



Claws

By Patrick Wise

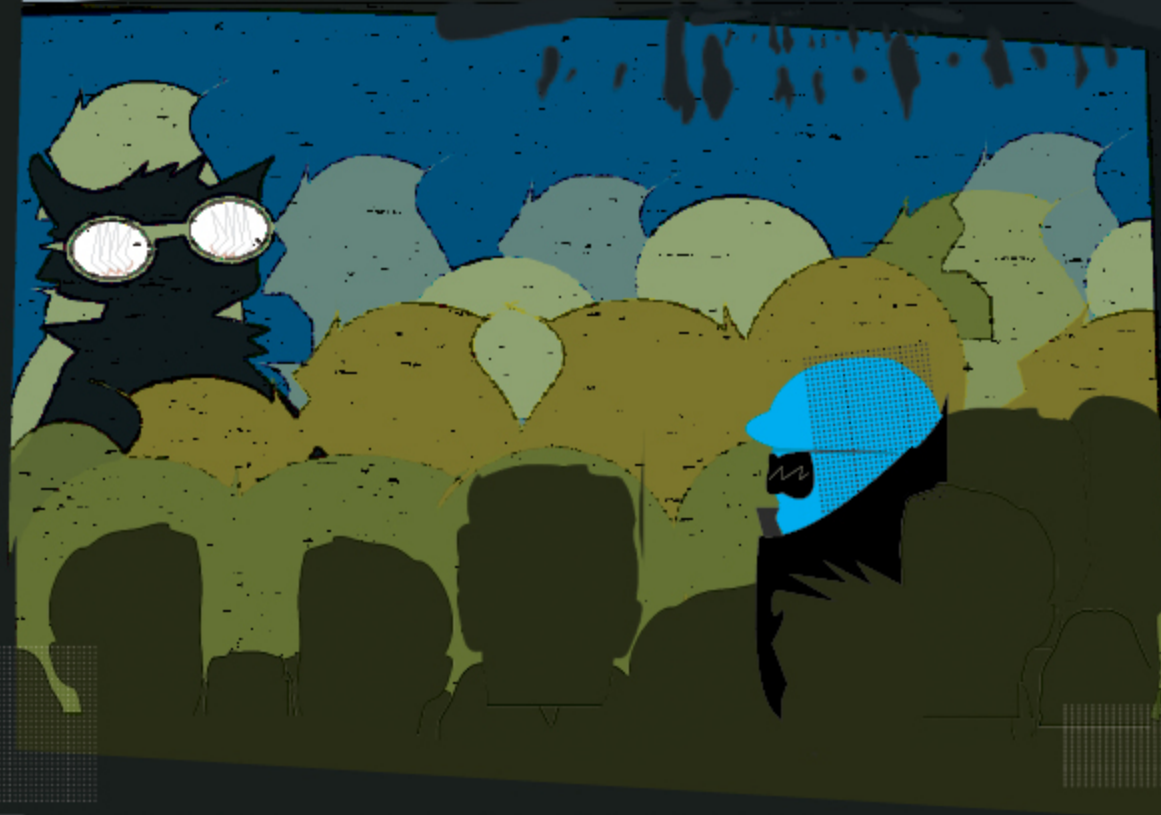
How cruel are chains tied to the past

Binding souls in shadow...





Every rusted link drawn tight
Drowning in the shallows



I was on the pay-me-no-mind list as a young cat...
Skinny, awkward, left behind. Lost in the crowd...
No one saw me... not really. The mocking, the
isolation—I didn't belong to nobody.

But that all changed

Last night's dream... still haunting. I saved their fallen moon... The township, rejoicing—their voices like a hymn. They needed me. But it was not me at all. It was when I gave myself to them that I transformed....



Validation? Ha! I threw it away—burned it, buried it. Scared? Pfft... not anymore. And this... this thing inside me? It's not fear—it's fire.

For I am

