

Example by StudyDriver

Source: <https://studydriver.com/into-the-wild-and-its-character/>

Into the Wild and its Character Example

Being exceedingly educated and greatly mannered, society uproared when they heard the story of Chris McCandless. Having a successful family background and a perfectly successful life himself, did he throw it all away for nothing? Or did he finally leave a life a life that was built for him, that he didn't want, and finally fulfill his dreams of living a life of adventure? Krakauer's Into the Wild shows how Chris McCandless or Alex Supertramp influenced many others and how he vividly affected the lives around him.

Chris was very privileged and had a full life ahead of him. He had recently graduated from college, was extremely educated and had healthy amounts of money. He mentioned to his parents about how he wanted to leave and how he wouldn't be back for a while, but his parents paid him no attention. As planned, he went missing and his family never heard from Christopher McCandless again. He continued his life as Alexander Supertramp and lived life to what he thought was the fullest. He made his way hitchhiking around the country, homeless, until he made it to Alaska where he died attempting to survive off the land.

During his journey, he had several encounters with a variety of people worth discussion. Jan Burres, A "rubber tramp" who traveled the world selling knick-knacks at flea markets, forty-four-year-old women and in a

relationship with her boyfriend Bob. Most of the people Chris made relations with were old enough to be his parents and sort of outlined the kind of parents he never had. Jan Burres and her boyfriend stopped on the side of the road where they saw Chris to consult him about their map. When they saw him using a guidebook to help him pick berries for food, Jan told Bob "Man, we got to take this kid with us. You need to school him about some things" (Krakauer 30). They took him in and he camped with them for about a week, and went with them on to their next flea market. Alex or Chris was around the same age as her son that she'd been disconnected with for multiple years now, furthering the point that she felt about him as a son like figure. He felt considerably more comfortable with Jan and Bob than his parents. Maybe it's because he felt discluded from his biological family because he didn't want what they wanted and Bob and Jan didn't care about what you had, but who you were. He built relationships without discussion like a relationship with family because when you're family, you don't discuss it, you just are. That may be why when Ronald Franz, another character in the story, offers to adopt Chris, and Chris delays answering him, which leads us to Franz.

Ronald Franz, like most, encountered Chris by picking him up as a hitchhiker. Franz became so attached to Chris by the death of his own son that he asked Chris to be his adopted grandson to continue his family since he was at the end of his rope. He cared for the boy and was always trying to persuade Chris to obtain a job, and live a non-fatal life but as always, Chris declined. Chris lectured Franz about how dull his life was and how he should take initiative and live on the edge a little bit because, in his opinion, that was the best life to live. The people he imitated most were authors he'd never met and lived lives of survivalists as well. He valued life experiences and deemed laws and technology worthless, which caused him to burn/ donate his money reasoning it corruptive. Whenever he told people of his crazy plan, which he came up with by reading *The Call of the Wild* by author Jack London, they would try to give him resources to help him, but of course, he refused. When Franz heard of Chris's death, he relapsed into his history of alcoholism and took into account a letter Chris had written before he died. Franz packed most of his stuff into a storage locker and moved to the campsite Chris had previously occupied and started from there.

In Chris's letter, he wrote: Make a radical change in your lifestyle and begin to boldly do things which you may

previously never have thought of doing, or been too hesitant to attempt. So many people live within unhappy circumstances and yet will not take the initiative to change their situation because they are conditioned to a life of security, conformity, and conservation, all of which may appear to give one peace of mind, but in reality nothing is more damaging to the adventurous spirit within a man than a secure future. The very basic core of a man's living spirit is his passion for adventure. The joy of life comes from our encounters with new experiences, and hence there is no greater joy than to have an endlessly changing horizon, for each day to have a new and different sun. If you want to get more out of life, you must lose your inclination for monotonous security and adopt a helter-skelter style of life that will at first appear to you to be crazy. But once you become accustomed to such a life you will see its full meaning and its incredible beauty (Krakauer 56-57). Westerberg picked up McCandless, once again, as a hitchhiker. Just from observing the boy, he knew something was different about him and offered him food and a place to stay for a couple night before offering him a job. McCandless took the offer and ended up growing close to Westerberg and his employees. "If McCandless felt estranged from his parents and siblings, he found a surrogate family in Westerberg and his employees" (16).

Westerberg stated in *Into the Wild* by Krakauer that Chris just "Conveyed a vulnerability that made Westerberg want to take the kid under his wing" (Krakauer 16). It was obvious to Westerberg that Chris was very intelligent. He had a huge vocabulary and loved to read. It was strange to Westerberg how hard-working Chris was because the typical hitchhikers he offered jobs to didn't do much and didn't really want to be working for him anyway. Chris was mannered and pleasant to be around as well. Something not typical for your homeless person. Your average homeless person didn't want to be homeless and had a reason to be. Chris, on the other hand, was a different story. Chris left such an impact on the people he met throughout the book *Into the Wild* by Krakauer because he was happy. He was happy with what he was doing and he was unstoppable. A real inspiration because of his dedication. He had a dream and he fulfilled his dream, even if it meant he died in the process. Not only did this impact the people he met, but he was a genuine guy, and pleasant to be around, the complete opposite of what you'd expect from a homeless hitchhiker. Not only did his personality and morals impact the lives around him, but the fact that nobody knows his background or where he came from made people curious.

The fact that he wasn't trying to abide to societies rules and just wanted to be free, and expressed himself of that freely too, especially at his age. His strange ways of refusing technology and the help of other people. He also impacted these lives because he was so young. The whole story was breathtaking and interesting and impacted even more lives when it hit the newspaper and media. The story of Chris McCandless or Alex Supertramp vividly affected the lives around him and influenced many others.