

## REPENTANCE

I repent the actual. It has never got me anywhere.  
It is nothing against principalities, against powers.  
My father will die and I will carry on. I dread his death

more than mine because it will come sooner—knowledge I  
repent. In lies  
he will outlive the liar. And that's me. The lie itself  
will carry on, is itself a child, a separate life, a blow

against the gods of objects. Who are not happy with me  
or with their densities. They are not worth their flawed  
kingdoms.  
And neither do I love them. They are dangerous. They are too

stupid to be insignificant, too proud of their ability  
to blister my hands and make them raw. I repent letting them,  
and I repent logic, which has no god: it will do

anything, it will go anywhere. Tell it your destination  
and it will take you there. A taxi. *This* is the nature  
of evidence: how could you prove the meat you ate last night

wasn't horse meat, goat flesh,  
or something I had, the night before, sliced from my thighs?  
Or that it was meat at all? Or that you ate? There is no

bottom to what we will believe, and no top.  
So I have made this vow.  
Never again will I insult you with the actual, something

that has no birthday, while lies are born  
six times a second and each with a festival. They are the gifts  
we give ourselves, like morphine, a change of clothes, a piece

of apple pie, a black chrysanthemum, a job—I could go on.  
I am ashamed when I remember whom I have attacked  
with actuality. My mother with her cheapness. My wife

with black and purple dress—you should have seen it!—  
and her infidelities. My friend who steals ashtrays. My brother's  
avoirdufois. I repent that blade and I repent

my skill with it. When blessed with falsehoods, I will tell them.  
When told a lie, I will believe it. I will not doubt  
a word you say. Forgive me now my finger in the wound, and  
knuckle deep.

### JUDAS, FLOWERING

Everybody has a hero. He is mine. Who would I be  
if I hadn't polished evil, like a pair of shoes  
and walked across my life in them? And though  
I've long since worn the bottoms through, the tops  
are bright as bulbs. They light my path. Without them I would be  
barred

from restaurants. But, Judas, do I have to be quite  
so human in my brilliant shoes? I'm not complaining. Lies are  
enough.

They are the grease that slips a camel through  
the needle's eye. He doesn't even have to touch the sides  
unless I say he does. Thank you. And lies  
are just a start. The world is rich  
with penny-ante lies and frugal sins. Since I am wrong  
I want to do it right. Or wrong. I confuse myself.  
I want to be spectacularly wrong  
so I may, in the crowd, be noticed, lifted out, preserved,  
redeemed. I need the big betrayal, the perfidy  
that Botticelli knew but didn't understand. In *Calumny*  
a prince has protracted, pointed, velvet donkey ears, and to those ears  
—those gorgeous ass's ears!—cling Ignorance  
and Suspicion. They love those wonderful ears! And there is  
Calumny,  
her fingers laced into the hair of a man