

# NINJAWPULLER WARRIOR

NABBAN T. HAQUE

Tiger stared down the obstacle course with a look of steely determination in his eyes. Japan's Sasuke or American Ninja Warrior is a competition that takes no prisoners. To succeed on the course it takes more than just strength and speed. One must enter the void, that state of mind known colloquially as "the zone." There are no do-overs, and a single, simple mistake can cost you the chance to win a million dollars.

With these thoughts lost in the nothingness and sheer concentrated focus of "the zone," he began. The first obstacle, the Quintuple Steps, was deceptively simple. Five platforms, angled at 45 degrees and separated in a zigzag pattern had to be traversed, leaping from one to the other. The steps have taken many a competitor that simply took to them with overconfidence. Tiger sprang from one to the other effortlessly, the overflowing sewage drains of the monsoon season having provided ample opportunities to adequately prepare, with even less of a margin for error.

Next up, was the Grip

Hang. Essentially a barrel with a thin edge for one to hold on to, it then falls with a jarring stop that shakes off all those who are unworthy. Once again, our Bengali brother took it in his stride, so to speak. While there was no rope to wrap around his ankles, Tiger needed none. The jagged shape of the grip reminded him of the coconut trees of home, and no coconut had ever been too far out of reach. The jarring stop caught him a little by surprise, but he had a million reasons to hold on for dear life.

After the first test of strength, another followed in relentless fashion. The Cargo Climb is designed to sap your strength, as you struggle to work your way upwards on the underside of the almost elastic net. Tiger was not worried about that part though. Lean and muscled, days on end pulling three and even four people on his three-wheeled traffic weaver meant there was no trou-

ble in hauling his lonesome self. He was careful to make use of his legs so as to insure those arms did not give way from over exertion.

Once he had tumbled down the net on to the platform, he gazed at his final obstacle, the only one in qualifying that he had feared: The Warped Wall. Bangladeshi's were not built for this kind of challenge, without the height that brings the top of that wall that much closer to his reach. He attacked the wall with a tremendous battle cry, willing his feet to grip the near vertical surface, and strained to gain some leverage for his jump. However, he slipped and his fingers did not even graze the top. Taking a moment to gather his thoughts, he prepared for his second attempt. Those who failed the Warped Wall on the second attempt rarely had the energy for the third. Composing himself, he began his run up once more. Taking more measured steps, this time he insured that his stronger foot was planted before leaping with one deafening roar. Straining his body to stretch and lengthen his reach, this time he managed to grasp the

edge with his fingertips. Yet that was all he needed. Pulling with monumental effort, he clawed his way to the top and hit that buzzer that signalled a step closer to his prize.

He held up his arms, too drained to let out a victory scream. If he could survive on a mere three hundred Taka a day, if he could climb the Warped Wall, then anything was possible. He revelled in his victory, as soon he would have to prepare for the next stage of the competition. That was not too hard. How bad could the rest be? He held no more fear. All of these absurd tests were his to conquer.

However, he did pray to get lucky on the Salmon Ladder. That obstacle was just unnatural, and something about it seemed to him very... fishy.

*Nabban Tahsin Haque is a daring explorer brave enough to explore the sick and twisted world of his own imagination. He is also the secret leader of the officially unofficial Manchester United Fan Club, and enjoys the carnage of computer to computer combat. You can reach him at*

*nabban.haque@gmail.com, but you could probably make better use of your time.*

