

## 12.

### VALENTINE

Walking through reception at work, one of the receptionists called Tracey stops me.

“Eleanor,” she says. “There’s some mail for you.”

One of the services that come with renting the office is that all parcel deliveries and post are left and sorted by the reception staff.

I stop in my tracks and look at the envelope Tracey is holding out. It’s scarlet in colour and it’s obviously a card! The address has been hand written.

Oh no...

It’s February the fourteenth.

I can feel the colour drain from my face.

I slide a paper knife under the small gap at the top where the flap’s been folded over and stuck down.

Taking the contents out of the envelope it definitely is a card. My stomach turns.

On the front I’m faced with two broad bean shapes in different colours with stick arms and legs. The eyes have been drawn on them, looking across from one to the other with a small red heart between them.

Reading the text on the front, a feeling of nausea comes over me. The text reads “We’ve **bean** apart for too long. Let’s give it another try!” Tracey looks on with anticipation, not understanding my reaction.

An age seems to pass before I nervously open the card and read what is written inside.

“We’ve noticed you haven’t ordered from Edmund Bell for a while and we’d really like to welcome you back. Your business is very important to us, so we’d like to offer you 15% discount on the trade price on your next order and free delivery.” The message finishes with “Lots of love from the team at Edmund Bell.”

The relief is unimaginable.