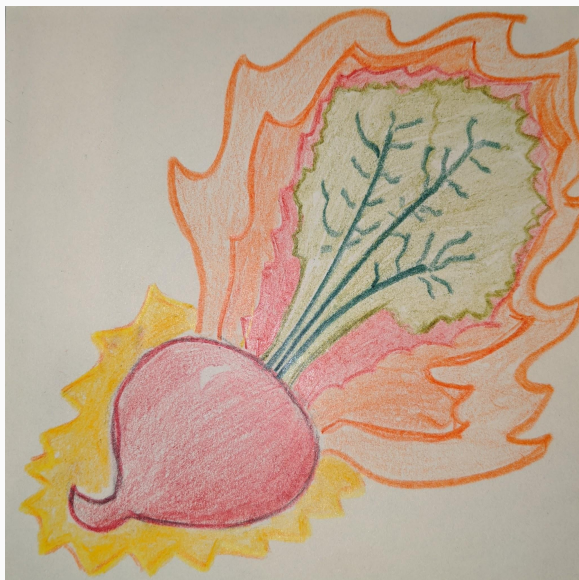
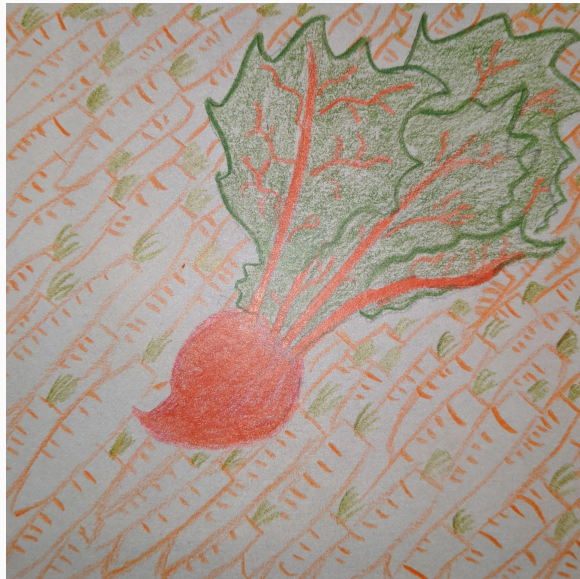
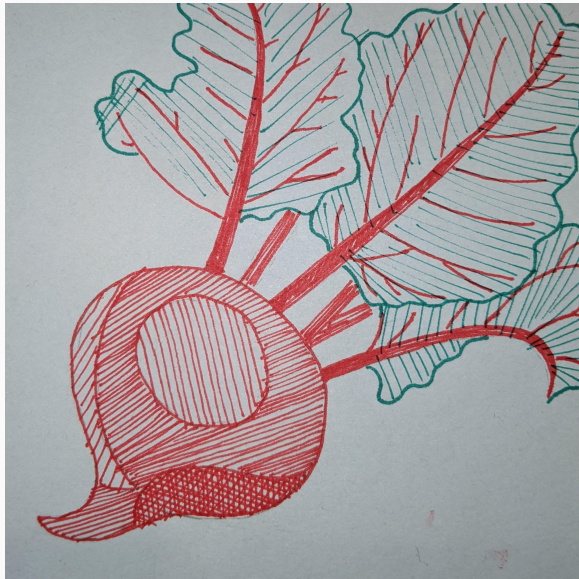


Quaran-Zine: Beet Edition



Edited by
Careme Schnell & Saunead Ennage

Growth in the time of hardship

"The beet is the most intense of vegetables. The radish, admittedly, is more feverish, but the fire of the radish is a cold fire, the fire of discontent, not of passion. Tomatoes are lusty enough, yet there runs through tomatoes an undercurrent of frivolity. Beets are deadly serious.
- Tom Robbins

For our inaugural Quarant-Zine, an homage to the humble beet may seem a bit unexpected. But beets are hardy, adaptable vegetables. They are known for growing almost anywhere, under unlikely conditions. In fact, they do especially well in home gardens - which seemed especially appropriate given that we are all trying to grow while stuck at home.

They were also, serendipitously, part of Rachel's CSA delivery when we first hatched the plan for our zine. And after hacking off the tops where new green leaves were sprouting so she could roast them into something delicious, she decided to try sticking these root stubs into a plate of water.

These fledgling beet stubs not only thrived - they inspired. Here they were, fragments of their former selves sitting in a most unnatural place, a shallow dish with water. Yet, despite the lack of soil, a fraction of the original root and sitting on Rachel's kitchen counter, the once droopy and dehydrated leaves sprung to life and reached toward the sun cascading in through the nearby window. These plants were forced into a new way of living and, in a stunning plot twist, they began to flourish! Rachel was certainly surprised by how a few decapitated vegetable stalks were able to grow delicious leaves that she has now put in at least two separate salads! We realized that perhaps there was something to be learned from these unassuming beets.

We're currently living through a crisis unlike any we've seen for a century or more. Yet we refuse to wilt. We're continually finding new ways to connect, to communicate, to learn, to lift each other up. We're learning about our own abilities in times of hardship. We're learning new skills, recalibrating our lives at a speed we never would have imagined months ago. We're exploring new creative outlets and discovering joy while stuck at home.

This quarant-zine is a celebration of the change and growth that we're all seeing in the midst of a global pandemic. Watching these beets thrive on a little mismatched plate, we wanted to be those beets. Or at least to write about them. On one hand, this was a silly creative writing prompt. Our imaginations took us in wildly different directions, both literal and metaphorical. You'd be hard pressed to

find beets in both plots. On the other hand, we saw so many unexpected commonalities between the stories we wrote. In both stories, we traveled far from home - the only way we're allowed to travel these days, after all. Both stories contain pairs of people united by life altering conflict. And although conflict is most often uncomfortable, it has the capacity to stimulate new growth in unexpected ways.

All of this from a couple of de-rooted vegetables in a dish. These stories recognize our own capacity to thrive in our little mismatched plates. And just like a beet, it's interesting to see what takes root. We hope you enjoy our first collaborative creative project. It has been fun to assemble it together, and we hope this is the first of many editions to come!

Careme Schnell & Saunead Ennage

Across the Island

By Nadee Gunasena

Island-hopping.

Jade thought the name for her daily pastime sounded far more exciting than what it meant. 'Island-hopping' brought to mind images of [far flung islands](#), stretched one after another in an idyllic tropical necklace, sandy coasts seeming to kiss each other at low tide.

The reality was nothing so exotic. Island-hopping simply meant the act of sailing from one rocky outcrop of land to the next, casting fishing nets two miles from shore in hopes of catching the fish that swam out past the sandbars.

Island hopping was a full day activity, a strenuous day of [sailing out and back](#), time consuming enough that most fishermen didn't take the time to venture out. It was left to a few enterprising fishers - and Jade, only daughter of an [aging but ambitious fisherman](#), one who expected a substantial daily catch even when he couldn't be out on the sea himself.

So here she was, navigating to her sixth island, the sun casting [long shadows behind her](#). In the months since Jade had come back home, she had gotten to know these coastlines well on her daily trips. Usually she welcomed the challenge of a new day's catch. But today was hotter than most, and she had already finished the water she had brought.

She looked longingly at the thick jungle canopy on the island before her, one of the larger islands on her route. Surely there would be a freshwater stream there? And that shade looked so inviting after a day on the water out in the sun.

Her father had warned her never to set food on the islands as she circumnavigated them. But she had seen other sailors going ashore here and there, young boys all.

She had not returned home only to be bound by more rules.

Jade [gathered up her nets](#), huffing at the paltry catch that came with. She tossed the few fish there into her bucket. Then, she grabbed a hold of the rudder and steered for shore. She whispered "[Land ho!](#)" to herself with glee.

When the boat was close to shore, she jumped out and hauled it the remaining few feet aground. She tied it to a sturdy tree nearby. Then, she found a shady spot to bury her catch so it wouldn't spoil while she was gone. Grabbing her water canteen, she entered the thick jungle.

Foreign trees towered over her, laden with [plump fruits](#) of all colors. Jade couldn't stop staring upward as she walked, fascinated by the dappled green canopy and the damp air surrounding her, so different from her own beach village home.

All of a sudden, she tripped. She looked down to unhook her foot from a large loop of tree root.

That's when she realized she was surrounded.

Massive [cats](#) - black as night and light as sand - stared at her from all sides. Their eyes gleamed in the odd half light of the canopy. They were huge, twice her size or more. And they were all staring right at her.

["Thwak!"](#)

All of a sudden, she heard the noise of an arrow hitting wood nearby. The cats turned as one to face the new noise. In that moment, a hand grabbed her upper arm.

"We must go - now!"

The hand belonged to a young woman, about her age and with skin shades darker than Jade's own. She hissed again at Jade to convey the urgency of her plea.

"Quickly now! They'll tire of you if you don't make it easy for them!"

And then she was off through the trees, soundless and light.

Jade hesitated no longer, following blindly in the direction of her new rescuer. She felt [loud and clumsy](#), crashing into trunks and stomping through fallen leaves. But she heard no sounds of pursuit behind her, and so she kept going.

After what felt like more than an hour - but was likely only minutes - they were back on the beach, free of the thick cover of the jungle. Jade bent over double, gulping huge lungfuls of air. She was a fisherwoman. She had never needed to run to catch her prey, much less to prevent herself from becoming the catch!

When she calmed down, she checked behind her into the jungle. No cats behind her. It was safe.

She turned to face her rescuer ... who promptly held out a full water flask.

Jade had forgotten all about her mission to gather water. She took the flask and drank deeply.

"Thank you!" She handed back the flask. "I'm Jade. You saved me."

The woman took the flask and drank. When she was done, she wiped her mouth in her forearm and smiled in greeting.

"I am Cholqi. You are not from here?"

Jade shook her head.

"No, I'm a fisher. I'm from the island several miles to the west of here, the one with the mango trees."

Cholqi nodded. "I know of your village."

"And you?" Jade asked, her curiosity growing now that the danger had passed.

Abruptly the ambient jungle noises around them seemed to grow quiet. Cholqi's eyes gleamed, and she gave Jade a toothy [smile](#). Her canines were sharpened to points.

And all of a sudden, Jade's heart [beet](#) faster.

Remolachas del Fuego

By Rachel Clemens

The grove of manzanita trees has stood there since before the small California town was ever built. The seemingly muscular branches covered in smooth red bark [reached toward the sun](#) for nourishment and had been doing so before humans built buildings tall enough to block its rays. He was in awe of their unpretentious grace, their stoic stature. Always had. When he was young, he would sit between their trunks to soak in the sun alongside them and a peaceful feeling would wash over him. He felt like he was a part of the forest. He loved these trees. And that is why he fought so ugly to save them.

A farmer from another part of town was looking to expand her operation and had, thus bought land that overlapped part of the grove. She intended to tear down the manzanita trees on her property to grow, among other crops, [beets](#). "They are pretty much the same as manzanita trees. Red stalks and green leaves. You won't miss them," she said to him one day. That peaceful feeling washed out of him. He was incensed at this statement and she knew it.

Tom and Martha had both grown up in the area and had known each other a long while. They were never close, but this spot was morphing into something [wholly toxic](#). The rest of the town just watched as things escalated between them and eventually became white hot. Some of them didn't know quite what they were witnessing, others derived a sick pleasure from it. The bartender was taking bets from townsfolk attempting to predict the outcome. Nearly everyone lost.

One day, while Martha was at the new plot of land, Tom drove over to one of her other farm properties and ran his truck over several rows of seedlings, crushing their bright green cotyledons into the dirt. A couple farm workers went out to chase him off the farm, but when they saw the crazed look in his eye chose to live another day instead.

Martha was not innocent in any of this either. For example, she made sure to let him know when she planned to finally tear out his beloved trees. In doing so, she would be destroying about a quarter of the grove. She wanted him to swing by and cause a scene. They taunted each other this way until finally one day when tragedy struck.

Tom had gotten the bright idea that Martha could not mow down a forest without her tractors. So, he decided to destroy some of the equipment. In the night, he stuck some gasoline-soaked rags into the gas tank of a couple trucks and gleefully [lit them up](#). He didn't merely want to disable her equipment, he wanted to obliterate it. It was an act of violence from a [tree-loving hippy](#) that would have surprised someone who didn't know any hippies.

There were potential consequences to blowing up anything in the middle of summer next to a parched forest, he may have attempted to accomplish this task by employing a slightly different method. Sadly, what anyone else would have

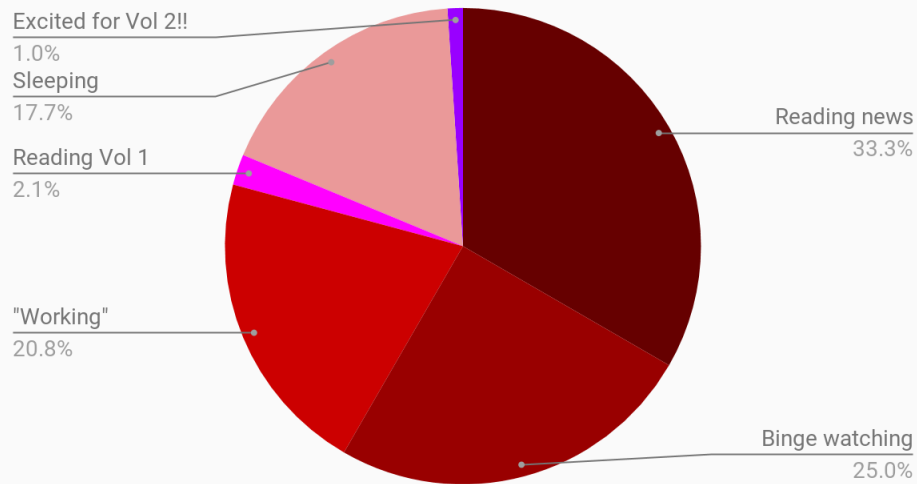
predicted happened - were they not at war. As the rags began to smoke and heat in the gas pipe, Tom eagerly waited. And when the first truck exploded, he jumped and danced and hooted in celebration. He was not watching as an ember from one of the rags floated on a gentle breeze toward the edge of the manzanita grove. At some point, however, it did register that something had changed. Tom slowed his [gyrations](#) to watch as his beloved sacred place began to blaze. Someone must have called Martha to tell her something was going on at her new farm. She showed up to find Tom trembling on his hands and knees on the ground, in anguish like someone who had unexpectedly lost a dear friend. Martha, who was on fire herself at the sight of her farm equipment having been blown to hell, tore into Tom as he lay in the dirt, defenseless.

The fire department eventually came and were able to stop the fire eventually, but not before nearly half of the manzanita grove had gone [up in smoke](#). The police arrived shortly thereafter to take witness accounts and Tom into jail.

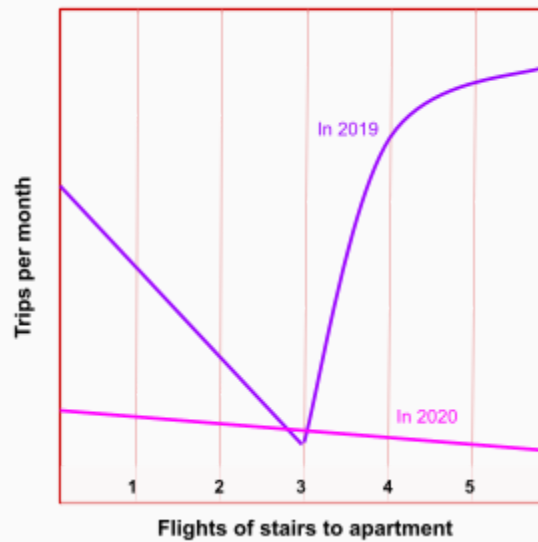
With time, Tom and Martha started to cool off. Partly because they both realized how stupid they had been and partly because Tom's fire took care of all the trees that Martha would have otherwise torn down. Then, throughout the court proceedings, Martha and Tom learned about the other. There was plenty of mud to sling around and after a while they both recognized they each were [covered in it](#). Martha was touched by how much the forest meant to him and provided refuge for him during a less-than-idyllic childhood. Tom came to respect Martha's vision for the town and strength as a businesswoman. Prison then gave them both time. And while Tom served a short stint at San Quentin for arson, Tom and Martha corresponded. Eventually, they worked together to petition the local government and get the remaining grove designated as a nature preserve, [saving it](#) from additional threats of expansion.

That Stat Lyfe

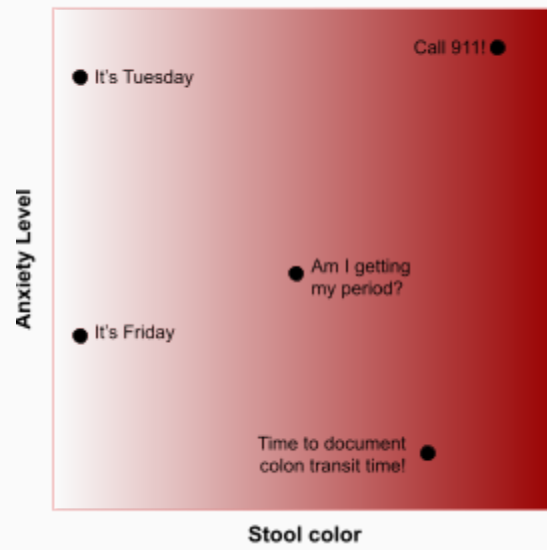
A Day in the Time of Rona (24 hrs)



Number of Trips to the Grocery Store



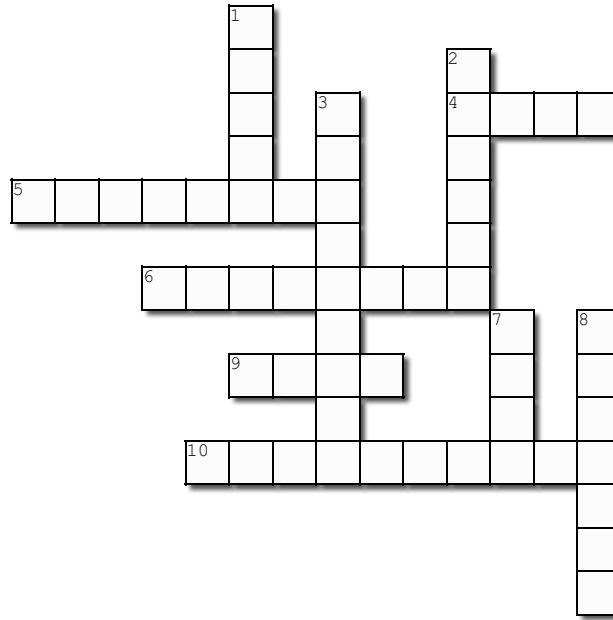
Giving a Shit: Reactions to Beet BMs



Name: _____

Leafy Greens

Listen to the beet



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

- 4. Beets can be used in what kind of alcohol?
- 5. Beets can be an aphrodisiac, and were often designs on the walls of what ancient buildings?
- 6. What are beets called in the UK?
- 9. The best season for beets in the US
- 10. What are the sweetest beets?

Down

- 1. What is the most exotic place that Beets have been eaten?
- 2. Who was the beet farmer in a popular US TV sitcom that revolved around the workplace?
- 3. Beets are a key topping on burgers in this country - even in the local McDonald's!
- 7. The part of the beet that isn't edible
- 8. What famous Eastern European soup uses beets at the main ingredient?