

Still Moving

A short story
By Michael Descy

Stillness is what creates love.

Movement is what creates life.

To be still and still moving:

This is everything.

—Unknown, Inscription at Va Tutto, Lafayette Street, NYC

Cassie

Ever realize that “mother” and “smother” are only one letter apart? That’s no coincidence.

“Mom,” I howled, “you don’t *understand!* How could you possibly?”

“Oh, I think I understand well enough, Cassandra: You sold yourself, your flesh, the skin you were born in. It doesn’t matter how much you made. That was the skin I gave you, to treat like a blanket to protect you from cold, not like...an orange peel, to be...to be *cast off* and thrown around.”

“An orange peel? You’re not making sense, *mother.*”

“I love you, dear, though I can’t say I know why sometimes. Does that make any sense? Maybe it has something to do with having shared a bloodstream. But you have certain obligations to me.”

“I was trying to fulfill them.” I hate saying it, but my eyes started dribbling like Britta filters. “It’s just so...expensive here, and I—“

“Aren’t you moral? Didn’t we teach you any pride?”

“Pride’s all I’ve got left,” I said.

“Pride is what’s gonna lead you to the Devil.”

“Mom, you and I both know that’s bullshit.”

“Don’t you take that tone with me, Cassie.”

“I’m not your little girl anymore.”

Maybe I’ve never been.

Dan

I'm not sure how this all happened. The girl had expensive dreams, maybe that's all. She was always working herself to the bone: five classes, two internships, two jobs. Crazy. The girl barely ate, barely slept, and when I thought she'd crash, she'd blast into hyperdrive, dance circles around me at the clubs, and drink me under the table. Something's strange though: despite our heart-to-hearts, I guess I never knew her all. At least that's what I think now.

It was a Tuesday in February, I think. We still hadn't cleared out the Fritos bags and pizza boxes from the Super Bowl. The crumbs were on the floor a long time after she left, I know that. Sometimes I'd just sit amidst it all, armed with a can of bug spray and think: *Would somebody bring me a vacuum?*

Cassie

Cassandra. You have no idea what it's like growing up Cassandra. Cassandra Angelica Concertina. My parents must have been insane, even before they had me, number one daughter. Totally insane. Cassandra: it's like naming your baby girl Cleopatra. Eves escape Original Sin left and right, but every Cassandra is a bad girl: wild eyes, wild hair, and no parts private. As a 6-year-old, wrapped in charm bracelets and blowing bubbles—now *those* are some photographs to burn—that didn't seem quite right. So I've forever been *Cassie*, a nickname that somehow pencils in pigtails and lollipops. The tomboy, the pal. There's a bit of Cassie and Cassandra in me now, but it's always up to someone else which one comes out. Names are funny that way.

Ann

Her father didn't seem to understand what was going on when I called. I dropped the receiver. "A...bordello?" I was numb with shock. The voice on the other end kept squawking in the receiver. "Pack up the car, Troy."

"Really, hon?" my useless husband remarked. "My birthday already?"

"Troy? Listen to me for crissakes! Our daughter—my little girl—is prostituting herself! In some Chinatown club just blocks from her school!"

"Jesus! That little slut."

"How dare you say that!"

“You said it yourself.”

“I don’t care what I said. That’s your daughter out there. She’s tramping herself, but she’s no tramp.” Hate the crime and not the criminal, as my father used to say.

Cassandra

And so on. There’s no decent manual to an improperly named young woman. Even the table of contents is screwy. I don’t blame my parents for how I turned out. I don’t blame anyone. How can I? I haven’t “turned out.” Nothing’s wrong. *Nothing’s fucking wrong.* I don’t dance, I don’t fuck guys for money, I’m not a call-girl, a street-walking ho; hell, I don’t even talk dirty on the phone, unless I want to, that is. True, I make my money lying on my back, but what woman doesn’t these days? Besides, it’s not what you’d expect.

Men are strange. They just are and I’ll never get over it. They fuck girls and fuck girls over, but will sit back in awe and reverence—a distinctly male type of delicacy—when confronted with a naked girl they’re not allowed to touch. The 300-pound bouncer keeps the rules in check, of course, but she’s not what you’d expect either. At any rate, that’s me: off limits.

I’m a pretender. I get \$150 an hour for playing a platter. I lie on a table perfectly still, garnished with wasabi and ginger, and very rich men eat sushi off me. (There truly *are* opportunities for everyone in NYC, even in this job-tight market.) They dress in designer suits, babble about business in Japanese—that’s what I gather, at least—never talk to me, and never touch me. Their chopsticks hover over the last California roll on my belly like scissors over a chrysanthemum. Not a messy eater in the bunch. I’m called a Geisha; despite my Western eyes and olive skin, I am honorary Japanese.

I was worried. I have a Lake Michigan heart in this Dead Sea world. What can I say? Even though I hate my parents, I love them, too. And not just because they pay the bills. I love them like...like I love the rain sometimes, when it falls softly in springtime and wraps your skin like wet sheets on the clothesline, billowing in the wind. This is not to say our relationship couldn’t be better. I swear sometimes its only genetic programming keeping our family together. But there are some things that are inexplicable, and those things can’t be helped. That’s love for me.

But in this case—which sensitivity-training dropout Dan thought was incredibly stupid—I just wanted them to know where I was. I just close my eyes and imagine horrible things: I’m not morbid, just a writer. I gave them the phone number, and my hours, in case of emergency. They didn’t have to do a reverse-lookup for crissakes! Beyond the fact that I can’t believe they actually knew how, it takes some digging to find that Ying San isn’t just another takeout joint. It’s like my folks have a direct connection to the underground now, twenty years to late to do them any good. At any rate, I learned the lesson of my life one more time: love makes you dumb, suspicion makes you resourceful.

To reiterate: I don’t suck or fuck for money and never will. I have no johns, no secret admirers, nor even big fans. If anyone’s got a stiffy around me, it’s strictly under the table, and I’m not talking payment-wise—they do tip, though. The money’s great, and the personal hygiene lessons—people eat off me, for crissakes—come in handy as well. My boyfriend loves it. Or ex-boyfriend now. Everything’s suddenly past tense. (Notice something about language: all the verbs are tense.) It’s like changing the calendar year. For the first few days, you keep writing down last year’s date. It’s become second nature.

Dan

Cassie never really told me what she did. She’s always been obsessed with money, with pulling in at least \$300 a week, but she never flaunted it. I had no idea how much she was making. I swear, except for nice clothes—and what self-respecting girl in the City doesn’t have nice clothes?—she didn’t spend a dime. I guess she was paying off her loans or something. Or saving for retirement; Cassie’s a hot girl—I’ve got some great photos—but looks like hers aren’t meant to last.

Come to think of it, I should have seen it coming—at least part of it. Now, I’m a cool guy, don’t get my wrong, but Cassie’s not entirely in my league. I thought she was above it, and maybe she still is, but what she’s done is pretty low. I don’t judge her for it. But I do. How can I not? Why put yourself in that position, and then practically tell mom and pop back home that you’re doing it? That chick’s got a big heart, I guess, but a small brain.

Cassie

Dan's not the best boyfriend I've ever had—he's no breakfast-in-bed-making, sure-I'll-massage-those-sore-sweaty-feet type—but I've got few complaints. He gets the job done. I mean, I don't really have much time for these things. We met at Club Shampu on a Wednesday night. I think I went home with him because he's the first guy in the city who didn't have to get drunk to ask me out. Men are strange that way.

Just thinking: In my mom's dichotomy, men aren't from Mars, but they might be from Sirius. It's kind of cute. Have a listen.

Ann

The way I see it, you've got cats and dogs in this world. Both are loyal, but show it in different ways. Dogs will slobber all over you. You beat the hell out of them, and they come crawling right back, looking for affection. Dogs are great creatures: they trust you and don't talk back. Then again, they tend to lick themselves in pubic. Cats lick themselves, too, but merely to primp, to clean. The cat's untamable, resourceful, and only plays at affection to get food. If you strike it, it will tear off into the night, and survive damn well on its own, thank you very much.

Women must be cats; we've got to care for ourselves first. "Always put yourself first, little girl," I always told Cassie. But my little girl's got an unselfish heart. She's unselfish to a fault, I've always known that. But love blinds, and I can't see her clearly. What's strange about an unselfish heart is that it allows you to see yourself most clearly of all.

Cassie

In case you zoned out, Ann Concertina there was saying women are cats and men, buy process of elimination, are dogs. What's hilarious is that she thinks she came up with that on her own.

Troy

I don't know what the girl's on, or why she thought she'd "show us how much she loved us" by taking off her clothes. I swear, NYU or no, that girl's got a fly buzzing inside that empty head of hers. All I know is that I want to kick that boyfriend's ass so hard his brain'll return to where it's supposed to be. A man's supposed to protect his

woman, and if that requires a little private investigation, well that's fine. If my wife decided to go gallivanting naked everywhere, I'd smack her up good. But Annie's got a level head on her shoulders, and wouldn't ever do a fool thing like that.

This punk kid—Dave is it? Man, I can't believe the shit he let my daughter go through. I mean, he just sat on his lily white ass and did nothing, knowing all the while what was going on. Christ, I hope she was on the pill, 'cause I don't want any little numbnuts running around the house. Jesus!

Ann

There's something about my daughter most people don't realize. She just keeps becoming and becoming and becoming. I can't explain it much better than that. It's like she's hitchhiking for a life. She just keeps picking up new pieces, then dropping them off somewhere down the line, never to see them again. Sometimes those pieces are glass, smashed beer bottles, stained-glass lampshades. She heals so fast she doesn't realize she keeps cutting herself.

Cassandra

I didn't have to go because I was a Geisha. That's just silly. If you think I couldn't have talked my parents down in five minutes, you're fooling yourself: bigtime. A job is something you do, not something that happens to you. And you're not acting self-destructive unless you're actually destroying yourself. Don't mock me. I'm not on the edge. I am the edge. I've been to a therapist, and I sure as hell cleared his mind of some brutal misconceptions, too. Things are peachy.

For the longest time, Dan didn't know a thing, and that was fine. The less he knew, the less he'd have to worry himself with. But if worrying were a professional sport, my mom would be a world-class contender. She carried a worry stone in her pocket—the kind you rub with your thumb—until the day it broke it two. I can't deal with that coming from a guy. Besides, Dan was too busy listening to old Elvis Costello records—perhaps pondering the ideological implications of the switch from “This Year's Model” to “This Year's Girl”—to form a definitive opinion about anything useful.

Dan

Going out with Cassie was like washing down Pop Rocks with Jolt Cola: deadly, but in theory only. Thank God for that. I swear she's nuts, but just the right kind of nuts. Maybe honey-roasted cashews. Sex with her was like a coed high school wrestling match. You'd end up bruised, sweaty, and exhausted at the end, and there'd be no question who ended up on top. Her temperature is a constant 100.1, just a little too hot, but it's for her own good. At least she makes it work, usually. Her mom's a little off her kilt, but hey, if that was my daughter, I would have...well, I might have taken a plane instead.

Troy

We drove six hours straight. No, *I* drove six hours straight, six motherfucking hours, while my wife just sat there like a sack of potatoes, blubbering and crying into my shoulder.

"My baby, my baby..." she murmured. "Faster, Troy. *Faster.*"

The last time she said that to me was...well, I don't want to say how long ago. If I had forgotten that girl's middle name, I sure won't ever again. Ann repeated all three names like a...a—what's that? A liturgy? *Litany?*

"Look," she would say, "she practically *told* us what she was doing. She gave us the goddam *phone number*, for crissakes. She wants us to come. She needs a mother. She needs her mother."

I just knew that girl, daughter of mine or cuckoo's egg, was going to spit venom in her mother's face the moment she saw her.

Cassandra

Don't laugh. It takes incredible skill to lie perfectly still, especially while the chopsticks of foreign-tongued bureaucrats hover around your flesh like helicopter blades. The training is intense: ice water, mud, hornets, tickling. It takes every ounce of determination to stay that still. Newton be damned, bodies at rest tend to shift incessantly. If you don't believe me, share a bed. I left each day exhausted, and you're not allowed to sweat.

The stillest thing I've ever seen are the red trout in the brook by my house. They look like stones, suspended toothpick-high above the creek-bed. But they're really swimming all their might upstream, against the current, so they won't get swept away. If only they knew the earth orbits the sun at 67,000 miles per hour. How can you swim against that?

After sex, you know, I want the rocking to stop, to be held, to be stopped, suspended in time like a leaf in a puddle. Still means static, the cling of that tank top I didn't peel off, the heaviness of the air before lightning strikes, sparks from my fingertips. Worn and sweaty, sore and unembarrassed, that's the stillness hardest to achieve.

Technically, it was my father's voice I heard first, politely telling the bouncer to get "her fat Asian ass out of my goddam way." But I swear I heard first the click of my mother's shoes, and felt the vibrations of her breath, her heartbeat, shimmering through the still, sushi-scented air. The horror wasn't that they came so much as that I couldn't speak, couldn't move, couldn't run the fuck away for crissakes. Breaking the rules in Chinatown is like breaking off your legs and beating yourself to death with one.

If my parents didn't assume that every Asian knows kung-fu, I might never have gotten out of there alive.

Ann

Six men stood up, all at once, like killers—you know the type in the movies that step in unison as they walk down the street? They turned toward us, and I screamed. I swear one of them smirked at me. Another curled his fingers into a ball. Troy was raging, nostrils flaring, like a penned-up bull.

Through the cracks in their lineup, I saw my daughter, lying down on a table, buck naked, sleeping with her eyes open. I didn't get it. Were they bidding on her or something?

That child is in a constant state of peril. But this wasn't what I imagined for her—no mother wants to rescue her little girl from this, whatever it was. What makes it worse was that it was her idea; no one coerced her, no one led her astray. There's right and wrong in this world, and I couldn't teach her that.

"There problem?" one of those strange men said, in some broken tongue.

“Yes!” I yelled. “Yes, there certainly is a problem. That’s my little girl over there. My daughter!”

“I’m sorry. Can’t be true,” another, older Chinese man said. “Muss be mistake.”

“I’ll show you a mistake.” Troy growled.

“Sorry. You must go. Go now.”

The other six were chattering amongst themselves in some Chinaman tongue, and my baby, she just lay there, not hearing, not seeing, not responding. She was dead to me. Dead to herself, too, I think.

Cassandra

They left a moment later, yelling at me from over the bouncer’s shoulders. I was too scared, too in shock to move. Staving tears took the rest of me: my body was so dry I thought sand might come out my eyes. I must have passed out, or maybe I just slid through a hiccup in time or something because the next fifty minutes didn’t happen. The previous three just kept repeating, over and over and over.

I thought my parents would ambush me at my apartment. So I went to Dan’s, in cognito of course. I didn’t go to this job dressed as spunky Cassie Concertina—I never wanted anyone from New Line or the Manhattan Theater Club seeing me—so I wore a red wig and glasses. It’s a really hot combo, actually.

My dad was waiting outside, smoking a bud, presumably on the lookout. How he knew where to go, I won’t even conjecture. On a hunch, red wig and glasses on, I walked right by him. It was a five-story walkup, so there was no doorman or anything like that. I just slipped in right by dear old dad. He was too busy downing a chili-dog to notice me.

Ann

I waited outside her apartment. It seemed like hours. I was pacing so much I thought I’d wear a trench in the sidewalk. Troy just sat on the stoop, sucking down cigarettes. Oh, I was so worried. I was fuming.

“That little bitch didn’t even have the respect to face us!” I grumbled. “Oh, I shouldn’t have called her that. What the hell was she doing Troy?”

“Maybe she’s selling her organs.” Smoke leaked out of him.

“Which ones? I just don’t get what’s going on.”

Men are dogs, women cats, but we're both hunters, we both can trace a scent. My daughter had a boyfriend, I was sure of that. So I called her roommate, made up a story, and got his address. I told Troy to run over there and wait. He shrugged and disappeared.

Dan

A wig and dark glasses waltzed into my room, wearing what appeared to be an olive-skinned girl with an otherwise good fashion sense. Fifteen seconds later, my girlfriend erupted from this disguise and leapt for me. She kissed me like they were going to outlaw tongues the next day. I reached behind her to help her out of her clothes. She was shaking.

"I've got to go," she told me. She pulled away.

"I love you," I said. "Stay."

"No, you don't. And I can't. You don't understand."

"Of course I don't: feeble male brain and all. You're supposed to tell me."

"My father's outside. They found out what I do, and are going to drag me back home."

"I don't get it. You work at the New Era Café."

"That's just cover. I'm a Geisha."

"Is that one of those squeegee people?" Like I had any idea.

Cassandra

It didn't get much better than that. Intercourse of that kind wasn't Dan's specialty. I had to leave. I had to run.

I always kiss with my eyes open. No one else does, at least no one I've been with. I always wonder if they're imagining someone other than me. True love, supermodel, E.T.—whatever revs their engine, I guess. Most of me doesn't want to assign any particular significance to this. Women are emotionally wrapped up in sex like fish in newspaper.

That "kiss" Dan described, well, that's putting it politely. I ingested him, devoured him. As if I could prove something to myself. As if there'd be nothing left. But you can't take the world in. You just can't. The world receives, it enfolds. You

can't take in taking in. The world enfolded me like a dictionary slamming shut on a butterfly.

The heart takes in. Mine does, at least. I've got some sort of emotional NAFTA going on in there: no tariffs, no borders. You can't trust anyone. That's what a big heart teaches you. You can't even trust your heart. It's true, really. I didn't get here because I'm stupid, I got here because I cared. It's true, dumb as it sounds, why I told my mom how to reach me. I can't go through the day without envisioning the house burning down. It's true that I did it for the money. It's true I did it for me, but not entirely for me. My parents can't afford to take care of me. They can barely put me through school. For crissakes, they've given up so much, even their happiness, just to get me through here. My folks are not happy. For them, walking down the aisle made as much sense as strolling across the Tacoma Narrows Bridge on a windy day. I only have to watch. My mom can't afford me on her own, so she sticks it out, despite all.

Troy

This hot little redhead came out of nowhere and started eying me from the corner. She winked, wagged a finger in slow-mo, and I kinda walked over there to see what was going on. I mean, I had nothing better to do: Cassie wasn't showing, after all. Suddenly she grabs her hair and yanks it right off, and rips the glasses from her face. She flings them to the ground in front of me and looks at me, just stared with her cat eyes. Her eyebrows drilled together toward her nose.

"What is it you want?" I asked her.

"An explanation," she said.

"You owe that to me and your mother. What the fuck is wrong with you?"

"Nothing, *father*. Nothing's *right* with me either. You think you're some moral yardstick? Come on, daddy. I know why you were roaming over here."

"I'm here to find you. I saw through your little disguise, you...you bimbo. You disgust me."

"I outsmarted you."

"I don't need this." I started walking off. "Don't bother coming home. You don't have one anymore."

Cassie

“You have no heart.” Those weren’t the words he used, but those were one’s I felt. No heart. Big heart equals little mind equals no heart after all. An equation without operators. That’s my life. Every scale balanced. Equals equals equals, I play that word like a one-note toy piano.

There’s a point when you’ve been beaten, when you zoom in on your lazy eight of infinite potential and find out its just two zeroes, side by side. Humiliation is a small price to pay for, well, a large price to pay.

My apartment was six blocks away. I’ve heard if you move fast enough, you stop aging. I must have regressed half-an-hour. My shoes melted into the pavement.

Dan

I found the wig and glasses in the street, and no sign of Cassie, which was no surprise, really. That girl was so out of control all the sudden that I half expected a trail of wreckage stretching behind her, as she spun through the city like the Tasmanian Devil. I rescued the red wig from beneath a cab’s tires. I hoped I wouldn’t have to rescue Cassie from the same fate. I ran toward her apartment.

Ann

She came charging down the street like her hair was on fire. My tongue crept back toward my throat. I was mad, the mad that comes out your ears like steam. Daughter or devil, I had to set her straight.

“Just who do you think you are?” I asked her. “Who? To do that to me?”

“Mom,” she howled, “you don’t *understand!* How could you possibly?”

“I understand perfectly,” I spat. “It’s the thrill of getting away with something. It’s the thrill of being wanted, of milking the world for all its worth. You think I’ve never been 19 years old and feeling on my own for the first time? You don’t know me at all.”

“I know you can’t afford to send me here.” Her eyes iced over with tears. “I was trying to help you out.”

“This way? Why do you keep hurting yourself? Compromising yourself?”

“I compromise nothing.”

“You compromised *me*. Half of me is in you, dear, and even if it’s the bad half, the short and nearsighted and not-too-bright half, you’ve got to keep it safe.” A teardrop was welling up: she was listening. I reached for her, but she didn’t come closer. “Cassie.”

“You have no right to hate me. You can’t punish me.”

“No, I think that’s about all we can do,” Troy said. He just came out of nowhere and stepped his bulky body in. “Don’t even talk to her,” he said to me. “Don’t bother. She’s your daughter, not mine. I don’t care. Let’s go.”

Troy

And Annie started crying. Jesus, I wish she hadn’t started crying. I hate it when she cries, ‘cause it’s always me that pays for it. I shouldn’t have said that in front of Cassie. Like anything I could say could make things better.

“Stop it, Annie. You saw her. What can we do? Drag her home?”

“Bring her home,” Annie sobbed. “Yes, Troy. Please?”

“Can’t do it, honey,” I told her.

“No, you can’t,” that girl piped in. “I did it ‘cause I wanted to, ‘cause I *could*. I’d do it here, and I’d do worse anywhere else. Don’t you understand economics? Self-confidence? Power? You think I can’t fend for myself, mom? You think I don’t know what I’m doing?”

Annie just looked at her, her face getting all blotchy red, like when we fight, like she was holding something in that was going to raise the roof.

“I did it, too, little girl,” Annie said. “I did it, too.”

Cassie

My heart took a breath, if such things could happen. A job is something you do, not something that happens to you. What happens when it happens to you, though? When a cycle is repeated? It’s like learning your mother’s milk was tainted, the water supply poisoned, the bones in your body cursed mummy remains.

“I was a dancer,” my mother told me. “Just for a few weeks at some run-down middle-of-nowhere place.”

“Why, mom?” The tears couldn’t run out my eyes fast enough, so they found their way through my nose.

“Because I knew better and didn’t care. Because I was you at your age and needed a thrill. In the end, maybe it doesn’t matter why I did it, but I know why I never returned. My father found me, though—one of the regulars turned out to be a buddy of his—and he yanked me off the stage, and beat me till I bled. He wasn’t a rough man, Cassie. He never hit me before, never hit me since. It’s just in that one moment, I hurt him so much.”

My dad looked like some thug sucker-punched that hairy paunch of his. He looked away from me.

Troy

This fucking sucked. I don’t need the whole world knowing how fucked-up Annie was, two weeks in the summer after we first met. That wasn’t supposed to matter anymore. Ancient history should stay buried.

“For crissakes, Annie,” I begged, taking hold of her shoulder. “Don’t—”

She shrugged me off. “Maybe not telling her’s what got us into this mess.”

Then that little numb-nuts came running in, panting like a pup, just in time to hear Annie say, “Troy saw me getting beaten. When my dad left me in a heap in the parking lot, Troy scraped me off the pavement, cleaned me up, and gave me a place to stay.”

That kid just stood there, mouth sagging open, and looked at Cassie like she could explain anything about it. There’s so much I didn’t want Cassie to know. So many things Annie and I kept from her, to protect her. Stories about cheating and getting even twenty years ago, about two guys and one little baby girl with identical blood types, about the Annie and I being very real and very scared. She doesn’t see us.

Cassie

I tried to visualize my mother on stage, wrapped in leather, wrapped in lace, twisting and grinding for dollar tips and dodging grimy hands, but I couldn’t. I just saw myself, a still-life with sushi, stretched across that Japanese table, heart pounding, mind racing. I saw both of us swimming against the current, like those trout in our backyard stream—our insides swimming frantically while the rest of us lies still. Insides

scrambled, exteriors you could eat off of. But my mom started swimming against life's current just *after* she stopped dancing. Just after she had me.

"We're even." I told her. "Equals." Equals, equals, equals. The same. I'm still the same, even though I'm moving closer to, or farther away from these people that birthed me, that make me up—who named me twice, never expecting Cassandra to spring fully formed from Cassie's flesh. I am mothered, smothered, tainted, twisted, still moving.

Dan

It wasn't like I couldn't hear them over the traffic, even yards away. Their voices bounced off the buildings like the drumbeats of those Rasta-dudes in the subways bounce through the tunnels. I heard about everything: the stripping, the dancing—the sushi-thing weirded me out. I mean, what the fuck is that? Her parents and her cried and yelled and shouted, then walked off like I wasn't even there. I guess they all got drunk together before the parents split—something really strange like that, 'cause she's still here, six blocks away from me. We talk, sometimes, exchange hellos, but she doesn't come over anymore, we don't date. She figures I broke up with her—maybe the way I yelled at her when she told me what she did—but I swear she gave up on me. One thing she hasn't given up on, I bet, is that sushi thing.

Cassandra

A Geisha never quits. Sooner or later, someone buys her freedom, or maybe she runs off with a special john for a lovers' suicide. That's what I always thought, but I was wrong: that's a prostitute. I'm a Geisha: it means "art person," look it up. I'm free *now*, no one can buy me, and no one can take me away.