

Prayer for Yom Kippur

Ann Metlay

Spirit of Comfort and Peace,
here I am, my silver platter readied.

For your sacred, holy hearth,
I bring offerings to burn.

Remember when I spoke
in brutal anger to my spouse?

Here, I throw hot cayenne
across Your crackly fire.

And when I whispered falsehoods
about a former friend?

Now, let me sprinkle bitter sage
above your red-hot coals.

And when I buried myself
in self-serving pity?

I will add a pinch of pungent cloves
to smolder in your soot.

God, please take this, my bouquet garni
of sin, the mistakes I made this year.

As I absolve myself of these shortcomings
please discharge me from their weight.

Add their pungent breath
to Your mysterious smoky veil.

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