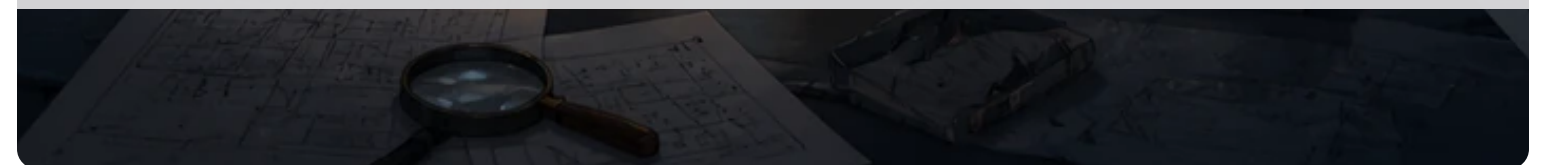




The Architecture of Us

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Three NIS students from Semey—Arman, Dana, and Alikhan—stood excitedly in front of their school, holding the guidelines for a strange new science experiment. For the next month, they would each live in a completely different type of building to see how architecture affects their minds and emotions.



Arman moved into a traditional Kazakh yurt pitched on the vast, quiet steppe just outside the city borders. Under the wide blue sky, he looked at the wooden lattice frame and the circular shanyrak window above, wondering how he would survive without his modern bedroom.



Soon, Arman found a peaceful rhythm, waking up early with the golden sunrise spilling through the roof. He felt a deep, grounded connection to the earth and nature, noticing that his usual school stress had completely melted away.



Meanwhile, Dana moved into a sleek, high-tech smart apartment right in the bustling center of Semey. During the first week, she felt like a queen as automatic sensors effortlessly adjusted the lights, music, and temperature at her command.



As the days passed, the apartment began to feel less like a luxury and more like a cage. The constant, high-pitched bleeping of machines and the cold, sterile walls made her restless, filling her with the anxious feeling of being a robot trapped in a matrix.



Alikhan settled into a beautifully restored historic merchant house built from weathered red bricks and thick, dark timber. The ancient building felt alive with memories, its long shadows and creaking floors whispering secrets of the past.



One quiet evening, Alikhan dropped his pen and watched it roll across the room before disappearing into a dark corner. Kneeling down to search for it, his hand brushed against a loose floorboard that felt entirely different from the others.



Prying the old wood open, Alikhan discovered a dusty, heavy metal box hidden in the dark space beneath. He carefully wiped away the grime of decades, revealing an engraved date on the lid: 1918.



With a racing heart, Alikhan opened the box to find a weathered notebook filled with beautiful, hand-drawn architectural blueprints of Semey. On the very first page, a handwritten note read: 'The buildings we create will eventually shape who we become.'



The next day, the three friends reunited at school, eager to share their radically different experiences. They realized the experiment had transformed them completely, turning Arman into a calm soul, Dana into a restless skeptic, and Alikhan into a detective on the trail of a grand historical mystery.