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The Last Samurai

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THE LAST SAMURAI

David Thornburgh

One evening while watching TV in Japan,
I saw an ad starring Toshiro Mifune,
the great actor of *Shichi Nin No Samurai*,
Sanjuro, *Yojimbo*,
one of the reasons I fell in love with Japanese culture,
one of the reasons I came to Japan
and stayed seven years.

Toshiro was behind the wheel
of a vintage 1930s American roadster,
maybe a Dusenburg or Stutz Bearcat,
all hood and chrome exhaust pipes roaring down a country road.
Lights of a city behind beneath a starry sky.

Curled around Toshiro like a blonde anaconda
was a beautiful young *gaijin* woman
nibbling his stoic ear.

Jump to view of the woman's undulant buttocks
in clinging gown seen from below climbing carpeted stairs,
falling in slo-mo, rolling on bed,
breasts surging under tight gown,
soft focus on smile rubbing against bedspread.
Fade out.

Cut to Mifune, still in car, smoking,
close up of very smug smile.
He says: "Nete mi tai."
Roughly, "I want to sleep, but won't be able to."

Toshiro Mifune, the unstoppable swordsman,
the greatest actor of his generation,
sold mattresses on TV.