

In Perfect Silence

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1 - Untitled

Mireille shut the computer down and pushed her chair away from the pool table that served her as a desk. She swiveled herself around as the chair moved backwards. Outside the pool of light that spilled over the paperwork on the table, the apartment was dark and full of shadows. Mireille yawned, clamping her jaws shut so she wouldn't wake the apartment's only other occupant. She glanced towards the bed, and imagined the girl asleep. Standing, she climbed the few stairs, and gazed down at the recumbent figure.

Kirika (for Mireille always thought of her with that name, knowing full well it may not truly be hers) slept, as she always did, her eyes not quite closed, her body laid out neatly on her back. There was a watchfulness about her, as if she were more cat than human, just waiting for the mouse to move before she pounced.

Mireille watched her for a few moments, watched the blanket rise and fall in a steady, slow rhythm, then stepped silently past the sleeping form. She closed the bathroom door before she switched on the light.

As the hot water hit her skin, she sagged against the wall. Leaning her forehead on her arms, she closed her eyes while the tiny fingers of water kneaded tension from her body. She stood upright, turned the water off, and squeezed the excess from her hair. Stepping from the shower, Mireille wrapped herself in a towel, switched off the light, counted to ten and stepped back into the darkness.

Diffuse, orange light spilled in through windows. Her eyes adjusted quickly and she made her way to the bed with sure, soft steps. Standing above the sleeping girl, Mireille gazed down pleasantly, waiting for her to wake. It wasn't long before the dark eyes fluttered, then opened. Their gaze was clear and unfettered by emotion as Mireille pulled the towel from her body. She climbed under the blanket, waiting a moment, as Kirika rolled herself over to face the blonde.

For a long moment they stared at one another, neither moving, neither speaking. Then, as she did every night, Kirika reached an arm out, drawing Mireille in towards her in a soft, but firm kiss. Her lips were warm as Mireille's tongue ran across them, and her tongue even warmer, as her lips parted. Neither made a sound as they kissed, indeed the only noises that could be heard in the apartment were the ticking of the clock, and the sound of bodies as they moved softly against one another. Perhaps, after an extended kiss, there might be a soft intake

of breath, but that would be all. In silence, Mireille reached out and stroked Kirika's face, and in silence, Kirika's eyes closed, as she pressed her cheek into Mireille's palm.

It was always like this - the silent passion - every night between them, and every day, it was as if it had never been. No words were spoken during the night, and no words were spoken by day, of what passed between them. Not a look, or a touch passed between them that might give the slightest clue that this was anything more than a dream in the night.

Mireille thought back to their first night together...

Spring had brought fog from the river. The streets were obscured; the streetlights transformed into glowing eyes in the haze. Mireille sped her steps up, thinking that Kirika might be worried. She glanced up at the window, but was unable to make out anything. If the girl stood there, she was invisible in the vapors rising from the cooling cobblestones.

The door opened as Mireille approached. So, she had been seen after all. She smiled as she said, "I'm home," and waited to be greeted with Kirika's usual, somber, "Welcome home."

Dinner was a simple affair, bread, pasta, salad, all eaten in the near silence they both found comforting. They had no job pending, nowhere to be in particular and the night stretched before them with atypical leisure. Mireille worked on the computer, erasing all traces of their presence from their last job. Kirika simply stood at the window, staring down into the muddied air.

"Don't you get bored?" Mireille's voice pulled Kirika out of her reverie. "Don't you get bored, just staring, night after night, out that window?" Mireille repeated, looking down at her computer screen.

Kirika shrugged. "Every day is different from the one before. I don't get bored." She paused, then said, "You've been coming home late a lot recently." Her voice held no inflection, but the implication, the accusation, was there.

Mireille's head jerked up at the statement, her lips tight. She spent a moment in thought, then said, "There's someone I had to see about something." She kept her voice even, refusing to answer the unspoken question.

"A man?" came the inquiry. Kirika's quiet voice could not quite hide the emotion that lay behind the words.

Mireille let her lids droop low over her eyes, as she said, "No." As she spoke the word, a phrase came unbidden into her mind.

There was a soft hiss, and Kirika's eyes went momentarily wide, as if she too, had heard the phrase...behind those eyes was understanding - and a momentary flash of unaccustomed pain.

Mireille stared at Kirika for a long moment, jumping when her computer beeped. She turned her attention to the screen, completing the process of wiping files from her hard drive. She felt bewildered and unhappy, but could not say why. The phrase echoed bizarrely in her mind..."lover's quarrel," it said over and over.

Her life had fallen into a pattern since the girl had come to live with her. Subtle differences had been made in her schedule now that it had to accommodate two people. But it was a familiar, dare she say, comfortable, pattern nonetheless.

They rarely spoke of themselves - or more of themselves than was absolutely relevant. Kirika knew nothing, in any case, to speak of. They had no claim on each other, on each other's time, emotion or attention outside their communal need to know about Soldats. Mireille had never spoken to the girl of her life away from the apartment, of the woman she visited occasionally. So why did she feel so guilty - as if she had been deceiving Kirika?

Mireille shut the computer with a snap. "I'm going to take a shower," she announced, and pushed herself away from the table. Another change in her life...she had always been a night owl, an occupational advantage she had thought. But Kirika was a morning person, and was often gone from the apartment by the time Mireille awoke. As a concession to the girl, Mireille had shifted taking her shower to the evening, so Kirika could take long, solitary, hot showers when she woke and not feel as if she was imposing on her....

On her what? Mentor? Not that...Kirika was as good, if not better, than Mireille herself at what they did. Partner, Mireille settled on. They were partners, professionally and on the quest for Kirika's - and Noir's - true identity.

The apartment was not dark. Mireille expected to see Kirika asleep on the bed, but although the bedding was turned down, the girl stood in her spot by the window. Mireille could see her silhouette clearly against the hazy orange light from the street. Kirika turned as

Mireille approached, stepping down into the apartment.

They faced each other in silence. Mireille felt words spring to her lips, although she wasn't sure why she was saying them. "I'm sorry," she said.

Kirika turned her head away, shaking it slightly. "It's not your fault."

Mireille reached out a hand, but dropped it at her side before she could touch the other woman. "I didn't realize."

Again, the head shake. "Neither did I." She took a step past Mireille...

And was caught up abruptly by a kiss. Mireille pressed her lips hard into Kirika's, making sure that the girl did not doubt her intention. This was no kiss of consolation, or comfort...this was a kiss filled with need, with adult passion and recognition that nothing is forever.

Kirika's eyes widened, then closed. She threw her arms around Mireille's neck, pressing her body into the other woman's, opened her mouth with a soft sigh.

Mireille, for a brief moment, considered pushing the girl away, apologizing again, taking back the action with a tearful rejection, but as her tongue met Kirika's all thought of that fled from her mind. Her arms tightened reflexively around the slim form as her head bent low.

So many things they didn't say - so many things they never would say. Mireille's hair fell onto Kirika's shoulders as they embraced, their bodies fusing together. Mireille felt Kirika pull away and she opened her eyes slowly, afraid to see the fear or betrayal in those brown eyes. Instead she was met with a soft, shy smile, and eyes that burned, for once, with desire not brought on by a need for vengeance.

Mireille took Kirika's hand in her own and pulled the girl across the floor and up the stairs. She sat down on the bed in front of Kirika and slipped her tank top over her head. Kirika sank slowly to her knees in front of the blonde, her dark hair shadowing her eyes in the gloom. Mireille could feel hands stroking her shoulders and arms, touching her gently. She reached out and drew herself closer to Kirika, focused on her lips, as if she was aiming a gun. As they kissed silently, Kirika's hands slipped from her arms around her waist.

The younger woman broke away with a shake of her head, and looked up questioningly, then lowered her head slowly until her cheek rested on

Mireille's breasts. Mireille reached up to stroke Kirika's hair, but stopped midmotion, as lips brushed across her nipple, followed by a tongue, then teeth. Mireille bit back a moan, but sucked in her breath as Kirika began to suck on her, only pulling away for a moment to shed her own blouse.

Mireille let her own hands trail across Kirika's skin, feeling the softness so at odds with the strange, coarse calluses on her hands that now held her breasts, stroking them, squeezing them until her head rolled back with pleasure. Mireille sank backwards, while Kirika followed, never taking her mouth from Mireille.

A soft gasp escaped Kirika, when Mireille's hands moved across her chest. Small hardinesses, small breasts, almost childlike, and Mireille pushed Kirika off her with force.

"I ..." she began, her breath coming in great gasps, as her body screamed for the other woman's touch, for the continued attention of mouth and hands. "I don't think we should..." A finger pressed against her lips, quieting her.

"It's alright." A whisper in her ear, the softest of sounds. Then the hands and mouth returned and Mireille could no longer find words with which to protest.

Her body burned then, with the need to feel and taste Kirika and she rolled over onto the smaller woman. Her experienced hands coaxed a reaction from Kirika and she smiled down at the dark eyes, sensing surprise. She lowered her head for a long, sweet, warm kiss, the taste of garlic and wine on Kirika's breath, the scent of floral shampoo in her hair.

Mireille moved lower, teasing Kirika with her tongue, finding soft areas to sink her teeth into, running her lips over those small, sweet nipples. Soundlessly, Kirika arched her back in pleasure and Mireille slipped a hand down to the small of her back, pressing the lithe body upwards, sliding further to feel the tight muscles of her @\$\$.

Mireille kissed her way down Kirika's slight body, feeling those muscles bunch as her lips reached the top of the other woman's shorts. The blonde lifted her head, waiting for a sign. Kirika's head lifted for a moment, then Mireille felt a hand on her head, pressing down, letting her know that she could have what she most wanted.

She wasted no time with teasing now, stripping the rest of the clothes from Kirika's body, parting her legs and lowering her mouth to the soft wetness beneath her. Still no sound came from the younger woman, as

Mireille's tongue parted her lower lips and traced spirals on the pink flesh. Kirika's body squirmed, her breath coming faster, more insistent. Mireille closed her lips on Kirika's clit, and began to thrust into the other woman. With a choked whimper, Kirika's body stiffened in climax, her head thrown back, her mouth open, her hands locked into Mireille's hair.

Time began again a moment later, when Kirika relaxed back, breathing deeply, her eyes closed, one hand thrown over her forehead, one hand still in Mireille's hair. As the blonde idly stroked one hand along Kirika's hip, she wondered briefly if this was the girl's first...and swallowed the thought harshly.

Hands wandered across her back, massaging, stroking, tracing, until Mireille's muscles released whatever tension lay trapped within. The hands stroked her neck, coaxing her back up, until Mireille, on hands and knees, hovered over the younger woman.

Kirika reached up, finding nipples once again, as she raised her mouth to Mireille's, letting her tongue trace the full lips.

Again Mireille opened her mouth to speak, and again a finger was pressed against it, asking for her silence. Mireille kissed the finger, then lowered her head. Blonde and brown hair mingled on the pillow, as she sank down over Kirika, her body silhouetted against the hazy light from dimmed streetlamps.

Mireille rolled over onto her back, drawing Kirika's form on top of her own. She looked up into russet eyes made dark by the low light from the street. Nights passed now with a rich silence that enfolded them; quiet that was broken only by the small noises of two people finding comfort in each other, or the harsh loud noises of life coming to a violent end.

Months had passed this way - months of small steps towards the truth, and small moments of intimacy, followed by comforting stillness that lay upon them like a blanket.

Kirika's lips brushed across Mireille's eyes, cheeks, nose, lips, ears, each touch brief. Their lovemaking was, for both of them, a reaffirmation of their humanity, but also a confirmation of their mortality. No vows of fidelity or eternity passed their lips, only pleasure and pain acknowledged in the simple act of sex.

Mireille leaned up to capture Kirika's mouth, stifling a cry as fingers

filled her, moving rapidly and insistently. Her fingers bit into Kirika's back while she arched with pleasure, watched by dark, curious eyes.

In the morning, Mireille awoke to find the apartment filled with bright sunshine and the smell of freshly brewed tea. She rolled over in the bed and inhaled, smelling Kirika on her hands, on the pillow, in the bedclothes. The snick of the door closing broke her train of thought, and wiped the small, private smile from her face.

She wrapped a shirt around herself, and stepped down to the main room, where a pot of tea sat next to a croissant at her place at the pool table. Mireille poured herself tea, took a bite of the croissant, and turned in her chair to look out the window. The small smile returned, with the thought that, perhaps, it was possible to speak volumes even in perfect silence.