

Kelly Joe Phelps "Circle Wars"

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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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