

Elixir

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Albus and Scorpius plan on brewing something. Trouble, most likely.

Episode 2, The AI & Scorp Show

Chapter 1 of 1

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(Second in a continuing series about Albus Severus and Scorpius.)

Disclaimer: I don't own any of these characters. But they've been following me around to the point where I'm seriously pondering whether or not they've staked some sort of claim to **me**.

Oh, no. Not again.

Doesn't anyone supervise those two?

"This will be BRILLIANT, AI!"

"In case you forgot, mate, the last time we were here we nearly burned the place down by accident. And you want to set a fire in her **deliberately**?"

Scorpius waved away Albus' concerns. "You've got that fire-in-a-jar spell from your aunt. As a Malfoy, I've got an absolutely mad natural talent for potions. And old Sluggy is convinced that you're some sort of Potter-Potions-Prodigy, just waiting to be unleashed. Nothing can possibly go wrong."

Dear God. I'd hoped I was wrong, for once. They are who they appear to be. What sort of absolute mental incompetents must be running the school to let them loose?

Of course, if Slughorn is still about, that would account for it.

The house seemed to make a low moaning sound, which exactly fit AI's feelings on the matter. "You've got the 'absolutely mad' part right, in any event," he muttered. More loudly, he asked, "What if the ghost doesn't want us mucking about in his kitchen?"

"What are you, a Muggle? Ghosts don't need kitchens. And if there was a ghost here, it would have said something before now. It's not like they aren't...weren't...people. Whatever."

With that last bit of wavering, Scorpius gave away his relative lack of expertise in the area of ghosts.

"Well, sometimes live people just don't feel like talking," Albus argued reasonably. "Why not a ghost?"

*Oh, bravo. Against all odds, you are correct. And if I did feel inclined to speak, it certainly wouldn't be **you**.*

"What are we brewing here, anyway?"

"I told you, it's experimental."

"No... No, I've seen these ingredients before. Dad was working on a case, and he was comparing lists of stolen potions ingredients against different recipes." Albus regarded the list with a worried frown.

Scorpius snatched it away. "Never mind! I'll do it myself!"

Al scowled at him, looked as if he were about to grab at the list, but instead studied the ingredients before him. "This... wait. This stuff is for Amortentia! What the hell are you going to do with Amortentia?"

"None of your business!"

"You can't tell me 'none of your business' when you're messing with something like this! What's wrong with you lately, anyway?"

He... a third year... recognizes the ingredients for Amortentia?

...

And I'm not teaching him.

...

Congratulations, Potter. I have no responsibility whatsoever with regards to your miserable spawn, yet he still succeeds in vexing the hell out of me.

"Nothing."

"Don't 'nothing' me. You've been too quiet, all week. Even Bullock noticed, and he wouldn't notice a pink Hippogriff if it took a crap on his shoes."

"Like you said...sometimes people just don't feel like talking."

"Uh-huh. And you don't feel like talking the way the sun doesn't feel like coming up. Spill."

"It's for my parents, okay? Father says they're... they're getting divorced. It'll be final by the New Year." He threw the smudged recipe to the table and began arranging ingredients with shaky hands. "If this batch turns out wrong, I reckon I've got two more tries to brew it right before going home for Christmas."

Albus bit his lip. "Scorpius, c'mon...this is a really bad idea."

"Oh, what do you know about it?" Scorpius' face was crunched up, and he sniffed. "Stupid itchy nose," he muttered, rubbing it fiercely on his sleeve.

"I grew up in the shadow of James Potter, Human Warning Label. I know a bad idea when I see it."

Scorpius made an odd face from the effort of trying not to cry and not to laugh at the same time.

It took Snape quite a while to get his amusement under control.

Human warning label, indeed. Damn the little prat and his unintentional irony.

Al started to smile, then frowned in puzzlement. "Is there a dog about? I thought I heard barking."

"It's the way this place echoes. You can probably hear drunks pissing on the wall behind the Hog's Head when the wind blows right," Scorpius answered with a weak imitation of his usual biting humor.

Albus laughed anyway, though it was a bit forced. When he finally saw a reluctant smile on his friend's face, he plowed on. "Seriously... even if we got it right, you'd have to go back to school after the holiday. You can't keep slipping them potions forever."

"Yeah, but maybe they'd... you know... get together...andIcouldhaveabrotherorsister." Scorpius turned a brilliant shade of red, becoming a human Christmas decoration under the near-white of his hair. Once Al figured out what Scorpius was talking about, he matched him...his green eyes making the combination nearly as festive.

"No offense, mate, but... eew."

"As if I want to think about it. You don't get it. You've got one of each...brother and sister, I mean...and half a million soddin' cousins." Scorpius kicked angrily at the floor. "I haven't got anybody."

There are more of them? It's a wonder that the school is still standing.

"We'll share the cousins. And you're welcome to James."

"How generous of you." Scorpius' mouth twisted in dry amusement. "I was sort of hoping for someone I actually get along with. Someone I could hang out with. Someone to blame for stuff I did and to steal Chocolate Frogs from."

"You'd have kids of your own before a brother or sister born now got old enough for all that stuff," Albus pointed out. "Besides**we** do all of that already. Which reminds me, you owe me two Chocolate Frogs." He was too busy poking at the more esoteric ingredients on the table to see the pink-cheeked, slightly wobbling expression that Scorpius directed at him.

"Hey, Al... I..."

"Scorpius, where did you get this stuff?"

"What?"

"The ingredients...where'd you get them?" Albus' voice was oddly urgent.

"I had some in my kit, but the unusual stuff I nicked from Slughorn. Why?"

Albus' eyes bugged out so much that they bid fair to exit his skull. He immediately began tossing all of the components back into the empty cauldron. "Get all of it! And open the door to the tunnel!"

"What the hell are you on about?"

"Overheard Slughorn...there's an inventory watching spell...with a hex...scans periodically...how long have you had these out?"

Scorpius gave a squawk and started tossing things into the cauldron, his cheeks ashen. "A couple of hours...um, since, maybe ten?"

"We've got twenty minutes, thirty on the outside! Put a sickle in it!"

They did a panicky scan of the room, lugging the cauldron and its contents towards the trap door.

"What happens if we..."

"You don't want to know! Don't drop anything!"

"I didn't!"

"Don't miss anything!"

"I'm looking!"

"Damn it, Scorp...if we lose more points for Slytherin, we can forget about showing our faces in the common room!"

"If you'd join the old tosser's club he'd probably give us free run of the store..." The trapdoor dropped shut on Scorpius' remark.

He decided to follow them to the end of the tunnel again. He even managed to convince himself that it was because he felt rather curious as to what ridiculous, cumbersome booby trap Slughorn was using in lieu of decent wards. Against all odds, they managed to get into the castle.

Snape was quite put out. Chances were, of course, that they would never make it to the dungeon in time. However, his curiosity did not overcome his aversion to meeting with the castle's ghosts.

I've changed my mind. They don't need supervision, they need to be kept on a couple of stout leads. Muzzles wouldn't be out of order, either.

Death, or being Head of a house that contains two living points-draining devices...

This may actually constitute a reprieve.

FIN

Author's Note: I would like to blame/thank Red_Rahl for drawing that darned cute cartoon that set me off on an Albus/Scorpius jag. And as always, I thank Tempest for rendering it fit to post.

(For the record, it's entirely my fault that Scorp is saying 'reckon' in here. Tempest didn't think it sounded very Malfoy despite it being a more ordinary word in Britain (in the U.S. its use labels one as being rural, to put it politely); when I brought her legitimate concern before the lads, they looked at me blankly. At last I had to tell them that it was an American thing, to which they replied 'Oh,' and continued to look wonderfully blank. I dropped the matter.

Snape is still laughing at us.)