

Kristi Khan

I am the mother... Sorry, but that is a hard sentence for me to say, I am a mother, instead of I was, but I will forever be the mother of my wonderful, intelligent, sensitive, empathetic, creative, loving son, Kai Khan. You see, Kai was my only child who God blessed me with on this Earth. He was my miracle child. He was the child I had been told I would never have on my own due to medical issues I have. I remember the day the doctor told me, "Congratulations!", after I really expected the doctor to tell me that the smells of fast food and candy corn in the Walmart aisles made me nauseated were the result of a stomach flu. The day my son was born was the happiest day of my life, and it feels like just yesterday, which it might as well have been, because the worst day of my life was the day he died, and came way too soon. Eighteen years with my son was not nearly enough. One of my precious memories of my son was when he was little I would tell him goodnight, and we did this thing where we would blow each other kisses and then pretend we caught them and say "Got it!" at the same time. I remember how much he always was fascinated and liked medicine and even when little would watch them take my blood, give me IVs, and once when having to have a spot on my arm removed, he announced to the doctor that he just knew mom was going to cry and proceeded to tell the doctor with such a serious voice and look on his face that he had selective hearing and had it for such a long time. I guess it really should not have shocked me that he grew up wanting to become a nurse and help others and that he would spend part of his break from school practicing putting a tourniquet on me and how to ease a patient he thought one day he would be taking blood from. Just as it didn't surprise me just 2 days before he left this world when I told him that the city put the notice about utilities being shut off for unpaid bill being placed by mistake on our door that his first thought was the poor person who would have no electricity if they weren't able to pay their bill on Monday.

Those are the types of memories a mother should have, not the other memories I have. Not the memory of driving in your car as fast as you can to get to your child after getting a call from the ER almost 3 hours away telling you that your son may need to be intubated and then sitting helplessly by his bed, holding his hand, having to help push him back down on the bed as he jerked and convulsed and watched nurses suction his mouth. Not the memory of a plane ride to Missouri many hours later after they finally located an open ICU bed and having to drive home days later once he was stabilized to go back to work while they kept him there for days looking for an open psych bed, which the wait for that bed was much longer than the time he spent in the bed to make room for the next patient waiting, but that is another discussion for another time. Another memory a mother should never have is opening up her front door to 2 police officers 6 months later telling you any mother's worst nightmare, your child is gone. I'm coming up on the 2-year anniversary of that day, and I can still hear my screams and feel that cement as I fell to my knees crying. To this day, I still often unplug our doorbell because my heart starts beating fast when I hear the doorbell ring. No mother should have to go to a funeral home to say goodbye to their child and get that closure, because you know if you don't see him this one last time it won't feel real and the denial will always be there that you're child can't possibly be gone. No mother should have to think about the fact that while life went on for everyone else around him, your child lay dead on the floor of his dorm all night long. No mother should know what it's like to see your child lying there with one side of his face all blue from where the blood pooled from how he laid dead, have to hear them explain to you about the shiny stuff on your child's face that was used in preparation for your viewing and goodbye, have to feel the stiffness of your child's hand as you grasp it and feel like his hand is grasping you back as

you rub his cold arms trying to warm them up as you cry and tell him how much you love him and miss him and apologize that you couldn't protect them for the cruel, hateful world we live in.

Days after that goodbye, I picked up his wallet, keys, computer, phone and notes he left from the police station and picked up his things that just months before we had helped him move into his dorm. That was the beginning of my quest to find the answers of why this happened, just according to the coroner, 16 minutes after my last call with him. After his attempt 6 months before, I called him and checked in with him every night and saw him every other weekend. The next weekend we had plans to go see my parents, get haircuts, do some shopping. After looking at the notes he left, this detailed notecard of what he took and what times, the card he left for the cleaning lady to warn her not to go around the corner and look in his bed so she wouldn't have to see his dead body and instead warned her to call 911 because he had committed suicide with sodium nitrite, the wishes for his cremation and services written out, I knew this was so weirdly very well planned out. It was then that I got on his phone, that was unlocked so that I could contact his friends, that I found he had deleted his email account, which I was able to bring back as at one time he had used my Gmail account as backup. In that email account, I immediately found an email from a site called Sanctioned Suicide, which stated his account had been closed as requested. It had his username, so from there I went on the site myself, even going so far as to create my own so that I could access what you can only access with your own account. It was there that I read these posts and these responses (read posts and responses showing Kai had second thoughts and was told that if his mother truly loved him she would let him go). As you can see, his name is crossed out here and so is this one, and that is how they tell everyone that they are no longer alive. The instructions tell them to message the administrators and let them know when they are crossing the bridge or CTB, so that they can cross out those names. You will notice how the person responding telling my son that I am selfish for wanting him to live doesn't have his name crossed out. It didn't take long after seeing those posts for me to find the detailed instructions on what my son had listed he took with the side effects outlined, the dosages outlined, even telling the reader where to purchase the items and have them sent directly to your door, how to hide what your doing from family, and destroy the evidence before you can take your last breath. I called the detective I had talked to after my son's death and was shocked and devastated to know that KS has no laws in place to make this a crime. Those who wish to prey on the suffering and the vulnerable have more rights than my son and so many others. There are laws to protect those who are vulnerable from being scammed out of money but not from being pushed over the edge to the point that they can't think clearly and are hearing do it, do it, do it. There is no hope. This is the only way. Is money more important than actual lives?

My life since that day of March 27, 2022, has been forever changed, and I will never be the same. My heart is forever broken with a giant hole that will never be filled. There has not been one single day since that I have not thought of or cried for my son. My life has gone from before Kai died to after Kai died. I can't even watch the same shows we used to. When I go to the store and see the profile of someone who reminds me of my son, I feel myself gasping and my heart racing, and just walking by the book section at Walmart and seeing the types of books my son loved breaks my heart all over again. To this day, at 6:30 p.m., I find myself looking at the clock and thinking I should be calling my son to check on how his day went. While all of his classmates are getting married, graduating college, or having babies and their parents are posting about how excited they are to be grandparents, I am trying to cope with the fact that I will never be a grandma, never hear I love you, mom, again, never get to see my son walk

across the stage at his college graduation. I will forever feel that stab in the heart when I'm asked if I have any children.

My whole life's purpose was being mom to my son and now it's to keep more children from leaving and more moms from grieving. I spend my time speaking up about my son, keeping his memory alive, and advocating, especially for the reasons he was so depressed and vulnerable to this game of helping push others to take their lives for sport and amusement, but that also is another discussion for another time. You know how you wake up after a nightmare and feel that sigh of relief knowing it was just a bad dream? Well, every morning for me it's the realization that it wasn't just a nightmare, that it is so very real. During the holidays, I felt the heartbreak like it was just happening all over again and struggled to even get out of bed, and my advocacy, telling my son's story was the only thing that kept me going, and I started receiving messages from fake accounts made with my son's picture defaced to look like a demon telling me that he was being raped in hell and begging me to kill myself and burn my house down, because that was the only way he would be allowed into Heaven and received these messages relentlessly day after day. I filed a police report, but I already knew from losing my son that pushing someone to take their life is not a crime here in KS.

Now I know that if this passes it will not bring my son back and will not give my family any sort of justice, but I am sure it will help so many other mothers avoid grieving the loss of their children as if there are actual consequences for these actions it will make many think twice about what they are doing, because even if they don't care about the lives of those they are trying to end, they will care about the punishment they will have to face for what they have done.