

PYLON

Animated film, 2D, 26 minutes

Written and directed by Gabriel Jacquel

While spending his first night outdoors a kitten discovers a dark and violent place. A large dog shows him how to survive but also hides a horrible secret.

Their vagrancy takes them to the base of an electric tower also called an electric pylon (the kind which the French call cat-pylons) that is also a giant totem pole which reveals their common history.



SYNOPSIS

While dreaming of an immense cat silhouette coming towards him, Pylon the tiny kitten, wakes up with a jolt. This kitten is afraid of everything : the vacuum cleaner, his master, the rain and even of his dreams.

And it is by running away from one creature and/or obstacle to another that he finds himself way too far away from his house...With a large and scary dog that doesn't want to let him go. It is raining and cold, the night is falling and the dog just wants to use the kitten's cuteness to attract people's pity so that they will give him food.

The little kitten finds himself forced to go door to door, meowing and showing his big shiny eyes to get servings of food that the dog eats directly without even sharing!

Try as he might, the tiny kitten can't run away, he is always caught by the dog! But the more he wanders with him, from house to house, from shelter to refuge, as if guided by the city lights, the more the kitten realizes that beyond his first fears this mysterious dog is more benevolent than he first seems. He also realizes he could learn a thing or two from the dog such as where to find food, how to defend oneself when confronted with bigger creatures than oneself, how to find shelter and avoid being run over by a car which the dog seems to fear most of all!

The kitten goes from being the dog's captive to becoming his companion as the dog increasingly allows the kitten more freedom ... Maybe even too much! Overjoyed to show the dog that he is learning the tricks of the trade, the kitten noisily begs in front of a butcher's shop...All the while that the shop is being robbed!

The two companions escape just in the nick of time by hiding in a field of wheat beneath a giant pylon (electric tower) with a cat-like head. This field of wheat, the scarecrow, the pylon, all of these elements together abruptly bring back memories to the dog causing him to stop so suddenly that the kitten is ejected farther into the field. The dog remembers running in a wheat field chasing a cat, a much larger cat than the kitten. It



was even a pregnant cat. Until he got to the road where, because he was so absorbed in his chase, the dog didn't see a car coming straight at him...

The driver gets out of his car panicked and discovers the suffering cat for whom he can't do anything for and scoops up the kitten.

This same kitten who, presently, finds himself in the middle of the road at the base of the electric pylon that he is watching with his big eyes... Totally lost in his memories he doesn't see a car hurtling towards him!

Luckily the dog appears out of the second field of wheat to protect him... but gets hit by the car in the kitten's stead.

Presently the kitten tries to wake him but nothing works.. The dog stays motionless...His luminous soul leaves his body and rises to the sky.

But when his soul gets to the height of the giant cat pylon a magical phenomenon occurs : the pylon interrupts the soul's ascension to the sky as if it was giving one last mission to the dog : to bring the kitten home !

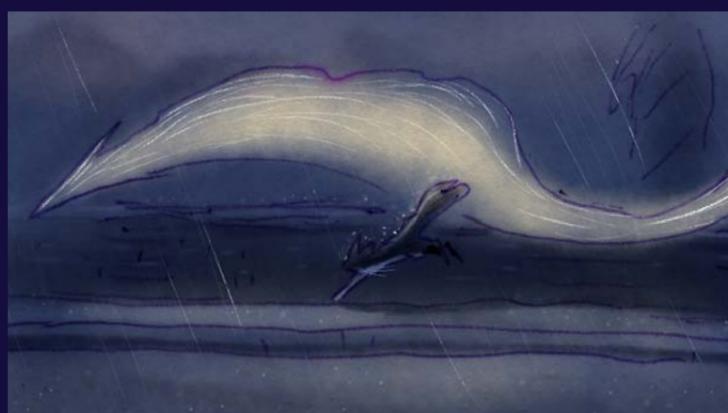
The pylon even uses electricity to change the houses' antennas positions so that they are lit by the first rays of the rising sun to show the way back like arrow shaped lights!

The kitten, guided by the dog's soul, runs on the way home.

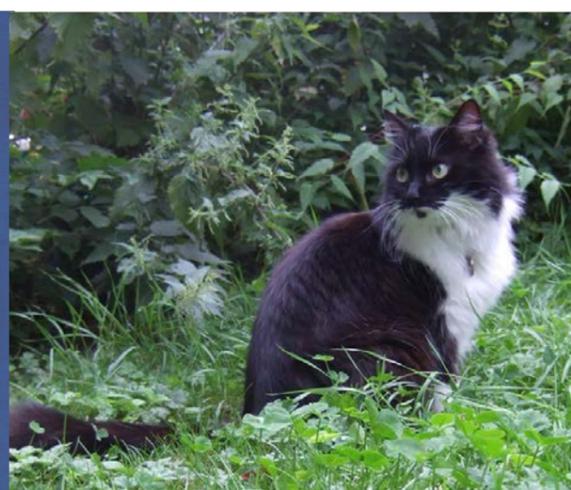
Several months later, Pylon is no longer the scare-dy-cat kitten that he used to be. He is no longer scared neither of the vacuum nor of his owner.

When the first drops of rain begin to fall he runs outside to watch the scenery. He can see from the deck, next to the giant cat pylon, there is now a dog pylon...

The cat is moved and looks at the two totem poles that are watching over him.



A PERSONAL STORY



I have always wondered what cats do during their nocturnal jaunts.

...While I was writing this story my son was born premature.

The strong connection they had during 7 months was brutally interrupted and I had to fill in without knowing what each of them was feeling. Even before his mother could join us my son had to be plugged into tubes and put in an incubator.

The separation anxiety, the questions about what my child that was just born must be feeling of being passed from one person to another, the tubes, incubator, beeping noises, the lights...

All of these elements fed my film...

A connection illustrated by electric cables and their carriers, the pylons.

From the train windows you can see these electric pylons (towers) within the surrounding landscapes. The tops of some of these big electric towers reminded me of cat heads and later I learned that in France they are called cat pylons.



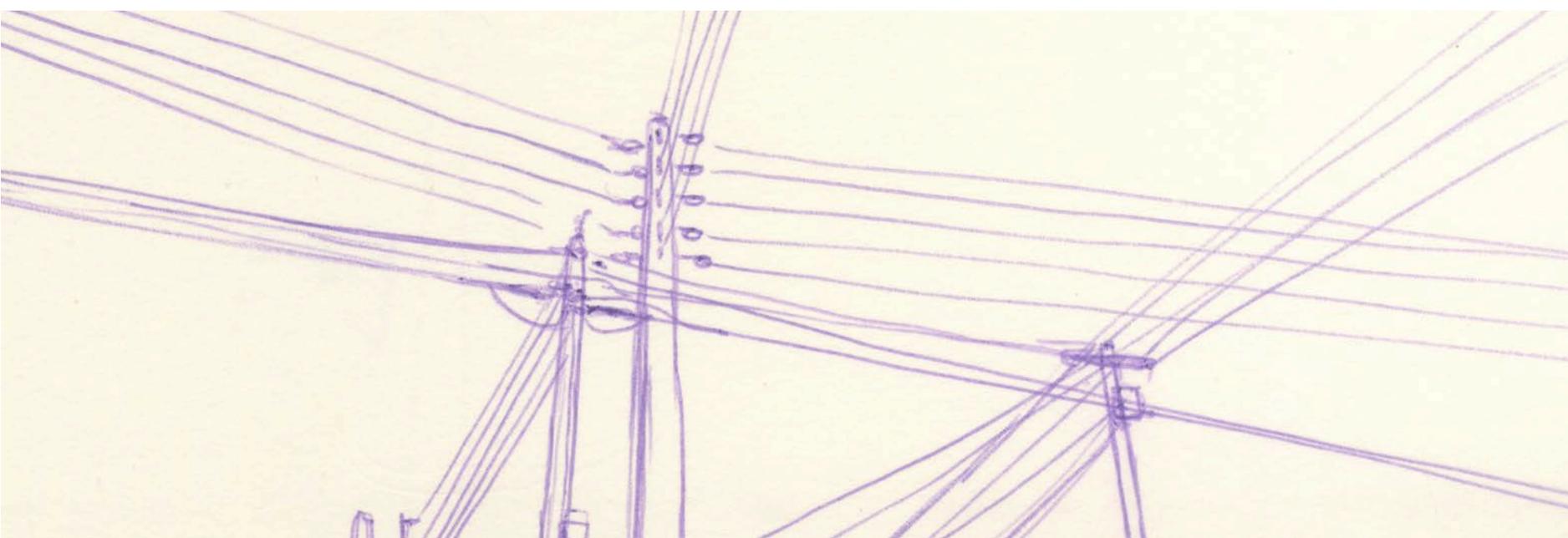


The dream Pylon has every morning is what remains of the images he saw in his first instants. She has become an electric pylon totem pole condemned to watching him grow up from afar) she sends the dog responsible for their separation to initiate her son in her stead, as an act of redemption.

The mother is the character that is absent and omnipresent at the same time. The warm light of the street lamps represents the benevolent gaze of the mother cat that guides the dog and kitten duo to show them the way.



In the movie, Pylon follows an itinerary not unlike an initiatory journey. This path, full of obstacles, brings him to discover his origins hidden in the recesses of his unconscious. And like a reminiscence of the way technology was a connection between us and our son during the first months of his life, the electric energy from the electric pylon created a link between the kitten and his mother. On a deep level, telling the story through the kitten's mishaps is a poetic and sensitive way to share what happened to us.



SOUND AMBIANCE



The rain is also an important "character" in the movie.

In the story the rain is truly the element that triggers the young cat's adventures. It is also the element that brings the main characters together : the kitten, dog and the mother.

The sound intensity and more specifically the sound of the rain will be very important. The rain's intensity will reflect the character's state of mind and also underline the tense moments.

It is thus a realistic sound ambiance that will carry the Pylon film. However, as in the movies by *Zatōichi* de Takeshi Kitano or *Dancer in the Dark* by Lars von Trier I would like the noises to bring the music.



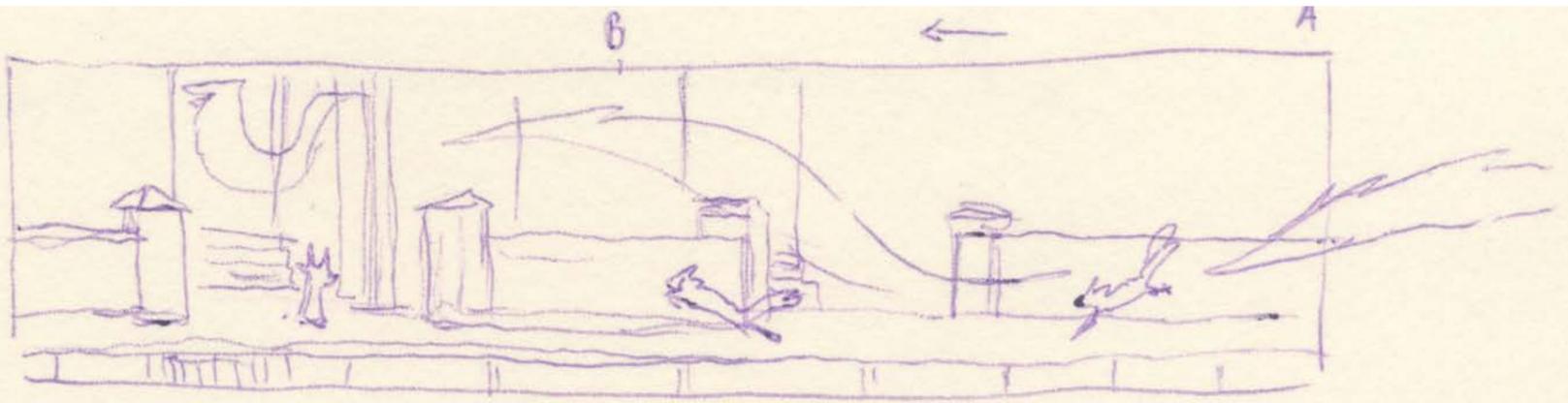
AN ELECTRONIC LULLABY

I have requested Valerie Trebeljahr's services (the singer from Lali Puna), who agreed to work with me on the film's soundtrack. The delicate nature of her voice really inspires me.

Valerie's voice, which is beautiful, soft, calm and full of compassion, is the perfect incarnation of the mother cat. This voice is there to guide, to help sleep, to help remember. Her voice's delicateness will help make the images appear gentler.

As if she was telling the story to her child.

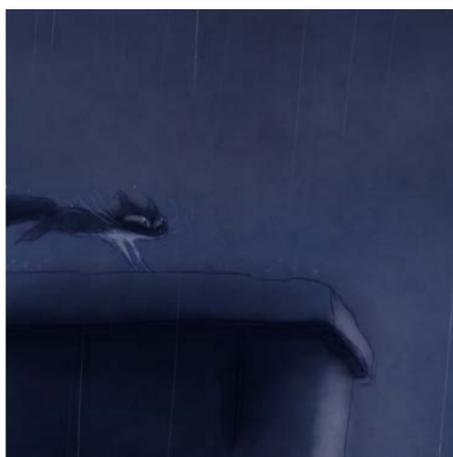
TRADITIONNAL ANIMATION



Pylon is an ambitious and long film that is almost 26 minutes of traditional animation during which almost all the views have rain FXs.

It's a traditional 2d animation with the usage of TVPaint software and many cuts (with few and very expressive drawings) to create a similar style to Isao Takahata's anime film "Jarinko Chie".

The backgrounds are imagined as traditional drawings on paper. These lines could eventually be replaced by a digital line, the digital strokes having already been created for the animation tests.

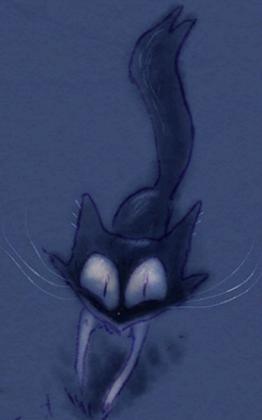
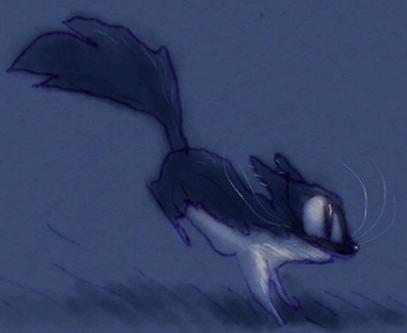
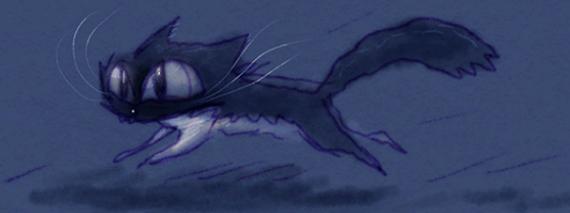
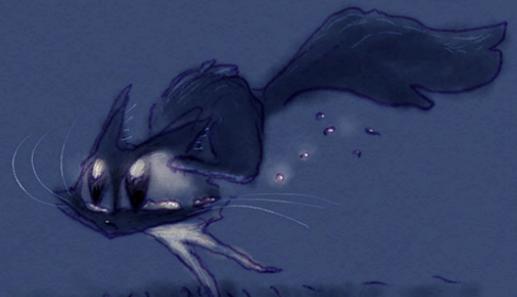
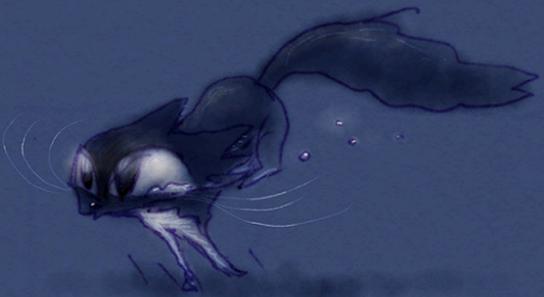


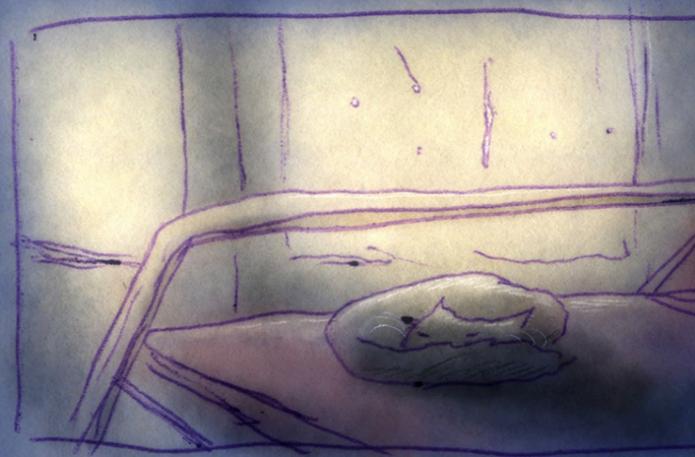
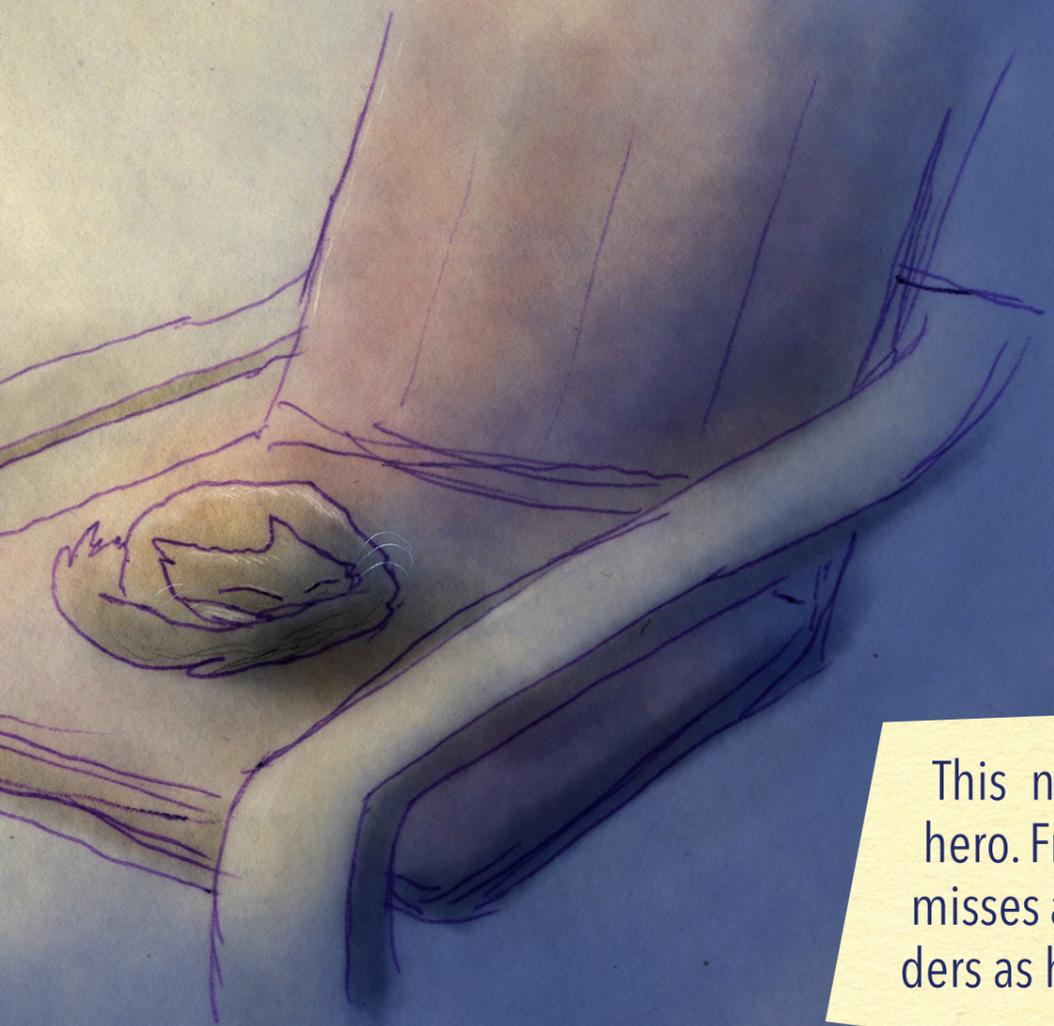
Clickable images leading to animation tests

PYLON



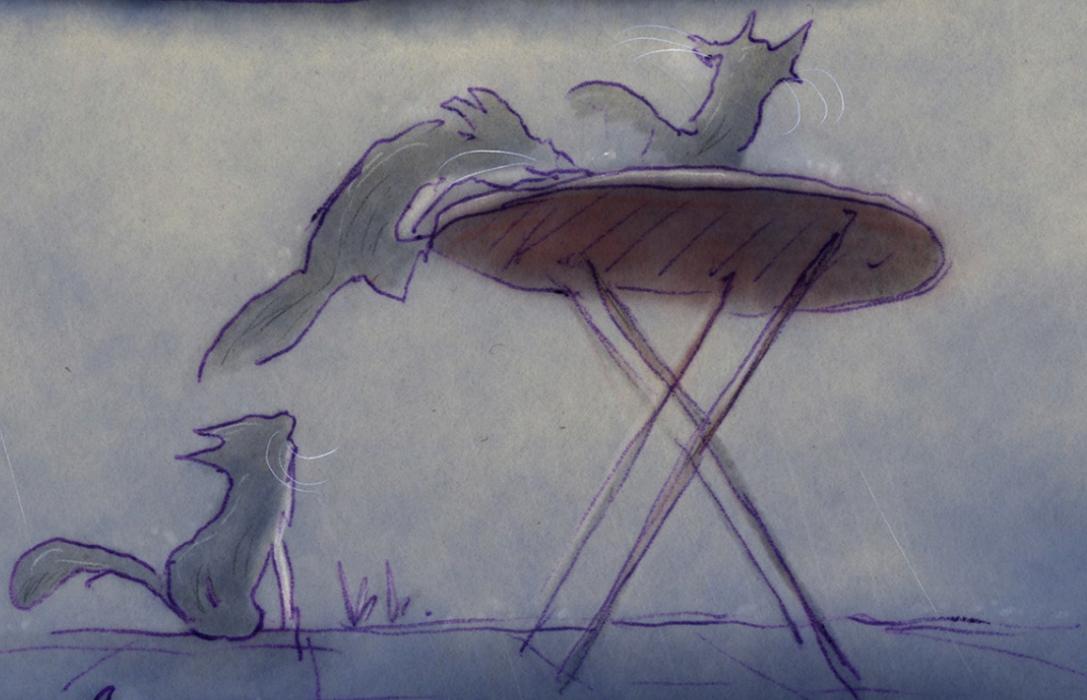
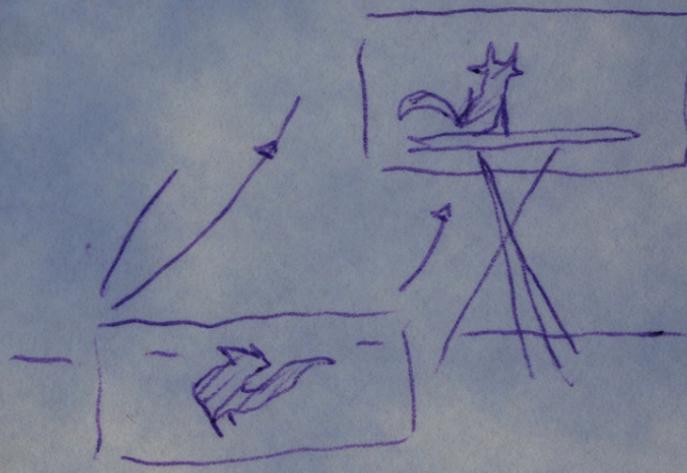
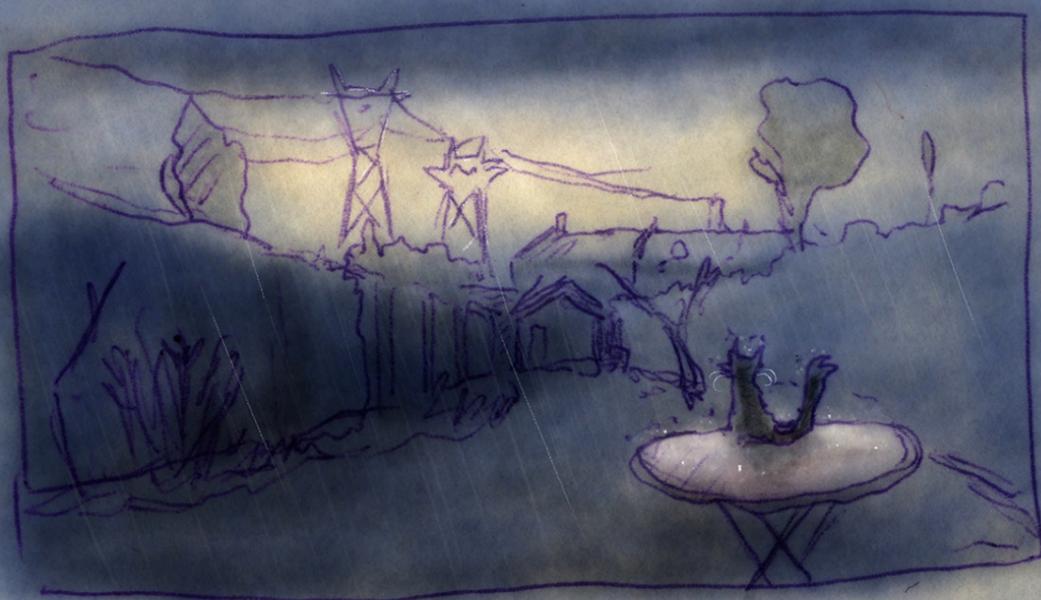
Pylon is a little kitten.
He has never left his house.
He is fearful, playful and
awkward.



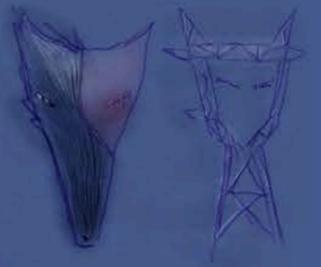


IL FAUT TROUVER UN ANGLE QUI PERMETTE
DE VOIR LE CHAT ET LA FENÊTRE

This night adventure has transformed our hero. From now on he likes the rain and never misses an opportunity to greet those he considers as his parents.



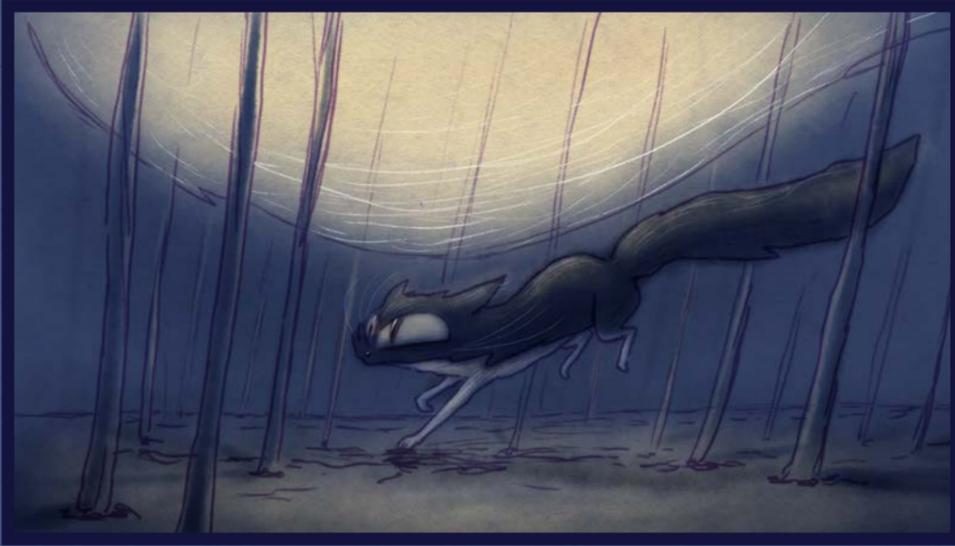
THE DOG



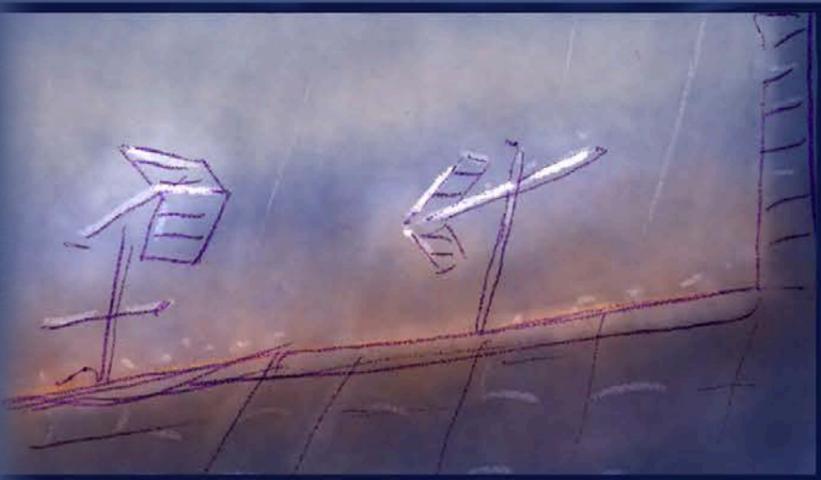
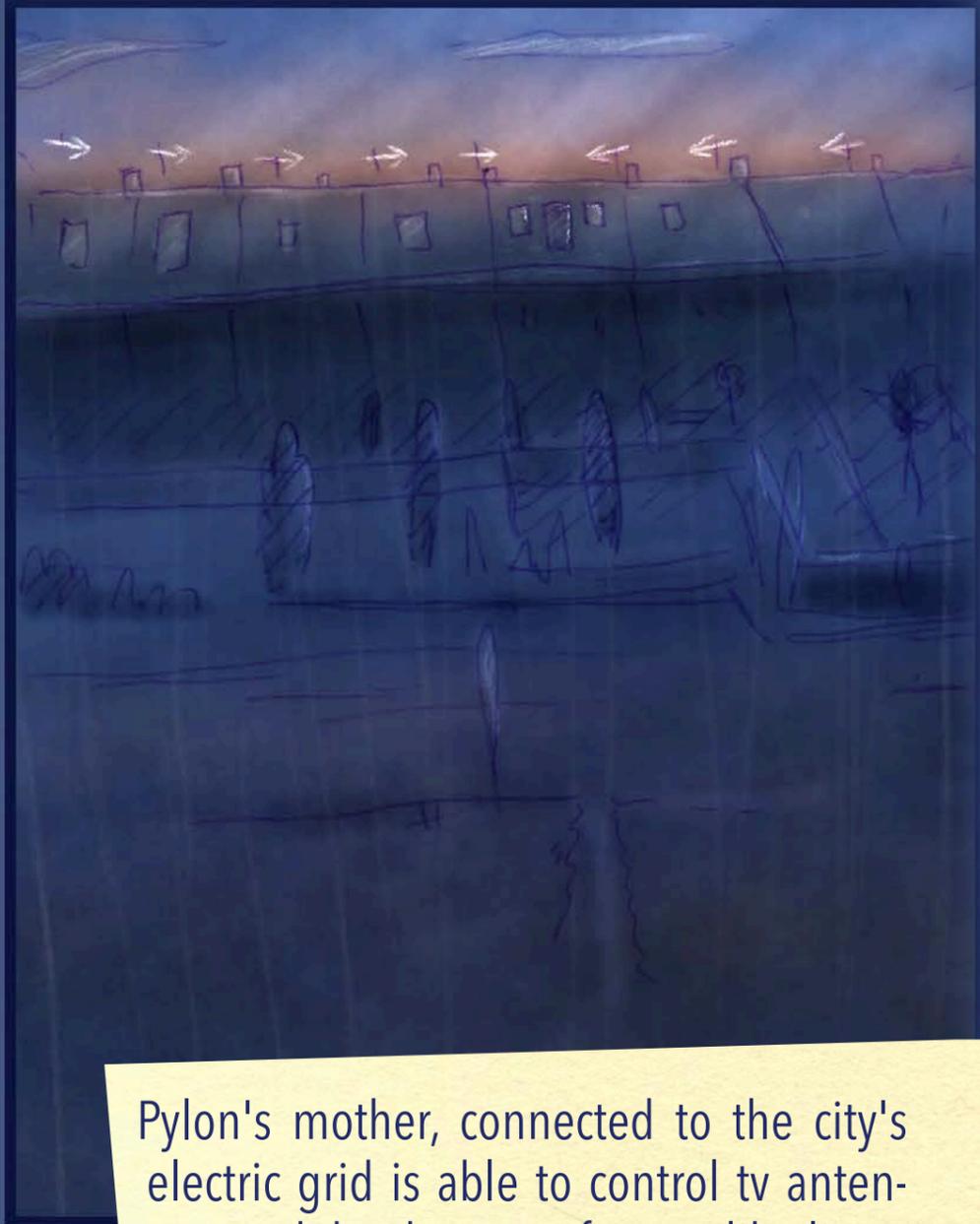
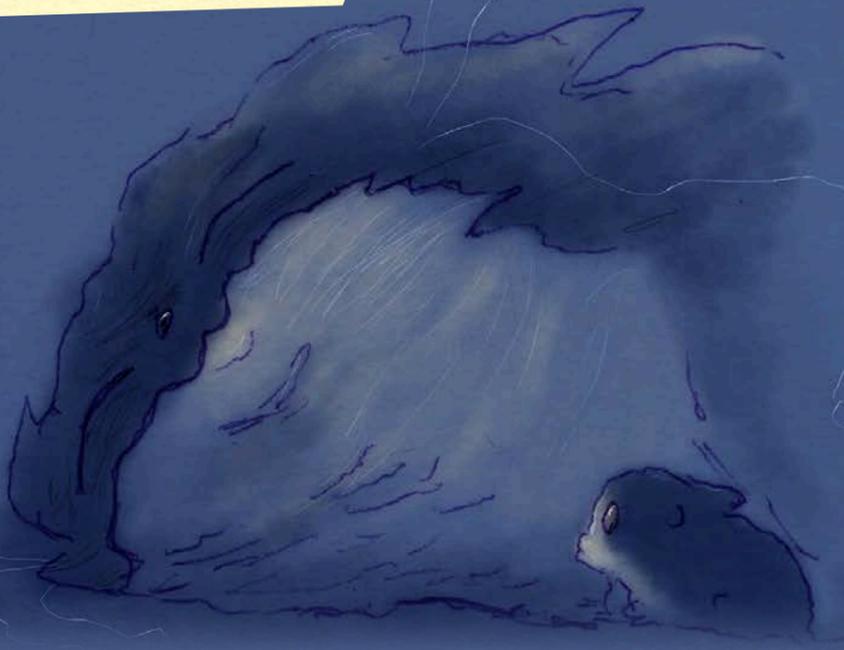
His coat is dirty and sparse and his legs are long and very muscular. He only has one eye. He is covered with scars one of which zigzags on his head and another down his chest all the way to his tail.



The dog's soul becomes luminous once the pylon discharges its electricity into it.



THE MOTHER



Pylon's mother, connected to the city's electric grid is able to control tv antennas and, by the way of arrow-like lit-up antennas, she shows the kitten's way home to the dog.

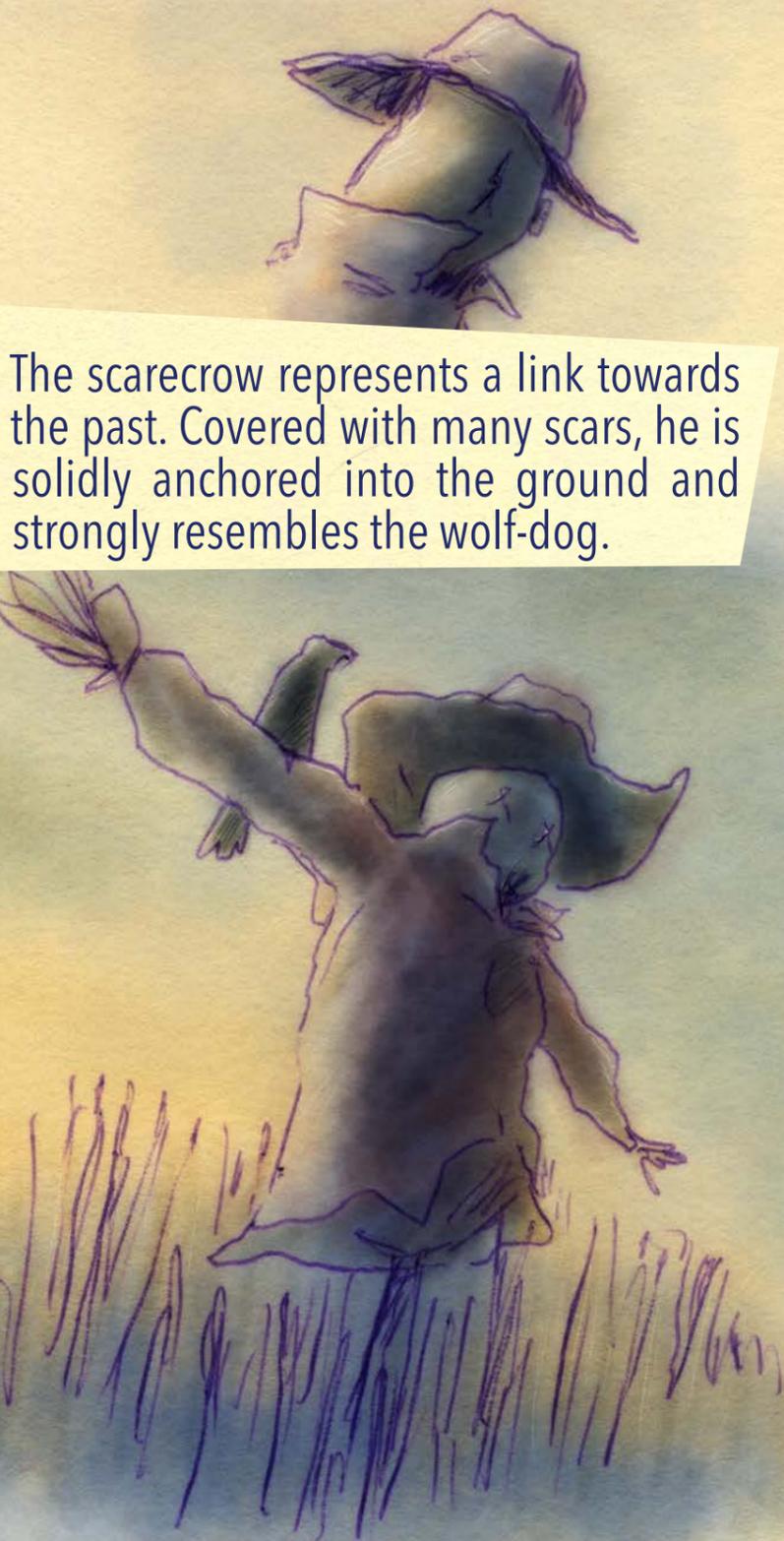


THE BIRD

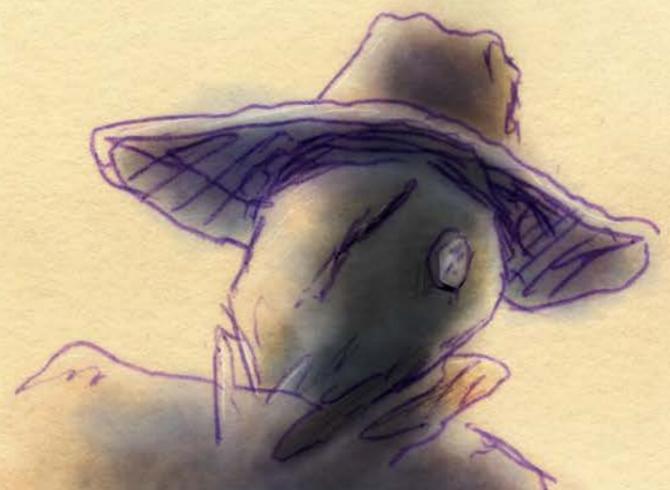


The bird is the witness of the story.
He observes from afar.

THE SCARECROW



The scarecrow represents a link towards
the past. Covered with many scars, he is
solidly anchored into the ground and
strongly resembles the wolf-dog.



THE CHICKENS



Pylon will cross unhappy chickens on his path; they will push him out of the chicken coop with their beaks.



Amongst the stray cats that cross our paths there is often a big dirty and aggressive cat that is a bit like the Godfather gangster of cats.

THE BIG ALLEY CAT



THE FIREBUG

The firebug will be the first character that Pylon meets. He realizes in this way that there are some fun parts to the outside world.



THE SNAIL



In a wooden barrel Pylon observes the rain and sees a snail coming out of its shell because it loves the rain.



THE BABY MICE



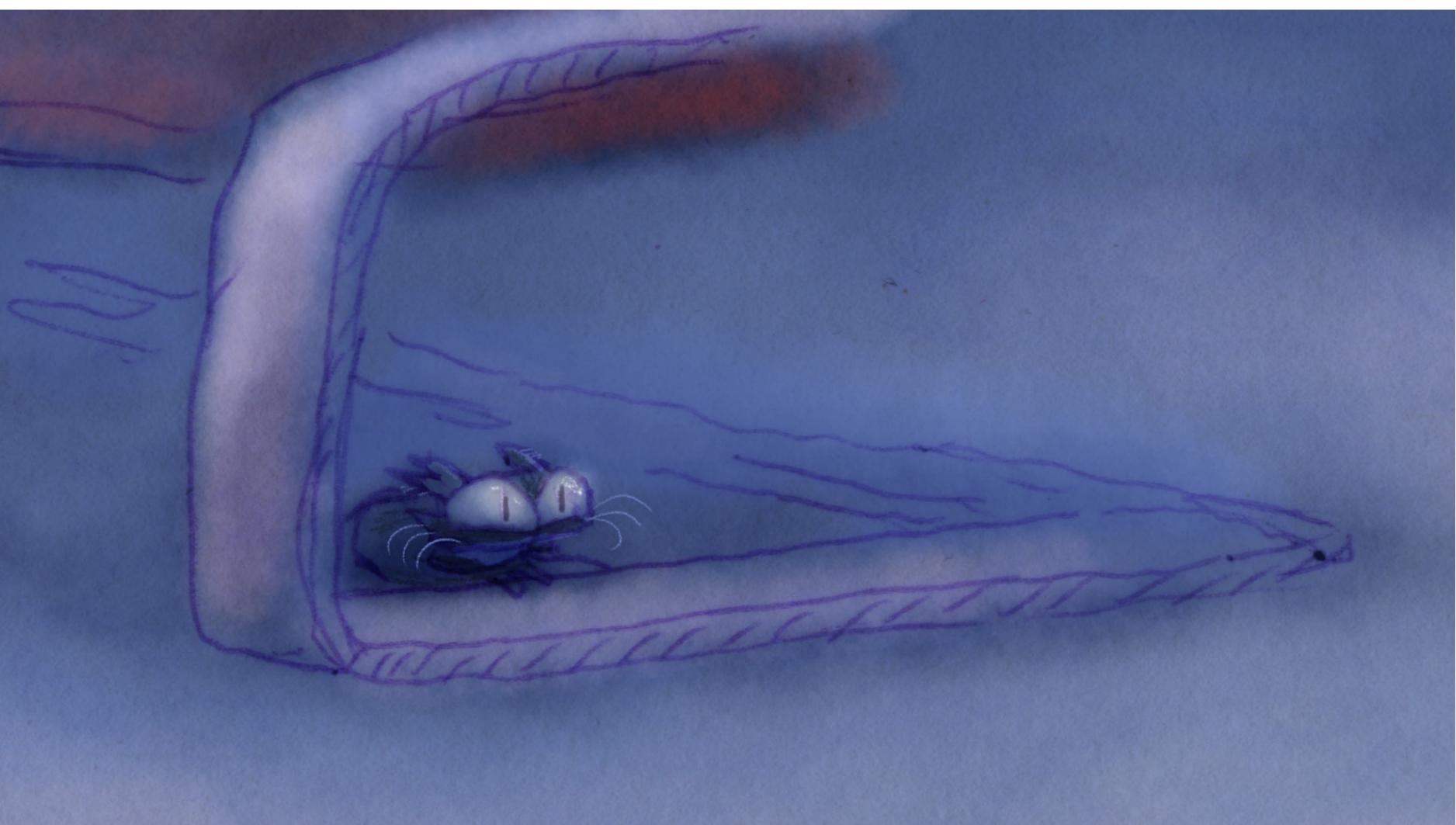
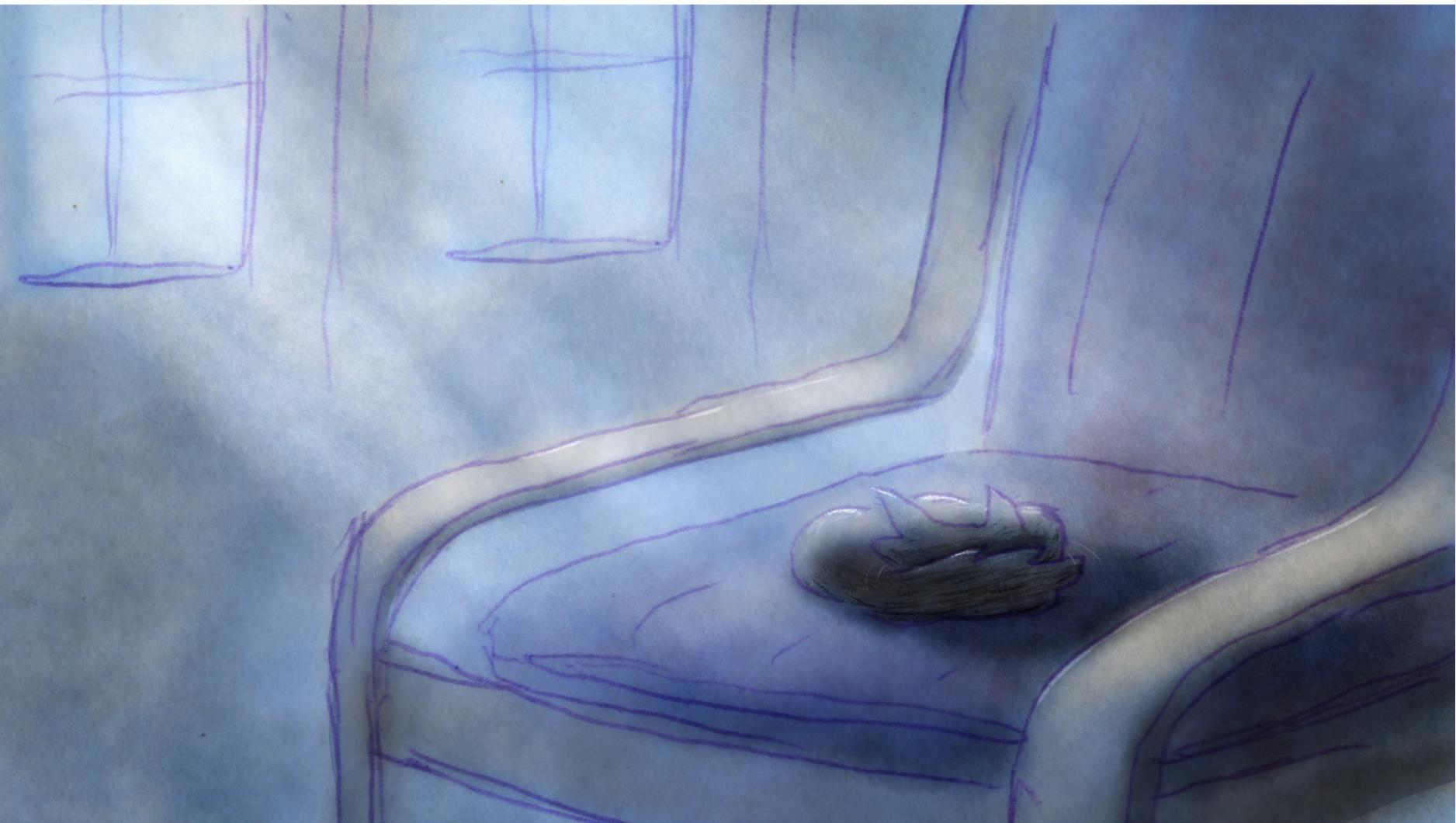
At first glance the rodent that Pylon comes across seems solitary.

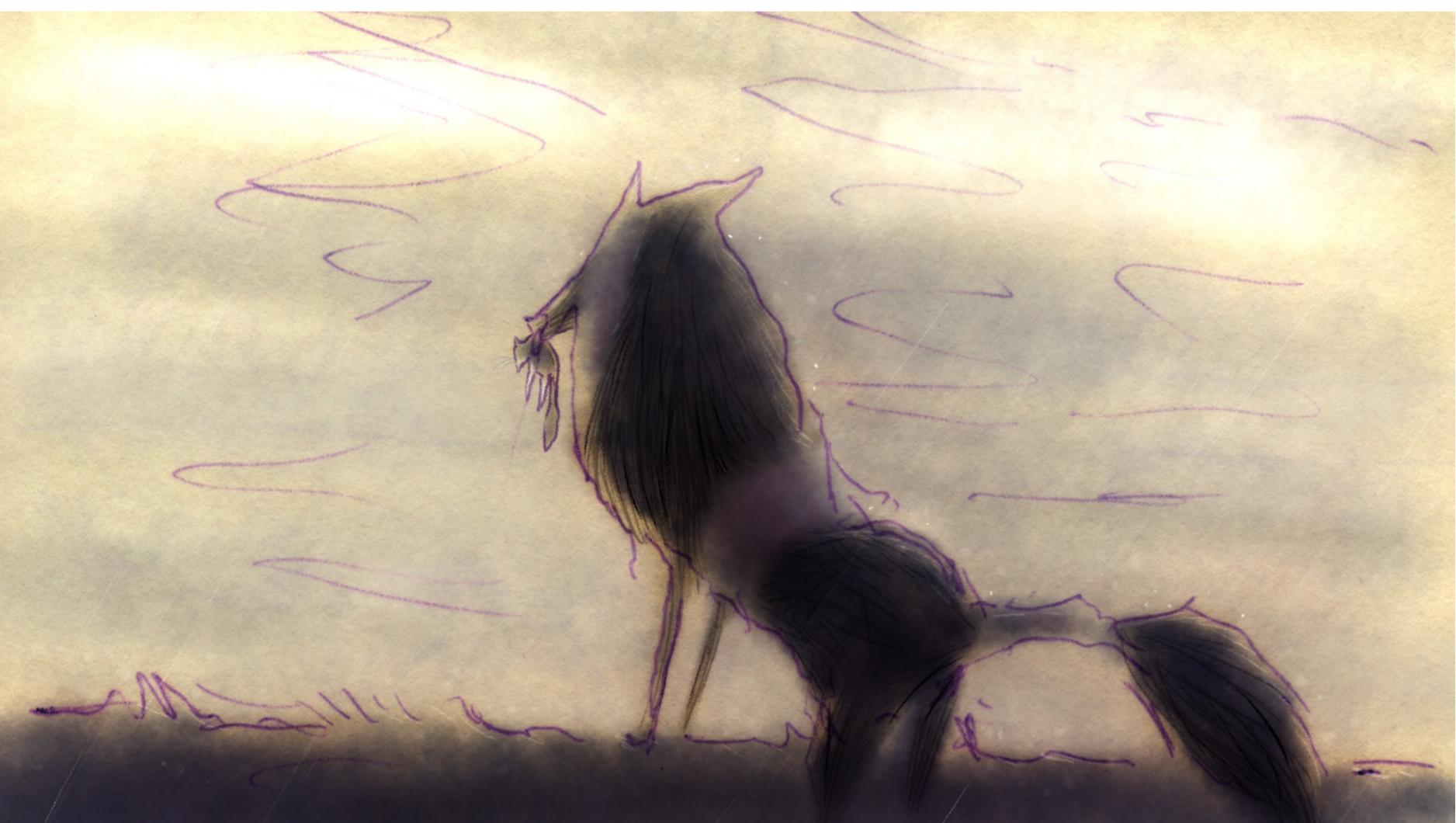
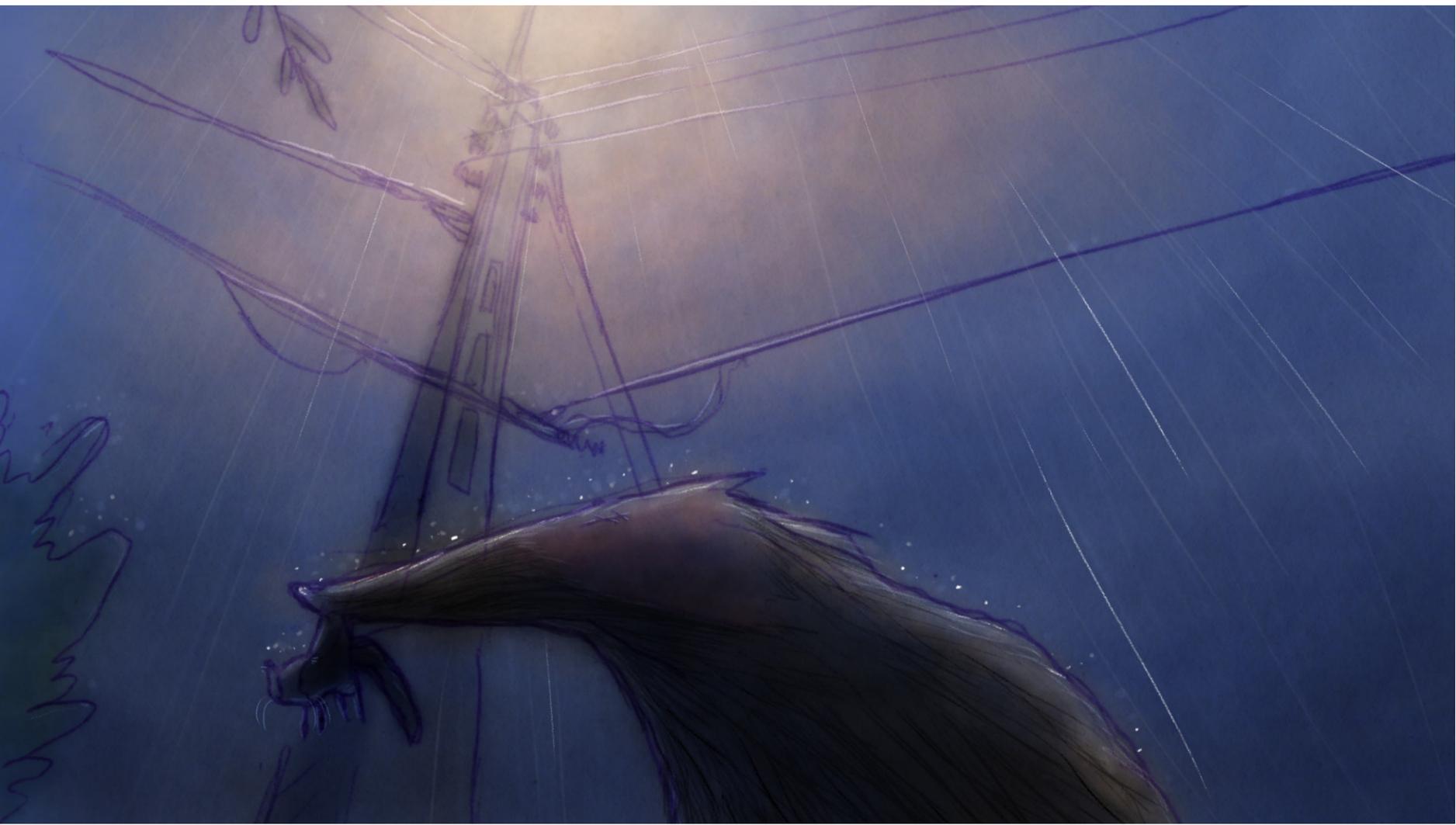


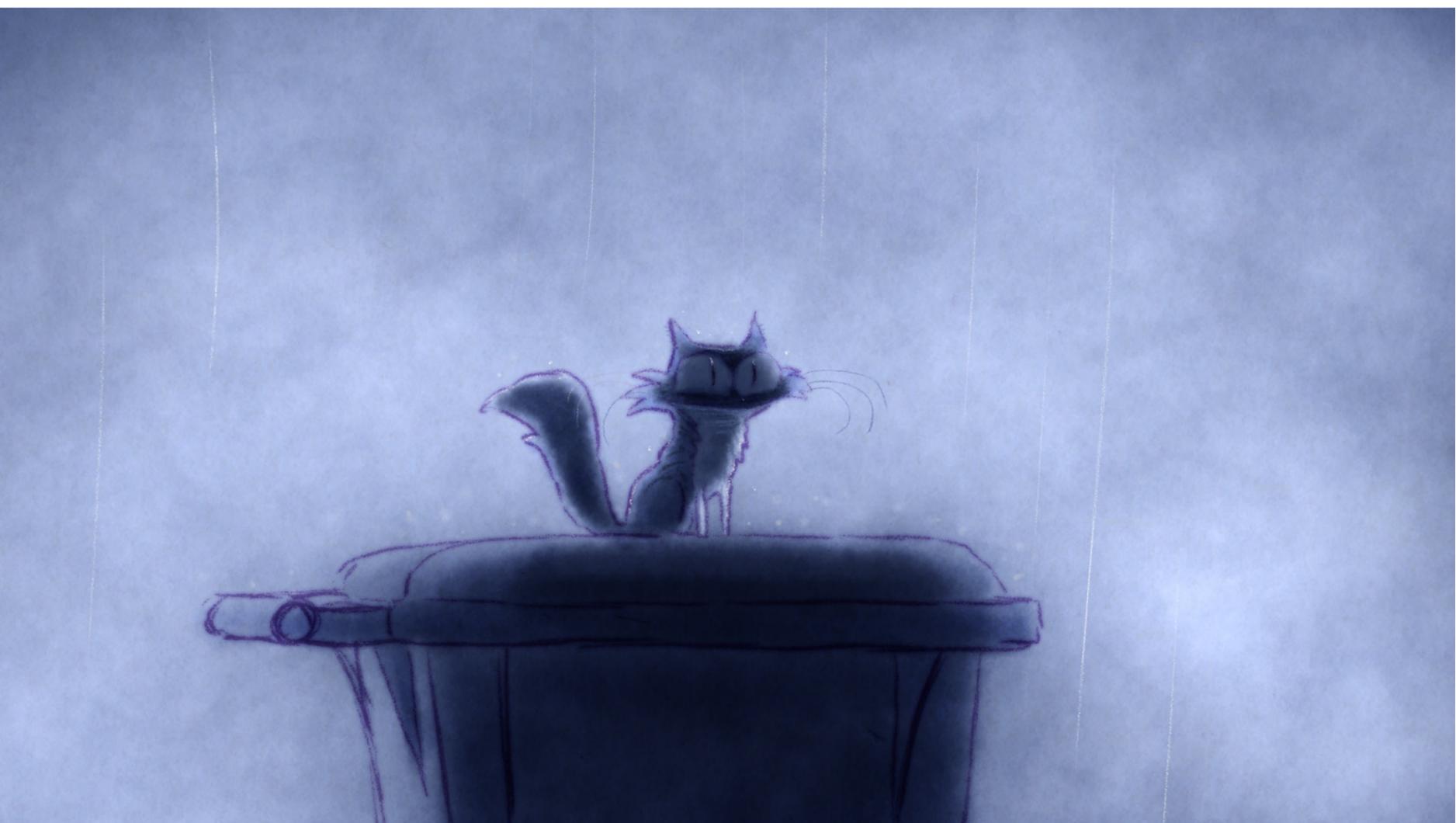
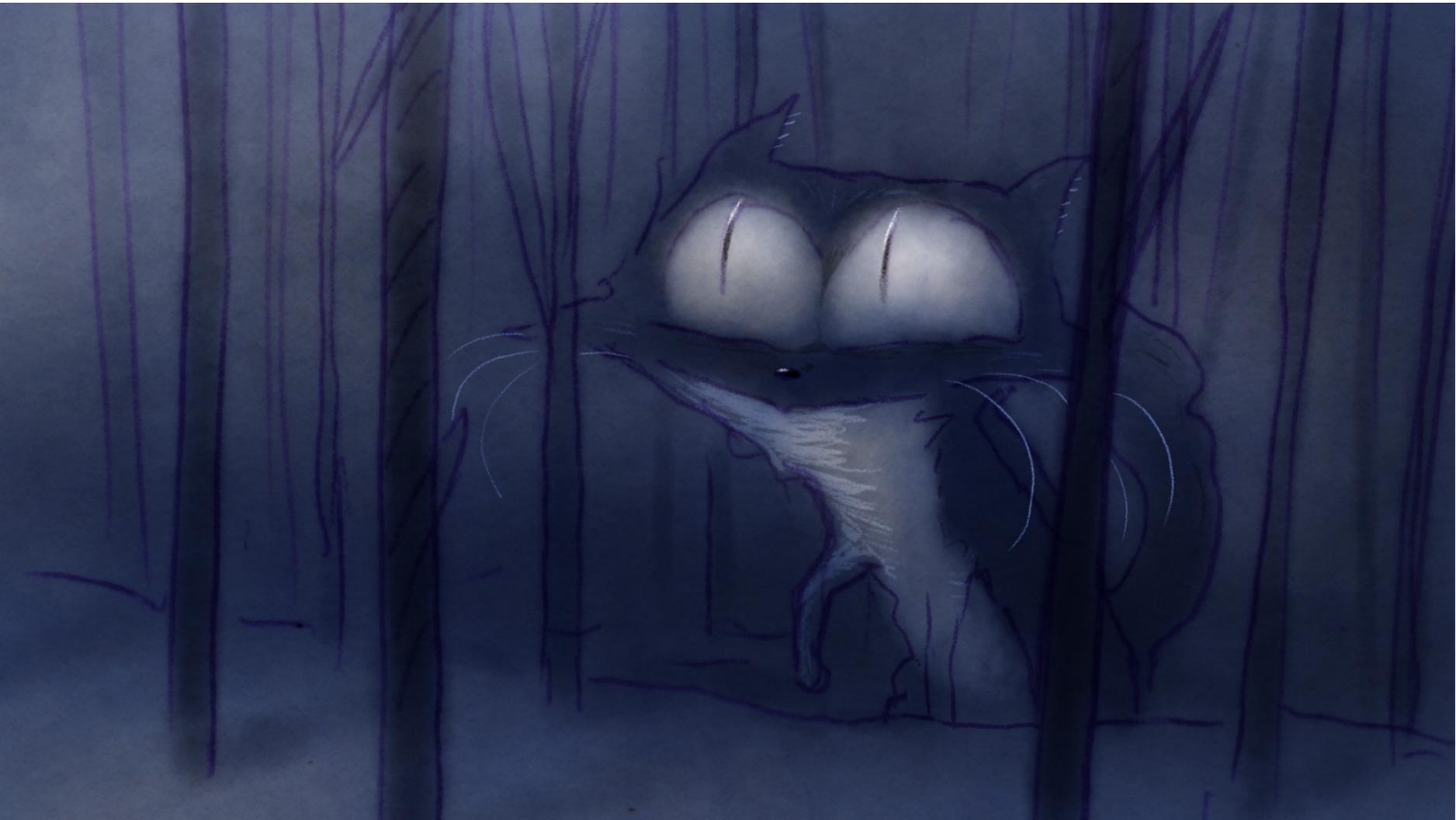
By gaining perspective from being higher up the young cat discovers a cookie box with a slew of baby mice. Their mother brings them crumbs that were hard to come by.



ILLUSTRATION







FILM FOR EVERY AUDIENCE

THAT LETS THE IMAGINATION RUN WILD

A fantastic tale at children's level to address their concerns and questions... where each age group, even if they don't understand all the subtleties, can understand the version of the film they're ready to accept, without frustration, because we've made sure that each reading level offers a complete and comforting story.



Little ones will enjoy this little kitten's journey of initiation, as he experiences Chaplin-style adventures and learns to face his fears alongside a big dog to get home.

Older children will understand the quest for redemption of a dog who has caused a terrible accident and seeks to help his victim's cub. Adults, meanwhile, will guess the story of a mother cat who, now that she's dead, has no choice but to send her former tormentor to help her cub grow up and face life.

Everyone will have seen the same film, but each will have drawn the story they needed from it.

It is a technically ambitious movie. The light, rain and how the characters are represented graphically will be key elements to make this project a cinematic success.

But we believe in it, and we're not alone.

After winning the Beaumarchais prize for writing a TV unit, we were congratulated by Pictanovo and the CNC. Selected for the Annecy 2023 Festival in the TV Pitch category, the project has attracted the interest of several production structures, enabling us to develop it further.

We recently received Valérie Trebeljahr's agreement to use the music from one of Lali Puna's albums, OUR INVENTIONS.

One of Pylon's musical challenges is to transpose the presence of the mother cat into Valérie's gentle voice. The illustrative music will accompany the spectator on this fantastic adventure.

Under its rainy aspects, " Pylon " is a luminous, funny and sensitive tale that speaks to everyone about the bond between parents, children, learning, life, mourning and transmission, but is also intended as a medium for discussing these subjects, not always easy to broach, with children.



Thank you for reading.