

SYNOPSIS

The God of Small Things is set in Ayemenem, southwestern state of Kerala. It takes place in 1969 during the political tension of Communists' power and the radical movement of Naxalites. The story mainly tells about the ongoing tragedy of a Syrian Christian family that runs a successful pickle factory. As a member of respected upper-caste Touchable family, it was a hard situation for Ammu—the daughter—who had to return to her mother's house after the divorce of her inter-religious marriage. She started to notice Velutha, a young Untouchable man who worked as the family carpenter, and eventually this attraction grew into a forbidden cross-caste love affair.

After a couple of weeks, Velutha's father found out about this affair. Therefore he visited Mammachi, Ammu's mother. Drunk and distraught, he told Mammachi of the affair and offered to kill his son to redeem the shame that had been caused. Ammu's bitter, spiteful aunt, Baby Kochamma, locked her in her room. In her rage Ammu shouted at her twins children—Rahel and Estha—to go away. Feeling sad, these children decided to run away to the veranda of an old house. They eventually got to the veranda and go to sleep, not realizing that an exhausted Velutha had taken refuge there and was also fast asleep.

They were woken the following morning by a group of policemen viciously beating Velutha almost to death. The police Inspector had given them this instruction based on Baby Kochamma's report that Velutha had raped Ammu and kidnapped the children. After the beating, the policemen noticed the

children's belongings and realize that it was not a kidnapping and that a terrible mistake had been made.

The police inspector was afraid, as he knew that Velutha would soon die in his cell. He told Baby Kochamma that she faced prosecution for giving false evidence unless either Ammu filed a complaint against Velutha for raping her or the twins identified Velutha as their kidnapper. Under the persuasion of Baby Kochamma, Estha went to identify Velutha as his kidnapper. Ammu later went to the police to try to clarify things but she was accused of being a prostitute and was not listened to. The official story is better for the police.

After Velutha's death, Ammu was banished by her family from Ayemenem. She was made to send Estha to stay with his father and leave Rahel at Ayemenem until she could get a job and was able to support them. She never could and died just a few years later, alone in a strange town. This whole tragedy left deep trauma for both of Rahel and Estha who could never 'return' into the mainstream of the society. They both grew up with broken memory and grief that manifested in Estha's silence and Rahel's emptiness.