

JIW *BROAD*sheet

Journey in
Words

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ISSUES!**

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"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."—Ponyboy Curtis, **The Outsiders** by S.E. Hinton

The Book with the Good Intentions*

People Who

- People who buy books and keep them pristine
- People who like to write in their books
- People who don't buy books anymore
- People who will only read old books
- People who will only read new books
- People who use books like blank notepads
- People who only buy hardcover books
- People who use bookmarks as bookmarks
- People who turn down pages or use paper clips
- People who put bills and gum wrappers in books
- People who use their Kindles as bookmarks
- People who love books others have written in

All kinds of people come in A Book a Day
All kinds of people still need a book in hand.

An Embarrassment of Riches

A slip of small spiral notepad paper, one corner brown-stained in the shape of a banjo player, is full of red words: *AMBITION* underlined and *HARD WORK* beneath that, *DETERMINATION* and *LET US PREVAIL*. *Please, baby, let's change our lifestyle. No jail time. Let's get serious. Asset to society. Non-felonious.*

Was she scribbling her thoughts or was it really meant as a note for him to read?

I want the white house & picket fence.

Perry puts the note back in the book, then shuts it on people she doesn't want to know.



The first line of "The Outsiders" hooked many a teen.

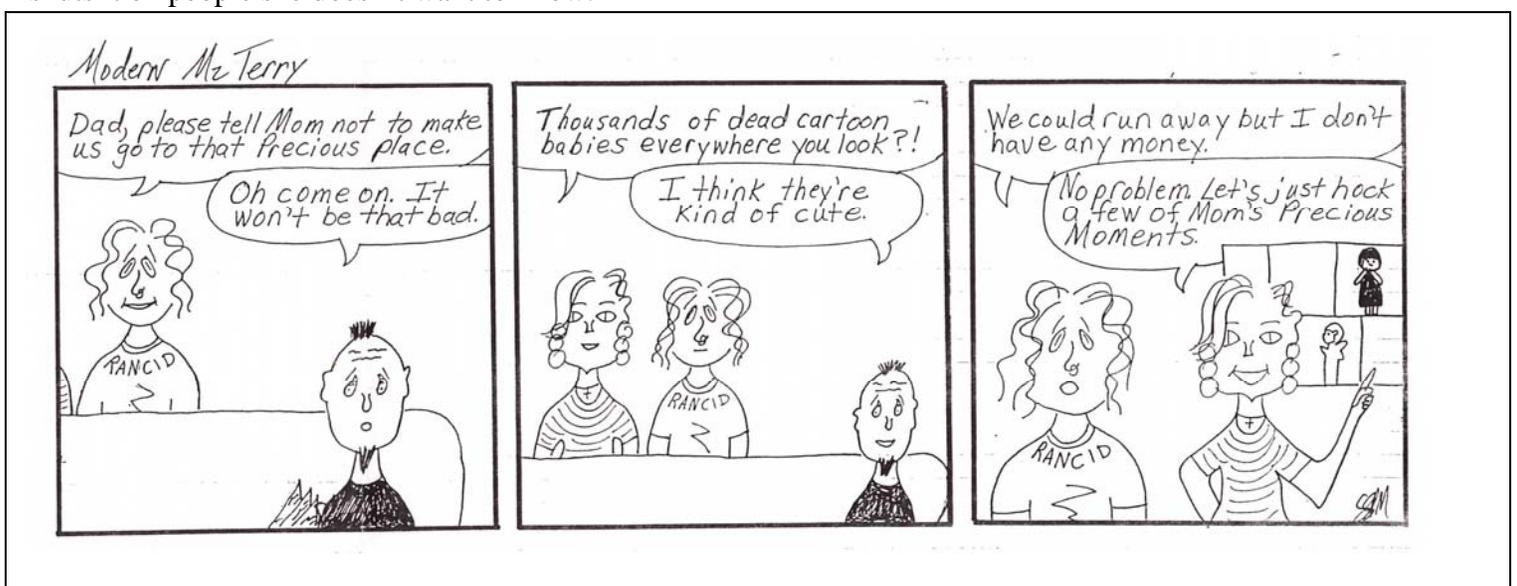
Hip hop artist Danny Boy O'Connor has been restoring the Tulsa house used as the Curtis boys' home in Francis Ford Coppola's film of the novel.

Visits from C. Thomas Howell and Rob Lowe, along with Hinton herself (who still lives in Tulsa) have helped his cause.

If you have never read the book, you should. If it has been a long time, read it again. It is 50 years old this year and holds up to the ages as a tale with an emotional truth of the lives of teenagers that can't be denied.

Follow O'Connor's progress on Facebook at The Outsiders House. He plans to open the house as a museum on the National Register of Historic Homes.

**The Book with the Good Intentions* is a detective story in verse. Used bookstore owner Perry Cassidy investigates the lives of people she reads about from scribbled notes and words in the margins of old books. Two poems will be printed in each edition of this paper. Follow the story, poem by poem!



I AM NOT A SMITH: Chapter 2

By the time I found out Felicia had brought her mom's pills to school and was selling them in the bathrooms, the whole school knew. At the exact time I was forcing her to hand them over to me, Vice Principal Mangrum's shadow loomed over our hands like Nosferatu drooling over Hutter.

Tah tah, ninth grade! I loved you well and never got to say goodbye!

Hello, Mrs. Derby. Hello, old house that I thought I knew every single corner and cranny of. Hmm, not so.

But the month of enforced tutoring and banishment from school did come to an end. Goodbye to Mrs. Derby and her aphorisms and hello to lazy days and sunshine and friends and . . .

Naturesmiths?

Mom. Dad. You have got to be kidding.

Mom. Dad. A jest that causes pain is no jest.

I looked at the brochure they placed on the kitchen table for me. Lobotomized children ran and swam and danced in brilliant color photos surrounded by an idyllic natural setting. A folksy woodsy camp for kids and teenagers, a place of joy and lasting friendships.

"Nice little brochure there, Mom and Dad. So, here you go. I'm giving it back to you. And I think I'll be running along now. Might see what Erin is up to."

"Put the patooty back on the plastic," Dad said, indicating the yellow plastic chair I had so coolly arisen from.

As much as Dad gets exasperated with my cutting sense of humor, my brilliant twist of phrase, my biting wit, my—

"Phoebe! We're talking to you!"

"Sure, Mom. I'm listening."

I had no choice. Visions of maniacal oak trees loomed as they spoke. Naturesmiths . . . dear old Ma had passionately fond memories of this camp when she was a child. And lo and behold, the place is still in business, still run by the same people. Don't tell me—their names are SkyDog and Rainbow Child, right? Right?

One month of tutor torture was not enough for the crime of attempting to save my friend. I was also being banished to Ye Olde Land of the Redneck—me a Chicago girl born and raised. What would I do with myself in this place called Oklahoma? Would I survive this "smithing" experience? I went outside every day and breathed the air: Wasn't that a good nature experience? Every once in a while we went to the lake. I took a bath every so often.

"It's not a punishment," Dad said, "Not exactly. We want you to get out more. Connect with the outside world, meet some new people. Get a fresh outlook."

"What's wrong with my stale outlook?"

"Exactly. It's too smart-alecky. Cynicism is unbecoming in a smart young girl like you."

"Oh, so is giggling the newest mode for teenage girls? Seems a little overdone to me. You know, I've been going for the unique in my humor style."

"Phoebe!" Mom had reached the high-pitched end of her level of exasperation.

Trudy, older sis, chimed in at this point, "Oh, Phoebe, just suck it up and do your time. Maybe you won't do such a stupid thing again."

"You're not helping, Trudy," Dad said.

"I second that motion," I said.

"Well, she shouldn't have been such a moron"—

"Move to strike!" I yelled with a sweeping motion of my right hand.

"Not another word, Phoebe," Dad said.

"Uncle Paul and Aunt Rodie . . ." Mom murmured.

Thus, I spent the next half hour of my life slowly melting into a puddle of my own ooze like the Wicked Witch destroyed by water as Mom waxed nostalgic about the old owners of the camp.

Could this truly be happening? Could my parents really force me to spend an entire month of my life, thirty complete 24-hour days in the woods of a red state? How would I survive? Did they make Okie primers? Could I buy a redneck detector? Would I have to wear a mullet, learn to say "I seen" and "ya'll" and drive a big-ass Chevy truck extended cab with mags and Hemi? Wait, I didn't have a driver's license yet. I was hyperventilating.

Was it possible to divorce myself from my parents or get myself emancipated from them—but just for the month because otherwise I kind of liked living with them?

How about that cloning stuff? Maybe I could clone a Phoebe to go to Oklahoma, while I, the real Phoebe stayed in the city and played and watched movies in the middle of the night and fell asleep with gum in my mouth and went to the Roundhouse with Erin and flirted with guys who didn't know we were fifteen.

Hang on a sec. I'm going to do a Google search.

TO BE CONTINUED.

This COMPLIMENTARY COPY of the **Journey in Words Broadsheet** is the new and original work of Shaun Perkins, writer, poet, artist. Twice a month, this paper is issued on a subscription basis and available only through the postal mail. Copies of JIW Broadsheet are mailed to subscribers on the 12th and 24th of each month. Each Broadsheet is accompanied by a miscellaneous, unique paper token: sticker, bookmark, boopteboom, card, postcard, note, doodad, photo, etc.

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A chapter of this novel in progress is included in each JIW Broadsheet. Get each issue to find out what happens to Phoebe!

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