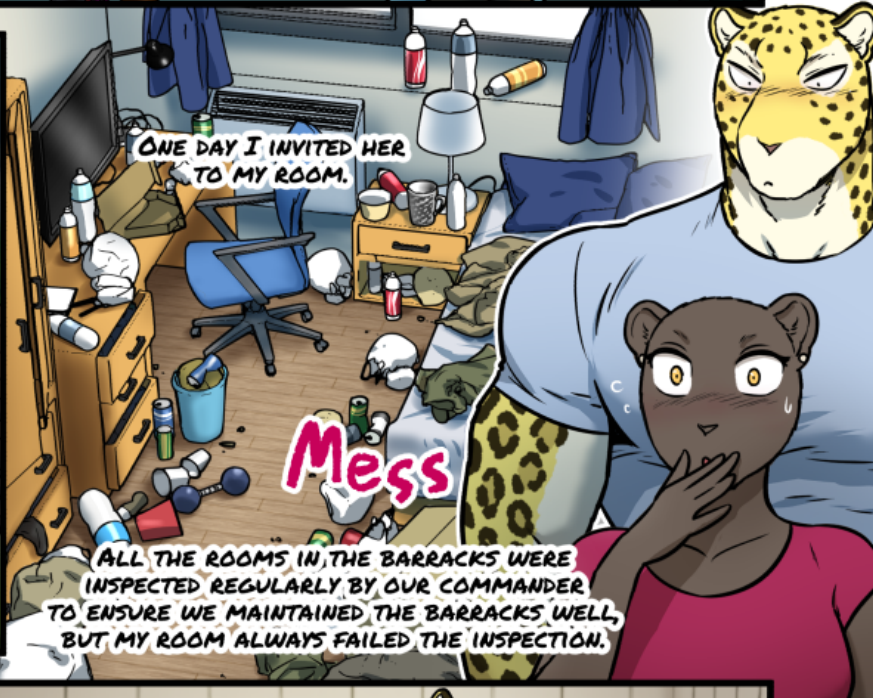




THE FACT SHE WAS SITTING IN FRONT OF ME AND TALKING TO ME MEANT MORE THAN WHAT HAPPENED IN THE PAST.



WE BEGAN MEETING REGULARLY AND TOOK SMALL STEPS IN TERMS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP.



ONE DAY I INVITED HER TO MY ROOM.

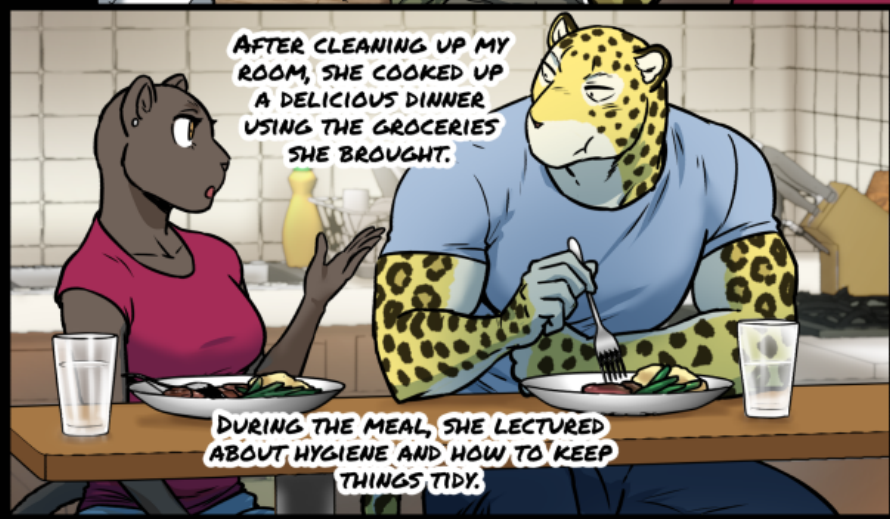
Mess

ALL THE ROOMS IN THE BARRACKS WERE INSPECTED REGULARLY BY OUR COMMANDER TO ENSURE WE MAINTAINED THE BARRACKS WELL, BUT MY ROOM ALWAYS FAILED THE INSPECTION.



JEWEL IMMEDIATELY BEGAN TO CLEAN UP MY JUNKYARD.

SHE MADE THE COMMON AREA SPOTLESS. MY ROOMMATE (WHO WAS SICK OF MY SLACKNESS) COULDN'T THANK HER ENOUGH.



AFTER CLEANING UP MY ROOM, SHE COOKED UP A DELICIOUS DINNER USING THE GROCERIES SHE BROUGHT.

DURING THE MEAL, SHE LECTURED ABOUT HYGIENE AND HOW TO KEEP THINGS TIDY.



I HAD NO CHANCE TO MAKE EXCUSES. BUT LISTENING TO HER MADE ME REALIZE HOW MUCH SHE REALLY CARED ABOUT ME.



AFTER THE MEAL,  
WE SAT ON MY BED AND  
WATCHED A MOVIE.

IT WAS MY FIRST TIME TO  
BE WITH ANYONE LIKE THIS,  
I WAS NERVOUS AS WELL,  
THE BEST I COULD DO WAS  
HOLD HER IN MY ARMS.

I COULDN'T EVEN IMAGINE  
OF MAKING ANY MOVES ON HER,  
AND EVEN THEN THE BARRACKS  
PROHIBITED OVERNIGHT VISITORS.

I WALKED  
JEWEL HOME.

I FINALLY MANNED UP AND  
KISSED JEWEL GOOD NIGHT.

OUR RELATIONSHIP CONTINUED  
AND I WAS INVITED TO JEWEL'S  
HOME TO MEET HER FAMILY.  
HER PARENTS WERE KIND AND POLITE  
TO A RUGGED MAN LIKE ME.

SHORTLY AFTER  
MY VISIT, I WAS  
DEPLOYED TO MY  
NEXT MISSION.

SHE SENT ME LETTERS  
ALMOST EVERY DAY.

I NEVER KNEW WHAT IT WAS  
LIKE TO BE IN LOVE, BUT THE DAYS  
WE WERE APART MADE ME REALIZE,  
I HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH JEWEL.





I WAS ABLE TO SEE JEWEL AGAIN AFTER 6 MONTHS OF SEPARATION.

WHEN I GOT OFF THE BUS, JEWEL RAN UP AND JUMPED IN MY ARMS.

WE HUGGED EACH OTHER TIGHTLY.

THAT MOMENT, I WAS SURE WE WERE MEANT FOR EACH OTHER.



IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG

FOR ME TO DROP THE QUESTION.



THAT MOMENT WAS AT A DINNER PARTY.



JEWEL...

YES?

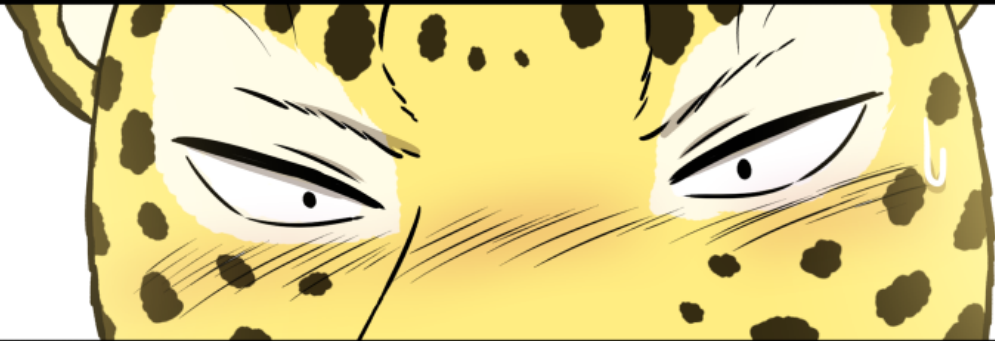


SLAM



WILL YOU MARRY ME??

OF COURSE  
I WILL!











I COULDN'T  
BE HAPPIER,  
IT FELT LIKE  
I WAS DREAMING.

WITH ALL THE  
HAPPINESS AND  
LOVE IN MY  
LIFE, I HAD  
FORGOTTEN  
ABOUT  
SOMETHING.

LIFE CAN BE CRUEL  
AND TRAGEDIES  
HAPPEN SUDDENLY.

JEWEL AND I  
KNEW THE KIND OF  
JOB I HAD WOULD PUT  
MY LIFE AT RISK  
WHEN I'M OUT ON  
MY MISSION.

WE NEVER  
EXPECTED SOMETHING  
COULD HAPPEN-

BACK AT HOME...  
SO SUDDENLY...  
WITHOUT NOTICE...



AN INCIDENT OCCURED.  
JEWEL WAS KILLED  
BY SOMEONE AT HOME.

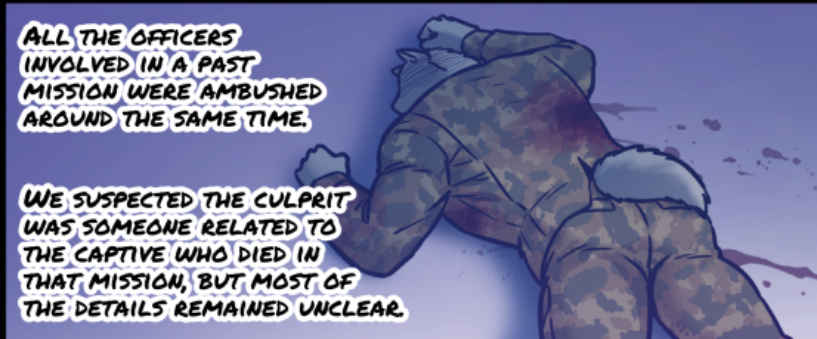




MY SON ALMOST FELL VICTIM, BUT I MANAGED TO KILL THE PERPETRATORS JUST IN TIME.

WHILE FEELING THE DESPAIR AND GUILT OF LOSING JEWEL-

I HAD TO FACE THE CHALLENGES OF TAKING CARE OF COAL BY MYSELF WHILE WORKING FOR THE MILITARY.



ALL THE OFFICERS INVOLVED IN A PAST MISSION WERE AMBUSHED AROUND THE SAME TIME.

WE SUSPECTED THE CULPRIT WAS SOMEONE RELATED TO THE CAPTIVE WHO DIED IN THAT MISSION, BUT MOST OF THE DETAILS REMAINED UNCLEAR.



I ASKED JEWEL'S FAMILY TO TAKE CARE OF COAL A FEW TIMES.

BUT THEY WERE STILL FEELING THE PAIN OF LOSING JEWEL. THEY BLAMED ME FOR HER DEATH; IT WAS NOT EASY TO BE AROUND THEM.

EVENTUALLY, WE STOPPED SEEING THEM, AND I RELIED ON MY COMRADES AND THEIR FAMILIES.



SOMETIMES, I WOULD CONSIDER CHANGING JOBS, BUT MY LIFE REVOLVED AROUND THE MILITARY. I HAD A PLACE HERE AND PEOPLE COUNTED ON ME.

I COULDN'T DECIDE TO LEAVE BACK THEN.



WHEN A FEW YEARS PASSED, EVERYONE SAID I SHOULD MOVE ON, JEWEL WOULD WANT THAT, ETC.





WELL, JEWEL  
WOULD HAVE SAID  
THAT. I KNOW.  
BUT I PROMISED HER  
IN FRONT OF HER  
GRAVE-

THAT I WILL  
NEVER LOVE ANY  
OTHER WOMEN...

AND SHE WAS  
THE ONLY PARTNER  
I COULD HAVE.



IT'S NOW 12 YEARS  
AFTER HER DEATH.



I FEEL THERE IS  
SOMETHING BETWEEN  
TOBIAS, TYSON AND I.

NOT THE SAME FEELING  
I FELT TOWARDS JEWEL,  
BUT ANOTHER FEELING I'M  
NOT FAMILIAR WITH.



THE MORE CLOSER  
WE GOT, THE MORE  
STRONGER THE FEAR  
OF LOSING SOMEONE  
SPECIAL GREW.

AND ALSO THE VOWS  
I MADE TO HER IN  
FRONT OF HER GRAVE  
MADE ME FEEL  
GUILTY OF GETTING  
TOO CLOSE  
TO THEM.



I'M WANTING  
TOO MUCH.

I GOT  
TOO LUCKY,  
FOR HAVING  
SUCH A SPECIAL  
WOMAN IN  
MY LIFE.

SHE EVEN LEFT  
A WONDERFUL KID  
LIKE COAL FOR ME.





BUT...

BY ANY CHANCE...



# PART 2 TOBIAS







THE GUARDIAN PAPERWORK IS GOOD TO GO.



NO NEED TO WORRY OVER OTHER STUFF RIGHT NOW.

WE JUST PRAY THAT THE COURT WILL NOT NEED TO DECIDE THE LEGAL GUARDIAN FOR COAL.



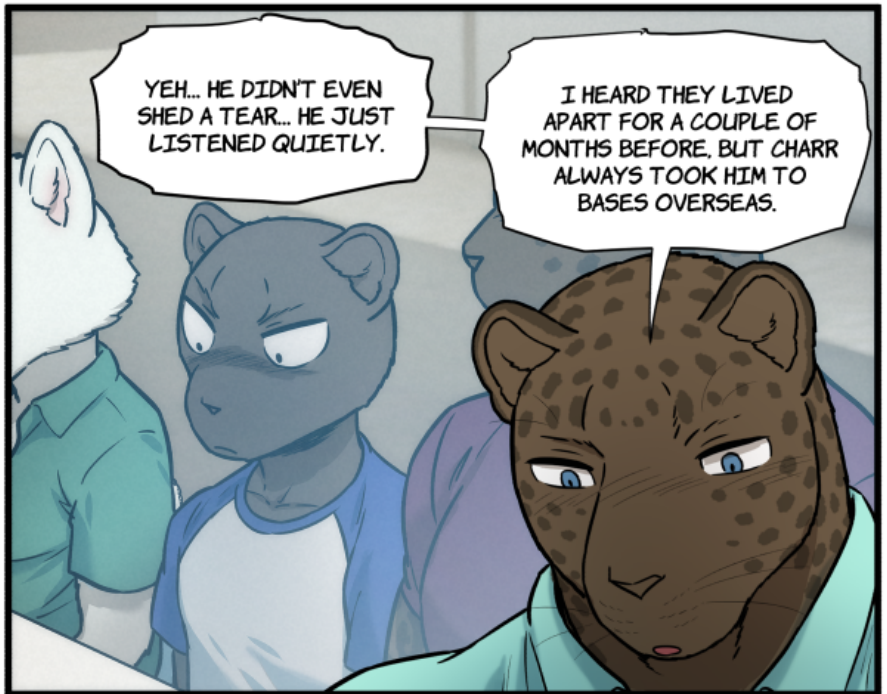
THAT'S TRUE...



CHARR EXPLAINED TO COAL ABOUT US TAKING CARE OF HIM LAST NIGHT.

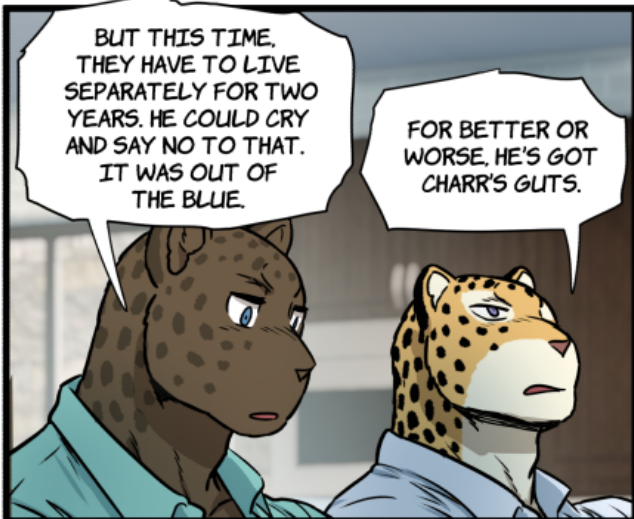
YEH.

IT WAS PAINFUL TO SEE COAL LIKE THAT.



YEH... HE DIDN'T EVEN SHED A TEAR... HE JUST LISTENED QUIETLY.

I HEARD THEY LIVED APART FOR A COUPLE OF MONTHS BEFORE, BUT CHARR ALWAYS TOOK HIM TO BASES OVERSEAS.



BUT THIS TIME, THEY HAVE TO LIVE SEPARATELY FOR TWO YEARS. HE COULD CRY AND SAY NO TO THAT. IT WAS OUT OF THE BLUE.

FOR BETTER OR WORSE, HE'S GOT CHARR'S GUTS.



AND CHARR WAS AWFULLY QUIET THIS WEEK. HE'S DEFINITELY DWELLING OVER SOMETHING.

HE PROBABLY UNDERSTANDS HE MUST LEAVE COAL BEHIND BUT STRUGGLES TO CONTROL HIS FEELINGS.





WE'VE BEEN WITH ELIAS FOR A MUCH SHORTER PERIOD THAN THEM.

BUT IF I HAD TO LIVE AWAY FROM ELIAS FOR YEARS...

IT BREAKS MY HEART TO EVEN IMAGINE.

AND SERGE DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IF HE CAN RETURN ALIVE.



WHY DON'T YOU SIT DOWN WITH CHARR AND TALK TO HIM?



HUH? TALKING IS YOUR EXPERTISE.

BUT YOU AND CHARR HAVE A SIMILAR MINDSET.



ELIAS AND COAL ARE DOING A SLEEPOVER AT MARK'S\* PLACE TONIGHT. SO IT'S PERFECT TIMING.

NO NEED TO SAY ANYTHING SMART. IT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH TO JUST LISTEN TO WHAT HE HAS TO SAY. THAT SHOULD MAKE HIM REASSURED.

\*MARK IS TYSON'S OLDER BROTHER.



TYSOON, YOU THINK I'M A CAT WHISPERER?



IF YOU CAN HAVE A CHAT WITH HIM FIRST, I CAN JOIN IN FOR THE "STRESS-RELIEF"...



TELL ALEX TO STAY OVERNIGHT SOMEWHERE!