

Knock Louder

Kelly Joe Phelps

this makes as much sense as a frog on a chain
a leper knocking trees down with his fist
twisting my ear like i'm a school yard churl
you know i want to sit beside that long-legged girl
wearing overalls and daddy's boots and mom's old coat
let's sing one together grace, and savor every note.

burned a hole right through me where we stood last Sunday night
one little tossed off glance i don't know if you were there
but i felt the rod impale me, my body growing wide
as you climbed up on the ladder and made your home inside
i'm the same and then i'm not, you know, from when we tried before
please, gracie, please won't you come knock on my door.

you've surely done more pounding than i give you credit for
i'm a fool most times, unusually so, and an inveterate sage
with the wisdom of half a rock washed up on the sand
so many simple things i just can't understand
yet i know that i'm so tired of wondering where you've been
a friend like you i've never had, i don't want to lose you again.

we'll reinvent the toaster, ride a crooked wheel
give three cares for common sense then throw it in a can
i'll be myself beside you and you can do the same
no responsibility save the magic in your name
i'm done, i'm beat, i'm old, i've looked in every tree
let's be you and me now, let's be you and me.