that is the red powdered sorrow
kept kindly in metal pots, lids shut
not seeping out but carefully blown out of place
that is the red powdered sorrow
made of dried blasphemous whispers,
shrivelled thoughts and impotent desires
that is the red powdered sorrow
clouding my vision and filling my lungs
suffocating the corners of my eyes
that, then, is the red powdered sorrow
that fills these tear ducts
and makes the finest of clays

They say sindoor is a red vermilion powder applied to the parting of her hair. At their wedding he applies it to signify forever that he is her husband. Later she applies it herself in her daily dressing routine, saying that it represents his longevity.

When he dies, she is told not to put it on anymore. How brazen, they say, to wear a vibrantly red powder when it was probably her bad karma that killed him. Well, she thinks, perhaps this clear forehead will be regarded as my shame, or perhaps as my unapproachable freedom.