

Following autumn, we have the interlude “Eine kleine Nachtmusik” (“A Little Night Music”), referring to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s chamber composition. This section is infused with a strong sense of contrast, as embodied in the lead poem:

Eine kleine Nachtmusik  
the slow movement  
of aging lovers

Those familiar with the composition will appreciate the contrast. Mozart’s composition is quick and lively, while the couple described in the poem is not. This section details the realities of mature love, both the lighthearted experiences and the challenges.

The collection concludes with “first snowfall.” This section does illustrate the less-pleasant physical and emotional aspects of winter, with poems such as, “penetrating dank / the bone-deep twinges / of something buried.” However, it also presents the cheerful, peaceful nature of the season, such as with the closing poem, “sentinel cat / observing snow’s slow descent / all is well.”

Maxianne Berger’s *you are here* is a well-honed collection that manages to hold a range of themes and emotional resonances. I encourage it for all readers, but especially for those looking for how to create emotionally resonant work, how to structure a collection, and how to incorporate allusion into their poems.

a good possible year for an apocalypse by Daniel Shank Cruz. 102 pp., perfect softbound. ISBN: 978-1-958-408-70-4. Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2025. \$20.00 at [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com).

In the introduction to *a good possible year for an apocalypse*, Daniel Shank Cruz notes that their introduction to haiku occurred in a writing workshop just five months before the

COVID-19 pandemic shut everything down. The isolation provided a perfect opportunity for them to hone their craft, and provides the underpinning of this excellent collection. Structured into two sections: “the pandemic” and “. . . and everything else,” this book harkens back to the early days of COVID, reminds us that the virus is still with us, and also refuses to give into despair, with poems covering the highs and lows of life in spite of an ongoing pandemic.

Although the first section of this book is about a fairly specific moment in time, the “pandemic” section nonetheless feels fresh and timely. While this is largely due to the artistic skill underpinning these haiku and senryu, I’m writing this while several of my neighbors are sick again with COVID, and another friend has gotten his first infection. In haiku, the past is brought into a continuous present; these poems also remind us that what we might believe (or wish to be) past is still with us.

Reading this book, one of the things that stayed with me is how adept Daniel is at monoku. While all the haiku in the collection are strong, I was struck by the depth of emotional range in the single-line poems. Ranging from the silly

in season watermelon emojis  
to the heartbreaking  
last trip to the vet the rain continues

Daniel shows incredible skill with the one-liner. At an organizational level, I also noticed the extent to which the one-liners were most prominent in the “. . . and everything else” section. It is as though the three-liners provided a sense of structure in the unstructured days when we could not go to work or socialize, and space for the one-liners emerged as the world opened back up.

I recommend a good year for a possible apocalypse for those studying the art of monoku, as well as anyone looking for an example of how to make timely poems feel timeless. I also think it's an exceptional collection of urban haiku. There is much to recommend about this book, and if you haven't read it yet, consider doing so.

moonflowers by Bipasha Majumder De. 96 pp., perfect softbound. ISBN: 978-1-958408-57-5. Winchester, VA: Red Moon Press, 2025. \$20.00 at [www.redmoonpress.com](http://www.redmoonpress.com).

In his introduction to Bipasha Majumder De's moonflowers, Alan Summer writes, "The power of haiku, and its poem power, is to get to the essence of a human being, whether that's the author themselves, or capturing a part . . . of their childhood, and their own humanness, or perhaps unleashing something about us, the reader" (13). De's haiku engage with a wide range of external landscapes to connect to that human essence.

I appreciated the opportunity to discover new-to-me geographical terms in these poems, such as in, "oleshky sands / strewn with oyster shells / necropolis." De also incorporates other cultural works into her poems, in poems like, "drought / I can still hear / the notes of Megh Mollar." Some of the culturally-specific poems include contextual notes, which readers will appreciate.

Most of the poems show a strong balance of external images and emotional resonance. For example, in:

air raid alarm  
signature spiders spin  
their webs

the peaceful work of spiders contrasts with the noise of the