Into the Wild

# Mini Socratic Seminar

1. **Think about the circumstances of Chris's death in Alaska. How did we learn about it, and what did you as a reader feel at that point in the story? Why does Krakauer decide to go to the location of Chris's death?**
2. **Was Chris McCandless’ death a “foolish, pointless, death” (71)? Did he lack “the requisite humility” to go into the wild (72)?**
3. **What do you think the experience must have been like for Walt & Billie McCandless to learn that their son was dead? How do you share this kind of news with people (102)?**
4. **Krakauer feared falling into a crevasse, “waiting for death to come, with nobody aware of how or where (he’d) met (his) end” (139). What is it to die alone? How do you think Chris felt in the final moments before his death?**
5. **Krakauer said that when he was young, “personal mortality – the idea of (his) own death – was still largely outside of (his) conceptual grasp” (151 & 155). What does this mean? How do you think he grappled with his own personal mortality?**
6. **There have been many speculations as to what led to the demise of Chris McCandless. What do you believe actually “killed” Chris McCandless?**
7. **Each chapter opens with 1-2 epigraphs (quotes/excerpts from other sources, interviews, or Chris's writings). What do these epigraphs do to focus our reading?**
8. **Krakauer admits to not being "an impartial biographer" (ii). What do you think about his presence in the text (personal comments and opinions, work as a reporter learning about Chris's story, etc.)?**
9. **We learn immediately that Chris dies during his journey, and the anecdotes and interviews are told in retrospective. Krakauer also presents the information about Chris in a non-chronological order. What is the effect of this narrative choice?**
10. **What do you think Krakauer's goals were in writing the text? Is this an informational piece? A tragedy we should feel bad about? A cautionary tale?**
11. **“Chris was very much of the school that you should own nothing except what you can carry on your back at a dead run” (32). What do you think of this belief? What is the value of a minimalist lifestyle?**
12. **Chris “believed that wealth was shameful, corrupting, (and) inherently evil” (115). What are your thoughts on wealth accumulation? Does it corrupt?**