

EDITORIAL

I often think of my time at school like a wildlife documentary. Students are the dominant species of course, owning the space, adapting to the terrain that they've grown up in, in complete control of the going ons and happenings of their primary social setting. Until, of course, the teachers appear. Old, experienced, commanding respect and obedience, teachers rule this jungle. Students fall in line when the senior teachers prow! It is the law.

But every king was once a prince, or even a princeling. When the new teacher shows up, young and fresh faced, students smell that inexperience. A new teacher is nervous, and students feed on that nervousness. Destroying their best laid study plans, students make sure every new teacher is initiated with a trial of fire.

In hindsight, I have a lot of sympathy for new teachers. And I really can't imagine how difficult it must be to go through all of that now that classes are online. As a new teacher, it used to be difficult enough to exert control over a classroom in person. Over Zoom, with network issues and background noises? I can't even.

-- Azmin Azran, Sub-editor, SHOUT



PLAYWATCH

YOUTUBE



I Watched Wilderness Survival Videos for a Week

ADHORA AHMED

All my friends have been raving over a certain niche category in YouTube for a while, spamming me with links to various videos of this kind. On the surface, they seem like your typical clickbait fodder; the thumbnails claim to show the building of houses and pools in a random forest with astonishing, unbelievable speed. I didn't see the appeal at first, but I gave in to the constant recommendations and chose to watch wilderness survival videos for a week.

Now, I have too many questions for one article, hence I have to compromise and make do with a few.

Why are they made?

Building a home in a jungle seems like what someone would do to go off grid, taking only the bare essentials with them. However, the structures shown in these videos are far from ordinary. The YouTube channels dedicated to wilderness survival show the building process of grand mansions, pools, villas, temples — you name it. With such attention to detail in these structures, you might ask why these are built at all. To show off architectural feats? To leave them behind for future archaeologists to stumble upon? Who knows?

Who lives there?

If you're going to build luxurious pools and houses in the middle of nowhere, there *has* to be a purpose. You're either going to live in the house yourself, or you're building them for someone else. Either way, these houses are meant to be lived in. Yet, it is never clear if these houses, temples, pools, etc. are used by anyone. If all of it is just for show, then refer to the first question.

Do they have permission to use forest land?

In the era of climate emergency, forests

are being depleted at a drastic rate. On top of that, wilderness survival videos start with a few people gathering at a clearing and, without exchanging any words, start digging at the earth, from which an elaborate mansion will eventually arise. As someone concerned about the environment, I wonder if wilderness survival channels have permission to use forest land at random for the sake of making content. Our remaining forests are too vital for this, don't you think?

Are the labourers paid fairly?

Building houses and pools from scratch is more hard work than you and I can ever imagine. Yet, this gigantic task is carried out by one or two labourers, unless there are more people at work behind the scenes. The editing makes it seem like these few labourers build the whole structure all by themselves, barely taking any breaks. But, are they getting enough rest? Are they paid fairly? The ad revenue better be put to good use.

How do they build these without consulting a blueprint?

The buildings are way too intricately designed to not have any blueprint behind them. However, there is no indication of any engineers or architects being involved with the projects. One of the videos even began with a person drawing an extremely crude plan of the house he was going to build on a wooden slate, then building the house singlehandedly with utmost precision. Are the labourers themselves the engineers and architects? If so, mad respect.

Adhora Ahmed tries to make her two cats befriend each other, but in vain. Tell her to give up at adhora.ahmed@gmail.com



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