An Excerpt from The Outsiders

By S. E. Hinton

Dally was waiting for Johnny and me under the street light at the corner of Pickett and Sutton, and since we got there early, we had time to go over the drugstore in the shopping center and goof around. We bought Cokes and blew the straws at the waitress, and walked around eyeing things that were lying out in the open until the manager got wise to us and suggested we leave. He was too late, though; Dally walked out with two packages of Kools under his jacket.

 Then we went across the street and down Sutton a little way to The Dingo. There are lots of drive-ins in town--- the Socs go to The Way Out and to Rusty's, and the greasers go to The Dingo and to Jay's. The Dingo is a pretty rough hangout; there's always a fight going on there and once a girl got shot. We walked around talking to all the greasers and hoods we knew, leaning in car windows or hopping into the back seats, and getting in on who was running away, and who was in jail, and who was going with who, and who could whip who, and who stole what and when and why. We knew about everybody there. There was a pretty good fight while we were there between a big twenty-three-year-old greaser and a Mexican hitchhiker. We left when the switchblades came out, because the cops would be coming soon and nobody in his right mind wants to be around when the fuzz show.

 We crossed Sutton and cut around behind Spencer's Special, the discount house, and chased two junior-high kids across a field for a few minutes; by then it was dark enough to sneak in over the back fence of the Nightly Double drive-in movie. It was the biggest in town, and showed two movies every night, and on weekends four--- you could say you were going to the Nightly Double and have time to go all over town.

 We all had the money to get in--- it only costs a quarter if you're not in a car--- but Dally hated to do things the legal way. He liked to show that he didn't care whether there was a law or not. He went around trying to break laws. We went to the rows of seets in front of the concession stand to sit down. Nobody else was there except two girls who were sitting down front. Dally eyed them coolly, then walked down the aisle and sat right behind them. I had a sick feeling that Dally was up to his usual tricks, and I was righte. He started talking, loud enough for the two girls to hear. He started out bad and got worse. Dallas could talk awful dirty if he wanted to and I guess he wanted to then. I felt my ears get hot. Two-Bit or Steve or even Soda would have gone right along with him, just to see if they could embarrass the gurls, but that kind of kicks just doesn't appeal to me. I sat there, struck dumb, and Johnny left hastily to get a Coke.