There are a number of essential motifs and themes within the plot of Roy’s novel, *The God of Small Things*, but none so important as Love, a central theme in the novel. Love is found embodied in varying unpredictable relationships, but its steadfast appearance makes it a constant theme in the book. It seems that for every instance of unrequited love there is a love that is reciprocated. The strange almost transcendental love between Estha and Rahel is perhaps the most obvious and most frequently described love. The familial love between Chacko and his ex-wife, Margaret, and daughter, Sophie, is another kind of love. Finally the romantic love between Ammu and Velutha, the forbidden, mutual love, is as destructive as it is powerful. The love in *The God of Small Things* is a rebellious love that violates social rules in almost every case.

Estha and Rahel, the fraternal twins and protagonists, have a special kind of love between them. They share a bond that no other two characters in the book have. In the early years of their lives, they “thought of themselves together as Me, and separately, individually, as We or Us.” (Roy 4). It is clear that there is a love connection between them that spans beyond their genetic similarities. They look to each other for approval (Roy 78), and even share experiences that only one of them has actually experienced. For example, Rahel can recall waking up giggling at Estha’s funny dream, and tasting tomato sandwiches that Estha ate (Roy 5). The childhood relationship between them is more than just a filial bond; it is a special loving connection.

The love between Estha and Rahel is also one of the strangest. When they grow older, they no longer have the special bond that they used to share. Their still is a connection between them, but it is different in nature. Rahel and Estha are not uncomfortable standing around each other naked, even as adults, which almost acts as a foreshadowing for the events near the end of the novel (88-89). In chapter 20 their relationship evolves into an incestuous one, a supporting example of love that breaks customary rules of society. Their relationship is made to sound like one that continues to extend past the usual boundaries of love that brother and sister *should* share. This extension ends after they engage in the greatest act of love possible.

The familial love that Chacko has for his daughter and ex-wife can be understood as unbounded. He loves them both unconditionally and takes great care to show it. This is especially prevalent when Sophie and Margaret arrive in India (131) and Chacko buys roses for them. Sadly both Margaret and Sophie loved Joe, Margaret’s second husband, more than they love Chacko, thus giving him an unrequited love that is not uncommon in this book. We learn that while Margaret was Chacko’s first female friend, and he truly loved her, Margaret’s “love” for him was a temporary passion. She loved Chacko in a sense, but only because she had never met someone like him before. She was in the process of accepting who she was independent of her family and embarking on the journey of young adulthood. Now Chacko, by trying to rekindle the love he lost with his daughter and ex-wife, is (in a sense) breaking a societal love law as well. He has already divorced Margaret and has not experienced the greater part of Sophie’s life. It is difficult for him to understand that he has missed something that cannot be replaced or regained.

Ammu and Velutha’s forbidden love is another of the important love cases in the novel. Ammu and Velutha belong to two different classes in the Indian caste system, and they both realize that they will not live long if they continue seeing each other. Regardless, they continue to meet secretly to talk about “the small things” in their lives, because they both know that there will be nothing more important in their futures. Ammu loves Velutha *because* he is lower class. Velutha has humility and appreciation for “small things” that no one else in Ammu’s life has. Their love is arguably the strongest in the book, because they continue to love each other even when they are certain of their approaching fates. The book is named after Velutha, in one sense, because he, to Ammu, is the “God of Small Things.” He becomes her god, and allows her to escape the prejudice and obsession with class that her family has. Because they both appreciate the small things in their lives, they have a special connection that proves impossible to break, even in the face of danger and death. This is the most obvious case of love that violates the rules laid down by society, since it is considered an abomination in India to make love to someone outside of your social class.

Love is a central theme in the Roy’s novel, *The God of Small Things*. The love relationships in the novel are not always mutual, but the overwhelming majority breaks the social rules, or Love Laws, of India. The love between Estha and Rahel is an interesting love, and belongs to its own class of relationship. Chacko’s love for Margaret and Sophie is a prime example of unrequited love. The love between Velutha and Ammu is the most socially unacceptable of all, but is described as the most justified because of their mutual appreciation of “small things.” *The God of Small Things* is, predominantly, a love story.