



UH201 - WAYS OF DOING: MAPPING SCIENCE-SOCIETY RELATIONSHIP

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The Paper Flower



Figure 1: Bougainvillea flowers

These bougainvillea flowers in the image are what I see every day on my way to and from my hostel room. I chose this particular fauna as they remind me of my home and my childhood. I have seen these flowers nearly every day since my childhood and they have always been a part of my life. Just like in campus, several vines of bougainvillea line the fence of the park not very far from my house, and I would see them every day on my way to school. Some days I would not even care about their existence and some days I would just stop and stare at them for a while and maybe pluck a few flowers to take home.

These flowers remind me of a very special incident when I was in 3rd grade. I had just changed schools, and the contrast in the syllabus and teaching methodology was very stark. Also, I missed my old friends and school and was not very happy with the change. One of the initial chapters in my new science textbook was about flowers. Bougainvillea happened to be one of the examples, and also one of the “hard words” which we would note down separately and byheart the way it is spelled. I remember having a very hard time memorising its spelling and I would always get it wrong. And I did get it wrong in the class test and was reprimanded by my teacher. I was very upset, and I remember going home and crying to my mother about it, I was also determined to go back to my old school as I felt everything here was going wrong for me. Clearly, I did not have much choice back then.

Although everything worked out very well for me eventually, I still remember that day and the flowers keep reminding me of it. There was also this incident when my elder brother and I decided to strip one of the vines of all its flowers on the way back home from school one day. The low hanging ones were vanished in no time, but the higher ones were a challenge. My brother got multiple cuts on his arms due to the thorns while trying to reach them, both of us were rebuked back at home for our actions by our mother.

The flowers are still there and so is the park, but I have moved on from that school and that house, only to find them again every day on my way to and from my hostel room!