**D-DAY THE TALE OF PRE-COLLEGE DISQUIETUDE**

**PROLOGUE:**

The facts below describe my two years of experience of the entire class 11th and 12th, the years of apprehension and ambitions in a student’s life, in a brief manner. They begin rendering a glimpse into my pre-preparation stance and include all the events recorded after the postponement of the remaining papers of ICSE Class 10th to the final day of JEE-Advanced result declaration as well as their allied incidents.

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**#1| WHEN I EXPLORED MY POSITION ON A NATIONAL SCALE**

I never admitted that I stepped into competitions right at class 11th itself. Rather I had been into them since I was a kid studying in the first standard of primary. It was a zonal general knowledge competition, TSE conducted by AOICSE, held in my school itself, where initial failures ignited my passion towards successful progress. Then I enrolled in various Olympiads, conducted by SOF, Silver Zone, Indian Talent, Unified Council etc. I was the possessor of multiple awards in them which gave me great fame in school.

But I got real essence of what Olympiads are when I attempted Pre-RMO in 10th standard. Realising my incapability in solving PYQs, I got enrolled into a one month crash course taught by Harsh Priyam Sir at Vedantu. But the little haphazard preparation could not help me excel and I fell short of the cut-off marks. Similar performance in NTSE too, made me feel that my preparation was not up to the mark. I lacked far behind in the nationwide race and I need to buckle up before things fall far wide.

**#2| UPROAR OF THE PANDEMIC SURPASSED THE EXCITEMENT OF EXAMINATIONS**

I can still recall the shock, those apprehensive thoughts that encompassed my eyes on that scary night. I had not performed that well in the first seven papers of ICSE 2020 Examinations. So I had coalesced the day with the night before geography examination, when the news headlines remarked the postponement of remaining three papers of ICSE. CBSE had taken the decision already, ICSE had to. So they made a historic decision meant for our safety.

This was followed by months of lockdown and dilemma spread by ICSE that it might conduct the examinations. But the damage caused by the pandemic was beyond cure.

**#3| FUTILE BAFFLEMENT BETWEEN 10TH AND 11TH: THE REALISATION**

My poor self was not able to believe that he was forfeited of the examination and hence continued preparing for it. Meanwhile, ICSE declared that we can take provisional admission. Since nobody, especially my grandmother, denied me shifting to some other city for entrance preparation, owing to the insecurity towards my health, I had to take a crucial decision. After discussing a lot with my father, I decided that I must continue in my same dear, old school, even though it was affiliated to CISCE (Generally, CBSE board pattern is recommended for entrance preparation) (CISCE is the board that conducts ICSE examinations for class 10th and ISC for class 12th). My father said two things, firstly, I was well acquainted with the school as well as the board and secondly, mental as well as physical well-being is best guaranteed at one’s home itself.

But the worst thing was that ICSE neither finalised the cancelation of exams nor did it decide upon its conduct. It merely fought a futile case in the SC and was heavily trolled over the Internet, when it cancelled the remaining papers and displayed the dates of result declaration, after a dilemma of two months. Meanwhile, I was enrolled in Vedantu’s long-term batch for JEE, but the immediate load on the ISPs, servers and communication systems led to infinite technical glitches and server losses, consequently ruining my online classes. Again I kept preparing for the remaining three tests and hence messes up my preparation completely. I neither fared well in my weekly mocks nor did I attend all classes. And ultimately the board exams were annulled.

It was around July 10, 2020 when ICSE results were out. I had scored 95.6% while 96.4% in best four. But I had messed up my Mathematics and English I papers. Yet, it was something worth appreciation (I feel that), but the world stays intent on finding faults every time. I was silently mocked by many, as they said that they were not satisfied with my performance, as I ranked 4th in St. Joseph’s Convent Higher Secondary School, one of the best schools in Odisha. The highest was 97.8% (best four). However everybody in my family were quite satiated with my performance. Thus I learnt one crucial lesson, “Never sacrifice thine present for thy bygone past”. I was left only with 11th now.

**#4| VENTURING INTO THE TENOR OF COMPETITIVE ARENA**

I had been a Vedan since class 9th. So, I didn’t have much doubts in choosing Vedantu among the vast choices of online coaching. Moreover, the nearest offline coaching was 15km away from my home. However, due to the uprising cases of the pandemic, Vedantu did not publish books in the first year. But, I did not know about any such hardcopies of Tatva material, except an online question bank. Thus, I assumed that I must buy some books.

Some of my seniors as well as Ranjita Ma’am, teacher in Biology at my school, recommended me to refer to materials made by some Kota-based institutes. After a lot of recherché work at You Tube and Quora, I finally decided to go with Resonance Distance Learning Programme. But another complication crossed my path. Around seven hundred victimized cases were reported from Kota during the first wave. So, they even could not send me their stuffs, but provided me only with an online reference to the books, the thing I hated the most.

**#5| MISERABLE FAILURE IN BALANCING BETWEEN AFFILIATION AND ASPIRATION**

Syncing back to those days of JEE preparation, I often ponder over the seconds of serious thoughts thinking whether I was aspiring for JEE or somewhat affiliated only to the name of the exam. My unsteady progress basically defines that. First of all, I would like thank my school. It has all been possible for Madhumita Ma’am and Bindu Ma’am, who taught me English at school that I have been able to jot down my feelings into this piece of text. The fluency in this foreign language which they invoked into me, ultimately culminated that potential within me, to be fearless in my write-ups. Then I would like to shift your attention towards Swapnita Ma’am, teacher at Mathematics at our school. In those days Ma’am used to give ample of notes and homework from NCERT and S. Chand, which she used to solve live during those online classes through Zoom. Titus Sir, teacher at Physics at my school, who used to derive every unsolved formulae from the text books and made numerical solving a game of thoughts. And nevertheless, the intelligently designed notes and theory explanation in chemistry, provided by Rakesh Sir, made it wholesome clarity of concepts in these three JEE-demanded subjects. My fourth choice of subject was a peculiar one. Surprisingly, it was Biology, an infamous combination right. But, it was Ranjita Ma’am hardwork that made it quite easy for me.

Here at Vedantu, I was provided with an excellent set of three teachers. Abhishek Sir, ex-Lakshay faculty and very popular teacher at physics, simplified the theory into sets of equations. Arvind Sir, Mathematics teacher at Vedantu, another ex-Lakshay faculty, bro