

THE OUTSIDERS

CHAPTER SUMMARY CARDS

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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER I SUMMARY

- The main character, Ponyboy Curtis, is introduced as the novel's narrator. He tells a story of walking home from a Paul Newman movie. He starts to think about how he wants to look like Newman, but he also likes his own 'greaser' appearance. He also wishes he had someone to walk home with.
- Ponyboy's gang of friends, the greasers, do not walk home alone as it is considered unsafe because they are often harassed by the Socials (or socs). The soc's are richer than the greasers and are less wild. The greasers wear their hair long, dress tough, commit crimes, get into fights, and usually carry switchblades to protect themselves against the socs.
- Ponyboy is different than the other greasers since he doesn't get himself into as much trouble. He lives with his two brothers, Darry and Sodapop. Their parents died in a car crash, so the three of them are able to live together as long as they stay out of trouble.
- Darry is the head of the household and is very strict with Ponyboy, who sometimes lacks common sense. Ponyboy gets along with, and looks up to, his other brother Sodapop.
- Ponyboy continues his story. On his way home from the movies, he notices a car (Corvair) following him. He walks more quickly and remembers how badly his friend Johnny Cade was beaten up by the socs.
- The car stops and five socs surround him. They begin making fun of his hair, and they pull out a knife. They begin beating Ponyboy up as he screams for help. His brothers and the rest of the greasers show up and chase away the socs. Darry reprimands Ponyboy for walking home alone, but Sodapop defends him.
- Ponyboy makes plans for the following night. He will go to the drive-in with Johnny and his friend Dally. Dally talks about his ex Sylvia. Ponyboy wonders what it would be like to hangout with a soc girl instead of the girls who date greasers.
- Ponyboy thinks about how his life is like the main character in the novel *Great Expectations* (Pip). At night, the brothers talk about Sodapop's girlfriend (Sandy) who Sodapop wants to marry someday.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY

- Ponyboy, Johnny, and Dally go to the drive-in theater and sit behind some Soc girls. Dally makes sexual comments to embarrass them.
- One of the soc girls turns around to tell them to stop, but he continues. When he leaves to get a drink, Ponyboy talks to the girl (Cherry Valance). They talk about Sodapop and how he dropped out of school and now works at a gas station.
- When Dally returns, he offers a drink to Cherry. She throws it in his face. He continues to bother her, and Johnny (who usually doesn't say much) tells him to leave the girls alone.
- Dally leaves angrily, and the boys watch the rest of the movie with Cherry and her friend Marcia.
- Two-Bit, Ponyboy's friend, comes to say that Dally is going to fight with Tim Shepard, the leader of another greaser gang, because he slashed his tires. Two-Bit says the greasers' two important rules are always stick together and never get caught.
- Cherry and Ponyboy continue to talk, and he tells her about the time Johnny got beat up. Cherry assures him that not all socs are like that and that the socs have problems too. He has difficulty believing that.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

- Ponyboy, Johnny, and Two-bit walk with Cherry and Marcia. Pony and Cherry talk about Pony's brothers.
- Ponyboy reveals that he thinks Darry doesn't like him and wishes he would go away. The other boys (Johnny and Two-bit) are surprised by this.
- They continue their conversation, now talking about Sodapop's old horse (Mickey Mouse) and the difference between socs and greasers. The two realize they have a lot in common.
- The two believe the biggest difference between socs and greasers is that greasers are more emotional, while socs never reveal their emotions.
- A blue Mustang arrives with two socs (Randy and Bob). Ponyboy notices Bob's rings and realizes that he is probably the one who beat Johnny up so badly. The boys almost fight, but the girls convince them to leave. Cherry tells Ponyboy that she doesn't want to see Dally again because she thinks she may fall in love with him.
- When Ponyboy arrives home, Darry is very angry. They argue, and Darry slaps Pony. Pony runs out of the house in anger because he now knows Darry hates him. Pony finds Johnny in the park and explains what happened. Johnny is also abused by his father, so the two walk through the park discussing whether or not they should run away.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY

- While walking in the park in the middle of the night, the blue Mustang arrives and five drunk socs get out of the car. They begin to argue with Johnny and Ponyboy and one of the socs grabs Ponyboy and holds his head under water in the fountain.
- Ponyboy loses consciousness. When he wakes up, he sees Bob bloody lying nearby. Johnny reveals that he killed him with a switchblade.
- Ponyboy begins to panic. They decide to go see Dally for help. Dally gives them fifty dollars, clothing, and a gun. He tells them to take the train to a place called Windrixville. He explains how to find an abandoned church and tells them to stay there.
- They board the train and follow Dally's instructions. They finally make it to the church where they fall asleep.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY

- When Pony wakes up the next morning, he finds a note from Johnny. The note says he has gone into town for supplies.
- Johnny returns with baloney, cigarettes, and a copy of *Gone With The Wind* (for Pony to read to him). After cutting and dying their hair, they stay in the church for a week spending their days smoking eating, and reading.
- Johnny thinks that one of the characters in the novel (southern gentleman) reminds them of Dally. Pony shares that he likes the other greasers much more than Dally. He thinks the heroes in novels remind him of the other greasers, but that Dally is too frighteningly real.
- Later, Ponyboy recites the poem, "Nothing Gold Can Stay" by Robert Frost. Johnny connects with the poem.
- After 5 days of hiding in the church, Dally arrives with a letter from Soda. Dally says that the police had asked him about the murder, but that he covered them by saying the killers went to Texas. He takes Johnny and Pony to the local Dairy Queen and reveals that after Bob's death, the greasers and Socs have been basically at war. He also shares that Cherry has been a spy for the greasers. There will be a big planned fight between the two groups very soon.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY

- Johnny shares that he wants to go home and confess to the murder. Dally discourages this, but Johnny says that although his parents might not care about him, Darry and Soda do.
- Dally begins to drive the boys. When they drive by the church, they see that it is on fire. Pony thinks that he may have left a cigarette burning which could have started the fire.
- They go to the church to check it out and find school children on a picnic. A chaperone appears and screams that some of the children are missing. Pony hears screaming in the church. He and Johnny go into the burning building through a window and find the missing children. They grab the children and lift them out the window. After the last child is rescued, the roof starts to cave in. Johnny pushes Pony out of the window and Pony hears Johnny scream. When he turns to go back into the house for Johnny, Dally knocks him out.
- Pony wakes up in an ambulance with one of the student chaperones (Jerry Wood). Jerry tells Pony that he caught on fire, but that the jacket he was wearing saved him. Dally was burned as well, but it wasn't serious. Johnny is hurt very badly as he was hit by burning timber as it fell.
- In the hospital, Pony confides in Jerry the story of Bob's death. Jerry agrees that it was self-defense. Soda and Darry arrive and Darry cries. This surprises Pony and makes him feel less angry at Darry as he realizes that he does care about him. He sees that Darry is so tough on him because he wants him to do well.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 7 SUMMARY

- The police and reporters arrive at the hospital and interview Ponyboy, Sodapop, and Darry.
- The doctors come in and reveal that Dally is okay, but the Johnny broke his back. He shares the bad news that even if Johnny survives, he will be permanently disabled.
- The next day, Steve Randle and Two-bit come with the newspaper. Ponyboy, Johnny, and Dally are described as heroes for rescuing the children. The newspaper reveals that Johnny will be charged with manslaughter and he and Ponyboy will be sent to juvenile court. Pony is concerned as this may result in him being sent to a boy's home.
- Ponyboy shares that he has had a reoccurring nightmare that he first had the night of his parents' funeral. He does not remember what the dream is about.
- The readers learn that Sodapop's girlfriend (Sandy) got pregnant and moved to Florida because her parents did not want her to marry Soda.
- Twobit and Ponyboy go to get Cokes when they see a blue mustang with the group of Socs that jumped him. He feels hatred for them.
- Randy, Marcia's boyfriend, comes over to talk to Ponyboy. He asks why Ponyboy saved those children because he is surprised that a greaser would do that. Ponyboy says that he didn't do it because he was a greaser. Randy shares that he does not want to fight at the rumble as he thinks the violence should stop.
- Randy shares that Bob was his best friend, but that he had a bad temper and indulgent parents. Ponyboy feels good about his talk with Randy. He now sees that Socs are not as different from greasers as he thought.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 8 SUMMARY

- Two-Bit and Ponyboy go to the hospital to visit Johnny and Dally. Johnny asks Ponyboy to finish reading *Gone With The Wind* to him. Johnny's mother comes, but she is a terrible woman and Johnny does not want to see her. When Ponyboy and Two-Bit leave, she confronts them and says it is their fault that Johnny is in this condition.
- Dally is doing well in the hospital. He shares that Tim Sheperd (leader of another gang of greasers) came to talk to him and told him about the rumble. Dally asks Two-Bit for his switchblade. Even though it is a prized possession, he gives it to Dally.
- When they are on their way home, the two boys see Cherry. She says that the socs will not be using weapons at the fight. When Ponyboy suggests she goes to see Johnny, she refuses. She says that Bob was only a violent person when he was drinking and that he had a good side as well. Pony is angry with her at first, but quickly forgives her.
- Ponyboy asks Cherry if she can see the sunset on the West side. She says yes, so he asks her to remember that the sunset can also be seen on the East side.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 9 SUMMARY

- Before the rumble, Ponyboy is feeling sick. He can't eat his dinner and he takes pills to feel better. The greasers get ready and leave for the rumble.
- Four cars arrive from the socs (22 people). Darry and Paul are the first to challenge each other. Dally joins the group and the fight between everyone breaks out. After a long fight, the greasers win.
- After the fight, Dally and Ponyboy go to see Johnny. A police officer stops them, but Ponyboy pretends he is hurt and the officer brings them to the hospital. When they arrive at the hospital, they find Johnny dying. He is moaning in pain. He tells Ponyboy to "stay gold" and dies. Dally runs out of the room with sadness.

THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 10 SUMMARY

- Ponyboy wanders around for hours after Johnny's death. A man drives him home. When he arrives home, he tells the other greasers that Johnny has died.
- Dally calls and says that he has robbed a grocery store is being chased by the police. They run out and see Dally being chased. Dally takes out an unloaded gun and the officers shoot him. He falls to the ground dead. Ponyboy thinks Dally may have wanted to die.
- Ponyboy passes out. When he wakes up, Darry is beside him. He learns that he has been in bed for three days suffering from a concussion from the rumble.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER II SUMMARY

- Ponyboy must stay in bed for a week because of his concussion. Looking through an old yearbook he finds a picture of Bob. He thinks that Bob's smile reminds him of Sodapop's. Ponyboy begins to wonder about Bob, but concludes that he was a cocky, angry person, but that he was also human.
- Randy arrives at Ponyboy's house and is very insensitive as he is not thinking about what Ponyboy has gone through. The two discuss the hearing scheduled for the following day. Ponyboy, in a half-conscious state, says that he killed Bob and that Johnny is still alive. Darry asks Randy to leave.



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THE OUTSIDERS: CHAPTER 12 SUMMARY

- Because of Ponyboy's concussion, he is not asked to speak much during the hearing. The judge acquits him of all the charges and allows him to return home with his brothers.
- Ponyboy starts to feel depressed. His grades start to slip, and he loses his memory, appetite, and coordination. He is also not getting along with Darry.
- Mr. Syme, Ponyboy's English teacher, says that Ponyboy can pass if he can write a strong autobiography.
- While at the grocery store the next day, Ponyboy, Steve, and Two-Bit are confronted by a group of socs. Ponyboy violently threatens them with a broken bottle. Steve and Two-Bit try to calm him down and tell him not to grow hard like Dally was in the end.
- That night Ponyboy and Darry fight about Pony's grades. Sodapop runs out of the house because the letter he sent to Sandy was returned to him unopened. Darry says that Sodapop is not the father of Sandy's child and is surprised that Ponyboy did not know.
- Darry and Ponyboy try to go find Sodapop. When they find him, he says that their fighting is tearing him apart. He asks them to stop fighting. They promise to try.
- They return home and Ponyboy looks at Johnny's copy of *Gone With The Wind*. He finds a note from Johnny which tells him to stay gold and he says that the children's lives were worth his own.
- Ponyboy realizes that he wants to tell his friend's story so that others will not get caught in the bitterness of the world. He starts on his English autobiography theme. He starts with the words that begin the novel: "When I stepped out into the bright sunlight from the darkness of the movie house, I had only two things on my mind: Paul Newman and a ride home."



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