Lennie

Barrier: has mental problems, probably crazy. This prevents not only Lennie but George as well from living out their dream of owning their own place. Lennie continually gets into trouble and has to leave a job before any kind of money can be saved up.

Quote: “And then, from out of Lennie’s head there came a little fat old woman. . . . And when she spoke, it was in Lennie’s voice.”

Explanation: This indicates that Lennie is likely crazy. George believes, or at least says to others, that Lennie is NOT crazy, but just dumb. If Lennie were merely dumb, perhaps he could overcome the problem and learn to stay out of trouble enough to earn the money with George to buy the ranch they know is for sale. However, Perhaps George knows Lennie is crazy, and that he never can get better. That would leave George two options as he sees it: have Lennie committed to a mental hospital or kill him. Putting Lennie in a mental hospital would prevent George from being able to save up the necessary money himself for the ranch, so he keeps Lennie around. But the trouble Lennie gets in escalates to a point where Lennie is a danger to anyone around him.