For All We Know

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Extract

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On the Contrary

It's because we were brought up to lead double lives, you said.
You were lying next to me, both of us verging on sleep.

We always had to withhold ourselves from the other side,
guarding our tongues lest we answer to their outspoken laws.

And so we lost ourselves in the dark forest of language
believing in nothing which might not be governed by touch

or taste, the apple bursting indescribably with juice
against the roof of the mouth, or the clean cold smell of skin.

As our promise was never to be betrayed by our words
so we became our own shadowy police watching us,

as loaded the long goods train clanks slowly towards Dublin,
we hear the shriek in the night from across the trip-wired fields,

as the searchlight trawls across the bedroom window you turn
towards me speechlessly and we look into each other's eyes.