

# Circle Wars

Kelly Joe Phelps

The sidewalk coughed up weeds and cracks  
A book, a magazine and a penny and a dime  
Oh, and Carl looked behind him making sure the scene was empty  
Breathed a sigh of bewilderment noting that it was Not that he expected to see Anita coming up  
With a brown bull whip or a box of daffodils  
Yeah, the night quiet bruised his ears and forced him into alleys  
Where the gravel crunch was friendly under polished army heels  
Under polished army heels The steps on St. Andrews seemed the best bet  
Catch a little shut eye, Anita could sweat some  
Bleed a little inside or find him in the morning  
Hunkered down like a derelict with mustard on his chin Oh, then the concrete froze his ass through the holes in  
his pants  
Winter's not the best time to make a martyr's point  
Carl caught the corner where the wind wouldn't get him  
And he absentmindedly spun the ring 'round his finger with his thumb  
Yeah, with his thumb Tomcat screams like a baby in the backlot  
Just as Carl's dreams kick in tight  
The light keeps stuttering hailstones between the boughs of a maple  
So many voices in a one man night And he starts to see the fool behind the windshield  
One hand on the steering wheel another in the air  
Trying hard to catch the jet stream to make the flying easy  
But only grabbing hunger for another man's life  
For another man's life And Anita makes the corner 'cross from Jones wrecking yard  
She been walking half the night and oh, her legs are tired  
Why, she thinks, does Carl have to take it so hard?  
Is it me that makes him lose who he truly think he is? He's the same damn man he's always been  
And I love him like I always did, like always  
What on earth will make him feel satisfied?  
I love him like I always did, like I always did  
Like I always did She leans against the street light watching him sleep  
Watching him turn and turn in a tide pool  
And she slowly walks across the steps of St. Andrews  
And stands there looking a minute or so longer Yeah, she tugs on his coat sleeve, "Carl, please let's go"  
But she stands, oh, doesn't say a word  
And they walk side by side, not touching nor explaining  
Just walking home to face down the circle wars  
Yeah, yeah, yeah, the circle wars

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