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# The Outsiders

a full-length play  
by  
Christopher Sergel

based upon the novel  
by  
S. E. Hinton



**The Dramatic Publishing Company**  
Woodstock, Illinois • Wilton, Connecticut • Melbourne, Australia

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CHRISTOPHER SERGEL

Based upon the novel "THE OUTSIDERS" by

S.E. HINTON

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(THE OUTSIDERS)

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Cover design and illustrations ©1990 by Susan Carle

ISBN 0-87129-277-7

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# THE OUTSIDERS

A Full Length Play in Two Acts  
For 10 or 12 Men and 5 or 7 Women\*, Extras

## CHARACTERS

PONYBOY .....in his early teens, a greaser  
JOHNNY .....Ponyboy's friend, in his early teens  
BOB ..... a Soc  
RANDY ..... a Soc  
DALLAS .....early 20s, a greaser  
TWO-BIT .....early 20s, a greaser  
DARRY .....Ponyboy's oldest brother, 20 years old  
SODAPOP .. Ponyboy's second oldest brother, mid teens  
SANDY .....Sodapop's girlfriend  
CHERRY ..... a Soc  
MARCIA ..... Cherry's friend  
MRS. O'BRIANT ..... a parent  
JERRY ..... a parent  
DOCTOR ..... at the hospital  
NURSE ..... at the hospital  
MR. SYME ..... an English teacher  
PAUL ..... early 20s, a Soc

Extras: GREASERS, SOCS, HOSPITAL WORKER,  
CHILDREN (if available)

\*If more female roles are desired for your production,  
the roles of JERRY and MR. SYME may be played by  
women.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING about *The Outsiders*...

“Great show! A good challenge for the kids, easy to stage and a lot of fun! Kids love ’50s plays.”

*Lisa Botts,  
Bolsa Grande High School, Garden Grove, Calif.*

“This piece was beautiful—in the last days of production and the first time I read it, it brought tears to my eyes. The students enjoyed a story with which they were familiar and a script to which they could truly connect.”

*Shannon Mallrich,  
Triad High School, Troy, Ill.*

“A beautiful coming-of-age story that any generation can relate to.”

*Laura LaChappelle, Bradshaw Mountain High School,  
Humboldt, Ariz.*

## ACT ONE

**SCENE:** *The stage is dark. There's a moment of silence. Then light comes up revealing a young man in the "living area." He is PONYBOY, a young teenager wearing blue jeans and a t-shirt. His hair is long and loaded with hair oil. He's sensitive, insecure and a bit younger than the other young men we'll see. PONYBOY looks for something on the table. Finding a note with a number on it, he dials it on the cradle phone on the table. After a brief pause.*

**PONYBOY.** Mr. Syme—this is Ponyboy. (*Apologetically in response.*) I didn't realize it was so late. I forgot. (*To the point.*) I'm calling about the theme assignment for English. How long can it be? (*Repeating what he hears.*) Not less than five pages. (*Anxious.*) But can it be longer? Longer than five pages? (*Repeating.*) As long as I want. (*His problem. Apologetically.*) It's all in my head—if I can sort it out. First I have to sort it out. (*Listens. Then nods in agreement.*) As soon as I get it together. No later than that. Thanks, Mr. Syme. (*As he hangs up he's already trying to handle this. He gets up from the table. Deciding on the first step.*) The place to begin—I'd gone to a movie. (*This is a memory. Remembering.*) When I stepped out into the bright sunlight from the darkness of that movie house, I had only two things on my mind: Paul Newman and a ride home.

*(General light coming up. PONYBOY blinks his eyes and shakes himself. He's no longer remembering. He's in the present and now he looks directly at the AUDIENCE.)*

PONYBOY. I wish I looked like Paul Newman. He looks tough and I don't. *(Traffic sounds are coming up and he considers the imaginary street.)* 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. *(Sound of a car zooming by and as it does, someone shouts from it.)*

VOICE. Greaser!

PONYBOY *(looks after the car, then front. Defensively)*. 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. PONYBOY is getting nervous.*) I'm not saying that either the Socs or the greasers are better; that's just the way things are.

(*Two young men, RANDY and BOB, obviously "Socials" are entering. RANDY comes on L. PONYBOY turns to start R but BOB enters from that side.*)

BOB. Hey, grease —

RANDY. How come you're all by yourself, grease?

PONYBOY (*tightly*). Stay away from me.

BOB. Couldn't think of it.

RANDY. Not safe for you to be out here all alone.

BOB. We're gonna do you a favor, grease. We're gonna cut off that long greasy hair.

PONYBOY (*tight*). Leave me alone.

BOB (*pulls a knife and flips open the blade*). Need a haircut, grease?

PONYBOY (*backing up*). No. (*BOB advances with the knife.*)

BOB. Gonna cut it real close! How'd you like the haircut to begin just below the chin?

PONYBOY (*panic*). Are you crazy! (*Shouting.*) Soda! Darry!

BOB. Shut him up.

RANDY. (*looking off L*). I see someone —

PONYBOY (*frantic*). Darry!

BOB (*coming at him. Hard*). Okay, greaser!

RANDY. Cool it, Bob!

BOB (*implacable*). He's asking —

RANDY (*gestures L*). Company coming —



**BOB** (*glancing L. Then to PONYBOY*). Have to give you another appointment, grease! Catch you later.

*(As they hurry along off R, JOHNNY comes rushing on L. He's almost as young as PONYBOY, has a scar on his face and a nervous look that comes from a recent and terrible beating.)*

**JOHNNY** (*frightened*). Ponyboy! You okay?

*(DALLAS is also rushing on followed by TWO-BIT. DALLAS is tougher than the rest—tougher, colder, meaner. TWO-BIT is DALLAS's age with a wide grin and always has to get in his "two-bits"—hence his name.)*

**DALLAS** (*to PONYBOY*). They cut you?

**PONYBOY**. No. All talk. Nothing.

**TWO-BIT** (*outraged*). They're cruising our territory.

**DALLAS** (*as he starts off R*). Soc scum! (*DALLAS and TWO-BIT exit.*)

**JOHNNY** (*concerned*). You really okay? You're not hurt?

**PONYBOY**. A little spooked, that's all. (*Looking at JOHNNY.*) Compared to what they did to you—it's nothing. Nothing at all.

**JOHNNY** (*unhappily*). They have to stop jumping us! They have to stop.

**PONYBOY** (*noticing. Concerned*). What's in your hand?

**JOHNNY**. It isn't anything. Never mind, Ponyboy.

**PONYBOY** (*interrupting*). Johnny—(*JOHNNY lets out a breath. Then he flicks the handle in his hand and the switch blade snaps out.*)

JOHNNY (*softly defensive*). I can't take another beating—  
I can't take it, Ponyboy. (*With a small smile.*) I get  
enough from my father.

(*DARRY, followed by SODAPOP, hurries on L. DARRY's tall and muscular. He looks older than twenty —tough, cool, smart. SODA is handsome, with a finely-drawn, sensitive face.*)

DARRY (*anxious*). Are you all right, Ponyboy? (*Shaking him.*) Tell me!

PONYBOY. I'm okay. Quit shaking me, Darry, I'm okay.

JOHNNY (*volunteering*). They didn't cut him.

PONYBOY (*to DARRY who still grips him*). Come on,  
Darry.

DARRY (*lets go and stuffs his hands in his pockets*).  
Sorry.

PONYBOY (*frankly*). You're never sorry. Not about any-  
thing.

SODAPOP. The kid's okay. You're an okay kid, Pony.

(*DALLAS and TWO-BIT come back in.*)

DARRY. Didya catch 'em?

TWO-BIT. Nup. They got away this time.

DALLAS. I hit their car with a couple rocks. (*With satis-  
faction.*) I don't think they liked that. (*They're moving  
into the living area.*)

PONYBOY. I didn't know you were out of jail, Dallas.

DALLAS. Good behavior. Got off early.

TWO-BIT (*curious*). Ponyboy, what were you doin' walk-  
ing by your lonesome?

PONYBOY. I was comin' home from the movies. I didn't think—

DARRY (*breaking in*). You don't ever think, not at home or anywhere when it counts. You must think at school with all those good grades, and you've always got your nose in a book, but do you ever use your head for common sense? No sirree, bub. And if you had to go by yourself you should've carried a blade.

PONYBOY (*unhappily*). No matter what I did you wouldn't like it.

SODAPOP. Leave my kid brother alone, you hear? It ain't his fault he likes to go to the movies, and it ain't his fault the Socs like to jump us, and if he'd been carrying a blade it would've been a good excuse to cut him to ribbons.

DARRY (*impatiently*). When I want my kid brother to tell me what to do with my other kid brother, I'll ask you—kid brother. (*SODAPOP laughs.*)

TWO-BIT. Next time get one of us to go with you, Ponyboy. Any of us will.

DALLAS. Speakin' of movies, I'm walking over to the Nightly Double tomorrow night. Anybody want to come and hunt some action?

DARRY. No time. I'm workin'.

DALLAS. You're *always* workin'.

DARRY (*wryly*). I've got a choice?

(*SANDY is entering L on this. She's pretty, has a soft laugh, and she's a greaser.*)

DALLAS. Sodapop?

SODAPOP (*shaking his head*). I'm picking up Sandy for the game.

SANDY. I'm glad to hear you say that.

SODAPOP (*delighted to see her*). Sandy! Can you stay?

SANDY (*regretfully*). No.

SODAPOP (*understanding*). Things at home? You have to go?

SANDY (*echoing DARRY*). I've got a choice?

DALLAS (*wanting to get this settled*). Two-Bit, Johnny-cake, you and Pony wanta come?

PONYBOY. Me and Johnny'll come. Okay, Darry?

SODAPOP (*helpfully*). It ain't a school night.

DARRY (*agreeing*). Since it isn't a school night.

TWO-BIT. If I don't get boozed up, I'll walk over and find y'all. (*DALLAS waves and is going off.*)

DARRY (*pointing a warning at PONYBOY*). If I ever catch you getting boozed up—

PONYBOY (*this is unfair*). Darry! (*But DARRY has gone off into the kitchen.*)

SODAPOP (*laughing*). Who needs boozed-up?

TWO-BIT (*feeling criticized. To SODAPOP*). I seen you lotsa times.

PONYBOY (*indignant*). When?

SANDY (*to PONYBOY, smiling*). Two-Bit is right. Soda gets drunk lotsa times—at drag races, at a dance, only—he never touches alcohol.

TWO-BIT (*she's crazy*). C'mon, Sandy.

SANDY (*the whole point*). He don't need alcohol. (*She looks at him with great affection.*) He gets drunk on just plain living.

TWO-BIT (*they're too much*). Probably I'll find y'all. (*He's starting to go.*)

JOHNNY (*calling to him. A little anxious*). Two-Bit—if you're walking toward my place, if you're in that direction, could I— part-way—

**TWO-BIT** (*considers JOHNNY. Getting his anxiety. Deciding*). Happens I'll be going right by your place, Johnny-cake. Right by your door.

**JOHNNY** (*with great relief*). Two-Bit – thanks. (*JOHNNY and TWO-BIT exit.*)

**PONYBOY** (*looking after them*). Remember how Johnny looked when he got beat up? Why do the Socs hate us so much?

**SANDY** (*bitterly*). That's just how it works. We're greasers.

**PONYBOY**. I'm reading *Great Expectations* for English, and that kid Pip, he reminds me of us – the way he felt marked lousy because he wasn't a gentleman or anything and the way that girl kept looking down on him.

**SODAPOP**. That's only a book, Pony.

**PONYBOY** (*not agreeing*). It happened to me. One time in biology I had to dissect a worm and the razor wouldn't cut, so I used my switchblade.

**SANDY**. Pony!

**PONYBOY**. I forgot what I was doing or I'd never had done it. The minute I flicked it out this girl right beside me kind of gasped and said, "They are right. You are a hood."

**SANDY**. A Soc? (*PONYBOY nods.*) Was she pretty?

**PONYBOY** (*nods again*). She looked real good in yellow. (*Annoyed at himself. To SODAPOP.*) Don't tell Darry. He'll say I didn't think again.

**SODAPOP**. Probably would, but when he hollers at you – he don't mean nothin'.

**PONYBOY**. Like hell –

**SANDY** (*to SODAPOP*). Have to get home before my mother gets hacked off. (*She's saying "I love you."*) I don't want to miss the game tomorrow.

SODAPOP (*the same in reply*). Wouldn't miss it for anything. Pick you up at home?

SANDY (*shakes her head quickly*). Better meet me. I'll be at the Dingo. (*They exchange a smile as she goes.*)

PONYBOY. She's different.

SODAPOP. From what?

PONYBOY. From the only girls that'll look at greasers—tough, loud girls with too much eye make-up, who swear too much. (*Looking after her.*) I like Sandy.

SODAPOP. She doesn't have it easy. She's got school, a job, and nothing but trouble at home.

PONYBOY. Soda?

SODAPOP. Yeah?

PONYBOY. How come you dropped out of school? I could hardly stand it when you left school.

SODAPOP. It's 'cause I'm dumb. The only things I was passing were auto mechanics and gym.

PONYBOY. You're not dumb.

SODAPOP. I am. Shut up and I'll tell you something. Don't tell Darry.

PONYBOY. Okay.

SODAPOP. I think I'm gonna marry Sandy. After she gets out of school and I get a better job and everything. (*Considering PONYBOY.*) I might wait till you get out of school though. So I can help Darry with the bills.

PONYBOY (*approving*). Tuff enough! (*Then with alarm.*) Only wait till I get out, so you can keep Darry off my back.

SODAPOP (*sharply*). Don't be like that. I told you he doesn't mean half what he says. He's just got more worries than someone his age ought to. He's really proud of you because you're brainy.

PONYBOY. Sure.

SODAPOP. Maybe we deserve a lot of the trouble we get. Dallas deserves everything he gets and should get worse if you want the truth. And Two-Bit—he doesn't want or need half the things he swipes from stores. (*Strong.*) But it's not like that with Darry. He doesn't deserve to work like an old man when he's only twenty. Even with the athletic scholarships, there wasn't money for college. Darry doesn't go anywhere and he doesn't do anything except work. But he's got hopes for you—you dig?

PONYBOY. Then why does he bug me all the time?

SODAPOP. You're the baby—I mean, he loves you a lot. Savvy?

PONYBOY. You're wrong. Darry don't love anyone or anything. And he thinks I'm just another mouth to feed. That's all I mean to him.

SODAPOP (*quietly*). You better get on with your homework. (*The light is beginning to dim.*)

PONYBOY (*curious*). You in love with Sandy?

SODAPOP (*quietly*). I am.

PONYBOY. What's it like? (*It's almost dark except for the lamp.*)

SODAPOP (*considers. Softly*). It's real nice. What's that book you're reading for English?

PONYBOY. *Great Expectations*.

SODAPOP (*as he goes off*). *Great Expectations*.

*(PONYBOY looks after SODAPOP wondering what he meant by that. Except for the table lamp the stage is entirely dark. PONYBOY opens up a writing pad and begins to write. In the darkness movie music is heard. During this, two benches are brought in DL diagonally facing the AUDIENCE, one in front of the other. UL the corner*

*of a movie popcorn stand is pushed on. PONYBOY is reading what he's writing.)*

PONYBOY. We were a little early for the movie so we walked around talking to all the greasers we knew, leaning in car windows or hopping into back seats, and getting in on who was running away, and who was in jail, and who was going with who, and who stole what, when and why. By then it was dark enough to sneak in under the back fence of the drive-in.

*(Light is coming up during this on the movie area with the benches and popcorn stand. Two attractive teenage girls, CHERRY and MARCIA – both Socs – are coming on left. They're upset.)*

CHERRY *(turns to shout at someone off L)*. Go home!  
Both of you!

MARCIA *(also off L)*. Dry out! *(They come down and sit in the front row bench facing the AUDIENCE. They're BOTH angry. DALLAS is seen at the right, impatiently waving off R.)*

DALLAS *(calling)*. C'mon Johnnycake!

*(JOHNNY comes on and DALLAS gestures at the bottom of an imaginary fence.)*

DALLAS. We'll slide under.

JOHNNY. Why don't we just pay?

DALLAS *(impatient)*. Follow me.



*(As JOHNNY follows, sliding under the imaginary fence, PONYBOY has turned out the desk lamp and is coming down to join them.)*

PONYBOY *(as he comes)*. You know he hates to do things legal.

DALLAS *(calling)*. Move it, Ponyboy.

PONYBOY *(following)*. Sure, Dallas. *(MARCIA has turned to CHERRY.)*

MARCIA *(she giggles)*. You really made them mad.

CHERRY. You object?

MARCIA. Bob and Randy are disgusting. I don't want to sit with them either. *(DALLAS is now observing the GIRLS with interest.)*

CHERRY. They need a lesson. *(Turning front. Emphatically.)* We came to see a movie. We'll see a movie. *(DALLAS is strolling over, followed by the hesitant PONYBOY and JOHNNY.)*

MARCIA *(looking out front at where the screen must be. Reciting the title)*. "Bikinis on Muscle Beach."

CHERRY. Must be something by J. D. Salinger.

MARCIA *(seriously)*. Really?

CHERRY *(what an idiot)*. Marcia! *(DALLAS has seated himself right behind CHERRY while JOHNNY and PONYBOY sit uneasily beside him.)*

DALLAS *(leans over CHERRY's shoulder and looks at the side of her face)*. Is this hair real, or a wig? *(CHERRY leans forward away from him. He gives her hair a little tug.)*

CHERRY *(slaps his hand away)*. Stop that.

DALLAS. I guess it's real. *(Suggestively.)* Wanna check if I'm real?

PONYBOY *(a faint protest)*. Dallas —