

THE ANGELS' SHARE

Angels are gristing a vanished mill,
spilling amber skies above Oliver Bond Flats,
sifting salt winds among whorling alleys, laneways, courts,
and starring St Audoen's Gate. Wind in sails,
as they tenter the stones and grind, not barley,
but clouds, sack by sack. Angels are turning the city
into light. Nettles, fireweed, blackthorn, dock.
They are turning the seagulls, and even the dead.
If you look along Bridgefoot Street, on the hill
you'll see risen ghosts of porters, coopers, tanners, smiths.
O, Robert Emmet, a white flame in his throat.
O, Marshalsea inmates crying out for sleep.
O, rogue daughters of still-houses and Virgins of the Masses.
O, Zozimus, last gleeman and balladeer of Meath Street.
O, foundlings of the wheel on the corner of James's Street.
O, great fire explosion of 1875. O, whiskey river burning
iridescent downstreet into the mouth of the Coombe.
O, red hands, cracked hands, hungry hands scooping.
O, death-shook tenements. And Poddle moon filling up
in a cask of oak. O, lost bells of St Catherine's on Thomas Street
and miraculous horses clattering like shells on rain-wet cobbles.
O, women of The Liberties, ash looms clacking.
Atlas of wool and silk. Nexus of smoke.
O, Patrick, crozier aloft. O, sweet kit of pigeons
tilting and soaring beyond the blossoms of a dusty pear tree.
O, ghosts, with your bad hips and cricks in your backs,
and all the aches inflicted by landlords, especially landlords.
O, city, the angels are turning your bones into light,
against winter rains and in a blazing sweat.
The work of the angels is revolutionary work.
And the angels' share is the woodsweet heart of Dublin
trembling, like a secret cabinet of bees, in a garden of thyme,
a colony of wings, in this city within a city
that is eternally flickering.



A NOTE ABOUT THE ANGELS' SHARE

by Annemarie Ní Churreáin

The 'angels' share' is a distiller's term for the portion of spirit that naturally evaporates from an oak barrel into the air as whiskey matures. At the height of Ireland's whiskey-making golden age, Dublin's Liberties was home to more than thirty distilleries. Looking to St Patrick's Tower, originally a smock mill built around 1757 to grind malted barley for Roe's Thomas Street Distillery, this poem draws inspiration from the folklore and superstition that was once part of the world of whiskey-making. It seeks to evoke and celebrate the rich tapestry of people, places, stories and historical events that have shaped Dublin 8.

The Angels' Share by Annemarie Ní Chuirreáin was commissioned by The Digital Hub to mark the official opening in 2026 of the new event and community space in St Patrick's Tower, The Liberties, Dublin 8.

Annemarie Ní Churreáin is a poet from the Donegal Gaeltacht in Ireland. Her third poetry collection, *Hymn to All the Restless Girls* (The Gallery Press, 2025) received The Michael Hartnett Poetry Award 2026. It was also shortlisted for the Farmgate Café National Poetry Award. Ní Chuirreáin is an Irish Writer Fellow in Residence at the University of Notre Dame for the academic year 2026-27 and Yeats Society Sligo Poet in Residence 2026-28. She is the poetry editor at *The Stinging Fly* Magazine.