

**A Toast for Independence Day**  
**August 14/15**

With my thanks to the freedom fighters  
    who were injured or died in a non-violent  
    struggle for freedom from the British  
With my thanks to the 5 million people of India and the Pakistans  
    who paid for that freedom with their lives  
With my thanks to those 17 million Punjabis and Bengalis  
    who suffered displacement by the Radcliffe border lines  
With my thanks to abducted women  
    never taken back by their loving families  
With my thanks to men who died trying  
    to protect the honour of their families

Here's to the hopes, ambitions and appetites of the post-Partition generations  
Here's to three countries that have gone far, but are still young  
    May they grow further, may they grow in peace.

Shauna Singh Baldwin

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