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Survivor castoff's speech serves up rats, snakes and raw emotion



“I think the producers picked me for the show because I’m from Wisconsin, with principles and morals and values I stick to. Where I was brought up, a man’s word was his word, and we still did things on a handshake. That’s why I felt so betrayed by Kelly [Wiglesworth] when it came to the finale. I don’t agree with Richard [Hatch]’s principles, but he stuck by them and was forthcoming in them, so I had to respect that. But I’d made friends with Kelly, and she started playing games behind everybody’s back.

We lived 40 days in the jungle, and I was voted off fourth from the end, on Day 37. I was disappointed, and then as the next few days went by, my emotions rollercoasted. I ended up pissed. I wished I could go up and slap them both. Instead I asked for a pencil and paper, and started writing and rewriting a speech for Tribal Council. And cried, and wrote, and cried.

We’d lived with rats on the island from Day 1. They

Susan Hawk recalls why she raked the final two contestants over the coals at first-ever Tribal Council

were everywhere, running all over us. And although we didn’t see many snakes, we were constantly on the lookout for them. So the imagery came to me. Richard to me was a predatory snake, and Kelly a scurrying rat. And [in voting for Richard], I urged the jury to allow what Mother Nature intended—for the snake to eat the rat. There hasn’t been a speech given like that on TV in 11 years, because nobody’s got the nuts or the backbone to tell the truth.

I’d warned the sound guys beforehand, ‘When I get up there and start, have your tapes loaded, because I ain’t gonna stop.’ Later, at the [wrap] party, the guy from the sound booth told me he’d never seen two producers hug each other like Mark Burnett and Craig Piligian did during my speech. [In forging such a famous moment for *Survivor*] I had just made Burnett a buttload of money, just by being a real person.”

— Susan Hawk, who finished fourth