

Looking past all that, Dally is also an unacknowledged hero. After he's shot robbing the store near the end of the story, Pony's gives us an impromptu eulogy of Dally saying, "But I remembered Dally pulling Johnny through the window of the burning church; Dally giving us his gun, although it could mean jail for him; Dally risking his life for us, trying to keep Johnny out of trouble. And now he was a dead juvenile delinquent and there wouldn't be any editorials in his favor" (Hinton 131). Dally was just as much of a hero as Johnny and Pony, but only they would remember him for looking out for them and saving their lives. He showed that he still had some bravery and dignity, but no one else would praise him and thank him for what he did, because what they saw was just another hood. Granted this, we can start to understand Dally's death and relationship with Johnny.

One of the final major aspects of Dally's character is his relationship with Johnny Cade. Dally had built an impenetrable wall around himself, blocking out his emotions and anyone who tried to get near him. But Johnny, quiet, meek, unspectacular Johnny, managed to break through his wall. We can see their relationship after Johnny came out of hiding to turn himself in, Dally, "in a pleading, high voice, in a tone I had never heard from him before" (Hinton 76), said to Johnny, "I just don't want you to get hurt. You don't know what a few months in jail can do to you...you get hardened in jail. I don't want that to happen to you. Like it happened to me." (Hinton 76). From Dally's surprisingly sentimental speech we can tell he obviously cares a lot about Johnny, since he never, ever in the story talks about going to jail like that, and if he did, he would do it to brag. Dally wanted better for Johnny, because he knew Johnny could end up hateful and hopeless like him. This gave him purpose, something to love and protect, like an image of his younger self. When Johnny died, he lost his purpose and the one thing he loved in