

## **Natalie Merchant**

### **"Photograph"**

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I found this photograph  
Underneath the picture glass  
Tender face of black and white  
Beautiful, a haunting sight

Looked into an angels smile  
Captivated all the while  
From the hair and clothes she wore  
I'd place her in between the wars

Was she willing when she sat?  
Posed the pretty photograph  
Save her flowering and fair  
Days to come, days to share  
A big smile for the camera

How did she know?  
The moment could be lost forever  
Forever more

I found this photograph  
Stashed between the old joist walls  
In a place where time is lost  
Lost behind, where all things fall

Broken books and calendars  
Letters script in careful hand  
Music too, a standard tune by  
Some forgotten big brass band

From the threshold what's to see  
Of our brave new century?  
The television's just a dream  
Radio, silver screen  
Big smile for the camera

How did she know?  
The moment could be lost forever  
Forever more

Was her childhood filled with rhymes  
Stolen hooks, impassioned crimes?

Was she innocent or blind  
To the cruelty of her time?

Was she fearful in her day  
Was she hopeful, did she pray?  
Were there skeletons inside  
Family secrets, sworn to hide?

Did she feel the beat that stirs  
The fall from grace of wayward girls?  
Was she tempted to pretend  
The love and laughter, until the end?

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