

*Sumbul*

(*Bombax ceiba*)

The leaves nearer ground come out

While the red flaming spread of sumbul

Still printed upon the April sky

Loses luster daily

5

Arms arched, ends raised in supplication

From where I stand nearly touch

My hands raised in prayer

Cupped to catch some falling red lotus

10 from the now scraggly dry top branches

still firmly studded refusing leaf

arching strong upon the ones below

begging to let go of flower for leaf

as the Lahore sun threatens

15 and demands to be appeased

my prayer added the scales may tip

in favour of the young supplicants

and the grandeur of our fall-spring

20 relent to green.

Majestic now it stands

stenciled against white

printing the midday sky to June.

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