

On Yom Kippur I fasted but said sorry
to no one. I repented nothing
but that I hadn't done my homework the day before.
I ate a hearty breakfast of spit and repentance,
but when my mom wasn't looking I shoveled my plate
full of remorse for my sins
into the wire wastebasket.
I hid my sins from God like Adam and Eve:
I have eaten no apple from the tree.
Still, I fasted.
The day was centuries long,
each second lasting lifetimes,
and yet, I said sorry to no one.
I had people in mind. I wasn't really sorry.
On Yom Kippur, I asked for no forgiveness
not because I didn't do anything wrong
not because I didn't regret anything
but because I felt no responsibility
to apologize to God. I asked for no forgiveness
from those I had offended
not because I didn't do anything wrong
not because I didn't regret anything
but because I wanted nothing less than to hand them
my heart, still raw, bloody, and pumping,
so someone up high would forgive me.
Why should I ask for absolution
from He who has watched over
all the crimes, all the injustices, all the cruelties that can be imagined:
over each slave, over each genocide, and came up
with no better solution than a flood?
On Yom Kippur I ate
a hearty break fast of turkey and butter
and the Indian leftovers from two nights ago
and once I was done,
my mom watched as I shovelled my plate
into the wire wastebasket.
I can fast, but I don't know if I can be forgiven.
I will hide no sin.
I will have nothing to confess.
I will eat an apple from the tree.