Billy The Bum

John Prine

Billy, the bum lived by the thumb
And sang of the hobo's delight
He'd prove he could run
Twice as fast as the sun
By losing his shadow at night
Now he loved every girl
In this curly headed world
But no one will know it seems
For two twisted legs and a childhood disease
Left Billy just a bum in his dreams
And he was just a gentle boy
A real florescent light
Cried pennies on Sunday morning
Laughs nickels on Saturday night
And your bullets, they can't harm him
Nor your knives tear him apart
Humiliation killed him
God bless his little heart
Now he lived all alone in a run down home
Near the side of the old railroad track
Where the trains used to run
Carryin' freight by the ton
Blow the whistle as Billy'd wave back
But the children around Billy's home town
Seemed to have nothin' better to do
Then run around his house
With their tongues from their mouth
Make fun of that crippled old fool

And he was just a gentle boy
A real florescent light
Cried pennies on Sunday morning
Laughs nickels on Saturday night
And your bullets, they can't harm him
Nor your knives tear him apart
Humiliation killed him
God bless his little heart
Now some folks they wait and some folks they pray
For Jesus to rise up again

But none of these folks in their holy cloaks
Ever took Billy on as a friend
For pity's a crime
And it ain't worth a dime
To a person who's really in need
Just treat 'em the same
As you would your own name
Next time that your heart starts to bleed
And he was just a gentle boy
A real florescent light
Cried pennies on Sunday morning
Laughs nickels on Saturday night
And your bullets, they can't harm him
Nor your knives tear him apart
Humiliation killed him
God bless his little heart

Lyrics provided by
https://damnlyrics.com/