

Song of the Happy Wife

The bangle seller displays his shining load,
“Happy Daughters become Happy Wives
who wear glass bangles till their husbands die.”

Glass bangles shiver silver and blue like mountain mist,
Mine sparkle purple and gold with flecks of grey.
My rainbow-tinted circles of light
Were there each day these hands
cherished, when my love blessed
and when I cradled two fair sons
on my faithful breast

but if ever a day our marriage fire
turns to your funeral pyre
I picture glass tinkle turning
to shatter and tear
till cuts bloom blood
as my wrist-flesh tears.

Would the gods I've worshiped
at your side, so many years since I came as bride
decline surrogate offerings when I'm grieving?

“Sell me bangles of metal to be my wrist-haloes
so this Happy Wife will be a Happy Widow.”

Shauna Singh Baldwin

(Inspired by *The Bangle Sellers* by Sarojini Naidu)