

The  
KINGDOM  
Chronicles

A Girl Called

*Kathy*

by Steven G. Kennard

# The Kingdom Chronicles

Short Stories of Life and Love

Somewhere in

The Kingdom

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The Kingdom Chronicles

A Girl Called Kathy

Author: Steve G. Kennard

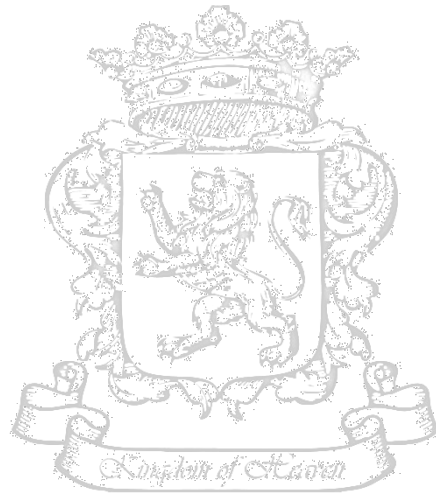
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*Blessed* is the **One**  **WHO**  
 has *taught* my **HAND**  
to write  & my *heart*  
 to *understand*   


A Girl Called

# Kathy



To my wife Kathy, who has been my greatest source of inspiration.  
She has never stopped loving me. This is for her.



## INTRODUCTION

### The Angel's Perspective

**I** am a messenger of the Most High God who is the King of the eternal Kingdom. I am a servant and a Guardian sent to watch over one of God's smallest children. My assignment began while he was still in his mother's womb. This one they will call Stephen. But for now we will call him Steve as he would come to prefer.

When Steve was a small child I spent many hours next to him singing the songs of the Kingdom as he fell asleep. As much as he may try, he would not remember any of it, for he spent his time growing and learning as all children do.

It is sad though, for as he grew so did the hurt that was in him and it would continue to grow if not dealt with. I saw in him a good-

## A Girl Called Kathy

hearted person. He would seek the Lord as he grew older for he had a special calling on his life. His steps had been ordained and so in this direction he would go for his faith would determine the condition of the path he would walk. His heart had already begun to ache for the feeling of love, for only love could heal his broken heart.

Then another call went out, It was ordained from on high that another child of God would be brought into the world. She would be a help-mate for the man the boy would become as her path would intersect and join his. A very special heart was fashioned that was full of the Creator's love. With forgiveness it did abound. It had been inserted into the young girl who would in time teach this boy what he needed so much. Her path was set and a destiny determined, she would steal his heart and give him back a family to love in return. This would be her gift to him, but she would give him an even greater gift. She would give him what he sought the most, the key to the Kingdom of Heaven. She would teach him how to forgive, for his hurts ran deep. A special one she was. On the day she was born they called her

# *Kathy*



## A Girl Called Kathy

While Steve was growing up, the job of protecting him was a task worthy of the attention of the League of Guardians for which I serve. It is unfortunate for Steve that he had come from a broken home, a home ruled over by a mother who had many times been rebellious and unruly. But I saw goodness in him.

In the absence of his father as a role model, Steve turned to his heavenly Father in times of his greatest needs. While boyhood fantasies of high adventure ran through his mind his heart hoped for a future that would include his dad. All his dreams and hopes faded away at night as he dozed off to sleep. There was more to this boy than what was seen on the outside, for he felt an empty place in his heart. Though he didn't understand it then, one day that empty place would be filled.



Many years later

### MY FATHER

**H**i there, my name is Steve, and all my life I can remember being taught about my Father in Heaven and how much He loves me. I was always glad to hear those words because I had never known, or met, or talked to my earthly dad. So every time the Sunday school teachers would talk about God I perked up because they were talking about my Father and I really wanted to hear about Him.

In many ways I already knew Him. Without realizing it there were times when He spoke to me and I would turn around and no one was there, but I know I heard someone, and then it would dawn on




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me. It was Jesus. It always put a smile on my face to think that He had time to say a word or two to me. I liked that.

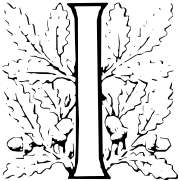
I always knew that there was something missing and though I didn't understand what it was, I did feel it inside. I always kept these things to myself.

### THE SECRET PLACE

 As I got a little older there were a few times I tried to find what I thought was missing in my life, but I always got hurt by it. I noticed a pattern that when I felt hurt, no matter how small or big I went to my secret place where I could go and tell my Father all about it. I think we all have that secret place our hearts run to, a place where somehow we find the one who understands. In our secret place He is always waiting with a kind word and arms that reach out to us and hold us close. In this place we feel loved, the way it was meant to be.

In that secret place a young boy's heart could dream of how life could be, full of wonderful secrets and thoughts of a better place and better times. There I felt loved and I wanted that like everyone else, so I came there often. My heart and my thoughts knew that place well.

### GOD IN MY HIP POCKET

 I was in church ever since I could remember. When I was younger my understanding reflected my age. One day I heard a sermon about taking God with you during the day, so I thought to myself that this was really good. I would take God with me all day, but how would I do that? Where would He fit if not maybe in one of my pockets? The pockets in my

## A Girl Called Kathy

jeans all had holes in them except maybe my hip pocket and nothing ever got put in there. Okay, I thought, I can take Him with me and He can ride in my hip pocket.

I thought growing up that most things were okay. But growing up abused you get to a point of thinking that abuse is normal. My mother was always gone during the day working and sometimes in the evening I only had glimpses of her as she left for a night out. Left to ourselves, we were always wrestling and fighting and just tormenting our sister. Just being boys, I guess.

We grew up running the streets mostly on weekends, then all day during the summer. I played a lot of baseball after school, and in the parks, but our most favorite place was in the back alleys. We accidentally broke more windows than I care to admit and had a lot of practice running for cover every time the police were called on us. I guess we were growing up a little on the wild side.

But you know even with God in my hip pocket I managed to get into lots of trouble. That empty place just kept letting me know it was there. It was waiting for the right something, or maybe the right someone.

As I look back now I think that my growing up years was a special time just to get to know my Father. By the time I turned six years old my brother and I knew our way around the streets and the beach areas of where we lived. We spent a lot of time at the YMCA. There I was taught how to shoot pool and play basketball by the sailors who hung out there during the day. My brother and I had many adventures and it is only by the grace of God that we somehow made it back home every day before our mother got home from work.

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Through it all, I always knew my Father was there. Everywhere we went and in all the trouble we got ourselves into my Father was there. Sometimes I tell you it was like I had a guardian angel sent just for me. He would have to be a full-time guardian angel because I was a full time, hard running, hard playing always getting hurt boy. But I had God in my hip pocket, so who could stand against me ... right?

By my teen years I already knew my Father's voice. I felt his hand in my life opening doors to attend a Christian high school, providing a way where there was no way. Everything I needed was somehow provided so that I could play sports primarily football. I seemed to excel in sports. And in all that I did, I would always look into the stands and pretend my earthly dad was there watching me. What I didn't realize was that he wasn't in the stands watching, but my Father was actually on the field standing next to me, and most importantly, I had Him in my hip pocket. No need to check, I knew He was there.

Of all the things I knew that I could do and of all the awards I won from the sports I played, I never felt that I had anyone to share them with. No one really cares, especially when you come from a broken home with nothing apparently going for you and no one in your corner cheering you on. Again, I felt that empty spot in me and a new thing was born in me. I began to want someone who would understand. Maybe if I was fortunate, that special someone might even hold my hand. I longed for the feeling of love, if even just a hug. What could that feel like I wondered ... maybe a little like ... a miracle?

A LITTLE FIRE TO GROW BY



few special years were all that were given me and soon I was gone, given over to the Army and a whole new life. A new page had begun for me full of experiences and decisions which I had to make and for which I was totally unprepared.

All which was new and glittered was not necessarily good and came from a very real enemy who was bidding for my life, constantly wanting me to join in to the activities that I knew were wrong, offering of the best of indulgences this life had. All the making of a young man's favorite fantasies could really come true, just take a pill, or be with this girl and if you're lucky she has friends. All you had to do was have a drink and forget where you are and join the crowd. I found out that sin loves company and I seemed to be high on the enemy's list.

In all my new life away from home I had forgotten about that special place to which I had so often gone. I struggled to understand my role as a man and how I fit in. The problem was that I didn't fit in. Never-the-less, one year later, I found myself in a war that really was not prepared emotionally to deal with, but then whoever really is?

I arrived in a country that was hot, humid, full of bugs I had never seen, disease, and a lot of jungle. By the time I got to my assigned company, I was so convinced I was never going home again that I resigned myself to dying there. One night, in a dark place away from the company lights where I knew I was alone, I yelled at my Father, "Why did you send me to this place to die? Couldn't you just have done it back home?" Desperation of the heart cries out and this time I got no answer.

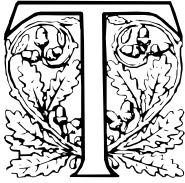
## A Girl Called Kathy

So I just started doing what I already knew to do. God doesn't need to tell you what you already know is the right thing to do. He is waiting to see if you will simply do it. I had to make a choice. So in the midst of all the pornography, the drugs, the drinking and other various things the guys wanted me to do, I decided to serve God. I prayed first for a new chaplain and God delivered. I prayed for Christian friends and God delivered. I prayed to be delivered myself from all this, and no answer.

As I look back at it now there were times my Father did speak to me. It was like a voice in my head, warning me at just the right moment. I would have just blown this off if it weren't for the fact that I knew the voice. It was familiar to me. It was the voice of my Father. If my younger years were a time to get to know God then this is my time of testing. The words from an old song always come back to me when I think about this, that "Steel is strong, because it knew the fire and white heat." The war was my time in the fire and the persecution made me stronger. I didn't like it much and though I didn't want to be there, it didn't change the fact that I was.

In God's good plan there came a time for me to go home. I arrived in the war as just a normal Christian teenager just trying to figure things out, and left a much stronger Christian. I had been through the fire and a time of testing and I did not indulge myself. I went home much stronger than I had left, and with a testimony for God.

## WHO'S THAT GIRL



o my complete surprise, one day I woke up and I was out of the Army and home. After five more days, I was kicked out and on my own.

I was rough not only around the edges, but all the way through, not exactly what every girl was looking for. I knew I needed to change and I didn't have a clue as to how to do that, but my Father did. What I needed was a good example. That was something I never had before.

Again in that secret place I asked God "Who would be willing to love me?" I needed so much work! I knew nothing about girls and had made some pretty big mistakes in the past, which I will be forever sorry for. "Father, maybe you know some girls because I sure don't? I need some help here, Jesus."

Words never had come easily for me, and I was kind of shy too. I could stand against any of the roughest guys in the war, but there was something about a girl that scared me like nothing else could. Suddenly, I would be at a complete loss for words.

I relocated myself to San Diego to be with a war buddy friend of mine. His family sort of adopted me and gave me a place to stay and took me to church with them. One day they decided to attend a different church that was in the middle of a building program. They were building a new church and Saturday was their volunteer work day. I was more than happy to help so I went to work that Saturday thinking I was just going to help where I could. It seemed like a good thing to do at the time.

I'm always surprised at how my Father works, and little did I know that God was bringing His plan together to answer that empty

## A Girl Called Kathy

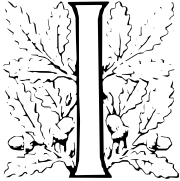
place within me and that I was about to discover the answer. They gave me a couple of jobs and I did my best accomplishing them, but I think God had a different job in mind. With God there is no job too small or too big that He can't use it for His intended appointments with destiny.

The final job they asked me to help with was simply sweeping the floor. WOW! I can do that with my eyes closed. So I went to the church balcony to sweep up construction debris and to my surprise there was already a girl up there sweeping, and from my perspective doing it all wrong. After all, I'm practically a professional at this! I did more than my share of sweeping in the Army. So move over, girl, a professional is here. We had a few words over how to sweep dirt when I realized that this was a very stubborn girl and the situation was going downhill fast. A thought went through my head that I wondered if Adam had similar problems with Eve? I don't know, but if so, all I can say is that right now "I feel your pain Adam."

After watching this girl who seemed to be getting so upset at me over the dirt piles, a new thought came to me, "This is a very pretty girl. I wonder if I can get a date with her." Suddenly a new strategy took precedence in my thinking, "Forget the dirt, get a date." Suddenly she could do no wrong.

In short order we were done and she took off so fast I didn't have time to get any information. I guess I must have impressed her beyond her ability to speak the words ... yeah-right! Darn, I didn't even get her name either. Who was that girl?

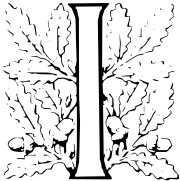
WHEN GOD HAS A PLAN

 believe that sometime ago in God's great plan that He knew exactly what I would need. He must have taken an extra measure of Himself and created a very special girl. Given this great love at birth, she would grow up knowing all about God's love and forgiveness. It would become the defining part of her character. She was not to be a theologian, but rather an example of his love and forgiveness, just what I needed.

I would soon discover that the girl I met in the church balcony sweeping dirt all wrong, was that one special person that my Father had in mind for me so long ago. She was a girl who I would eventually realize was the sweetest person I had ever met. The more I thought about her the more I wanted to know who she was.

If this girl was part of God's plan for me then I had a problem because I didn't even know who she was. Somehow in the grand scheme of things love always finds a way and the plan always works.

KATHY

 had a friend who told me he knew lots of girls in the church. The first one he thought of was a girl whose dad taught karate. My friend took karate from him and told me to come with him and watch next time he went. If I was fortunate, I would see the man's daughter. So hey, what single guy wouldn't be interested in karate and a pretty girl? What a good deal ... so I went for it!

The next time my friend went to karate I went along with him and had a chance to meet the karate dad. We hadn't been there very



## A Girl Called Kathy

long when in walked his daughter and to my complete shock it was that same girl. I really perked up then. Oh yeah! Where could I sign up for karate? I was all about karate and ready to start immediately. Where can I get one of those white pants and jacket outfits with the color belts? The black belt looked cool. Does it come in a medium?

Her dad called her name Kathy, and suddenly that name was now permanently seared into my brain. It would still be several months down the road, but I knew I wanted to get a date with this girl. It took a lot of karate classes, but sure enough several months later I got up the nerve to ask her out on a date. Then, to my complete surprise, she said, “You’re going to have to ask my dad.”

All the gears in my brain suddenly stopped moving, “How old are you anyway?” I asked. A good question I had forgotten to ask before I agreed to all the karate classes.

“I’m sixteen,” she said. Oh no, the girl is only sixteen! Visions of a shotgun suddenly appeared, or the police knocking on my door, or worse yet a big karate kick to some vital part of my body.

“Ahhh, no reason” I said. “I just thought I’d ask.” What a liar I suddenly became, I was such a chicken and suddenly I just barely had the nerve to hold her hand.

In my own defense, though, I should add that Kathy had mentioned to me that she was able to stand on the ground and yet kick someone in the head, which she then demonstrated on me ... POW !!! Yep, I felt that one, too.

A new question arose in my mind, “Father is this part of your plan too? And oh yeah one last question Lord. You’re not planning on me having a jail ministry from the inside of the jail are you? I just wanted to be prepared ... she really is cute though.” Well God knew

## A Girl Called Kathy

what He was doing and she was sixteen for a good reason, too. It seems that quality has no minimum age limit.

### HAPPY EVER AFTER



Well a year and a half later as things tend to go when two young people fall in love, we got married. And things were happy ever after ... right? Remember I said I was rough around the edges and even I did not know how much help I needed. Issues and baggage abounded in me and I didn't even know it.

It took a few days, but Kathy must have gone into shock over what she had done. On the other hand, I didn't have a clue why this girl seemed to be upset so much. What was wrong with her? She was fine before we got married. But I loved her so much and I tried so hard to make her happy. All the while she tried her best to deal with all of my baggage, discovering that even my baggage had baggage.

You may think that you really know someone and that happiness will follow you all the days of your life, but you don't really know someone until you are married to them. It would take some time to work through all the new things we found out about each other, but through all our stages of discovery Kathy never stopped loving me, and that was something I desperately needed to know. I had been running on empty for so long that I needed a heaping portion of love that was not going anywhere, a real stick-to-it kind of love. I never really believed that I deserved what God has given to me, but then what guy does?

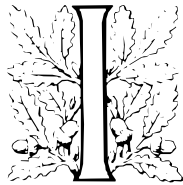
Sometimes in the Kingdom you can still find a diamond. The more I was with Kathy the more I understood why my Father put us

## A Girl Called Kathy

together. At seventeen she was so much the girl I needed, like finding that special and rare diamond.

### GROWING TOGETHER

“A successful marriage isn’t a union of two perfect people, it’s a union of two imperfect people who have learned the value of forgiveness and Grace towards each other.”



It took a while before I began to understand what my Father had given me. Kathy would, over time teach me the key to my own healing by giving me countless words of encouragement and forgiveness. In our beginning Kathy was my greatest fan and constant encourager. She always told me I could do different things if I just tried. Because of her I enrolled in college, I tried new things and discovered abilities and talents I never thought I had. All I really needed was someone who believed in me.

In time she showed me something else too, the key to my own internal peace and happiness. I had to learn to let go of the past and forgive. I learned to appreciate my wife very much. I had been given a good thing in Kathy as I would often repeat to myself “All good things come from my Fathers hand.”

I still was burdened down with my own inability to express what I felt inside. Never having been raised in a loving home which gave you praise for things done right and taught you how to praise others meant I often would be at a loss for words. Like a lot of guys everything just would come out wrong and I didn’t even know why it did that. When she would stop crying she would eventually forgive

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me. Another example of what real love does was that love forgives and I was paying attention this time. However all the paying attention in the world doesn't stop you from just messing up even when you think you're doing well. If God had a plan then I felt like I was messing that up too.

One day the company I worked for sent me to a seminar on anger management (not that I needed it). I spent all day there learning new skills so I could go home and practice becoming a better husband. The therapist gave us all a word to say when bad things or even negative words were used against you. Think "CANCEL!" She said ... shout it out real loud and do that three times, because it takes three times more positives to cancel out the negative.

So okay I got it and practiced it all the way home. "Cancel," "cancel," and more "cancel." Now it had been a while and I failed to remember that this sweet, loving, beautiful and angelic female also was part Apache Cherokee Indian. Later that night, words were said back and forth and I saw my chance. Armed with new and greater knowledge I blurted out a hearty "CANCEL, CANCEL, CANCEL."

Now up until that night, I never knew how many pillows it took to get comfortable sleeping on the couch. Fortunately for me it didn't last all night. Several hours later, I found out that making up can be so much more fun. Since then I have kept in the deepest recesses of my mind, someplace where I am sure she can never hear me, I still whisper under my breath ... cancel.

FORTY YEARS AND COUNTING



ell forty plus years have gone by and we are still here, still together and we have become grandparents. The love of a good woman, the Psalmist says “who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies” (Prov. 31:10). If you have a good woman in your life, then hold onto her with both hands. She is worth it.

Somewhere I have heard that, “The supply of good women far exceeds the supply of men who deserves them.” The young man that I was didn’t deserve what he got, but isn’t it great that God doesn’t give us what we do deserve ... He gives us better! His cup of love runs over, and we can have all we can handle, for love is that one thing you get in this life, that you can give away, and yet take it with you when your soul is handed over into eternity.

That secret place I knew growing up is still my secret place and I still go there now and then, but mostly to thank my Father for the good things He has brought into my life. That little sixteen year old girl brought into my life a new beginning and a chance at finding happiness I might have otherwise missed. By her example she has taught me how to forgive and how to love even in the toughest of times. The empty place I knew for so long is all full now. She filled that empty place. And she also gave me three daughters that, after much prayer and a lot of work have their own families now.

The secret desires of my heart turned out to be someone to love who would love me back. I feel it more than ever now and it was that thing I sought after when I was just a little guy. It’s one of those basic things we are all born with, a need to feel loved. I didn’t find it then, but I have found it now, with just a little help from my Father.

## A Girl Called Kathy

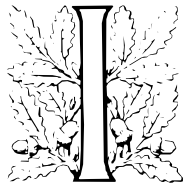
Kathy and I are a bit older, and I'd like to think wiser for all the mileage we've put behind us on our journey together. I try to never let a day go by that I don't tell her she is loved. She is that one thing that's most important in my life. She is that generous portion of love, kindness, and selflessness that I get to wake up to every morning.

A wise pastor once told me not to worry about what the world thinks, just focus on what she thinks, because she is everything to you. In my particular case my everything is called Kathy. In her my Father has given me a taste of heaven, so that this world would not seem so bad.

What can I say to someone who has given her entire life in the service of others? I know the nights she stayed up until the wee hours of the morning cooking and baking. What do you say when someone continuously goes the extra mile no matter how she feels? If I ever needed an example of what is good and true in life, then I would only have to open my eyes and there she would be.

After over forty plus years with her I now can see what she already knew in the beginning. I don't ever want to let go of her, Lord. She is mine and I am hers and we go together down our path you have set before us. I smile sometimes just thinking what my Father must be saying to Himself, "He has finally got it."

SOMETIME YET TO COME



will say to my wife after a lifetime with her, “You have been my strength and my reason for going on. Heaven forbid, but if you are ever taken from me by either health or acts of evil men, always know that you take my heart with you. When you see God please give my heart back to Him. Only He can heal a broken heart. You know me better than anyone, and you know my heart better than anyone. You are the custodian of a heart you helped to heal and this too has all been worth it.”

At that time my constant prayer to my Father will be wrapped up in only one word, “When.” When will I see you again, and how long till I can hold you ... again? I know the sound of your voice and I will listen for it at night. Like the many nights side by side you would whisper to me of dreams realized and those still hoped for, I too will hope your hopes and dream your dreams. I will keep my ears open so I can hear your voice in the songs of the angels at night. I know your sound. I know you. It is my great joy that in all I do, I may bring honor to the one person, out of an entire world of possibilities who my Father used to teach me about His love.

“Father in heaven, some day if you find her among the clouds in your City of Gold, please let her know that I’m coming and I will see her again. On that morning, your Son shall bring us together again and in His song of love, which we knew for so long, we will continue forever.”

## KINGDOM MINDED



Some of us are given eyes to see beyond the here and now. To be given understanding of something bigger than yourself and how you fit into the big picture is a blessing few will know. To understand that God saw us and our lives and the decisions we would make even before the world was created is simply amazing. He knows the past and sees our present, He knows the future. It is God's will that we share that future with Him in a place, He spoke into existence, somewhere in the dateless past. That place is called the Kingdom of Heaven.

Right now we all have a role in this eternal Kingdom. For now we tell other people how they too can be part of this Kingdom which is truly eternal.

## HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

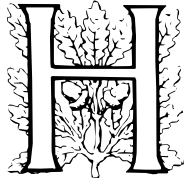
### The Angels Perspective



As a Guardian Angel I can tell you there are people who really challenge even the angels when it comes to watching over them. That little boy I used to sing to is now well known in Heaven. Believe me, we all know him. But it has also been one of the best assignments for I have seen a child of God grow and have great faith. He has provided us with a few laughs and that too makes him special in the Kingdom. This one is headed in the right direction now and when he gets home he will be eternally happy and realize it was all worth it.



THE LAST WORD



Hi there, it's Steve again. Just wanted to tell you how great it is when you wake up one day and see how your Father has directed your life. The road you're walking down just might have a few valley experiences in it, but it also has some mountain top experiences too. Live for the mountain experiences because they are eternal and they last forever as a testament about how you made a difference and did something for the glory of God.

Now, for what I can see there's more to my story. I guess I haven't told it all, but there's more to your story, too. What lies ahead of us is a new life in the Kingdom of Heaven, and that is a never ending story.

See you around the Kingdom.

THE END

## A Girl Called Kathy

The years seemed to have gone by so fast. I have experience a depth of love that will never fade away, because it took one girl a lifetime to teach it. Kathy surprised me one day with a video she said was her favorite. I thought since this is about her, I would share the words with you.

### *Perfect*<sup>1</sup>

I found a love for me  
Darling just dive right in  
And follow my lead  
Well I found a girl beautiful and sweet  
I never knew you were the someone waiting for me  
'Cause we were just kids when we fell in love

Not knowing what it was  
I will not give you up this time  
But darling, just kiss me slow, your heart is all I own  
And in your eyes you're holding mine

Baby, I'm dancing in the dark with you between my arms  
Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favorite song  
When you said you looked a mess, I whispered underneath my  
breath  
But you heard it, darling, you look perfect tonight

Well I found a woman, stronger than anyone I know  
She shares my dreams, I hope that someday I'll share her home  
I found a love, to carry more than just my secrets  
To carry love, to carry children of our own  
We are still kids, but we're so in love  
Fighting against all odds  
I know we'll be alright this time  
Darling, just hold my hand  
Be my girl, I'll be your man  
I see my future in your eyes

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<sup>1</sup> Lyrics to the song "Perfect" sung by Ed Sheeran

## A Girl Called Kathy

Baby, I'm dancing in the dark, with you between my arms  
Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favorite song  
When I saw you in that dress, looking so beautiful  
I don't deserve this, darling, you look perfect tonight

Baby, I'm dancing in the dark, with you between my arms  
Barefoot on the grass, listening to our favorite song  
I have faith in what I see  
Now I know I have met an angel in person  
And she looks perfect  
I don't deserve this  
You look perfect tonight