



## Two Moons: Stories

*Krystal A. Smith*

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## **Two Moons: Stories** Krystal A. Smith

A splendid debut collection of speculative fiction that traverses the connections between earth and the heavens, the living and the spectral, human and animal.

In “Cosmic,” a former drug addict has a chance to redeem herself and restore honor to her family’s name. In “Harvest,” a woman tasked with providing for her community ponders her inability to bear live children. In the title story, “Two Moons,” a young woman falls in love with the moon, and is astonished by the moon’s response. In “What the Heart Wants,” a rejected lover discovers that her physical and emotional desires are incongruent with the organ pumping blood through her veins.

Sensitive, ethereal, humorous, and at times, heart-breaking, Smith’s collection of speculative fiction signals the arrival of an exceptionally talented writer with a promising career ahead of her.

## **Two Moons: Stories Details**

Date : Published March 20th 2018 by BLF Press

ISBN : 9780997243901

Author : Krystal A. Smith

Format : Paperback 164 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Glbt, Queer, Lgbt, Fantasy, Fiction, Lesbian

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## From Reader Review Two Moons: Stories for online ebook

### ONYX Pages says

I spoke to a friend of mine today about the stories in this book and described them like this:

These stories caught me off-guard. One minute, I am minding my own business, getting prepared for a short space opera or breakup story. The next, I'm down the rabbit hole (in one case, literally) of some of the best magical realism/speculative fiction I've ever read.

And the characters! Goddess, they are so Black, so queer, so recognizable. They are beautifully and powerfully flawed. I saw myself, my partner, my momma, all over these pages.

This read was majestic.

Best read under a full moon.

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### Morgan says

I found this collection of short stories to be too wildly inconsistent for me to reap much enjoyment from. I usually like to read shorts anthologies contributed by multiple authors just for that varied writing style; there is bound to be a few I "click" with. This just wasn't the case here with many of the stories being a little too allegorical for my personal taste. All of the shorts are indeed quite short, which is a plus here because if a story is dull, it'll be over in just a few pages--unfortunately though I felt this way for much of the book before deciding to put it aside and move on to something new and much more enjoyable.

ARC provided by NetGalley

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### Kest Schwartzman says

I want to love these. I want to love them because having queer women of color showing up as main characters in speculative fiction is important, and the voice is promising, but... the actual relationships are so blindly toxic, without the author seeming to have noticed that toxicity. The most fantastic (as in literal fantasy) parts of these stories are where they shine brightest; it's the reality that's really messed up. Like, ok, tearing out your heart post breakup to have a conversation with it and it singing you songs and bringing you flowers? that's fine and surprisingly cute. But flipping out on a loved one who doesn't immediately accede to your precise and previously unexpressed desires for the progression of the relationship but instead wants to think about it? That shit is terrifying. The only part of the friendship with the bleeding-on-the-counter-and-walking-around-making-breakfast-heart that is creepy is that said heart is such a bad, enabling friend as to tell this person that they did nothing wrong and that it was all the other person's fault.

That's just one story, but it's not the only example I could've picked. There's the moon marrying a human: not creepy. But the moon picking an infant, watching her grow up, grooming her from early adolescence, and then swooping down to fetch her? Nah.

-received as part of librarything's ARC program-

## Krystal says

This captivating collection of speculative fiction stories did not disappoint! Krystal A Smith has established herself as an imaginative force to be reckoned with!

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## Bina says

Full review on my blog WOCreads:  
<https://wocreads.wordpress.com/2018/0...>

Krystal A. Smith's new work collects 14 short stories of speculative fiction centering Black lesbian characters. The stories may be short but the characters come to live through unique voices. Finding themselves in difficult situations or at the cusp of change, Smith's characters seek connections and relationships with the elements down on earth and up in space, but above all they find strength and magic in themselves. Much of Two Moons shows how happy and playful speculative fiction can be and gives happy endings to women loving women. I feel greedy saying this, as the book has not even been released, but I can't wait to read more by this author!

Two Moons: Stories comes out March 20th, 2018

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Trigger warnings: Miscarriage, stillbirth, terminal illness, addiction.

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Disclaimer: I received an e-galley of this book, in exchange for an honest review.

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## Celia says

Two Moons is a gorgeous collection of wildly creative short stories, but a lot of the stories feel too short. The characters, voice, and situations are so so interesting, but I often felt that I didn't fully engage with them because of the brevity of the stories.

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## AfroLit says

This collection of short stories is by far one of the most CREATIVE I have ever read. Just when you think the next story is about just a normal round the way girl or typical experience Ms. Smith kicks it up into the highest gear of magical, spectacular, dare i say spiritual realm. I was taken back to my childhood when I thought about stories that left the page and flew so far out of reach that i thought i was a strange kid. I am not strange, Thanks Krystal for letting me know. I was then and surely now am Magical.

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### **Rafa Brewster says**

At 52%, I am still enjoying this book but wanted to give my feedback before it was archived on Netgalley. Please note release date isn't till March 2018. ARC received in exchange for honest and fair opinion.

I'm more than halfway through and have loved every single story so far. I tend to expect stories with a darker tone when I think spec fic, but these stories have been an absolute delight - full of hope and love and even plain cuteness, which has been an absolute balm to my soul. Highly recommended if you're in need of some uncomplicated, lighthearted and happy-making reading.

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### **Rae Magdon says**

Two Moons is an absolutely beautiful piece of work. It's not an exaggeration to say it's the best thing I've read this year. It doesn't get better than a Black woman, separate from the world but beautiful in her own shining way, literally falling in love with the moon and finding eternal happiness. And that's just one story! I can't express just how much I loved these stories. The prose stole my breath, and the substance made my soul overflow. Can't recommend highly enough. Please, please read this!

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### **Cat says**

Different... well done.... I wasn't quite prepared for this type of book, I assumed it was just short stories. I did enjoy many of the tales. They were well written. I can think of a few women I know who would appreciate these stories more than me, but I love short stories of all types and this one wasn't a disappointment at all. It's interesting, entertaining, and thought provoking. Good read actually! I received a Kindle Arc in exchange for a fair review from Netgalley.

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### **LaToya Hankins says**

Death's little helper. A woman having a heart to heart with her actual organ. A celestial being willing to sacrifice itself in order to earn redemption. Those are some of the characters Smith introduces to the world through her short story collection. The slender compilation is filled with fanciful situations that take place in pretty standard locations. It is hard to pick out a stand-out story but "All the Light There Was" and "A Rose for Brescia" offers up different ways of looking how family relationship shape our decisions. "Life Cycle" and "Harvest" both deal with new beginnings while "Catch Me if You Can" makes you rethink the whole fox and hound hunt scene. Smith's work deals with women in the throes of transformation. Their journey range from fantastic locations like outer space to the typical single woman's apartment. Smith creates rich characters who deal with unique situations in a way that is totally relatable even when they are being coached by bunnies through childbirth. It is a short read which lends itself being returned to time and time again as the mood hits.

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## Andrea says

This was definitely an interesting read. It had been a while since I read speculative fiction so it's been nice to come back to it with these short stories.

It's a bit hard to review a collection of short stories because each one of them was different from the others. However, I have to say that it's always nice to see that there is some sort of connection between them. The author uses secondary characters from the first stories as main characters for the last ones, so the whole book is tied together. I honestly enjoyed that very much.

Each story reflects a woman dealing with a complicated situation. Some of them are easier to relate to than others. There are two stories dealing with astral bodies, which are humanized in them. Those were pretty interesting to picture in my head since the difference in proportion of the characters involved was quite large. However, they still deal with interesting topics like the pressure to live up to our parents' expectations.

To be honest, after reading the first two stories I thought that they were only going to deal with romantic relationships, but thankfully I was wrong about that because they explore different types of relationships. I also thought that it was going to be more childish and I was wrong about that, too. The topics that are presented here are not childish at all. Also, there are a couple of very sensual scenes.

In my opinion, some of the stories felt really short and there was no time to connect with the characters, so they fell kind of flat for me.

In conclusion, I had a good time reading this compilation of stories because they felt different.

*\*I received an e-ARC copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review\**

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## Cat says

I received an ARC from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

"She was, indeed, special. Too special to be normal."

Sapphication: WLWOC MC

This is a beautiful collection of fantasy and sci-fi stories all with Black lesbian leads. Krystal A. Smith's language is absolutely gorgeous and reminded me of why I love speculative fiction. It was really lovely and refreshing to read stories that didn't involve homophobia at all, but instead presented love between women as natural and deserving of happy endings. I'm so glad I had the chance to read this.

'Search': Told in second-person POV, the protagonist searches for her true self.

'Any One Out There': The Any Love project is a video matchmaking service. Josie watches Cora's video over and over as she travels through space.

'Two Moons': This one was my favourite and I see why the collection was named after it! It's everything you've ever wanted from the 'moon lesbian aesthetic'. Selene is in love with the moon and Luna is in love with her too, but can they ever be together?

'Meena & Ziya': Meena's girlfriend Ziya is a healer, but this takes its toll on her.

'Catch Me If You Can': Jaleesa and her girlfriend Lomi are fox shifters.

'Harvest': This was another of my favourites. Korinthia has had one miscarriage and two stillborn children by virgin conception (well, not virgin because of her girlfriend Maddie but you know what I mean). However, each failed pregnancy results in a successful harvest. I'm very much interested in infertility or near-infertility narratives done right and this certainly delivered. Also, talking rabbits.

'What the Heart Wants': Saachi has spent a lot of time preparing to ask her girlfriend Mona to move in with her. When Mona refuses, Saachi feels unlovable, so she pulls her heart out of her body and he attempts to convince her otherwise. This was the only story I wasn't too sure about, as I felt Mona was wrongly painted as the villain, since not wanting to move in with your partner if you aren't ready isn't wrong or a sign that you don't love them. The ending in particular felt unnecessarily cruel to Mona.

'Life Cycle': Khalida works for Death in the hope that someday she will be able to see her girlfriend Celia, who was terminally ill, again. This was achingly sad and beautiful.

'Me, the Moon, and Olivia': Nideana tells her therapist Olivia about the woman she sees living on the moon, but she may be able to help Olivia as well.

'A Rose For Brescia': Brescia knows someone is stealing her roses and finally has a close encounter with the thief. This one had an excellent twist.

'All The Light There Was': Soma considers her life and her relationship with her two sons.

'Feeling Blue': Claire has a conversation with a piece of wall art which makes her reconsider her life choices regarding her career and her ex-girlfriend Laney.

'Cosmic': Esme, a secondary character from Two Moons, really shines here, not just because she's a star. Bittersweet and thought-inspiring.

'Demetria's Nature': Demetria discovers her true self.

Representation: All Black lesbian MCs (the word lesbian isn't used in any of the stories, but it's in the list of themes at the beginning).

Ownvoices/author info: Krystal A. Smith is a Black American lesbian.

Content warnings: sex scenes, illness, infertility issues (miscarriages and stillborn children), hospitals, terminal illness and death of partner, injury, fire, death.

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## **Manon says**

**\*4.5 Stars\***

*I was provided an ARC via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

Two Moons : Stories is a collection of short stories about many things.

It was a very quick read and I enjoyed it immensely. The stories were very poetic, beautiful and I just couldn't stop reading.

The characters were very interesting and the love stories too.

The poetry of it all is what marked me most.

I really want to read more from this author.

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## **Mel (Epic Reading) says**

To call these stories is really stretching it. They are more like tidbits of a short story or a book blurb. This is really the number one reason why this book is only 3 stars for me. It's not that the writing is poor, or even the story ideas weak, all that is well done by Krystal A. Smith; but the shortness of each story makes me feel like I'm reading tweets about story ideas. Far too short for my liking.

## **Two Moons**

The best story by far gives this compilation book its name. Two Moons is a superb romantic story about the moon and an earth gal who fall in love. I adored the uniqueness of this and that the context pops up in a few other stories along the way. As the second book in the collection it's disappointing to realize that it was the best.

## **Representation**

I think in every instance in this story it is a F/F relationship or a F/entity relationship. That may sound weird but I'm not sure what to call the moon or someone's heart (yes the heart as a conscious mind), or stars. So let's just say entity. These are actually the stories I loved the most. Not because I didn't enjoy the F/F stories but just because they were very, very unique.

Certainly if you want some super quick reads with some LGBTQ+ representation you will find a few here. What did make me smile was when I realized that by putting in these entities as romantic partners or interests it could serve to normalize the lesbian or trans relationship stories for those that find them uncomfortable! If this is intentional or not I don't know; but I'd like to think it is because it's a clever way of changing perspective enough that someone might suddenly have an ah-ha moment.

## **Overall**

I'd love to see a full short story or novel about our human girl and the moon. I'd also love to see the odd star story (last one) carried forward or given more context. I think there is a great short story there it just needs some substance and context.

While I think Krystal A. Smith has something here, not a one of the stories included has enough to it to really be outstanding. And none of them are long enough to really remain in mind for very long.

For this and more of my reviews please visit my blog at: [Epic Reading](#)

*Please note: I received an eARC of this book from the publisher via NetGalley. This is an honest and unbiased review.*

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