

#PROFILE

# More Than a Punchline: Rakin Absar Beyond the Reels



He never planned on becoming an influencer, and that, perhaps, explains why his journey feels so organic in a space obsessed with algorithms, strategy decks, and five-year plans.

"I get anxiety when I plan," Rakin Absar says honestly. "So, I never plan."

For Absar, his lack of rigid planning was not recklessness; it was self-awareness. He knew structure dulled his creativity, while freedom sharpened it. Even when life felt overwhelming, humour remained his anchor. "No matter what stage of life I was in," he says, "I kept going."

That instinct — knowing when to speak, when to pause, when to move — would later become one of his strongest tools. It allowed him to build a body of work that feels lived-in, not manufactured.

## The start

Before YouTube and Facebook became the default stages, Absar was already creating content on Vine, experimenting with timing, delivery, and observation. From the beginning, it was about expression; bringing perception with subtlety.

And during difficult personal phases, humour became something deeper than entertainment. "Using my humour, making people laugh online — or even making myself laugh — was a good distraction," he reflects.

Regardless of where life placed him, one belief stayed steady. "I knew in my heart I wasn't meant for the usual," he says. "I was meant to do something different. Good, great, and different."

## Finding his people

From the beginning, Absar was clear about one thing: his content wasn't for everyone — and that was intentional. "I always wanted to target people with the same mindset as mine," he points out, "That is, after all, the whole idea of having a target audience."

This clarity wavered briefly during his collaboration phase with Bhai Brothers. Working in a team came with the immense pressure to appeal to the masses, pushing him toward content that did not feel entirely his. It worked, in theory, but not in spirit.

"I realised that this was not my niche," he admits. What followed was a bold decision in an industry that thrives on constant visibility: he stopped. For four years.

During that time, Rakin finished his undergraduate degree and stepped away from the noise. No pressure. No performance. When he returned, he did not rebrand; he realigned.

"I went back to my roots," he says. "The Vine days. The reason I started in the first place."

## The making of Gulshan Bhabi

Gulshan Bhabi. We know her, we love her, and we had to know how she came to be!

One of the strongest outcomes of that return was Gulshan Bhabi, a character who now feels inseparable from Rakin's identity online. Inspired by the many women in his life, with "a dash of sass," Gulshan Bhabi also carries the unmistakable "Gulshan effect," a playful nod to the neighbourhood that partially shaped him.

Far from being a random skit, the character was introduced deliberately and slowly. "These are not cameos," Rakin says with conviction. "Each of my characters is here to stay."

And yes, he absolutely expected Gulshan Bhabi to blow up. He understands his audience well — perhaps better than most. Every character arrives with intention, spaced out over years, not rushed for quick applause.

## Trolls, fame and perspective

With visibility comes criticism, and Rakin Absar has learned to reframe it. "I used to think trolls bring us down," he admits. "Now I see it differently."

For him, negativity is a marker of relevance. "You have to have haters to know you're famous," he says. "If you walk into a room with only compliments, you wouldn't even notice them. So yes, I would say the trolls and bullies keep us going"

## From skits to cinema

Acting was never a surprise detour; it was the destination.

"I always wanted to be an actor," Rakin adds, "and it's a known fact that comedians tap into people's psyche like no other. That's scientifically proven."

Although there had been offers, there were not many that were challenging Rakin in the right way. "I think people expected me to keep doing my thing in movies as well. But that doesn't extend my range," he explains.

Was it a risk to reject scripts? Yes. Did it pay off? Absolutely. This year alone, Rakin has completed two back-to-back projects.

## Is the content space too crowded?

When it comes to the influencer landscape in Bangladesh, Rakin is candid and concerned. While he sees massive, unexplored potential for dancers and quality musicians, other sectors feel heavily saturated.

The pressure to monetise through brand collaborations often comes at a cost. "Our craft loses its essence when we compromise our style too much for scripts," he says. Worse, some creators chase controversy, rage, and hate purely for clicks, eroding trust and respect for the community as a whole.

For anyone starting today, his advice is unwavering: originality first, consistency second, and money last.

"You have to have a deep connection to your craft," he says. "Originality comes from creating your own ground. Consistency is not giving up on yourself too fast. Money will follow."

## Thoughts on entrepreneurship?

Do we get to see a Gulshan Bhabi merch soon? Or perhaps Rekina's skincare line?

Absar says thinking about it and not thinking about it at the same time. Business, he knows, requires careful weighing of risks and rewards. For now, the focus remains on the craft itself.

Rakin Absar's journey is not loud. He trusted instinct when planning felt like too much, humour when words felt heavy, and silence when noise became overwhelming.

In an ecosystem obsessed with immediacy, Rakin Absar has chosen the long game. And it has kept him visible for the past 16 years. Not because he tried to be everything, but because he knew exactly who he was all along.

By Nusrath Jahan

Photo: Sheikh Suraiya Rehnuma