



WHO IS EMMA?

Emma is a runner, a writer, a mother and a cancer thriver. Her book, *All That Followed*, describes her ongoing cancer tug of war and how she manages that while bringing up four children. Follow her @limitless_em

The third lockdown took its toll on Emma's running mojo, but [spoiler alert] don't worry, she's back out there now

THE RUNNING RELATIONSHIP

Take a break if you need to. As Emma Campbell found out, running's always there, waiting till you're ready



A little hiatus on Emma's running journey

Me and running hit a rocky patch recently. There was no big falling out, just a slight cooling of relations. We've been together for over two years now so maybe it's to be expected. Maybe I shouldn't over think it but I've got to say, it came as a bit of a shock. Tears were shed. Chocolate was consumed in vast quantities, pyjamas not removed and duvet days became the norm. And the mood swings. Oh my god, the bloody mood swings. Not to mention the lovelorn what's-the-point-of-it-all? flailing around.

So we had a break, instigated by me. There was no one else involved, honestly. I just needed some time out. I just needed to get my head straight. I think I was testing our relationship. Pushing it away. Are you really there for me with your promises of feelgood endorphins and serotonin boosts? Okay, I admit, you haven't let me down so far and seem remarkably unconditional in how you show up, but really, come on, how long can that last for? And all the endless patience, lack of judgement, showing nothing but pride even when I can't muster up more than a slow shuffle? Are you for real, running? Or is this just



That first run back is like falling in love all over again

part of your game, reeling me in before spitting me out. And (yawn) those endless claims of improved mental health and general wellbeing... well, I'd like to know where you were when I was emerging from bed at midday and shuffling back just a few hours later.

What's that? You were there all the time? Waiting patiently? Oh - but I didn't realise you still cared. I thought you might get bored and leave me for good. I was really scared. It must have been confusing for you. I was blowing hot and cold: high as a kite one minute, making wild declarations of endless love and devotion and how together we could take on the world and then the next... nothing. I'm sorry. No, I know you don't need me to apologise but I want to. I should never have doubted you. You never gave me any reason to and I can see that now. This has all been my 'stuff'.

// No games. No empty promises. I PROMISE I won't mention the word 'marathon' until at least the summer //



Maybe it's the effect of the third lockdown, maybe the January blues went on a bit too long, maybe... Oh I don't know, I really don't want to make excuses. All I know is that I really want us to start again. Can we, please? Will you give me another chance? We can take it slowly, if

you like; I'll just follow your lead. No games. No empty promises. I PROMISE I won't even mention the word 'marathon' until at least the summer.

I just want us to go back to the start, like it was: you and me, four or five

times a week, for half an hour or maybe 40 minutes... maybe even longer at the weekends if you like. I love you running, I really do. Maybe I needed that time out just to realise how bloody incredible you really are.

What do you mean I'm being a bit melodramatic? Ha ha, I know, I know, you're right; it was only a week-long break but god, it felt like forever. I'm glowing, you say? Ah, that's so lovely of you. I feel good actually! I'm feeling like me again. And that is definitely, 100% down to you. You're the best. No, really, you are. 🧡

