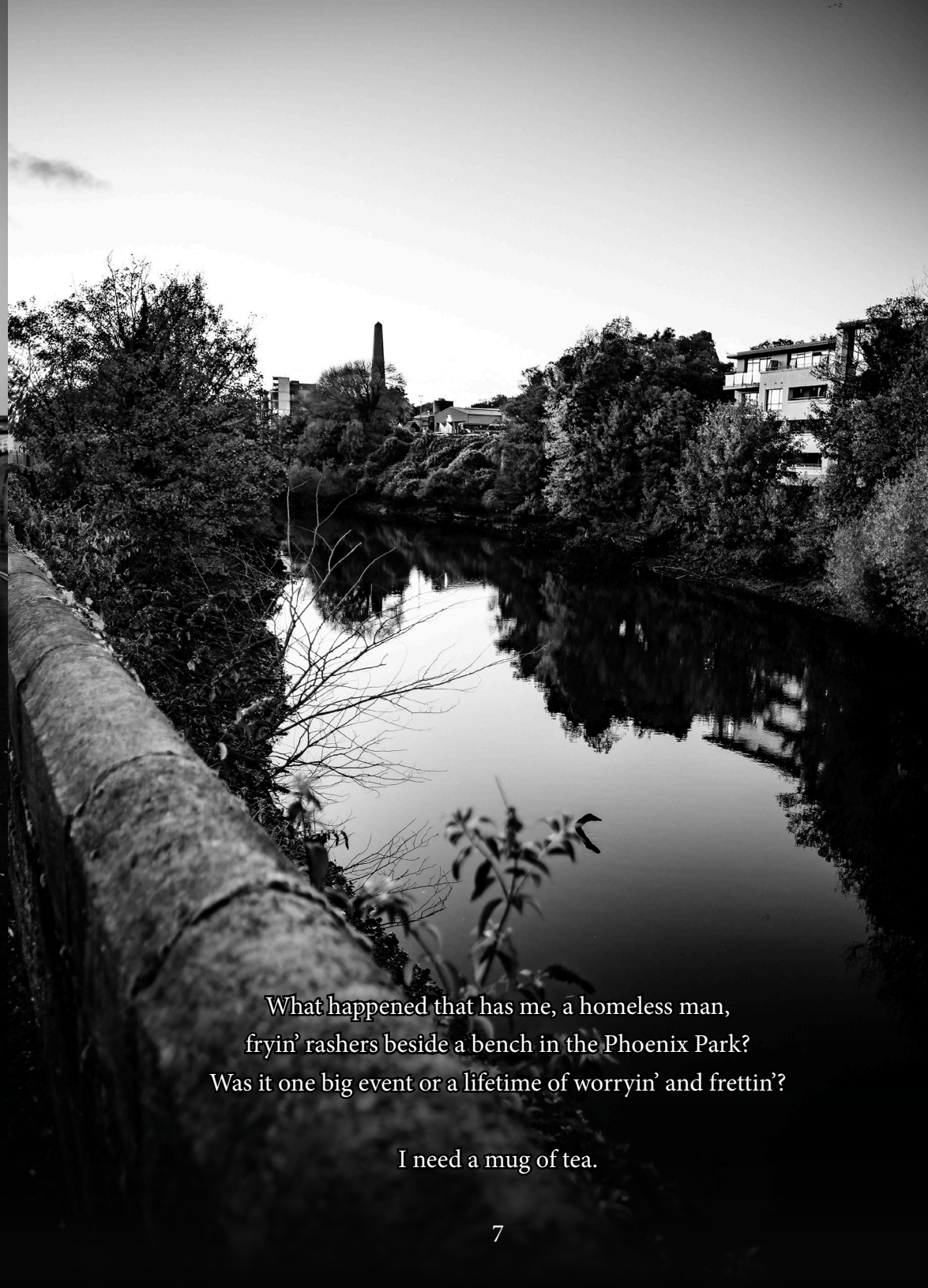


I wonder what time it is? I hope it's noon at least.
I couldn't face a whole day. Perfect! Half past twelve.
Time for a shower and a shave and tackle the world head on!

Would you listen to me! I wonder what or who I am?



What happened that has me, a homeless man,
fryin' rashers beside a bench in the Phoenix Park?
Was it one big event or a lifetime of worryin' and frettin'?

I need a mug of tea.

It's a lovely aspect from my bench here on the grassy breast,
lookin' across the valley
at the other breast with the silver birches.

If a woman saw somethin' in me,
she'd want to improve the place;
give the bench a lick of paint,
move those trees back,
move that stream closer,
make an arch of clematis to bathe under.

That wouldn't be half bad!


But there's two chances of that happenin'.

On my perambulations around the park, birdsong,
particularly the magpies, which isn't song really,
heavy metal more like, can unleash a blizzard of words,
concerning my downfall.

I can't catch them. I'm blinded, spittin'.
My mind is swirling.
I come around
and there's nothin' again.


Only the grey path!

Crows make a right racket too. Pluck the eyes out of lambs!




Ah, the swallows are back,
all relieved with a great story to tell.


But you can't know what they're thinkin'. Are they thinkin' at all?



Three cheers for the swallows!
They must have the colour of foreign lands on their
wings.
But that's as far as I'll go.
They don't remember the journey. Bird brains!





But I've great respect for them,
the way they sway and swarm
and don't collide.



Maybe they do, occasionally.

Swallows?



Get out of the way, ye feckin' eejit!



About the Author

Gerry Mc Donnell was born and lives in Dublin. He was educated at Trinity College Dublin where he edited Icarus, the long-running literary magazine. He has written six collections of poetry and a novella. He has also written for stage, radio, television and opera. His writing has been translated into Breton, French, Romanian and Russian. He is a member of the Irish Writers Union.



About the Photographer

Kieron Ellis is a photographer, graphic designer, artist and musician. He has worked in the fields of web design, logo and branding design, fashion and event photography, image licensing and film. A published collection of his street photography, DUB (Discovering Urban Behaviour) is shot entirely in black and white in and around the Dublin area and he is currently working on a companion volume.

Acknowledgements:

An earlier version of the text in *Invisible* appeared as Homeless, a haibun, in a book of haibun, haiku and senryu, called *A Kiss*, published by Alba Publishing in 2022.

Homeless, a monologue, was translated into Breton and published in the journal Al Liamm.