

花坛从不催所有花同一天开

我们教学楼窗外有一长条花坛。三月初我开始留意它，是因为物理考砸了那个晚上，我趴在窗边发呆，正好看见第一朵玉兰开了。之后一个月，我几乎每天看它一眼，看明白了许多事。

玉兰开得最早，光着枝干就开，一朵顶一朵，开满时整排树像举着白蜡烛。海棠晚它小半个月，先冒红点，再一点点膨大，开的时候一夜之间满树。月季最沉得住气，四月里别的花都开得热闹，它只闷头抽红芽，直到五月初才一朵一朵地登场。整个春天，花坛里没有一朵花被谁催过，也没有一朵花因为自己开得晚就干脆不开。它们各守各的节令，谁也没误了谁。

盯着花坛的那一个月，正是我被物理折磨的一个月。三月月考我物理不及格，同桌两个月前就开始刷竞赛题，我连课本上的受力分析都画不利索。那段时间我天天怀疑自己，觉得别人都开花了，我还是一截光木头。我甚至想过放弃物理，把时间全挪去擅长的科目，保住排名好看一点。

是花坛拦住了我。五月初月季开出来那天，我忽然想明白：月季在四月不是没干活，它一直在抽芽长叶，只是把力气花在了看不见的地方。我的物理也一样。那两个多月我每天弄懂两道错题，周末把受力分析重画一遍，这些努力当时看不见分数回报，可它们都在长我的根。后来的期中考试，物理我及格了，不算漂亮，但那是我自己一毫米一毫米推出来的成绩。

这段经历让我对节奏这件事有了自己的看法。比较是容易的，从别人那里借一个时间表套在自己身上，套不上就慌。可是花从来不互相借时间表。每个人都有自己的节令，早开的不一定结得稳，晚开的不一定结得晚，重要的不是哪天开，是开之前有没有一直在长。

往后的打算我也写清楚了。第一，不再用别人的进度吓自己，只跟上周的自己比。第二，坚持每天弄懂两道错题，雷打不动，像给花坛浇水，不问哪天开。第三，允许自己有花期，但不允许自己停长。花期教会我的事说到底就一句：按时浇水，静静扎根，我的花会开的。

The Flower Bed Never Rushes Every Flower to Open on the Same Day

Outside our teaching building window runs a long flower bed. I began noticing it in early March, on the night I failed my physics exam. I was staring out the window when I happened to see the first magnolia open. For the next month I glanced at it almost every day, and understood quite a lot.

Magnolias bloom earliest, flowering on bare branches, one blossom crowding the next, until the whole row looks like it is holding up white candles. Crabapples come about half a month later, first with red dots, slowly swelling, then covering the whole tree overnight. Roses are the most patient: while other flowers threw their parties in April, roses kept quietly pushing out red buds, only appearing blossom by blossom in early May. All spring, no flower in that bed was ever rushed, and no flower decided to skip blooming just because it was late. Each kept to its own season, and none missed the others.

The month I watched the flower bed was the month physics was tormenting me. I failed the March monthly exam. My deskmate had started competition problems two months earlier while I still could not draw a free-body diagram from the textbook. Every day I doubted myself, feeling everyone else had bloomed while I was still a bare stick. I even thought about giving up physics and moving all the time to my strong subjects to keep my ranking presentable.

The flower bed stopped me. The day the roses came out in early May, it hit me: the roses had not been idle in April. They had been pushing buds and growing leaves, spending their strength where no one could see. My physics was the same. For more than two months I understood two wrong problems a day and redrew force diagrams on weekends; the effort showed no score return at the time, but it was all growing my roots. On the midterm exam I passed physics. It was not a beautiful score, but it was a grade I had pushed out one millimeter at a time by myself.

This experience gave me my own view on pace. Comparison is easy: borrow a timetable from someone else, put it on yourself, and panic when it does not fit. But flowers never borrow timetables from each other. Everyone has their own season. An early bloom does not always set steady fruit, and a late bloom does not always bear fruit later. What matters is not which day you open, but whether you kept growing before you opened.

I have written down my plans too. First, stop scaring myself with other people progress, and compare only with myself from last week. Second, keep understanding two wrong problems every day, rain or shine, like watering the flower bed without asking which day it will bloom. Third, allow myself to have a flowering season, but never allow myself to stop growing. What the flowering season taught me comes down to one line: water on time, root in silence, and my flowers will open.