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Whiskey and Wine
By Kayelle Allen
The Inspiration for Surrender Love

Tarth, Tarth City, Di Lusso District
Saint-Cyr's Loft

What was I thinking, inviting him here? He's pure temptation. Luc Saint-Cyr clasped his hands behind him to resist the exotic pleasure the young Kin afforded.

Izzorah's skinfur had the look of plush golden velvet drawn hard over defined muscle and solid bone -- it drew the eye, drew the hand, drew the mouth... *He's likely a virgin and barely out of his teens. He just turned what -- twenty-three? Don't even think about it. He wouldn't want you, anyway, old man.* Luc might look fortyish on the outside, but his soul was ageless. Ancient. Especially tonight. He turned and faced the windows, but the youth's reflection tempted him from the middle of the night sky among the lights of

Tarth City.

Izzorah had none of the sizzle that other Kin exuded. He did not resist control or fight off everyone who attempted to influence him. He did exactly the opposite. Which was what made him so damned irresistible. Izzorah yielded.

Luc shifted his weight, spreading his legs. It did little to ease the discomfort his arousal caused. That heat rivaled his craven desire for the wet friction of Kin fangs and rough tongue. His heart craved Izzorah's submission, his guileless eyes and smile, his artless desire to please. His innocence. *If he knew what I wanted to do to him, take from him, he'd surely run the other direction.*

Instead, Izzorah came closer. Just as Luc turned toward him, Izzorah set one foot between his and pressed his cool mouth to Luc's burning one.

Breath caught in his throat, too stunned to do more than accept the youth's kiss, Luc stilled himself. Everything within him longed to drag Izzorah closer. Plunder the gentle mouth pressed against his. Lust drove through him like a hammer. Raw sexual hunger pummeled his mind, battered his resistance. When he could gather his ravished senses, he drew back.

"I... I'm sorry." Izzorah took three steps backward and turned away. "I shouldn't have done that." He made a small sound of distress, lowered his head. "I should never have come here. I'm sorry. I'll go." He lurched toward the door, all but running.

"Izzorah, wait."

He halted. By slow degrees, he swiveled to face him. Anxiety and trust warred for dominion in his eyes. "I'm so sorry, Mr. Saint-Cyr! You have every right to be angry."

"Angry?" Luc licked his lips, tasting the maleness and salt that was pure Kin. His body still burned from the youth's nearness. "Never, Izzorah. Not with you. Nor *at* you. Ever. And I hope you're not too sorry."

The youth's gaze searched his face. "You're not offended?"

"No." He rubbed a hand across his mouth. "Surprised, maybe."

Izzorah clutched both hands against his chest. He touched his lips with trembling fingers. "Please don't tell my cousins."

Fierce protectiveness swept over him. How dare anyone make Izzorah afraid? He forced his hands to remain open at his sides and his jaw to stay relaxed, lest the youth think the consuming anger Luc felt was directed at him. He steadied himself with a deep breath.

"You don't want them to know?"

"No. My clan executes males like me. My c-cousins--" Izzorah pressed a fist against his mouth, body shaking. He sucked in a ragged breath. "If they don't know, they don't have to decide whether to tell. Please. Don't say anything."

"I won't. I have a few secrets myself." He touched his own chest. "Your secret's safe with me, Izzorah. *You're safe with me.*"

The youth's nostrils flared, slender cat-ears drooping against his head. His emerald eyes glittered with unshed tears. "Thank you." Izzorah let out a long, sighing breath and offered a faltering smile that tugged at Luc's heart.

"I don't want you to be afraid of me." Luc stopped the lie that wanted to follow. *I'll never hurt you.* Because

if Izzorah stayed close to him, he would hurt him. God help him, he would. He wouldn't be able to stop himself. Having that hard body beneath his, the long legs spread wide, the firm back arched against him... He swallowed. "It wasn't easy for you to come here, was it? Or to kiss me."

The youth groaned, hands in fists. He pitched his head farther down, shook it side to side.

Luc had to ask it. Had to know. "Why me?"

Izzorah looked up, ears standing upright. They lowered slowly to the sides. "I... You-- the way you--" He sighed. "You smell so... What is that human word? Testerosity... tester..."

Luc squinted at him. A smile planted itself on his mouth and refused to go away. "Testosterone?"

"Yes. That. We call it *romtzeet*. You have an abundance of it." He took a deep sniff. "I love the way you smell."

The empress often said the same thing about him. Called herself a testosterone junkie; said she couldn't get enough of him. Could she smell it somehow?

Luc tapped two fingers against his mouth. His rational side chimed in with the usual warnings. *You're letting him too close. Back off. Throttle down. You're two steps from seducing him. You'll live forever. Do you really want to watch one more young lover age and die?* The far-less-than-rational side swooped in to press the advantage. *With your experience, this young Kin will get the ride of his life. Take him!*

He shifted position, opening the line of his body to draw Izzorah in. "Is that all?"

"No." He scuffed a foot back and forth. "When I first met you, I was terrified of making a mistake. I didn't want to look stupid in front of you. There you were, the most powerful man in the empire, talking to a dumb kid fresh off his homeworld. You took time to make me feel at home. You were kind to me."

"First, you aren't dumb, Izzorah." He spread his hands down and out. "Far from it. I've been impressed with everything about you. You're polite and you know when to be quiet. You have common sense, which isn't as common as it sounds." He wouldn't argue about the power. It had taken centuries of maneuvering people and things to gain it. "Second, a lot of people are kind. You don't owe me a thing." He turned one palm toward him. "Never think that."

"Thank you." He pulled at a beaded strand of his shoulder-length dark hair, wound it around his fingers. "I...should go." He turned and fled toward the door again.

A stab of longing tightened Luc's stomach. "No!"

Halting mid-step, Izzorah turned toward him, beautiful green cat's-eyes shining blue in the light.

Oh, screw being proper, damn it! Just take him to your bed and get it over with. You know you're going to do it. No point in fighting the obvious. He wants it. You want it. Take him.

Izzorah touched fingertips to brow, head lowered. He peeked up through dark, spiky lashes, the rich green of his eyes sparkling. He chewed his lower lip; the tip of one fang showed.

"It's all right, Izzorah. There's no need to be embarrassed. Come, have a drink with me." Without waiting for a response, he returned to the bar and drew out two shot glasses and his finest bottle of Kelthian whiskey. The one he'd been saving for a special moment. Nothing more special than the seduction of Izzorah. *Don't get him drunk. You want him to know what he's doing.* But the inner plea for restraint might as well have been water dumped on arid sand for all the good it did. *Shut up and enjoy him. The last time you tasted the passion of a true innocent the Kin hadn't been discovered yet. You're due.* He set about opening the bottle. *Besides, innocents don't come near your kind very often. Savor every moment of the*

surrender you're going to wring from him.

Izzorah seated himself on a barstool.

Luc poured a small amount of liquid into each shot glass. "Ever had Kelthian whiskey?"

"No." Izzorah blew an errant strand of hair out of his eyes. His gaze connected with Luc's only briefly before he lowered it to his hands, folded atop the bar. "Is it strong?" He wet his lips.

Luc licked his in anticipation. "That depends. Have you tasted Kin whiskey?"

"My father gave me some on my last day at home." He leaned his chin on one fist. "It took my breath away."

"Must have been like you, then."

Izzorah blushed, ears lowering.

Luc cleared his throat. *Oh, you've got it bad, old man.* He set the glass in front of the youth and dipped the tip of his first finger into it. Meeting Izzorah's questioning gaze, he cautioned, "Be sure you're ready to accept this. It's powerful. Do you want what I'm offering you?"

Izzorah's innocent eyes grew more round as the double meaning of the words sank in. He gulped as he nodded.

Luc leaned in closer and held the finger in front of Izzorah's mouth. "Then taste."

The lush, dark lips parted temptingly before him, scratchy cat-tongue hesitating. He stroked the fleshy pad of Luc's finger and sucked it into his mouth, into a lust-heated oven. Fangs scraped across Luc's skin.

Luc's entire body jerked with awareness. *What would those fangs and scratchy tongue feel like on my cock?* The world narrowed to that demanding tongue stroking his finger, the moist heat of Izzorah's mouth. A red hot tide of desire inundated his senses. He couldn't breathe, couldn't see, couldn't think beyond the rough sensuality of that tongue circling, tugging his finger deeper into scorching heat.

Izzorah let go of the dampened fingertip and lifted his innocent gaze.

Luc fought to breathe. If this untutored youth had shaken him simply by sucking his finger, what the hell would it be like when he mouth-worshipped Luc's cock the same way?

Izzorah lowered his head, but his mouth curved in the satisfied smile of a young lover who knew he'd just pleased his master.

Primal male pride soared through Luc's heart. He drew a strand of dark glossy hair back from Izzorah's eyes, slid his fingers down the Kin's smooth cheek. "Be sure you want this, Izzorah. Can you give yourself to me without flinching or holding back?"

Izzorah laid his hands flat atop the bar, funeral-solemn eyes holding Luc's gaze. "What... what if I disappoint you?"

Luc smiled, drew back that unruly lock of dark hair. "You could never do that." Beside him, he leaned against the bar. Izzorah's face was so close Luc could kiss him with ease. Right within licking distance.

"I want to please you." Izzorah ducked his head, lifted it again. "But I've never done this before."

"You've never given yourself to another?"

"No, sir. You'd be the first." Izzorah nibbled at his lower lip.

He tilted his head. "Then where did you learn to...?" He wiggled his finger.

The youth glanced away, a small smile on his face. "Sex vids on Imperinet."

Luc laughed. "Score one for technology. I need to subscribe to whatever it is you've been watching."

Izzorah blushed darkly, his eyes bright. "I'd like to learn more."

"Will you trust me to guide you?" He held up a hand. "Be certain before you answer." He held his breath, waiting, savoring the anticipation.

The solemn eyes held Luc's gaze. "Yes, sir."

"Then I'll teach you how to please me." He'd take all the time necessary to coach, satisfy and delight. No hurry where Izzorah was concerned. This one warranted time. If there was one thing Luc possessed in abundance, it was time. His balls drew up, tingling with anticipation. Already hard, his cock twitched. "Start by thinking of me as whiskey." He rested one elbow on the bar, face inches from the young Kin's. "Hard. Searing. Overpowering. Best taken in quick gulps so it doesn't burn you. Whiskey leaves an aftertaste. Is it always pleasant?" He smiled, shaking his head. "But take one sip of whiskey and you'll never forget it."

Izzorah wet his lips, gaze fastened on Luc's mouth. He lifted wide eyes, their cool green ablaze with lust.

"You, on the other hand, are wine." Luc dragged one finger across Izzorah's lower lip. "Rich, lush, meant for savoring. Tasting." The soft flesh yielded to his touch. "Wine should be enjoyed slowly, lapped up, tasted with every part of the tongue." Luc rubbed his thumb slowly across the flat planes of that full lower lip. "A man should lick up every last drop."

Izzorah purred. He rubbed his cheek against Luc's hand. "Will you taste me like that?"

Luc swallowed, held his breath. "Hell, yes." He stroked the palm of his hand down Izzorah's cheek, relishing the smooth golden furskin, the tender mouth, the sharp tip of one fang. The Kin's warm breath heated his skin. He bit back the assurances he wanted to offer and told him the truth instead. Izzorah deserved the truth. "I might hurt you. I don't want to, I won't mean to, and I will try to be gentle. But I can't promise you it won't happen."

He purred again, eyes half closed. "If I'm yours, I won't be afraid."

Luc pushed the glass toward him. "Kelthian whiskey deserves to be tossed straight down. Taken all at once." He raised his glass. "An old Kelthian toast goes, to good whiskey, good companions, and good sex."

The young male tipped up the glass and drank it as Luc told him. When more was offered, he held out the shot glass without hesitation.

Luc poured them each another liberal splash of the honey-colored liquid.

"A Kin toast." Izzorah raised his glass. "To the hunter and the prey." He swallowed the drink.

Luc drained his. "Why the prey?" He lifted the bottle. "More?"

Izzorah pushed his glass forward. Luc poured. "To hunt is a sacred duty, so we honor the prey when it's brought home." Izzorah slid one claw along the edge of his glass. "Those who hunt appreciate that the

prey surrenders everything."

Excellent. He can give as well as he takes. Can't wait to see how much of me he can take. He lifted his glass. "Well said, Izzorah." He slugged down the drink.

Izzorah's eyes were already starting to look glassy while Luc's Sempervian metabolism burned alcohol like candy. A few bottles wouldn't phase him. He poured one last shot for each of them. The youth's mouth was going to taste like his favorite whiskey. Salt. Honey. Maybe lust. Definitely lust.

Luc drained his drink and pushed the glass away. Too many centuries had passed between them for him to drag the youth into an affair without giving Izzorah one more chance to back away. He closed his eyes and breathed a silent prayer, not for forgiveness, but for strength.

"Izzorah, have you considered how old I am compared to you? Does that bother you?"

"Bother me?" The boy's eyes crinkled at the corners in a smile. "Kin males are traditionally seduced by older females. We marry older mates. Why would it bother me if you were older?"

This should not be happening. The Harbinger should not be standing here letting his heart be seduced by a Kin youth. Yet he stood stock still, waiting, watching, while Izzorah stood a bit unsteadily and took a step toward him. Another. Into his personal space as if he had a right to be there.

"I noticed you said 'too old.'" Izzorah set both hands against Luc's chest, gaze fixed on his mouth. "Not the wrong gender."

"I stopped worrying over what was proper centuries ago." At the puzzled expression, he added, "Figure of speech."

Izzorah smiled. "You're never too old to be loved."

"You can't love me, Izzorah. No one can." *Where the hell had those words come from?*

Izzorah slid his arms up and hooked them around Luc's neck, rising on tiptoe to offer his mouth.

Slanting his mouth across Izzorah's, Luc cupped one hand around the back of the youth's head and drew him into the kiss. He spread a hand across Izzorah's back and down to his ass, gripped one hard cheek, felt it tighten and flex. The clean smell of Kin male filled his nostrils, rich with the tang of desire. Izzorah's cat-like tongue scraped along his, circled it, teased the corner of his mouth with a firm lick. Luc burned, so overcome by lust he stood there mutely and allowed Izzorah to control the kiss.

When the youth drew back and smiled up at him, Luc slid both hands across his back and down the sides of his hard body. "You don't know what you're risking. You're playing with fire, courting me. I could hurt you."

Izzorah's ears lifted, angled toward him. He trailed one finger along Luc's jawline. "Maybe I want you to do that."

"Damn it, Izzorah." Luc balanced on the precipice of surrender. The body-sating lust of a passionate young virgin tugged on one side of his heart -- sensibility and reason pulled on the other. The siren call of Izzorah's potential as a lover screamed in his brain, begging for release. The promise of an inferno kindled by innocence and ardor.

He gripped the youth's wrist, backed him against the bar and held him immobile. He rocked his groin forward, making Izzorah gasp at the feel of the arousal pressed hard against him. "Feel that, do you?"

Izzorah nodded, breath shallow and fast.

The youth's hard shaft twitched, its length a line of heat against Luc's upper thigh. He ground himself against Izzorah, eliciting a soft groan. The green eyes fluttered shut and he bit his lips. Luc ducked his head, his mouth next to the youth's. "Look at me."

When he obeyed, the impact of that emerald gaze felt like a long, sensual lick. Luc tightened his grip on the youth's wrist and captured the other one.

"Take care, beautiful one. You're asking to be pierced through the soul by a lover who'll demand full surrender to passion. A lover who'll dominate, rule and own you. I want you to be absolutely sure you want this. Because once I take you to my bed, I won't let you go. You'll be mine." Luc slid one thigh between Izzorah's legs. "Only mine."

Izzorah squirmed, spreading his muscular thighs. Opening himself. Yielding.

Luc transferred both the youth's wrists to his left hand and brushed the back of his right down Izzorah's cheek, savoring the smooth golden furskin, the tender mouth.

A blood-stirring hunger rolled over Luc. "Your cousins should never have called you Izzy."

He smiled, puzzlement pricking his ears forward. "Why not?"

"Because I thought of you as Rah the first moment I saw you."

"Rah." He squinted, ears flicking. "Why?"

"In my language..." He pressed his mouth against one of the youth's naked wrists, heard him gasp and then hold his breath. Luc met his gaze; the green eyes were wide with desire, the pupils fully open. "Rah means passion."

Izzorah's entire demeanor changed: his shoulders went back, head up. In one smooth movement, he freed his wrists and lifted his arms to wrap them around Luc's neck, mouth crushed against mouth. Luc swept one hand into the youth's silken hair, gripped a fistful of it and drew back his head, baring his throat. A Kin lover would bite him now. Mark him with his teeth. Brand him. Possess the passion that was Izzorah.

Luc shook his head. "I should not be doing this." It was a mistake, letting a youth take the lead, even if only until they reached a bed. Not wise. Not wise at all.

"Please." Izzorah nudged his nose up against the underside of Luc's chin. "You called me Rah." His green eyes burned like a summer fire. "Teach me how to live up to my name."

Luc cast aside his last reserve, tugged Izzorah hard against his body and wrapped him in a vanquishing embrace, lost in a hot kiss full of fangs.

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