

#FemkuMag



2022 Touchstone Award and
Red Moon Anthology Nominations

#FemkuMag

haikai poetry by womxn and non-binary folx

2022 Award Nominations

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A Note from Me to You

I'd like to both sincerely apologize and thank you for your patience with me as I am struggling to navigate life with my disabilities. As most of you know, I received over 40 diagnoses within the last year and it's not been easy grieving my life as I knew it, but I am forever grateful for the support I've received from all of you.

I know that this announcement of my Touchstone and Red Moon Press Nominations is incredibly late (especially as [skipping stones: The Red Moon Anthology of English Language Haiku 2022](#) has recently been released), but I strongly feel these poems still deserve to be celebrated.

There's a lot that goes into selecting nominations for Touchstone and Red Moon Press, so I thought I'd shed light on my decision-making process: When I re-read through the issue I'm choosing from, I try to focus solely on whether or not I think the poem is effective both technically and emotionally. After narrowing it down to my "short list", I go back through and ask myself the

following questions about each individual piece: *Does the poem contain a universal moment? If not, does it have the means to shift the reader's perspective? Does it capture the senses? Is the idea original? Is the poem well-crafted? Does it feel authentic? Is the poem groundbreaking? Does it have the power to change the world?* I also try to keep in mind who the judges/editorial panel are and what their tastes might be, although I'll admit that sometimes I'll throw in one or two personal favorites that might not get anything based on context, but that I think are so necessary to society, I'll force the extra readership. I think it's incredibly important that we are ever pushing those boundaries.

Red Moon Anthology noms are first, then Touchstone. Please check out the very last page for announcements, including information about a (coming soon) call for assistant editors. I hope you enjoy and good luck to all the nominees!

Stay radical always,
Lithica Ann, Editor

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

horses have them too cold stirrups

Joan Torres

#Femkumag, Issue 32

this kiss . . .
what i wouldn't have known
had i died

Kelly Sauvage

#Femkumag, Issue 32

urn. . .
at the potter's wheel
shaping my future

Marilyn Ashbaugh

#Femkumag, Issue 32

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

feeling dirty eyes at work

Margaret Walker

#Femkumag, Issue 32

wishbones
a dumpster-diver
goes under

Debbie Strange

#Femkumag, Issue 32

Marilyn's dress
the upturned leaves
predicting rain

Erin Castaldi

#Femkumag, Issue 32

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

the morning after
making the bed
unmaking myself

cain gwynne
#Femkumag, Issue 32

arranged marriage—
the bride's henna
slowly fading

Neena Singh
#Femkumag, Issue 32

night rain
this tiny window
in the psych ward

Aidan Castle
#Femkumag, Issue 32

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

leaves falling farther than Lucifer

Pippa Phillips
#Femkumag, Issue 32

half moon
another disappearance
at the border

Laurie Greer
#Femkumag, Issue 33 April 2022

devouring me from inside his best swimmer

Vandana Parashar
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

hippocratic oath
another doctor tells me
it's all in my head

Seren Fargo

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

new growth in an old tree flower child

Deborah P Kolodji

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

state of the world—
no longer second guessing
my childlessness

Helen Ogden

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

fire ash
all the days
I almost quit

Erin Castaldi

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

the lone star state of her pregnancy

Sarah E. Metzler

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

if it weren't for the rain bombed out home

Eva Limbach

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

deep depression no flesh left on the bone

Susan Burch

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

crushed petals
the baby has
the rapist's eyes

Arvinder Kaur

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

the ledge where i was standing moonlit

Aidan Castle

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

dried mud the body eager to dissolve into a definition

Richa Sharma

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

Mother's Day tea –
knowing I will never be
one of them

Antoinette Cheung

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

extramarital affair again the flowers

Corine Timmer

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

decluttering I ask him to leave

Wanda Amos

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

our baby blanket
my husband tries to stop
his girlfriend's abortion

Deborah P Kolodji

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

overturned
tonight i question
the stars

Kerry J Heckman

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

windswept hair caught up in a kiss

Mary McCormack

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

new school year
my daughter asks for
a bulletproof backpack

Tina Mowrey

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

peonies before the bad touch

Daya Bhat

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

maidenhair ferns he hides the condom

Lorraine Padden

First Place, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

Roe v Wade the right not to bear

Laurie Greer

Second Place, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

schrodinger's womxn knowing and unknowing our place

Tracy Davidson

Third Place, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

(r)aging

Barrie Levine

Honorable Mention, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

where polliwogs used to be the neighborhood

Cynthia Anderson

Honorable Mention, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

date rape a pocket full of posies

Susan Burch

Honorable Mention, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Sometimes I Give In

Rising from my zabuton cushion, I notice a slight chill in the evening air as the scent of inner-truth, indigo in color, mingles with the telltale rustle of autumn leaves. With a gentle exhale directed toward the candle's flame, darkness engulfs my chamber. I pick up my robe, wrap it securely around me and pad into the kitchen to brew a tea of tranquil wildflower essences. Again, I find myself enveloped in silence, broken only by the crescendo of the teapot's whistle. Inhaling the aroma of earth's inherent wisdom, I sigh as the liquid wets my lips and warms my throat; yet, something within me continues to crave a harsh bitterness, a familiar though ever-elusive elixir.

cigarette smoke
his voice on the phone
full of sex

Kelly Sauvage and Agnes Eva Savich
#FemkuMag, Issue 32

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Blackberries

Put as many in your bucket as your belly, my mother says, and I can already taste the pie. Lazy grasshoppers whirr underfoot in the tall grass at the edges. Clouds cast hulking shadows, shape-shifters moving fast over the patch. This day full of promise. Everything perfect under this summer sun, just me and my mother. I lick my stained fingers.

when purple
was my favorite color
childhood passions

Kristen Lindquist
#FemkuMag, Issue 32

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

One Foot in, One Foot Out

A bright orange halo forms and stretches itself out above a constellation of clouds. Underneath, a trick of the light lays the brilliant pink flat on the lake surface. I look out through the house's large windows, safe from the fierce wind, and try to write. But, surrounded by the family I married into, my thoughts drift, and I realize that after all these years, I'm still a stranger.

orientation
I breathe in
every hue

Tia Haynes
#FemkuMag, Issue 32

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Declaration of Intent

How to convey the satisfaction of a day well spent, of a day in which I awaken clear-headed and optimistic, in which I feel thin and attractive and like the way my hair falls loose down my back? Of a day in which much is accomplished and there's still time for a nap, for touching myself on the bed in broad daylight, for starting a long book as snow falls lightly and with beauty out the window? A dear friend calls, the radio plays songs I like all day, and another friend invites me to a dinner party: tonight there will be dancing and wine. Tonight, I will fully inhabit my life.

self-reflection
the moon over the bay
a big fat zero

Kristen Lindquist
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

(Un)growing up

Pushing a finger into the dry soil of the overwintered pot, I look up and catch sight of a school bus full of heads barely making it into their window view. One face in each window, each half covered in a sky-blue mask, head cuddled in hoodie, only a bit of eyes and forehead. I realize it's the first time in years I've seen a bus full of such young ones. It all comes into focus, how things are. The separateness, the changes. Is it easier or harder now for those children? Not talking to someone, no one scrunched in beside them, the laughter and words of others silenced. Just staring through their bit of glass out into the cold, watching the morning take root. I remember my own bus rides and how there were times I needed others around me, the sounds, the encapsulated chaos. And the times I prayed for separateness to feel safe. I guess either scenario could stunt a person, depending.

tender bulb
trying to force it
before its time

E. L. Blizzard
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Inheritance

Once, on a family visit, I noticed the soles of my mother's feet. She sat across from me and took off her socks in the too-warm living room. I was startled by the massive callouses bisecting the mounds below her toes, shaped like stigmata or rivers—treacherous estuaries clogged with sediment. I had the beginnings of those same marks. Seeing my future unless I chose differently, I began to poke, prod, anoint, trim, massage. Today, those signs on my feet are long gone. No one can say I'm irrevocably my mother's daughter. And yet...

swallowing the canary a lonesome smile

Cynthia Anderson
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Red Blanket with Black Dots

Her eyes dazed. She's carried out on a stretcher from the maternity hospital in Mariupol—the one that's just been bombed. Her hip detached and pelvis crushed. The woman's bloody hand cradles her belly. Hospitals begin blackout procedures at night. As the third week of war ends, the moon swells towards full. Will clouds bury the light?

blown-in walls—
snowflakes swirl
among ashes

Cyndi Lloyd
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Dirty Dancing

moonbeam desire the length of the room

hide and seek the private places

curves and angles dark corner tango

eyes lock two as one the rhythms change

your breath my breath i lose my way

come now slow retrace the steps

Marcie Wessels & Margaret Walker
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Forces of Nature

These days, every full moon has a name—Wolf Moon, Snow Moon, Worm Moon—and now, the Super Flower Blood Moon, complete with total eclipse. Social media fills with photos. As the light returns, my wakeful night is made more so by an immense bang. Living where I do, in the Mojave, this can mean one of two things: an earthquake with sound but no shaking; or, an explosion at the world's largest marine base, where live fire weapons training is a way of life. Come morning, I learn that this time, it's the former.

not yet a robot
I turn over
a new leaf

Cynthia Anderson
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Time Tells

Surely he'll look me in the eyes soon when we make love, I tell myself. He was so kind during our courtship, though yes, inexperienced. I told myself he would start trying to please me, stop running when the deed is done (from his point of view^[OBJ]) to wash off some unspeakable proof of the act then move to the far side of the bed.

How many more years will it take?

But that^[OBJ]'s the back story, the reason karma brought me earlier to so many good men's beds. I was being prepared for these long years of deprivation.

north star
aiming the boat's bow
anywhere but here

Pris Campbell
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

In dependence

She was 12 when I picked her up in the maternity ward at the hospital. A beautiful strawberry blonde who had just given birth to her father's child. With no mother in the home her dad had made her his substitute wife. Keeping her out of school Moving from place to place so no one would know. Finally, this child called Child Protective Services herself. By then close to 9 months. Over the next year she attempted suicide several times at home. Then at school. We could no longer keep her safe. It was a Friday afternoon. No hospital would take her for suicide watch. No bed for a 13 year old girl. It was evening when I reached a psychiatrist acquaintance in a city 50 miles away. He found a spot for her. I drove her to the hospital that rainy night unable to tell her where we were going. Afraid she would open the car door and throw herself out. Nurses met us at the door of the ER to get her out of the car. What happened to her father? Probation and supervised visitation.

*lights out
her heart still pounds
with each creak*

Margaret Walker & Pris Campbell
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Inheritance

She never eats at the table. If she can't drink it or eat it while headed out the door, she leaves it alone.

morning
the long commute
from hand to mouth

The cherry farmhouse table is where all the fighting started. The one piece of furniture everyone else wanted after Mother died.

first AA meeting
she takes the seat
her mother left her

Marilyn Ashbaugh
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Bottomed Out

judges gavel

*rainbows end
those old fears
creep back in*

the hourglass sand

*another betrayal
her sparkle
slowly wears away*

reverses its flow

*santoku edge
the choices
we are left with*

Sangita Kalarickal and Reid Hepworth
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Red Moon Press Anthology Nominations

Her Perfect Life

Her perfect hair and perfect skin. Her perfect smile. Her perfect figure,
perfect clothes to hang on it. Her perfect house with its perfect décor.
Her perfect boyfriend turned fiancé turned husband.
Her perfect career and perfectly positive attitude.

the email states
that she's outgrown our friendship –
first butterfly

Maeve O'Sullivan
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

what she doesn't give up lenten rose

Debbie Olson

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

wisteria
struggling under
the weight of living

Jenna Manley

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

this kiss . . .
what i wouldn't have known
had i died

Kelly Sauvage

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

horses have them too cold stirrups

Joan Torres

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

urn. . .
at the potter's wheel
shaping my future

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arranged marriage—
the bride's henna
slowly fading

Neena Singh

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

night rain
this tiny window
in the psych ward

Aidan Castle

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

young sea glass --
the numbness deeper
than last time

Julie Schwerin

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

cut stem—
the lifespans
of captive animals

Pippa Phillips

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

snowdrops the moment I know how to love

Isabella Kramer

#FemkuMag, Issue 32 January 2022

state of the world—
no longer second guessing
my childlessness

Helen Ogden

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

foraging for twigs --
how crows build homes
how we build fires

Baisali Chatterjee Dutt

#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

expanding universe
a new growth
to biopsy

Marilyn Ashbaugh
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

if it weren't for the rain bombed out home

Eva Limbach
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

common robin faith is all we have

Erin Castaldi
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

green cherries
I teach my daughter
patience

Kristina Todorova
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

deep depression no flesh left on the bone

Susan Burch
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

crushed petals
the baby has
the rapist's eyes

Arvinder Kaur
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

the color
of bruised fruit
grief season

Jenn Ryan-Jauregui
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

wind through dry reeds
a different sound
to my old story

Cyndi Lloyd
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

the ledge where i was standing moonlit

Aidan Castle
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

lunulae
a friend tells me
about her stillborn

Debbie Strange
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

counting
the pills in her hand
morning glories

Christine Eales
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

overturned
tonight i question
the stars

Kerry J Heckman
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

sweat bee proboscis
dips into my wrinkles
summer's end

Allyson Whipple
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

Girl Scout camp
the woodpecker feather
I've kept all these years

Billie Dee
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

not yet extinct
the rainbow sheen
of another oil spill

Deborah P Kolodji
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

acclimating
to a new threshold
the ache of everything

Erin Castaldi
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

new school year
my daughter asks for
a bulletproof backpack

Tina Mowrey
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

balcony full of stars
our conversation
about illness

Maria Concetta Conti
#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

maidenhair ferns he hides the condom

Lorraine Padden

First Place, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

Roe v Wade the right not to bear

Laurie Greer

Second Place, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

schrodinger's womxn knowing and unknowing our place

Tracy Davidson

Third Place, 2022 Marlene Mountain Contest

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

(r)aging

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where polliwogs used to be the neighborhood

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date rape a pocket full of posies

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cigarette smoke
his voice on the phone
full of sex

Kelly Sauvage and Agnes Eva Savich
#FemkuMag, Issue 32

2022 Touchstone Award Nominations

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swallowing the canary a lonesome smile

Cynthia Anderson
#FemkuMag, Issue 33 April 2022

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How many more years will it take?

But that^[OBJ]'s the back story, the reason karma brought me earlier to so many good men's beds. I was being prepared for these long years of deprivation.

north star
aiming the boat's bow
anywhere but here

Pris Campbell

#FemkuMag, Issue 34 November 2022

Announcements

- Due to my health #FemkuMag is on hiatus until 2024. When we return, I am hoping to have 1-2 assistant editors. I'm also hoping my pain level will be down and my energy level will be up after starting monthly pain infusions in just a few weeks.
- Within the next month or two there will be a call for assistant editors with a Google form application for those who are interested. Unfortunately I won't be able to pay, but I can offer editorial experience and guidance. These positions will be open to both beginners and those with experience.
- #FM's sibling press, Moth Orchid, has an [open call](#) for the ["Then and Now" Anthology](#). Originally the deadline was supposed to be today (Feb 15, 2023), but I've extended it an extra month since I need time to heal my body and catch up on everything.
- 2022 Marlene Mountain write-ups are still coming! I was hoping to publish them in this, but my brain fog has not allowed me to find the words to say. Anything I write comes out in fragments. At this point, I'm hoping to have them up when I send out the Assistant Editor Application.
- A 2023 Marlene Mountain Contest is planned for this year. I'm hoping to use this as an opportunity to bond with the new editors. Stay tuned for more announcements! 😊