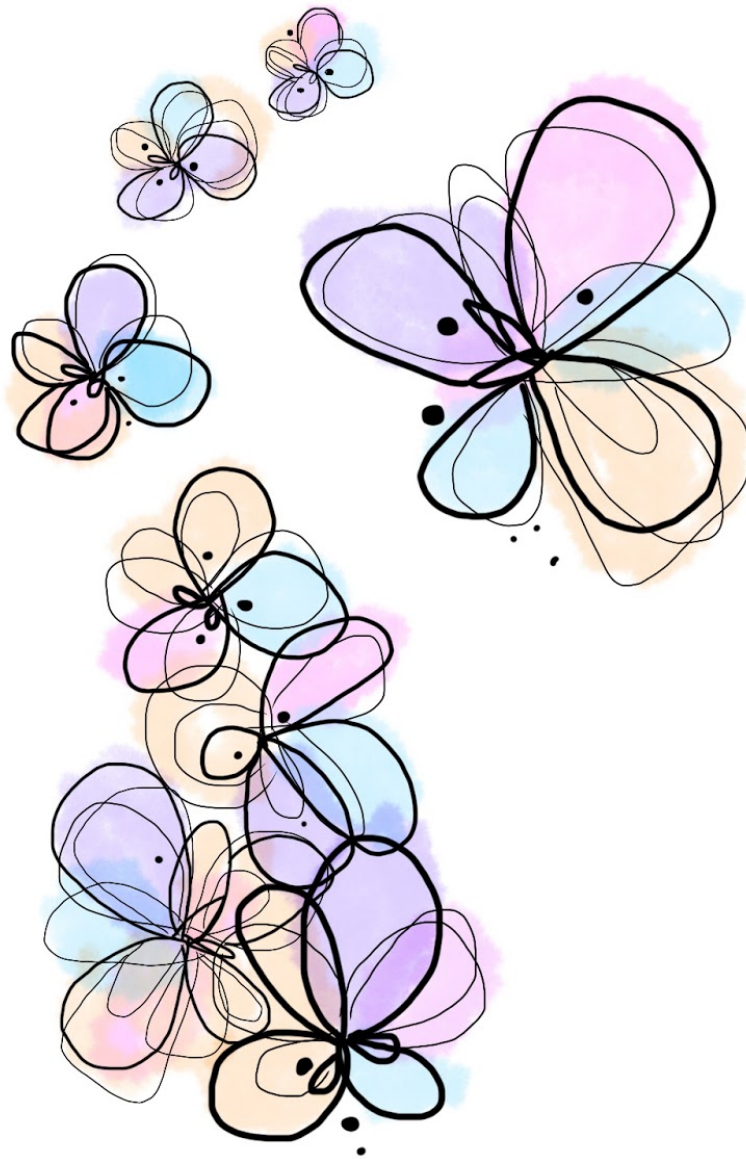


# #FemkuMag



#15

# *#FemkuMag*

*An e-zine of Womxn's Haiku*

*August 2019*

*issue fifteen*

*Editor: Lori A Minor*

*Cover art: Lori A Minor*

### *a note from me to you*

*As always, thank you so much to everyone who has trusted me with your work. With nearly 70 submissions, this is the largest issue of #FemkuMag yet. This also means that submissions have just about tripled since I started this mini e-zine a little over a year ago and I could not be happier. There are many new people in this issue, as well as several womxn haijin who have submitted consistently since issue one, and many who started submitting somewhere in between. I am incredibly proud of each and every womxn included for their openness, honesty, and willingness to share their work. I hope you all enjoy this issue as much as I do. It's a good one!*

*Stay radical always,  
Lori A Minor*

*she sages his man parts in case he's a turkey*

**- Roberta Beach Jacobson**

*itches  
give me back  
my b*

**- Roberta Beach Jacobson**

*mother's day  
I begin  
my journal*

**- Guliz Mutlu**

*spring growing out of the remote control inside me*

**- Lucy Whitehead**

*empty nursery  
night lengthens  
in a box of crayons*

**- Lucy Whitehead**

*runaway bride  
the empty  
birdcage*

**- Lucy Whitehead**

*protection amulet    the steady beat of my oft-broken heart*

**- Kelly Sauvage Angel**

*darkest night  
the uncharted journey  
toward home*

**- Kelly Sauvage Angel**

*thriftshop trinket  
my inner-child unfurls  
her faerie wings*

**- Kelly Sauvage Angel**

*feathered pillow the weight of my regret*

**- Kirsten Cliff Elliot**

*dream energy awakening with the heat of you*

**- Kirsten Cliff Elliot**

*synesthesia the elasticity of my heart*

**- Kirsten Cliff Elliot**

*Sisyphus in my laundry basket*

**- Meg Arnot**

*full moon  
another chance lost  
with the ebbing tide*

**- Meg Arnot**

*in his black eyes  
a well of hate  
midnight ocean*

**- Meg Arnot**

*stacking the deck  
against me . . .  
old age*

**- Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**

*lotus flower  
I become one  
with myself*

**- Valentina Ranaldi-Adams**

*earth dawn  
the days I'm happy  
having no child*

**- Isabella Kramer**

*bright starlight  
my she-wolf  
awakes*

**- Isabella Kramer**

setting sun  
a faint trace of her warmth  
on the unmade bed

- **Vandana Parashar**

post war  
only the ghosts of people  
I once knew

- **Vandana Parashar**

stuck somewhere  
in the rusted drawers  
my childhood

- **Vandana Parashar**

watching the doctor  
insert a false breast  
I wonder who it's for

- **Helen Buckingham**

~~through her given surname~~  
she draws a line in the sand

- **Helen Buckingham**

radiologist, male  
requests access  
to my *lady parts*

- **Helen Buckingham**

the many hats they wear working mothers

- **Debbie Strange**

climate  
change  
she  
shrinks  
away  
from  
her  
uncle

- **Debbie Strange**

phantom pain . . .  
the hauntings of invisible  
disabilities

- **Debbie Strange**

long after  
they are spoken -  
her words of love

- **Anne Curran**

rose bush  
i pick  
the unpretty one

- **Isabel Caves**

night-blooming jasmine  
they know me as  
the quiet one

- **Isabel Caves**

wild swans  
the too-tight hem  
of my party dress

- **Isabel Caves**



Gemini moon  
her mood changing  
with the tide

- **Wanda Amos**

morning coffee  
suddenly my day  
in colour

- **Wanda Amos**

over there  
that square  
of sunshine  
on the wall

- **Julie Warther**

bars of tree shadows  
he asks why a released bird  
would ever come back

- **Julie Warther**

one more  
one day  
the moon's downward bow

- **Julie Warther**

newborn nursing the title in me

- **Elizabeth Alford**

giving up  
the ghost of summer  
in a faded lily

- Elizabeth Alford

forget cellulite  
women are dying  
out there

- Elizabeth Alford

first autumn breeze  
she uses her fingers  
to check her age

- Kath Abela Wilson

dandelion fluff  
I pluck a white hair  
from my chin

- Kath Abela Wilson

scent of  
orange blossom  
she runs away

- Maria Concetta Conti

hospital  
alone in her mind  
daylight

- Maria Concetta Conti

hunger  
the look in the mirror  
searches and searches

- Deborah Karl-Brandt

Black feet  
Black sand  
Same struggle

- Valeria Bullock

*thinking divorce the Minotaur's blind eyes*

**- Réka Nyitrai**

*first drops of rain from her chin watermelon juice*

**- Réka Nyitrai**

*white-haired  
called a girl yet again  
variegated clouds*

**- Doris Jean Lynch**

*pregnant  
wondering  
whose  
hiccups*

**- Doris Jean Lynch**

*once we used mirrors to see inside ourselves*

**- Doris Jean Lynch**

poppy heads  
the sharp edges of childhood  
that strengthen me now

- Radostina Dragostinova

Alzheimer's  
her need to forget  
the irreversible

- Radostina Dragostinova

blood moon  
her lullaby interrupted  
by starting period

- Irina Guliaeva

cherry tree wood  
no one to ask  
when I'm going to have kids

- Irina Guliaeva

a wake...  
instead of her footsteps  
a crawling fog

- Nina Kovačić

soldier's rest  
her rifle set above  
a teddy bear

- Nina Kovačić

washed laundry  
mother finds a petal  
in her grey hair

- Nina Kovačić

moon walk  
hopscotch  
in high heels

- Marilyn Ashbaugh

*first French kiss falling star*

**- Marilyn Ashbaugh**

*wanting more waxing moon*

**- Marilyn Ashbaugh**

*bindweed  
the longevity  
of words*

**- Martha Magenta**

*little rituals  
counting the elephants  
in the room*

**- Martha Magenta**

*fear of the dark he calls me witch*

**- Martha Magenta**

*baby's breath the un(not)iced truth*

**- Hifsa Ashraf**

*snow in sumMEr The cOnfessiOns*

**- Hifsa Ashraf**

*metro train tracks outstretching her last cry*

**- Hifsa Ashraf**

*changes...  
even Facebook asks me  
for updates*

*cambiamenti...  
anche Facebook chiede  
aggiornamenti*

**- Lucia Cardillo**

*flashback...  
lights and shadows  
of a memory*

*flashback...  
chiaroscuri sbiaditi  
di un ricordo*

**- Lucia Cardillo**

the  
weight  
in  
this  
tear

- *Lisa Espenmiller*

hitting  
every sidewalk crack  
not-good-enough-mother

- *Lisa Espenmiller*

*no more eggs tossing out the condoms*

- *Lisa Espenmiller*

*yesterday's name tag —  
I can't re-invent myself  
again*

- *Julie Bloss Kelsey*

*self-mutilation —  
the scars you see  
the ones you don't*

- *Julie Bloss Kelsey*

*at the poetry reading  
no end to his excitement —  
literary boner*

- *Julie Bloss Kelsey*

*hiding my first language  
behind lighter skin  
confederate flag*

- *MCT*

*e-motion activated camera*

**- Susan Burch**

*snubbing me  
the woman who said  
to welcome everyone*

**- Susan Burch**

*guest speaker  
I try not to concentrate  
on his boner*

**- Susan Burch**

*lumbering tortoise  
lugging home groceries  
nine months pregnant*

**- Christina Sng**

*mountain mist  
wearing the fog  
of dissociation*

**- Christina Sng**

*some things  
impossible to forgive  
the murder of crows*

**- Christina Sng**

*Texas hill country  
I try to make peace  
with my belly*

**- Agnes Eva Savich**



cactus blossom  
choosing words that won't  
make him mad

- **Agnes Eva Savich**

home birth  
I become every doorway  
and the rising wind

- **Agnes Eva Savich**

amid  
his please and plea  
I forget my orgasm

- **Benedicta Gyepi Garbrah**

his turn -  
after the baby's lips  
leaves my nipple

- **Benedicta Gyepi Garbrah**

non-nEGOtiable

- **Corine Timmer**

single by choice—  
I switch my ring  
onto my wedding finger

- **Corine Timmer**

table for one—  
the waiter offers me  
a gossip magazine

- **Corine Timmer**

*cumming outside the lines*

**- Tia Haynes**

*my tongue parting the forest floor*

**- Tia Haynes**

*gemini moon  
it was never about  
the lies*

**- Tia Haynes**

*in between  
our heated argument  
cool breeze*

**- Hemapriya Chellappan**

*treasure map  
the buried secrets  
of childhood*

**- Hemapriya Chellappan**

*anxiety test—  
i forget  
to breathe*

**- Hemapriya Chellappan**

*new buds  
the wheels of the mower  
full of mud*

**- Angiola Inglese**

*the flower  
of just one morning-  
shooting star*

**- Angiola Inglese**

*pack of jackals --  
the bridesmaids grapple  
for the bouquet*

**- Jeaunice T Burnette**

*the makeover...  
her lewd graffiti  
on the store*

**- Jeaunice T Burnette**

*grandma loved  
wrestling on t.v...  
the Southern eulogy*

**- Jeaunice T Burnette**

*an old song  
so many promises  
lost in a smile*

**- Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo**

*all the flowers  
in my dreams tonight  
cactus thorns*

**- Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo**

*wind shadow  
looking in the mirror  
I border time*

**- Anna Maria Domburg-Sancristoforo**

*hotel conference  
sharing  
all my baggage*

**- Elizabeth Crocket**

*dark horse  
his colours  
never changed*

**- Elizabeth Crocket**

*a clay goddess I mold the mythology of self*

**- Robin Anna Smith**

*it's not confusion wearing the pants*

**- Robin Anna Smith**

*cannabis blooms where I lie my pain to sleep*

**- Robin Anna Smith**

*the disconnect speaks volumes*

**- Kimberly Spring**

*blind to self worth  
creating life  
saved her own*

**- Kimberly Spring**

*stepford wife  
i draw the curtain  
on our secret*

**- Kimberly Spring**

*grouses in separation files the mediator's bill*

**- Christina Chin**

*the heat pinnacles in unbearable silence*

**- Christina Chin**

*broken again she bows at his heels*

**- Christina Chin**

summer breeze  
a woman inspecting  
my curves and shapes

- **Nadejda Kostadinova**

still remembering  
that ripped jeans skirt  
I could never fit in

- **Nadejda Kostadinova**

untouched by assault the new minority

- **Shirley Brooks**

he took  
my daughter, another  
unreported theft

- **Shirley Brooks**

sunglasses  
block out the light  
gated community

- **Shirley Brooks**

the makeup  
my face doesn't need—  
Indian paintbrush

- **Cyndi Lloyd**

thistle bract  
this unwanted  
chin hair

- **Cyndi Lloyd**

*window space for the moon alone just*

**- Kala Ramesh**

*bleached by the mind's censor my stand*

**- Kala Ramesh**

*blood red  
deep in you and me  
the untouched*

**- Kala Ramesh**

*hot summer days  
his policy about  
married women*

**- Claire Vogel Camargo**

*straight best friend  
only one of us  
gets off*

**- Lori A Minor**

*long o  
gripping my face  
between her thighs*

**- Lori A Minor**

# *Femku Features*



## ***To be or not to be***

*It is the fourth night. I didn't know it would be that difficult. The hours seem to drag and my brain is clogged with thoughts of anything and everything.*

*I reach over. My hand moves as if it has a will of its own and wraps around the bottle of pill.*

*coming undone  
stitch by stitch  
my rag doll*

***- Vandana Parashar***

## **Left - Right**

Nothing else comes to my mind about those days in the mid-70s except the elections held in my town in the midst of proletarian turmoil, strikes and trade union struggles. The train Torino-Reggio Calabria arrived at the station carrying in its belly the immigrants who, after escaping from the misery and poverty of the South, were now coming back to vote. En mass, activists and members of the Communist Party were there, joyfully waiting for them, while singing the "Internazionale" Communist anthem under a big banner that said: "Torna per votare! Vota per tornare!" (Come back to vote, vote to come back home). From the windows of the overloaded carriages the immigrants were waving flame-red flags, while bursting out with these words: "Stato e padroni, fate attenzione!" (Watch your step, State and masters!). Fearing a Bolshevik invasion, the Christian Democrats (the whole popish universe) of the town cried out the end of the world. The priests from their pulpits warned all those believers who wanted to choose the People's Front: "Under the seal of the polling booth, God will see you, Berlinguer won't".\*

only after his death  
the temp will be  
a permanent

\*Enrico Berlinguer was a secretary-general of the Italian Communist Party (Partito Comunista Italiano) from March 1972 until his death.

**- Antonietta Losito**

*During her final years, I often found grandma alone in her study, sitting on her favourite chair reading. She always seemed to keep to herself. Nobody bothered, and nobody asked why. It's been six months now since she passed away. It's a huge loss for our family, especially me. I loved her dearly. When I happened to clean her room, after she'd gone, I found books and article clippings on loneliness and depression. It shook me. I didn't know she was depressed. At times now, when I go to her room, I still feel her presence on that good ole chair (which is now collecting dust) and I know she's watching over all of us.*

*incense sticks  
how the house fills  
with emptiness*

*- Hemapriya Chellappan*

## Commentary on Cyndi Lloyd's Tanka

the sky filled  
with wildfire smoke  
on our patio umbrella  
a caterpillar  
scales the top

How small we are in comparison to the world as a whole is remarkable, but a tiny caterpillar has no hope in the face of danger. In this tanka, Cyndi gracefully and effortlessly stitches together the scene line by line. On its own, line one gives the reader a sense of wonder and hope, but we quickly shift away from that as she sets the mood for the rest of the tanka with the wildfire smoke. In lines three, four, and five we feel the poet is looking at this not only from an outside perspective, but quite literally she is looking outside at this microscopic life fighting for survival. No matter how high the caterpillar climbs, it won't be able to escape its fate. Although this is such an authentic moment, we can put ourselves in the place of that caterpillar. Each of us have been through something so devastating that we felt we wouldn't be able to escape, and maybe we never could. Perhaps those moments stuck with us. Perhaps they even killed our spirit. We have all experienced loss and trauma, and like the caterpillar, we have had to fight for survival in a world impossibly bigger than we are. This is such a poignant, authentic, and tragic tanka, but what a humble reminder to appreciate life, even in the midst of heartache and disaster.

## **Commentary on Terri Hale French's Senryu**

cyber bullying  
hashtags on  
the fat girl's arms

*Prune Juice, issue 11: November 2013*

Since the early 2000s, various forms of self-harm, especially cutting, have become prominent coping mechanisms among teens. With the ever increasing popularity of social media throughout the years, cyber bullying has become a go-to form of harassment. Being almost twenty-seven years old, I'm in the MySpace generation and was fifteen when I got my Facebook account. This being said, I have experienced my fair share of cyber bullying, as well as in-person bullying. However, I think the influx of online bullies over the years is because you don't need to have "the balls" that you would to bully someone in person. You can hide behind a screen, as opposed to confronting someone to their face, so there's a reduced chance of the victim fighting back. The use of "hashtags" in line two is the brilliant linking between "cyber bullying" in line one and the shift away in line three, creating the image of self-harm cuts on the girls arms.

The first time I ever cut myself, I was twelve. I was also the fat girl. As I look at my own arm and reflect on my emotional and physical scars, this piece resonates with me in ways I could have never imagined. This senryu is not only incredibly powerful, but is necessary for addressing an important issue and raising awareness for those of us who not only survive cyber bullying, but self-harm as well.

## **Announcements:**

**#FemkuMag in print-** As most of you know, #FemkuMag goes into print every three issues, combining them into a three-in-one anthology. Below you will find the link to the website print edition archives, where you can find links to purchase all available print issues. Stay tuned for issues thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen to go into print! I'll send out an email when the collection is available for purchase.

<https://femkumag.wixsite.com/home/print-editions>

**Title IX Press-** The reading period for manuscripts opens tomorrow, September 1, 2019 and runs through November 30, 2019.

At Title IX Press, a womxn run press for womxn, I aim to continue the legacy of womxn haijin all over the world by offering a safe space to publish topics that might not be picked up by other publishers. If you're interested in learning more, please check out the guidelines, which are provided below via the link.

<https://titleixpress.wixsite.com/home/guidelines>

**Donations-** I would like to sincerely thank everyone who made donations through the #FemkuMag website. Your support is lovely and means the world to me. Again, you should never feel obligated to donate. I'm here because I love haiku, the community, and this platform, not to make money.