Dylan Bennet Klebold

    Dylan Bennet Klebold was born in Denver, Colorado on September 11, 1981. He was the second child of Thomas and Susan and the brother of Byron, three years older. As a boy, he was in the Boy Scouts and was a pitcher on his Little League team. His parents told investigators that Dylan was a gentle boy and never gave any indications of a violent nature.

    Klebold attended Normandy Elementary School in Littleton, Colorado, for first and second grade and then transferred to Governor’s Ranch Elementary School where he was part of a program for gifted and talented children. Klebold’s parents told investigators he was somewhat sheltered at Governors Ranch Elementary and believed his transition to Ken Caryl Middle School was a little difficult for him because he was so quiet and shy. However, his parents thought the transition from elementary school to middle school is difficult for many adolescents and therefore they were not very concerned. During his earlier school years, he played T-ball, baseball and soccer.

    While at Columbine High School, Klebold became active in school play productions and operated the lights and sounds. He was involved in video productions and Columbine High School’s Rebel News Network. Klebold also became a computer assistant at school and helped maintain the school computer server. He also built his own home computer.

    According to Thomas and Susan Klebold, their son was extraordinarily shy and did not have a girlfriend but did socialize with different groups of friends. He and his group of friends were interested in video games, midnight bowling and fantasy football leagues.

    Klebold had few close friends other than Eric Harris. Klebold’s nickname was VoDKa with his initials capitalized. His friends generally described him as shy and quiet and somewhat of a follower. In most accounts, he was a typical teenager with an interest in video games, movies, computers and spending time with groups of other teenagers. According to friends, nothing in his behavior gave clues of what he and Harris were planning.

    Tom Klebold told investigators that, as far as he knew, Dylan never showed any fascination with guns. The Klebolds indicated that their son had dreams of being a computer science major and had been accepted at the University of Arizona. In fact, the Klebolds drove to Arizona with Dylan on March 25, 1999 to pick out Dylan’s dorm room. The Klebolds spent four days driving to Arizona and back to Colorado with their son and saw nothing unusual with his behavior or demeanor.

    On January 30, 1998, Klebold and Harris were arrested after breaking into a vehicle in Jefferson County. In April 1998, they were both placed in the juvenile diversion program offered by the Jefferson County District Attorney’s Office. It is a program for first time offenders whose crime was non-violent, who show remorse and who have parents who are willing to help them. As part of the program Harris and Klebold were required to pay fines, attend anger management classes, counseling and complete community service. Once they successfully completed the diversion program, all charges were dropped and they were released from the program on February 9, 1999.

    After the tragedy at Columbine High School investigators searched for answers to why Klebold opened fire on his classmates and teachers. Although no clear-cut answers were found, there were clues. Investigators spoke with friends and teachers of Klebold who described him as a “nice, normal teenager.”

    But there was another darker side.  Klebold left behind glimpses of his thoughts in the form of notes jotted down in a day planner, a 1997 journal and writings in a math notebook and a yearbook. Klebold and Harris also left videotapes behind articulating many of their thoughts and plans.

    On the cover of Klebold’s 1997 journal is written *“Fact: People are so unaware…well, Ignorance is bliss I guess…that would explain my depression.”* Klebold began his journal on March 31, 1997 during a point he described as *“a weird time, weird life, weird existence.”* He described not fitting in, being depressed and generally hating his existence and hating his life. He talked about suicide. In another entry in 1997 he wrote, *“I swear – like I’m an outcast, & everyone is conspiring against me…”*

    During one period Klebold’s tone briefly changed and he described his “first love.” It appeared that this was a one sided love. Throughout his journal, Klebold named several girls he “loves” but he did not indicate that he ever actually spoke to any of them. He even went so far as to write letters to one girl but it appears he never sent them because they remained in his journal.

    Again in 1997 Klebold wrote that he wanted to die. He mentioned getting someone to buy him a gun so he could kill himself. In November of 1997, Klebold described getting a gun and going on a killing spree.

    In Klebold’s 1997/1998 academic day planner are what appear to be random thoughts and poems. One entry simply said, *“The lonely man strikes with absolute rage.”*

    In April of 1998, at the end of their junior year, Harris and Klebold received their copies of the Columbine High School 1998 yearbook. A full year before their rampage Klebold made four entries in Harris’s yearbook. One such entry referred to *“the holy April morning of NBK (Natural Born Killers).”*Another entry says in part *“killing enemies, blowing up stuff, killing cops!!  My wrath for January’s incident will be godlike. Not to mention our revenge in the commons.”* The January incident Klebold referred to is believed to be his arrest for breaking into a vehicle on January 30, 1998. The Columbine cafeteria is also called the commons.

    In Klebold’s notebook, along with his math homework, were eight pages of writings and drawings that appeared to be written the day before April 20. One part began, *“About 26.5 hours from now the judgement will begin. Difficult but not impossible, necessary, nervewracking & fun. What fun is life without a little death?  It’s interesting, when i’m in my human form, knowing i’m going to die. Everything has a touch of triviality to it.”*

    There were a few more pages of drawings and writings included in the notebook. Klebold’s last entry was:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Walk in, set bombs at 11:09, for 11:17*  *Leave,*  *Drive to Clemete Park.  Gear up.*  *Get back by 11:15*  *Park cars. set car bombs for 11:18*  *get out, go to outside hill, wait.*  *When first bombs go off, attack.*  *have fun!* | http://i.cnn.net/cnn/SPECIALS/2000/columbine.cd/Photos/SUSPEC6.jpg |

    Investigators will never know exactly when Harris and Klebold verbalized to each other their hate towards others and their desire to kill. However, it is clear from his journal that Klebold had those feelings as early as 1997, and Harris began expressing his thoughts in his journal in April 1998. It is also apparent from their cryptic yearbook messages to each other that they had already begun their plans for the Columbine shootings by April 1998 -- a full year earlier.

    There were also many common themes throughout their writings. Harris and Klebold both wrote of not fitting in, not being accepted and their lack of self-esteem. They reflected on natural selection, self-awareness and their feelings of superiority. They plotted against all those persons who they found offensive – jocks, girls that said no, other outcasts or anybody they thought did not accept them. Most of those teens were unaware that they had ever offended Harris or Klebold.

    Harris and Klebold left behind several videotapes documenting many of their plans, their activities and their philosophies starting in March 1999. Harris and Klebold taped a tour of Harris’s bedroom and showed off their weapons and bombs. They recorded each other conducting dress rehearsals and they taped the drive in Harris’s car to buy supplies needed for their plans.

While talking to the camera, Harris and Klebold laughed at how easy it was to make other people believe what they wanted them to. They talked about how “evolved” they were and how they considered themselves to be “above human.” They said they were going to be successful because they were going to die and stressed that they had been planning the Columbine shootings for over eight months, before all the other school shootings had occurred.

    Klebold and Harris both talked on camera about the rage and anger that had built up for years and declared they would destroy the world if they could. Harris asserted that, *“There is nothing that anyone could have done to prevent this. No one is to blame except me and Vodka.”* He went on to say that their actions were “*a two man war against everyone else.”*

There were also indications that Harris and Klebold initially planned the shootings to occur on April 19. They specifically mentioned Monday and another time said, *“Today is the 11th, eight more days.”* They never articulated why they chose the day they did and never mentioned that April 19 was the anniversary of Waco, Texas or the Oklahoma City bombing.  They never verbalized that they even knew April 20 is Adolph Hitler’s birthday.

    Harris and Klebold seemed to have lived two lives. Their friends and family described them as normal teenage boys. Others described them as outcasts. But they left behind evidence of a much darker and sinister side. This darker side was an aspect they apparently shared only with each other.

    There was also evidence that Harris and Klebold had little concern for the welfare of their friends and the siblings of their friends, many of whom were in the cafeteria and library on April 20. In fact, they mention nonchalantly that some of their friends might die and casually point out that their families would be devastated but justified it by saying, *“War is war.”*