Fancy

Bobbie Gentry

Well, 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 OrleansWe didn't have money for food or rent
To say the least we was hard-pressed
When momma spent every last penny we had
To buy me a dancin' dressWell, momma washed and combed and curled my hair
Then she painted my eyes and lips
Then I stepped into the satin dancin' dress
It had a split in the side, clean up to my hipsIt was red, velvet-trimmed and it fit me good
And standin' back from the lookin' glass
Was a woman
Where a half grown kid had stoodShe said, "Here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
Here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
God forgive me for what I do
But if you want out, girl, it's up to you
Now get on out, you better start sleepin' uptown"Momma dabbed a little bit of perfume
On my neck and she kissed my cheek
Then I saw the tears welling up
In her troubled eyes as she started to speakShe looked at our pitiful shack and then
She looked at me and took a ragged breath
She said, Your Pa's runned off and I'm real sick
And the baby's gonna starve to deathShe 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-healed shoeIt sounded like somebody else was talkin'
Askin', "Momma what do I do?"
She said, "Just be nice to the gentlemen, Fancy
They'll be nice to you"She said, "Here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
Here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
God forgive me for what I do
But if you want out, girl, it's up to you
Now don't let me down
Now get on out, you better start sleepin' uptown"That was the last time I saw my momma
When I left that rickety shack
The welfare people came and took the baby
Momma died and I ain't been backBut the wheels of fate had started to turn
And for me there was no other way out
It wasn't very long after that I knew exactly

What my momma was talkin' 'boutI knew what I had to do
Then I made myself this solemn vow
I's gonna to be a lady someday
Though I didn't know when or howBut I couldn't see spendin' the rest of my life
With my head hung down in shame
You know I mighta been born just plain white trash
But Fancy was my nameShe said, "Here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
Here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
God forgive me for what I do
But if you want out, girl, it's up to you
Now get on out, you better start sleepin' uptown"Wasn't long after that a benevolent man
Took me in off the streets
One week later I was pourin' his tea
In a five roomed penthouse suiteSince then I've charmed a king, a congressman
And an occasional aristocrat
And I got me an elegant Georgia mansion
And a New York townhouse flat
Now I ain't done badNow in this world there's a lot of self-righteous
Hypocrites who call me bad
They criticize momma for turning me out
No matter how little we hadBut I haven't had to worry 'bout nothin'
Now for nigh on fifteen years
But I can still hear the desperation
In my poor mommas voice ringin' in my ears"Here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
Oh, here's your last chance, Fancy, don't let me down
God forgive me for what I do
But if you want out, girl, it's up to you
Now get on out, you better start sleepin' uptown"

Lyrics provided by
https://damnlyrics.com/