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The Relationship of the Siblings in Danielle Steel and Arundhati Roy's Novels: A Comparative Study

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INTRODUCTION

Literature extracts the innermost feelings of both the reader as well as the writer and the chore of literature is to entrust a positive thought to the readers. It is the task of literature to involve the readers into the work and allow him/her to experience the feel of the characters. Novels can do the task of involving the readers into it to an extent than the other domains of literature such as poetry and prose. Moreover, the readers associate their own viewpoint and concern it to their own lives and burgeon from the essentials given by the work.

Danielle Fernande Dominique Schuelien Steel, the fourth placed author among the top ten highest earning authors according to forbes.com release, is known for her romantic novels. Steel, born on 14th August 1947, New York City better known as Danielle Steel, though is tagged as American romantic novelist is an author of family drama. Steel's novels have been sold more than 580 million copies worldwide and she is the eighth best selling writer of all time. Her novels have been on the New York Times bestseller list for over 390 consecutive weeks. She has conquered the hearts of millions of readers all over the world with her heart-throbbing novels.

In many of her novels the relationship of brothers and sisters is displayed with authenticity. She has been opening up the siblings bond in an ardent way, the instances being the bond of the four sisters in '**Sisters**', Olivia and Victoria Henderson in '**Mirror Image**' and Edwina and her siblings in '**No Greater Love**'.

This paper is an attempt to compare Danielle Steel's "**No Greater Love**" with Arundhati Roy's "**The God of Small Things**" as the latter shows the different trait of siblings love. Arundhati Roy in her first work, "**The God of Small Things**" which bagged the Booker prize award has rendered a different notion of sibling's relationship as she deals with twins who are separated at the age of seven. Rahel, one of the twins, who returns from US meets her other twin Estha, who has become eternally silent with the events from her childhood and summons up her childhood memories.

DANIELLE STEEL'S WORK OF ART NO GREATER LOVE AND ARUNDHATHI ROY'S MASTER PIECE "THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS"

Steel in her work **"No Greater Love"** demonstrates a zealous rapport between sisters and brothers as the protagonist, the elder sister, Edwina Winfield, takes the place of a mother of her five brothers and sisters after the sudden demise of her parents pledging her life to the welfare of her younger brothers and sisters. Roy's portrays relationship between the siblings in Ammu and Chacko who censure each other for their own adversities and Rahel and Estha who at last have a sensual relationship.

The novel **"No Greater Love"** enhances the thought of conviction among the siblings as even at the age of twenty after she has lost her parents and fiancé in a harrowing moment, Edwina dispenses with her idea of getting married or rethinking her life. As the custodian for the young children, she encounters so many convolutions in raising them as noble children and stands for all of them when they need her.

Roy's **"The God of Small Things"** presents the two vital characters Ammu and Chacko, who besides being brothers and sisters does not feel for the distress of the other. When Ammu leaves her husband and returns to Ayemenem, but that does not bother Chacko in any way as he is concerned with his own life, his broken marriage and his daughter and does not get to help his sister. He does not take any steps to set his sister's life well or to get her remarried or to secure his niece and nephew's lives.

Though Steel's protagonist Edwina feels the loneliness she composes herself showing no angst to her brothers or sisters or even to Ben, her father's friend, who stands with her. Edwina not only composes herself but helps her siblings to take decisions in a persuasive manner. She does not give way to any feelings or thoughts that would disturb the lives of her brothers and sisters and would break her up from her siblings. But Roy's protagonist Ammu does not even think of her family or children and gets into an affair with Velutha. She not only brings disgrace to the family but death to her lover Velutha. She puts her feelings before her own children and holds them responsible for her hardships and calls them the "millstones around her neck". She feels that it is because of her children that she could not have a life with Velutha and shows hatred towards them.

Steel's Edwina Winfield is taken aback on Philip's decision to enroll himself in the army, but deems that her siblings should lead their life as per their own wish and gives him consent to join the war. Consequently she loses him in the war, and above all she loses the moral support from the eldest male member of the family. But she musters all her energy to bring her other siblings up with the same courage she had when she lost her parents and her fiancé. But Roy's

character Chacko, brother of the protagonist Ammu, manipulated by their aunt Baby Kochamma, sends Ammu and her children out of the house. In Roy's novel the brother thinks egotistically in comparison to Steel's Edwina who gives all to her siblings.

Steel in her novel presents George, another of Edwina's brother who wants to step into Hollywood as a studio in charge, though Edwina wanted anyone of the two to take over the family business. Although she initially thinks of imparting the newspaper, which she and her father had enriched, to Phillip she confronts his loss in the war in Europe. Despite the fact that she crumbles, she recuperates from the situation to see her hopes of George taking up the charge is trampled as she ascertains that he too is not interested in it. As Edwina does not want to impede in the free will of her siblings she goes by his choice not only consenting him for becoming a production assistant but also espouses him when he wants to marry Helen, his girlfriend.

In Arundhati Roy's character Chacko, the elder brother of the protagonist does not understand the feelings of his sister as Edwina in Steel's *No Greater Love*. When the family finds out the relationship of Ammu and Velutha, Chacko also joins the family in separating them and in locking her up in the room. Steel's character Edwina gives her whole life to her brothers and sisters and puts forth the welfare of them before her own but Roy's characters Ammu and Chacko do not maintain a close relationship among themselves and they are very much self-centered in their decisions.

Steel through her protagonist Edwina shows a different aspect of siblings' relationship as Edwina acts softer to her younger sister but she realizes her blunder of granting free will to her little sister, Alexis to enter Hollywood as an actress at the age of seventeen and tries to fix it. Furthermore, she takes up the challenge of finding her naive sister Alexis who has run off with Malcolm Stone, a crook whom she had met in Los Angeles, to London. She faces her worst fear of travelling through the sea yet she travels to London so that she could bring back her sister from the intricacy she has pushed her into. She tracks her down and confronts the felon Malcolm Stone, expounds her sister of all the pros and cons of her act and brings her back to San Francisco.

But in the case of Ammu and Chacko, they don't show the care or concern about each other's life but to be egotistic about their own life. Ammu is very much concerned of her relationship with Velutha that she feels that her children to be a burden to her. Ammu censures the twins for her misfortune and calls them the "millstones around her neck". Edwina in Steel's novel treats her brothers and sisters as her own children while Roy projects her protagonist Ammu to hate her children for her ill fortune.

Moreover in the case of Rahel and Estha, though they do not have an apathetic relationship among each other like Ammu and Chacko, they long to

meet each other for more than twenty years and when they meet up they have a close and concealed relationship among each other.

Edwina believes that god has destined her to devote her life for the welfare of her brothers and sisters. But when she meets Patrick she learns that there is still time left for her to love and have a life of her own. Yet, she does not feel that she should remove herself from the love of her brothers and sisters.

It is absolutely enticing on the part of all the brothers and sisters in **“No Greater Love”** as they regard the feelings of the other siblings as their preference and act towards their goal. **“No Greater Love”** by all ways is a perfect piece of literature to be rendered for the readers as it imparts all the virtuous deeds they should follow in their life.

ANALYSIS OF DANIELLE STEEL AND ARUNDHATHI ROY WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR NOVELS

Danielle Steel an American novelist in her novel **“No Greater Love”** advocates an ardent way of affinity among the siblings which not only shows the reverence and esteem the brothers and sisters have for each other and the bond though highlighted on a strong way would not deviate in concealed way. The siblings advocate a deferential tie between themselves in contrast to the siblings presented by Arundhathi Roy in her novel **“The God of Small Things”**. The siblings in Roy’s novel, Ammu and Chacko as well as Rahel and Estha uphold contrasting relationship among themselves. Ammu and Chacko have hostile liaison with each other and Roy presents siblings of inconsiderate nature in them on the contrary a clandestine relationship between Rahel and Estha.

As Roy portrays sibling’s love in two distinct ways which do not initiate any type of veneration in the minds of readers for the siblings, Steel’s character Edwina earns the high regard in the reader’s mind for her sacrifice and allegiance towards her brothers and sisters.

As **“The God of Small Things”** teaches callous relationships among the siblings, Danielle Steel’s **“No Greater love”** handles siblings’ love in such a way that the reader finds great waves that he is forced to deem the protagonist Edwina as the mother of her brothers and sisters.

CONCLUSION

Danielle Steel in her novel **“No Greater Love”** unveils the sanguine traits of Siblings relationship as compared to Arundhathi Roy in **“The God of Small Things”**. Though, the protagonists in both the novels endure a lot in their life it is Edwina, Danielle steel’s heroine, who thrives in all the trials and tribulations of her life as a subjugator.

In contrast to, Arundhathi Roy it is Danielle Steel who exhibits a great bond among brothers and sisters which interests the readers. It is the ability of the

protagonist Edwina to handle the situations in life that wins over as Arundhati Roy's protagonists. The siblings in Steel's novel brings to view of the strong but devoted relationship among the brothers and sisters and they would all sacrifice their own lives for the welfare of the other brothers and sisters but Roy presents two types of sibling relationship of either to have a hatred towards each other or to have sexual relationship with each other.

The characters in the "The God of Small Things" regard the welfare of their own lives as the foremost intent but in "**No Greater Love**" the siblings lead their life in such a manner that they are inseparable till the as only death could part them from each other. Danielle Steel not only presents the relationship as an intense and resilient one but the one which would concede the whole life for the other brothers and sisters.

Probing the styles of both the novelists it is implicit that Steel handles her characters in a seamless way against Roy's way of exposé of the characters. This paper has analyzed the two authors through their presentation of sibling characters.

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