

A Town Full of Memories

I was welcomed into this 'campus town' with heavy rain crashing down onto my car's windshield as my parents sought to see me off. For a person who loved the rains with an unparalleled passion, it seemed like the town was beckoning towards me with open arms. As I would later come to realise, these short outbursts of rain were a classic feature of the odd semester—a feature that left everybody clambering for their umbrellas in a failed attempt to keep their books dry.



One of my fondest memories would come two weeks into my life as a hosteller. I was sitting in my neighbour's room, a person I barely knew at the time, and inexplicably the two of us wound up singing old Bollywood songs at the top of our lungs. In a matter of minutes, a few other friends came over and suddenly, we were a large group of tone-deaf acquaintances singing cringeworthy songs with the help of someone's borrowed guitar. This would soon become a tradition for us; we got together every Saturday evening to relish in each other's awful singing. I'd love to say that our vocals got better or that we finally learned to play the guitar, but none of that happened. All we accomplished through this tradition was a sense of companionship and a misplaced confidence in our

ability to sing. I guess that's what hostel life is about—accepting each other for who we are and cherishing the moments we spend in each other's company.



Another memory that comes to mind when I think of my first year in this town I've learned to call home, took place during TechTatva (the technical fest of MIT). College fests are the times when Manipal bursts to life with events in every corner of the college campus. What had relatively been a quiet fest suddenly changed its course on the third and final day. Something that started as three people dancing amidst themselves to peppy music quickly became a huge group of people going berserk with their dance moves. Once the rain started pouring, the enthusiasm of the dancers just grew exponentially—a few even ventured into dancing on top of the tables! At that moment, with heavy rain pouring over me and Bollywood songs playing in the background, being surrounded by strangers didn't seem as daunting as it would have a couple of months earlier. That's the beauty of Manipal—it brings together people from all walks of life and unites them, almost as if they've known each other since their childhood.



From going to sleep early for the sake of classes, to switching off the alarm and going back to sleep despite missing classes, a lot has changed over the course of my time as a 'fresher'. The only thing that's remained constant is the long delivery time for Apoorva Mess and MFC (that's Manipal Frizzled Chicken, for those wondering).

It's this journey of change and self-discovery that truly encompasses the roller coaster that is the first year of college at MIT. Before we notice it, amidst the sessionals, assignments, parties, and fights, we become seniors with a newfound longing towards this quaint town called Manipal.



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