

THE OUTSIDERS EXCERPT

Chapter 4

THE PARK WAS ABOUT two blocks square, with a fountain in the middle and a small swimming pool for the little kids. The pool was empty now in the fall, but the fountain was going merrily. Tall elm trees made the park shadowy and dark, and it would have been a good hangout, but we preferred our vacant lot, and the Shepard outfit liked the alleys down by the tracks, so the park was left to lovers and little kids.

Nobody was around at two-thirty in the morning, and it was a good place to relax and cool off. I couldn't have gotten much cooler without turning into a popsicle. Johnny snapped up his jeans jacket and flipped up the collar.

"Ain't you about to freeze to death, Pony?"

"You ain't a'woofin'," I said, rubbing my bare arms between drags on my cigarette. I started to say something about the film of ice developing on the outer edges of the fountain when a sudden blast from a car horn made us both jump. The blue Mustang was circling the park slowly.

Johnny swore under his breath, and I muttered, "What do they want? This is our territory. What are Socs doing this far east?"

Johnny shook his head. "I don't know. But I bet they're looking for us. We picked up their girls."

"Oh, glory," I said with a groan, "this is all I need to top off a perfect night." I took one last drag on my weed and ground the stub under my heel. "Want to run for it?"

"It's too late now," Johnny said. "Here they come."

Source:

Hinton, S. E. (1995). The outsiders. Hampton-Brown, p. 53. (First published 1967).