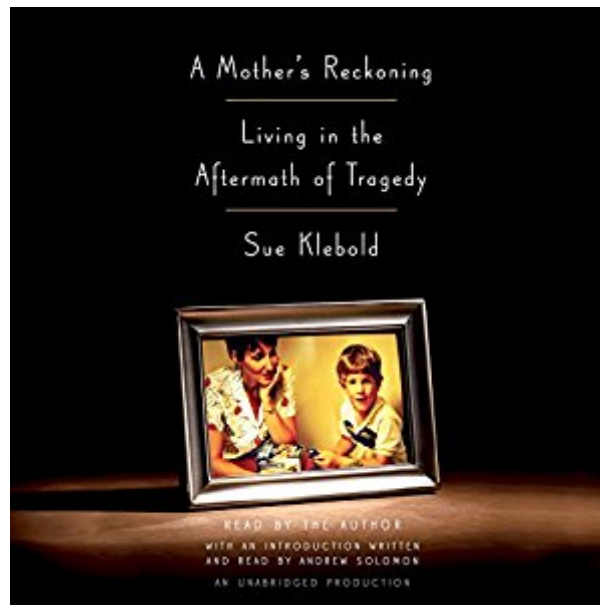


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# A Mother's Reckoning: Living In The Aftermath Of Tragedy



## Synopsis

On April 20, 1999, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold walked into Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. Over the course of minutes, they would kill 12 students and a teacher and wound 24 others before taking their own lives. For the last 16 years, Sue Klebold, Dylan's mother, has lived with the indescribable grief and shame of that day. How could her child, the promising young man she had loved and raised, be responsible for such horror? And how, as his mother, had she not known something was wrong? Were there subtle signs she had missed? What, if anything, could she have done differently? These are questions that Klebold has grappled with every day since the Columbine tragedy. In *A Mother's Reckoning*, she chronicles with unflinching honesty her journey as a mother trying to come to terms with the incomprehensible. In the hope that the insights and understanding she has gained may help other families recognize when a child is in distress, she tells her story in full, drawing upon her personal journals, the videos and writings that Dylan left behind, and countless interviews with mental health experts. Filled with hard-won wisdom and compassion, *A Mother's Reckoning* is a powerful and haunting book that sheds light on one of the most pressing issues of our time. And with fresh wounds from the recent Newtown and Charleston shootings, never has the need for understanding been more urgent. All author profits from the book will be donated to research and to charitable organizations focusing on mental health issues.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

How does one begin to "rate" a review for a book based on this subject of gut-wrenching recent history? I put up Five Stars because of the candor, humility and deep-sorrow that is clearly evident

and expressed in this harrowing account by the mother of one of the shooters; in a rampage that will be remembered as "Columbine" for many generations, as one of America's most tragic mass-shootings. This book is raw and emotional ... but tells the story from a perspective that few others, aside from a mother, could ever present. It held my attention from the first to last paragraph.

My mom used to get upset with me because I disregarded what was going on in the world, as far as news goes. Columbine was the first news story that gripped me to the point of obsession. I asked all the questions every other person was asking, and made assumptions I had no right to make. That changed when I read Susan's essay, *I Will Never Know Why*. It, to me, is the single most important essay ever written, and it changed me. Never, since reading that essay, have I ever blamed parents for their child's behavior, especially kids in their teen years. I've seen my own child act out in ways that she certainly didn't learn from her father and I, and I felt deception like I never felt it before. And stupid. I felt stupid that a teen could pull the wool over my eyes. Thanks to Susan, I learned years ago that it is foolish to think I know my child. I waited for this book to drop on my Kindle last night, and read it until I finished it. I did have to take breaks, because she is raw and honest, and as a mother, this is a welcomed relief, but also suffocating. I can only conclude that not only is this book a reflection of Susan's most personal thoughts, but a reflection of myself and all the mistakes I've made, and the signs I've overlooked as a parent. It's suffocating to realize my own failures, simply put. Every year, right after New Year's, I share Susan's essay on my FB page in hopes of enlightening others. Susan, I continue to send you strength, courage and clarity. Thank you for being you. From one mother to another, I give you permission to mourn your son. You can simultaneously have grief for all the victims and your son, because the heart can hold multiple emotions at once. I wish you well.

Heartbreaking. The struggle you have endured Mrs. Klebold is felt in every word. Everyone has been looking for answers to this tragedy for years. You were harassed from the beginning for "answers" and were damned if you did and damned if you didn't speak out. You will never satisfy everyone looking to place blame for how this all happened but I feel your pain in trying to figure it out. I can tell you first hand that kids are very good at hiding what they don't want their parents to know, and anyone who tells you differently is a fool. Where there is a will there is a way. From what went on in Columbine and what I have seen in my own local schools I can honestly say I can't believe it doesn't happen more than it does. What separates those who can weather that storm, and it is a storm, and not act on those thoughts of getting even and those who can't is the scary part,

and I think not really predictable. You are a good parent, you certainly tried.....and from the parents I've seen in my upper middle class world I dare say you tried more than most. Never be ashamed that you loved your son or continue to love him even after what he did. Unconditional love is just that, unconditional. It does not mean you don't hate what he did, it just means you love your son. There but for the grace of God. I wish you peace Mrs. Klebold

Without shame I admit that I don't normally read books like this. There is too much sadness in the world, and I do my very best to distance myself from it--understanding clearly after a long and tormented childhood that such things are triggers for me, and that participating can often send me on a downward spiral. From which I will recover, of course, but that never lessens, or eases, the impact of the experience. And so I spend my life with my three little dogs and my husband happily engrossed in a wide range of novels that contain an edge of sadness, and an edge of pain, and the edge of a life lesson...but never more. I am also the person who writes critical reviews without reservation since, as a frequent purchaser of books on , I don't trust any book (or product) that doesn't have one. In light of that, I fully intended to write one upon completion of my reading. That reading now is finished, however, and if there is a critical review to be written, it will not come from me. The book was achingly sad, and it made me cry, and it spoke to me deeply as a human and an individual who often thinks about the darkness I almost didn't escape, and then somehow did. I never saw the message in this book to be: "Forgive my son because he was once a good boy." I saw the message in this book to be: "Pay attention to the ones you love, and learn to recognize the signs of deep internal pain because if you don't, bad, and even evil things could happen." At best your loved one will only kill themselves. At worst they will become so emotionally unstable as to kill other people too. And before it ever reaches that point (or either point), they can be stopped. They can be helped. They SHOULD be helped even if only to save the lives of the people they plan to brutally murder. That message, is the message to which I give this five star review. It is a message for everyone. For the very few who have family members twisted enough to plot the death of innocents, and also for the regular families who deal only with the possible suicide of one person they love. That last group is by far the largest group, and I find myself desperately hoping that for them, the message was heard. Because the pain a person can feel from inside their minds is the blackest kind of pain that never ends. Not for the people who live inside it, paralyzed, and utterly incapable of reaching out to those who would give their lives for the chance to help. As for me, I am mostly free of it now, and when it comes I am practiced at dealing with it quickly. But I will never forget what it was like to look forward at the rest of my life in that hellish reality and wish with every

fiber of my being for it to end....While the people who loved me deeply lived on, oblivious to the terrible depth of my suffering.I promise you. I PROMISE you, it is like that for everyone who lives with thoughts of suicide, and yet so much could be done to make it go away if people only knew how to reach out to those who don't know how to reach out to them.

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