

**it's not all bad**

12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2020

ISSUE #5

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## laugh (pg 1)

zoomin' to the top  
takeshi's kennel  
kabootar ja

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## be reassured (pg 1)

cheap drugs  
will the real RR pls stand up  
good news

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## rethink (pg 2)

baby steps  
idiot box → smart TV

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## culture (pg 2)

plato & platypus can't walk  
love in the time of corona



Bhasha Mukherjee, Miss England 2019, [trades](#) her crown for a stethoscope.  
Beauty, brains (and safety for that matter) – you can have all three.

The artist is raising money for healthcare workers via [Maker's Asylum](#)

Today marks the best comeback moment of all time: the resurrection of Jesus Christ. For the last 2020 years, humanity has tried to compete – Jon Snow in Game of Thrones, Mihir Virani in Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi, Rocky in Rocky – and failed. The J-Man remains the G-Man, a superlative Comeback King.

But at last, a twist! Mankind has been thrown a bone in this seemingly futile contest as the virus wrecks our economy and social systems. This is our chance to seize the title of Comeback King once and for all. Jesus of Nazareth, meet: Citizens of Earth. It will be a hard-fought challenge testing our physical and mental faculties, and we must train if we are to be victorious. To get you started (and to celebrate long-distance Easter in our own quarantined way) we've embedded this newsletter with three [easter eggs](#). Not the edible kind (we wish!) but the digital kind – secret pixels unseen by the naked eye that, if discovered, will give you a hint to our next newsletter and are sure to bring you some of the wholesomeness you might be missing today. Happy hunting, and Happy Easter!

## reasons to laugh

In a wonderful turn of events, Zoom has [overtaken PUBG](#) in terms of downloads on the Indian App Store. iPhone users are using quarantine to video-conference rather than strategise coordinated attacks and although the Zoom app has its faults, this preference is promising.

Sports commentators have to work from home too and, in the absence of new live action, they've turned to the world around them. Meet [Olive and Mabel](#) (the dogs of BBC commentator Andrew Cotter), who can be seen (rather, heard) competing in a range of pseudo-sports, from a "game of bones" to eating matches. If you're more of a cricket fan, however, police-officers turned commentators in [Kerala](#) might be more your thing.

[Masakali 2.0](#), the Bollywood music industry's most recent offering, is a reason to... **not** re-invent. Jaipur Police agrees, and has issued the [following advisory](#) in public interest: "If you are unnecessarily roaming outside we will put you in a room and play Masakali 2.0 on loop." Honestly, terrifying.



The artist is fundraising for healthcare workers via [Maker's Asylum](#)

## reasons to be reassured

A [new analysis](#) estimates that many of the drugs used to treat other viral diseases that are currently being clinically tested to determine efficacy in treating COVID-19 will be (much to the delight of any Indian reading this) CHEAP! The manufacturing costs of at least 8 potential drugs are < \$1 a day per patient (our friend, hydroxychloroquine, would cost \$1 for a 14-day course) which means, if any drug proves effective, it will be affordable!

The [IMF has enlisted](#) Raghuram Rajan (India's ex- RBI governor, who is a real-life Rahul Raichand from K3G) to advise on IMF policy and response to the pandemic. Reassuring news to know that RR will be repping the Indian perspective at the global level!

As the outbreak continues, people are reading more news. Specifically, more better news. [In the US](#), for instance, there's been a huge spike in the viewership of local news channels and established newspapers (think CNBC, the New York Times and the like). This is particularly important when you consider the alarming popularity in recent years of 'partisan' news: biased sources that attract readers with their opinionated hot-takes and promote the creation of echo-chambers for fake news.







The artist is raising money for Delhi violence victims via [UMEED](#)

## reasons to rethink

If, just for a second, we were to suspend our default scepticism around data collection and usage, there's [reason to believe](#) that studying aggregate data on human mobility could be extremely valuable in this crisis. [For instance](#), public health officials might find it useful to understand what are "essential trips" as they design lockdown policies. It can also help officials predict hotspots before a spike in reported cases emerges. Comparing movement can inform officials' understanding of where distancing recommendations are being followed and where more stringent lockdown needs to be maintained. Perhaps, most importantly, such data can help answer the fundamental question of how might we begin to exit this lockdown and resume life!

There is robust scientific evidence for the correlation between subtitles being broadcast on a television show and children's literacy rates. A [simple change](#) of including subtitles on the screen has the potential to boost reading-levels and language cognition in children. In the UK, campaigners appealed to networks to make this change; if they succeed, the skyrocketing screen-time during quarantine can at least have a positive impact on literacy!

## reasons to culture

How did the solipsist break up with his girlfriend? "It's not you, it's me." While there is more such philosophy humour, there is also the philosophy of humour (and the philosophy of just about everything else). Why, then, should the topic of social distancing be any different? From J.S. Mill to Kant to Marx, [this article](#) offers a different lens by which to evaluate some of your most pressing dilemmas during the quarantine. To get you started: Is it fair to go to the grocery store for non-essentials even if you maintain social-distancing norms?

Quarantine ruining all the romantic date nights you had planned? Not sure how to celebrate an upcoming anniversary over FaceTime? Sir Patrick Stewart, best known for his Star Trek and X-Men fame, is here to help. In a spectacular turn as Quarantine Cupid, his [daily renditions](#) of Shakespeare's sonnets are music for the soul. The combination of Sir Patrick's baritone and William's literary genius: a perfect gift for your loved one.

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That's all for today, hunt away! As always, let us know what you think, [subscribe \(click here\)](#), and **stay safe**. M&S.

P.S. While searching for images for this newsletter, we typed the nuanced query "Raghuram Rajan **stud**" into google, only to be politely questioned by the search engine, "Did you mean 'Raghuram Rajan **study**'"? At 5 pm tomorrow, please join us for a moment of silence in memory of the professor's street cred.