

WEDNESDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2020

ROGUE



EDITORIAL

"HAPPY NEW YEAR!" – 3 words I'm desperate to say to end this awful year. I swear we took 2016 for granted... This time, both with 2020 and 2021, we must be grateful for what we've had to prevent 2021 from becoming a re-run of this year.

Though we've globally suffered losses, hardships and sacrifices, we must remember that we got to spend time at home with family, learning the value of gratitude, patience and understanding. If that doesn't bring you peace, just be glad Trump is going to be pulled, kicking and screaming from the White House in a few short weeks – if that doesn't bring you comfort, I don't know for you.

2021 is looking good!

Better prospects, new beginnings and second chances. Try to take everything as a blessing and don't dwell over the past – think blank canvas, clean slate, a fresh stack of paper.

Glad to be back with another issue of the Rogue for you to end the year, looking forward to bringing you all some more fun content next half term! Over to Ella :)

- Zoya

Time for the obligatory issue roundup! This Christmas we've collated all things festive to keep you entertained during a Tier 3 lockdown. Not the holiday any of us were hoping

for but there's no harm in channelling our inner Buddy the Elf and staying positive.

First up Grace is telling us all the ways we can stay merry this Christmas and the people we can reach out to when we're feeling a little blue, Ms Pringle reviews her favourite Yuletide reads for a night curled up by the fire, if reading isn't your thing Chris is screening some festive favourites and Luca is providing the ultimate Christmas party playlist. Shiraz closes the show with a weird and wonderful insight into the human mind. This issue also features a very special submission from our friends down in the Junior School. In the absence of Christmas trees around the school the pupils took it upon themselves to get creative and make their own, the very special Royal Russell Christmas Tree is proudly displayed in this issue. As always Zoya and I want to say a massive thank you to all our contributors for their super hard work.

Have a very merry Christmas, stay safe and don't be a 'cotton headed ninny muggins.'

- Ella

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FINDING A MERRY CHRISTMAS

Christmas! A word we all love to hear, well, except Scrooge (Bah Humbug). Though this year has been different to say the least; while we may be able to see our family and friends, this is not the case for many people. To stay safe, many may be isolating and may be spending Christmas alone, which can be incredibly lonely. Looking after each other is important and there are many ways you can reach out to family and friends. Phone call, text, video call, email, or even go 'old school' and write letters. Yes people still write letters! Reaching out, even with just a simple, 'just wanted to see how you are doing' message, or a random compliment or an act of kindness, can make such a difference in people's lives. Especially in a year like this one, so make sure you reach out to your friends and family - small acts of kindness, even to strangers can be incredibly heart-warming.

What to do if you are struggling and how to maintain positive mental health:

Exercise is beneficial for improving your mental health and maintaining positive mental health. Now, this does not mean you have to go for a 10K run every day. Even just taking a short walk, can improve your mood and mental health

Speaking to friends - we are fortunate in our time that we have mobile phones. Pick up the phone and call or message your friends, check in to see how they are doing, or if you need a chat.

Mindfulness Meditation - There are apps, such as 'CALM' which can be used for meditation and breathing techniques, which are helpful for relieving stress or anxiety.

Sleep - Teenagers should be getting 8-10 hours of sleep every night. By ensuring you get enough sleep, you will feel more energised, be able to concentrate, and will work better.

If you are struggling, or need someone to talk to over Christmas here are some options: Samaritans- Email - jo@samaritans.org OR Call - 116 123

Samaritans is a registered charity aimed at providing emotional support to anyone in emotional distress or struggling to cope. They have call and email services, and before COVID-19 drop-in centres, where you can talk face to face to a volunteer. The volunteers who answer the email service go by the name 'Jo'.

Childline - Call - 0800 1111

Childline is a charity for anyone under the age of 19 who is struggling. It is free and does not show up on the phone bill. All counsellors are trained staff and volunteers.

The Mix - Call - 0808 808 4994

The Mix is a leading support service for young people in the UK. They are here to help with any challenges you may be facing, no matter how big or small. They offer free, confidential helplines.

Shout - TEXT SHOUT - 85258

Shout is a free, confidential, 24/7 text message support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.

For Christmas, I would like to leave you with this thought. "As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands, one for helping yourself, and the other for helping others."

- Maya Angelou



BY GRACE SCOTT

YULETIDE READS

The Christmas period often allows us a little more down time than we usually have, and in this year of the Great Plague of 2020, filling our time has become more of a challenge for some people. A bit of escapism might be just the ticket as the days grow darker. Why not choose one of the following festive reads to occupy you for a few hours?

A Christmas Carol – Charles Dickens

No Christmas reading list would be complete without this classic. In this novel, it isn't as obvious that Dickens was paid by the word as it is a lot shorter than many of his other novels. Join Ebenezer Scrooge on his discovery of the true meaning of Christmas, and that money isn't everything. This year, the message of this book may be even more poignant as many families across the land face financial hardship, rather like Bob Cratchit's family.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas – Dr Seuss

Another classic, written by the ever-favourite Dr Seuss. In this tale, the Grinch takes a severe dislike to the merriment in Whoville, and decides that the best remedy for this is to actively pack up and steal Christmas. With the help of his long suffering dog, he sneaks into town and steals the lot – Christmas trees, decorations, food and presents. If you are of a grumpy, anti-Christmas disposition yourself, you could stop reading the book here, and delight in the ruined Christmas in Whoville. Or you could read on to discover how the Grinch comes to understand the true meaning of Christmas and watch as his heart grows.

The Box of Delights – John Masefield

A good book to read if you are curious to know what 'scrobbling' involves. Young Kit meets a strange Punch and Judy man at a Christmas party who entrusts him

with a special 'box of delights'. This box has many amazing properties, allowing Kit and his friends to shrink in size, travel swiftly, and go back in time. Add in some rogue magicians dressed as clergymen, random kidnapping, and talking animals and you're on to a winner with this book.

The Dark is Rising – Susan Cooper

This classic begins on Christmas Eve, when our young protagonist discovers that he is one of the Old Ones and a guardian and warrior for the Light. In the midst of a horrendous snowstorm, he is summoned to a quest to gather mysterious objects in order to win the battle against darkness. A very sinister book, given that it is aimed at children, but definitely a gripping read.

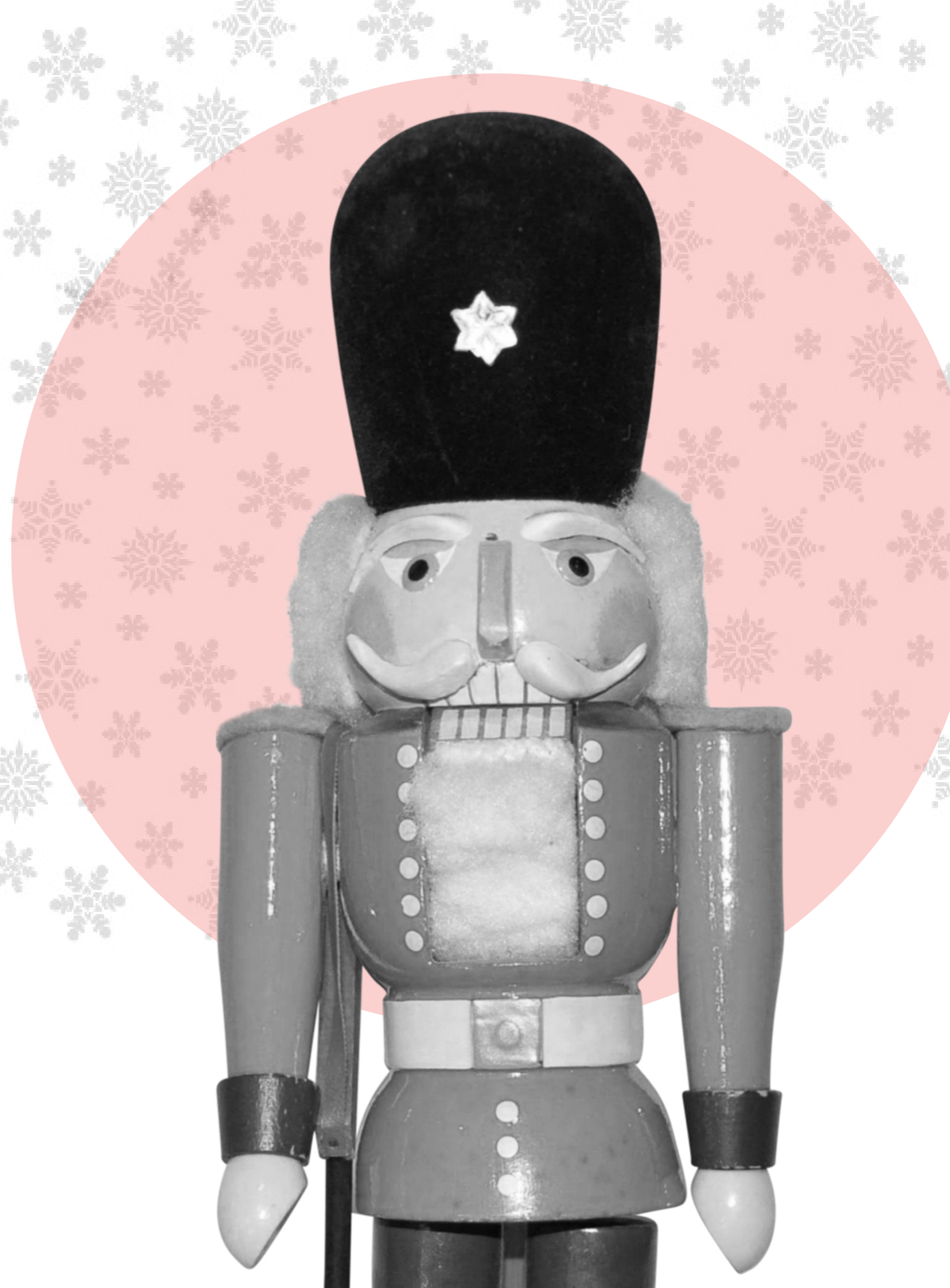
The Gift of the Magi – O. Henry

A short story this time, but one that will stay with you. A young couple, recently married and very much in love face a common problem – what do you buy the one you love for Christmas when you have almost no money? To say any more would give the plot away, but there is a real twist to this tale.

The Nutcracker and the Mouse King – E. T. A. Hoffman

Another favourite that may be familiar to ballet fans, but the original tale is rather more grim. In this story, Marie and Fritz find that the toys made for them by their inventor godfather come to life in the night, and do battle with the evil Mouse King.

BY MS PRINGLE



FESTIVE FILMS

Home Alone (1990)

A classic we've all seen a million times and for good reason too. As stated by the name, an 8-year-old Kevin McCallister (Macaulay Culkin) is left at home by his family when they go to spend Christmas in Paris. All alone, a scared Kevin must protect his house from the 'Wet Bandits' - a pair of foolish burglars. What makes this film so special is the central theme of being with your family over the holidays and an important reminder that no matter how bad you fall out with them, you should never turn your back on your family.

Love Actually (2003)

A collection of intertwined relationships, a British star-studded cast including Hugh Grant, Colin Firth & Emma Thompson, what's not to like? This film has heart-breaks, adultery, loss of loved ones yet it still manages to show that love is actually all around us and especially during the Christmas season, anything is possible.

How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2000)

A live-action adaptation of the Dr. Seuss story, Jim Carrey stars as the notorious Christmas hater. The grinch who hates Christmas, is persuaded by young Cindy Lou to enjoy Christmas. After stealing the town's Christmas presents, he realises that Christmas is more to people than just the gifts and about being

with family and friends. This film reminds a materialistic present-day audience of what the true meaning and values of Christmas really is.

It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

Named as one of the greatest films of all time, this film's meaning is more relevant this year than ever, with the significant focus on mental health. George is willing to end it all on Christmas Eve, but is saved by his guardian angel and shown how his loved ones' lives would be completely different without him. The definition of 'Old is Gold'. 'It's a Wonderful Life' always has us in tears by the time the credits roll and is a must watch for everyone.

Die Hard (1988)

Some say it's a Christmas film, others say otherwise. Oh well, I'm reviewing either way. Often considered one of the best action films ever, it features Bruce Willis as a NY cop John McClane visiting his estranged wife in LA on Christmas, when German terrorist Hans Grubber (Alan Rickman) storms the Nakatomi Plaza. Trapped on the top floor with nothing but a pistol and his wits, it's up to McClane to save his wife and stop the terrorists in time for Christmas. Another Classic which stresses the importance of family, "Yippee-ki-yay".

FESTIVE FACT: *It's a wonderful Life* was a huge commercial failure when it hit cinemas in 1946. However, its copyright ran out in 1974 due to a clerical error meaning that TV stations could run it for free, turning it into the festive hit it is today.



SONGS OF CHRISTMAS

1. **All I Want for Christmas is You** (1994)
– Mariah Carey

Carey earns \$500,000 each year from this song alone!

2. **Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree** (1958) – Brenda Lee

Lee recorded the song when she was just 13.

3. **Last Christmas** (1986) – Wham!

It's ironic to think that George Michael passed away on Christmas Day...

4. **Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas** (1948) – Frank Sinatra

5. **Merry Christmas Everyone** (1973)
– Slade

6. **It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas** (2011) – Michael Bublé

7. **Fairytale of New York** (1987)
– The Pogues

8. **I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday** (2005) – Wizzard

9. **Jingle Bell Rock** (1970) – Bobby Helms

10. **Driving Home for Christmas** (1986)
– Chris Rhea

11. **Sleigh Ride** (1963) – The Ronettes

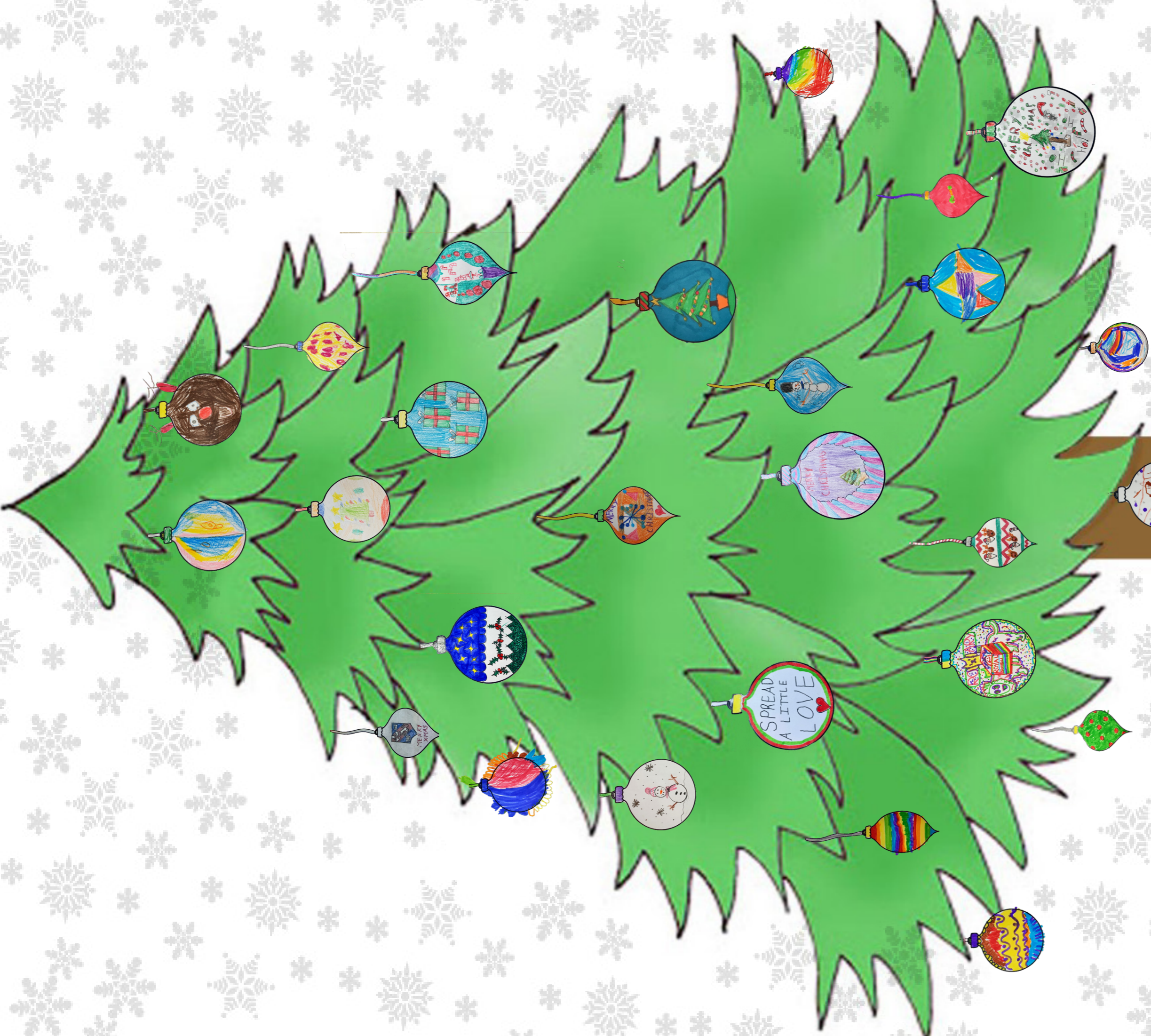
12. **Do They Know It's Christmas** (1984)
– Band Aid



BY LUCA SIMONS



SCHOOL COMPETITION



BLINDED BY CHOICE

BY SHIRAZ KIRMANI

You don't know yourself as well as you think you do. You don't even know why you do what you do. I think I know myself pretty well and I'm sure you do too. But two Swedish psychologists clearly think we have no clue and set out to conduct an experiment meant to show us that we can't trust our minds. Are you confused? Good. Me too.

Let me explain. Petter Johansson was an experimental psychologist who decided to explore how people justify the choices they make or the ones they don't make. Bear with me. He conducted an experiment in which the participants were shown two pictures each of complete and random strangers, marked A and B. They were asked to choose the one they liked, their choices were logged, and the pictures handed back to their 'handlers'. Sorry, I've been bingeing on Jack Ryan.

Now for the fun part.

Each participant was given the picture they'd chosen and asked to explain why they had chosen it. Which they did, in detail, pointing out various features and enthusiastically explaining why they'd found them attractive. All the while not realizing they'd be given the OTHER picture. The one they were justifying as their preferred picture wasn't the one they'd chosen at all. It was not as if the differences were subtle, like those fiendish multiple-choice questions where you have to give 'the least wrong answer.' Beards had disappeared, earrings had appeared, blondes had become brunettes.

You would think everyone would have noticed their pictures had been swapped. You'd be wrong. Three out of four people did not. In fact, they gave detailed explanations for why they'd chosen a picture they clearly had not. How can you forget you'd chosen someone without a moustache because you don't like facial hair; or that you chose the

dark-haired man because you don't like blonde? Like five minutes ago. Not a day, not an hour. Just a few minutes.

Anyway, as you would expect, there is a name for the brain's strange tendency to try to justify and to make sense of something that isn't true, but that it has been led to believe is true. It's called choice mismatch.

I'm still confused and I'm a Psych student. The participants were shocked. Some were so traumatized they called it fake news and refused to accept the results.

This intriguing experiment shows that despite what we might believe about ourselves and the choices we make and why we make them, we're actually clueless. We have no idea why we are drawn towards one thing and not the other, because actually we're not. We just think we are. Fiendish. You could say that your innermost soul is a mysterious creature that has no intentions of stepping into the light. So, next time you choose x over y, ask yourself...why? Do you really prefer x, or do you just think you do? The answer, my friend ...

