



Collin Robert Dobin

February 20, 1997 - January 12, 2026

Minneapolis, MN - Colin (Collin) Robert Dobin, (born in Edina, MN, on February 20th, 1997 - died January 10, 2026). You were received into great love, as the third of four siblings, on a blustery February afternoon. And you left this earth nearly 29 years later on a similarly icy wintery day. A treacherous combination of mental health challenges and related physical maladies conspired to take you from us decades too soon. Those are the facts. But they are not what defined you.

To our Col-Rob, little Dobes, our Sully, our "little hunk -of-cuteness"-so full of passion, conviction and irrepressible idealism; you didn't just shine-yours was a soul on fire. From the time you were a tiny boy, you "lit up a room." For you, life was a stage, the narration your own, your actions the story. Fueled by a drive always to make a difference, you were a born entertainer. Whether it was a banana suit costume, playing the clown, or a reliably snarky turn of phrase-you loved to make people laugh. You were also a renaissance man. Equal parts talented vocalist, passionate writer, gifted intellectual, orator, networker, leader, mentor, and social activist. Using your powers for good, (mostly), you never met a soapbox you didn't relish. Whether it was marching for a social cause, reaching out to those who felt marginalized, winding up the crowd at an event, or even blogging and vlogging about politics or personal

struggles - you were always and forever about making connections. About helping people feel seen and included.

A natural and tireless competitor, you effortlessly checked all the boxes that are meant to distinguish a successful young life. Honors student at Edina High School, Rugby player, and self-admittedly unambitious second-string defensive end, class clown, Homecoming candidate, student council leader, student announcer, academic tutor, state and high school honors and performance choirs, Metropolitan Boys Choir, Mount Olivet Minneapolis Church Youth Choirs, (for 16 years), youth leadership, church camp mentor, staff member, counselor, and camp cut-up. University of Minnesota CLA Twin Cities (4th generation) student affairs counselor and student mentor, scholarship recipient and award winner, Phi Kappa Psi Fraternity leadership and Alumni Foundation Liaison, Twin Cities Arts and Entertainment Writer, and star corporate cold caller. You were enormously proud of your many achievements and so were we.

Your interests, like your passions, were legion: soccer games with friends, friendly if sharp-witted banter, political debate, stand-up comedy marathons (especially Dave Chapelle), US history movies and memorabilia, nearly all things Disney - especially your beloved Toy Story, family road trips, lounging by the lake or the campfire at the family cabin on Lake Caribou at Lutsen, a deep love for a good turn of phrase, relishing your myriad self-improvement books and projects, discussing philosophy and especially the existentialists, sketching still life's, loudly cranking your eclectic musical obsessions and belting out favorite tunes in the shower, creating strange new recipes in the kitchen, sharing favorite memes and building and maintaining endless interest groups on social media. "Big Papa Dobes," as your peers called you, could always be counted on to check in and say "hey" and "I love ya man," in that beautiful booming radio announcer voice of yours.

Beyond the accolades, however what struck someone most when they encountered your massive 6-foot 4 -inch self, topped off with a thick shock of scruffy blonde hair and twinkling blue eyes - was the dichotomy. You could always sense both a vulnerability and a deep and palpable sensitivity in your presence. At times, your masked inner turmoil could play as arrogance or insensitivity. However, your insecurities wouldn't allow you that wide of a berth of self-esteem. It was inherently difficult for you to be dismissive of the feelings of others.

A child, later a man, who knew exactly how to build bridges with the hearts and minds of others - because your soul saw what others needed from you to feel seen. Your internal battles made you exceptionally kind. You worked to include everyone in any venue you entered. You were quick to laugh, offer bear hugs and to play the fool - and equally fast with a smart remark to put any opponent or aggressor in their place. Irrepressibly candid, people knew where they stood with you. Texts and voicemails rarely went unanswered, and few calls for help ignored. You showed up for those who asked with intention and with heart. Even when your own emotional hurdles made that nearly impossible.

But the darkness came hard for you these last 5 years. A lifelong sufferer of ADHD and its accompanying anxiety and deepening depression - you crashed hard when your meds of the past decade were reassessed. Later meds didn't work well for you or even at all. Therapists had a limited effect. You wanted answers, which never seemed to come. As you tried to regain the light, you lost your way again and again and fell often and hard. But by god, did you put up a fight. The next years were composed of this med and that, inpatient and outpatient therapy, one-on-ones, long walks, self-help books and videos, long talks with friends, family, mentors and clergy... vitamin regimens... cold baths and supplements, teas and herbs. You tried it all. Over time, when nothing you

tried seemed to work, and too proud to admit defeat to those you loved - you quietly turned to chemicals to try to "fix" yourself. It didn't go well for you. With each year, you lived more in the past and in your "beautiful dreams." A safe space you perceived as the best time of your life. A time when you were carefree and safe from the shadows that chased you. A brief renewal of ADHD meds in early 2025 brought a glimmer of hope. But the last crash was the most complete. The spark dimmed. Though you continued to frantically look for ways out of the darkness, to reach out to friends and family and to look for hope - depression consumed your ability to function, to care, and finally to act in your own best interest. Your physical health failed you. Still, we would get our daily messages, often half a dozen or more to each of those closest to you. "Hey, its Colin, what are you up to, can you talk? Just wanna hear your voice. I Love you." Those were also the last messages you left each of us on the day you slipped away.

There is no denying that suffering was a significant part of our Colin's story. But it isn't the only or even the primary narrative. Col was a man of great loves and ambitions, and he wanted very much to heal and to remain here with us. If love could have carried him over the finish line, he would still be here now. It wasn't enough. And so, we are left to tell Colin's story. One he began himself in earnest and was unable to complete. Colin had very few secrets. And it is our hope that in being completely transparent about who he was; a gorgeous kaleidoscope of special gifts and imperfect humanity, that we can add his voice and our own to those of countless others seeking to deepen and transform the conversation about mental health. Maybe then, we can make his legacy about reaching a hand back to others who might find themselves on a similar darkened path, and in need of a light - to guide and support them. May we remember to always pay attention and to say with intention "I am here. I love you. What can I do to help?"

"Oh Me! Oh Life! Of the questions of these recurring...What good amid these O me, O life? Answer: That you are here-that life exists and identity, That the

powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse." - Walt Whitman

Colin was preceded in death by his grandfather Robert J. Malone, his uncle Scott, and his admired stepfather Michael W. Thompson. He is survived by his mother Michele Malone Dobin, his older brother and emotional "rock" Andrew (Jenny and Mason), his adored big sister Lauren (Joe) and his treasured baby sister Payton; stepsiblings Paul, Mara, Philip and Anna (Shari, Adrian, Christine, Stephen, Mirina and Gunnar); favorite Aunt, Kay Henderson; cherished members of his extended maternal birth family; lifelong friends Aren, Cort, Andy and Drew; Ron, and Patrick, and legions of friends and loved ones.

Remembrances to Mount Olivet Cathedral of the Pines Camp, Mount Olivet Counseling Services, SAVE (Save.org), and Relate Counseling of Minnetonka.