



**The challenging landscape mirrors the struggles of a woman in a controlling relationship** October 3, 2008  
by **Krista R. Fink "Krista"** (WV)

**This review is from: BELIZE SURVIVOR: Darker Side of Paradise (Paperback)**

Wow! I started reading this book prepared for an account of a domestic violence survivor, but found myself on an exciting journey to Key West and into the lush jungles of Belize. The challenging landscape mirrors the struggles of a woman in a controlling relationship, as she and her young family learn to brave the storms and floods of the land, and she simultaneously learns to predict and weather the dark storms of her marriage. One of the major components of domestic violence is isolation, and Koerner's Belize serves as the ultimate locale, isolating its inhabitants physically due to difficult to impossible traveling conditions, but also from basic rights due to the corruption amongst the local officials. In the 80's, America had yet to make strides in protecting our women from abusive spouses, but Koerner's revelation that in Belize the man's right to discipline his wife protects him adds to the hopelessness of Alexis' situation. As I read I felt the conflict so many friends and family members of victims feel today: I wanted to gather a group of friends and rush down to the jungle to rescue this young woman and her children, but I felt the fear of her husband's far-reaching connections and ability to manipulate any situation. And ultimately, I knew she had to rescue herself in her own way. Captivating, thought-provoking, wonderful read.