



LEFT Suzanne in Keolu, Hawaii, with her rescue dog, Muffin, and two rabbits.

At a Young Age, We Believe in 'Trust Above All'

WRITTEN BY SUZANNE J. FARROW

My story is set in an imperfect world where it seems like everything can be bought with money. This is in stark contrast to my childhood growing up in Hollywood Beach, California, where life was more about outdoor adventures with my horse. At a young age, the values of truth, trust, honor, and faith were taught to me by my parents. I carried these values into adulthood, believing in them as a foundation of character-building and integrity. To me, this was what built America—freedom, honor, self-respect, and responsibility.

After 14 years of marriage, supporting my husband's career in the high-end resort field, I asked for a divorce after learning he had a different lifestyle on the side. I moved to the big island of Hawaii. Instead of buying a home, a parcel of incredible beauty called to me. When I bought it, I stood there saying to God, "This is the most beautiful land I've ever seen, Lord."

I prepared the land and planted a Kona coffee orchard of 2,000 trees. I planted grass down the

rows to hold the top-soil, with the trees situated further apart allowing the breeze to bring moisture and nutrients to my trees twice a day. This had never been done before, and I was laughed at by many local farmers. I fogged my orchard with an organic seaweed mixture that attracted ladybugs to eat the unwanted scale. As my orchard grew vibrantly, I would drive the tractor through the rows singing and talking to my trees, not knowing this land had been King Kamehameha Royal Gardens back around the year 1824.

Within five years, my trees tripled the average crop per tree on the Kona Coast, registering at the North Coast Coffee Mill with 95 percent Fancy-Extra Fancy grade! Prior to my coffee tote packaging design that took national packaging awards, all Kona coffee was presented in brown paper bags with peel stick labels. In 1993, after winning 1st place at the Kona Coffee Festival Cupping Event against many large farms, The Chef de Cuisine of the Kona-Kohala Coast five-star resorts adopted my Keolu Mauka Lani

In 1993, after winning 1st place at the Kona Coffee Festival Cupping Event against many large farms, The Chef de Cuisine of the Kona-Kohala Coast five-star resorts adopted my Keopu Mauka Lani Plantation Coffee (the Heavenly Belly of The Mountain) as their representative of Kona coffee.

Plantation Coffee (the Heavenly Belly of The Mountain) as their representative of Kona coffee. I designed the dessert coffee for the Ritz Carlton Resort Hotel, and I was asked by our state representative to represent the Kona Coffee Industry for several years at the opening of the State Legislature. All this stimulated the Komo brothers, long-time coffee farmers, to want to sell their 228-acre parcel next to my plantation to me at a very low price of \$1 million to honor the land their father had left them. They said they had watched me work as hard as they did for years, and couldn't believe a woman from the high-end five-star resorts world could become so involved with making Kona coffee beautiful.

Their proposal was overwhelming to me. I was still building my coffee business, but I agreed. Later, when I had the land appraised, I was shocked at its \$8.2 million appraisal!

The formal business plan I created for this organic, undeveloped land was to set aside ten acres for a Hawaiian Cultural Center so the Hawaiian Historic Society would have a central place to teach its language, arts, crafts, and dance, and 14 acres were set aside at the top for youth outdoor education and school camping since there were no camps for children on the islands at the time.

I interviewed enthusiastic developers including Lucky Bennett, architect of The Mauna Kea Resort, and Adrian Zecha, developer of The Bora Bora Resort Hotel. The plan was for the purchasers of the five-acre parcels to develop Polynesian-style homes to be leased back to the private resort. My coffee company, Keopu Mauka Lani, would install and manage three of their five acres in orchards, giving back a crop share percentage

with low agriculture state tax. A real win-win-win!

I interviewed numbers of potential finance partners and because of time restrictions, I decided to take a man who presented himself as being a single investor from Honolulu. I had my attorney check out his credentials. However, as legal partnership documents were created and signed, I learned the man was just "the frontman" for two very powerful "silent partner investors." They didn't want me, they wanted all I had pulled together over the years of planning, labor, and investment. I had been duped. I quickly shifted from managing my coffee company to defending against a barrage of hostile legal "takeover" attempts. The silent partners were high-profile agricultural businessmen with mainland markets, Harvard attorneys, a former governor backing them, and connections to investors "with deep pockets."

The corruption my attorneys and I witnessed over the many years as I struggled to defend what was rightfully mine was overwhelming, to say the least. It involved corruption of controls in the banks, the law firms, courts, and certain politicians. What did I learn from this? Not all human souls upon this earth are honest, caring, and come from an integral foundation—money and power drive many of them. I had trusted these men and the advice of my attorney.

From 1991–2012 (21 years), I fought like a mother tiger trying to protect her cubs. During intense legalities, my attorneys and I had our phones tapped and our lives threatened. Throughout those years, I spent about \$1.2 million striving to get justice in the courts. Finally, I won a \$2.2 million settlement ... only to have the settlement challenged.



I had to leave Hawaii. In 2010, I moved back to Hollywood Beach. I had no alternative but to file for bankruptcy, which took another two years for the court to sort out.

The hard pill to swallow was that the Bankruptcy Trustee didn't want to investigate the accounting that I requested. Without any investigation of the changed illegal document of a loan agreement from a straight percentage rate into a percent being compounded monthly, the Bankruptcy Trustee agreed with the opposition to grant all my land, development plans, and home, destroying my award-winning Kona Coffee Company and handing over the \$2.2 million settlement to the corrupt side. The judge shook her head that the document presented was not researched, but said she would have to grant everything to the corrupt challenging side. I walked out of the courtroom with my family as we dragged our mouths on the floor in disbelief.

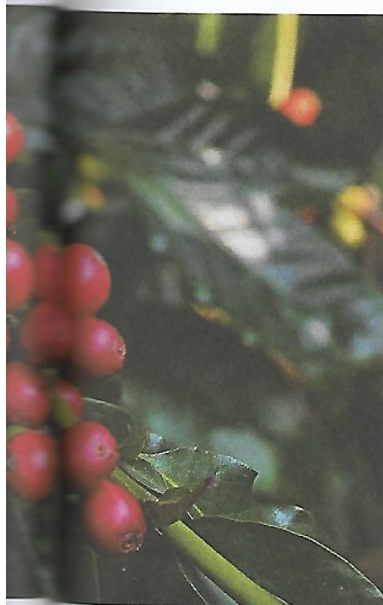
During these years, I watched as "white envelopes" of cash bought attorneys and even judges to rule against Hawaii state statutes. Thus, "he

who has the most money wins." I flew back to the Keopu Mauka Lani Plantation to retrieve my belongings and say goodbye.

At 72 years of age, I walked off my land after standing on the old ancient Hawaiian stone wall, overlooking my orchard and 14 miles of Kona Coastline, saying to God, "I never owned this land. I only owned the privilege to direct and protect it ... now Lord, I give it back to you. May I learn my lessons of soul ... and may those who took it ... learn their lessons. Amen."

These past ten years, in an effort to keep my innate "positive outlook of life," I have written and illustrated 16 life-value children's books, through my Lollipop Media Productions, LP. Ten of these books have won national and international awards in book festivals, from Paris, London, and Amsterdam to Chicago, Los Angeles, Hollywood, and the Greater Southwest.

In the Abraham Lincoln book, he shares with the child reader: "Of all the countries in the world, America is the only Country with a Birthday! So why do we celebrate your birthday, my birthday,



and America's birthday?" Questions stimulate curiosity. Curiosity drives passion to know. Life becomes fun and exciting. Using this thread of creativity in learning about life, I've just completed 90 "Homeschooling PuPus" (in Hawaii, pupus are delicious appetizers).

Also, I've dedicated myself to a visionary project to build The Pavilion and Chapel of Nature to educate children and visitors to the importance nature plays in our everyday lives. We have explored various potential sites in California and Arizona. When I was a student at Arizona State University in the early 1960s, I fell in love with the "organic" architectural designs and creations of Frank Lloyd Wright through Taliesin West. He designed The Trinity Chapel of Nature in 1958 that was never built. I've always admired this idea, so going forward we're hoping to secure necessary financial support for our project to really educate people of nature's exquisite importance in sustaining life here on planet Earth!

Integrity, honor, faith, love, giving from our soul ... these are the real gifts of life ... the real

happiness that many souls never discover, and that money alone cannot buy.

Walt Disney's last words to me in the summer of 1964 were: "Suzy, never give up your dreams no matter what anyone says. And always remember, failures are stepping stones to success."

Love life, be available to life, learn your lessons with the joy of wisdom, and the rewards will come within your heart and soul.

With Gratitude,
Suzy

From Levi jeans with a plaid shirt and blonde pigtails flying, riding her horse Paint as a child, Suzanne Farrow became a polished, knowledgeable young lady at Colorado Women's College and Arizona State University. Her life over the years expanded into many incredible and creative experiences as an entrepreneur. ☼

LEFT TO RIGHT Kona coffee at Kailua Bay, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii.

Kona coffee cherry fruit.

Suzanne fogging coffee orchard trees with organic seaweed mixture to attract butterflies by the hundreds.

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ISSUE 3

The Voyage of Life

Thomas Cole pioneered American landscape painting, expressing moral or religious meanings with his "higher style of landscape."

