

## NEVER HAVE I EVER, SEASON 1, EPISODE 1: PILOT

*Never Have I Ever* is a Netflix series featuring an Indian-American high school girl living in California. The name of the show is taken from a well-known drinking game in which people learn about others' life experiences—and often their romantic explorations—in an indirect way. The focus of the show is her romantic frustrations and her project, along with her friends, to become more romantically active. It also explores the challenges of growing up bicultural with immigrant parents, of losing a loved one unexpectedly, and navigating the challenges of high school social life when you're not "cool."

### PART 1. OPENER: DISCUSSION QUESTION

What are some of the difficulties you think a bicultural kid might face growing up in South Korean society today?

### PART 2. VOCABULARY

- "What's poppin'?"
- "hard drugs"
- **"a stone-cold hottie"**
- "heart attack"
- "there was no medical reason"
- **"raise her spirits"**
- "raised her heart rate"
- "go get 'em"
- "too curvaceous"
- **"can't take much more of this"**
- squad
- **shit-fest**
- "mobility issue" / FDR:
- **"women of color"**
- attainable
- status-enhancing
- "sociopaths get shit done"
- **nemesis**
- **"the gods smiled down on \_\_\_\_\_"**
- "litty"
- "shook"
- "trust"
- "set aside your rivalry"
- nerd
- bangable
- **disgusting troll**
- taking the high road
- Paxil, Lexapro, Xanax, Zoloft, Clonopin
- "It was mixed."
- "a dick"
- "You parents have found you a match."
- "It me!"
- "He's a firecracker."
- "Stand up for himself."
- **"serving a damn lewk."**
- **"flapper girl"**
- "intravenous drugs"
- **"I support women."**
- **perv**
- "That's how we hotheads boil over."
- **unhinged**
- nervous breakdown
- **"a hot date"**
- "I'm down"
- **"we'll circle back about it"**

### PART 3. QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Almost every character in this episode is a person of color. The major exceptions are John McEnroe (who does not appear as an actor) and Ben Gross, Devi's nemesis. Group of mostly-nonwhite kids do often form in high school, but it is slightly unusual for a show to focus on them. What do you think this shift in focus adds to the show?
2. Why do you think the show uses so much internet and youth slang, even in the speech of characters who wouldn't normally use it, like teachers and the narrator?
3. Devi and her friends are high school sophomores, and so are likely to be 16 years old. While the show is not necessarily *unrealistic* about the romantic and sexual lives of American teenagers, it is unusually *frank* (honest) about the subject. What do you think of this?
4. What were some of the elements in Devi's family scenes that highlighted the bicultural nature of Devi's family life? What elements or moments seemed particularly "Indian"?

### PART 4. FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

If you were helping create a adaptation of *Never Have I Ever*, but for a South Korean audience:

- What would you keep the same?
- What would be different?
- Where would you set it?
- What themes would you explore?