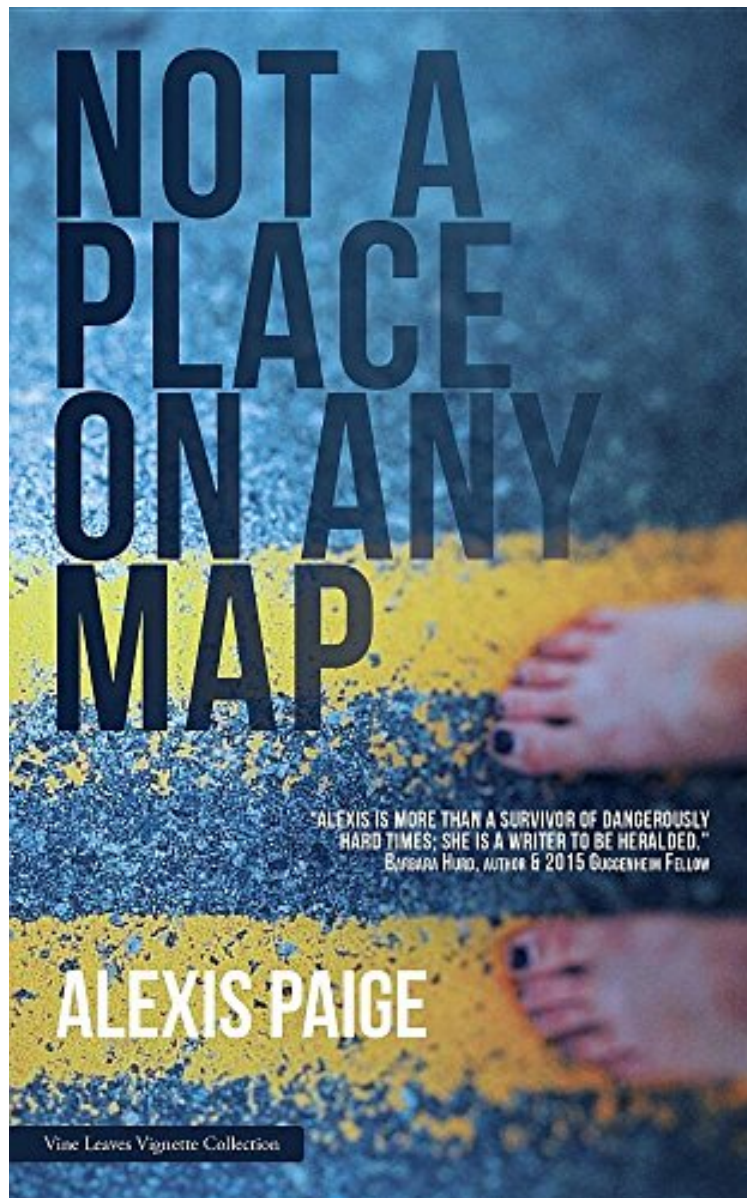


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## Not a Place on Any Map

Alexis Paige

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**Alexis Paige : Not a Place on Any Map** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Not a Place on Any Map:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. ... reading and the author writes such a poignant and beautiful sentence that you have to stop and marvelBy ChloeDo you know when you are reading and the author writes such a poignant and beautiful sentence that you have to stop and marvel? When you re-read that sentence over and over and

feel something profound in you shift? If I'm lucky, I find a sentence like this in maybe every fifth or sixth book that I read. Just one. Reading Alexis Paige's, new book, every sentence was this beautiful. A road map of moments written in poetry and dripping with life altering imagery and description. It really is one of the most beautifully written collections I've ever read. Just finished it today and I already know I'll have to re-read it a dozen times to catch all the layers of nuance and creative imagery. Usually when I review a book I try to find the one or two most beautiful lines to quote in my review but I literally couldn't pick, they are all beautiful. Highly recommend you order your copy now.<sup>2</sup> of 2 people found the following review helpful. This fine collection of flash prose has stayed with me for ...By L. Heiser This fine collection of flash prose has stayed with me for a few weeks. I love the narrative, the melancholy, the fight, the love in these brief essays. There's a wonderful sense of place here that informs every essay. Overall it's a great story beautifully written about a woman who experiences trouble in many forms from childhood on. It's dark but also light because she figures out how all the trouble feels and what it means and how she can make a life out of her new knowledge and strength and growing love of others.<sup>1</sup> of 1 people found the following review helpful. Appreciated honesty from a writer to watch. By Suzanne Strempek Shea To be so excruciatingly alive is what hurts, Alexis Paige tells us as she attempts both to breathe in the San Francisco night air and make a step toward stability and healing. The reader takes the place next to her there and in in each of these brief, vivid, solid essays recalling a broken childhood home, or a hard leaning on alcohol and drugs, or the trauma of rape, or the devastation of arrest and incarceration. One cannot read these pages without thanking the author for delving so deeply and honestly into to the North, South, East and West of rough years endured, and for grabbing for a handhold of the hard-won strength that has carried her to a place of recovery and gratitude.

Not a Place on Any Map, winner of the 2016 Vine Leaves Vignette Collection Award, explores the switch-backing emotional terrain of traumas and triumphs, as well as the disparate landscapes where they unfold. In rich, evocative snapshots of Chicago, the desert Southwest, California, New England, and Texas, the book traces a peripatetic childhood shaped by loss and dislocation that tumbles into an early adulthood spent chasing excitement from coast to coast and abroad. After being raped in Italy on her first trip to Europe at twenty-five, the author goes adrift in despair from which only drugs and alcohol provide escape. The flash lyric essays in this debut collection pursue a lost sense of self and home after trauma, but as the author discovers, home is not a place marked neatly on any map. Reaching recovery takes years and detours through depression, blurred landscapes, rehab, and jail. Ultimately, the book maps not home at all, but a truer place, one made all the sweeter for having travelled so far to find it.

"A series of prose vignettes, Not a Place on Any Map, explores departures and arrivals, moments when the writer's past opens up into illumination or essence, into an internal emotional landscape answering or echoing or at odds with the world around her. The writing pulls you in like mesmerizing fiction or a well-crafted memoir and then holds you with the brilliant poetry of its prose. Paige's wayward and peripatetic past threads through New England, San Francisco, Houston, Phoenix, and Italy, in a journey where she navigates through family breakdowns, addiction and a DWI, the Harris County Jail, hard reassessments of recovery, and her life as a writer and teacher. This is powerful and insightful work, filled with moments of beauty and forgiveness worthy of the journeys which led to its creation." DAVID MURA, AUTHOR OF TURNING JAPANESE, A NEW YORK TIMES NOTABLE BOOK OF THE YEAR AND WINNER OF THE PEN OAKLAND JOSEPHINE MILES LITERARY AWARD \*\*\* "The title of this masterful collection of prose vignettes says it all: what Alexis Paige is trying to map is not a place at all but a state of mind affected by drug and alcohol abuse, 'that liminal no-place between the dead and the living.' If there is redemption here, it is not heroic or even celebration-worthy because Paige doesn't ask us to lament her stumbles or to salute her triumphs. The writing itself-superbly crafted-demands that we pay attention instead to the small labors that might finally lead any of us away from precariously bad choices. Compassionate and clear-eyed, Paige also immerses us in the social and racial injustices that can, in the end, make even those laborious choices futile. At times startlingly poetic about the crude and matter of fact about the breath-taking, Paige manages tone with such deftness we end up more interested in how she thinks than in what she does. She is, in other words, more than a survivor of dangerously hard times; she is a writer to be heralded." BARBARA HURD, WINNER OF THREE PUSHCART PRIZES, AND 2015 GUGGENHEIM FELLOW \*\*\* "To be so excruciatingly alive is what hurts, ' Alexis Paige tells us as she attempts both to breathe in the San Francisco night air and make a step toward stability and healing. The reader takes the place next to her there and in each of these brief, vivid, solid essays recalling a broken childhood home, or a hard leaning on alcohol and drugs, or the trauma of rape, or the devastation of arrest and incarceration. One cannot read these pages without thanking the author for delving so deeply and honestly into to the North, South, East and West of rough years endured, and for grabbing for a handhold of the hard-won strength that has carried her to a place of recovery and gratitude." SUZANNE STREMPEK SHEA, WINNER OF THE NEW ENGLAND BOOK AWARD FOR FICTION \*\*\* "I suppose all our lives could be considered rich and full of incident, but if we are going to persist in sharing them, how we document them matters. Paige writes of Seurat, 'the way you have to pull back to see the shape of the thing.' From magnificent magnification in 'America, Allegory, 2015, ' or in the beached-glass smoothness of a tiny elixir

bottle washed ashore after a flood, Paige's lens is nimble. We have always had the vignette form, that quick gesture, for sparing us all that is unnecessary. There is not a gratuitous moment in *Not a Place on Any Map*, not one extra syllable. It is a specific skill, this paring, a surgeon's deft talent, leaving the reader only the most vital of cells. Every cell connected to its counterpart, fore and aft." NINA GABY, EDITOR OF *DUMPED: STORIES OF WOMEN UNFRIENDING WOMEN*"

About the Author Alexis Paige's work appears in multiple journals and anthologies, including *Fourth Genre*, *The Pinch*, *The Rumpus*, *Pithead Chapel*, and *Brevity*, where she is an Assistant Editor. Her essay, *The Right to Remain*, was named a notable in the 2016 *Best American Essays* anthology, was featured on *Longform*, and nominated for a Pushcart Prize. Winner of the 2013 *New Millennium Writings Nonfiction Prize*, Paige is a graduate of the *Stonecoast MFA* program. She writes from a converted farmhouse pantry in rural Vermont, where she lives with her husband, and their two dogs, Jazz and George. Visit Alexis online: [alexispaigewrites.com](http://alexispaigewrites.com)