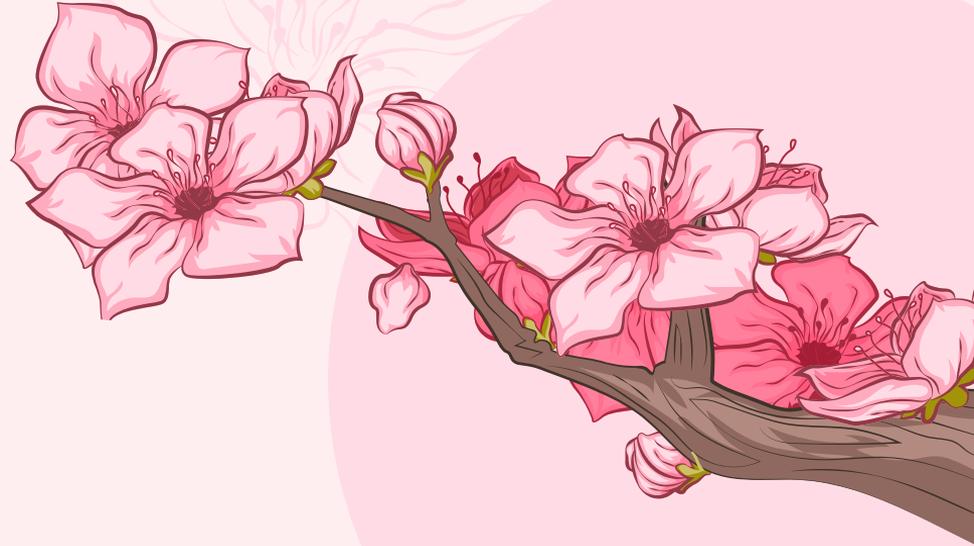


The Crimson Petal and the White



Meghan Lovely

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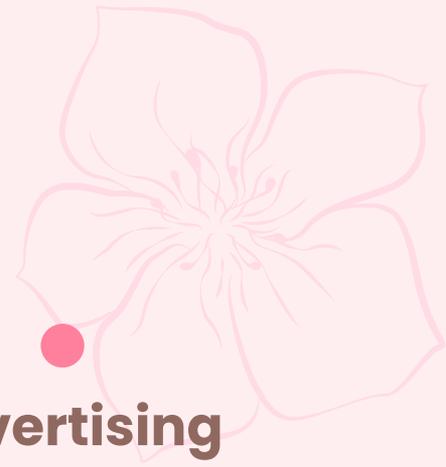
●
Fashion

●
**Beauty
Standards**

●
Advertising

●
'Sugar'

●
**Character
Study**



Fashion

Fashion changed pretty dramatically around this time and in a section focused on the Season I want to take a minute to look at what Agnes and Sugar would have worn in their first Seasons.



The 1875 Look
Tight fitting sleeves
Long waistlines
Corset

Smaller bustles and longer trains



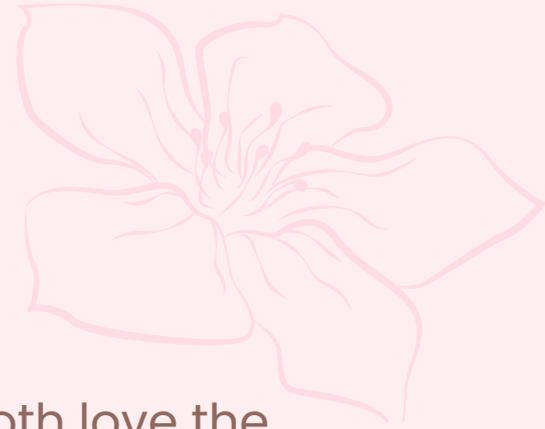
Afternoon Dresses



Evening Dresses

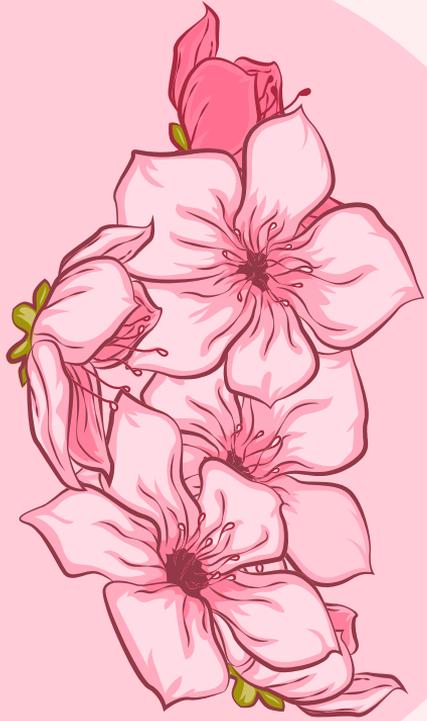
Character Comparison

Sugar and Agnes both love the Season, but for very different reasons, what does this show about their characters and the class system in general?



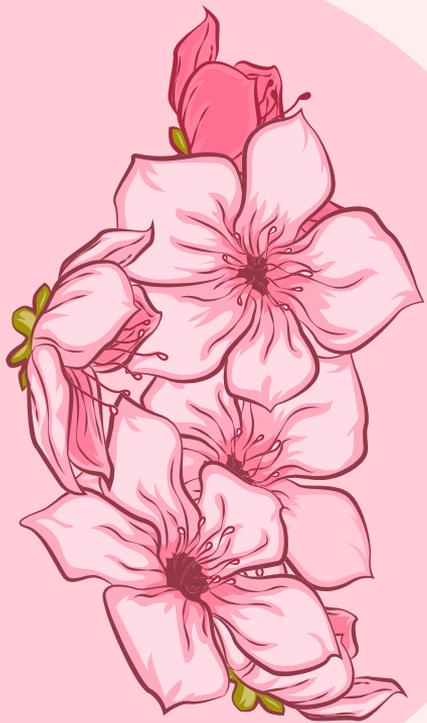


Mourning Dresses



“Anxious to attract as little attention as possible, Sugar has adopted a strict policy of sober dress. Her wardrobe once so sumptuous in its greens blues and bronzes, has faded to shades of grey and brown; she walks on the stylish side of mourning. Against such dusky hues the redness of her hair is a curse rather than a blessing, and her skin appears pale and sickly.”

—Sugar p. 393



“I am relieved to read that you deplore the fuss of Mourning as much as I do. Isn’t it tiresome? I am to be in crape for three months, in black for two, and then in half mourning for another month after that.”

—Agnes p. 512

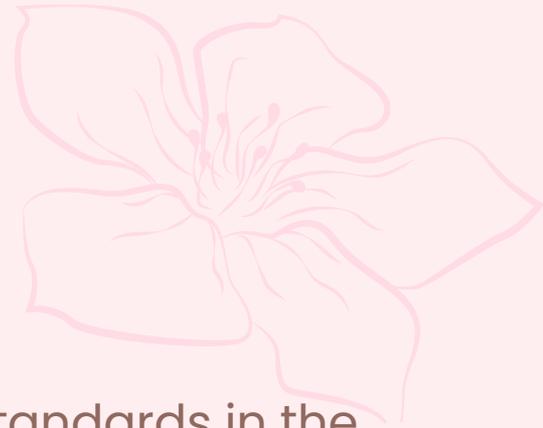
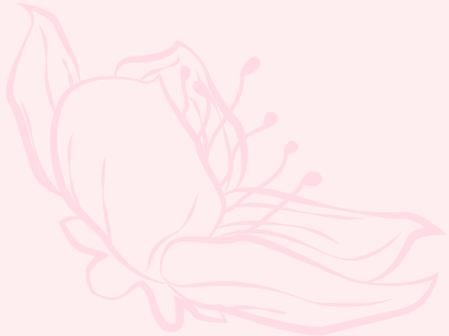
Beauty Standards

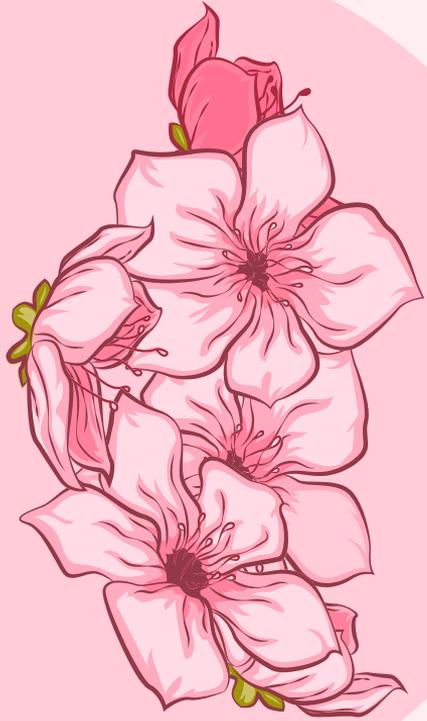
- No body hair- depilatory treatments were popular
- Blonde- bleaching was in its infancy
- Curls- using hairpieces or the new curling irons
- Pale skin- avoid the sun and use face powder
- Hourglass figure- corsets and extreme diets



A Reflection of Society

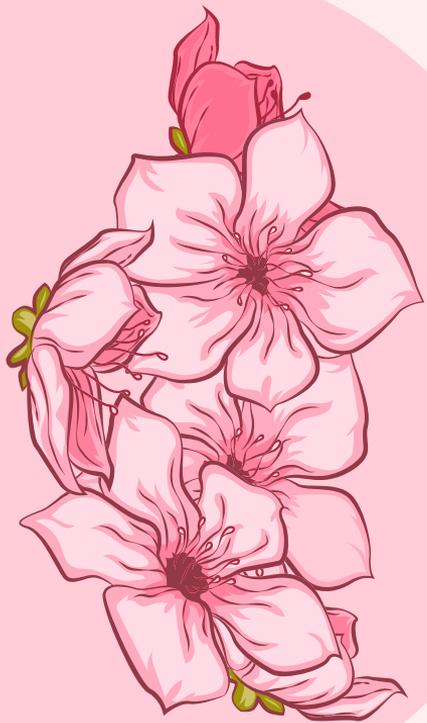
Looking at beauty standards in the 1870s, not much appears to have changed. What does that say about Western society and about people in general?





“Today, in Agnes’s parlour, she was thin as a reed, with a flawless white complexion. Of course Agnes, mad with curiosity, longed to sweep politeness aside and *ask*, but in the end, Mrs Amphlett volunteered the secrets, namely: (1) a diet of water, raw carrot and mouthfuls of oxtail soup, and (2) Rowlands’ Kalydor Lotion, with a little ‘finishing off’ from a face powder.”

—p. 512

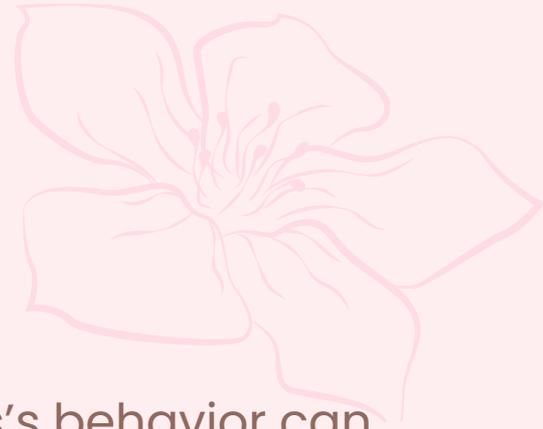


“The near-skeletal arms and waist given her by her illness are exactly what the times require... A segment of fruit and a slice or two of cold meat are quite filling, she’s found, especially in conjunction with a dose of that sweet blue tincture recommended by Mrs. Gooch. Alone in bed at night, Agnes takes especial pleasure in counting her ribs.”

—Agnes p. 387-388

Agnes

How much of Agnes's behavior can be attributed not to her brain tumor, but to her drug addiction? How much is due to her eating disorder?



Agnes

Think about the diet culture and disordered eating shown in the novel in relation to class and social status.



FOR MOTH PAT. HES,
FRECKLES,

AND TAN ask your Druggist
for Perry's Moth and Freckle
Lotion. It is reliable.

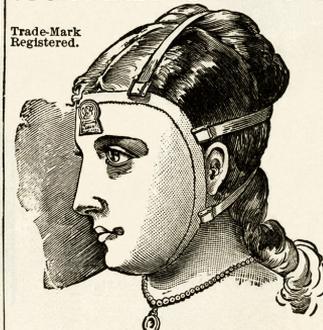
FOR PIMPLES ON THE
FACE,

Blackheads or Fleshworms,
Perry's Improved Comed
and Pimple Remedy—the G
Skin Medi ine, or consult
B. C. PERRY, 49 Bond Str
New York. 1016



MADAM
ROWLEY'S TOILET MASK
(OR FACE GLOVE)

Trade-Mark
Registered.



Is used by ladies of refinement everywhere for
*beautifying and preserving the skin and removing
complexional imperfections.* It has been wonder-
fully successful for 21 years at home and abroad.
Made of *pure and approved materials*, it is *recom-
mended by well-known medical and scientific au-
thorities.* The Toilet Mask is the only *time-tested,
safe and natural beautifier.* It is *soft and pliable*
and can be *easyly, comfortably and privately worn.*

COMPLEXION BLEMISHES may be hidden im-
perfectly by cosmetics and powders, but can only
be removed permanently by the Toilet Mask. By
its use every kind of spots, impurities, roughness,
wrinkles, etc., vanish from the skin, leaving it soft,
clear, brilliant and beautiful. It is a Toilet *treasure*,
costs little and saves its user money. Famous
society ladies, actresses, belles, etc., use it.

VALUABLE ILLUSTRATED PAMPHLET, with
proofs and full particulars, mailed free by

The Toilet Mask or (Face Glove) in
position to the face.
To be Worn Three Times in the Week.

THE TOILET MASK CO.

1164 Broadway,

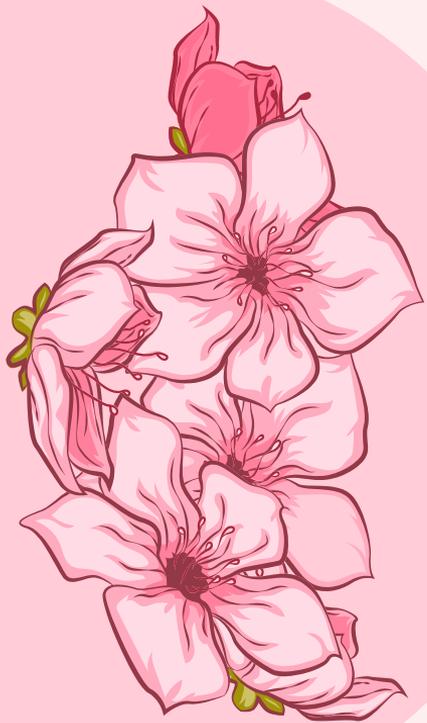
NEW YORK.

1870s Advertising



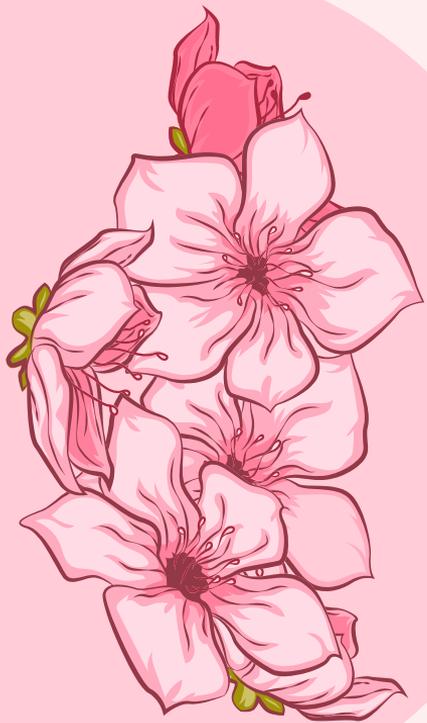
Perfume Packaging





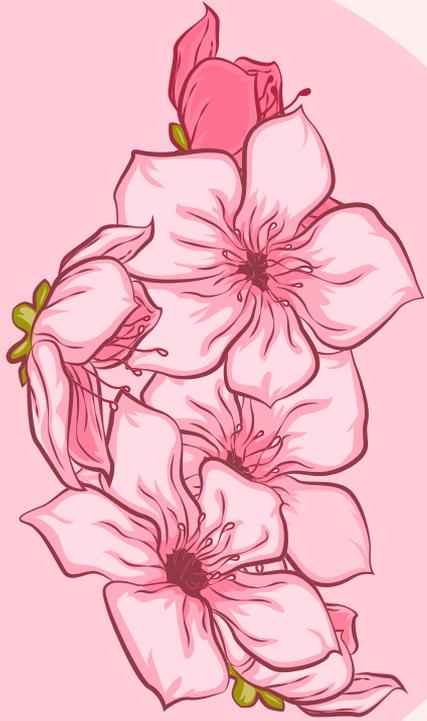
“So much luxury, in such excess! An essence she might purchase in a tiny phial for a considerable sum is so abundant here at its source, that it’s no doubt poured roughly into barrels and the over spills trampled into mud—or so she fancies.”

—Sugar p. 330



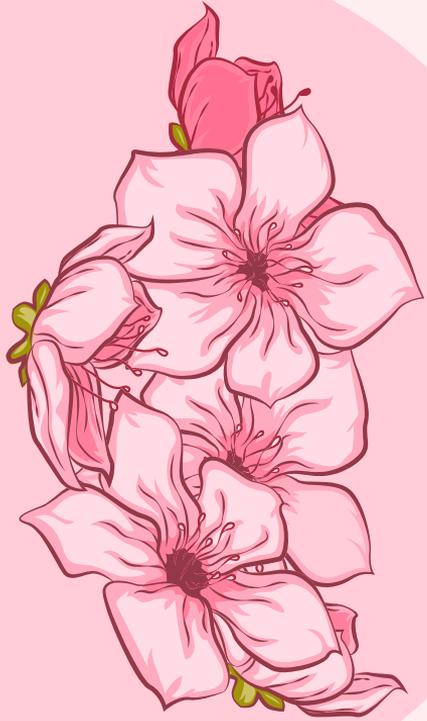
“‘...Me own mother ‘ad some Rackham’s perfume as I recall, for special occasions.’ She narrows her eyes at a memory as distant as the moon. ‘One bottle lasts a year!’ ‘No, no,’ says Sugar, (making a mental note to advise William to expunge that vulgar motto from Rackham advertising)...”

—Caroline and Sugar p. 519



“The new Rackham’s catalogue is a great success, purged entirely of the old man’s crude turns of phrase, and now so much improved by Sugar’s elegant suggestions that there’s been a notable increase in orders from the gentry.”

—p. 421



“...Why not turn your thoughts to the things about Pears you *can* compete with, like... well, like the pretty illustrations on their posters and labels. They’re *very* popular, you know: I’ll wager half the reason so many people are partial to Pears is the appeal of those pictures.”

—Sugar p. 421

PEARS' SOAP

HEALTHFUL SKIN.
GOOD COMPLEXION

SOFT, WHITE BEAUTIFUL HANDS.

PEARS SOAP PREVENTS REDNESS & ROUGHNESS & CHAPPING

PEARS SOAP. THE PUREST & MOST DURABLE TOILET SOAP. HENCE THE BEST & CHEAPEST.

Pear's Soap

THE WORLD RENOWNED

ENGLISH COMPLEXION SOAP

ESTABLISHED 1856

LONDON 100 YEARS. INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

A BRIGHT HEALTHFUL SKIN AND COMPLEXION ENSURED BY USING PEAR'S SOAP.

AS INTRODUCED BY THE GREAT BRITISH AGENCY OF THE SOAP, PROF. SIR ERASMUS WILSON, F. R. S., F. R. C. S., F. R. C. P., OF THE SOLE CO. OF ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND ALL OTHER LEADING AGENTS OF THE SOAP.

UNTOLD BEAUTIFUL LAZES, INCLUDING THE LITTLE LAMBY, BEHOLDEN ITS VERTUE AND PEAR'S SOAP TO ANY OTHER.

Testimonial from Miss Anna Augusta PATT.

"I HAVE FOUND IT WATCHFUL FOR THE HANDS AND COMPLEXION."

PEAR'S SOAP IS FOR SALE THROUGHOUT THE CIVILIZED WORLD.

PEARS' SOAP

PERFECTLY PURE

THE BEST & THE CHEAPEST

THE FAMOUS ENGLISH COMPLEXION SOAP

SEE the *Illustration* WRITTEN

London, Dec. 24, 1883.

"I have used your Soap for two years with the greatest satisfaction, for I find it the very best."
"TO MESSRS. PEARS."
MARY ANDERSON.

NOTHING ADDS SO MUCH TO PERSONAL APPEARANCE — As a Bright, Clear Complexion and a Soft Skin. With these the pleasant business success connects. Witness them, the testimonials on our costly Soap. Every complexion is suited by our purest *Alkaline and Colored Toilet Soap*.

PEARS' SOAP

A SPECIALTY for the SKIN & COMPLEXION. Is recommended by the greatest English authority on the Skin, Prof. SIR ERASMUS WILSON, F. R. S.

For Sale throughout the CIVILIZED WORLD. 15 INTERNATIONAL AWARDS.

KEEPS THE PORES OPEN — KEEPS THE SKIN SOFT.

ESTABLISHED 100 YEARS IN LONDON

HANDS SOAP

COMPLEXION

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY JOURNAL. March 23, 1890.

Pear's Soap

The Purest best for the skin & most economical in use

PEARS

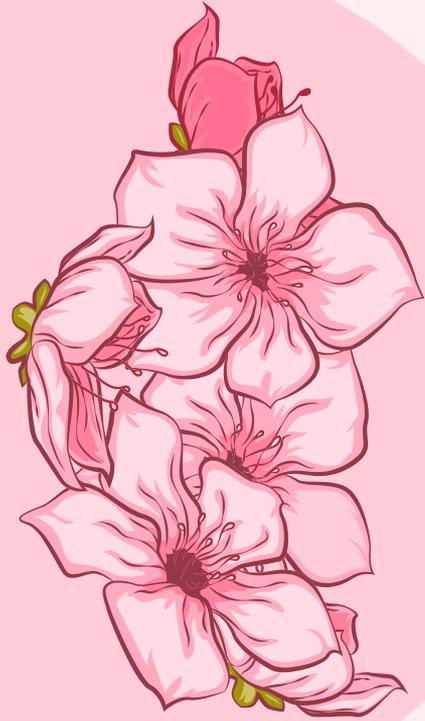
SOAPMAKERS BY APPOINTMENT TO H.R.H. the PRINCE OF WALES.

Pears Advertisements

Advertising in the Novel

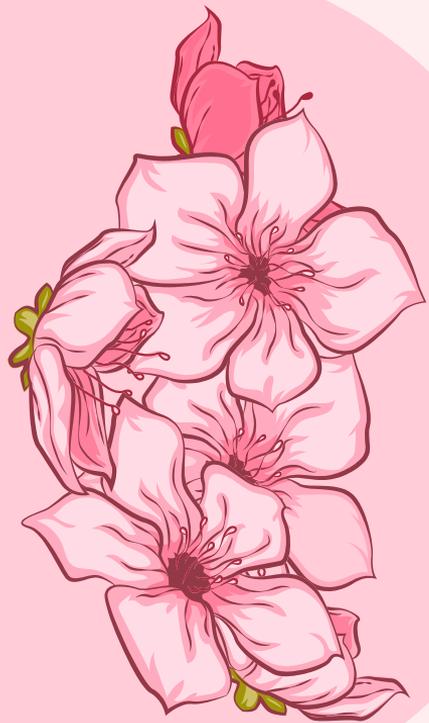
So, as we can see in the novel advertisement of products and Victorian beauty standards are very important in the novel, and Sugar is well-versed in both. Not only because she is a female consumer that these are aimed at, but also because of her status as a sex worker.





“Anyhow, the underlying principles of commerce are so simple, even an imbecile could understand them: convince your customers you’re generous when in fact you’re forcing them to pay dear for what you have produced cheap. Conversation with a boring man likewise has its underlying principles. Principle One: humbly apologize for your ignorance, even when you know what he’s about to explain. Principle Two: at the point when he grows weary of explaining, appear to grasp everything in an instant.”

—Sugar p. 317

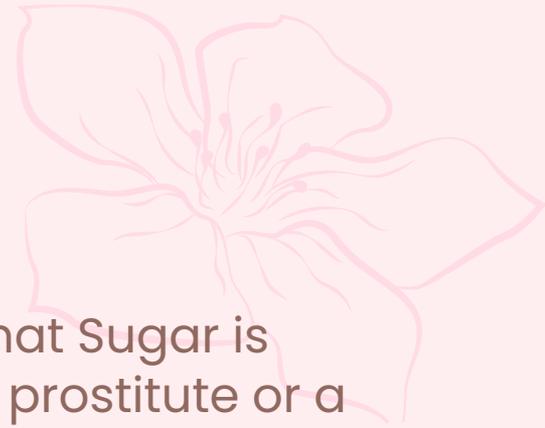


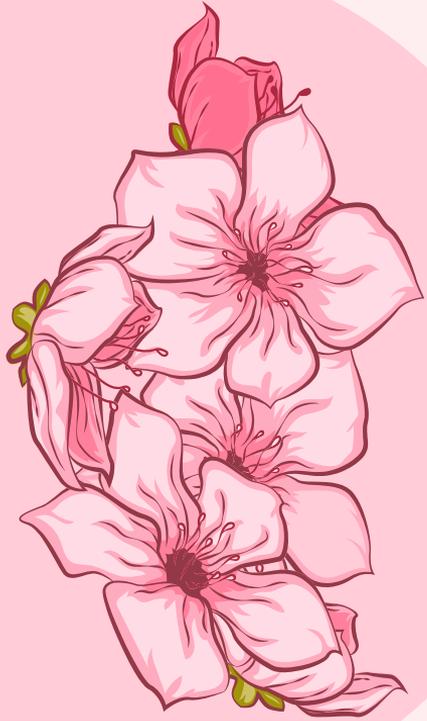
“My, my: all this devotion – caused by one li'l entry in *More Sprees in London*. Ah, the power of... of advertising!”

—William p. 377

Sugar

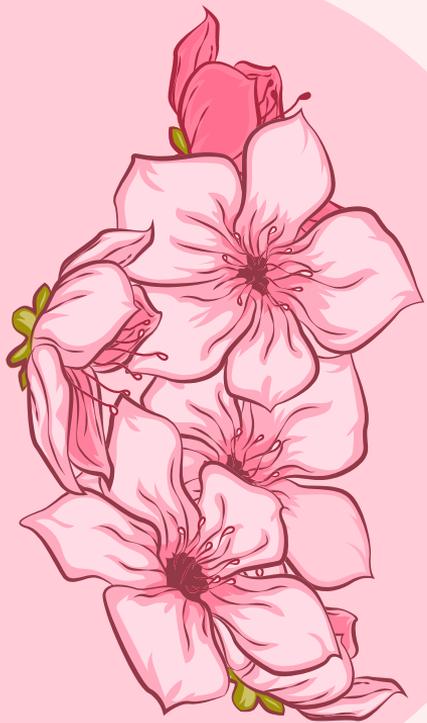
But, I would argue that Sugar is more than simply a prostitute or a mistress. I think that the key to her identity lies within her name. Sugar can be read as a 'sugar baby.' She does far more than simply have sex with William, she provides him with 'the girlfriend experience.'





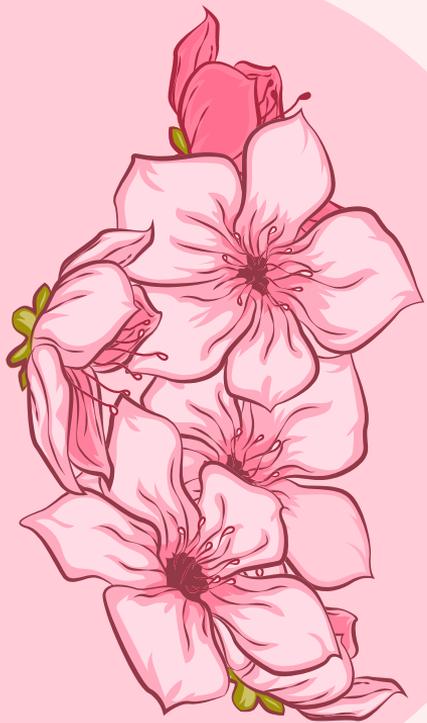
“She can try to wash the ink out – and if it doesn’t go, or if she can’t be bothered, well she can buy a new dress. Another envelope from William’s bank arrived this morning, to add to the others in the bottom drawer of her dresser.”

—Sugar p. 359



“She reminds herself that if William should decide to cast her out of this luxurious nest, she’d be homeless and without income...”

—Sugar p. 443



“How dreadfully tired you look!’ she observes, in a tone of lavish commiserations such as might be warranted by multiple spear wounds or at least a very nasty cat scratch... He hadn’t realized, until these attentions were lavished on him, that they’re precisely what he’s been longing for since his return home yesterday.”

—Sugar and William p. 446-447

Sugar

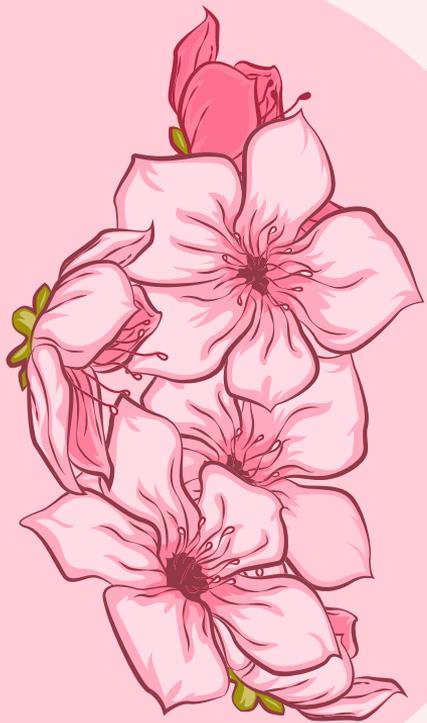
Do you agree or disagree with this interpretation of Sugar's position?



William

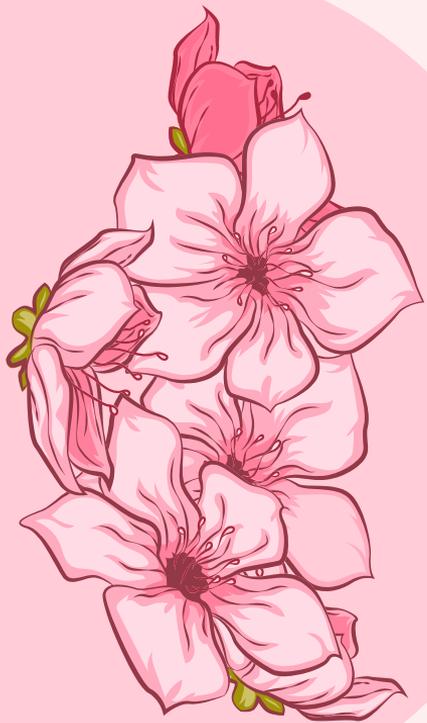
In a section that was dominated by the perspectives of Agnes and Sugar, William was often busy working but we did see several key moments in this section pertaining to his character.





“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and *subdue* it’ (Rackham Senior would lay emphasis on this word) ‘and have dominion over every thing that moveth upon the earth.’”

—William p. 331



“The way he asked her if she liked the ornaments he’d chosen for her and, having encouraged her to confess she didn’t care for the swan on the mantelpiece, jovially snapped its porcelain neck. She laughed along with him, but what the devil was he playing at? Was he granting her greater licence to be candid – or was he letting her know he’s a man who’ll happily break the neck of anything that has outlived its usefulness?”

—Sugar p. 338

William

What do these passages tell us about William? As a man? As a businessman? As a husband/lover? What does this mean in the future for Agnes and Sugar?



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