

MY ENGINEERING ACADEMIA

The local anime no one asked for



DEEPARGHYA DUTTA BARUA

Takiona was standing in front of a building with optimism glaring out of his eyes. This was it. He had been preparing up for months to face this assortment of bricks, bricks that whisper stories of glory and honour.

It was the great BE Academy, short for Bangladesh Engineers' Academy, a place where great minds of the country meet in order to become the greatest of engineers.

Albeit a bit nervous, he thought about how the exam was going to change the course of his life, looked towards the azure that's above and felt a breeze fondle his five-centimetre-long hair. One might have pictured him to be that protagonist with moderately long hair and a pointlessly optimistic persona but unfortunately, it's heretic to have long hair in the country as deemed by lawful Tonari No Rinjin, a group of elite middle-aged women who have sworn to keep children in the right track by judging and shaming them throughout their formative years. Here's the part where the OP by Supercell would explode, with colours scintillating

throughout the screen as seamless transitions take place.

After a ninety-second-long intro, the episode would begin where it started in the first place but with a few dialogues not making this cut. One would question why this was necessary since they literally saw the same thing two minutes ago but it's a shonen anime anyway and requires hundreds of flashbacks per episode to keep up with the audience suffering from short-term memory loss. To make the point valid, the protagonist would have a flashback right away on the things he had to face while coming to this point.

As always, he was happy as a child but then one day his mother discovered Bee Bangla, eventually becoming a Bee Bangla otaku and then finally evolving to a hikikomori. She had locked herself in a dark room with a TV, a Hitstar subscription, and an online delivery service that brings her goodies from Gawsia, oftentimes the same dresses named after different trending Bee Bangla shows each year. Realising that it was too late for recovery, he and his father had to leave

her and shift to Mirpur. The life of hardship had begun from there, as Mirpur had an AQI over 9000. His dad would come back late each day after a hard day of work, mainly due to the traffic. They would miss out all the weddings and social gatherings as each attempt to attend such events would draw two possible conclusions: they would either find themselves reaching the coffee parlour when everyone else is about to leave or they'd find themselves in weddings after the organisers were all out of borhani.

It was just another night. Thirteen-year-old Takiona was idly leaning against the couch while watching his favourite show on Animax, Montu no Bouken. He didn't realise that he had dozed off for hours while watching a few bugs move around the screen, not until he woke up with a nosebleed. The clock was ticking twelve but his dad hadn't returned home by then. He got up to call him, but met with no response.

Three days had passed. No response from his dad. His phone was switched off as well. Takiona had spent all his time playing video games and watching reruns

of Montu no Bouken but got bored of it. He began to realise that his dad isn't probably going to make a return as this is an anime and the backstory needs to have as many tragic incidents as possible. He would have to tackle the wilderness of Mirpur on his own and to make up for the living costs, there was no other sensible option apart from working in a nearby construction site. Not to mention that it'd be the most fitting montage for the flashbacks that follow throughout the series.

One day, after coming back from work, he found a letter near the doorway. It was from a colleague of his dad. Apparently, his dad who was unsure of his birth (yes, he has a tragic backstory as well) had found out that he was a Southern by birth. The very news made him so depressed that he left his office immediately after the year-end staff dinner, never to be seen again.

The flashback ends there. Only Takiona himself knew how many Udbase papers he had to cram to claim the spot where he was standing. He packed a punch in empty space, jostled the swarm of people

ahead and headed to the exam hall, possibly leaving the people around a bit displeased.

It has been a week since the exam, the results would get published any moment now. Takiona was anxious, scared and depressed since he was not able to complete the goal of 1000 math problems in 30 minutes despite using his secret power, "Tenporari IQ burasuto" which basically grants clairvoyance for a few minutes, allowing him to scroll through all the Udbase notes. The rankings were announced by famous anchor Shigunaru on a huge panel that floated above the majestic building, with an animated HD logo being flaunted at one of the corners and also in screens placed throughout the entire country.

To no surprise, like every shonen anime, Takiona was the one who had his name at the top despite solving fewer problems than most other examinees. Turns out that he got free points under some arbitrary section named "Anti-rescue points" as he had resorted to aggressive measures during the exam to make sure that no one around gets a glimpse of his answer script even for a fraction of a second.

BE Academy is well known for birthing legendary engineers throughout the past centuries. There's EEE legend Muteki Harena who has formed such deep connection with electrical circuitry that he

can bend circuits without using any additional equipment, there's CSE legend Kiripto who hacked into WeeTube to copystrike all the Battle Royale streamers, ChE legend Gasuriin who found ways to decontaminate Buriganga river and finally, there's Biochem legend Shou who found new species of chimaeras in the same water body, presumably that of a dog and a mola maach. Takiona himself was a fan of single-player games and so he wanted to bring balance into the world by following the footsteps of the great Kiripto. Plus, he hated eating mola maach as it reminded him of his hikikomori mother.

On his first day of class, Takiona found himself amidst the tritest stereotypes possible. There was that one childhood friend named Nekasuki with an ego bigger than the number of germs found in street-side fuchka, someone who had parted ways with Takiona for a tragic backstory that would be revealed in the later episodes, a transfer student from Uttara with a fake accent, the nice helpful girl for whom he'd fall for in the future and vice-versa but wouldn't reciprocate until the end of the show since it's a shonen anime. On the other hand, there was that smart dude who had a rich father owning hundreds of readymade garment factories but maintained a cold relationship with his father since he makes all his employees work under minimum wage.

The anime would have a bunch of filler episodes following that, leading up to the anticipation of the great Engineers' Smackdown, the annual sports event of BE Academy where the best among the best engineers pit themselves against each other to win the title.

Takiona's first opponent was no other than the most useless character of the entire show, a guy from a business course who cheated in the entrance exam to get into BE, basically a hollow character with forced development to make up for its short screen time. The battle ended with the business guy being defeated (obviously), and a positive monologue where he shouted that he'd try his best to become a legend one day, never to be seen again in the entire show.

The quarter-finals and the semi-finals got cut short since the studio had already spent a pointless amount of money on the first battle.

The final battle took place between Takiona and the most obvious rival, his egomaniac childhood friend, Nekasuki, who also happens to be his CSE classmate. After a five-minute-long montage of each battler going harder than the other through various fake and nonsensical visuals of "hacking" (something that involved opening seven to eight terminal windows at the same time), both of them seemed very tired and on the brink of passing out. Their

keyboard buttons had fallen off, the microphones on their cheap headsets bought from Uniplan Centre had stopped working due to relentless but unnecessary shouting of the "hacking" moves they had used. Their other classmates were busy observing and analysing the whole thing from the stands, having arguments on who had a higher core count than whom and who had a better overclock potential. At the very last moment, after a pile of pointless monologues, Takiona did a crooked smirk and pulled off his ultimate card, Lana Del Rey streamed from a certain djmazikmasala.com. He blasted the songs through the computer of his opponent and in no time, the already-weakened Nekasuki fell asleep and got disqualified from the battle.

Takiona stood strong. He knew that he had won the hearts of little fourteen-year-olds with his very predictable but adrenaline-fuelling battle. He stared into the sun that was about to glaze its surroundings with the brightest of beams, promising another anime with a clichéd storyline that might never end anytime soon.

Deeparghya Dutta Barua likes to feel apprehensive whenever there are more than two people around. Help him in finding new ways of butchering his name at deeparghya@rantages.com

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