



**The Evolution of the Feminine
Figure in *Papeles de Pandora* (1976)
By Rosario Ferré**



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Agenda

- Research Questions
- Research Purpose
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Analysis
- Acknowledgements
- Bibliography
- Q&A

Research Questions

- ❖ How does Rosario Ferré use short stories to represent Puerto Rican women's reality during the 20th century?
- ❖ How does Rosario Ferré use her short stories to critique the sexual objectification of women?

Research Objectives

- ❖ To examine the evolution of the female figure and gender roles in Puerto Rican literature and society.
- ❖ To understand the feminine liberalist alternatives for empowerment within patriarchal society in Puerto Rico
- ❖ To highlight the autonomous evolution of women through fictional narratives that reflect everyday life in the 1970s

Literature Review

❖ Feminism

➤ The Puerto Rican feminist movement began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

➤ Aimed to discover a new world outside patriarchal norms.

➤ Ana Roque was the pioneer of Puerto Rican feminism.

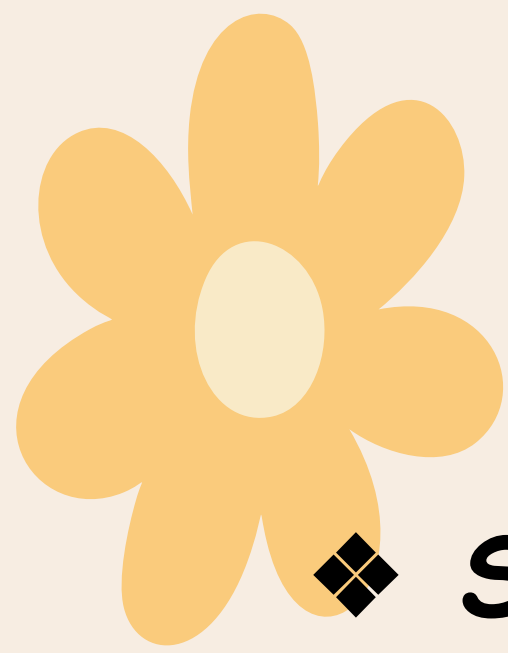
(Jara; Guzmán 27)



Umbral.urrp.edu



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Sexuality



❖ Stereotypes

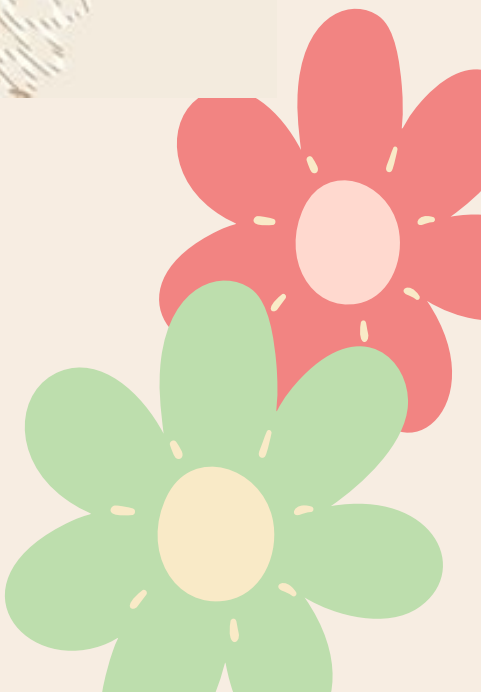
❖ Labels

- The "angel of the home"
- The prostitute
- The pejorative term
"whore" (Cruz Cámara 8,9)

❖ Gender roles



ladoduecoqutte.blogspot.com



Women's Socioeconomic Roles

- ❖ Work is the only thing that can guarantee complete freedom.
- ❖ Positive development of women's rights.
- ❖ Limitation and the perception of stagnation because of chauvinist ideologies.
- ❖ Fight for women's equality.

(Warren, 167)



Autonomy

- ❖ Exploration of identity and freedom
- ❖ Literary Representation
- ❖ Social validation as a collective (Navas 128; Pacheco 356)



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Methodology

- ❖ Author: Rosario Ferré
- ❖ 20th century (1970s)
- ❖ Book title: *Papeles de Pandora* (1976)

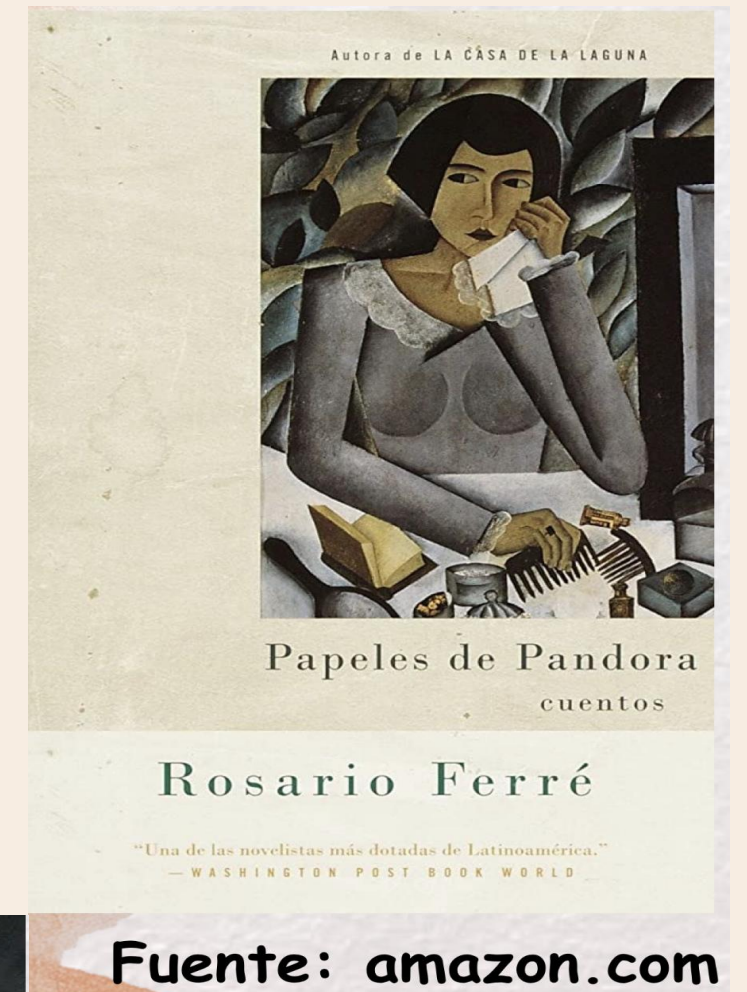
Papeles de Pandora

"The Youngest Doll"

"Amalia"

"When Women Love Men"

"The Poisoned Story"



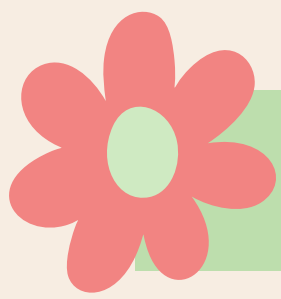
Fuente:nyt.com

- ❖ (1938 - 2016) born in Ponce, Puerto Rico
- ❖ Novelist, critic, poet and professor
- ❖ Popular Magazine *Zona de carga y descarga* (*Loading and Unloading Zone*)
- ❖ Awards
 - Ferré won the first prize in a short story contest of the Ateneo Puertorriqueño in 1974.
 - She was the recipient of the "Liberatur Prix" award in 1992 from the Frankfurt Book Fair for "*Kristallzucker*," the German translation of *Maldito Amor/ Sweet Diamond Dust*.
 - In 1997, Ferré was also awarded an honorary doctorate from Brown University.



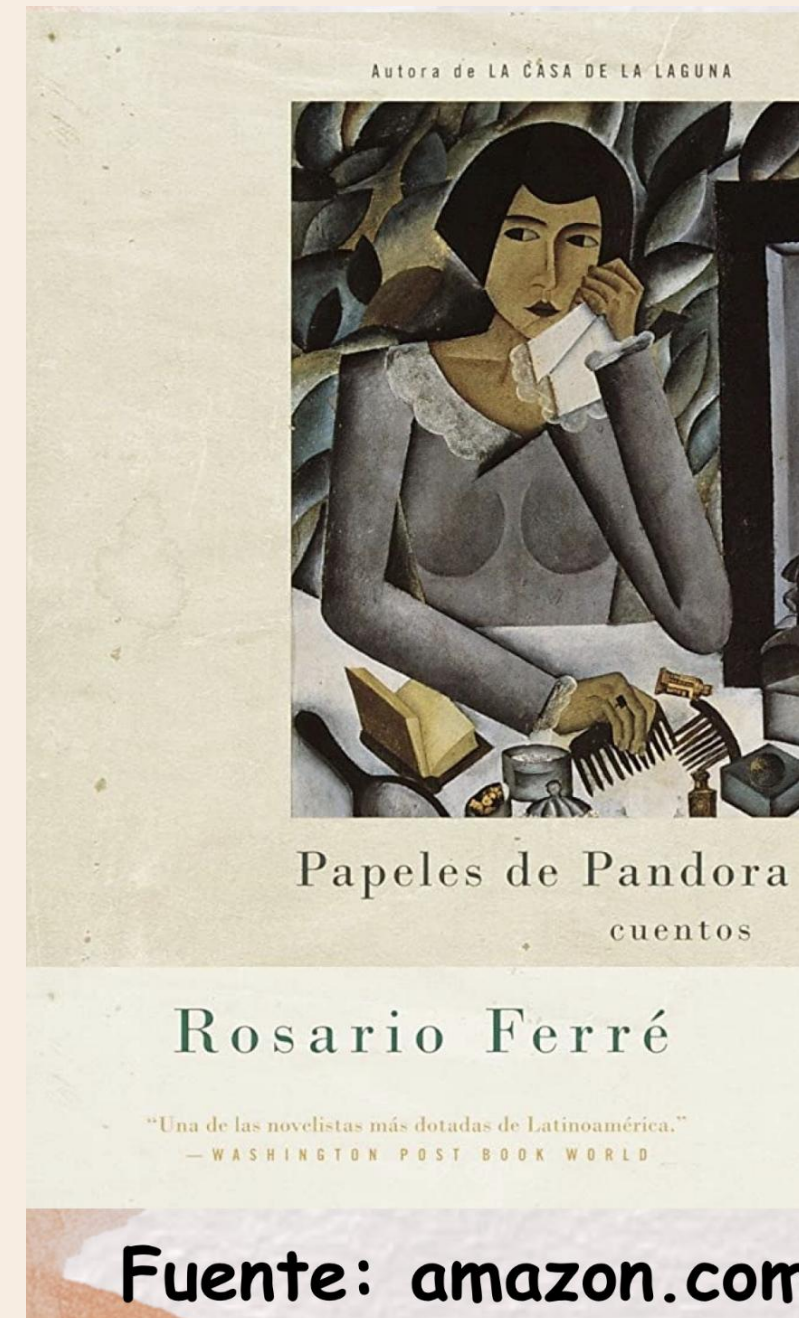
Fuente: [nyt.com](https://www.nytimes.com)

Author's Biography



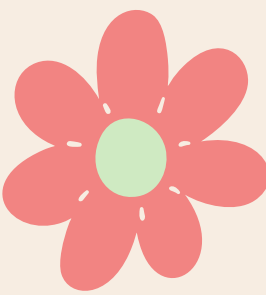
Analysis of Papeles de Pandora

- ❖ Reference to the Greek myth of the goddess Pandora
- ❖ The use of the word "Papeles" (Roles) works as a reference to gender roles.



Unprofesor.com

Analysis of "The Youngest Doll"



❖ Structure

- ❖ **Environment:** Sugarcane bourgeois class
- ❖ **Main characters:** The maiden aunt, the youngest niece, the young doctor
- ❖ **Plot:** Both doctors take advantage of the aunt's physical and economic vulnerability. The young doctor marries the youngest niece to ascend among the sugarcane society of the region.
- ❖ **Literary resources**
 - Personification of the doll
- ❖ **Symbolism**
 - Doll: Beauty
 - River prawn: Colonizer
 - Doll's materials: Economic position of female characters
(*Papeles de Pandora* 1,8)



Analysis of "Amalia"

❖ Structure

- ❖ Environment: Upper class belonging to the militia and human trafficking (prostitution)
- ❖ Main Character: Amalia
- ❖ Plot: Amalia faces social and sexual abuse from her uncle and seeks freedom
- ❖ Literary resources
- ❖ Symbolism
 - Doll: Sexual rebellion against gender roles and stereotypes
 - White: Purity and female chastity

(Papeles de Pandora 61,77)



Pinterest.com

Analysis of "When Women Love Men"

❖ Structure

- ❖ **Environment:** Sugarcane industry bourgeois class and prostitution that leads to socioeconomic growth
- ❖ **Main Characters:** Isabel Luberza and Isabel la Negra
- ❖ **Plot:** Both female characters are in dispute over the love and inheritance of Ambrose, who divides it equally for his wife and lover.
- ❖ **Literary resources:**
 - ❖ **Symbolism:**
 - **Doll:** The sexual objectification and oppression of women
 - ❖ **Interior monologue:** Representation of the merger of both female characters
 - ❖ **Metaphor:** Two women, one soul
 - **Isabel Luberza:** Representation of the pure woman
 - **Isabel la Negra:** "La puta" ("the whore," pejorative term) for expressing her sexuality

(Papeles de Pandora 22,41)



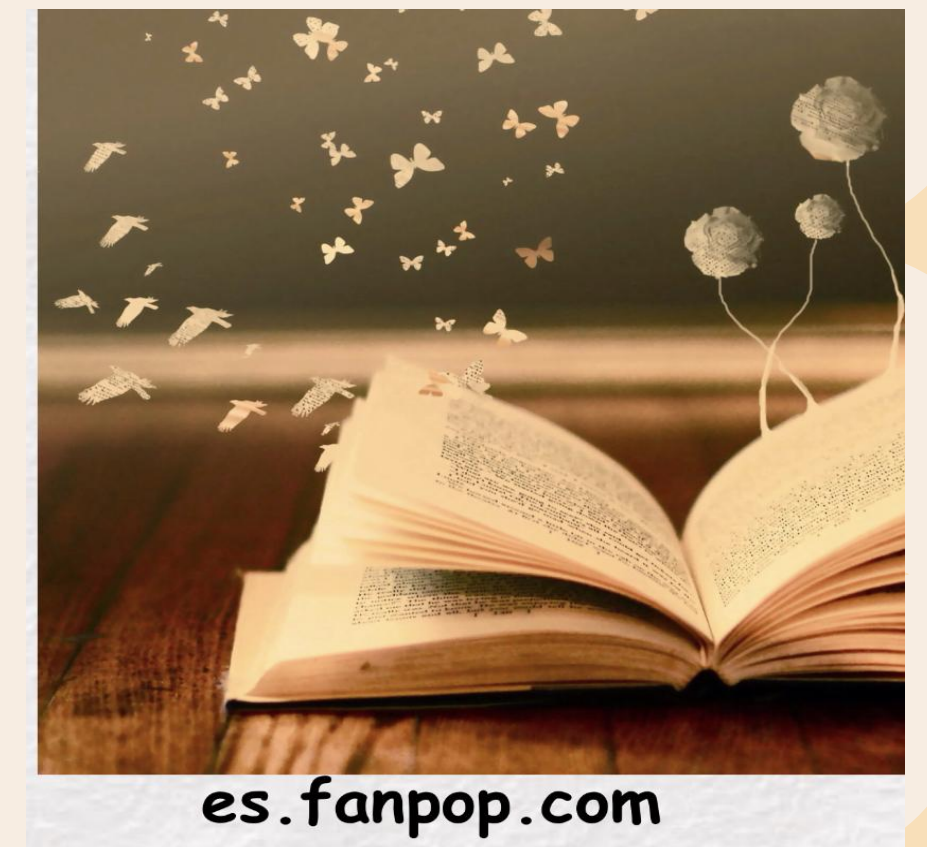
❖ [Pinterest.es](https://www.pinterest.es)

Analysis of "The Poisoned Story"

❖ Structure

- ❖ Main characters: Mr. Lorenzo, Rosa, Rosaura
- ❖ Environment: Sugarcane industry bourgeois class, and social climbing through Rosa's entrepreneurship in the fashion industry.
- ❖ Plot: Rosa and Don Lorenzo (widower) marry and move to the hacienda. After the economic problems of Don Lorenzo, Rosa takes the reins of the household to support the family.
- ❖ Literary resources:
 - ❖ Symbolism:
 - Doll: Beauty
 - The books: Fantasy and illusion
- ❖ Non-linear narrative: Time

(*Papeles de Pandora* 229, 242)

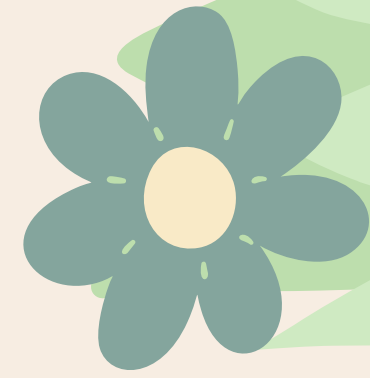


Results

❖ Economic Role

- High acquisitive power in female characters
- Export and possession of materials of great monetary value
- Progress in the public sphere and monetarily
- The narratives break the convention of gender roles





Sexuality

- ❖ Discovery of body autonomy
- ❖ Rebellion against the bylaws
 - Chastity and purity
 - The colonized body
- ❖ Sexual liberation and independence



Autonomy

- ❖ Polysemic symbolism of "the doll"
 - Women's liberation
 - Tragic endings
- ❖ Condemnation of subversive women
- ❖ Greek mythology: Greek goddess Pandora



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Expression of Gratitude

Questions & Answers

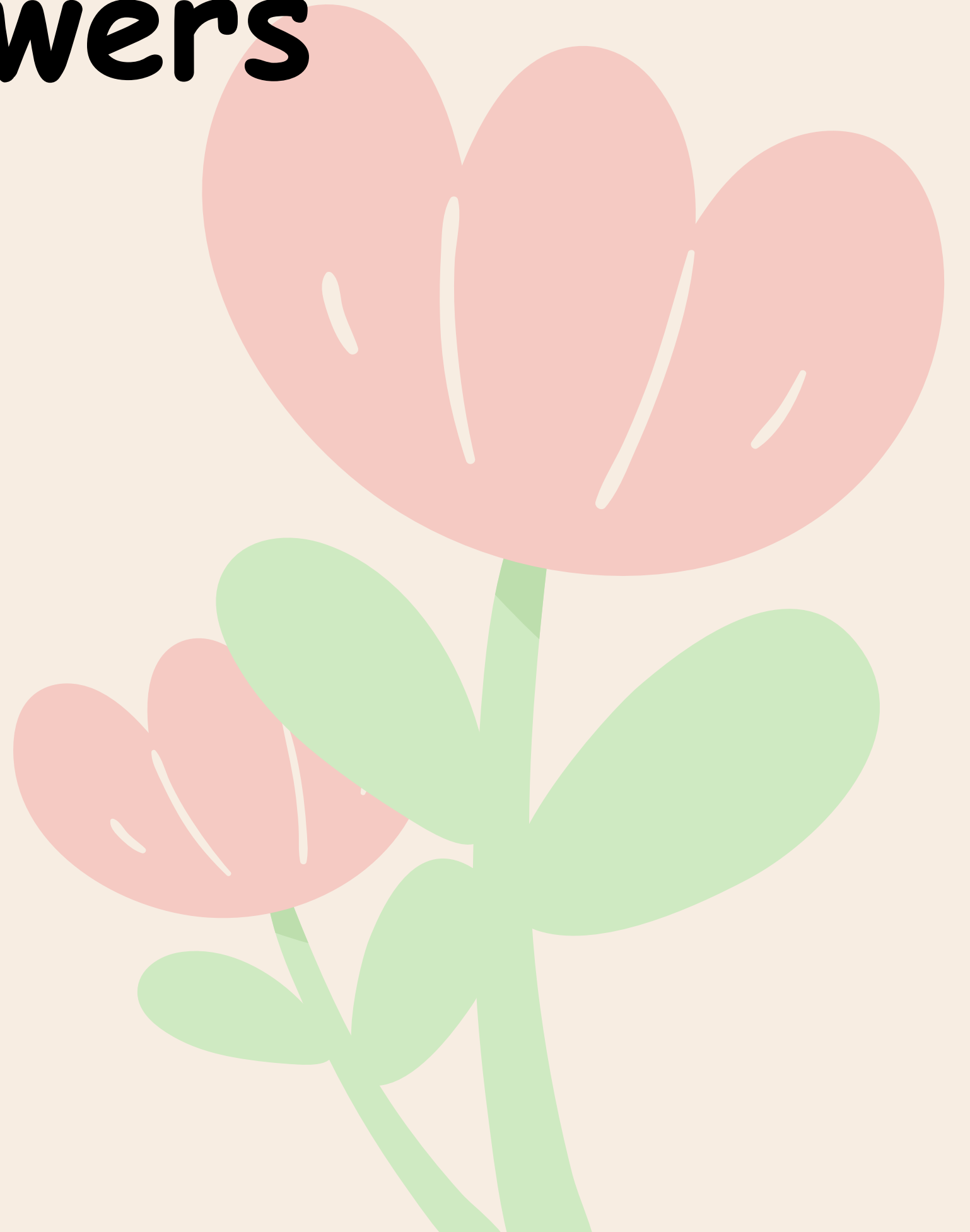
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