

This Shirt

Mary Chapin Carpenter

This shirt is old and faded
All the color's washed away
I've had it now for more damn years
Than I can count anyway

I wear it beneath my jacket
With the collar turned up high
So old I should replace it
But I'm not about to try

This shirt's got silver buttons
And a place upon the sleeve
Where I used to set my heart up
Right there where anyone could see

This shirt is the one I wore to
Every boring high school dance
Where the boys ignored the girls
And we all pretended to like the band

This shirt was a pillow for my head
On a train through Italy
This shirt was a blanket beneath the love
We made in Argeles

This shirt was lost for three whole days
In a town near Buffalo
'Till I found the locker key
In a downtown Trailways bus depot

This shirt is the one I lent you
And when you gave it back
It had a rip inside the sleeve
Where you rolled your cigarettes

It was the place I put my heart
Now look at where you put a tear
I forgave your thoughtlessness
But not the boy who put it there

This shirt was the place your cat
Decided to give birth to five
And we stayed up all night watching
And we wept when the last one died

This shirt is just an old faded piece
Of cotton, shining like the memories
Inside those silver buttons
This shirt is a grand old relic

With a grand old history
I wear it now for Sunday chores
Cleaning house and raking leaves
I wear it beneath my jacket

With the collar turned up high
So old I should replace it

But I'm not about to try