

The Outsiders (the Play)

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✓ Verified Book of The Outsiders (the Play)

Summary:

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Adapted by Christopher Sergel. From the book by S.E. Hinton.

Cast: 10m., 8w. (extras as desired.) Some variations possible. S.E. Hinton, who wrote this modern classic when she was 16 years old, comments: "The Outsiders, like most things I write, is written from a boy's point of view. That's why I'm listed as S.E. Hinton rather than Susan. (I figured most boys would look at the book and think 'What can a chick know about stuff like that!') None of the events are taken from life, but the restâ€”how kids think and live and feelâ€”is for real. The charactersâ€”Dallas, who wasn't tough enough; Sodapop, the happy-go-lucky dropout; Bob, the rich kid whose arrogance cost him his life; Ponyboy, the sensitive, green-eyed Greaser who didn't want to be a hoodâ€”they're all real to me. Many of my friends are Greasers, but I'm not. I have friends who are rich, too, but nobody will ever call me a Socâ€”I've seen what money and too much idle time and parental approval can do to people. Cool people mean nothing to meâ€”they're living behind masks and I'm always wondering "Is there a real person underneath?" This entirely practical stage adaptation deals with real people, seen through the eyes of young Ponyboy, a Greaser on the wrong side of life, caught up in territorial battles between the have-it-made rich kidsâ€”the Socsâ€”and his tough, underprivileged "greaser" family and friends. In the midst of urban warfare, somehow Ponyboy can't forget a short poem that speaks of their fragile young lives:

Nature's first green is gold, Her hardest hue to hold.

Her early leaf's a flower; But only so an hour.

Then leaf subsides to leaf. So Eden sank to grief,

so dawn goes down to day. Nothing gold can stay.

"Robert Frost wrote it," Ponyboy tells Johnny. "I always remembered it because I never quite got what he meant by it." Cherry, a beautiful Soc, comes to share a special sensitivity with Ponyboy as she discovers that he remembers poems and needs to watch sunsets. At the same time, Cherry's attracted to the older, tougher Dallas, and in a sense she's caught in the violent space between the Greasers and the Socs. While the Socs appear to have everything, the only thing a Greaser has is his friends. As these young people try to find themselves and each other, as the sadness of sophistication begins to reach them and their battles and relationships reach a resolution, Ponyboy's dying friend, Johnny, sends him a last message â€” I've been thinking about the poem that guy wrote. He meant you're gold when you're a kid, like green. When you're a kid everything's new, dawn. It's just when you get used to everything that it's day. Like the way you dig sunsets, Pony. That's gold. Keep it that way. It's a good way to be. This is a play about young people who are not yet hopeless about latent decency in the midst of struggle. Area staging. Approximate Running Time: 2 hours.

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