breakfast. Carl Tiflin, Jody's father, joins them and together they all sit down and eat while engaging in a conversation.

The film adaptation, on the other hand, begins differently than the novella given that Billy Buck is absent in the film. Instead, the film starts with a scene of a barn, transitioning inside where Mrs. Tiflin is shown milking a cow and Carl Tiflin can be seen upstairs working with timber. Upon finishing the milking, Mrs. Tiflin informs her husband that she will proceed to prepare breakfast and expresses her concern that another cow does not have enough milk. Therefore, Mr. Tiflin assures her that he will address the matter by selling two cows on his way to town. This segment regarding the selling of cows is adapted from the novella as it can be found in the following excerpt.

"Got the cows ready to go, Billy?" he asked.  
"In the lower corral." Billy said. "I could just as well take them in alone."  
"Sure you could. But a man needs company. Besides your throat gets pretty dry." Carl Tiflin was jovial this morning.<sup>19</sup>

Even though the novella includes the detail about cows being sent to the butcher, it is mentioned in different time and form compared to the film. In the novella, it occurs at the breakfast table when Mr. Tiflin asks Billy Buck whether the cows are ready, not before, as no conversation precedes breakfast in the novella. Their exchange is followed by Mrs. Tiflin's question regarding Carl and Billy's return. Carl suggests

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<sup>18</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 5.

that they might be gone until dark. After this, readers imagine Jody watching Carl and Billy driving towards Salinas with six cows, not just two as in the film.

Subsequently, the film continues with a scene unfolding in the barn with Jody and his father. Jody is helping his father with a beam. Struggling with the task, Jody eventually falls from the roof. His father looks concerned but then admonishes him, stating that with better attention, such accidents could be avoided. Jody gets furious and declares that he will quit just as Billy Buck did. The reference to Billy Buck suggests that Billy Buck used to work on their ranch, although he quit since Jody says that he will quit like Billy Buck did.

Jody is crying and hugging his mother who comforts him while his father's harsh words linger in the air. At the same time, Jody's grandfather rushes from the house to them to find out what is the commotion is all about. His presence in the beginning of the story represents an apparent difference since in the novella, Jody's grandfather appears only in the fourth and final chapter as he is the leader after whom the chapter is named. However, Jody's grandfather makes another appearance in the film later again, visiting his family for a second time which follows the corresponding visit in the novella to certain degree, whereas in the book he visits his family members just once.

In the film, they have breakfast too, although no tringle in rung. Seated at the table are Jody and his mother while Jody's grandfather in standing, looking in the mirror as he is preparing to leave. His father does not dine with them this time. Jody expresses his hatred towards his father and consequently his mother sends him as a reprimand to his room. Meanwhile, Jody's mother and his grandad engage in a conversation and eventually, her father departs. Leaving aside the mention of the cow and having breakfast, none of the action presented at the start of the film to this point can be found in the novella.

The film continues with act two in which Carl is riding on a horse to Salinas, while in the novella, there is just the remark that he and Billy Buck leave for Salinas. The narrative does not follow them there, but the film contains additional scenes of Carl in town. However, before the narrative shifts to Salinas, there is a scene of Jody and his mother in his room, in deep conversation dealing with Jody's hatred towards his father from which in the next excerpt comes:

I need to know about this hate you feel. You never hated before.  
What happened between you and your father? But answer me.  
I don't know.  
Did you say something to upset him?  
No, I didn't say nothing. It didn't work out.  
What's that supposed to mean?  
I tried but wasn't good enough. So bam, he pushed too hard,  
and I fell down and I quit.  
I see. You just up and quit, huh?  
No, ma'am. I got almost killed and he said I wasn't  
paying attention. I quit him. Not up and just flat out like  
all the hands. He's just mean, I guess.<sup>20</sup>

Explaining the incident that had happened in the barn, he attempts to justify saying to his father that he hates him. In this excerpt from the film, he expresses his feelings towards his father whom he calls mean. His mother disagrees, affirms her love for Carl, and states that it would be impossible for her to love him if he was mean as Jody sees him. Jody suggests that she feels this way because she is a woman, although she refutes that. Their conversation continues by Jody's mother explaining to Jody that respect is an essential part of love, especially in her marriage. Afterwards, she describes to Jody how she and Carl met.

Many years ago, before I met him, he was a young cowboy  
as rough and tough as they make him. That's the way they say it,  
I believe. The other men I mean.  
You bet that's the way they say it.  
Well, I met your father on his way out from Texas to California  
with, oh, I don't remember the name. It was some kind of new-  
blooded cattle.  
Yes, ma'am. That's it. Then you sweet talked, danced, put your  
little foot, corded, drank, wine, ate, supper, and got married.  
I know all about it, mother.  
How do you know? I heard father to tell Billy Buck about it.  
Oh, and what did he tell Billy Buck?  
He drags it out more than you do, mother.<sup>21</sup>

Jody's mother seems surprised that Jody knows the story. This marks the second reference to Billy Buck from Jody without any further context, but it shows that Carl and Billy were close enough for Carl to reveal some personal information to a mere farm-hand.

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<sup>20</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (12:07).

<sup>21</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (14:25).

Their conversation progresses by Jody's mother emphasising her respect for his father influenced partly by the fact that Carl did not leave her as other men would when they were struggling to have a child. Moreover, she expresses his love for her husband once more and this time for Jody too. This scene full of emotions leads Jody to the conclusion that he must become as tough as his father. Subsequently, Jody realizes that he must get to school, thereupon his mother informs him that he has his lunch box ready.

In the book, Jody's father is depicted as follows:

His father was a disciplinarian. Jody obeyed him in everything without questions of any kind.<sup>22</sup>

Mr. Tilflin is portrayed as disciplinarian whose rules such as not pointing a rifle onto the house Jody obediently follows without any questions. Howard Levant in his work *John Steinbeck's The Red Pony: A Study in Narrative Technique* describes Jody's father as well as his mother unable to express emotions.

Jody's mother speaks "irritably" and his father "crossly" to Jody on the morning he gets the pony, since they do not know how to express the love or joy that they do feel (pp. 209–11).<sup>23</sup>

The ability to express his affection and emotions which can be perfectly seen on the example of showing Jody his love and affection through the pony, and not directly himself.

After watching *The Red Pony* (1973), it seems like the film adaptation puts greater emphasis on how difficult and complicated Jody and his father's relationship is. This emphasis is placed to evoke a deeper emotional response from the viewers of the film. What is more, their relationship in the book remains constant throughout the whole book with only minimal changes, whereas in the film there is an evident development in their relationship and consequently in the characters.

Overall, by adding several scenes (absent in the book), to the film's narrative, the portrayal of Carl's temperament might seem harsher at first compared to the novella.

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<sup>22</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> Howard Levant. "John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony: A Study in Narrative Technique*", *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)*, edited by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Pub, 2008, p. 25.

However, although their relationship in the book seems to be the same throughout the whole book, without any progression, the film emphasises more on their relationship as well as its growth and Carl's emotion growth as well. This can be explained by a comparison of Carl's attitude during the harsh scene at the beginning of the film with the very last scene.

The opening scene where Carl and Jody have an argument might make Carl seem crueller in the eyes of some viewers, leading to a different interpretation from the book. However, in this particular scene, after Jody falls, Carl rushes to check on him, seemingly looking concerned at first, although he fails to express his emotions, for he reacts by reproaching Jody for not paying attention rather than asking whether he was alright. Thus, even though the passage is supplementary to the narrative, it does not fail to portray Carl's inability to express himself in the right way.

Comparing the harsh scene at the beginning, followed by Jody's expression of hatred towards his father, with the closing scene where Carl changes his mind to save both the foal and its mare simply because Jody wants him to, highlights a change in their relationship. This progress in their relationship as well as Carl putting faith in Jody's wish, cannot be found in Steinbeck's novella since the scene where Carl changes his mind and saves both horses is not how the corresponding chapter of the book ends.

The section regarding Jody and his mother's deep discussion cannot be found in the book since after having breakfast and Jody's father leaving with Billy Buck, Jody goes for a walk up the hill near their house. This part of the novella does not include any dialogue, containing only of narration of Jody's actions. Filmmakers cut it from the film in order to include supplementary and cinematically more interesting scenes featuring Carl in Salinas that are not present in the book, instead. Through these scenes, filmmakers included a few elements present in the novella, but in a more profound manner. In the novella, Carl's journey to Salinas is briefly outlined, as readers know that he and Billy go there to sell two cows to the butcher, and they end up buying a pony, and return late in the evening. Nevertheless, the film adaptation portrays the entire passage of Carl being in Salinas to which filmmakers incorporated a scene of Jody's father buying a foal on an auction led by the local sheriff. This scene enriches the film's narrative, as in the book, Billy informs Jody about purchasing the pony

at a sheriff auction but does not specify the prize (only as it was not much) or mention that originally, the pony was about to be sold along with its mare.

Another scene completely absent in the book, unfolds upon his arrival in Salinas where he meets Jess Taylor and few other men in a pub, where Carl sits with Jess Taylor who talks about his wagon while Carl appears distant, seemingly not listening to him. Jess notices Carl's dissociation and asks what is troubling him while Carl expresses his issues regarding raising his son Jody. Carl turns to Jess for help and Jess, who despite having nine kids, says that they basically raise themselves, suggesting that Carl must raise Jody by himself given he is the only child.

In summary, in the film, viewers are given longer screen time of Jess Taylor compared to the novella, where Jess Taylor appears just a few times. After Carl buys the horse, he comes back to the pub where Jess is still drinking. During this scene in the pub, Jess is joined by a lady with whom he gets quite comfortable as well as drunk while they engage in a conversation about the possibility of his wagon being painted pink. Eventually, they share a kiss. However, her husband comes in and initiates a fight with Jess, resulting in significant injuries to Jess, the husband and Carl who joins in the fight. This action scene cannot be found in the book. Eventually, the sheriff enters and stops the fight. Filmmakers likely integrated these scenes to make the film more stimulating especially by increasing suspense through the scene with the fight. Carl helps Jess out of the pub, drops off Jess at his home, where his wife awaits them as the sun is setting. She is holding a little baby, surrounded by their other sad and disappointed children. This scene was added to make viewers feel empathy for Jess' wife and their children.

In the novella by Steinbeck, Carl leaves with Billy off to Salinas in the novella, where their journey is not portrayed in real time rather the narrative focuses on Jody and his activities, none of which are portrayed on screen. Some of them include Jody going to school and walking back home, after which he does his chores and brings up his rifle. Although he does not shoot because he does not have cartridges yet, as he will not be allowed to use them until he reaches the age of twelve. He is not permitted to point at the house either since his father prohibits it.

In both mediums, Carl in the film and Carl and Billy in the novella, return home late.

The supper waited until dark for his father to return. When at last he came in with Billy Buck, Jody could smell the delicious brandy on their breaths. Inwardly he rejoiced, for his father sometimes talked to him when he smelled of brandy, sometimes even told things he had done in the wild days when he was a boy.<sup>24</sup>

In this excerpt from the novella Jody notices Carl and Billy's breaths smelling of brandy upon their arrival home, indicating that they could have been to a pub as directly portrayed in the film adaptation, despite there is no scene depicting their visit of a pub in the book.

After supper the narrative of the film differs from the novella as there are another mostly supplementary parts in the film. In the film adaptation, Jody notices that his father is coming back and quickly retreats to his room while Jody's mother rushes to prepare supper. Jody is called to return and set the table, which he eventually does. Meanwhile, his father walks in and heads to the sink to wash his face while Jody steps back to the staircase where he is still able to hear their conversation.

Ruth is horrified of his injures that might need stitches. Carl takes her to sit on his lab and they share a kiss. Ruth points out that Jody can see them and starts crying because she is glad that her husband had returned. Carl tells Jody that he met a friend of Jody's in Salinas, whom he describes as a red head since he did not ask his name. They reach the conclusion that it is Billy Buck. Overwhelmed with excitement, Judy rushes to the barn to meet Billy.

Jody's parents follow him and on the way to the barn, Jody's mother expresses her surprise by saying the following.

Is Billy Buck in some sort of trouble? Why on Earth would you bring him back here?<sup>25</sup>

By asking why Carl would take Billy Buck back to the ranch, Jody's mother confirms that Billy Buck spent an unknown amount of time on their ranch possibly working as Jody's expression to quit like Billy Buck from earlier in the film may suggest that Billy Buck had worked on the ranch and quit. Perhaps, the interpretation is for the viewers to come up with, giving them something to think about.

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<sup>24</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 8.

<sup>25</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (39:24).



Surprisingly Jody does not find Billy Buck in the barn. Instead, his eyes sparkle as he notices a young horse. In Steinbeck's novella, Jody is given a pony. Despite the animal Jody receives in the film resembling more of a horse than a pony due to its height and additionally the fact that his mare, a female horse, is shown in the film, there is an indication to Gabilan Mountains being a pony in the closing scene, as Carl refers to Gabilan Mountains as such.

Apart from its height, the foal's appearance partially corresponds to the description of the pony Jody receives in Steinbeck's novella.

A red pony colt was looking at him out of the stall. Its tense ears were forward and a light of disobedience was in its eyes. Its coat was rough and thick as an iredale's fur and its mane was long and tangled. Jody's throat collapsed in on itself and cut his breath short.<sup>26</sup>

In the novella, the colt is depicted as red pony with dense fur and a long mane. Even though in the film, the foal retains its red colour, its fur does not appear to be thick as described in the novella. Nevertheless, there is a sense of disobedience visible, akin to Steinbeck's description of its eyes since the foal is running around in the barn. In addition, the horse bites Jody just like the pony does in the book and he reacts by saying the exact line from the book:

Well, I guess he can bite all right.<sup>27</sup>

After Carl tells Jody that the horse is his in the film adaptation, Jody bursts into tears of joy.

“He needs a good currying,” his father said, “and if I ever hear of you not feeding him or leaving his stall dirty, I'll sell him off in a minute.”<sup>28</sup>

In the film, Jody's father delivers similar lines and seems pleased with his gesture of love conveyed through the gift and his mother appears very touched. Jody's parents leave together, while Jody stays in the barn admiring the horse. The narrative shifts to their bedroom where Ruth stitches Carl's injuries.

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<sup>26</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 10.

<sup>27</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 10.

Subsequently, they kiss and go to sleep. This bedroom scene cannot be found in the novella, as the narrative continues in the barn with Jody and Billy, and Carl then leaves because he feels embarrassed.

After Carl and Ruth go to sleep, the film's narrative shifts back to the barn when Jody starts to train his horse and decides on a name – Gabilan Mountains. However, in the novella Billy proposes to make Jody's suggestion of the name, which is the same as in the film, shorter.

I'll call him Gabilan Mountains," he said.  
Billy Buck knew how he felt. "It's a pretty long name. Why don't you just call him Gabilan? That means hawk. That would be a fine name for him." Billy felt glad.  
"If you will collect tail hair, I might be able to make a hair rope for you sometime. You could use it for a hackamore."<sup>29</sup>

Not only the presence of Billy Buck changes the horse's name, but Billy also provides an insight that the name Jody come up with means hawk. Another difference regards the pony's saddle. In the book, Billy informs Jody that they had bought a saddle at the auction, a cheap one. However, in the film, there is no mention whether a saddle was bought along with the horse.

Jody's father then leaves the barn, Jody seeks reassurance from Billy, and their exchange in the novella unfolds in this way:

It was easier to talk to Billy Buck. Jody asked again — "Mine?"  
Billy became professional in tone. "Sure! That is, if you look out for him and break him right. I'll show you how. He's just a colt. You can't ride him for some time."<sup>30</sup>

Billy reassures him that the pony belongs to Jody and tells him that he will help Jody with caring for the pony. This fact and Billy's presence itself represents one of the major differences regarding not only this passage but also the whole narrative. In addition, reference to the fact that it seems easier to communicate with Billy than his father makes Billy's absence in the film even a more crucial alteration. However, in the film he seeks reassurance from his father, for Billy Buck is absent. Other differences regarding this part

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<sup>29</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, pp. 11-12.

<sup>30</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 11.

include the fact that in the book, there is Jody, his father and Billy present although in the film adaptation viewers see Jody, Carl, and Jody's mother. The timing of the gift in the film comes when Carl gives the foal to Jody after returning from Salinas, whereas in the novella he says to Jody upon his arrival from the town that he will need Jody in the morning. After breakfast Jody is then gifted the pony. Giving him the pony this way makes him curious for a longer time in the novella and during their walk to the barn after breakfast, Jody ponders what the surprise could possibly be, with one of his guesses being a pig killing. Moreover, he dismisses this possibility as soon as they go by the cypress tree where pig slaughters usually take place.

## **5.2 Gitano's visit**

Following the barn scene and Jody naming his horse Gabilan Mountains, the film shifts to a new day. While Jody is feeding the chickens in the background, which portrays that he does his chores in the film as well, Jody notices a stranger and rushes to tell his mother who is shown with a gun in her hands. Jody rings the triangle and father joins them. The man speaks mostly Spanish, so Jody's mother translates, revealing that the man's name is Gitano and that he has return to his birthplace to die where he was born over near the Gabilan Mountains. In the novella, Gitano appears in the second story and there are several evident differences compared to the film.

From the beginning of the second chapter *Gabilan Mountains* in the novella, Jody is fascinated by the mountains and curious what they might reveal, contrasting the happy Gabilans with the dark Great Ones, mountain ranges that evoke a sense of mortality for him. Jody's fascination with the mountains was not adapted into the film as faithfully, although the mountains are mentioned. However, Jody killing a bird before having conversation about the mountains with his parents. One of the references to mountains can be noticed later in the film while Jody is having a lesson after Gabilan's passing. Jody's teacher asks him about his plans for Thanksgiving holidays. Jody replies that he will ride with Gabilan to the mountains even though his colt is already dead at this time. Moreover, he expresses an interest in extending their journey to the ocean as he has never been there, which is followed by a scene with Jody actually riding on a beach. This additional segment maintains Jody and his father's conversation regarding the mountains in the book, where his father told Jody that beyond all the mountains lies the ocean.

After talking to his parents and Billy about the mountains in the novella, Jody notices an old man walking towards their home and rushes to him. The man is Gitano and reveals to them that he has come back to the ranch to die. Their initial interaction with Gitano in the novella serves as the base for the film, as aside from Gitano speaking mostly Spanish and Ruth translating during their first meet, their first encounter in the film follows the correspondent part in the novella with some slight variations. For instance, in the film, Jody notices Gitano while tending to the chickens, whereas in the novella, he spots him from a distance and hastens to him. Additionally, Carl offers Gitano a place to sleep which he also does in the book. However, in the film, Carl calls the room Billy Buck's bunk, hence Billy used to live there, whereas in Steinbeck's book Billy is still living there and present during Gitano's visit.

After the novella's initial interaction with Gitano, Jody shows Gitano to his room, and asks several questions regarding the mountains. Gitano recalls being there once with his father, although to Jody's eager question about what it was there like, Gitano responds by only remembering that it was nice and quiet. In the film adaptation, Gitano goes by himself to the bunk house, so they do not engage in a conversation regarding the mountains. After this exchange in the novella, Jody takes Gitano to the barn where he shows him Easter, his father's first horse, now thirty years old. While the part concerning Jody showing Gitano Easter is present in the film adaptation as well, it occurs later in the storyline compared to the novella and it is portrayed more briefly.

After Jody's father offers Gitano a place to sleep and Gitano goes there, the film's narrative moves to the bunk house where the Mexican man is praying, and Jody brings him biscuits and soup. Gitano tells him something in Spanish, prompting Jody to express his confusion by stating that he does not understand him.

What sir? I don't understand. Can you talk English?  
Buenas noches.  
Me – old man, no good.  
I think you're good, eat this.<sup>31</sup>

Gitano seems pleased, tells him to stay and they share the food together and engage in a short conversation. Jody reveals his age as twelve, differing from his age in the book

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<sup>31</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (42:00).

where he is depicted to be ten years old as cited on p. 16 of this thesis. Jody also mentions that he is glad that Gitano stayed and states that his father had to let all the hands go when the difficult times arose, probably including Billy Buck was one of them. Additionally, Jody plans to show Gitano the horse his father gave him. Their interaction is cut short by Jody's father who sends Jody to bed, blows out the lamp and leaves. None of this conversation can be found in the book.

The fact that Jody pays a visit to Gitano is adapted from the second story of the novella although the way it is adapted differs. In the novella, Jody visits Gitano and finds him looking at a beautiful blade with a golden hilt. Jody inquires about what it is, prompting Gitano to conceal it with a piece of deerskin. Jody curiously asks about the rapier.

“What is it?” Jody demanded.  
Gitano only looked at him with resentful eyes, and he picked up the fallen deerskin and firmly wrapped the beautiful blade in it.  
Jody put out his hand. “Can't I see it?”  
Gitano's eyes smoldered angrily and he shook his head.  
“Where'd you get it? Where'd it come from?”  
Now Gitano regarded him profoundly, as though he pondered.  
“I got it from my father.”  
“Well, where'd he get it?”  
Gitano looked down at the long deerskin parcel in his hand.  
“I don't know.”  
“Didn't he ever tell you?”  
“No.”  
“What do you do with it?”  
Gitano looked slightly surprised. “Nothing. I just keep it.”<sup>32</sup>

Jody's questions reminded him not only of the origin of the blade but also of Gitano's own origin. Gitano eventually shows Jody the blade again before telling him to leave so he may rest. After Jody leaves, Jody knows that he cannot tell anyone about the blade. The reason of Jody's certainty about not revealing the rapier to anyone, Levart explains in the following manner.

The truth seems to be that death is only a natural fact, and it is natural because it is really a search for origins, for one's father. It is quite to the point that Jody's earlier eager questioning about treasure cities in the mountains forces Gitano to understand that

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<sup>32</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 51.

his own search is really for a place to die that is his father's; for, as Jody questions, Gitano remembers that his father had taken him into the mountains once when he was a boy, and he comes to feel that only the mountains belong now to his father.<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, the next morning, Easter as well as Gitano are gone because Gitano left for the mountains, indicating a place he plans on dying in, as he has the mountains associated with his father and probably other ancestors. Jess Taylor informs the Tiflin family that he had seen an old man riding Easter towards the mountains, and they immediately know that Jess is talking about Gitano.

The film, however, differs since it does not contain the novella's segment regarding Jody and Gitano's conversation about the blade. Hence, the film lacks Gitano's remembering of the origin of the blade and its association with his father. One of the possibilities why the filmmakers did not include this part in the film adaptation may be associated with the fact that in the film, Jody's horse is still alive during this segment, whereas in the novella, Gabilan is already dead. According to Levart, Jody's excitement upon Gitano's arrival is attributed to the following reasons.

Jody can sense the painful reality of Gitano's wish to die, having learned about death in his own right, and he feels a kinship because he senses that Gitano's thoughts are like his own.<sup>34</sup>

Thus, in the novella, Jody's perception of Gitano might differ from how he views as well as relates to Gitano in the film adaptation. In the film, Jody has not yet experienced the death of his colt, so it might suggest that Jody would not relate to Gitano as much as in the novella. However, the clips showing the two of them together in the film show viewers that they manage to bond either way.

Another aspect in the film adaptation differing from the novella concerns the length of Gitano's stay on the ranch. In the film, Gitano does not leave the next morning as in the novella, but stays for another day. After Jody visiting Gitano in the film, a new day arises and there are several clips of Gitano seemingly having a good time

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<sup>33</sup> Howard, Levart. "John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*: A Study in Narrative Technique", *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)*, edited by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Pub, 2008, p. 28.

<sup>34</sup> Howard, Levart. "John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*: A Study in Narrative Technique", *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)*, edited by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Pub, 2008, p. 27.

and appearing to be close with Jody while making roof tiles. These clips are interspersed by scenes with Jody's father on a horse working with cows and Jody showing Gabilan to Gitano. These scenes are supplementary since Gitano does not stay at their ranch for another day in the novella. In addition, since Gitano visits the family after Jody's pony dies in the novella, it is accordingly impossible for Gitano and Gabilan to meet in the book. In the film, Jody eventually displays Easter to Gitano, which is based on the book. However, it is very brief compared to the novella as it lasts just a few seconds. Jody introduces Easter to Gitano similarly as in the book and Gitano expresses his opinion that the horse is old, can only eat and soon will die which corresponds to the novella. Nevertheless, the novella includes additional segments such as Jody's father stating the following.

“It's a shame not to shoot Easter,” he said. “It'd save him a lot of pains and rheumatism.” He looked secretly at Gitano, to see whether he noticed the parallel, but the big bony hands did not move, nor did the dark eyes turn from the horse. “Old things ought to be put out of their misery,” Jody's father went on. “One shot, a big noise, one big pain in the head maybe, and that's all. That's better than stiffness and sore teeth.”<sup>35</sup>

This excerpt indicates how mean Jody's father, who is not present during this part in the film, can be. Likewise, Billy Buck appears in this part of the novella, but like the rest of the film, he is absent from this scene as well.

After the scene with Jody telling Gitano about Easter, a sunset is shown and subsequently the film's narrative shifts into a new day. Jess Taylor rides to their house and informs the family that he had seen an old man on their horse Easter. Jody immediately hurries to the bunk house where he found a roof file bearing the following carved inscription.

Jody  
Nosotros vamos  
Con dios  
Muchas gracias  
Gitano<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 47.

<sup>36</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (48:08).

In the film Gitano leaves no such roof file as there is no mention of the two of them working on the roof. When Jody runs to the bunk house after finding out that Gitano is gone in the novella, he finds only Gitano's sack with extra pairs of clothes in it and nothing else. The scene of Jody reading Gitano's carving in the film implies that even though they might not have been connected by death, they managed to build a great bond. Additionally, the segment involving Gitano is concluded by a scene depicting Gitano riding Easter up the hill into the mountains to die.

### **5.3 Billy's Buck absence**

Subsequently, the film continues by Act 5 which focuses on Gabilan. The correspondent part of the book can be found in the first chapter *The Gift*, therefore the order of the events in the novella differs from the order of the film quite significantly. Moreover, the part itself varies from the book mostly due to Billy Buck's absence.

In the novella, starting from the moment when Jody is given the Pony, Billy Buck helps Jody care for the pony. According to Levart, Billy also imparts valuable lessons on manhood to Jody through the pony's training.

The pony's training can be read in abstract terms as the bending of nature to man's will, or paralleled with Jody's growing up, but the specific details of the training carry their own conviction. The fact is that Billy Buck, the kindly stable hand, teaches the pony with Jody's help; implicitly, Billy teaches Jody how to be a man by way of using a horse without showing fear.<sup>37</sup>

It is evident that Billy plays a key role in Jody's life and in the plot as a whole, though in the film Jody lacks Billy's help with training the pony. Additionally, the training itself is not extensively portrayed in the film. Only a few short clips of Jody training his colt with Gitano among the scenes of Jody and Gitano working on the roof tiles.

In the book, one day after receiving the pony, Jody leaves his pony outside and goes to school. Billy assures him that it will be beneficial for Gabilan and promises Jody to shelter Gabilan inside the barn if it starts raining, though Billy believes rain is unlikely. Their conversation unfolds in the following manner:

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<sup>37</sup> Howard, Levart. "John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*: A Study in Narrative Technique", *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)*, edited by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Pub, 2008, p. 25



Be good for him to be out in the sun,” Billy assured him. “No animal likes to be cooped up too long. Your father and me are going back on the hill to clean the leaves out of the spring.” Billy nodded and picked his teeth with one of his little straws. “If the rain comes, though—” Jody suggested. “Not likely to rain today. She’s rained herself out.” Billy pulled up his sleeves and snapped his arm bands. “If it comes on to rain—why a little rain don’t hurt a horse.” “Well, if it does come to rain, you put him in, will you, Billy? I’m scared he might get cold so I couldn’t ride him when the time comes.” “Oh sure! I’ll watch out for him if we get back in time. But it won’t rain today.” And so Jody, when he went to school, left Gabilan standing out in the corral.<sup>38</sup>

However, Billy is mistaken, and it starts to pour. Jody notices the rain while he is at school but hesitates to return home, fearing punishment. He finds comfort in Billy’s reassurance that a little rain cannot harm Gabilan. Yet, when Jody comes home, he finds his pony standing in the pouring rain soaking wet. He immediately takes Gabilan to the barn and rubs its trembling body with a gunny sack. Billy and Carl return home in the evening and even though Billy feels guilty, he is sure that the pony will be alright. However, the following morning, Gabilan’s condition worsens, although Billy insists that it is just a minor cold.

Jody looked back at Billy Buck. “He’s awful sick, Billy.” “Just a little cold, like I said,” Billy insisted. “You go get some breakfast and then go back to school. I’ll take care of him.” “But you might have to do something else. You might leave him.” “No, I won’t. I won’t leave him at all. Tomorrow’s Saturday. Then you can stay with him all day.” Billy had failed again, and he felt badly about it. He had to cure the pony now.<sup>39</sup>

Clearly burdened by guilt over Gabilan’s condition, Billy now feels even more obligated to rectify the situation and cure the pony, determined not to fail Jody again. Billy puts a strong effort in trying to nurse it back to health. One night Jody decides to sleep in the barn with Gabilan. During this night, while Jody is asleep, the door of the barn is thrown open, and when Jody wakes up, his pony is gone. However, Jody is able to catch

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<sup>38</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 22.

<sup>39</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 30.

Gabilan and take him back to the barn. In the morning, Billy comes to them and informs Jody that he will do a procedure with a knife in order to help the pony.

“Jody,” he said, “I’ve got to do something you won’t want to see. You run up to the house for a while.”

Jody grabbed him fiercely by the forearm. “You’re not going to shoot him?”

Billy patted his hand. “No, I’m going to open a little hole in his windpipe so he can breathe. His nose is filled up. When he gets well, we’ll put a little brass button in the hole for him to breathe through.”

Jody couldn’t have gone away if he had wanted to. It was awful to see the red hide cut, but infinitely more terrible to know it was being cut and not to see it. “I’ll stay right here,” he said bitterly.

“You sure you got to?”

“Yes, I’m sure. If you stay, you can hold his head. If it doesn’t make you sick, that is.”<sup>40</sup>

Billy tries to shield Jody from witnessing his actions, but Jody stays anyway and sobs as Billy cuts into Gabilan’s throat, for it is a distressing and traumatic experience.

To maintain Gabilan’s wound open, Jody spends another night in the barn with the pony. By then, Billy realizes that there is no hope for Gabilan. When Jody wakes up, the door is opened, and the pony is gone once again. Jody hurries to look for him and when he finds Gabilan, buzzards already are devouring him. Jody catches one of them and beats it to death. Jody’s father and Billy come to him, and the novella continues subsequently.

Carl Tiflin wiped the blood from the boy’s face with a red bandana. Jody was limp and quiet now. His father moved the buzzard with his toe. “Jody,” he explained, “the buzzard didn’t kill the pony. Don’t you know that?”

“I know it,” Jody said wearily.

It was Billy Buck who was angry. He had lifted Jody in his arms, and had turned to carry him home. But he turned back on Carl Tiflin. “ ’Course he knows it,” Billy said furiously. “Jesus Christ! man, can’t you see how he’d feel about it?”<sup>41</sup>

This part, which closes the first chapter of the book, reveals Billy as a fatherlier figure to Jody than his very own father. This can be suggested because Carl questions Jody about whether he realizes that the pony was not killed by the buzzard, implying that he sees

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<sup>40</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, pp. 31-32.

<sup>41</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 36.

Jody's emotional maturity as limited to Jody's physical age. Moreover, Billy seems to understand Jody better as he points out whether Carl cannot see how Jody feels.<sup>42</sup>

The segment of Jody finding Gabilan with birds appears in the film. However, given Billy's absence, the preceding part in the film significantly differs from the novella. In the film Jody's pony falls ill as well, although several other circumstances surrounding the pony's illness and death varies from the novella. The film's corresponding part that regards the pony getting ill, begins with Act 5 in the film. It starts with a scene showing a struck of lightning, portraying the unfortunate weather in the novella that leads to the pony getting ill. The film continues by a scene in school. As there is no Billy Buck in the film, who previously tells Jody that little a rain cannot harm Gabilan as in the book. Therefore, as soon as Jody notices the rainy weather, he runs out of the classroom and hurries home where he finds Gabilan outside asking him why he is in the rain. This marks the first difference as in the book he does not leave school early given his preceding conversation with Billy Buck. Jody takes Gabilan inside and dries him off just like in the book. However, there is no Billy, instead his father replaces this role and comes to the barn. Jody suggests to him that Gabilan caught a cold as he is shaking, explains why he left school and inquires father in the following way.

Why does the rain have to hurt Gabilan and make him sick?  
Rain helps everything. Why not Gabilan, father? What's wrong,  
father?  
It wasn't the rain son. He got the strangles.<sup>43</sup>

Jody's father explains to Jody that Gabilan has strangles, a condition he also suffers from in the novella, although it is Billy who tells Jody about it in the novella. Afterwards, there is a scene in the kitchen with Jody's mother and father, where Ruth expresses her hope for the colt to recover. Filled with sadness Jody sits in the barn and recalls the great memories with Gabilan. The film's narrative focuses closely on Jody's eyes, which is followed by flashbacks of the time Jody met Gabilan mixed with clips of Gitano, Jody grooming Gabilan, playing with him as well as Gitano praying. This sequence ends as it began, with a close-up of Jody's eyes and this additional part is followed by Jody

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<sup>42</sup> Howard Levant. "John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*: A Study in Narrative Technique", *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)*, edited by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Pub, 2008, p. 26.

<sup>43</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (51:06).

and his father arguing. Jody accuses his father of not caring nor liking the horse as he did not care about Gitano leaving them and expresses his desire to help Gabilan. This argument, is absent in the book, as the pony's illness in the book concerns mostly Jody and Billy. What is more, during this confrontation in the film, Jody mentions a key difference. Jody tells his father that Gitano had predicted rain for that day. Despite this notion not being directly shown in the film but only by Jody's reference, there is no such mention in the book. In addition, Jody asks his father in the film why he did not take Gabilan inside. Carl responds by saying that rain does not harm horses, a line similar to Billy's in the novella. Another addition represents Jody mentioning that Gitano stated that Gabilan is a unique horse that needs special care, leading to Jody expressing that Gitano knows more than Jody's father.

Jody's father insists that rain does not harm horses and that Gabilan had spangles even before the rain. Overall, this interaction is insensitive since Carl states that Gabilan looks like he is going to die, asserting that Jody's reminiscing about Gitano's words will not improve Gabilan's condition as he will live or die no matter what Jody or Gitano have to say about it, indicating that Carl feels jealous of Gitano. Jody is sent home. However, Carl goes upstairs, while Jody goes to his colt instead. There is no portrayal of attempts to cure Jody's colt as in the book. Instead, Jody takes Gabilan out of the barn, telling him to find Gitano, believing he will help because, unlike his father, he really cares. None of this is depicted in the book since Gitano does not even meet Gabilan in the book.

Carl notices the empty barn and searches for Jody at home. Jody's mother rushes to go look for Jody, while Carl sits down, expressing his reluctance to participate. Eventually, he heads to Taylors', commenting on Ruth's perceived softness. This scene cannot be found in the book either. Subsequently, the film continues with a scene depicting Jody lying on the ground noticing birds perched on a tree. This dramatic part accompanied by intense music is followed by Jody rushing down the hill where his colt lays dead surrounded by buzzards. This does not represent an addition since, as previously noted, the novella also has a corresponding part to this scene. Jody rushes to scare off the birds, while Gabilan is still alive, stands up and runs away. Mirroring the events in the book, Jody kills one of them by repeatedly

striking it against a stone. This scene regarding the death of the horse and Jody killing the buzzard follows its counterpart in the novella faithfully.

While dramatic music is playing, Jody's father goes to him, stops him and tells him the following line.

The birds didn't kill your horse. Do you know that?<sup>44</sup>

Mirroring the lines in the book with slight derivations, it conveys the same message. A key difference is made again due to Billy's Buck absence, as the film cannot include Billy's sensitive response to Carl's question. Even though Gitano fills the void left by Billy's absence even if it is only for a brief period of time, after the death of Gabilan in the film, Jody does not have either Billy or Gitano.

However, for the time Gitano is present in the film, it seems as the two of them had bonded effortlessly, and that Jody placed a significant trust in Gitano. In addition, Gitano partially adopts the Billy's role of being a better father figure than his actual father since Jody reveals that Gitano showed interest in Gabilan and warned them about the rain on the day Gabilan was outside, emphasising Gabilan's need for special care due to his uniqueness. Nevertheless, after Gitano leaves, Jody lacks the presence of Gitano as well as Billy in the film which might lead to an interpretation that Jody is lonelier in the film compared to the book, making it even more difficult for him to cope with Gabilan's death.

Another variation can be noticed during this bird-killing scene. In the novella, Jody realises that there is no one to blame for Gabilan's death, whereas in the film, Jody responds to Carl's question by blaming this death on him. Subsequently, the film includes another addition in the form of Jess Taylor coming to them and Carl expressing that Gabilan was the only present that Carl had ever given Jody, while they observe the dead horse being eaten by the birds. Additionally, the scenes portraying Gabilan's death are the only harsh scenes from the novella that filmmakers included in the adaptation.

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<sup>44</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (1:00:29).

#### **5.4 Different ending**

After the scene regarding the horse's death, the film precedes with a previously noted scene with Jody at school, followed by a portrayal of Jody riding Gabilan near the ocean. Subsequently, the film's narrative unfolds to the part with Jody collecting mail with Jess Taylor. While Jess does not receive any mail, the Tiffins are mailed a catalogue and a letter from Jody's grandfather. They also receive these two items in the book, although separately, over two separate occasions. In the adaptation, Jody opens the letter immediately while conversating with Jess Taylor, whereas in the novella Jess is not present and Jody brings the letter home where it is opened. In the film, Jody opens the catalogue, and when Jess proposes that Jody can ride his horse, Jody replies that he does not ride horses. Instead, he shows Jess a picture of an automobile in the catalogue, expressing his preference for it because, unlike a horse, it cannot die. Jody adds that Jess' horse will die on him, to which Jess responds by acknowledging that death is a part of the circle of life. Even though by saying that Jess highlights one of the novella's themes, this conversation was added to the film and cannot be found in Steinbek's novella.

In both mediums, the letter was sent by Jody's grandfather who lets them know that he is coming over. However, the letter is delayed, and Jody's grandfather is coming the same day as the letter. A correspondent part can be found in the final chapter of the book where Jody's grandfather visits them. Even though this part is adapted from the novella, its form differs. The main difference regarding this part is in length. In the book, there is a whole chapter dedicated to Grandfather's presence, whereas in the film, his visit is not portrayed as thoroughly. Several parts from the book are cut from the film, while, on the other hand, supplementary parts are added.

In the film, immediately after Jody collects the post and Jess Taylor leaves, Jody's grandfather appears, whereas in the book, Jody brings the letter home and then goes up the road to meet him. The film's narrative shifts to a scene with Jody's parents talking about grandfather's arrival even without receiving the letter as he always comes for Thanksgiving. During this scene's conversation, Carl expresses his reluctance to meet with Ruth's father, knowing he will repeatedly tell his stories about his leadership experience, as he does every time when he visits them. Therefore, Ruth explains that his stories are about the most important event in his life. Carl's feelings are consistent

in both the film and the novella. The corresponding dialogue can be found in the novella as well, with only slight derivations being mostly cuts.

The film adaptation continues with a scene including Carl, Ruth, Jody, and his grandfather dining. During this scene grandfather tells his tales as expected. After a while, Carl forcefully hits the table, stands up and interrupts grandfather a few times. This leads to Carl expressing his frustration at having to hear grandfather's same old stories repeatedly. When Jody suggests his grandfather to skip straight to the story about Indians, Carl interrupts him and says that Nellie is due so he should go check up on her. Carl also expresses his irritation towards grandfather's repetition of his stories in the novella, albeit in a different manner. In the novella, Carl complains about his father-in-law.

“Well, how many times do I have to listen to the story of the iron plates, and the thirty-five horses? That time's done. Why can't he forget it, now it's done?” He grew angrier while he talked, and his voice rose. “Why does he have to tell them over and over? He came across the plains. All right! Now it's finished. Nobody wants to hear about it over and over.”<sup>45</sup>

After venting his annoyance, grandfather, who heard Carl's harsh words, enters the room. Carl immediately retracts his statement and apologizes. Jody's grandfather accepts Carl's apology, stating that he will from now on tell stories only if he is sure that people really want to hear them. Eventually, in the novella, grandfather shares the following with Jody.

“It wasn't Indians that were important, nor adventures, nor even getting out here. It was a whole bunch of people made into one big crawling beast. And I was the head. It was westering and westering. Every man wanted something for himself, but the big beast that was all of them wanted only westering. I was the leader, but if I hadn't been there, someone else would have been the head. The thing had to have a head.”<sup>46</sup>

This statement is adapted into the film extremely faithfully. In the film, during a scene in the barn, Jody promptly responds that he could lead people someday, to which his grandfather replies that there is nowhere further to go as the ocean would stop him. This segment is adapted from the novella which includes other additional elements,

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<sup>45</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 93.

<sup>46</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 95.

such as Jody's grandfather describing the westering or Jody noticing his grandfather's sadness and offering him a glass of lemonade.

Subsequently, the film's narrative's focus shifts on Nellie. While the family is having dinner in the film, viewers are informed that there is a pregnant mare named Nellie, without any further context. However, in the novella, similar to grandfather's story, an entire chapter is dedicated to the story of Nellie and her foal. It is depicted in the third chapter called *The Promise*, in which Jody's father gives Jody a chance to have a new foal whom he could raise from birth. Jody accepts this opportunity, and the next day, Nellie is bred by Jess Taylor's stallion while the breeding process is portrayed in the book quite thoroughly. A long period of time passes until Nellie teaches Jody patience while he waits a long time for the foal to be born. After a year elapses, Nellie begins to show signs and Billy, who plays an important role in helping Jody with her care, tells Jody that the foal will be ready to be born after approximately three months. Additionally, Billy feels guilty about the red pony that had died so he tells Jody that he will do everything in order to save the foal, as Billy realizes that Jody does not see him as infallible anymore. Finally, when Nellie is set to deliver her foal, dreadful complications arise as the foal is positioned incorrectly, which leads to a horrible and challenging labor.

“Go outside, Jody,” he said.  
The boy stood still and stared dully at him.  
“Go outside, I tell you. It'll be too late.”  
Jody didn't move.  
Then Billy walked quickly to Nellie's head. He cried, “Turn your  
face away, damn you, turn your face.”<sup>47</sup>

This time Jody obeyed and turned his head sideways. He heard Billy whispering hoarsely in the stall and then he heard a hollow crunch of bone. Jody looked back just in time to see the hammer rise and fall again on the flat forehead. Subsequently, Nellie fell heavily on her side and quivered for a moment.

This excerpt from the novella portrays Billy instructing Jody to go outside because he is about to kill Nellie in order to deliver for Jody his colt alive. However, Jody stays and after Billy kills Nellie with a hammer, he cuts into her belly from which he retrieves the colt and tells Jody the following.

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<sup>47</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 74-75.



“There’s your colt. I promised. And there it is. I had to do it—had to.”<sup>48</sup>

Afterwards, Billy sends Jody to go for hot water and a sponge and the third chapter of the book ends.

In the film, with Billy Buck completely cut out, the film’s narrative producers a very different ending. After the conversation between Jody and his grandfather regarding grandfather’s past, the focus of the film shifts on Nellie in the barn as she starts to deliver her foal. During this scene, viewers see Jody, his parents, and his grandfather, unlike the novella where it is just Jody and Billy. After grandfather mentions that Nellie is in pain, Jody expresses his fear that she might die like Gabilan Mountains. Carls takes his son away from the mare and they engage in a heated but raw conversation. Jody begs his father not to let Nellie die, and Jody’s father reacts in the following manner.

She ain’t gonna die. You’ve been blaming me for your pony’s death ever since it happened. Now it’s time for you to grow up. Your colt died out of the strangles and that’s a fact. Nobody’s fault, that’s a fact. She ain’t dead, she ain’t close and that’s a fact. But if she does die, God forbid, it won’t be ‘cause I didn’t try and help her with everything I know and that, son, is a fact.<sup>49</sup>

Jody’s father expresses his determination to do everything possible to not let Nellie die, in contrast to the novella where Jody urges Billy not to let anything happened to the colt. During the aforementioned excerpt, Jody’s father states that Jody has been putting blame on him for the colt’s death, whereas in the book, he does not blame his father. Moreover, in the novella, Jody is initially scared to put Nellie in Billy’s hand, fearing that Billy may fail once again. However, Carl reassures Jody about Billy’s expertise regarding horses.

The film continues by Carl returning to Nellie’s side. Following this, Jody joins them, saying that he wants to help. As hopeful music starts playing, Jody’s father tells Jody that the foal will be his. Even though this segment mirrors Carl’s offer in the novella, there can be noticed a difference concerning the timing of Carl’s decision to give Jody the foal. In the film, Carl gives his son the foal minutes before it is born.

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<sup>48</sup> Steinbeck, John. *The Red Pony*, Penguin Books, 2017, p. 75.

<sup>49</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973 (1:26:53).

In the book, Carl offers Jody a foal before Nellie is even pregnant. This variance means that book explores the entire process, from Nellie's breeding to Jody's long anticipation, which is not portrayed in the film.

Eventually, Carl finds out that the foal is twisted, foreshadowing the plot in the novella, and Carl decides to save the foal, reminiscent of s Billy's action in the book. Despite Jody arguing against it, Carl instructs Jody to bring him a hammer. Jody retreats to the next room and remains there. Jody's grandfather seeks reassurance from Carl by asking whether sacrificing Nellie to save the colt is truly the only option. After receiving confirmation from Carl, Jody's grandfather goes to the room where Jody is. Jody expresses his refusal to accept a foal if it means killing Nellie, therefore he cannot bring his father the hammer. Jody's grandfather states that Carl is right, affirming that Carl's way is the only option to save the foal. Jody reacts by insisting that his grandfather should bring Carl the hammer himself, after which Jody's grandfather says that Carl does not want to do it, however it is a necessity. Subsequently, Jody goes back to Nellie and his grandfather gives Carl the hammer. However, Jody says "please"<sup>50</sup> to his father and after long and deep eye contact, Carl changes his mind, starting to believe that there may still be a chance for both. Hence, they try to save both Nellie and her foal, a task they ultimately achieve. Consequently, in the end, both Nellie and her foal, unlike in Steinbeck's novella, survive.

The film concludes with a heart-warming scene, accompanied by joyful music, as both Nellie and the foal stand up, indicating their healthy condition, while the whole delighted family is watching them with pure joy and relief.

As previously noted, the story concerning Nellie in the film comes to a happy end as both Nellie and her foal survive. The novella's ending of the correspondent story, on the other hand, concludes with a death of Nellie, with only the foal surviving, as Billy chooses to save it because he feels obligated to Jody for failing with Gabilan. Therefore, one of the possible reasons for the filmmakers to alter the ending might simply lies in the fact that Billy's character is not adapted to the film. Additionally, the decision to change the film's ending to a positive one might have been motivated by a desire

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<sup>50</sup> Totten, Robert. *The Red Pony*, Omnibus Productions Universal Television, 1973, (1:35:20).

to evoke positive emotions such as happiness and relief among the viewers, particularly after the tragic death of Gabilan, and happy endings make better box-office success for the film company.

In addition to this alternation, filmmakers may have excluded the tragic death of Nellie from the film to soften its harshness, especially since the film already contains the passing of Gabilan, making the film more suitable and appealing for younger audiences. By omitting the death of Nellie, the film adaptation clearly loses a significant representation of death. However, even without this event, Jody can learn important lessons in resilience from the film's conclusion.

Lastly, in terms of acting quality, it can be stated that the cast delivered an outstanding performance. Particularly noteworthy is young Clint Howard's outstanding portrayal of Jody, alongside Henry Fonda's depiction of his father. All characters as well as the setting of the film closely resemble Steinbeck's descriptions. However, throughout several segments of the film adaptation, Billy Buck's absence is evident mostly because, among all the characters in the novella, Billy embodies Steinbeck's most typical features of a character, being a fallible ranch-hand.

## ***6. Of Mice and Men***

### **6.1 Summary of the book**

*Of Mice and Men*, the tragic novella set in the 1930s in California during the Great Depression, was published in 1937. The story concerns two labourers, the physically strong but mentally childlike Lennie Small and the shorter yet intelligent George Milton, who looks after him, on a journey to find employment on ranches. Their dream is to buy a house of their own one day where they can live independently. They find work on a ranch where they meet a diverse group of people including Candy, a disabled man who expresses the desire to join forces in purchasing their own place to live. They also encounter with Curley, the boss's aggressive son, whose loose flirtatious wife becomes a major source of tension and trouble. Beside the migrant workers' contrasting personalities and Lennie's intellectual limitations, Lennie possesses remarkable strength, which becomes problematic as he likes to pet anything he finds pleasant to touch, especially animals such as mice, bunnies, and puppies. Fascination with soft things

and an inability to control his strength leads to tragedy as Lennie accidentally kills Curley's wife. At the end, as a mercy killing, George shoots Lennie in the back of the head to save him from a crueller fate of a mob lynching.

## **6.2 Film adaptation**

The 1992 film *Of Mice and Men* is an adaptation of John Steinbeck's novella. This western drama set in California was both directed and produced by Gary Sinise who also stars as one of the main characters, George Milton. The character of Lennie Small in this 111-minute-long film is portrayed by John Malkovich. The American adaptation also features Ray Walston as Candy, alongside John Terry as Slim, the character of Curley is played by Casey Siemaszko, Crooks by Joe Morton and Curley's wife is portrayed by Sherilyn Fenn.<sup>51</sup>

# **7. Comparison of the novella *Of Mice and Men* and its film adaptation**

## **7.1 Different perspectives leading to different beginnings**

Although the novella *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and its film adaptation made in 1992 share mostly similarities, there can also be found several changes, cuts as well as additions. The first change can be noticed at the beginning since the film adaptation starts differently than Steinbeck's novella. The novella actually begins with a description of the place and the two main characters George and Lennie appear for the first time.

“A few miles south of Soledad, the Salinas River drops in close to the hillside bank and runs deep and green. The water is warm too, for it has slipped twinkling over the yellow sands in the sunlight before reaching the narrow pool. On one side of the river the golden foothill slopes curve up to the strong and rocky Gabilan mountains, but on the valley side the water is lined with trees - willows fresh and green with every spring, carrying in their lower leaf junctures the debris of the winter's

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<sup>51</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:47:01).

flooding; and sycamores with mottled, white, recumbent limbs and branches that arch over the pool.”<sup>52</sup>

Readers imagine a valley filled with willows and sycamores, a path beaten through all the trees, the Salinas River running to a deep pool as well as wildlife such as rabbits and deer. At this thoroughly described scenery set on a summer evening, the shorter George Milton is walking with the giant Lennie Small following right behind him.

The film, on the other hand, starts in a completely different way. In the opening scene, George travels on a train after shooting Lennie, therefore the adaptation starts with the end of the novella’s plot, juggling the events so that it is not chronological in the film. After the scene of George in the train that lasts a few seconds, a woman in a red partly torn dress is running and looking very upset. It is the woman from the last ranch where George and Lennie had worked. She is in a rush to get to the men from the ranch and tell them what had happened. Viewers, however, do not know what had happened and why she is so upset until later in the film when George informs Slim the reason why they had to leave the previous ranch. It was because Lennie touched the soft fabric of the woman’s dress which led to a misinterpretation of his intentions as inappropriate. The film continues with a chase. The men from the ranch on their horses chase Lennie and George, though eventually, the two of them manage to hide in the river and the group of men leave. Aside from the fact that they do not stay under water until it gets dark as in the novella (but hide in the bushes in the river), the plot is the same as it is described in the book. Nevertheless, it does not correspond to the novella’s storyline since it is not mentioned in the beginning of the book. When they sit by the fire near the river at the second half of the first chapter of the novella, readers notice a reference to the lady whose dress Lennie wanted to touch and its consequences. The detailed information about the workers’ previous job on the ranch is revealed only in the third chapter when George talks to Slim.

It raises the question why the filmmakers made such a choice and added the scene to the beginning instead of following the storyline of the book. In order to follow

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<sup>52</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 1.

the novella, they could have kept the dialog of George and Slim talking about the incident in real time as in the book and, in addition to that, they might have perhaps added a corresponding flashback of it while George and Slim engaged in the conversation about it. Even though the chase at the beginning of the film adaptation is not in correspondence with the written storyline, it stays true to the actual timeline in which it happened, leaving aside the opening scene where George travels in the train which is the ending. What is more, it works well at the beginning of the film since it pulls viewers into the story and makes them think about what the scene actually means, especially to those audience members who have not read the book. In addition to that, it increases the suspense, making the beginning of the film gripping.

## **7.2 Setting and atmosphere**

### **7.2.1 George and Lennie**

The novella continues with a description of the two men:

“Both were dressed in denim trousers and in denim coats with brass buttons. Both wore black, shapeless hats and both carried tight blanket rolls slung over their shoulders. The first man was small and quick, dark of face, with restless eyes and sharp, strong features. Every part of him was defined: small, strong hands, slender arms, a thin and bony nose. Behind him walked his opposite, a huge man, shapeless of face, with large, pale eyes, with wide, sloping shoulders; and he walked heavily, dragging his feet a little, the way a bear drags his paws. His arms did not swing at his sides, but hung loosely.”<sup>53</sup>

Thus, the two men Steinbeck presents as complete opposites. George represents a short yet strong man with sharp features whereas Lennie is described in the novella as an extremely huge man with wide shoulders likened to a bear. In the film adaptation, George’s appearance corresponds to how he is described in the novella to a high extent, although as far as Lennie’s appearance in the film is concerned, his size does not stand out as much as one would think after reading the novella, therefore Lennie does not seem as big in the film as in the book. In addition to their appearance, in the film, they are dressed mostly the same as described in the book. Both Lennie and George’

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<sup>53</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 2.

characters in the beginning of the novella wear denim trousers, denim coats with brass buttons and black hats. In the film, Lennie Small has a shirt underneath his blue denim dungarees and a blue denim coat. George is also wearing a shirt, a brown seemingly denim jacket and dark blue denim trousers. Judging by this fact, they are dressed accordingly to the novella since their clothing match the description and there are no further specifications. Even though they are dressed in sync with the book, both carry blanket rolls just like in the novella, an insignificant difference in the form of their hats appears for the author of *Mice and Men* (1937) described both of their hats as black and shapeless, Lennie is wearing a grey beret and George a brown cowboy hat in the film which might be considered a modest change made possibly to make their clothing appear more diverse.

As far as their characters are concerned, in the novella as well as the film, their boss and Slim are surprised by the fact that George and Lennie travel together as they find it extremely unusual. This peculiarity is addressed repeatedly throughout the story. It is pointed out even by George and Lennie themselves during their conversations about their dream as they mention that it is different for them because they have each other. Steinbeck describes the reason why it is different for them in the following excerpt.

"With us it ain't like that. We got a future. We got somebody to talk to that gives a damn about us. We don't have to sit in no bar room blowin' in our jack jus' because we got no place else to go. If them other guys gets in jail they can rot for all anybody gives a damn. But not us."

Lennie broke in. "But not us! An' why? Because... because I got you to look after me, and you got me to look after you, and that's why." He laughed delightedly. "Go on now, George!"<sup>54</sup>

It is their friendship that makes them unique. Their companionship is depicted as exceptionally strong and straightened by the fact that George made a promise to Aunt Clara. Additionally, elements emphasizing their strong bond such as the sceptical reactions of other workers occur in the film as well, ensuring a faithful portrayal of their friendship compared to the novella.

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<sup>54</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 15.

### 7.2.2 The valley and the bunk house

After the description of the two men, the novella proceeds with George and Lennie drinking from the pool in the valley where they spend the night. In the book, George scolds Lennie for drinking so much water and complains about a long journey they had to walk because the bus driver that was supposed to take them to the ranch told them to get off the bus early, whereas in the adaptation viewers watch the characters walk in real time from where they left the bus to the pool. What is more, film producers even added a previous scene of George and Lennie hopping on a train, which never took place in the plot of the book. They get off in a town and go to an employment agency, which they leave with bus tickets to the ranch and work cards. Although there cannot be found any information concerning getting bus tickets and work cards in the book as chronically soon as in the film, a reference appears much later in the novella of George and Lennie going to Murray and Ready's, an employment agency, where they were given their work cards as well as bus tickets. In the film, they go by bus to the new ranch although their ride is cut short because the driver tells them to get off the bus sooner than they are supposed to. They need to get to the Tyler's ranch but, according to the driver, they must get off in Soledad as it is just down the road. They listen to him and walk the rest of the way which is indeed significantly longer than the bus driver said. In the book, readers are not aware of the fact that they took the bus and had to walk a long way until George complains about it while they are sitting around the pool after drinking from it.

George stared morosely at the water. The rims of his eyes were red with sun glare. He said angrily, "We could just as well of rode clear to the ranch if that bastard bus driver knew what he was talkin' about. 'Jes' a little stretch down the highway,' he says. 'Jes' a little stretch.' God damn near four miles, that's what it was! Didn't wanta stop at the ranch gate, that's what. Too God damn lazy to pull up. Wonder he isn't too damn good to stop in Soledad at all. Kicks us out and says, 'Jes' a little stretch down the road.' I bet it was more than four miles. Damn hot day."<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 4



During this walk in the film, Lennie also forgets where they are going and looks for his work card in his pocket. He thinks that he must have lost it, but George tells him that he has both of their work cards as he would not let Lennie carry his. Even though Lennie does not have his work card, he does have something else in his pocket – a dead mouse. All of this also occurs in the book although not during the walk, as there is none, but while they are sitting near the river. In the film, George takes the dead mouse and throws it away. Upon seeing this, Lennie starts to cry and George in attempt to comfort him tells him that he will get him a new mouse, a fresh one. It does not seem to be enough for Lennie to stop crying so George subsequently promises Lennie a puppy. This tactic succeeds in placating Lennie, and they continue walking. However, in the novella, George takes the mouse away and tells Lennie that he can get a new mouse that he can keep, not a puppy this time. George promises Lennie a puppy after the second mouse that Lennie takes later in the novella. After promising a puppy in the film, a first reference is registered to Aunt Clara who used to give mice to Lennie. Moreover, they observe the bus that was supposed to take them to the ranch, which is not mentioned in the book at all. After that they arrive in the valley in the film, go to the pool to drink, and spend the night there.

As there is no walk in the novella like it is in the film, after George talks about the bus driver, the novella continues with Lennie forgetting where they are going, Lennie thinking he lost his work card and finding a mouse in his pocket instead. George tells Lennie that they are going to a new ranch and emphasizes that Lennie cannot say anything when they meet with the boss; none of this is mentioned or depicted in the film. George decides that they will spend the night there in the valley. The sun is setting, and they are getting ready for supper – three cans of beans.

In the film adaptation, much less happens after they arrive at the river, as several of the occurrences that happen by the river in the novella have already been portrayed during their journey to the river in the film. They come to the river, drink from it, and decide that they will spend the night there and have supper. Supper represents the point when the novella and its film adaptation finally meet. In the film adaptation, George tells Lennie that he has three cans of beans, thereupon Lennie responds by saying that he prefers beans with ketchup, which he emphasizes two times.

George tells him to get wood, but Lennie replies with the same answer, he likes beans with ketchup. At this point George loses his cool and Lennie says that he was just fooling. He does not need any ketchup and if there was some, he would leave it to George. In response, George answers that he would have a better life without him. Lennie says that he could leave him and go the hills where he would live in a cave. As he is leaving, George says that Aunt Clara would not want Lennie to wonder the world alone, so he stops him and tells him to get wood for the fire.

After that, there is a scene of them in the dark sitting by the fire in the film. Lennie is eager to hear from George how they will live out of the fat land and Lennie will tend the rabbits. Suddenly George stands up and wants Lennie to remember the place they are currently in just in case he gets into any trouble. George tells Lennie that this is the place he must go to and hide in until George comes for him in case of any trouble. Lennie wishes for different coloured rabbits and the film's narrative shifts into a next day. The sun is shining, and they walk on to the ranch.

The novella, however, contains several other details that did not appear in the film. In the novella, while they are getting ready to have supper, Lennie expresses his desire to have ketchup with the beans just as in the film, nevertheless, he says it just once this time. Afterwards, George replies that they do not have any ketchup and tells him to get wood. Subsequently, Lennie gets the wood and comes back with a mouse in his pocket that George immediately knows of and tells him to give it to him. After Lennie pretends that he does not know which mouse George is referring to, he finally gives the mouse to George who immediately throws it away, and Lennie starts to cry. This is the second mouse that Lennie has taken in the novella, whereas in the film adaptation Lennie takes a mouse only once. Both times, George makes Lennie to hand the mouse to him, but Lennie starts to cry only when he must take up the second one while sitting near the river. George promises Lennie that he will get him another mouse that is fresh, when first mention of Aunt Clara is made:

“I ain't takin' it away jus' for meanness. That mouse ain't fresh, Lennie; and besides, you've broke it pettin' it. You get another mouse that's fresh and I'll let you keep it a little while.' Lennie sat down on the ground and hung his head dejectedly. 'I don't know where there is no other mouse. I remember a lady used

to give 'em to me – ever' one she got. But that lady ain't here.' George scoffed. 'Lady, huh? Don't even remember who that lady was. That was your own Aunt Clara. An' she stopped givin' 'em to ya. You always killed 'em.'<sup>56</sup>

Subsequently, Lennie wishes for them to get the rabbits as soon as possible as he supposes mice are too little to pet and then he goes to get the wood. George prepares beans and Lennie tells him that he likes beans with ketchup again which leads to George getting mad. George angrily expresses his frustration, longing for a carefree life without the burden of looking after Lennie. This part can be found in the film as well. Although slight differences in wording and additional parts in the book such as the reference of the lady whose dress Lennie wanted to touch compelled to them leave the previous ranch, the section in the film is very similar to the one in the book. Both effectively convey George's frustration with Lennie's actions and his wishes for an easier life.

The novella continues by Lennie telling George that he could leave and go to the hills. This part also shares similar features, and only the slightest changes in wording, although a change in Lennie and George's attitude is notable. In the book, George explodes with anger to the point that he is ashamed of how much aggression he had expressed towards Lennie and even tells Lennie that he does not want him to leave, and that he will try to get him a puppy. Therefore, Lennie takes it to his advantage and tells him several times that he could leave. George responds that Aunt Clara would not want him to leave Lennie alone. In the film adaptation, George mentions Aunt Clara too, but the dialog is much shorter, and George does not seem to care how mean he was to Lennie as in the novella. The part where Lennie urges George to tell him about their dream follows in both mediums. This part barely differs as well.

Additionally, in the novella, George tests if Lennie remembers what he is supposed to do when they will speak to the boss the next day and this time Lennie remembers. Subsequently, George tells Lennie to look around and remember the place they are currently at, as it is the place Lennie must go to, in case he gets into trouble, mirroring the passage present in the film adaptation at the end of the scene in the valley.

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<sup>56</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 10.

After they spent the night by the river, the next morning in the novella readers learn about the description of the bunk house whereas the film shows George and Lennie walking towards the ranch. “Tyler’s Ranch” written on a wooden sign greets George and Lennie as they walk towards it on a beautiful sunny morning. Outside they meet three dogs who barks until an old man, Candy, the first worker they encounter, tells them to stop barking and lay down. He asks them if they are looking for something, George says that they came there to work and if he knows where the boss is. Candy introduces himself and while he is taking them to see the boss, he tells them that the fact that they did not show up the day before as expected made the boss angry and that he took it out on another worker, a black man with crooked back. While Candy talks about him, they can see the black man. Candy does not mention his name. He designates the stable buck, and his name is Crooks. Candy leads them to the boss’s office, and they have a conversation about their employment. Although the first person who George and Lennie meet in the novella is also Candy, they did not see him for the first time outside as in the film, but in the bunk house.

The bunk house is described in the novella as follows.

The bunk house was a long, rectangular building. Inside, the walls were whitewashed and the floor unpainted. In three walls there were small, square windows, and in the fourth, a solid door with a wooden larch. Against the walls were eight bunks, five of them made up with blankets and the other three showing their burlap ticking. Over each bunk there was nailed an apple box with the opening forward so that it made two shelves for the personal belongings of the occupant of the bunk. And these shelves were loaded with little articles soap and talcum powder, razors and those Western magazines ranch men love to read and scoff at and secretly believe. And there were medicines on the shelves, and little vials, combs; and from nails on the box sides, a few neckties. Near one wall there was a black cast-iron stove, its stovepipe going straight up through the ceiling. In the middle of the room stood a big square table littered with playing cards, and around it were grouped boxes for the players to sit on.<sup>57</sup>

In the film, the portrayal of the bunk house maintains the essence of Steinbeck’s narrative, although several features that do not correspond to the description of the bunk house

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<sup>57</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 19.

in the novella are apparent. The bunk house depicted in the film bears a striking resemblance to the long rectangular building described by John Steinbeck in his literary work. Its likely composition is wood; however, it remains unknown if it corresponds to the book as Steinbeck does not mention the material the bunk house was made of. The interior of the bunk house is all wooden. The walls have a whitewashed finish, and the floor remains unpainted in both mediums. There are several beds and wooden boxes for storage near each bed in the film and the novella as well. In one of the empty boxes, George finds a yellow can with a poison for lice and roaches in both mediums and the dialog between him and Candy about it differs mainly in length, as it is shorter in the film than in the book.

The middle of the room occupies a wooden table just like in the novella, although there are standard wooden chairs in the film instead of grouped boxes that can be found in the book. Overall, the cinematic representation of the bunk house remains faithful to the description provided in the novella, with differences being minimal. It can be said that the filmmakers were successful in capturing the appearance and atmosphere of the bunk house described in the novella through their portrayal of the bunk house in the film.

This applies to the overall setting of the film adaptation as well. Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937) is set in California during the Great depression, a time of economic hardship, and portrays difficult lives of lower-class people. The film adaptation's setting follows the narrative and remains faithful to Steinbeck's vision as the film take place on a ranch, depicting harsh lives of people working on it. Additionally, the ranch is near Soledad just like in the book. However, there are multiple scenes in the film adaptation where the characters are portrayed working, accompanied by optimistic music, which adds a more of a positive sense to the overall atmosphere regarding working which is not typical for Steinbeck's setting.

### **7.3 Shooting of Candy's dog and the preceding events**

After the description of the bunk house, the novella continues with a part in which George and Lennie meet Candy for the first time, when they enter the bunk house. In the film, they meet Candy outside upon their arrival on the ranch. Their conversation is longer

in the book than in the film as it contains additional details. Subsequently, George finds the aforementioned yellow can with poison for lice and asks Candy about it. Candy explains that it belongs to the last man who worked there, a blacksmith, who used to wash his hand even after he ate. Their conversation continues by George asking how the previous worker could have got bugs, thereupon Candy explains that the blacksmith, his name was Whiney, did not get any, he was just a very clean person who took precaution even if it was not needed. Conversely, the film adaptation differs by excluding certain supplementary elements from their conversation such as George's inquiry about how the blacksmith could get bugs, Candy mentioning his name and explaining the reason why the worker quit. Nevertheless, apart from these additions, the passage retained in the film remains almost indistinguishable from the corresponding part in the book.

In Steinbeck's novella, Candy informs them that their boss will be there soon, that they were expected the day before and he also mentions that he took his anger out on the black man, all of which was adapted to the film but is shown during their walk to the boss's office. Additionally, a derivation occurs in the film adaptation where, unlike in the novella in which the boss comes to the bunk house, George and Lennie proceed directly to the boss upon their arrival at the ranch. Before the boss comes to the bunk house in the novella, George asks Candy what the boss is like, which cannot be found in the film. Even though the boss comes to them in the book, and they come to him in the film adaptation, their conversation remains nearly identical with only minimal differences such as the fact that their boss does not directly mention Slim during their exchange in the film.

Following their conversation with the boss, George notices Candy behind the door in the film and accuses the old man of listening to them. Candy refuses, so George tells him to go inside, therefore Candy and his old dog enter. This passage is absent in the film, given that George and Lennie have previously visited the boss' house, with Candy waiting outside and subsequently leading them to the bunk house. Despite the variation where Candy enters the bunk house for the second time, this time with his dog, but in the film George, Lennie, Candy, and his dog go inside together, the narratives converge at this point. In both mediums Curley, the boss' son, comes to the bunk house, asks

for his father, and feels intimidated by Lennie. After he leaves, Candy explains that Curley is just as most little guys who hates big guys. This conversation in the film shares mostly similarities, for there can be noticed only slight differences such as the fact that in the book they are sitting and playing cards while talking whereas in the film, they do not play cards, Candy takes them outside where they can look at Curley while talking about him.

The book continues by Candy talking about Curley and his wife. Subsequently, George tells Lennie to stay away from Curley and asks him if he remembers what he is supposed to do in case he gets into trouble. This dialog also occurs in the film adaptation from which it differs minimally. However, in the film, this conversation is cut short as Lennie does not answer George's question whether Lennie remembers the place where they slept the previous night as Curley's wife comes in, making her first appearance. Their interaction with her remains mostly faithful to its corresponding part in the novella, albeit with a shorter dialogue in the film adaptation.

In the novella, readers meet a new character, Slim, whom Curley's wife asks whether he had seen her husband. Slim tells her that Curley is at home, and she leaves. However, in the film, Slim does not make his first appearance in this moment but in the scene during which they are eating dinner. Although similarity in both mediums remains as Lennie tells George that he finds Curley's wife pretty in the novella as well as in the film, after which George immediately tells him that he must stay away from her. Subsequently, in both mediums, Lennie expresses his sadness by saying that he does not like it there although only in the book George answers him that he does not like this place either, and states they are going to stay there regardless.

There can be then found a section in the book dedicated to describing Slim. It can be stated that he is depicted as a highly respected and admired character since he is described as a skilled and authoritative worker and this image has been successfully adapted to the film.

In the film adaptation, Slim does not encounter with Curley's wife during his initial appearance. Instead, he makes his first appearance after several clips of the ranch workers riding on horses and then dining outdoors, following Lennie's expression of his desire

to leave. George and Lennie are also eating dinner there, when Slim comes and sits next to George asking if they are the new guys and they all introduce themselves. In Steinbeck's novella, they engage in this conversation in the bunk house, and it shares mostly similarities such as the fact that some of Slim's current workers are not able to tell barley bag from a blue ball or Slim asking whether they travel together. Their conversation in the film is interrupted by another man, Carlson, who directs their attention to Slim's puppies. He instructs Slim to advise Candy to put down his old dog and acquire one of the Slim's puppies instead.

All of this can be found in the book, although the characters still have not left the bunk house, therefore all of it happens inside the bunk house. After their conversation comes to an end in the novella, they decide to go have dinner. Slim and Carlson leave first while Lennie is looking at George with excitement and George knows, even without Lennie saying a word, that he wants a puppy. Therefore, George promises Lennie that he will ask Slim about it. In the film adaptation, there is also a scene in which Lennie gazes intensely at George who immediately knows what Lennie wants and nods. At this point, the novella continues by them heading to dinner which has been already portrayed in the film.

Therefore, the film's narrative transitions to the workers heading to work. As they are getting onto a wagon in the film, Lennie prompts George to ask Slim about the puppy, though he does not specify his preference for a brown and white one just as in the novella. They begin working, and the film progresses with several scenes of them working under the bright sunlight. One scene stands out, showcasing Lennie's remarkable strength. In the book, there is the fact that Lennie is extremely strong mentioned several times, but this scene unmistakably demonstrates it without the need for words. In this particular scene, Lennie effortlessly carries a bag on his own and throws it onto a wagon completely on his own, while two other workers struggle to lift another of those bags together, providing a clear visual illustration of his immense power. Meanwhile, Slim and George are watching him and as their eyes meet, they are in awe and smile at each other. After more scenes of the workers, they head home while it is getting darker.

They get back to the ranch, and clean and refresh themselves. Lennie urges George to ask Slim about the puppy, he does, and a scene unfolds with Lennie in the barn



alongside a puppy. He is holding it while surrounded by the rest of the litter and their mother. Slim lets him get a white one that Lennie chooses, deviating from the description in the book, where the puppy is white and brown. They do not go working after dinner in the novella. Additionally, as they are leaving for dinner in the book, they meet Curley who is looking for his wife. This encounter is cut from the film adaptation, as in the film's narrative cannot be found a scene in which they would leave the bunk house heading to dinner.

The third chapter of the book starts with George and Slim entering the bunk house talking about Lennie and the puppy. There is no section about them having dinner as in the film. They lead quite a long conversation mostly about Lennie, the fact that they are travelling together and their past until Lennie comes in. Lennie is asked about his feelings about the new puppy, to which he responds that it is the precise colour he desired. After a few seconds George realised that Lennie has brought the puppy inside the bunk house and tells him that he is not supposed to take it away from its mother yet and urges Lennie to give the puppy to him. Lennie reassures George that his intention was merely to pet the puppy, not to cause it any harm and Lennie takes it back to its mother. This part is also present in the film adaptation, although it is preceded by several segments.

After the scene in the barn with Lennie and his puppy, the film's narrative shifts to ranch workers including Candy feeding the chickens and Crooks looking after a horse. While other workers are about to leave the ranch and go to work, Curley asks Slim whether George and Lennie are good workers, to which Slim responds affirmatively. While it is not explicitly stated, it seems as it was a morning of a new day. The film then transitions to the crew working on a field, during which Slim instructs George to take a mule with a sore foot back to the ranch, none of which is depicted in the novella. Following Slim's command, George complies and encounters with Curley's wife in the barn. She tells him that Crooks is not there, sparking a conversation filled with tension as she attempts to flirt with him. Her mostly monologue involve several questions such as whether he has a sweetheart and is interrupted by Curley who comes into the barn filled with anger. He asks what George is doing there and sends his wife home. She tells him that he does not own her, but she obeys his command. Curley threatens George that he can make him leave the ranch after which Crooks enters and Curley leaves. This interaction between George and Curley's wife cannot be found

in the book, although it shows the flirtatious nature of Curley's wife depicted in Steinbeck's novella.

After that, there is a clip of the Moon, it is dark, and George and Slim are sitting in front of the bunk house. Lennie is on his way into the bunk house when George asks him how he likes the puppy and immediately notices that Lennie has the puppy with him. George quickly stands up and goes to the bunk house where Lennie is and takes the puppy. They go outside, George seems angrier than in the book, but eventually he gives the puppy back to Lennie who promises to take it back to its mother. As aforementioned, this segment also happens in the book, although at a different point of the narrative and George appears to be more composed and less impulsive compared to the film adaptation. Lennie is headed to the barn while Slim compares Lennie to a little kid. This segment is followed by a scene of Lennie in the barn playing with the puppy.

Following a brief conversation between Slim and George about Lennie sleeping in the barn, Candy comes in with his old dog in the novella. Soon after, Carlson joins them in the bunk house and complains about the odour emanating from Candy's old dog. Carlson expresses his strong desire to dispose the dog due to its unbearable smell, telling Candy that he should put down the animal. However, Candy is deeply hesitant, as he has formed a close bond with his dog since it was a puppy and cannot bear the thought of ending its life. This conversation is interrupted by Whit who takes their attention to a magazine passage. He wants Slim and the others to hear the part in which the author praises the magazine's content. Whit explains that the piece might have been written by a former worker, Bill Tenner, who had worked on the ranch. Even though Carlson and Candy's discussion about the dog was momentarily interrupted, Carlson does not forget about it and resumes the topic. Candy simply does not want to put down his dog, but Carlson urges. Additionally, Slim tells Candy that the dog is no longer good to himself, suggesting he can take one of Slim's puppies instead. Eventually, Candy gives up and allows it. He leaves the room and lies down on his bed, crossing his arms behind his head. There is silence in the room where is also George and Whit who are about to play cards. Candy does not say a word. He lays in his bunk with his eyes closed. Eventually, there is a shot in the distance. Everyone in the room immediately looks at him while he is looking at the ceiling and then turns over to the wall. Subsequently, Whit engages a conversation with George, and Crooks

enters to inform Slim that he has completed the task that Slim requested. Consequently, Slim expresses his intention to proceed to the barn. Moreover, Crooks mentions that Lennie is taking the puppies out of their nest.

The scene regarding shooting of Candy's dog has been adapted into the film, which is commendable since it represents one of the pivotal moments of the story. Morris Dickstein in his work *Steinbeck and the Great Depression* places the following significance to the event of shooting Candy's dog.

When Candy's old dog must be put out of his misery, the wrenching loss prefigures what the old man fears for himself, and what George will have to do for Lennie. In the fateful world of *Of Mice and Men*, every man must kill the thing he loves, the thing he cares for most.<sup>58</sup>

After viewers see Lennie playing with the puppy in the barn, there is a scene with the workers inside the bunk house. Candy enters saying that he has a stomach-ache after which Carlson immediately tells him that his dog stinks and that he should shoot him. This passage is closely resembling its counterpart in the book, with only minor alternations noticeable. In the novella the whole passage is longer compared to the film adaptation as certain conversational segments were omitted in the film. Despite this, it still conveys the novella's message perfectly. The film adaptation also features the scene where Whit is reading the magazine. The minimal differences include Candy looking at his dog as Carlson leads it away in the film whereas in the novella it is stated that he does not look at him while Carlson takes him away as he is not able to. Candy lies on his bed and the room is filled with silence in both mediums although it lasts longer in the novella. In the film, it is Whit who suggests playing cards, while in the novella, George takes on this role. Furthermore, George begins to shuffle the cards immediately in the film adaptation whereas in the book he does not start laying them until Whit tells him to and there is also a reference to a mouse being under the floor. Additionally, there is no conversation exchanged by George and Whit about George and Lennie coming to the ranch to work as it is in the novella.

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<sup>58</sup> Dickstein, Morris. "Steinbeck and the Great Depression", *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)*, edited by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Pub, 2008, p. 151.

Instead, there is a shot focusing on George who is expressing sympathy by his look, followed by a transition to a new scene depicting workers on a wagon heading to a field and Candy looking deeply saddened looking as if he was searching for his dog. The whole scene carries a sense of melancholy, with Candy and the foggy surroundings as well as the addition of sorrowful music casting a sombre mood over the setting. Following this melancholic scene, the focus shifts to the crew working on a field. Once more, the fact that Lennie is an outstanding worker is portrayed as one of the workers wants to switch positions with another one because he is not able to keep up with Lennie.

After the conversation between George and Whit in the book, which is omitted from the film adaptation, the novella progresses with Crooks entering the bunk house. Therefore, after Carlson shoots Candy's dog, the narrative of the novella remains within the bunk house, whereas in the film adaptation, it transitions to a scene of the crew working on the field. During this shift, George and Slim speak with each other. This exchange has occurred previously in the book, specifically at the beginning of the third chapter. This dialogue is present in both mediums, albeit unfolding within different timelines in each. Their conversation is interrupted by their boss, so they get back to work, which cannot be found in the book since it was an addition to the film. Subsequently, the film's narrative shifts into a scene of Curley boxing with his wife sitting near him.

Subsequently, there is another scene through which the film's narrative returns to the bunk house, while in the novella, George and Whit continue their discussion, focusing on Curley's wife and the possible danger posed by her behaviour. As their conversation progresses, Whit suggests that George should join them on their trip to town the following day. After George and Whit's conversation, Lennie and Carlson enter the bunk house. Lennie heads to his bunk and Carlson goes to clean his gun. Meanwhile, Candy remains just lying on his bed. Additionally, Lennie laughs and pretends that he has a puppy with him. Suddenly, Curley barges in asking for his wife and afterwards Slim's whereabouts. Upon learning that Slim is in the barn, Curley promptly heads in that direction.

## 7.4 The American dream

Curley entering the bunk house represents a point where the film adaptation meets the novella again. In the novella as well as in the film adaptation, Whit and Carlson are eager to see if there is going to be a fight between Slim and Curley so they rush to the barn, with George, Lennie and Candy remaining the only ones in the room.

In the novella George seeks reassurance from Lennie that he has behaved well and inquires if he saw Slim and Curley's wife in the barn. In contrast, in the film, George only asks about Curley's wife. Subsequently, Lennie holds up a deck of cards and comments that both ends look identical in both mediums. Except the fact that George is sitting at the table and shuffles the cards in the book whereas in the film George stands near the door while Lennie is holding the cards, their interaction regarding the cards is the same. In the film, George once more asks about Curley's wife visiting the barn, to which Lennie denies her presence. Following this, George mentions the possibility of forgetting about his troubles in a brothel, a thought also present in the book, however, before mentioning the brothel, he asks Lennie what Slim was doing in the barn. Afterwards in the book, George brings up a woman named Andy Cushman from their past who now runs a brothel in town, which is not mentioned in the film, possibly to avoid explicit and mature content in the film. Lennie does not respond to that, instead he asks George when they are going to have their dream house. The novella continues accordingly.

Lennie drummed on the table with his fingers. "George?"

"Huh?"

"George, how long's it gonna be till we get that little place an' live on the fatta the lan – an' rabbits?"

"I don' know," said George. "We gotta get a big stake together. I know a little place we can get cheap, but they ain't givin' it away." Old Candy turned slowly over. His eyes were wide open. He watched George carefully.<sup>59</sup>

In the novella, it is noted that Candy is listening to their dialogue from the beginning, whereas in the film, the scene is portrayed in a way that initially suggests George and Lennie are alone in the room although it is possible to notice Candy in the background

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<sup>59</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 63.

lying on his bed. It is only later, after further discussion about their dream house, that Candy is revealed to be present, creating a slight surprise for the film audience, contrasting with readers of the book who clearly know that Candy is listening to their conversation from the beginning. The surprise of George and Lennie when Candy encounters with them remains in both mediums.

Lennie's question is nearly identical in both mediums.

- George. - Yeah? How long is it gonna be till we get the little place and live off the fat of the land? Gotta get some money together first. I know a little place where you can get cheap, but they ain't giving it away.<sup>60</sup>

In the film, George's response closely mirrors the one in the book, with only a slight alternation in wording. Lennie then wants George to tell him about their dream place in both mediums.

The description given by George in the film remains faithful to the one in the novella, retaining exact parts from the novella, although certain details are not adapted to the film in order to streamline the dialogue. The rest of their conversation about their dream house continues in the same sense as the dialogue remains true to the novella while excluding certain parts. The omitted parts provide supplementary details to the primary content which was adapted to the film.

In both mediums, George describes their dream place, and Lennie asks anxiously about the rabbits. While the film focuses on the basics such as a windmill, shack, and chicken run, the novella includes richer details such as a kitchen, orchard, pig pen and which fruits they will plant. John Malkovich, who plays Lennie, has done an outstanding job embodying the character of Lennie, particularly in this scene where he eagerly expresses his excitement about the rabbits. As an illustrative instance, the subsequent excerpt represents an additional part in the novella that is omitted from the film.

"An' we could have a few pigs. I could build a smoke house like the one gran'pa had, an' when we kill a pig we can smoke the bacon and the hams, and make sausage an' all like that. An' when the salmon run up river we could catch a hundred of 'em an' salt

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<sup>60</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (57:47).

'em down or smoke 'em. We could have them for breakfast. They ain't nothing so nice as smoked salmon. When the fruit come in we could can it-and tomatoes, they're easy to can. Ever' Sunday we'd kill a chicken or a rabbit. Maybe we'd have a cow or a goat, and the cream is so God damn thick you got to cut it with a knife and take it out with a spoon."<sup>61</sup>

In both mediums, Lennie watches George intensely but only in the book does he say:

We could live offa the fatta the lan'<sup>62</sup>.

Additionally, George further envisions their place, stating that it will be a place they will belong in. This George's detailed expression cannot be found in the film adaptation either. Subsequently, the novella and its adaptation meet when Lennie urges George to describe the house as follows.

"Sure, we'd have a little house an' a room to ourself. Little fat iron stove, an' in the winter we'd keep a fire goin' in it. It ain't enough land so we'd have to work too hard. Maybe six, seven hours a day. We wouldn't have to buck no barley eleven hours a day. An' when we put in a crop, why, we'd be there to take the crop up. We'd know what come of our planting."<sup>63</sup>

In the novella, George's response contains additional content once more as only the first two sentences from the aforementioned excerpt from the novella were adapted into the film. What is more, in both the novella and the film adaptation, readers and viewers alike note that George's voice grows warmer as he discusses their dream house. Moreover, both George and Lennie frequently smile at each other during this conversation, evincing a sense of hopefulness. The optimistic ambiance is further enhanced by the addition of positive music, heightening the overall hopeful atmosphere. Afterwards, Lennie mentions none other than his beloved rabbits in the novella as well as in the film, with minimal differences, which also applies to George's response as in the novella he tells Lennie:

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<sup>61</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 64.

<sup>62</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 65.

<sup>63</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 65.

"Sure, you'd go out in the alfalfa patch an' you'd have a sack. You'd fill up the sack and bring it in an' put it in the rabbit cages."<sup>64</sup>

While in the film he answers Lennie by saying:

"Well, you go out to the alfalfa field. You have a sack. You fill up that sack and you bring it in and you put it in the rabbit cage."<sup>65</sup>

Therefore, Lennie's reply in the film adaptation is extremely faithful to the one written in the novella. Overall, as far as their dialogue about their dream house is concerned, in Steinbeck's novella, one is given additional parts that the filmmakers omitted from the film adaptation. Nevertheless, in the adaptation cannot be found anything during this conversation that is not present in the book.

At this point, Candy enters the narrative in both mediums by asking whether they are familiar with a place like this. In Steinbeck's novella as well in the film adaptation, Candy expresses his interest in their plan to have a place of their own by offering both financial and manual help. The film adaptation follows this part of their conversation, leaving out only additional details. There can be found minor changes in wording and the novella contains some additional information that is not in the film adaptation such as George's line about the current owners of the house. In the film, viewers are given only the information that the old owners are broke, whereas the book also involves the exact reason why the current owners need the money for. Additionally, Lennie speaks in the film during this exchange, he repeats George's words, whereas in the book he does not during this part.

Subsequently, their conversation continues differently as George does not spit on the floor in the film as in the novella, instead, he looks at Lennie and his answer to Candy's question is shorter than in the novella. Subsequently, there are noticeable differences in the sequence of discussions between the book and the film. Even though the film draws from the novella, some parts of their conversation in the film do not follow the order of their discussion in the novella. Although the dialogues in both mediums cover the same

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<sup>64</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 65.

<sup>65</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (59:03).



topics, their order slightly differs which can be noticed in the following part, starting with the novella.

Then he said thoughtfully, "Look, if me an' Lennie work a month an' don't spen' nothing, we'll have a hunderd bucks, That'd be four fifty. I bet we could swing her for that. Then you an' Lennie could go get her started an' I'd get a job an' make up the res', an' you could sell eggs an' stuff like that.

"They fell into a silence. They looked at one another, amazed. This thing they had never really believed in was coming true. George said reverently, "Jesus Christ! I bet we could swing her." His eyes were full of wonder. "I bet we could swing her," he repeated softly.<sup>66</sup>

The novella precedes by George proposing a plan to save money in order to acquire the place, whereas the conversation in the film adaptation continues by Candy expressing his sadness over his dog's death paralleled with his desire to be given the same faith when he is unable to work.

You seen what they done to my dog?  
They said he wasn't no good no more.  
I wish somebody'd shoot me when I ain't no good, but they won't do that.  
They'll can me, and I ain't gonna have no place to go.<sup>67</sup>

This passage can be also found in the book but not in this order as it is mentioned after George's plan regarding saving their money. Moreover, this part contains additional information in the novella such as the fact that his accident happened four years ago and Candy opening about the means how he can help them at the place that would be theirs.

After Candy bringing up his dog, the film continues by George telling them the plan about the future, which is mentioned earlier in the book.

Look, if me and Lennie work a month and we don't spend nothin',  
we'll have 100 bucks.  
And you got 350?  
Yeah, and you can have every cent of it.  
That'd be 450.

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<sup>66</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 67.

<sup>67</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:01:25).

Jesus Christ, I bet we could get it for that.<sup>68</sup>

This passage aligns closely with its corresponded part in the novella, albeit with a slight variation. In the film, George directs the question to Candy, who responds, whereas in the book, only George speaks during this excerpt. Furthermore, after the end of this selected part, viewers can hear soft, uplifting music with a positive tone mirroring the characters' sense of hope. The optimism continues in the film adaptation although it contains fewer details than the novella.

You two could get her started. I'd work and make up the rest.  
I'm gonna take that goddamn pup.  
Sure, sure, sure. You know what I'm gonna do?  
I'll write those two old people that we'll take it.  
Candy will send \$100 to hold it?  
I sure will. I'll have 30 more dollars the time you guys is ready to quit.  
I get to tend the rabbits. Tell him, George. Tell him he can't do it.  
I'll get to hoe in the garden, even if I ain't no good at it?  
- They got a nice stove there?  
- Yeah, yeah. They got a real nice stove!  
But I bet that pup will like it there.  
We're gonna do it, goddamnit. We can fix up that little old place and live there.  
When we gonna do it?  
One month. Right smack in one month.  
(men talking outside)<sup>69</sup>

This excerpt remains faithful to the one in the novella, yet it derivates from the original order of the novella once more. In the film, segments as Candy asking about the stove and Lennie mentioning his pup precede the discussion and the Lennie's question when they are planning to make their dream come true. In summary, while all parts of their conversation about their dream house are adapted from the literally source, they are not presented in the exact order compared to the novella.

However, the following part maintain the same order in both versions. As the man draw close to the bunk house, signalling the end of their conversation about their dream house,

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<sup>68</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:02:03).

<sup>69</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:02:17).

George tells them to not tell anybody about their plans and Candy, once again, expresses his sorrow and regret over his dog and his death.

Voices were approaching from outside. George said quickly, "Don't tell nobody about it. Jus' us three an' nobody else. They li'ble to can us so we can't make no stake. Jus' go on like we was gonna buck barley the rest of our lives, then all of a sudden some day we'll go get our pay an' scam outta here." Lennie and Candy nodded, and they were grinning with delight. "Don't tell nobody," Lennie said to himself. Candy said, "George." "Huh?" "I ought to of shot that dog myself, George. I shouldn't ought to of let no stranger shoot my dog."<sup>70</sup>

Same observation can be made regarding the film adaptation. Even though the selected part from the novella is longer than the one in the film as it contains additional segments that are omitted from the film and there can be noticed slight changes in wording, it shares the same topics – George telling them to not speak about it with anyone and subsequently Candy bringing up his dog.

Now, don't tell nobody about it.  
- Just us three and nobody else. - Don't tell nobody.  
George, I ought to have shot that dog myself.  
I should not let no stranger shoot my dog.<sup>71</sup>

In summary, the Steinbeck's theme of dreams, or the American dream, has been successfully adapted onto the screen since it conveys his message despite leaving out certain segments and adjusting the narrative sequence. Consequently, Steinbeck's novella as well as its adaptation progress into a fight.

## **7.5 The harsh reality**

### **7.5.1 The fight**

Following the conversation filled with optimism and hope, the novella as well as its film adaptation continue with a fight between Curley, who initiates it, and Lennie, who does

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<sup>70</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 69.

<sup>71</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:03:00).

not want to fight at all. This fight is adapted into the film almost identically, with only a few segments of conversation omitted, and a few changes made. Overall, the fight can be viewed as the beginning of the end of their dream and the story, for it represents a point from which ordinary events start to go sideways.

Curley embodies an aggressive and insecure small man. Candy uses the following words in the novella as description for the boss's son.

“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?”<sup>72</sup>

On the other hand, Lennie is not aggressive, quite the opposite. He represents some sort of innocence. Moreover, he possesses extreme physical strength but lacks the understanding of his own power. The inability of managing his own power combined with his desire to pet soft things and animals is the reason why events go awry in the end. It is not just the tragic ending of the story that is caused by his inability to control his strength. There are other clear examples include the killings of mice and his puppy, which foreshadow the killing of Curley's wife and the death of their dream. However, Lennie controls himself, therefore his strength during this fight. George previously told him to not get into any trouble and to stay away from Curley as he is bad news. Hence, Lennie lets Curley to beat him up and does not engage until George tells him to. Thus, it is because of George's command that Lennie starts to fight back. Moreover, Lennie feels devastated after the fight. Lennie shattering Curley's arm serves a clear demonstration of Lennie's extreme strength and capabilities, as well as his deep devotion to George, his keeper.

In essence, the fight has been adapted wonderfully into the film as it effectively conveys the fight's message and vividly shows the vulnerability of their dream. What is more, the scene adeptly captures the struggles of the men as well as their raw emotions, evoking empathy from viewers, especially for Lennie.

In both mediums, Curley barges into the bunk house with the workers while Curley and Slim engage in a heated conversation about Curley frequently asking about his wife's

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<sup>72</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 29.

whereabouts. The scene escalates after Carlson joins the conversation and makes fun of Curley.

Minor changes differing from the novella are evident in the film's depiction of the fight's commencement. The fight begins in the following way in the book.

Carlson laughed. "You God damn punk," he said. "You tried to throw a scare into Slim, an' you couldn't make it stick. Slim throwed a scare into you. You're a yella as a frog belly. I don't care if you're the best welter in the country. You come for me, an' I'll kick your God damn head off."

Candy joined the attack with joy. "Glove fulla vaseline," he said disgustedly. Curley glared at him. His eyes slipped on past and lighted on Lennie; and Lennie was still smiling with delight at the memory of the ranch.

Curley stepped over to Lennie like a terrier.

"What the hell you laughin' at?"

Lennie looked blankly at him. "Huh"?

Then Curley's rage exploded. "Come on, ya big bastard. Get up on your feet. No big son-of-a-bitch is gonna laugh at me. I'll show ya who's yella."<sup>73</sup>

In the film, Carlson also compares Curley to a punk and being yellow as a frog belly, although certain parts of his speech such as the mention of Slim are omitted. Additionally, Candy's line about Curley's glove is cut from the film as well. One of the men mimics the sound of a chicken in the film, which represents an addition to the film. After the imitation of a chicken, all the men burst into laughing although it is just Lennie with whom Curley gets angry. In Steinbeck's novella, there is no imitation of the chicken sound while Lennie smiles because he is still thinking about the idea of the ranch which is noticed by Curley who gets furious and asks him why he is laughing. This question is also portrayed in the film. In both mediums, Lennie is confused, and Curley attacks him.

The fight itself in the film closely follows the novella, with only minor derivations such as omission of Slim's desire to join the fight and George stopping him. Lennie refrains from defending himself until eventually prompted by George, aligning novella with the film. Similarly, Slim assists George in separating Lennie from Curley, leading to Lennie crying, after which Slim mentions the need for Curley to see a doctor

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<sup>73</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 70

in both mediums. However, Slim gets Curley water in the novella whereas in the film he does not.

The novella as well as its adaptations continue by George immediately asking Slim about the odds of them getting fired, mirroring the suddenness with which circumstances can shift, as the loss of their jobs could mean the delay of their dream. However, thanks to Slim and his quick idea that Curley's hand injury was caused by a machine, they manage to retain their jobs and stay on the ranch.

The film follows by the men taking Curley to the wagon while Lennie remains in the bunk house, crying. Subsequently, there is a scene where George tends to Lennie's wounds while Lennie anxiously asks George whether he will still be able to tend the rabbits. George reassures him that he can still do so since he did nothing wrong. In the novella, Lennie also asks this question, albeit after a short exchange involving Slim, George, Candy and Lennie regarding George's warning to Curley about provoking Lennie and reassuring Lennie that it was not his fault. Additionally, George advises Lennie to clean himself up, differing from the film where George cleans Lennie's face himself.

### **7.5.2 Discrimination**

Another theme that is present in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937) is racial discrimination. After the fight, the book proceeds into a new chapter starting with a description of Crook's room, whereas the film transitions to a new scene outside, suggesting the beginning of a new day. The scene unfolds with Curley's wife coming to George and Lennie who are working. This scene in particular does not take place in the novella; therefore, it is an addition to the film to a certain extent. Even though it can be marked as an addition, it mirrors a conversation in Crook's room in the book that follows the description of his room. After Curley's wife leaves, the film's narrative transitions to George and Lennie as well as the other men hopping onto a wagon and riding back to the ranch while the sun is setting, indicating a long day of work. Subsequently, George visits Lennie in the barn, where Lennie is keeping company with his puppy. George informs Lennie that he is heading into town with the other men, allowing Lennie to stay in the barn for a while. Before leaving, George reminds him to stay out of trouble. The following scene shows Crook's room with the light on, where viewers see Crook putting ointment onto his spine.

In contrast, the book does not include a corresponding part of George and Lennie working, returning to the ranch, or George visiting Lennie in the barn as the novella continues with the description of Crooks' room after the fight. Both mediums meet at the point when Crooks is in his room putting liniment to his back and Lennie comes in. The conversation that is led in this room plays a key role in the story through which are portrayed the themes of discrimination and loneliness. The clearest example of discrimination and isolation is shown through Crooks, who is a black man and daily faces racism. Even though the conversation between Crooks and Lennie in the film is abbreviated since certain segments such as parts of Crooks' lines are omitted, the significant fragments of their conversation are adapted into the film, with minor changes in wording, if any, and a slightly different order of the discussed topic. The significant parts include Crooks informing Lennie that he, Crooks, is not wanted in the bunk house because he is black, showing viewers how harsh and wrong racism has been. The film adaptation begins to differ from its literary source when George appears at the door after just few minutes after Lennie enters and after a quick exchange takes Lennie with him to the bunk house. Additionally, they meet Curley's wife on their way to the bunk house.

The book's narrative, however, continues within Crooks' room, and Crooks and Lennie are joined by Candy, and eventually by Curley's wife as well. Therefore, the passage inside Crooks' room involves Crooks, Lennie, Candy, and Curley's wife in the book, while in the film it is a discussion between Crooks and Lennie only, who are interrupted by George. By not including the whole conversation between the four characters, the film loses an interesting point of view of those characters.

In the book, Candy is looking for Lennie as he wants to share with him the potential to make money through rabbits on their farm and finds him with Crooks. As he enters, he remarks the fact that this is the first time that he has ever been to Crook's place which points out how lonely Crooks feels due to his race. They talk about their soon to be the house they dream of and even though Crooks is sceptical at first, he eventually tells them that he could help them with work on their place if they wanted him to. He does not get a response as Curley's wife comes in asking whether they know where Curley is, despite knowing it herself. Candy and Crooks express their desire for her to leave but she stays anyway and tells them the following.

“Well, I ain’t giving you no trouble. Think I don’t like to talk to somebody ever’ once in a while? Think I like to stick in that house alla time?”<sup>74</sup>

She expresses her loneliness and even though she is not in Crooks’ room in the film, she does say these lines in the film, although during different time of the narrative. This represents the part which partially corresponds to the scene in the film shown after the fight. In this aforementioned scene in the film, Curley’s wife speaks to George and Lennie.

Hi, boys.  
It's hot out here. Not cool like in the barn.  
I said it's hot out here!  
Why don't you go back to your house now? We don't want no trouble.  
I ain't giving you no trouble.  
Think I don't like to talk to somebody every once in a while?  
You got a husband. Go talk to him.  
Sure, I got a husband. Swell guy, ain't he?  
Say, what happened to Curley's hand?  
He got his hand caught in a machine.  
Baloney! What you think you're selling me?  
How'd you get them bruises on your face?  
- Who, me? - Yeah, you.  
Got his hand caught in a machine.  
Yeah, OK.<sup>75</sup>

Although their exchange in the film contains supplementary segments such as the first three lines, serving as an adjustment to the scene, it aligns with a part in the book. Nevertheless, George is absent during their conversation in Crook’s room in the novella, so the lines that George says in the film, are said by Candy during this part in the book.

Candy laid the stump of his wrist on his knee and rubbed it gently with his hand. He said accusingly, “You gotta husban’. You got no call fooli’ arou’ with other guys, causin’ trouble.”<sup>76</sup>

Candy’s response in Steinbeck’s novella contains additional segments, yet it conveys the same message as the novella. Similarly, Curley’s wife’s answer is longer

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<sup>74</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 88.

<sup>75</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:08:03).

<sup>76</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 88.



in the novella, although the film includes the exact same parts from the novella. George answers her question earlier in the film, and although in the novella her question is responded to by Candy more hesitantly than George and again, his answer is longer compared to George's response in the film.

“Why... Curley ... he got his han' caught in a machine, ma'am.  
Bust his han'.”<sup>77</sup>

Her ironic response in the film is extracted from a more extensive one in the novella, containing additions such as her inquiry about who injured Curley, rather than immediately addressing Lennie as depicted in the film. However, her asking Lennie about Curley's hand does not represent an addition to the film as she asks Lennie the same question in the book as well, although with certain parts preceding. One of those parts is the following.

“Awright,” she said contemptuously. “Awright, cover ‘im up if ya wanta. Whatta I care? You bindle bums think you're so damn good. Whatta ya think I am, a kid? I tell ya I could of went with shows. Not jus'one, neither. An' guy tol'me he could put me in pitchers...”<sup>78</sup>

In this segment, she shares with Candy, Lennie, and Crooks what her live could have been (her past dreams) and reflects on her life now. By doing that, she adds her point of view to the narrative of which the viewers are not deprived as the film mentions segments of her speech when George and Lennie meet her outside the bunk house. This occurs after George takes Lennie from Crooks' room to the bunk house. Therefore, even though she is not present in Crooks' room, certain parts of her speech are adapted into the film, albeit in different way and form. However, the following part of her speech is not adapted in full into the film.

She was breathless with indignation.” – Sat'iday night. Ever'body oot doin' som'pin. Ever'body! An'what am I doin'? Standin' here talkin'to a bunch of bindle stiffs – a nigger an'a dum-dum and o lousy ol' sheep – an' likin' it because they ain't nobody else.”<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 88.

<sup>78</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, pp. 88-89.

<sup>79</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 89.

In the book she expresses meanly her feelings about Crooks, Lennie and Candy calling each of them names indicating their inferiority (although in the film she only compares them to “bindle stiffs”) in one of her lines during her conversation with George and Lennie who are on their way from Crooks’ room to the bunk house.

(Curley's wife) Hey!  
Did you see Curley in town?  
No.  
He went into town. His old man went into town, too.  
(George) Yeah.  
I couldn't even play my records tonight.  
I got no records left. I had four.  
"Am I Blue", "Little by Little", "Button Up Your Overcoat"  
and "Ten Cents a Dance".  
Curley got mad at me after supper, broke all my records.  
I know how you got them bruises on your face.  
And how Curley got his hand busted.  
He got his hand caught in a machine.  
Yeah. All right.  
Someday I'm going into town, and no one's ever gonna see me  
again.  
Not Curley, not his old man, not a damn one of you bindle stiffs!  
(sobs)<sup>80</sup>

During this exchange, she contributes to the notion that her portrayal might seem less harsh and flirtatious to film viewers compared to Steinbeck’s representation in the book, achieved by not including the section in which she disparages the men. On the other hand, the aforementioned part from the film itself represents an addition to the film, absent in the book, where only segments of its content are present. Moreover, the supplementary content includes the fact that Curley’s wife is not able to play any of her records as Curley destroyed all of his wife’s records. She expresses her loneliness as well as her struggles with Curley, which once again contributes to the theory that the portrayal of her character on the screen differs from the book. However, it indeed portrays her isolation from the rest of the men on the ranch which is a theme present in the book. She is the only woman on the ranch, who is never referred to by her own name, but rather by “Curley’ wife” or by derogatory terms, potentially indicating her belonging to Curley which can be viewed as gender discrimination. Moreover, the men on the ranch see

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<sup>80</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:17:24).

her as trouble or a cause of trouble, since Curley is very jealous and controlling of his wife's interactions with others.

According to Bashar, Zeb and Khan's research, Curley's wife is stereotyped in three ways in Steinbeck's novella. Primarily, she is the only woman in the narrative, viewed as a tool or manipulative figure catering for the desires of men and never referred to by her real name. In addition to that, Candy's reference to Curley's glove, intended to keep his hand soft for his wife, reinforces the first stereotype of her being sexualised. During the period of the novella's narrative, women was perceived as housewives and nothing more which is incorporated into the novella and shown on the character of Curley's wife. Lastly, she embodies the stereotype of isolation since, once more, she stands as the only female figure in the story, unable to pursue her dream, viewed by her husband primary as a on object rather than a partner, yearning for social interaction.<sup>81</sup>

The novella proceeds with a section, absent in the film, wherein Candy stands up and expresses his feelings towards Curley's wife. He states that she is unwelcomed in the room and says that if they were about to lose their jobs because of her, they would not trouble themselves as much as she thinks, since they aspire to have a ranch on their own. Curley's wife finds it amusing and unrealistic, however Candy stays calm and asserts that that they do not care about her opinion and suggests that she can just as well leave. After that, she asks Lennie the same question about Lennie's bruises on his face as depicted in the film during the scene after the fight.

Afterwards, there is another part that cannot be found in the film in which Candy threatens to inform George about her behaviour, Lennie mentions George's promise to let Lennie tend the rabbits and Curley's wife tells him that she could obtain rabbits, too. Subsequently, Crooks has enough and demands she leave his room since she is not welcomed there. She reacts by threatening him as the book continues accordingly.

“Listen, Nigger,” she said. “You know what I can do to you if you open your trap?”

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<sup>81</sup> Bashar, Khair Ul, Zeb, Alam, Khan, Hakeem. *Stereotyping of Curley's Wife in Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men: From Derridean Perspective*, Linguistics and Literature Studies, 2019, p. 97.

Crooks stared hopelessly at her, and then he sat down on his bunk and drew into himself.

She closed on him. "You know what I could do?"

Crooks seemed to grow smaller, and he presses himself against the wall. "Yes, ma'am."

"Well, you keep your place then, Nigger. I could get you strung up on a tree so easy it ain't even funny."

Crooks had reduced himself to nothing. There was no personality, no ego – nothing to arouse either like or dislike. He said, "Yes, ma'am," and his voice was toneless.<sup>82</sup>

Her language represents a straightforward example of racism towards Crooks. It also shows how oppressed people will use what little power they may have to oppress those still lower than themselves. Crooks reacts this way because he is aware that she holds the power to have him fired. It serves as another illustration of Curley's wife cruelty, yet it is not shown in the film, possibly presenting her in a more sympathetic light to the viewers.

In her speech, Curley's wife questions whether Crooks is aware about the consequences of opening his trap. John F. Slater underscores the significance of the trap, a slang word for mouth. Even though the reference may appear trivial by itself, its significance is heightened by George's warning to Lennie about Curley's wife being called a rat-trap earlier in the book, drawing notice to the racism that surrounds Crooks.<sup>83</sup>

After that, Candy has Crook's back by saying that they would tell if she framed Crooks and he got fired. Eventually, she leaves with saying that she is glad that Lennie injured Curley. Subsequently, she leaves, and they hear George and the guys coming in.

Before George's arrival into Crooks' room, Candy mentions to Crooks that Curley's wife should not have spoken to him in such a harsh manner, thereupon Crooks replies by the following.

"You guys comin' in and settin' made me forget. What she says is true"<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 91.

<sup>83</sup> Slater, John F. "Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (Novel) (1937)" *The Essential Criticism of John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men*, edited by Meyer, Michael J., Scarecrow Press, 2009, pp. 89-90.

<sup>84</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 93.

Clearly, the men's visit in Crooks' room means a lot to Crooks as nobody except Slim and the boss come into his room at all. Additionally, through this part is shown racism, isolation as well as dreams are shared. Therefore, the section in Crooks room represents a significant part of the story. Even though some people might find it unfortunate that the section in Crooks' room has not been adapted into the film in full, it is good that the film contains the part with Lennie in Crooks' room which portrays the issue of racism and Crooks' isolation.

George comes back and the exchange is similar in both mediums. Although Candy tells him that he came up with a plan for the rabbits on their ranch and George replies by saying that they were not supposed to tell anybody about their plan, none of which was written in John Steinbeck's novella.

Before they leave, in the book, Crooks tells Candy to forget that he ever offered to help them on their future ranch, potentially indicating that he feels like he exceeded his current societal boundaries and now takes his offer back because Curley's wife reminded him the harsh reality of his place in society. In the film, however, Crooks does not mention that he would like to be on their ranch. Subsequently, George, Lennie, and Candy go to the bunk house together. In the film only George and Lennie go to the bunk house as they were the only ones present in Crooks' room in the film.

In summary, the fourth chapter of the book concerning Crooks' room varies from its correspondent part in the film quite significantly. The book contains firstly a conversation between Crooks and Lennie which slightly differs from the adaptation, mostly in length. However, in the film George comes to the Crooks' room when Crooks and Lennie are talking and together, they leave the room earlier than in the book. There is no part with Candy and Curley's wife being present in Crooks' room in the film.

Even though Curley's wife is absent in the Crooks' room in the film, therefore she does not engage in the conversation with Crooks, Lennie and Candy, the film includes important segments but they, as well as their order, differ. Furthermore, by omitting the part where Curley's wife is mean to Crooks and adapting to the film just some parts where she expresses her sadness and regret, more viewers might tend to have more sympathy for her, hence see her differently than the readers of the novella. However, her representation of a failed dream, since she wanted to be an actress, but deviously her dream was not fulfilled, was adapted into the film. Moreover, she is killed by Lennie

and her death represents the death of their dream as well. Regarding Candy's involvement in this scene, he is present in Crooks' room in the novella but absent in the film. Certain lines attributed to Candy in the book that are incorporated into the film include the aforementioned conversation with Curley's wife. In the book it is Candy who talks to her in this part, although in the film Candy's lines are delivered by George. According to Lennie, Candy is in the bunk house figuring out about the rabbits during the minutes in Crooks' room in the film adaptation.

### **7.5.3 Killing of the puppy and events going awry**

The fifth chapter of the book starts on a Sunday afternoon, with men playing peg outside and Lennie being in the barn with a dead puppy that he strokes. During his monologue, he mentions his fear that George will not let him tend the rabbits now that he has killed the puppy. Nevertheless, Lennie does not think that he is in so much trouble that he should go hide to the brush, instead he comes up with an idea to tell George that he found it dead.

The film cuts from a scene where George and Lennie enter the bunk house after their conversation with Curley's wife outside into what it seems like a new day. There are several scenes of the ranch and workers resting and playing peg, also played in the book, which suggest a Sunday, the proverbial "day of rest". However, it remains unknown, as the film does not mention which day or part of the day it is. After the scene with men playing the peg, the narrative shifts into George coming into the bunk house where he informs Candy that he had finished the letter for the current owners of the ranch they are planning to purchase. Candy suggests sending the binding money as he fears that it could be sold to someone else. George responds by promising to consider it and reassures Candy and his doubts that they will acquire the house soon. After this exchange between George and Candy (that cannot be found in the book) unfolds, as George goes outside and joins the game while the narrative focuses on Lennie in the barn.

Lennie has the puppy in his hands and expresses his regret of killing it which he associates with the fear that George would not let him tend the rabbits. His monologue follows the one in the novella, only with few parts being omitted. Meanwhile, as Lennie cries in the barn, a scene of George and the guys playing occurs, while Curley joins them and takes a seat there. Although it is supposed that Curley is outside with them, the narrative of the book stays in the barn and does not shift outside the barn to the men playing as in the film. There are only mentions of the sounds of horseshoes

coming from outside in the book but the narrative stays in the barn. In the film, the focus returns to the barn with Curley's wife waking in. She enters the barn in the book as well while Lennie is mourning the death of his puppy.

The segment of Curley's wife and Lennie's conversation in the barn has been adapted into the film extremely faithfully. Only a few cuts of certain parts in their dialogue were made in the film. With the cuts of their lines being minimal, this section can be marked as one of the most faithful parts of the film in correspondence to the book. However, after their interaction escalates into the death of Curley's wife and Lennie realizes that has done a bad deed, he therefore leaves to hide in the brush, there can be noticed several changes.

The film's ending differs significantly from the ending in the literary source. Candy finds Curley's wife's remains in the book as well in the film and informs George about it. In the novella Candy rushes out of the barn quickly to tell George whereas in the adaptation, he walks toward George slowly and does not say a word, speaking just through his face. Thereafter, they are both in the barn looking at Curley's wife's dead body. Their dialog in the film is much shorter than the written one. In the film, George tries to wake up Curley's wife and realises that she is dead, thereupon Candy asks, in the same way as in the book, what they are going to do now. George answers by saying that they should tell the guys just like in the novella. Candy voices his disapproval by stating these exact words from the novella:

“We oughtta let ‘im get away. You don’t know that Curley. Curley gon’ta wanta get ‘im lynched.”<sup>85</sup>, omitting just one following sentence from the book: “Curley’ll get ‘im killed.”<sup>86</sup>

George replies by refusing to let them hurt Lennie. Candy agrees to give George a minute to go back to the bunk house where the rest of the guys are before he gives all of them the bad news, which concludes their conversation in the barn. This cannot be said for their dialog in the novella as it is longer and contains additional parts just as the following one:

Now Candy spoke his greatest fear. "You an' me can get that little place, can't we, George? You an' me can go there an' live nice, can't we, George? Can't we?"  
Before George answered, Candy dropped his head and looked down at the hay. He knew.

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<sup>85</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 106.

<sup>86</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 106.

George said softly, " – I think I knowed from the very first I think I knowed we'd never do her. He usta like to hear about it so much I got to thinking maybe we would."

"Then – it's all off?" Candy said sulkily. George didn't answer his question. George said, "I'll work my month an' I'll take my fifty bucks an' I'll stay all night in some lousy cat house. Or I'll set in some poolroom till ever'body goes home. An' then I'll come back an' work another month an! I'll have fifty bucks more." Candy said,

"He's such a nice fella. I didn' think he'd do nothing like this."<sup>87</sup>

In the novella, almost the first thought that comes to Candy's mind is whether their dream is still going to come true. It is almost as he cares less about the fact that a life is gone and more about the consequences of Lennie taking the woman's life. This segment in the book illustrates how much they want for their dream to come true, and by cutting Candy's immediate interest about their little place from the film, the depth of their desire is not adequately portrayed in the film.

Another part that is omitted from the movie is Candy's speech to Curley's wife which he says to her after George leaves the barn including the following.

"You God damn tramp," he said viciously. "You done it, di'n't you? I s'pose you're glad. Ever'body knowed you'd mess things up. You wasn't no good. You ain't no good now, you lousy tart."<sup>88</sup>

Candy expresses his anger at the irresponsibility of Curley's wife as he fears that her death means the death of their dream as well. His speech then progresses as he reflects on what he could have done on the ranch and how his life could get better if it were not for her. Therefore, it seems that Candy blames more Curley's wife than Lennie. Once again, by omitting this speech, the film does not highlight Candy's longing for the house as much as the novella does.

The novella continues by Candy going outside and the game stopping. Consequently, Slim, Carlson, Whit, Curley, Crooks, Candy, and George go to the barn where they see Curley's wife. Slim checks her pulse and Curley says that he knows that it was Lennie who killed her. In the film, however, more men are present during this part. Curley notices

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<sup>87</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 107.

<sup>88</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 108.



Lennie's hat on the ground, leading him to correctly conclude that Lennie killed Curley's wife, which represents an addition.

Curley's declaration about Lennie being responsible for her death in the film varies from the novella quite interestingly as in the novella he refers to Lennie as "that big son-of-a-bitch"<sup>89</sup> whereas in the film he calls Lennie "that little son-of-a-bitch"<sup>90</sup>, although in both mediums he holds Lennie responsible.

In both mediums, Curley states that he will kill Lennie and Carlson goes to get his gun. Meanwhile, Slim and George have a quick exchange about the possibility that Lennie has done it which also follows the novella with only slight cuts such as Slim's question where Lennie would go. Carlson suggests that Lennie stole his gun, hence Curley tells him to take Crooks' gun in both mediums (suggesting Crooks as a black man might get mixed up if they kill Lennie and police want Lennie's killer). However, in the book, Curley orders Whit to go to Soledad for a cop and tells George to go with them to look for Lennie. This detail is omitted from the film, which is continued by Slim proposing to Curley that he should stay with his wife which Curley declines to do just as in the film. Furthermore, Curley instructs Candy to stay in the barn in the book, which represent a detail missing in the film, although Candy does stay on the ranch in the film, too.

After Curley and the men leave, the novella continues with its sixth and final chapter. The narrative of the novella returns to the valley near the Salinas River and the pool where for the readers the story started. Once peaceful place is now covered in a shadow of the end of their dream. Lennie emerges from the brush and goes to the river to drink. Subsequently, he is very pleased with himself because he did not forget to hide in the brush and wait for George. He also mentions that he could go to the mountains and live there in a cave since he expects George will be angry and might tell him that he is better off without Lennie.

The film, on the other hand, progresses with a supplementary scene not mentioned in the book that includes Curley and rest of the men getting ready, hopping on horses, and riding away while dramatic music added to the scene heightens the gripping

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<sup>89</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 109.

<sup>90</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:35:58).

atmosphere. Moreover, Curley orders Slim to go with his men South, while him and his men go North. As the men are leaving, George exchanges few words with Candy about what he is going to do, but he does not know yet. There is then a dramatic scene of George running alone to the valley where he finds Lennie. None of this is portrayed in the book, for its narrative continues directly in the valley. Eventually, in the film, he finds Lennie in the river. Lennie informs George that he did not forget, he just does not remember the exact place.

There is a crucial difference worth noting as before George finds Lennie in the book, Lennie hallucinates Aunt Clara and a rabbit, which is completely cut from the film adaptation.

Firstly, Lennie has a conversation with Aunt Clara who scolds him for getting into trouble and not thinking about George who looks after him.

"You never give a thought to George," she went on in Lennie's voice. "He been doin' nice things for you alla time. When he got a piece of pie you always got half or more'n half. An' if they was any ketchup, why he'd give it all to you."

"I know," said Lennie miserably. "I tried, Aunt Clara, ma'am. I tried and tried."

She interrupted him. "All the time he coulda had such a good time if it wasn't for you. He woulda took his pay an' raised hell in a whore house, and he coulda set in a pool room an' played snooker. But he got to take care of you."<sup>91</sup>

His subconscious is telling him that he really is in trouble because he has done a bad deed. Furthermore, Aunt Clara scolds him by calling him incorrigible and not deserving of the trouble George must undergo because of him. She mentions sacrifices George would make for him. For instance, giving him all his ketchup just because he knows that he likes it, which suggest George's devotion to Lennie. The hallucination of Aunt Clara also paints a picture of how George's life would improve if he did not have to take care of Lennie, which indicates the fear of George abandoning him. Despite Lennie declaring that he tried, he proposes his usual suggestion of leaving for the mountains to stop causing trouble to George. The hallucination of Aunt Clara expresses her disbelief,

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<sup>91</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 114.

while Lennie states that he can leave since George will not let him take care of the rabbits now. Subsequently, the hallucination of Aunt Clara is replaced by a huge rabbit that as well as Aunt Clara did, jumps out of Lennie's head.

In this passage, the hallucination of the giant rabbit taunts him. This hallucination tells Lennie that he would not be capable to tending any rabbits and that George will not let him take care of them. Additionally, he predicts that Lennie will beat him for causing trouble and eventually leave him.

"Well, he's sick of you," said the rabbit. "He's gonna beat hell outa you an' then go away an' leave you."

"He won't," Lennie cried frantically. "He won't do nothing like that. I know George. Me an' him travels together."

But the rabbit repeated softly over and over, "He gonna leave you, ya crazy bastard. He gonna leave ya all alone. He gonna leave ya, crazy bastard."

Lennie put his hands over his ears. "He ain't, I tell ya he ain't." And he cried, "Oh! George – George – George"<sup>92</sup>

Lennie is certain that George would never hurt him, nor would he leave him, although the rabbit, his subconscious, suggest otherwise. Thus, this passage portrays Lennie's fear of George abandoning him as well as not letting him tend the rabbits because of his actions. Also, this part foreshadows the fact that Lennie is not sad and disappointed because he killed Curley's wife, as he does not care that she is dead that much as he cares about the rabbits. Lennie views the killing of Curley's wife as a bad thing because of which George will not let him tend the rabbits which is devastating for him.

The whole part of the book concerning these hallucinations shows themes of regret, guilt, and its consequences as well as fear of abandonment and it adds depth to Lennie's character since it shows the readers his internal struggles. Furthermore, hallucinations can be labelled as a disorder of perception, and they can be connected with serious mental illnesses which would indicate that Lennie might suffer from a such disorder. Therefore, by omitting this segment from the film adaptation, audiences not only miss out

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<sup>92</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, pp. 115-116.

on witnessing Lennie's internal struggles, but also remain unaware of Lennie having hallucinations as well as the possibility that Lennie might suffer from a mental disorder.

After George and Lennie reunite, their dialogue also differs since the novella's conversation is built upon the previous part with the hallucinations where Lennie is shouting at the hallucination of the rabbit when George finds him. Therefore, George asks him why Lennie is yelling.

George said quietly, "What the hell you yellin' 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 it," Lennie cried. "You ain't that kind"<sup>93</sup>

The part where Lennie is hallucinating is absent in the film so there cannot be found George's question regarding Lennie's shouting in the film, while the segment, in which Lennie asks George whether he will leave him and George reassures him, is adapted into the film, but it is presented in a different form and order compared to Steinbeck's novella.

Their reunion in the film begins differently as Lennie tells George that he did not forget but did not manage to find the right place, where he is supposed to go when he gets into trouble, whereas in the book he remembers.

George. George, I didn't... I didn't forget, George.  
I didn't... I didn't remember where we was, but I didn't forget.  
- I just... I couldn't find it. - It's OK.  
- I couldn't find it. - It's OK. OK?  
I didn't forget what you told me.  
It's OK. It's OK.<sup>94</sup>

This segment of their exchange from the film is absent in the book. Afterwards in both mediums, George comforts Lennie while remaining alert of their surroundings. Subsequently, in the film, there are clips of Curley and the men on horses as well as dogs running alongside them, underscoring how urgent and real the situation they are in is.

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<sup>93</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 116.

<sup>94</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:40:25).

Consequently, both mediums continue in different order of the dialogues, yet covers the same content. The book progresses by Lennie saying that he has done a bad deed.

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.<sup>95</sup>

This segment corresponds to a similar part in the film, albeit with slight differences in wording. Nevertheless, the film version contains additional part including Lennie's question about their future.

George, I done... I done a bad thing.  
It don't make no difference.  
George...  
George, where are we gonna go now?  
I don't know.  
I... I like it here.<sup>96</sup>

The supplementary part, absent in the book, may serve as a tool for heightening the emotional impact on viewers. Hence, Lennie stating that he likes it there combined with George's face full of sadness, as he knows that they cannot stay there, could lead into evoking even deeper empathy from the film audience towards Lennie and the story. In the novella, their conversation proceeds by Lennie asking George whether he will scold him like he always does. Lennie then mimics George by saying the lines George typically says to him when he scolds him and encourages George to continue. George stops after a while and Lennie states that he could go to the mountains, thereupon George expresses his desire for Lennie to stay. Lennie's inquiry about George scolding him and the following exchange is incorporated into the film, although in different length and order, as it precedes Lennie admitting that he has done a bad thing, whereas in the book it occurs afterward. Moreover, the segment of Lennie suggesting that he could go to the mountains is cut from the film.

Subsequently, both mediums meet by Lennie eagerly wanting George to tell him like he always does. Thus, George starts to recount how their lives differ from those

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<sup>95</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 116.

<sup>96</sup> Sinise, Gary. *Of Mice and Men*. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1992, (1:42:14).

of other men because George and Lennie have each other and they share the dream of owning their own place together. The film follows the novella faithfully in this section with only minor changes in wording as well as some cuts. Nonetheless, the content and overall message remain unchanged. The novella contains supplementary details, such as the mention of George taking Carlson's gun whereas in the film there is no such direct reference, leaving it up to the viewers of the film to come up with their own conclusion about the gun. Furthermore, in the book, George and Lennie have their hats, while in the film none of them does. In the novella, George takes his off and instructs Lennie to do the same, which represent a detail that is not present in the film as Lennie left his hat in the barn in the film and George does not have his hat during this passage in the film at all.

There can be noticed a significant difference in the way George shoots Lennie. Although he uses a gun and shoots him in the back of his head in both mediums, there is a variation in George's approach. In the book, it takes George more time to shoot Lennie. Initially, George fails in his first attempt to take his life since his hands are shaking and he eventually drops his hand. George manages to kill him on the second attempt, during which he hears the men approaching. George raises his hand and, in response to Lennie's desire to secure their place immediately, assures him that they will do it right away before ultimately shooting Lennie.

In the film, however, George kills him on the first attempt, seemingly without hesitation as he steps away, raises his hand, and immediately shoots him. Additionally, he takes his life during a different point in their conversation. He kills him while Lennie is expressing his excitement about having rabbits on their ranch. With their dialogue in the book being longer, the conversation in the film does not reach the same point as in the novella. Therefore, Lennie does not express his desire to get their dream house right at this moment, as there is no dialogue after the sound of the gunshot.

Despite George's expedited approach in taking Lennie's life, which might suggest that his character in the film does not care that much about Lennie as he does in the film and as a result making him seem less compassionate, it cannot be determined because George shows remorse before killing Lennie by putting his head on him.

If the film adaptation did not depict Lennie's death this way, the story would lose one of its key elements. Hence, it is essential to the story for George to be the one

who kills Lennie, as it foreshadows the earlier event of Candy's dog being shot where Candy lets his own dog to be killed by another man. According to Louis Owens, as he mentions in *Of Mice and Men: The Dream of Commitment* which is a part of *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)* edited by Harold Bloom, George is Lennie's keeper and, unlike Candy who lets Carlson to shoot his dog, feels accountable for Lennie and takes his life himself. Moreover, he ends his life while picturing their dream which Owens parallels to envisioning Eden.<sup>97</sup>

After Lennie's life is ended, the film does not follow the novella at all. The book continues by George throwing the gun away and Slim shouting as he is searching for George. The men come to the clearing, but Curley appears first.

“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.”<sup>98</sup>

Slim goes to George after Curley and sits closely to George while expressing his sympathy.

“Never you mind,” said Slim. “A guy got to sometimes.”<sup>99</sup>

Subsequently, there is a short exchange between George and Carlson who ask him if Lennie had his gun which George confirms. Afterwards, Slim urges George to have a drink with him, reassures him that he had to do it and they leave. The novella ends with Carlson's line:

“Now what the hell ya suppose is eatin' them two guys?”<sup>100</sup>

The film ends differently. After the shooting of Lennie, the film continues with George sitting for a while beside Lennie which is followed by George on a train returning to the beginning of the film. Hence, there is no section of the men going to him or Slim inviting him for a drink. Instead, George sits in the train with tears in his eyes and reflects on his and Lennie's friendship and the time they had together, for the film ends

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<sup>97</sup> Owens, Louis. “Of Mice and Men: The Dream of Commitment.” *John Steinbeck (Bloom's Modern Critical Views)*, edited by Harold Bloom, Chelsea House Pub, 2008, p. 20.

<sup>98</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 120-121.

<sup>99</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 121.

<sup>100</sup> Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*, Penguin Books, 2014, p. 121.

by a flashback of George and Lennie tossing a bag of barley onto a wagon, looking at each other and then walking away.

## 8. Potential use of the films in public schools

Mimi Reisel Gladstein describes *The Red Pony* (1937) in association with children accordingly.

Jody Tiflin of *The Red Pony* stories may be among the best-drawn children in American literature. And, in keeping with that special quality of Steinbeck's creation of child characters, the novel is at once a book for children and a book for adults.<sup>101</sup>

Gladstein states that by creating this episodic novella, Steinbeck was able to make a narrative that appeals to both children and adults. While children might learn multiple important lessons from the stories as well as form a deep connection to the main protagonist, given that Jody embodies a 10-year-old, adults might be drawn to the novella's profound themes incorporated into the book.

However, certain sections of the book include heart-wrenching scenes that may be traumatic for a young reader, particularly in the third chapter of the book. *The Promise* centres on the mare Nellie, who is supposed to deliver a foal. The novella depicts the harsh breeding process, during which Nellie sustains slight injuries and Jody feels scared. Subsequently, the difficult labor leads to her death since she is abruptly killed by Billy, with the foal forcibly removed from her belly using a knife.

These distressing scenes might be too drastic for some children, potentially leaving an emotional scar, especially when seen on screen. Therefore, it is fortunate that these scenes are not included in the film. Additionally, with Billy Buck's absence in the film, another harsh moment from the first chapter, where Billy cuts into Gabilan's throat in an attempt to cure him, is also not incorporated into the film. The only harsh scene that could make some viewers might feel uncomfortable watching it, is the scene with Jody's

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<sup>101</sup> Gladstein, Mimi Reisel. "Through the Eyes of a Child: A Steinbeck Forte" *A John Steinbeck Reader Essays in Honor of Stephen K. George*, Edited by Barbara A. Heavilin, Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2009, p. 54.



pony lying on the ground surrounded by buzzards, followed Jody killing one of them. Despite the presence of the red pony's death in the film, which might be upsetting for some children, there are valuable lessons that the children can learn from watching it. For instance, they can learn that death is a natural part of life. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that this scene represents the only harsh moment compared to the novella which contains additional killings that were omitted from the film such as Jody killing a bird out of boredom.

In summary, given the altered ending with both Nellie and her foal surviving, as well as the exclusion of certain heart-wrenching scenes, the film can serve as a more pleasant way to introduce Steinbeck's works to young children in public schools. Moreover, by excluding such scenes, the film might be more suitable for young children compared the book, especially the intense moments in the third chapter. In addition, one problem that might occur is associated with the depth of Steinbeck's themes incorporated into the book and the film, which might be difficult to understand especially for young children.

As far as *Of Mice and Men* from 1992 is concerned, viewers are confronted with the harsh realities experienced by ranch workers during the Great Depression. The adaptation contains several instances of violence from Lennie killing animals to killing Curley's wife, which is followed by Lennie being shot by George. Even though by including these parts some children might find the film unsettling, it conveys the novella's themes. However, watching this film can be beneficial to watch during English lessons due to its valuable portrayal of the period of Great Depression and the ranch workers life during that time. While the language of the workers includes swear words, which is incorporated into the film adaptation, the language in *The Red Pony* adaptation, on the other hand, is significantly gentler in tone.

Overall, both adaptations offer ways to be beneficial for children and young adults as part of their literary education, particularly in showing viewers the era of the Great Depression and the essence of Steinbeck's writings. However, while 1973 adaptation of *The Red Pony* with its happy ending can serve as a great way to introduce one of John Steinbeck's works even to young children, the complex themes of *Of Mice and Men* (1973), accompanied by occasional violence, harsh language, and a pervasive sense of pity

for Lennie, suggest that the adaptation *Of Mice and Men* might be more suitable for classes of young adults who might be able to understand the profound themes easier than young children.

Additionally, the use of these film adaptations in education can encourage critical thinking, as teachers have the opportunity to engage students in analysing and comparing the film adaptations with the original novellas.

## 9. Conclusion

This Bachelor thesis delves into a comparison of John Steinbeck's novellas *The Red Pony* (1937) and *Of Mice and Men* (1937) and their respective film adaptations.

John Steinbeck whose career as a writer spanned nearly for four decades represented a Nobel Prize winning author who had contributed to the literary world by publishing short stories, novels, journals as well as screenplays. Steinbeck was born on February 17, 1902, in Salinas, California. His birthplace profoundly influenced his writing, with Salinas often appears in his works. Additionally, Steinbeck spent time on ranches in his youth, experiencing the life during the Great Depression first-hand. This background influenced him and provided rich material for his stories, which he incorporated into the settings and themes of some of his works, including the novellas examined in this thesis.

Steinbeck's best-known novel is regarded to be *Grapes of Wrath* (1939), which was among other of his works adapted for the screen. Beside *The Red Pony* and *Of Mice and Men* the film adaptations include *Tortilla Flat* (1935), *The Moon is Down* (1942), *The Pearl* (1947), *East of Eden* (1952), *The Wayward Bus* (1947), *Cannery Row* (1945), *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961) and *In Dubious Battle* (1936). Therefore, despite Steinbeck's passing on December 20, 1968, his legacy lives on not only in his works but also in these film adaptations.

The first work by John Steinbeck analysed in this thesis *The Red Pony* (1937). After undergoing the comparison of Steinbeck's novella with the film 1973 adaptation directed by Robert Totten, it becomes evident that the key moments from each chapter

are incorporated in the film, albeit presented in different sequence and in some cases form. Moreover, the film obtains alternations in the form of both omissions and additions.

One of the most significant changes to the film's narrative is the absence of Billy Buck, a key character of the novella. Except a few mentions of his name that lead to a possibility that Billy had previously worked on the Tifflin's family ranch, he is never present in the film adaptation. In the book, Billy occurs in every chapter and his presence deeply affects not only the chapter about Gabilan, but it also influences subsequent actions and events regarding Nellie, the mare, and her foal. Therefore, the exclusion of Billy Buck's character from the film adaptation results in the absence of several elements of the novella's narrative as well as themes. For instance, by omitting this character from the film, Jody loses an important paternal figure other than his own distant father and a companion who helps him with the pony and subsequently the mare. Instead, the film places a greater emphasis on the relationship between Jody and his father by including additional scenes.

Furthermore, it appears that their relationship undergoes a positive transformation as at the beginning of the adaptation, their relationship is cold, but throughout the story, it evolves, resolving in the end of the film when Carl changes his mind thanks to Jody and saves both the mare and her foal. Consequently, it is evident that the film ends differently than the novella. The disparity is caused not only by the film's conclusion with a different event than the book, as the book ends with a chapter regarding the visit of Jody's grandfather, which is incorporated into the film but placed before Nellie's labor, the last event in the film. Moreover, the altered portrayal of the Nellie's labour plays a significant role because it results in a happy ending in the film adaptation, which cannot be said for the correspondent part in the novella in which Billy Buck kills the mare in order to save her foal. In addition, a different or slightly altered order of the events varying from the novella concerns the entire film adaptation. A key example of this includes the fact that Gitano meets Gabilan in the film, a moment that cannot occur in the novella as Gabilan dies in the first chapter while Gitano visits the family in second chapter, after Gabilan's passing.

The second part of this thesis centres on one of the best-known Steinbeck's novellas, *Of Mice and Men* (1937). Compared to the film adaptation of *The Red Pony* (1973) which captures the essence of John Steinbeck's novella with obvious additions and overall

changes to the film, the film adaptation *Of Mice and Men* (1992) follows the narrative of the book more closely, making some of the changes, aside from the film's opening and closing scene, less evident.

However, there are still present certain significant changes such as the omission of the entire conversation in Crooks' room, different portrayal of Curley's wife leading to viewers seeing her in a more sympathetic way, and exclusion of Lennie's hallucinations. Moreover, there can be noticed certain additional segments such as the chase during the opening scene, incorporated possibly in order to raise the film's suspense.

Overall, the main themes of the novella, such as the harsh reality of life during the Great Depression, George and Lennie's companionship, the American dream, and its eventual demise, as well as themes of discrimination and loneliness, were adapted into the film. Unlike *The Red Pony* adaptation, the ending of the film does not vary that significantly, as George takes Lennie's life, just like in the book.

Each of the adaptations were inspected through slightly different way as the *Of Mice and Men* (1992) adaptation follows the novella to a high extend, maintaining a high level of fidelity compared to the *The Red Pony* (1973) which diverges significantly from the novella, particularly in terms of sequence and portrayal of several events. Given the high fidelity of the *Of Mice and Men* film, the analysis could delve deeper into comparing details such as examining the dialogues, which are mostly similar and sometimes almost identical, in a more profound manner, thereby extending the comparative part.

The last part of this bachelor thesis focuses on potential use of these film adaptations in schools. In summary, both film adaptations offer benefits for children as well as young adults by depicting the Great Depression era and capturing the essence of Steinbeck's writing. While the 1973 adaptation of *The Red Pony* with its happy ending, can introduce Steinbeck's works even to young children, the complexity of themes, occasional violence, and harsh language in the 1992 adaptation *Of Mice and Men* suggest it may be better suited for young adult classes, where student can grasp the profound themes more easily.

## 10. Resumé

Tato bakalářská práce se věnuje americkému autorovi Johnu Steinbeckovi a porovnání jeho novel *Ryzáček* (1937) a *O myších a lidech* (1937) s jejich filmovými adaptacemi.

Americký spisovatel John Steinbeck, jehož kariéra trvala téměř čtyři desetiletí, byl nositelem Nobelovy ceny a přispěl do světa literatury publikací povídek, románů, deníků a scénářů. Steinbeck se narodil 17. února 1902 v kalifornském městě Salinas, jehož vliv se výrazně promítl do Steinbeckovy tvorby, která často reflektuje právě prostředí tohoto města. Mimo jiné John Steinbeck strávil v mládí mnoho času na rančích, kde na vlastní kůži zažil dobu Velké hospodářské krize, která ho výrazně ovlivnila a poskytla mu podnět pro jeho tvorbu. Tuto inspiraci zařadil do prostředí a motivů několika děl, včetně novel, kterým se věnuje tato bakalářská práce.

Za nejnámější román Johna Steinbecka je považován román *Hrozny hněvu* (1939), který byl spolu s mnoha jeho dalšími díly zfilmován. Kromě děl *Ryzáček* (1937) a *O myších a lidech* (1937) patří mezi zfilmovaná Steinbeckova díla *Rovina Tortila* (1935), *Měsíc zapadá* (1942), *Perla* (1947), *Na východ od ráje* (1952), *Toulavý autobus* (1947), *Na plechárně* (1945), *Zima úzkosti* (1961) and *Bitva* (1936). Z této skutečnosti jasně vyplývá, že i přes Steinbeckovo úmrtí 20. prosince 1968, přetrval jeho odkaz nejen v knihách, ale také ve světě filmu.

První knihou Johna Steinbecka, které se tato práce věnuje, je dílo *Ryzáček* publikované v roce 1937. Po porovnání této Steinbeckovy novely s filmovou adaptací z roku 1973 režírovanou Robertem Tottenem, je zřejmé, že klíčové momenty každé kapitoly knihy jsou ve filmu zakomponovány, avšak v odlišném pořadí a v některých případech i jiné podobě. Mimo jiné filmová adaptace obsahuje úpravy, jak ve formě vystřížení některých pasáží, tak přidáním některých scén, které nejsou součástí novely.

Jedna z nejvýznamnějších změn, kterou se film liší od jeho literární předlohy, spočívá v nepřítomnosti jedné z důležitých postav, Billyho Bucka. Kromě skutečnosti, že je o něm ve filmu několik zmínek, které naznačují, že Billy Buck dříve na ranči pracoval, ve filmu se nikdy jeho postava neobjeví. V knižní verzi je Billy přítomen v každé z kapitol, avšak nejvíce jeho přítomnost ovlivňuje první kapitolu, ve které Jody dostane poníka, a následnou část knihy týkající se klisny Nellie a jejího hříběte. Tím pádem vynechání jeho postavy z filmové adaptace má za následek absenci několika knižních částí a stejně

tak motivů. V knize Billy poskytuje Jodymu pomoc se zvířaty a z velké části zastává otcovskou roli, zatímco film klade daleko větší důraz na vztah mezi Jodym a jeho skutečným otcem, Carlem Tifflinem, k čemuž přispívá nejen absence Billyho, ale také zahrnutí přidaných scén, které nejsou obsaženy v knize. Kromě toho, ve filmové adaptaci je možné ve vztahu Jodyho a jeho otce zaregistrovat pozitivní změnu. Zatímco na začátku filmové adaptace je jejich interakce chladná, postupně se vyvíjí, a na konci filmového příběhu Carl díky Jodymu změní svoje přesvědčení a zachrání klisnu i hříbě, což představuje výraznou progresi v jejich vztahu, jež v literární verzi pozorovatelná není. Tímto rozdílem je patrné, že filmová adaptace končí jinak než Steinbeckova novela. Kniha je zakončena kapitolou o návštěvě Jodyho dědečka, která je začleněna do filmové adaptace, ale nachází se před sekci s porodem klisny, která film uzavírá. Filmová adaptace se neliší pouze rozdílnými závěrečnými událostmi, ale také podobou jejich ztvárnění. Filmová adaptace končí porodem klisny, která spolu s jejím hříbětem přežije, a tím pádem vede ke šťastnému konci, což nelze říci o odpovídající části v knize, v níž Billy Buck klisnu zabije, aby zachránil její hříbě. V souvislosti s tím, je nutné zmínit, že odlišné nebo mírně změněné pořadí událostí děje filmu lišícího se od novely, se týká celé filmové adaptace. Mimo zakončení filmu, je toho příkladem také fakt, že ve filmové adaptaci se Gitano setkává s Gabilanem, což představuje okamžik, který nemůže nastat v knize, jelikož Gabilan umírá v první kapitole, kdežto Gitano navštěvuje rodinu ve druhé kapitole, a tedy poté, co Gabilan zemře.

Druhá část této bakalářské práce se zaměřuje na jednu z nejznámějších Steinbeckových novel, *O myších a lidech* (1937). Ve srovnání s filmovou adaptací *Ryzáček* (1973), která zachycuje podstatu novely se zřejmými přidanými scénami a rozdílným ztvárněním některých částí, filmová adaptace *O myších a lidech* (1992) je daleko věrnější ději novely, a kromě úvodní a závěrečné scény neobsahuje tak evidentní rozdíly jako *Ryzáček* (1973).

Nicméně stále je ve filmové adaptaci *O myších a lidech* z roku 1992 přítomno několik zásadních změn. Mezi nejvýznamnější patří vyřazení celé konverzace v pokoji Crookse, odlišné ztvárnění Curleyho manželky vedoucí k tomu, že jí diváci mohou vnímat rozdílně než čtenáři novely, a dále vyčlenění sekce s Lennieho halucinacemi. Mimo jiné filmová adaptace obsahuje dodatečné scény jako například v úvodní části filmu, kdy Lennie a George prochází z bývalého ranče, které jsou zakomponované zřejmě k zvýšení napětí filmu.

Je nutné podotknout, že každá z adaptací byla analyzovaná lehce odlišným způsobem. Filmová adaptace *O myších a lidech* (1992) zachovává až na několik zmíněných rozdílů vysokou úroveň věrnosti. Filmová adaptace *Ryzáček* (1973) se od knihy výrazně odchyluje zejména co se týče pořadí a ztvárnění několika událostí. S ohledem na vysokou věrnost filmové adaptace *O myších a lidech* (1992) bylo možné se v práci zaměřit hlouběji na toto dílo, a to například na porovnání dialogů, o kterých lze říci, že jsou podobné, někdy až identické.

Poslední část této bakalářské práce se zaměřuje na potencionální použití těchto filmových adaptací ve školách. Souhrnně lze uvést, že obě filmové adaptace mohou být ve výuce přínosné tím, že zobrazují éru Velké hospodářské krize a zachycují podstatu Steinbeckových děl. Avšak zatímco adaptace filmu *Ryzáček* (1973) se šťastným koncem může Steinbeckova díla představit i dětem, složitost motivů, občasné násilí a vulgarismus v adaptaci *O myších a lidech* (1937) naznačují, že by mohla být vhodnější ve výuce mladistvých, kteří mohou také lépe porozumět tématům tohoto díla.

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