

# Fancy

Katie Melua

I remember it all very well lookin' back  
It was the summer that I turned eighteen  
We lived in a one-room, run down shack  
On the outskirts of New Orleans

We didn't have money for food or rent  
To say the least we were hard-pressed  
When Momma spent every last penny we had  
To buy me a dancin' dress

Momma washed and combed and curled my hair,  
Then she painted my eyes and lips  
And I stepped into the satin dancin' dress  
It had a split in the side clean up to my hips

It was red, velvet-trimmed, to fit me good  
And standin' back from the lookin' glass  
Was a woman  
Where a half grown kid had stood

"Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down!  
Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down.  
Lord forgive me for what I do,  
But if you want out then it's up to you  
Don't let me down your momma's gonna help you move uptown"

Momma dabbed a bit of perfume  
On my neck and she kissed my cheek  
And I saw the tears well up  
In her troubled eyes when she started to speak

She looked at our pitiful shack and then  
She looked at me and took a ragged breath  
Your Pa's run off, and I'm real sick  
And the baby's gonna starve to death

She handed me a heart-shaped locket that said  
"To thine own self be true"  
And I shivered as I watched a roach crawl across  
The toe of my high-heel shoe

It sounded like somebody else who was talkin'  
Askin', "Momma what do I do?"  
Just be nice to the gentlemen, Fancy  
And they'll be nice to you"

"Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down!  
Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down  
Lord forgive me for what I do,  
But if you want out then it's up to you  
Don't let me down,  
Your momma's gonna help you move uptown"

Well that was the last time I saw my momma  
The night I left that rickety shack  
Cos welfare people came and took the baby  
Momma died and I ain't been back

But the wheels of fate had started to turn  
And for me there was no other way out  
And it wasn't very long till I knew exactly  
What my ma had been talkin' 'bout

I did what I had to do  
But I made myself a solemn vow  
That I was gonna to be a lady someday  
Though I don't know when or how

I couldn't see spendin' the rest of my life  
With my head hung down in shame  
I might have been born just plain white trash  
But Fancy was my name

"Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down!  
Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down.

It wasn't very long a benevolent man  
Took me in off the street  
And one week later I was pourin' his tea  
In a five roomed hotel suite.

Well I've charmed a king, a congressman  
And an occasional aristocrat  
And I've got me a Georgia mansion  
And an elegant New York townhouse flat.

Now I ain't done bad

Now in this world there's a lot of self-righteous  
Hypocrites who call me bad  
And criticize Momma for turning me out  
No matter how little we had

And though I hadn't had to worry about nothin'  
For nigh on fifteen years  
I can still hear the desperation  
In my poor mommas voice ringin' in my ears

"Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down!  
Here's your one chance, Fancy, don't let me down  
Lord forgive me for what I do,  
But if you want out then it's up to you  
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