

The Outsiders – by S. E. Hinton. Adapted to the stage by Christopher Sergel

Description: In Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1967, Ponyboy Curtis, his best friend Johnny and their makeshift family of underprivileged ‘Greasers’ are in a fight for survival amidst ongoing territorial battles with their rivals, the upper-class gang of ‘Socs’, who seem to have it all. When a fight goes too far, Ponyboy and Johnny are forced to run away and confront the realities of the violence they grew up in and find hope and acceptance in a world that seems like it has abandoned them.

The Outsiders is a coming-of-age story told by fourteen-year-old Ponyboy, the youngest of the greasers, who is being raised by his oldest brother Darry. The greasers and Socs--the rich kids--do not get along and are always fighting. Cherry, a Soc, shares a connection with Ponyboy due to his sensitive nature and love of poetry. This makes her boyfriend, Bob, jealous, and he, along with a gang of Socs, jump Ponyboy and his best friend Johnny. To save Ponyboy from being drowned, Johnny stabs Bob and accidentally kills him. Ponyboy and Johnny flee into hiding. Later, Ponyboy and Johnny rescue children from a burning church, and Johnny is critically injured during the rescue. Eventually, Johnny succumbs to his injuries but not before leaving Ponyboy with his famous message, "Stay gold Ponyboy."

The Greasers

Ponyboy Curtis *Character Age: 14*

The narrator of the story and the youngest of the Greasers. Ponyboy lives with his brothers Sodapop and Darry after their parents were killed in an automobile accident. His literary and academic interests set him apart from the rest of the gang and he struggles with a fractured sense of identity and feeling like an outsider to the others. He’s sensitive, contemplative and loyal, especially to Johnny.

Johnny Cade *Character Age: 16*

Ponyboy’s best friend, fondly described as the gang's ‘pet’. Between previous traumatic encounters with the Socs and an abusive home life, Johnny is skittish and keeps to himself if he’s not with Ponyboy or Dallas. However, he is fiercely loyal to the Greasers and would do anything to protect his friends.

Dallas “Dally” Winston *Character Age: 17*

A tough and hardened Greaser with a tendency to go looking for fights. Despite his independence and fierceness, Dally is also a compassionate and loyal friend and is particularly protective of Johnny.

Darrel “Darry” Curtis *Character Age: 20*

The oldest of the Curtis brothers and the ‘dad friend’ within the gang. Darrel gave up his football scholarship and his dreams beyond Tulsa to look after Ponyboy and Sodapop when their parents passed away. He feels the weight of the world on his shoulders and is doing his best to keep their family together despite it all.

Sodapop “Soda” Curtis *Character Age: 16*

The middle child and a high school dropout. Soda is fun-loving and supportive and cares deeply about his friends and his girlfriend, Sandy. He loves his brothers but often gets caught between Ponyboy and Darrel’s incessant arguing.

Two-Bit Mathews *Character Age: 18*

One of the oldest Greasers. Two-Bit is quick witted, earnest, and likes to talk. Sometimes he takes the joke too far but he always means well. He's a good friend to Johnny and Ponyboy.

Sandy *Character Age: 16*

Soda's girlfriend that breaks his heart when she moves away to live with her grandmother. May be doubled as an extra in fight sequences and large group scenes.

The Socs (short for Socials not Socks)

Cherry Valance *Character Age: 16*

Cherry is open-minded, courageous, and steadfast on her values even in the face of her rowdy and violent boyfriend Bob. She befriends Ponyboy and offers him a new perspective on the lives of the Socs.

Bob Sheldon *Character Age: 18*

The intimidating leader of the Socs and Cherry's boyfriend. Is seen as violent and quick to anger due to an absence of guidance from the adults in his life. Cherry describes him as 'something special when he isn't trying to destroy himself.'

Randy Adderson *Character Age: 18*

Bob's best friend and Marcia's boyfriend. Goes along with Bob's antics but tries to reflect and turn his life around later in the story. May be doubled as an extra in fight sequences and large group scenes.

Marcia *Character Age: 16*

Cherry's friend and Randy's girlfriend. Marcia is witty and unshakable when talking to the Greasers. May be doubled as an extra in fight sequences and large group scenes.

Supporting Roles *Will ALL be doubled as an extra in fight sequences and large group scenes.*

Mrs. O'Briant *Character Age: 20-35*

A school teacher whose students were saved by Ponyboy and Johnny from a fire.

Jerry *Character Age: 20-35*

A school teacher whose students were saved by Ponyboy and Johnny from a fire. Praises Ponyboy for his heroism.

Paul *Character Age: 18-25*

Darrel's friend from high school that went to college. Fights him at the Rumble.

Doctor *Character Age: 20-35*

The doctor that treats Johnny and Dallas in the hospital after the fire.

Nurse *Character Age: 20-35*

Takes care of Johnny in the hospital.

Mr. Syme *Character Age: 20-35*

Ponyboy's English teacher that assigns him the essay in which Ponyboy is writing the story for.

Audition Scene 1 - Ponyboy Monologue

PONYBOY. I wish I looked like Paul Newman. He looks tough and I don't. The other thing - it's a long walk home with no company. But I usually lone it anyway. I like to watch movies undisturbed so I can get into them and live them with the actors. I'm different that way. I mean my second oldest brother, Soda, never cracks a book at all, and my oldest brother, Darry, works too hard to be interested in a story or drawing a picture - so I'm not like them. And nobody in our gang digs movies and books the way I do. So I lone it. And I'm a greaser. (Explaining) Greasers can't walk alone too much or they get jumped by the Socs. I'm not sure how you spell that, but it's the abbreviation for the Socials-the jet set, the rich kids. (There's the sound of a car approaching, driving slowly. PONYBOY notices the sound.) We're poorer than the Socs. I reckon we're wilder, too. But not like the Socs, who jump greasers and wreck houses and throw beer blasts for kicks. (Frankly.) Greasers are almost like hoods; we steal things and drive old souped up cars and have gang fights. I don't mean I do. Darry would kill me if I got in trouble with the police. Since Mom and Dad were killed in a car crash, the three of us get to stay together only as long as we behave. So Soda and I stay out of trouble as much as we can. (The car has stopped and car doors are opened and then slammed shut. PONY-BOY is getting nervous.) I'm not saying that either the Socs or the greasers are better; that's just the way things are.

Audition Scene 2 - Ponyboy and Cherry

PONYBOY Johnny figured it was Soda holding him. He started shaking and crying-couldn't stop himself. He said there was a whole bunch-a blue Mustang full. Soda kept holding him saying, "Don't talk," and over and over, "They've gone. They've gone, Johnnycake."

CHERRY (cautiously). A blue Mustang?

PONYBOY (nods again). Johnny tried to run, but they caught him. One of them had rings on his hand. That's what cut Johnny so bad.

CHERRY (disturbed). All Socs aren't like that. You have to believe me, Ponyboy. Not all of us are like that.

PONYBOY. Sure.

CHERRY. That's like saying all greasers are like Dallas Winston. I bet he's jumped a few people.

PONYBOY (conceding, nods). Lotsa times.

CHERRY. You think the Socs have it made, don't you?

PONYBOY (sharply). Well you do.

CHERRY. It may come as a surprise, but we have troubles you've never even heard of. You want to know something. Things are tough all over.

PONYBOY. Then why are we so different?

CHERRY (considering). You're more emotional. We're sophisticated - cool to the point of not feeling anything. I'll catch myself talking and realize I don't mean half what I'm saying. I don't really think a beer blast

on the river bottom is super-cool, but I'll rave about it just to be saying something. (She suddenly smiles at him.) I've never told that to anyone. You're the first person. (Truly curious.) Why is that?

PONYBOY (wryly). Because I'm a greaser and because I'm younger. So you don't have to keep your guard up.

CHERRY (admiring). For a kid, you're awful smart.

PONYBOY. Probably I'll outgrow it. (Nods left.) We'd better buy some popcorn and get back. (Movie music is climaxing and then ends.)

CHERRY (glances at the imaginary screen). The picture's ending. (Curiously.) You read a lot, don't you, Pony-boy?

PONYBOY. Yeah. Why?

CHERRY. I could just tell. And I bet you watch sunsets. (PONY nods.) I used to watch them, too, before I got so busy.

Audition Scene 3 - Darry

DARRY Pony! (PONYBOY comes in, swallowing hard. DARRY throws down the paper and jumps up. DARRY is furious.) Where the heck have you been? (PONYBOY is too frightened to reply.) Do you know what time it is? (PONY-BOY shakes his head.) Well it's two in the morning, kiddo. Another hour and I would have had the police out after you. (His voice rising.) Where were you? Where in the almighty universe were you? You went to sleep in the lot?? It never occurred to you that your brothers might be worrying their heads off and afraid to call the police because it might get you thrown in a boys' home so quickly it'd make your head spin -and you're asleep in the lot! (Outraged.) What's the matter with you?

Audition Scene 4 - Sandy and Sodapop

SANDY (one glance is enough). No news. (As she looks at them.) You both been up all night.

SODAPOP (shrugs). How'd you make out at home?

SANDY. Not good. The worst.

SODAPOP. That bad?

SANDY. I said — the worst. (She has bad news.) We have to talk.

SODAPOP (as he considers her). I'm getting a little nervous.

SANDY. I can't live at home anymore. I have to get out - right now.

SODAPOP (bewildered). How can you get out - right now?

SANDY. How can I stay? (She takes a breath.) I've been up all night, too.

SODAPOP. You shoulda called.

SANDY (this is it). Sodapop - I'm going to Tallahassee, Florida. My grandmother lives there. I'm gonna live with my grandmother in Florida.

SODAPOP. Hold on! You don't have to do that. You could stay here. You heard Darry. You don't have to go to Florida.

SANDY. I can't stay here.

SODAPOP. We could get married. We're gonna some-day, so why not-

SANDY (no hope). We're sixteen.

SODAPOP. A couple weeks I'll be seventeen.

SANDY. Big difference.

SODAPOP. No, Sandy, I'll be-I won't-

SANDY. I have to get away. I can't talk about it anymore. (She takes a breath.) And - I can't see you anymore.

SODAPOP (stunned). What?

SANDY. That's what I came to tell you. (As SODAPOP starts to say something, she puts a hand over his mouth.) It's hard enough, Sodapop.

SODAPOP. But-

SANDY (a plea.) Don't make it worse. (Begging) Don't do that.

SODAPOP (grabs a breath). Okay. Okay-for now. It's been a bad night. You have to back off for a while. Okay. But we'll write. Keep in touch. Give it a little time. Work things out.

SANDY. When you see Ponyboy and Johnny explain to 'em. (She touches his face.) I sure love you.

SODAPOP (a cry). Sandy-

Audition Scene 5 - Randy and Ponyboy

RANDY (calls to PONYBOY). Can we talk? I read about you in the paper. How come?

PONYBOY. Maybe I felt like playing hero.

RANDY (bothered). I wouldn't have done it. I'd a let those kids burn to death.

PONYBOY. You might not have. You might have done the same thing.

RANDY. I can't believe a greaser could pull something like that.

PONYBOY (sharp). Greaser didn't have anything to do with it! Two-Bit wouldn't've done it. Maybe you would. It's the individual.

RANDY. Maybe you're right. (Takes a breath.) I'm not going to show at the rumble tonight. (PONYBOY is surprised.) I'm sick of all this. And no matter what you think, Bob was a good guy. He had a problem, but he was a real person.

PONYBOY. How could I know that?

RANDY. You couldn't, and now he's dead. His mother had a total breakdown.

PONYBOY. Who's to blame?

RANDY. All I know, they spoiled him; they gave in to him all the time. He kept trying to make someone say "No" and they never did. He needed somebody to lay down the law, set limits, give him something to stand on. (Tries to grin, but he's close to tears.) One time he came home drunker than anything-falling down disgusting. He thought sure they'd raise the roof. (It's so absurd.) Know what they did? They said it was their fault, they'd failed him, they took the blame. Maybe if his father had given him a belt instead, he'd still be alive. (With a small smile.) Only person ever told Bob "No" was Cherry Valance. No wonder he was so crazy about her.

PONYBOY. I have to go to the hospital.

RANDY. That kid-your buddy-he might die?

PONYBOY. He might.

RANDY. And tonight-people get hurt in rumbles, maybe killed. And it doesn't do any good. Even if you whip us, you'll still be at the bottom and we'll still be the lucky ones with all the breaks. Greasers will still be greasers, and Socs will still be Socs. I'm going to get out of this town.

PONYBOY. Running away won't help.

Audition Scene 6 - Dallas

JOHNNY. Ponyboy -(PONYBOY has to lean to hear. JOHNNY whispers.) Stay gold. (Then JOHNNY is inert.)

DALLAS (softly. Pleading). Don't die, Johnny. Please don't die. (His pain is making him angry.) This is what you get for tryin' to help people, you little punk. This is what you get. (Pleading.) Please, Johnny-don't be dead. (Cracking up. Turns on PONY.) See, Pony! I was crazy for not wanting him to get mean. If he'd been tough like me, he'd never have been in this mess. If he'd got smart like me he would not have run back in to that church. This is what you get for helping people. Wise up, Pony. Get like me and you don't get hurt. Look out for yourself and nothin' can touch you. Hear me, Pony, Wise up!

(He turns and runs off)

Audition Scene 7 - Sodapop

SODAPOP. I'm telling you the truth, Ponyboy. I dropped out because I'm dumb. Look, I'm happy working in a gas station with cars. You'd never be happy doing that. You have to understand about Darry, too. He wants you to have the chance he missed. (Emotional.) We can't get hacked off at each other anymore. We're all we've got left and if we don't stick together, we don't have anything. (His hope.) Pony, if you make it you're making it for all three of us.

Audition Scene 8 - Johnny

JOHNNY (what PONYBOY is reading). I asked the Nurse to give you this book so you could finish it. I want you to tell Dallas to look at a sunset. He'll probably think you're crazy, but ask him for me. Listen, I don't mind dying now. It's worth it saving those kids. Some of their parents came by to thank me, and I know it was worth it. That guy who wrote the poem — he meant you're gold when you're a kid, like green. When you're a kid everything's new, dawn. It's just that when you get used to everything that it's day. The way you are, Pony. That's gold. There's still lots of good in the world. Tell Dallas. I don't think he knows. Your buddy. Johnny.