

Soft Words for Hard Feelings

I Was So Stupid to Think This Would Work Out

(but here's the truth)

No.

You weren't stupid.

You were *hopeful*.

And hopeful isn't the same as naive.

Hope is what people do when they still have the courage to imagine something better — even in a world that hasn't earned it.

You thought maybe, just this once,
the math would line up.

The effort would matter.

The people would listen.

The system wouldn't break your heart.

And why wouldn't you think that?

You showed up right.

You did the work.

You believed in reason, in fairness, in the miracle of things *maybe* finally going your way.

That's not stupidity.

That's *humanity*.

It's what we do when we still have something in us that hasn't hardened all the way over.

You didn't miscalculate.

You dreamed.

You reached.

You hoped like hell.

And the fact that it didn't work out — that some petty little empire of fear and control blocked the road — says nothing about your intelligence, and everything about the smallness of the people guarding the gate.

You are not stupid.

You are *wounded*.

There's a difference.

One says you were wrong to try.

The other says trying cost more than it should have.

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And that's the truth: it shouldn't have cost this much. But it did. And it hurts. And it's not your fault.

Don't let this moment trick you into shrinking.

The world doesn't need fewer people who believe things can work out.
It needs more people like you — the ones who dare to believe *even when it doesn't*.

You are not stupid.

You are scarred.

And even still, you're here.

That means something.

That means *everything*.