

## A Kingdom Far Away; Raising a daughter with mental illness in a systematically unsafe world

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### **Abstract**

Kari Gusso shares her personal journey. Living with a child that struggles with mental illness is very hard and sometimes debilitating. Friends and family are not aware of what really goes on behind closed doors. Health care professionals and law enforcement need to stop treating the mentally ill as if they have committed a crime. Having an anxiety attack does not constitute a crime. There needs to be a higher standard of mental health education. This book is a raw account of living with mental illness. Kari bravely tells her brutally honest story of daily struggles parenting a child living with a mental illness and the unrelenting battle to keep her daughter safe from untrained police, medical staff, and society at large. Mental illness has a biological component, like any other disease. I want to raise awareness that mental health is a national issue. Schools need to screen early and educate.

where she sits with law makers as a parent representative telling her story. Kari and her husband Jared live in Sioux Falls, SD with their three daughters.

### **Biography:**

Kari Gusso grew up in MN where she attended Holy Angels in Richfield, MN. Kari received her BS in Nursing from SDSU, and worked for many years as a labor and delivery nurse, a flight nurse and as an RN case manager at the VA Medical Hospital in Sioux Falls SD. In 2012 she decided to stay at home full-time to care for their daughter Lauren who suffers with a mental illness. Kari has been featured on KDLT Sioux Falls, 96.5 radio SD, and the Sioux Falls Argus Leader News, along with magazine articles. Kari spoke to the University of MN CHAT program and she is involved in the SD Partners in Policymaking