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How Deaths in The Novel Changed the Curtis Brother's Relationships

During the novel "The Outsiders", there are three linked deaths that change the relationships between the Curtis brothers in many different ways. The soc, Bob Sheldon, dies first. When Ponyboy and Johnny flee after Darry hit Ponyboy they run into their rivals Bob and his best friend Randy Adderson. Bob takes Ponyboy and starts drowning him until Johnny gets his switchblade out and kills Bob. After this, Johnny dies. Dally (a greaser with a criminal record) sends Ponyboy and Johnny to an abandoned church so they can hide after what they did. When they go to leave after a few days, the church catches on fire with a few elementary school kids trapped inside, so they go into the church to save them. When Johnny gets the last kid out, a piece of the roof falls on his back, breaking it. The last death is Dally. After Johnny dies, Dally goes crazy and robs a store. The police chase him and shoot him down because he pulled out a gun at them. As you can see at the beginning of the novel, the brothers are constantly getting into arguments about stupid little things, but after Darry hits Ponyboy, things change. After these deaths, Ponyboy's grades start dropping and he starts to lose sight of himself. Him and Darry get into many more arguments until Sodapop Curtis tells them to promise to stop arguing because it's tearing him apart. They both agree and it makes their relationship really strong at the end of the novel. Although the Curtis brothers do not have a close relationship at the beginning of the novel, after experiencing the deaths of Bob, Johnny, and Dally, it makes their relationship stronger.

The first death that occurs is of Bob Sheldon. After Ponyboy comes home from a late light with some of the soc girls, Darry becomes furious. They get into a big argument until Darry slaps Ponyboy across the face. At this point you can tell that the relationship between Ponyboy and Darry is not very strong because they get into a lot of arguments

that leads to a very crucial point, when Darry hits Ponyboy. Ponyboy then runs out of the house with a rage knowing that Darry does not want him there anymore. He later finds Johnny and asks him to run away with him and Johnny agrees without hesitation. They go to the park to think out their plan when they run into a group of the socials. They want to get them back for stealing their girlfriends. One of the socials, Bob, grabs Ponyboy and forces his face into a fountain of water, drowning him. Johnny quickly grabs his switchblade and kills Bob, which makes the socials flee. Ponyboy regains his conscience and sees Bob dead on the ground; he could only think one thing, that Johnny killed him. They decide to go to Dally thinking that he would know what to do. He gives Ponyboy a change of clothes, 50 dollars, and tells them both to hop on the train to Windrixville. They will be able to stay in an old abandoned church for a bit to hide for cover. Later on, this will lead to another death in the novel.

The next person to die in this novel is Johnny. When the boys arrive at the Windrixville church, they fall asleep immediately. When they wake up, they cut and bleached their hair to disguise themselves. To stay occupied, Ponyboy reads the book "Gone With The Wind" to Johnny. Five days later Dally comes to pick the boys up with all the news back in their hometown. They go to Dairy Queen and discuss what has happened with the murder case. On their way back home they pass the church and they see that it has caught on fire while an elementary school was they're having a picnic. They go to check it out when they find that a group of kids were trapped inside. Johnny and Ponyboy jump in through a window and start helping the kids out one by one. As they are letting the last kid out, Dally yells that the roof is about to collapse. Johnny pushed Ponyboy out of the window and a part of the roof falls on Johnny's back. They wake up in the hospital, Ponyboy and Darry with mild burns, and Johnny with a broken back. Sodapop and Darry show up at the hospital and it came to Ponyboy's surprise that Darry was actually crying. Ponyboy was shocked and at that point he knew that Darry is only being really strict because he cares about him and wants him to succeed and that he actually does love him. A few days later, Johnny dies. As you can see, the relationship between the Curtis brothers become strong at this point, but later on in the novel, it drops back to normal. Johnny's last words were "Stay gold, Ponyboy, Stay gold," (148, S.E

Hinton). This quotation shows that Johnny knows that Ponyboy is one of a kind. By saying stay gold, he means to stay the way he is because he's more than just a normal greaser. Johnny's death causes Dally to break down and go insane.

The next death in the story is of Dally. Because Johnny dies, Dally loses it and runs frantically out of the hospital. Ponyboy walks home and finds a bunch of the greasers in his house. He tells them that Johnny is dead and Dally has gone insane. They later get a call from Dally saying that he just robbed a store and the police are chasing him. They run outside and find that the police have caught him but he quickly pulls out his gun. The police shoot him down and kill him. This seems to be the turning point for the Curtis brothers. Ponyboy attends a hearing to determine whether the Curtis brother's will be allowed to stay together or not and who killed the soc. The judge accuses him of killing Bob but he is allowed to stay at home with Darry and Sodapop. Because Ponyboy is so traumatized from all the deaths that ad happened, he starts to lose sight of himself and his grades start to drop. Darry, once again, becomes frustrated with Ponyboy and starts another argument. They encounter Sodapop and he tells them that when they argue, it tears him apart. All he wants is for them to promise to get along because it is the only way things are going to get better. They all agree and finally realize that they can recall the deaths of their friends without pain. They are also thankful for Sodapop because they know he can keep them together.

The Curtis brothers have a tough time throughout the novel, experiencing three deaths of their friends, but later realize that they still have each other and all of their arguing and fighting will get them no where. It brings their relationship really close at the end of the novel. Before the soc dies, tension between Ponyboy and Darry reach a peak and Darry slaps Ponyboy across the face. This shows that the relationship is not very strong because you do not just do that to someone you are supposed to be really close to. The relationship builds again when they are in the hospital when Johnny, Ponyboy and Dally return from Windrixville and Johnny is dying. Ponyboy realizes that Darry does actually care about him; he is just strict because he wants him to be better. At that point Ponyboy thinks that everything is going to be all right because he understands Darry

now, but it just goes back to normal with all of the arguing. Finally Sodapop steps in after Dally dies and everyone is sad and feeling helpless. He tells Darry and Ponyboy to promise to never argue again because he doesn't like it, and they agree. All of these conflicts in the novel "The Outsiders" started with Darry hitting Ponyboy in the face. This led to three deaths which changed the relationships of the Curtis brothers throughout the novel.