

Micro-tears
Cathal Gunning

The soul can thrum too
the taut-skin panda-bag eyes of exhaustion
knuckle-clasping jolts of thought to get lost in
the soul can shudder
and ache
and build strength in resistance

Micro-tears progress-pic'ing to
mass and muscle and
hearts that
can't break

Cathal Gunning is the co-founder and editor-in-chief of the online literature, poetry, and non-fiction collective *Cold Coffee Stand*. His poetry has been published in *The Rose Magazine*, *Lonesome October Lit*, and *Lagan Outline*. His fiction has been published or is forthcoming in *Tales From the Forest*, *The Honest Ulsterman*, *The Cabinet of Heed*, *The Runt*, *Snakes of Various Consistency*, *The Weary Blues*, *HCE Review*, *TRAIN*, *Funicular*, *The Occulum*, *Sleaze Magazine*, and the collection "From the Candystore to the Galtymore." His debut novel, *Innocents* was published by Solstice in 2017. His work has been short-listed for the 2015 Maeve Binchy Travel Award and Hennessy New Irish Writing.