



# **Together, Alone: A Memoir of Marriage and Place (Southwestern Writers Collection Series, Wittliff Collections at Texas State University-San Marcos)**

*Susan Wittig Albert*

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What does it mean to belong to a place, to be truly rooted and grounded in the place you call home? How do you commit to a marriage, to a full partnership with another person, and still maintain your own separate identity? These questions have been central to Susan Wittig Albert's life, and in this beautifully written memoir, she movingly describes how she has experienced place, marriage, and aloneness while creating a home in the Texas Hill Country with her husband and writing partner, Bill Albert.

*Together, Alone* opens in 1985, as Albert leaves a successful, if rootless, career as a university administrator and begins a new life as a freelance writer, wife, and homesteader on a patch of rural land northwest of Austin. She vividly describes the work of creating a home at Meadow Knoll, a place in which she and Bill raised their own food and animals, while working together and separately on writing projects. Once her sense of home and partnership was firmly established, Albert recalls how she had to find its counterbalance—a place where she could be alone and explore those parts of the self that only emerge in solitude. For her, this place was Lebh Shomea, a silent monastic retreat. In writing about her time at Lebh Shomea, Albert reveals the deep satisfaction she finds in belonging to a community of people who have chosen to be apart and experience silence and solitude.

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