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Dave Cullen spent ten years researching the Columbine shooting to create a comprehensive account that jumps between the events leading up to the tragedy and its aftermath. The book delves into the lives of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, using their personal diaries, interviews with friends and acquaintances, and FBI investigator Dwayne Fuselier's insights. Harris was a charismatic psychopath who sought the destruction of humanity, while Klebold struggled with depression and anger issues. The two formed a "tornado" of hatred, meticulously planning their attack over a year, while sharing their plans with close friends. On April 20th, 1999, Eric and Dylan carried out a violent massacre at Columbine High, killing thirteen instead of the intended five hundred. Despite the planned bombing failing to detonate, they executed an execution-style massacre in the library, taunting classmates before attempting to blow up propane bombs in the cafeteria. The community struggled to understand the motive behind the attack, with parents and families grappling with blame, compensation, and conflicting information. Cullen focuses on the survivors' recoveries and bereaved families' grieving process, highlighting the unique trauma of the event through detailed accounts spanning ten years or more. To fully grasp why mass shootings and horrific violence in America remain largely unaffected by gun control measures, journalist Dave Cullen examines the complex issues surrounding such tragedies. He delves into the phenomenon of "spectacle murder" and how it continues to motivate shooters and killers each year. Furthermore, Cullen explores the tendency to place blame on individual perpetrators, as seen in the case of Columbine, and critiques this approach for being both comforting and problematic. In his book "Columbine," Cullen tackles big issues such as the debate over handling potentially dangerous psychopaths, shared grief and post-traumatic stress within communities, and how national crises are sensationalized, making it increasingly difficult to process, understand, overcome, and prevent similar attacks from occurring again. Through extensive research and interviews, Cullen aims to provide a deeper understanding of what drives individuals to commit such acts, even if the answers prove challenging to accept. Columbine, a book by Dave Cullen, offers a detailed account of the tragic events that unfolded on April 20, 1999. The LA Times notes that Cullen's perspective resonates, while Cleveland Plain Dealer praises his minute-by-minute rendering of the chaotic assault. Salon describes it as a "chilling page-turner" and an "inspiring work of art." Time Magazine calls it the definitive account, with Newsweek praising its vivid detail. Jennifer Senior from The New York Times Review of Books commends its journalism skills, calling it a fine example of old-fashioned reporting. Newsday notes that Cullen's unadorned prose offers welcome relief from the grisly minutiae, while Entertainment Weekly gives it a grade A and calls it a remarkable book. Columbine is a masterpiece that delves into the complicated nature of evil, providing a nuanced understanding for readers who want to grasp its intricacies. Despite being leveraged by some media outlets as a synonym for teenage violence, journalist Dave Cullen's book offers a compassionate narrative of teenagers and their impact on schools and communities. Exhaustive and level-headed, Cullen's work tells the story with remarkable clarity, exuding authority and steering clear of melodrama or easy answers. The result is an example of literary nonfiction at its finest, shedding light on a dark topic through masterful prose.

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