

**A FEW DAYS LATER
— BERNARD'S
BACKYARD (TYSON'S
PARENTS' PLACE)**

SO, WHAT'D YOU WANNA TALK TO ME ABOUT?

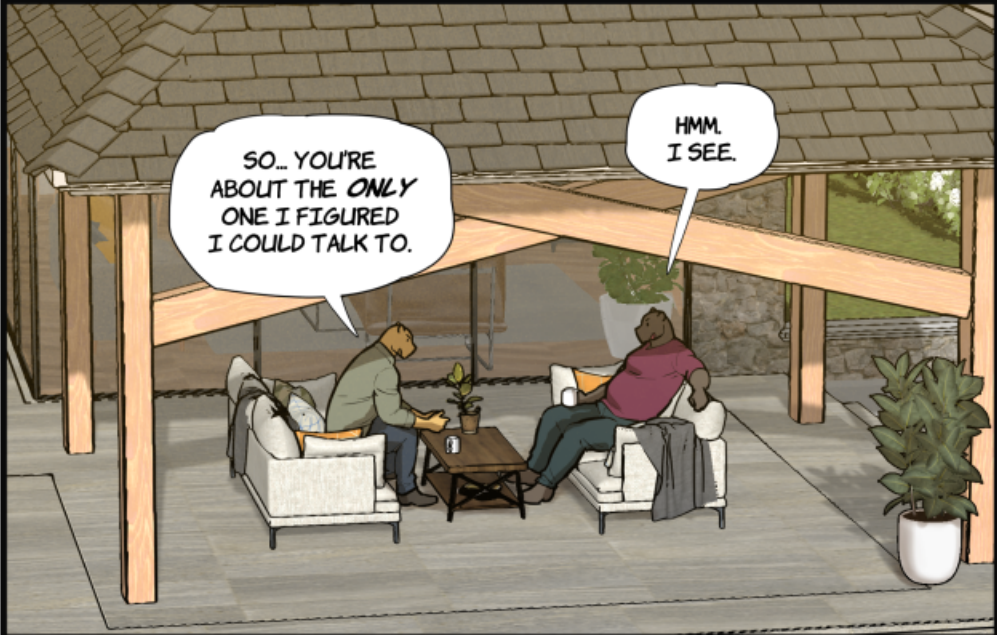
AIN'T YOUR PLACE SLAMMED RIGHT NOW?

SHOULD THE NEXT CFO BE OUT HERE KILLING TIME?



YEAH... THE WEATHER'S BEEN ALL OVER THE PLACE THIS YEAR. HARD TO TELL WHEN HARVEST'S GONNA HIT.

MY OLD MAN'S BEEN WORKING NONSTOP.



SO... YOU'RE ABOUT THE *ONLY* ONE I FIGURED I COULD TALK TO.

HMM. I SEE.



WELL, IF YOU'RE AFTER ADVICE, I CAN PROBABLY HELP MORE THAN STIFF OLD RICHARD. I'VE GOT MORE MILES ON ME.

COULD BE.



THING IS, COAL STARTED THAT CRAZY TRAINING AGAIN.

TYSON TOLD YOU WE HAVEN'T HEARD FROM CHARR AND ALEX IN A WHILE, RIGHT?

I THINK COAL'S WORRIED.



HONESTLY... WHEN I THINK SOMETHING MIGHT'VE HAPPENED TO CHARR, I CAN'T FOCUS ON ANYTHING.

IF EVEN WE'RE THIS SCARED, I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW COAL FEELS.

I THINK HE'S... PUSHING HIMSELF JUST TO GET THROUGH THIS.



I CAN'T JUST LET HIM BE...

BUT IF I FORCE HIM TO STOP, I MIGHT TAKE AWAY THE ONE THING KEEPING HIM GOING.



AND THEN I THINK... IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO CHARR, COULD I REALLY PROTECT COAL?



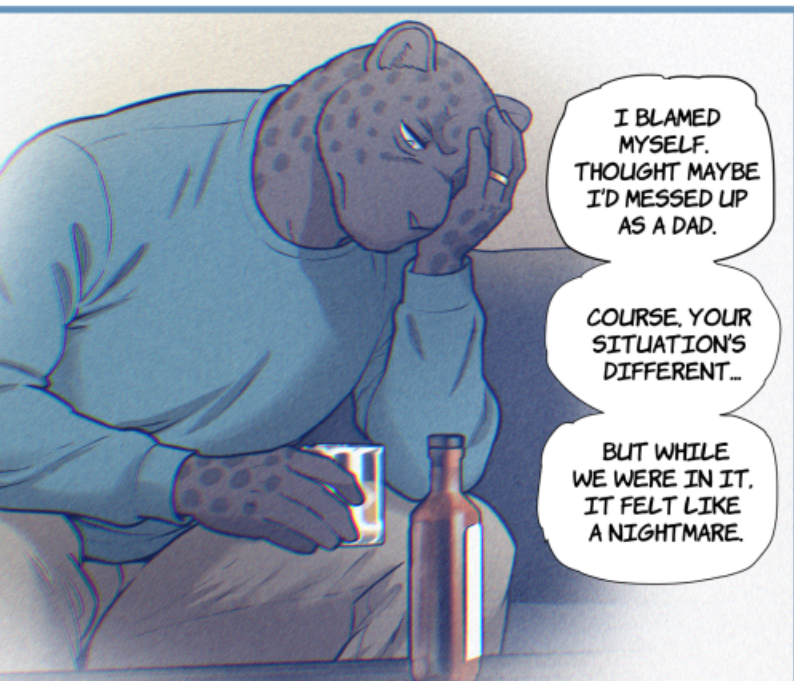
TOBY, I KNOW THAT *FEAR*.

MY KIDS ALL HIT ROUGH PATCHES.

TAKE MARK, MY OLDEST. BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL, MORE THAN ONCE, HE HAD US THINKING HE'D GOTTEN SOME GIRL PREGNANT.

AND EVERY TIME, IT WAS A DIFFERENT GIRL.

SPENT PLENTY OF SLEEPLESS NIGHTS OVER THAT.



I BLAMED MYSELF. THOUGHT MAYBE I'D MESS'D UP AS A DAD.

COURSE, YOUR SITUATION'S DIFFERENT...

BUT WHILE WE WERE IN IT, IT FELT LIKE A NIGHTMARE.



BUT WE ALL GOT LOUD, MADE A MESS, AND SOMEHOW GOT THROUGH IT TOGETHER.

NOW IT'S THE KIND OF THING WE CAN ALL LAUGH ABOUT.

THOSE HARD TIMES PROBABLY HELPED ALL OF US GROW.



YOU KNOW MY KIDS. YOU KNOW HOW THEY TURNED OUT.

YEAH, THAT'S ANOTHER REASON WHY I'M HERE TODAY.



YOU GOT INTO YOUR SHARE OF TROUBLE AS A KID, DIDN'T YOU?

...YEAH. A LITTLE...



RICHARD TOLD ME PLENTY.

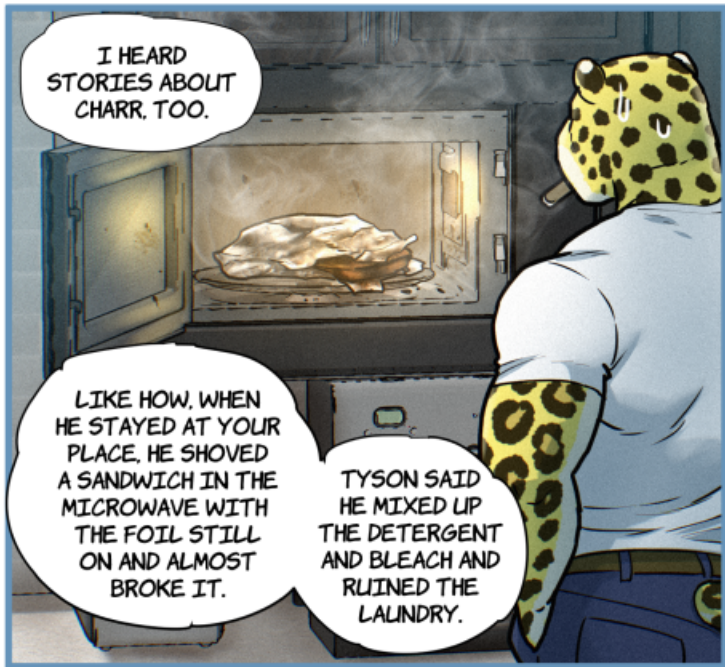
LIKE HOW YOU PUT WATER IN THE MOWER INSTEAD OF OIL AND WRECKED IT.

AND THE TIME YOU SPREAD HERBICIDE IN THE VINEYARD INSTEAD OF FERTILIZER AND WIPED OUT AN ENTIRE ROW.



ARE YOU SERIOUSLY BRINGING THAT UP?

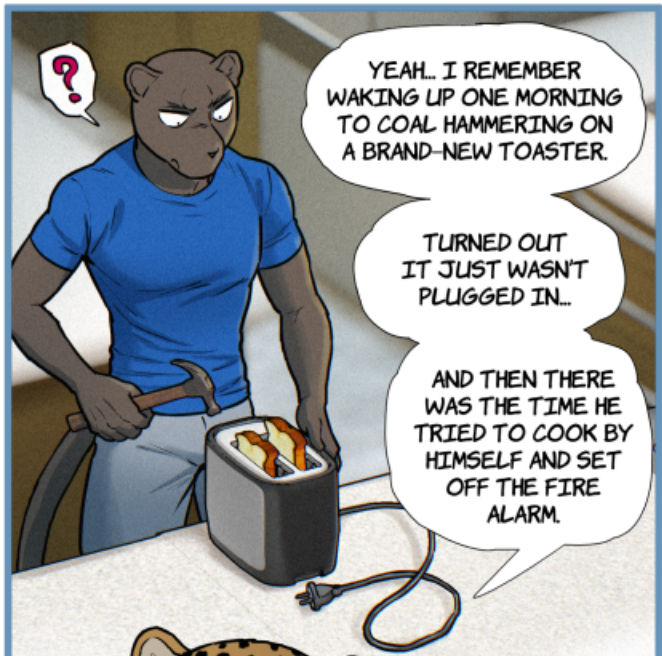
THAT STILL HAUNTS ME. PLEASE STOP...



I HEARD STORIES ABOUT CHARR, TOO.

LIKE HOW, WHEN HE STAYED AT YOUR PLACE, HE SHOVED A SANDWICH IN THE MICROWAVE WITH THE FOIL STILL ON AND ALMOST BROKE IT.

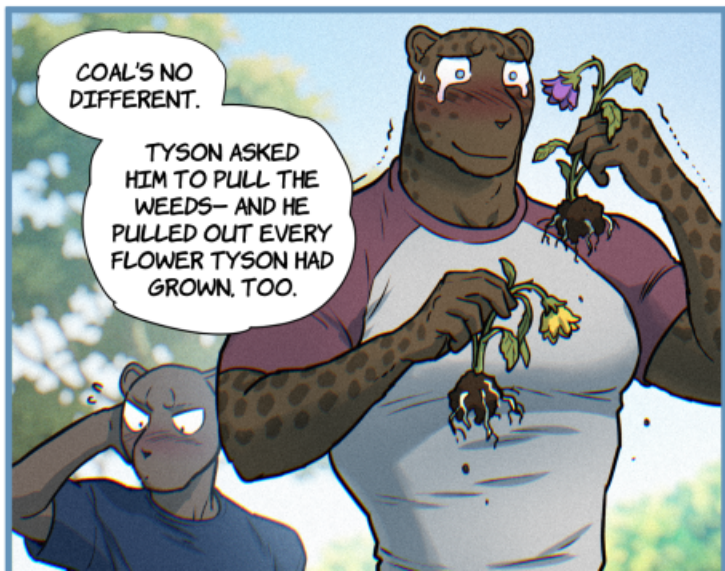
TYSON SAID HE MIXED UP THE DETERGENT AND BLEACH AND RUINED THE LAUNDRY.



YEAH... I REMEMBER WAKING UP ONE MORNING TO COAL HAMMERING ON A BRAND-NEW TOASTER.

TURNED OUT IT JUST WASN'T PLUGGED IN..

AND THEN THERE WAS THE TIME HE TRIED TO COOK BY HIMSELF AND SET OFF THE FIRE ALARM.



COAL'S NO DIFFERENT.

TYSON ASKED HIM TO PULL THE WEEDS— AND HE PULLED OUT EVERY FLOWER TYSON HAD GROWN, TOO.



Heh

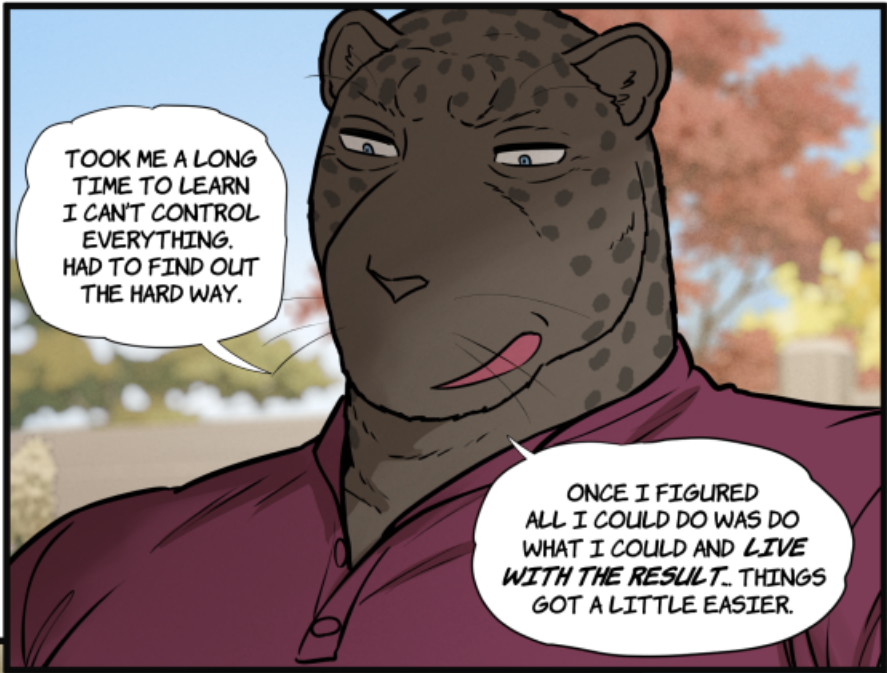


YOU THREE ARE SO ALIKE



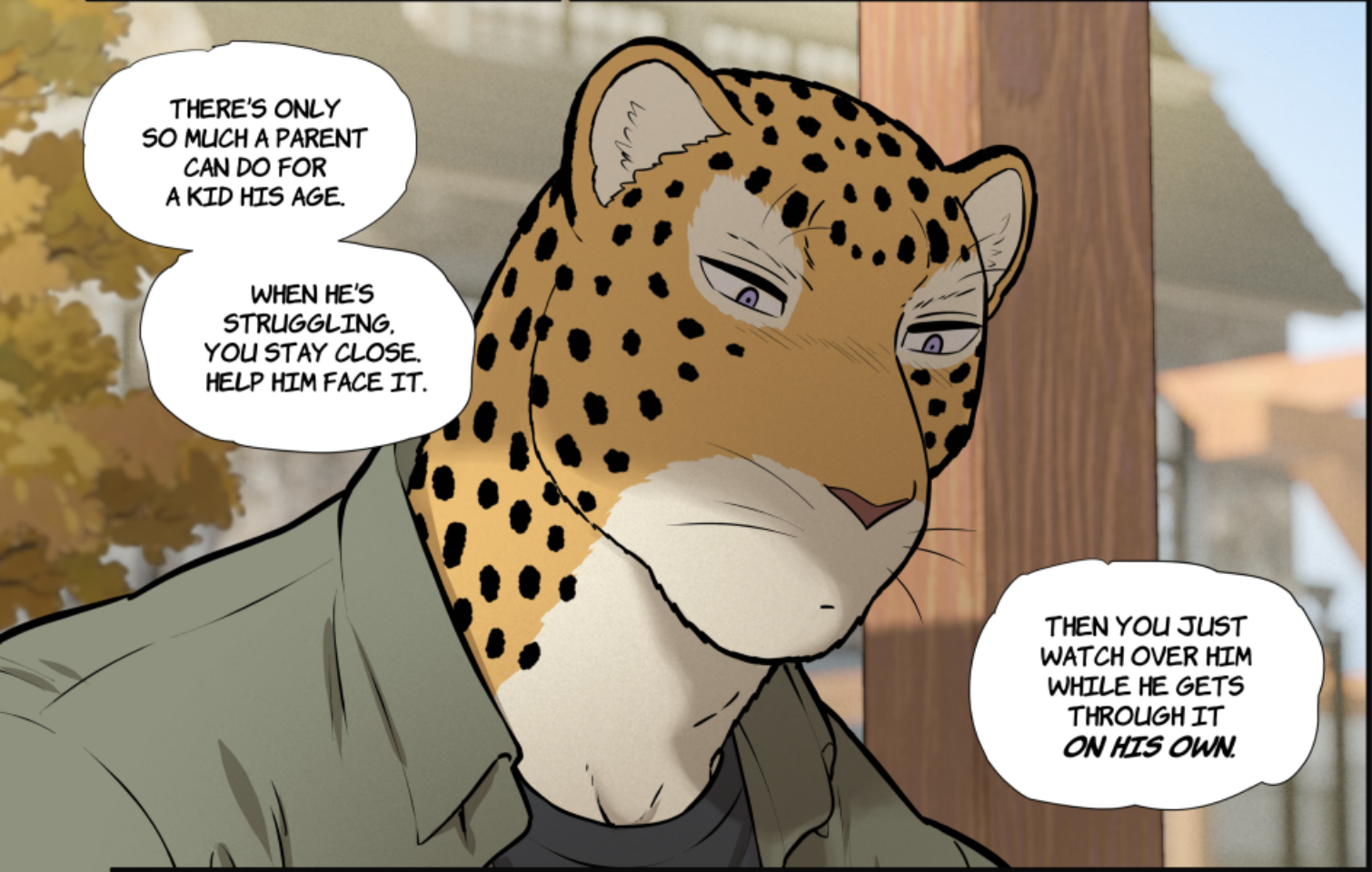
YOU THREE
AREN'T THE ONLY
ONES WHO MESS UP.

MY FAMILY AND I
MADE PLENTY OF
MISTAKES, TOO. AND
WE KEPT GOING,
BIT BY BIT.



TOOK ME A LONG
TIME TO LEARN
I CAN'T CONTROL
EVERYTHING.
HAD TO FIND OUT
THE HARD WAY.

ONCE I FIGURED
ALL I COULD DO WAS DO
WHAT I COULD AND *LIVE
WITH THE RESULT.* THINGS
GOT A LITTLE EASIER.



THERE'S ONLY
SO MUCH A PARENT
CAN DO FOR
A KID HIS AGE.

WHEN HE'S
STRUGGLING,
YOU STAY CLOSE.
HELP HIM FACE IT.

THEN YOU JUST
WATCH OVER HIM
WHILE HE GETS
THROUGH IT
ON HIS OWN.



ALRIGHT.



COME WITH
ME A SEC.



MY GRANDPA USED TO SAY THIS.



"LIFE'S LIKE AN APPLE. YOU DON'T KNOW IF IT'S SWEET OR TART TILL YOU BITE INTO IT."

"BUT NO MATTER HOW IT TASTES, ONLY THE ONE WHO TAKES THE TIME TO SAVOR IT KNOWS HOW GOOD THAT APPLE REALLY IS."



NOW TASTE IT FOR YOURSELF.



Crunch



YEAH...

DAMN, THAT'S GOOD.



**NEXT MORNING,
BEFORE DAWN.**

3:50









YOUR DAD USED TO
COME OUT HERE AND
SMOKE A CIGAR
NOW AND THEN.



HE WOULD OFTEN SAY...

"MY SON'S GOT MY STUBBORNNESS. AND HIS MOTHER'S HONESTY."



HE'S DAMN PROUD OF YOU.

YOU KNOW THAT, RIGHT?



I...

I GOTTA BE LIKE DAD. FAST.



I GOTTA GET STRONGER. STRONGER.

SO I CAN PROTECT EVERYONE.



MY DAD...



BUT... I...



ALEX, TOO...



I...

I CAN'T DO ANYTHING...

SCARED...





