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That Was Then, This Is Now



Synopsis

Another classic from the author of the internationally bestselling *The Outsiders* celebrating 50 years of *The Outsiders* by reading this companion novel. *That Was Then, This is Now* is S. E. Hinton's moving portrait of the bond between best friends Bryon and Mark and the tensions that develop between them as they begin to grow up and grow apart. "A mature, disciplined novel which excites a response in the reader . . . Hard to forget." *The New York Times*

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0780 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 160 pages

Publisher: Viking Books for Young Readers; 1st edition (April 26, 1971)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0670697982

ISBN-13: 978-0670697984

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.6 x 8.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 396 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #761,538 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #44 in Books > Teens >

Personal Health > Drug & Alcohol Abuse #65 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Stepfamilies #96 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Drugs

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Ever since Mark's parents died, he has been living with Bryon. The boys are more like brothers than mere friends. They've been inseparable--until recently. Something seems to be changing between them, and Bryon can't figure it out. Is it Cathy, Bryon's new girlfriend? Is Mark jealous? Bryon is also tired of the street fighting, but Mark seems unable to quit. And where is Mark getting all of that money? In *That Was Then, This Is Now*, one of her most admired novels, S. E. Hinton paints a richly textured portrait of two boys at a crossroads in their friendship. With careful, intimate strokes, Hinton reveals a boy struggling over whether to protect his best friend or whether to follow his own beliefs about right and wrong. The ending will surprise readers, challenging them to puzzle over

Byron's dilemma in their own hearts. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"A mature, disciplined novel which excites a response in the reader . . . Hard to forget." •The New York Times" This unforgettable classic still packs a powerful message even after nearly thirty years in print." •Children's Literature

"That was Then, This is Now" centers around the lives of four adolescents. There is the narrator, Byron Douglas, a handsome charming but ultimately selfish and self-absorbed teenager. There is Mark, whom Byron's mother adopted for her own and who is Byron's best friend. Mark's penchant for mischief is too often offset by his winning smile, and he maintains a fierce loyalty to his friends. The two minor but equally important characters are Cathy, a precocious young woman who falls in love with Byron, and her younger brother M&M, a sensitive and soulful hippie wannabe. The book moves in different actions so that it seems we're reading two novels about two brothers and best friends. In the first novel, Mark and Byron are always by each other's side, and together they witness the fearsome murder of their good friend Charlie, which scars both. In the second novel, there's a love triangle -- Byron has fallen deeply in love with Cathy, and Mark feels abandoned. The novel comes to a climax when Byron commits an act that will forever sever his relationship with both Mark and Cathy. Like in "The Outsiders", SE Hinton has a gift for understanding and speaking the language of troubled adolescent boys, making us think she is in fact one herself. And the writing is pristine and polished, as always. But the characters are far less compelling than the ones we were entranced by in "The Outsiders," and the plot far more fragile and broken. Still, many a teenager will find "That was Then, This is Now" speaks to them in the most haunting manner possible.

Another great one from SE Hinton. The mood and style are felt throughout. And a closeness with the characters. I'm no good at going into details such as a book report. Read this and all of these books. Read every book you can. Thanks for creating such good reading SE Hinton.

Got a 13-17 year old kid that refuses to read? Give 'em this book. I think I knew every single person in the story. You probably will too. And it teaches a moral at the end without being preachy. (at all) Why you should NOT hang around with certain bad influences, how without your even realizing it, you take on other people's characteristics, even people you dislike. Great story, easy read,

excellent writing style.

Great book! Writers like S.E Hinton don't exist any more sad to say. But good to say she is an awesome writer. This is by far my favorite novel of hers. Priceless to say the least a great read. Reminds me of my teenage years. I know the outsiders is her best seller, but this is by far her best book!

Read this after the Outsiders. Not as good as the Outsiders but it was a good story and it has Ponyboy from the outsiders mentioned in it.

I really enjoy Ms. Hinton's few books. I sure wish she had written a lot more of them in this venue. She has a wonderful grasp of what it is to be young and not always expected. Her dialogue is amazing and her prose just flows along like a deep river carrying the reader with it. Good for young people struggling and a good way I would think in getting them interested in reading in general. I highly recommend them all.

I read this and the other S.E. Hinton staple books ("The Outsiders," "Tex," and "Rumble Fish") repeatably as a teenager. Even then they were dated in literal context (i.e. the hippy era and lifestyle), but they still captured the angsty spirit of being a teen and the changes that result from growing up. As always, the author has parentless boys virtually raising themselves, in this case Bryon and his friend Mark, who had taken in the orphaned Mark after his supposed father shot his mother - as it turns out because he realized that Mark was not his son. Bryon's mother does the best she can for both boys, but when she becomes hospitalized, everything begins falling apart. Sadly, Mark's decline is likely inevitable. He already shows signs at the beginning of the book of a lack of conscience, no doubt the result of seeing and hearing the argument regarding his parentage as a child followed by his 'father' shooting his mother. Without the stabilizing force of Bryon's mother, as well as the boys' increasingly desperate need for money to survive, Mark descends into the world of selling drugs. The conclusion is typically Hinton, with the younger brother of Bryon's would-be-girlfriend, M&M (Hinton cannot write a book without at least one weird moniker), ODing on drugs obtained via Mark. Forever gone is the sweet and brilliant M&M, replaced by a dulled child. At the discovery of Mark's part in this, Bryon breaks their friendship and 'brotherhood.' Those sharp-eyed enough will be able to find out what happened to Mark in Hinton's other book, "Tex." I intend to give this to my son soon, for its lessons of blood being thicker than

water, the dangers of drugs, and the sometimes necessity of distancing oneself from those one loves.

This book draws attention to the changes that occur and the questions that come up as a person grows up. The change in mindset that a person has when he becomes an adolescent is depicted in a brutally honest way. This book is suspenseful and had me feeling strongly for the characters in it. Part of the suspense comes from my not knowing whether or not the book would have a happy ending or result in tragedy.

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