

# 1 | God of Small Things Essay

## 1.1 | General Information

Due Date	Topic	Important Documents
March 5th, 5PM	GoST	GoST

## 1.2 | Prompt

For this assignment, you will craft a literary analysis essay that shows your understanding and close reading of a thematic aspect of Roy's *The God of Small Things*. As always, close reading can involve tracking a repetition of some type in the text, including but not limited to repetitions in diction, images, structure, syntax, or characters' behaviors. You might also think about tracking a change of some kind in the novel.

You may think of this analysis in two pieces:

- A deep engagement with textual evidence, close reading, and a thematic scope of Roy's *The God of Small Things*
- A tracking and analysis of a pattern, theme, motif, or element of the narrative. Your analysis **MUST** include the significance of this tracking. It is not enough to notice a pattern, you must examine **WHY** and **HOW** that pattern functions within the broader scope of the narrative.

## 1.3 | Evidence bin

"Whole was very frequent"

### 1.3.1 | Holes and Smashed

- (Holes) "Wild creepers burst through latente banks and spill across the flooded roads. Boats ply in the bazaars. And small fish appear in the puddles that fill the PWD potholes on the highways." AA
- (Holes) "Steelshrill police whistles pierced holes in the Noise Umbrella. Through the jagged umbrella holes Rahel could see pieces of red sky." (w.r.t. communism march) AB
- (Holes + Squash) "Vellya Paapen had assured the twins that there was no such thing in the world as a black cat. He said that there were only black cat-shaped holes in the Universe. / *Squashed Miss Mitten-shaped stains in the Universe.* / Squashed frog-shaped stains in the Universe." AC
- (Holes) "Chacko marveled at how someone so small and undefined, so vague in her resemblances, could so completely command the attention, the love, the sanity, of a grown man. / *When he left, he felt that something had been torn out of him. Something big.* / But Joe was dead now. Killed in a car crash. Dead as a doorknob. A Joe-shaped Hole in the Universe." AD
- (Holes) "Estha wouldn't look up. His mind was full of trains. He blocked the light from the door. An Estha-shaped Hole in the Universe." (no, train was not mentioned elsewhere) AE
- (Holes) "How marvelous!" Margaret Kochamma said. 'It's a sort of sniffing! Do the Men and Women do it to each other too?' She hadn't meant it to sound quite like that, and she blushed. An embarrassed schoolteacher-shaped Hole in the Universe." AF

- (Holes) "Esthappen and Rahel both knew that there were several perpetrators (besides themselves) that day. But only one victim. ... He left behind a Hole in the Universe through which darkness poured like liquid tar." AG
- (Holes) "She concealed her anguish under the brisk, practical mask of a schoolteacher. The stern, schoolteacher-shaped Hole in the Universe (who sometimes slapped)." AH

### 1.3.2 | Bottles and Cans

- (Bottles) "She even locked her sad, paint-flaking fridge, where she kept her week's supply of cream buns that Kochu Maria brought her from Bestbakery in Kottayam. And the two bottles of rice water that she drank instead of ordinary water." (w.r.t. Baby Kochamma) BA
- (Bottle (sealing)) "He commuted his pension and provident fund to buy a Bharat bottle-sealing machine. Mammachi just ran it like a large kitchen. Chacko had it registered as a partnership and informed Mammachi that she was the Sleeping Partner. He invested in equipment (canning machines, cauldrons, cookers) and expanded the labor force. Almost immediately, the financial slide began" BB
- (Cans) "His honor redeemed by his grandmother's cans, Estha Alone organized the rusty cans of nothing in front of the urinal. He stood on them, one foot on each, and pissed carefully, with minimal wobble. Like a Man." BC
- (Bottles (Closing)) "Sound of Music smell that Rahel remembered and treasured. Smells, like music, hold memories. She breathed deep, and bottled it up for posterity." BD
- (Bottles, and other things.) Welp welp welp this is a quote from the book so here goes nothing "He got a cold bottle and a straw. So he held a bottle in one hand and a penis in the other." BE
- (Cans) "They gave him rusted film cans in which to put the vegetables he picked. He never bargained. They never cheated him. When the vegetables had been weighed and paid for, they would transfer them to his red plastic shopping basket" BG
- (Cans) "Rahel thought of the someone who had taken the trouble to go up there with cans of paint, white for the clouds, blue for the sky, silver for the jets, and brushes, and thinner." BH
- (Bottles) "The pickled mangoes had absorbed oil and expanded, making the bottles leak." BI

### 1.3.3 | Eggs and Bubbles

- (Eggs) "Rahel had come to see her brother, Estha. They were two-egg twins. "Dizygotic" doctors called them. Born from separate but simultaneously fertilized eggs. Estha—Esthappen—was the older by eighteen minutes." CA
- (Eggs) "'I tell you, these Hindus," Baby Kochamma said piously. 'They have no sense of privacy' // 'They have horns and scaly skins,' Chacko said sarcdownyastically. 'And I've heard that their babies hatch from eggs.'"" CB
- Ok so this again. I am so sorry. (Eggs) "Then the gristly-bristly face contorted, and Estha's hand was wet and hot and sticky. It had egg white on it. White egg white. Quarter-boiled." CC
- (Eggs) "The moth on Rahel's heart lifted a downy leg. Then put it back. Its little leg was cold. A little less her mother loved her. The Sea Queen room smelled of eggs and filter coffee." CD
- (Eggs) "When the red cement floor [to the Ayemenem House] was laid, the egg whites from nearly nine hundred eggs went into it. It took a high polish." CF

- (Eggs) "War could have been the stallion that he rode, part of, if not all, the way to the Legislative Assembly, whereas victory left him no better off than when he started out. He broke the eggs but burned the omelette." CG
- (Bubbles) "Rahel ignored her and blew an inadvertent spit bubble. Ammu hated them blowing spit bubbles. She said it reminded her of Babà. Their father. She said that he used to blow spit bubbles and shiver his leg. According to Ammu, only clerks behaved like that, not aristocrats." CH
- (Bubbles) "Blowing through the straw (while his other hand moved), Estha blew bubbles into the bottle. Stickysweet lemon bubbles of the drink he couldn't drink." CI
- (Bubbles) "So once again, in the space of two weeks, bottled Fear for Estha. Chilled. Fizzed. Sometimes Things went worse with Coke. The fizz went up his nose. He burped. Rahel giggled. She blew through her straw till the drink bubbled over onto her dress. All over the floor." CJ

### 1.3.4 | Misc.

- (Floor) "The low cement pickle vats silhouetted in the gloom made the factory floor look like an indoor cemetery for the cylindrical dead." DA

## 1.4 | Claim Synthesis

### 1.4.1 | The Bin

- AA muddy water fills public works' holes in road
- AB holes in communist umbrella reveal sky?
- AD death as leaving a hole + leaving as tearing a hole
- AE Estha experiences retrobution? death? by himself
- AF British people looking down upon Indians, having been snapped at, "dies" and gets hole-y retrobution
- AG Valutha died as a victim, while bleeding black, rebtrobuting liquid from his hole
- AH Joe died, and Margret Kochamma hid that using a hole
- BA Baby Kochamma drinks weak gruel instead of water (seeking to gain small gains by taking the wastewater of rice cooking)
- BB Industrial bottling machine for sealing bottles leads to financial slide
- BD smell of movies bottled up for memories
- BE abuse as balance between bottle and um... that other thing
- BF Rahel "canned" by principle due to her childlike nature
- BG silent Estha places vegetables in film cans
- CB Chacko sarcastically relates babies of Hindus as being from eggs
- CC abuser having given Estha eggs
- CD sad sea queen where Rachel is loved less smelt of eggs
- CF egg whites as polishing the ground floor of house

- CH spit bubbles reminds Ammu of the twins' degenerate father
- CI Estha blew bubbles into abuser's drink
- CJ bubbled cold drink as fear
- DA Factory floor as gloomy after family is separated

#### 1.4.2 | The Synthesis

#### 1.4.3 | Bottles Contain Emotions

Fear was handed to Estha bottled in Two Bottles:

BE abuse as balance between bottle and um... that other thing. Which is also a bottle. Think about it a little bit harder.

- CJ first, bubbled cold drink as fear. (maybe the other (sickly sweet) quote?)
- Of half-cooked eggwhites — of deformed love. => CC abuser having given Estha eggs as a product of love.

#### 1.4.4 | Bottled Emotions are Handled to Little Gain

Items, once bottled up, are frequently handled by characters overprotective of the bottled emotions in order to gain often minimal results.

BA Baby Kochamma — the opportunist that also loses the big picture — drinks weak gruel locked away instead of water (seeking to gain small gains by taking the wastewater of rice cooking) — literally valuing the wastewater of a pauper.

In order to prove his manhood, Estha BC attempting to carefully ride above emotions (cans). This restraint of emotions ("sing outside"), of course, lead to him being abused.

#### 1.4.5 | The Bottling Process Ultimately Leads to Downfall

Right before the abuse, Rahel attempted to capture the final remnants of her positive emotion into a "bottle", BD smell of movies bottled up for memories. Unfortunately, this did not end well with the abuse.

BB Industrial bottling machine for sealing bottles leads to financial slide: mass-processing emotions does not land well => DA Factory floor as gloomy after family is separated — lack of love, of egg-whites that shone the floor CF

\*Through tracking characters' use of the bottle as an instrument to preserve strong emotions in the *God of Small Things* — namely, that of love, as represented by the Egg, and of fear, as with Bubbles — the novel paints a cautionary tale against the forcible containment of raw emotions which will lead to a depressive and gloomy downfall.\*

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There is always UCLA Writing Lab