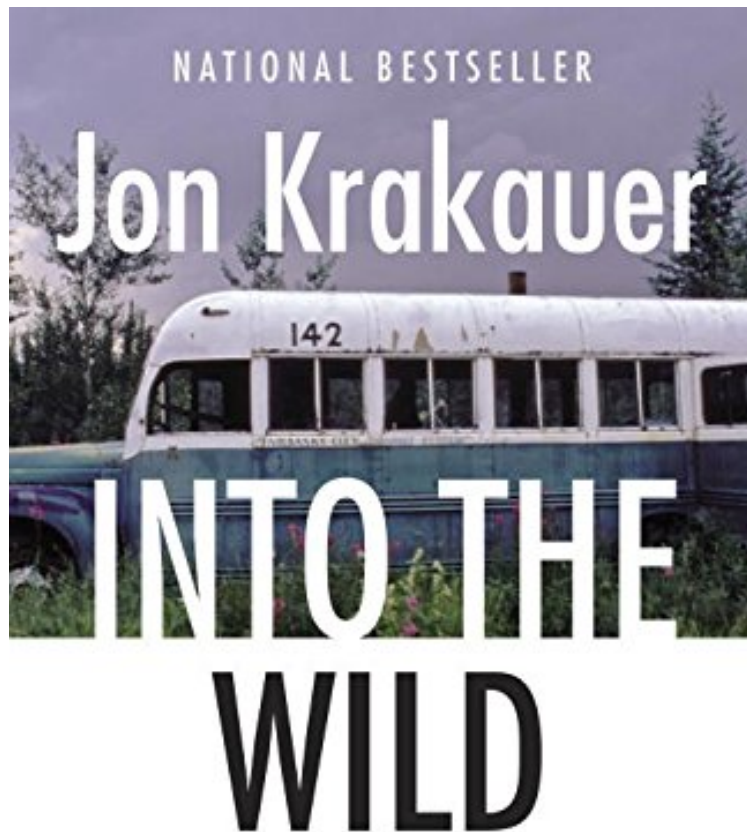


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Into the Wild

Jon Krakauer

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In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. . . .

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Jon Krakauer : Into the Wild before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Into the Wild:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Welcome Addition to My LibraryBy dwserraol highly recommend this book. Jon Krakauer goes into great depth describing this young man's life and adventures. He is able to smoothly weave in a wide range of similar events into the narrative, including some he has experienced in his own

life. The story line is engaging. I read this book in two nights. If reading about outdoor adventures is your forte you should add this book to your library. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic book, exquisitely well-written. By Mike Victor Whatever you think about the subject of the book, Krakauer's telling of the story, weaving in his own and parallel narratives of young men gripped by a desire to test themselves by walking into the wild, is so masterful that it would be hard not to be mesmerized. When addressing the question of whether McCandless was suicidal, the author draws on his own adventure climbing Devil's Thumb: "At that stage of my youth, death remained as abstract a concept as non-Euclidean geometry or marriage. I didn't yet appreciate its terrible finality or the havoc it could wreak on those who entrusted the deceased with their hearts. I was stirred by the dark mystery of mortality. I couldn't resist stealing up to the edge of doom and peering over the brink. The hint of what was concealed in those shadows terrified me, but I caught sight of something in the glimpse, some forbidden and elemental riddle that was no less compelling than the sweet, hidden petals of a woman's sex. In my case and, I believe, in the case of Chris McCandless that was a very different thing from wanting to die." The quotations from Thoreau to Tolstoy to Jack London (usually sections found highlighted by Chris McCandless) place what could have been a pathetic, self-absorbed adventure gone terribly wrong into a much larger context, making it all start to make sense by the end of the book. "...suddenly you were on your own, you had to learn to walk by yourself. There was no one around, neither family nor people whose judgment you respected. At such a time you felt the need of committing yourself to something absolute life or truth or beauty of being ruled by it in place of the man-made rules that had been discarded. You needed to surrender to some such ultimate purpose more fully, more unreservedly than you had ever done in the old familiar, peaceful days, in the old life that was now abolished and gone for good." **BORIS PASTERNAK, DOCTOR ZHIVAGO PASSAGE HIGHLIGHTED IN ONE OF THE BOOKS FOUND WITH CHRIS MCCANDLESS REMAINS.** "I do not share McCandless's obsession with "the wild" but like most of us with a Y chromosome, I can relate at some primitive level. Our species evolved because of our extraordinary curiosity and desire to roam. Our ancestors all walked out of Africa only a few hundred thousand years ago and we have been walking ever since. The idea that there is nothing untamed left to explore or experience offends us somehow. McCandless took this idea to a ridiculous, tragic extreme, but it's hard not to respect the spirit driving him even if we can shake our heads at his naiveté. There are more questions than answers about this young man and his demise - did he realize he wasn't really in the wild after all but a few miles from a major highway? was he the one who vandalized and trashed the nearby well-stocked cabins? what exactly did he eat that may have so suddenly incapacitated him after he had survived so long on his own wits (and firearms)? had he survived, would he have returned home and reconciled with his family, having answered whatever burning question he had to answer on his own? I feel that Krakauer is inviting us into a crime scene. We have a body, some clues, but so many more questions. What Krakauer excels at developing is motive, taking us into the mind of this young man (who the author annoyingly refers to as a "boy" although he was approaching his mid-twenties) and walking us through his final days. It's a fascinating, gripping read. If I could give it 6 stars, I would. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Krakauer Creates Epic Americana By Big Sean Jon Krakauer's "Into the Wild" spins a beautiful tale that literally spans a continent and is as grand in scope as any American Dream envisioned by an uncompromisingly idealistic genius who ever decided to take The Road Less Traveled. Despite being concretely reportorial in his style, Krakauer still manages to bring to life the various backcountry (and backwater) locales that make this book impressively American. It's profound in its implications and will resonate deeply with anyone who has ever felt the call of the road, the inexpressible wanderlust of youth. If you read this and don't have a turmoil of clashing emotions for Chris McCandless / Alexander Supertramp, then you missed Krakauer's point entirely. This book is as enigmatic, disturbing, beautifully touching, and frustratingly incomprehensible as the country that engendered McCandless. This book will haunt you with a caldera of ambivalent emotions and theories about how and why a mystery of this magnitude occurred in the first place. Ultimately, Krakauer raises more questions than he answers, but, after all, isn't that precisely what a great piece of writing is supposed to do?

In April 1992 a young man from a well-to-do family hitchhiked to Alaska and walked alone into the wilderness north of Mt. McKinley. His name was Christopher Johnson McCandless. He had given \$25,000 in savings to charity, abandoned his car and most of his possessions, burned all the cash in his wallet, and invented a new life for himself. Four months later, his decomposed body was found by a moose hunter. How McCandless came to die is the unforgettable story of *Into the Wild*. Immediately after graduating from college in 1991, McCandless had roamed through the West and Southwest on a vision quest like those made by his heroes Jack London and John Muir. In the Mojave Desert he abandoned his car, stripped it of its license plates, and burned all of his cash. He would give himself a new name, Alexander Supertramp, and, unencumbered by money and belongings, he would be free to wallow in the raw, unfiltered experiences that nature presented. Craving a blank spot on the map, McCandless simply threw the maps away. Leaving behind his desperate parents and sister, he vanished into the wild. Jon Krakauer constructs a clarifying prism through which he reassembles the disquieting facts of McCandless's short life. Admitting an interest that borders on obsession, he searches for the clues to the drives and desires that propelled McCandless. Digging

deeply, he takes an inherently compelling mystery and unravels the larger riddles it holds: the profound pull of the American wilderness on our imagination; the allure of high-risk activities to young men of a certain cast of mind; the complex, charged bond between fathers and sons. When McCandless's innocent mistakes turn out to be irreversible and fatal, he becomes the stuff of tabloid headlines and is dismissed for his naiveté, pretensions, and hubris. He is said to have had a death wish but wanting to die is a very different thing from being compelled to look over the edge. Krakauer brings McCandless's uncompromising pilgrimage out of the shadows, and the peril, adversity, and renunciation sought by this enigmatic young man are illuminated with a rare understanding--and not an ounce of sentimentality. Mesmerizing, heartbreaking, *Into the Wild* is a tour de force. The power and luminosity of Jon Krakauer's storytelling blaze through every page.