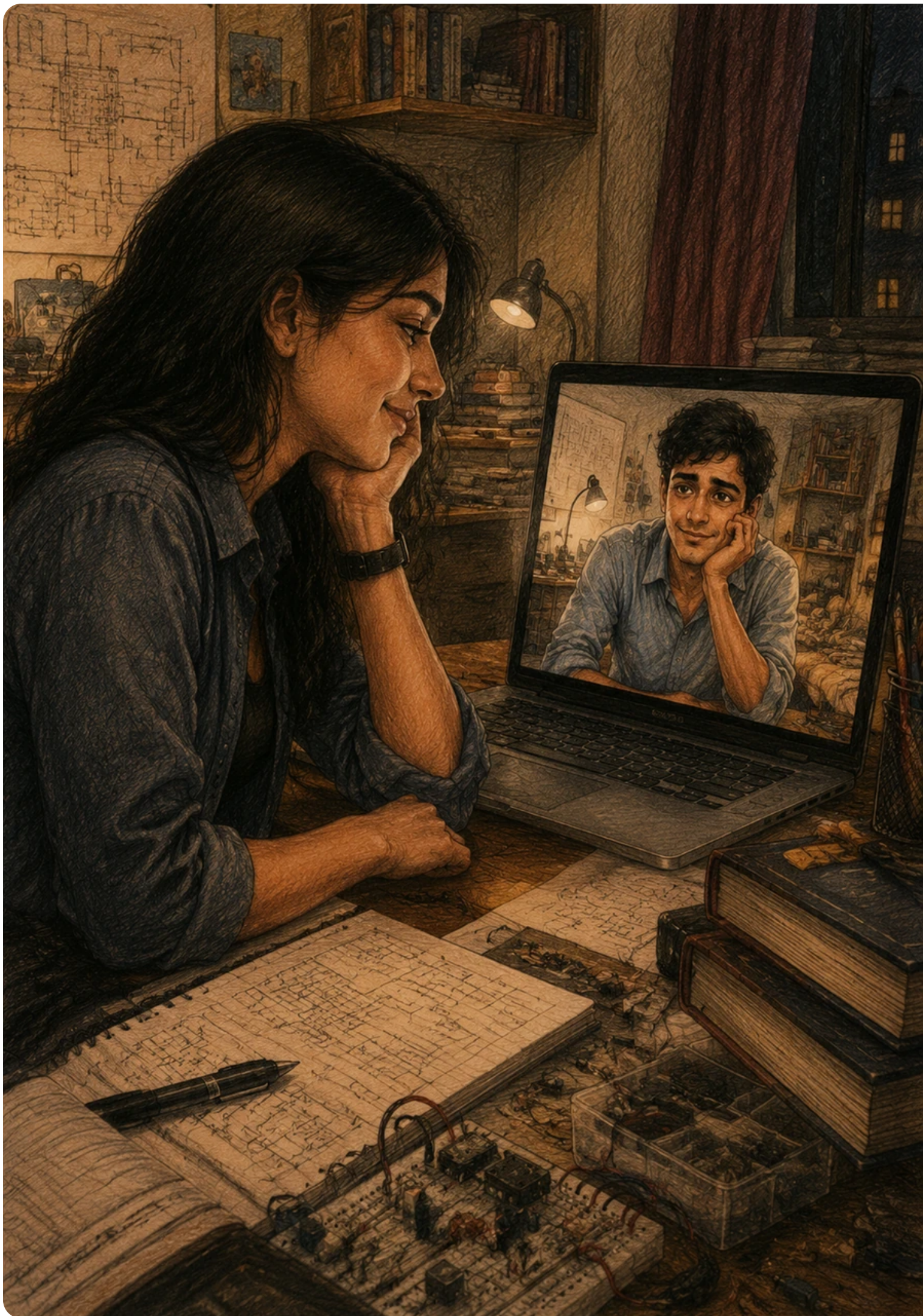


The Engineering of Betrayal

Harshit Negi



Harshit and Kanika are engineering students at different universities, often sharing long video calls to bridge the distance between their campuses. They seem like the perfect couple, promising to build a future together once they graduate and find success in their careers.



Everything changes when Kanika's ex-boyfriend, Harsh, moves back into town after three years of silence. A single text message from him sparks a flame in Kanika that Harshit's steady and predictable love could never ignite.



Kanika begins to spend her weekends away, telling Harshit she is buried in difficult lab reports and late-night study sessions. In reality, she is rediscovering the thrill of Harsh's company, feeling a rush of adrenaline she hasn't felt since their original breakup.



Harshit sends flowers and supportive messages, completely oblivious to the fact that his girlfriend is currently laughing at his perceived neediness with another man. He trusts her completely, never suspecting that the woman he loves is drifting further away with every passing day.



The secrecy turns into blatant disregard as Kanika and Harsh are seen together by mutual friends, yet she continues to gaslight Harshit whenever he asks questions. She enjoys the power of having a devoted boyfriend while indulging in a passionate affair with the man who once broke her heart.



Driven by a desire to see her, Harshit takes a midnight bus to surprise Kanika at her college, carrying a small anniversary gift. His heart sinks when he sees her walking into a dimly lit apartment with Harsh, their hands intertwined in a way she hasn't held his in months.



When Harshit confronts them, there are no tears or apologies from Kanika, only a cold and mocking stare. She tells him directly that he was always just a placeholder, a safe and boring option that could never satisfy her the way Harsh does.



Harsh stands tall beside her with a cruel smirk on his face, as Kanika forces Harshit to stand there and listen to exactly why he will never be enough for her. She describes his flaws with a sharp and cruel precision, relishing the look of absolute devastation on his face.



The humiliation deepens as Harsh tosses a few crumpled bills at Harshit's feet, jokingly telling him to buy himself a drink for being such a loyal and pathetic follower for three years. Kanika laughs at the gesture, leaning into Harsh and showing Harshit exactly what he has lost.



Harshit stands alone in the cold night, watching the silhouettes of Kanika and Harsh through the window, finally realizing the depth of the betrayal. He is left with the ruins of his trust, a broken man who learned the hard way that some hearts are engineered to deceive.