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Flower Impact Assignment

The flowers I used for my assignment were violet colored Calibrachoa. These flowers look similar to Petunias, but have many more flowers per plant and are perennial. My initial idea for my flower impact assignment was to give my Calibrachoa to my girlfriend. I quite often buy her flowers, so this seemed like the logical thing to do with my new flower. So I brought it to her, and she was happy to receive them, though a little nervous about the additional responsibility of *watering* the plants (I've never given her a potted flower).

Still, she took the flowers gratefully and set them outside on her doorstep. Over the next few days, we managed to remember to water the flowers, and she even received a few compliments on her new porch ornament. But this was not to be the ultimate destiny of these Calibrachoa.

My girlfriend's neighbor is an old friend of the family's (my girlfriend is currently living at home with her parents). But in recent years, that friendship has dwindled, for subtle, unknown reasons; a happening that can be common with long-time neighbors. Whatever the reasons, the communication of late between the neighbors has only been minimal acknowledgements and small talk when necessary.

However, one detail critical to this story is that my girlfriend's family's neighbor is an avid gardener. She has flowers and fruit trees and vegetables and herbs. It is a hobby she has had for the entire time my girlfriend's family has known her.

This fact is relevant because one day shortly after I delivered the Calibrachoa, my girlfriend and I happened to step outside the door at the same time her neighbor was out gardening. We waved, and she waved back, and then she asked us about the new flowers. She said she liked it a lot, and she wondered what our idea was for its permanent location (a plastic flowerpot is somewhat lacking in aesthetic value). My girlfriend honestly stated she had no idea and that tending for flowers was not a usual part of her routine. To this, her neighbor suggested a number of options, as this was her expertise.

Our favorite option was to plant the flowers alongside the front lawn, where it could be seen by passersby, and it would help fill the bare strip of ground between that lawn and the neighbor's beautiful flowers. We thanked her for her advice, and said we would plant the flowers as soon as we could get ahold of the proper equipment. To this, the neighbor replied that she would be happy to help us plant it! Since we were not busy at that moment, and the neighbor was already tending the plants, we decided to put the flowers in the ground right then and there. We rolled up our sleeves and pant legs, carried the Calibrachoa over, and knelt down in the dirt. The neighbor handed over a trowel and showed my girlfriend how deep and wide to dig for our flower's roots. We pulled the flower from the pot, gently placed it in its new spot, and covered it over smoothly with soil. For the finishing touch, the neighbor wetted the soil with her nearby watering can. Finally, we all stood up and admired our handiwork and how nicely the flowers

looked next to the lawn and the flowers of the neighbor's garden. We laughed and smiled and my girlfriend and her neighbor continued to talk, catching up on each other's lives.

Since that day, my girlfriend's (and by extension her family's) friendship with their neighbor has rekindled, and she tells me that they now have regular conversations when they see each other outside. The neighbor has continued to provide gardening advice for my girlfriend's new plant and has even shared some of the products of her own garden with the family. In the end, what began as a simple gift of flowers to my girlfriend has turned into the symbolic connection in a family friendship; I could not have predicted the impact these flowers have had.