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Ponyboy

 The character Pony in S.E. Hinton’s novel *The Outsiders* demonstrates innocence in many situations. One example is when Pony frequently dreams of the country and how his life could be better. He falls asleep in the lot one night and dreams that his parents could come back to life, and his family would all be reunited in the country. His brother Soda would be able to get the horse Mickey Mouse back, and the gang members could come and live with his family. Pony dreams, “Maybe Johnny could come and live with us, and the gang could come out on the weekends, and maybe Dallas would see that there was some good in the world after all” (48). This shows Pony’s innocence because all of his dreams are unrealistic, yet Pony shows the reader his desire to help others and find good in the world. It is not possible for Pony to recreate a life where his parents are still alive and where there are no harsh realities such as Johnny’s abusive home or the lack of money that keeps the boys from achieving many of their dreams. However, since Pony is a dreamer it demonstrates his innocent and pure nature. He isn’t like the other gang members who desire fighting and competition; Pony desires close relationships and the peaceful life that the countryside symbolizes to him. Another example of Pony’s innocence is shown when Pony tries to become hardened to the world after Johnny dies, but he is unable to do so. As Johnny is dying, Dally advises Pony to become hardened to the world and not let anyone hurt him again. Pony contemplates this advice, and at first, he begins to appear detached and tough. When a group of Socs confront him in a parking lot, Pony breaks a glass bottle to use as a weapon. Despite his attempt at violence, Two-Bit finds Pony picking up the pieces of broken glass off the ground after the Socs leave. Pony states, “I just went on picking up the glass from the bottle end and put it in the trash can. I didn’t want anyone to get a flat tire” (172). Therefore, this illustrates that Pony’s true, innate character is innocent. Despite how tough and hardened he tries to act, his true personality comes through when he cares about others and does not want anyone hurt by the pieces of glass which he broke. This shows the reader that Pony will not be able to become like Dally to prevent himself from being hurt emotionally, but that he will always remain “golden” as Johnny had wished. From these examples, it is clear that Pony’s innocence is an important character trait in this novel.

Works Cited

Hinton, S.E*. The Outsiders*. New York: Penguin Group, 2008.