

Beneath the Station Lights

Felicity Li always hated the train station at midnight. The bright lights made everyone look tired and ghostly, and the cold wind always made it worse. Yet every Friday night, she still waited there after work, hoping she might see Mark again.

A year earlier, they'd met on the same station during a thunderstorm. Her bus had broken down, and his train had been delayed for hours. They spent the entire night talking about books, music, dreams, and every place they wanted to visit one day. By sunrise, Felicity felt as though she had known him forever.

After that night, they became inseparable.

Mark brought her tea whenever she worked late at her shop. Felicity listened while he complained about university stress and family expectations. Slowly, friendship turned into something deeper, more beautiful than either of them expected.

Then everything changed.

Three months earlier, Mark abruptly stopped answering her messages.

At first, Felicity believed he was simply busy. Days became weeks, weeks became months, soon the silence slowly shattered her heart. Every unanswered call felt like another crack spreading through her heart.

So when she saw Mark standing across the station platform that one rainy Friday night, her heart stopped.

He looked thin, exhausted.

A minute passed, neither of them moved.

Then Mark tentatively walked toward her.

"Felicity..."

His voice sounded weak, almost nervous.

She hugged her arms. "You disappeared."

"I know."

"That's all you have to say?"

Mark looked down. "I didn't know how to explain."

Rain hammered against the station roof while passengers shuffled around them. Still, Felicity felt trapped.

Finally, Mark looked up again. His eyes were red with exhaustion.

"My mother got cancer," he admitted quietly. "I had to leave university and work full-time to help pay for her treatment."

Felicity's anger weakened immediately, even still the hurt remained. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"Because I felt ashamed," Mark whispered. "I didn't want you seeing me fall apart."

She stared at him silently.

For months, she'd imagined terrible reasons for his disappearance. Maybe he stopped loving her. Maybe he found somebody else. Yet the truth was sadder than she expected.

"You should've trusted me," she said softly.

"I know."

A train thundered past the station, making the platform rumble.

Then Mark reached into his coat pocket, pulling out a small photograph. It depicted them, together, during the summer festival, both smiling beneath glowing lanterns.

"I carried this every day," he admitted quietly. "Even when I thought you hated me."

Felicity's gaze wavered.

She stepped closer to him.

"I never hated you," she whispered.

For the first time in months, Mark smiled warmly.

Then, another train roared into the station. A frightened child slipped near the platform edge, screaming in panic.

Without hesitation, Mark lunged forward and pulled the child safely back.

But he lost his balance.

Felicity's scream echoed through the station as Mark disappeared beneath the rushing lights.

The photograph slipped from her shaking hands and landed beside the tracks below.