

Summary: Chapter 11

Name: _____

Ponyboy is restricted to bed rest for a week after he wakes up from his concussion. He finds a picture of Bob the Soc in Sodapop's high school yearbook. Bob's grin reminds him of Sodapop's. Ponyboy wonders if Bob's parents hate him, saying he prefers their hatred to their pity. Looking at the photograph and remembering conversations with Cherry and Randy, Ponyboy concludes that Bob was cocky, hot-tempered, frightened, and human.

Randy arrives at the house to talk to Ponyboy and behaves with shocking insensitivity. Not thinking of what Ponyboy has suffered, Randy says he is worried about being associated with the violence. They discuss the hearing scheduled for the next day. Ponyboy, in a delirious state, says that he killed Bob himself and that Johnny is still alive. Darry asks Randy to leave.

Summary: Chapter 12

Ponyboy does not have to speak much at the hearing, since his doctor has spoken to the judge about Ponyboy's condition. The judge asks Ponyboy a few gentle questions about his home life and then acquits him of all wrongdoing and allows him to return home with his brothers. After the hearing, Ponyboy becomes detached and depressed. His grades suffer, he loses his coordination, memory, and appetite, and he resumes fighting with Darry. Ponyboy's English teacher, Mr. Syme, says that although Ponyboy is failing, he can raise his grade to a C by writing an outstanding autobiographical theme.

The next day at lunch, Ponyboy goes to the grocery store with Steve and Two-Bit for candy bars and Cokes. When a group of Socs accosts him, he threatens them with a broken bottle, saying he refuses to take any more of their intimidation. Ponyboy's uncharacteristic show of hostility alarms Steve and Two-Bit, and they warn Ponyboy not to grow hard like Dally was. They are relieved when Ponyboy bends down to pick up the broken glass, not wanting anyone to get a flat tire.

That night as Ponyboy and Darry fight about Ponyboy's grades, Sodapop runs out of the house, upset that Sandy has returned a letter he wrote her unopened. Darry explains that Sodapop is not the father of Sandy's child and acts puzzled that Sodapop never told Ponyboy. Ponyboy reflects that he probably acted uninterested when Sodapop tried to talk about his problems. Worried, Darry and Ponyboy go find Sodapop. He tells them their constant fighting is tearing him apart. Sobbing, he asks them to try to understand each other and stop fighting. They promise to try. Ponyboy thinks that Sodapop will hold them together.

The boys run back home. Ponyboy looks at Johnny's copy of *Gone with the Wind*. He finds a handwritten note from Johnny urging him to stay gold and saying that the children's lives were worth his own. Ponyboy realizes that he wants to tell the story of his friends so that other hoodlums will not nurse their anger at the world and ignore the beauty in it. He begins to work on his English theme, starting with the words that begin *The Outsiders*: "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."