

Never Have

by dracontia

Scorpius has never wanted to disappoint his father. Companion piece to 'You Have,' the tenth installment in the AI & Scorp series.

AI & Scorp Episode 10

Chapter 1 of 1

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Disclaimer: I don't own them, don't charge for them; do be a dear, and don't sue me for borrowing them.

Note: While some episodes in this series COULD stand alone, albeit with reduced significance, I would venture to say that this one really and truly can't. So please--if you are interested in this series and want to read this installment, pop over to my story list and refresh your memory.

In chronological order:

Do Not Enter: Off Limits to Students (G/PG for a mild swear, fits both story arcs)

Elixir (G/PG for a mild swear, fits both story arcs)

Yule Be Sorry (G/PG for language, fits both story arcs)

Once Upon a Window Pane (G/PG for language; gen content, fits both story arcs)

Uniformly Brave (PG-13 for language, minor violence)

In Gratitude (G/PG for a mild swear, fits both story arcs)

Xenial, After a Fashion (PG for swearing)

Seeing His Way Clear (PG for swearing)

You Have (PG)

Each sentence from his father's mouth was a nail in the coffin.

"She is of a good family."

Scorpius' imagination numbly asserted that his heart was echoing the sound of those nails being pounded home.

"Her record at Beauxbatons is exceptional, and she has a place waiting for her in the Diplomatic Corps at the end of the term."

Each nail effaced another pinhole's worth of light from his constrained existence.

"Her interest is purely in money and position, of course... which we once again have to offer."

Soon, the darkness would be complete. Even so, Scorpius heard the edge of bitter pride in the second half of that sentence.

"But then, you knew that this would, essentially, be a business arrangement."

The little air that remained was stale and stifling.

"To that end, she has agreed that any heirs produced from your union shall be entirely under the care and control of our family. She seems content that her duties in that regard will be minimal, once the actual bearing is complete."

He wondered if Father had felt that he was being buried alive when confronted with the marriage contract that bound him to Mother.

"We must, of course, make the appropriate concessions to modernity. She will be entirely free to pursue her career, and she has consented not to interfere with whatever direction you may choose for your future."

It would all be over soon.

"Is this all acceptable, Scorpius?"

He wanted to scream. He wanted to say, 'No, this is not acceptable. I'm sorry that our family name will end with me, but I can't produce an heir as a 'business transaction,' as you apparently did. I just can't.'

But instead, he could hear himself saying, hollowly, "Yes, Father."

"Scorpius?"

He raised his head to meet mirroring eyes through the corrective lenses he'd finally been forced to admit he needed, shocked to find that the expression as well as the color was currently the same.

"I assure you, that if you have even one child... then at least one good thing will have come out of the arrangement."

Scorpius wondered why people thought that his father's eyes were cold. It occurred to him that perhaps no one else ever saw his father like this. No one else had what they had together—this beam of light that passed from one pair of eyes to the other, piercing the lenses that made Scorpius' vision clear, bridging the gaps between generations.

"And there is always divorce."

His head was spinning, hope and joy drowning resignation and despair so quickly that he was almost sick from the speed of the change. *Whatever else my parents' marriage was about, this is real. Father and me. And I will love my own child, too.*

"I hope that I make myself clear, son."

There is always divorce. It had been a quiet business between his parents. It could be a quiet business for him and his suitable bride. Even if Scorpius could never have the one person he loved most, in the way he most wished, he would have a child. And he would have a chance.

"Yes, Father."

"Have you any questions?"

"May I tell—my friends?" He knew that his tone of voice gave away things that they would never discuss.

Part of Scorpius ached to discuss it... to tell his father all the secrets that weren't really secret and to ask questions that he'd never dared to ask. But, as usual, he couldn't bring himself to say any of it.

His father's eyes closed. His perpetually tired face creased into a frown. Scorpius knew that frown—a careful combination of exasperation, chagrin, and resignation. His reply was terse, but the tone was gentle. "Go."

Before he opened the door to leave, he did say, "Thank you." With his heart still in his voice, he added, "I won't disappoint you, Father."

The door closed on the frail reply, which went unheard. "You never have."

FIN

As usual, if you enjoyed this story, award part of the thanks to Severuslovesus, who rendered it grammatically presentable and reminded me to THINK. (If you don't care for it, the blame is all mine for the content!)