

The Stone Boy tells the story Arnold, who has lived his whole life in the shadow of older brother, Eugene. One morning, Arnold wakes to pick peas with his brother. He gets up and dressed before his brother, Arnold finally wakes his brother and goes downstairs. He tries to awaken Eugie, to no avail and continues on to pick peas by himself. Later, after the sun has fully risen, he returns to the farmstead, to find that the rest of the family is awake and bustling. In the face of Arnold's apparent lack of introspection, the sheriff decides that one of two things must be true: either Arnold has no feelings, or he's just stupid. However, the sheriff makes it clear that he belies the former – and Arnold soon realizes that his uncle Andy agrees. Arnold overhears them tell many stories about Eugie, who was universally loved. Finally, he goes to bed, hollowed out and numb, but not regretful. Arnold's sister pointedly ignores him, until their father intervenes. He takes his gun off the rack and prepares for duck shooting. He informs them that Eugie is dead. Eugie does so first, without incident.