

Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander

Over the Rhine

You are a gardener
You cultivate my soul
You water thirsty vines
That snake along my spine
In case I forget to shiver

You are a carpenter
You build the scaffolding
Replace the windowpane
I see the sky again
As if I've been delivered

You are a fisherman
My weather lets you know
When and when not to wait
Your hook's inside the bait
I'm wary but I swallow

You are a messenger
You bring me all the news
The kind that never lies
It's written in my eyes
You beckon and it follows

I get to be guilty
I

You are a singer too
Carry me like a tune
Like a newborn child
I'm wrapped up for a while
You're swaying like a hobo

You are a circus clown
I've never laughed before
Beneath your canopy
Oh, say a prayer for me
I want this in a photo

So be a photographer
I'm dancing naked now
Across the maple floor
Above the lion's roar
Your pictures will protect me

You must be a scientist by now
With rumpled midnight hair
You've studied every pore
And every follicle
Of my bewildered body

I get to be guilty
I

Yours is a different light
I like my face that way
The canvas of my skin

Serene and strange but true