

Fleashine

Kelly Joe Phelps

Fleashine, shoeshine, man of fifteen
Brings the house in with a smile
All twelve teeth tell myriad stories
One upon one and one

The breath in his hand waving
Drives the gypsy woman mad, oh
She loves him anyway
Has told him so a thousand times or more

She refuses to believe that
At forty two years old
She's not still a butterfly
Ready, ready for the net

Bobby the fifteen is turning strong and soft
As can be seen by his patience with the animals
He used to hate 'em
Now lays down beside them

To keep all from feeling sad
As animals sometimes do
He dreams of being old enough
To marry the girl with two heads

Their name is Gladys
And they don't yet know
Of the young man's fascination
They're too busy drawing circles in their arms

A fleashine, shoeshine, man of fifteen
Floating into the next town
Puts a straw in a Jim Beam bottle
And lays his head down

He puts a straw in a Jim Beam bottle
And lays his head down