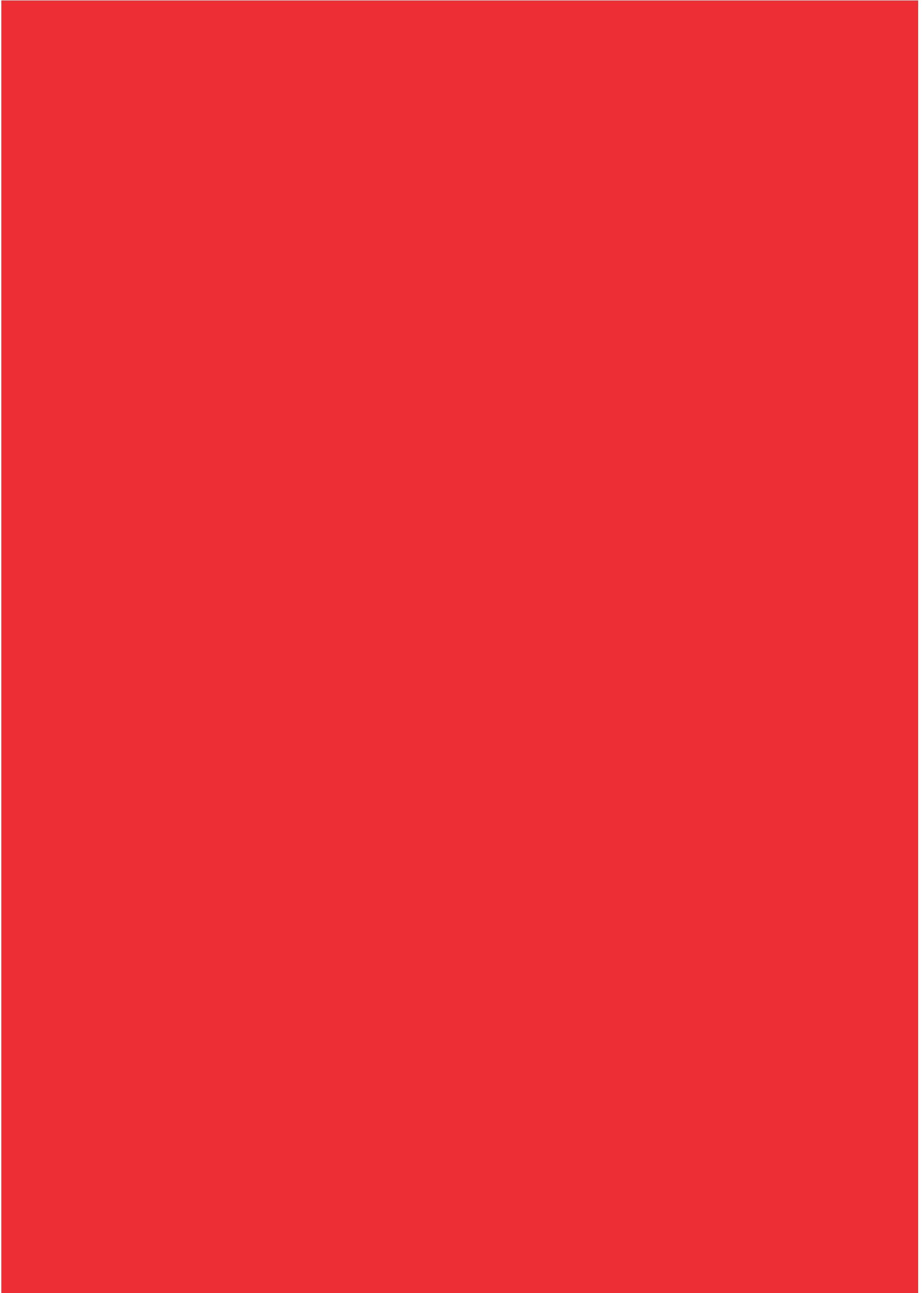


Lucy E. ALLAN



HOMETOWN BESTIARY



WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, I USED
TO FANTASISE THAT I WAS A WOLF THAT
PRETENDED IT WAS HUMAN, BUT THEN
FORGOT IT WAS EVER A WOLF.

I HAD SUCH VIVID DREAMS
ABOUT MY HALF- REMEMBERED
WOLF- SELF,

I ALMOST BEGAN
TO THINK IT MIGHT
BE TRUE



THE PLAN IS TO STAY HERE FOR A
LITTLE WHILE. JUST A YEAR OR TWO.
GET A JOB. SAVE SOME MONEY.



I KNOW THE VALUE NOW
OF 'JUST A YEAR OR TWO.'
THAT IS THE TIME IT TOOK
TO BECOME WHO I AM.

I AM SO AFRAID
THAT IN 'JUST A YEAR OR TWO'
I WILL HAVE TURNED BACK
TO WHO I WAS
BEFORE.



I MOVED BACK TO
MY HOME TOWN
ABOUT A YEAR
AGO



BEFORE THAT, I'D
LIVED AND STUDIED
IN DUBLIN



BUT I COULDN'T
AFFORD TO STAY THERE



I LIKED WHO I WAS
IN DUBLIN



I LIKED THE FRIENDS
I MADE THERE



BUT MORE THAN ANYTHING,
I LIKED HOW DUBLIN
MADE ME
FEEL



LIKE I WAS SEEING EVERYTHING,
EXPERIENCING EVERYTHING,

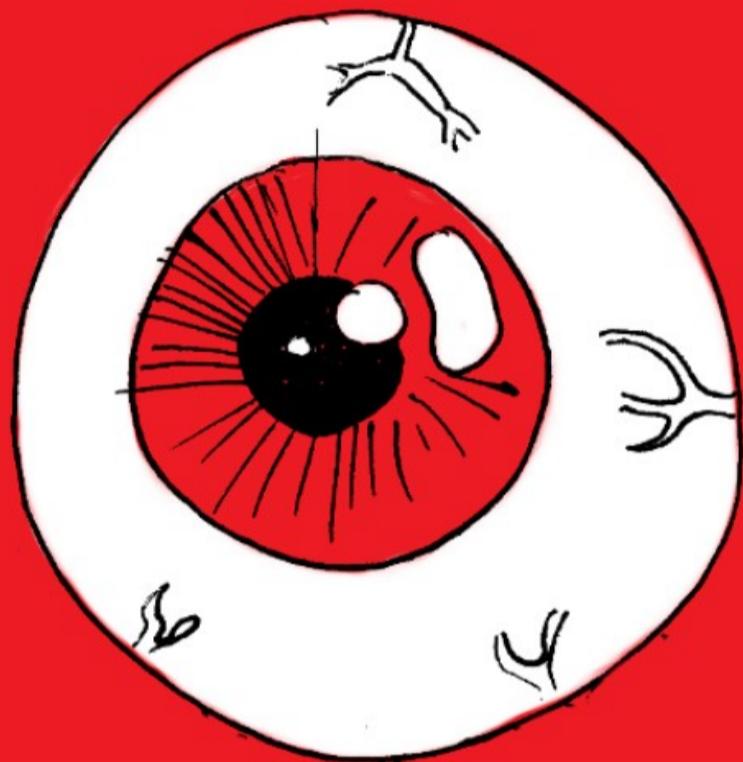
AND NOBODY
WAS WATCHING
ME.



I FELT LIKE AN
ANIMAL
MOVING IN THE
NIGHT,



THE KIND YOU ONLY EVER
SEE OUT OF THE CORNER
OF YOUR EYE
AS IT DARTS AWAY.



PERCEIVING EVERYTHING
PERCEIVED BY NO ONE

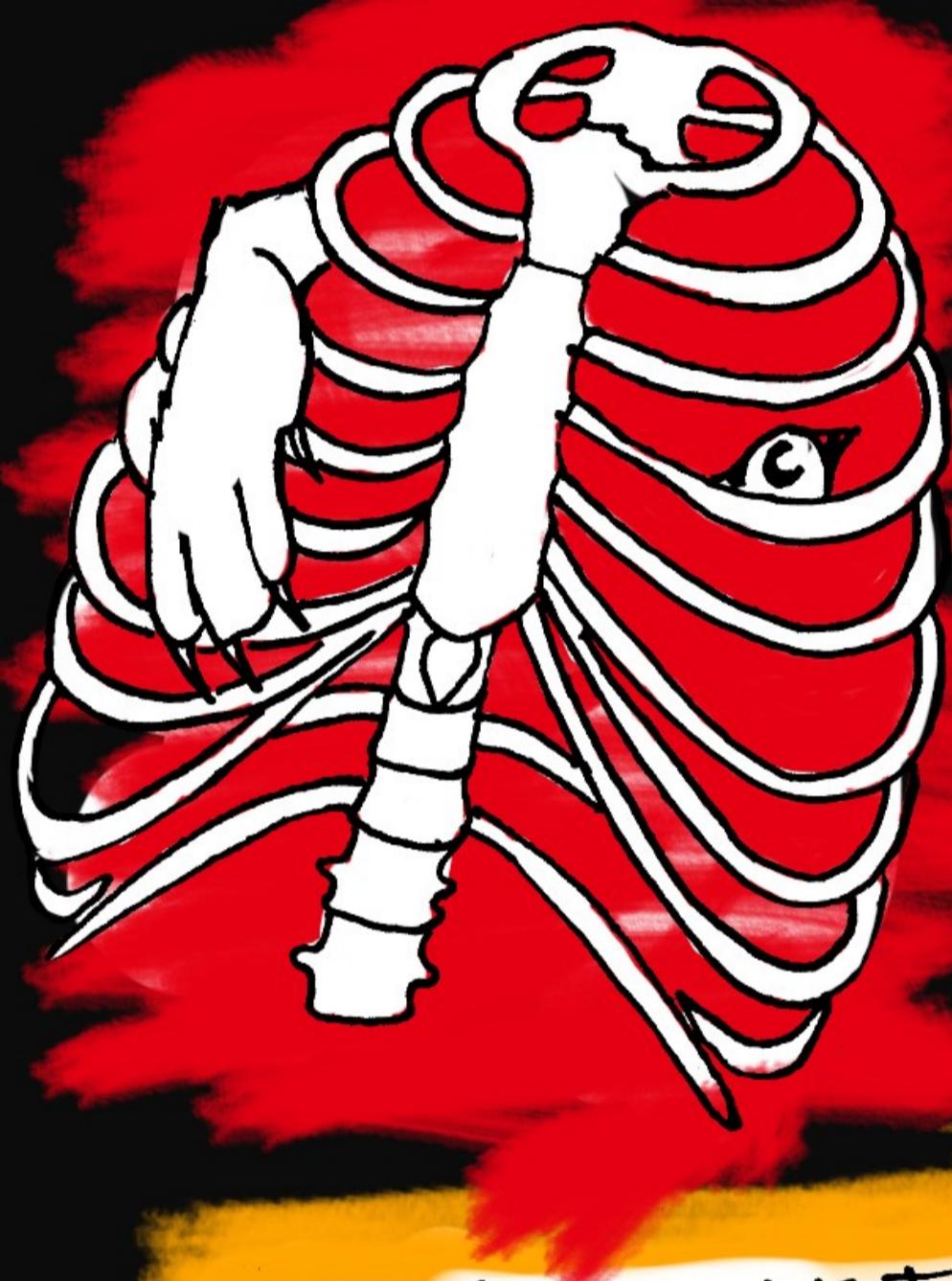
HERE, I FEEL EYES ON
ME ALL THE TIME



ALL THE TIME, I'M
CONCIOUS OF THE SHAPE
OF MYSELF -
OF THE PHYSICAL,
VISIBLE PART OF
ME



MY SKIN DOESN'T FEEL
LIKE MINE ANYMORE.

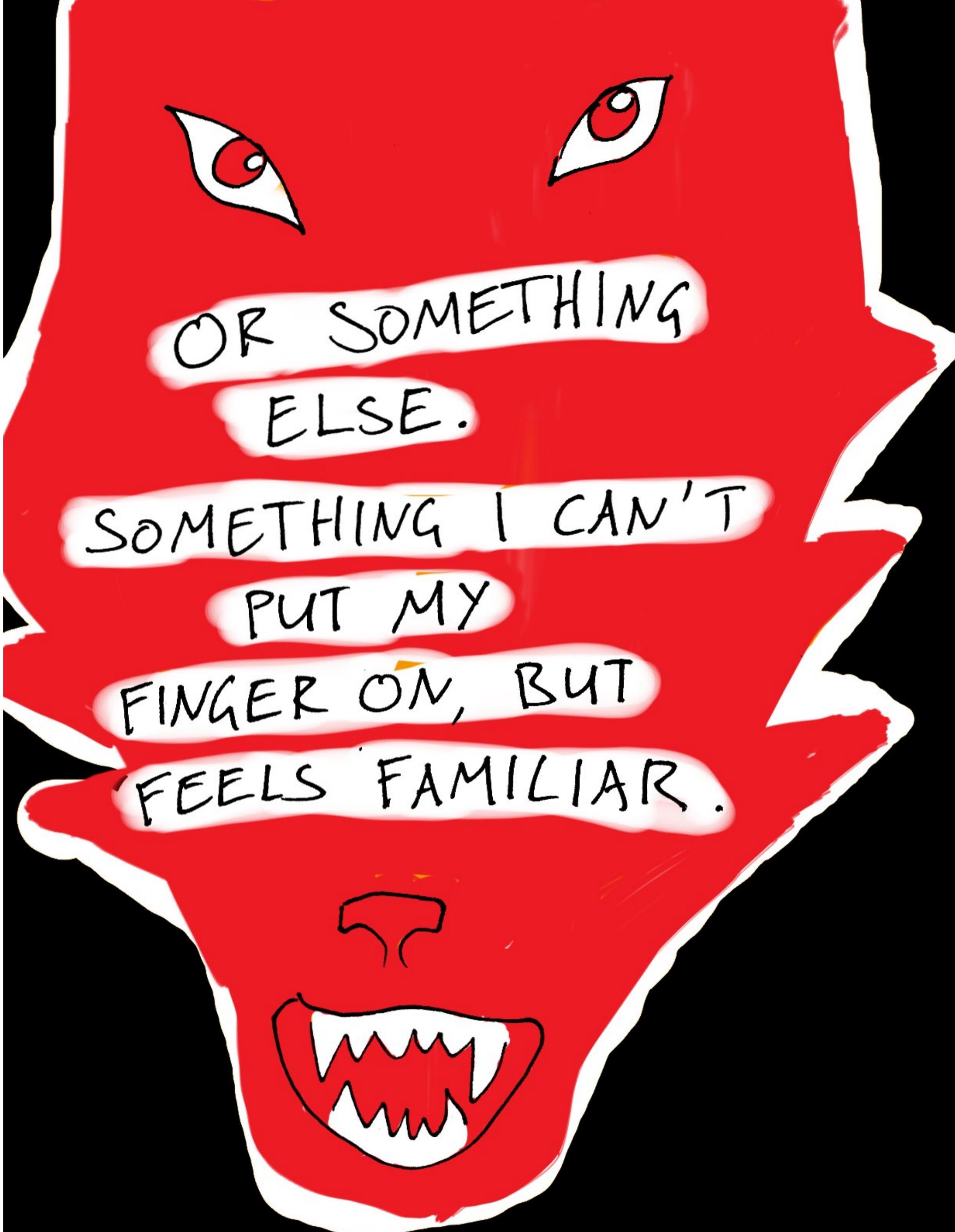


I FEEL ITCHY
ON THE INSIDE,

LIKE SOMETHING'S TRYING
TO CLAW ITS WAY
OUT.

LIKE MY GHOST IS RATTLING
FROM THE INSIDE





OR SOMETHING
ELSE.

SOMETHING I CAN'T
PUT MY
FINGER ON, BUT
FEELS FAMILIAR.

I LIVE ALONE.

I SPEND MOST OF MY NIGHTS
GETTING BLACKOUT DRUNK
BY MYSELF,

TRYING TO

TAP IN TO

THAT

STRANGE

SOMETHING



THAT'S INSIDE ME.



IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, I TAKE
IT OUT FOR WALKS



THAT GHOST-PART.

THAT CREATURE-PART.

THERE IS A
WILDNESS TO THIS
CITY.

SOMETHING HERE
IS FRACTURED
AND UNEVEN.



- LIKE THERE
ARE HAIRLINE
CRACKS IN
ITS REALITY.

I FEEL AFRAID, SOMETIMES -
OF THE CITY AT NIGHT,
OF MY CREATURE-THING,
DELIBERATELY LEADING ME
INTO DANGER



A stylized illustration featuring a red horse on the left and a yellow person on the right. The horse is facing left, showing its profile. The person is shown from the waist up, facing right, with their head turned towards the horse. The background is black, and the figures have thick outlines.

BECAUSE IT'S
EASIER TO THINK OF
IT AS SOMETHING
SEPARATE FROM
ME.



SOMETIMES
YOU HAVE TO TAKE
YOUR EYES OFF
YOURSELF FOR A
SECOND

LET YOURSELF SLIP
IN BETWEEN THE
CRACKS





AND REMEMBER
WHO THE FUCK
YOU ARE.





**Lucy E Allan is a Frankensteins's
monster apologist with a creative
writing Master's. Her published
work can be found in Thomond
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Funk Press. She can be found on
twitter at @BitchHomunculus**