

Katie Melua**"Fancy"**

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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
Don't let me down,
Your momma's gonna help you move uptown."

(And I think she did it.)

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Written by .

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