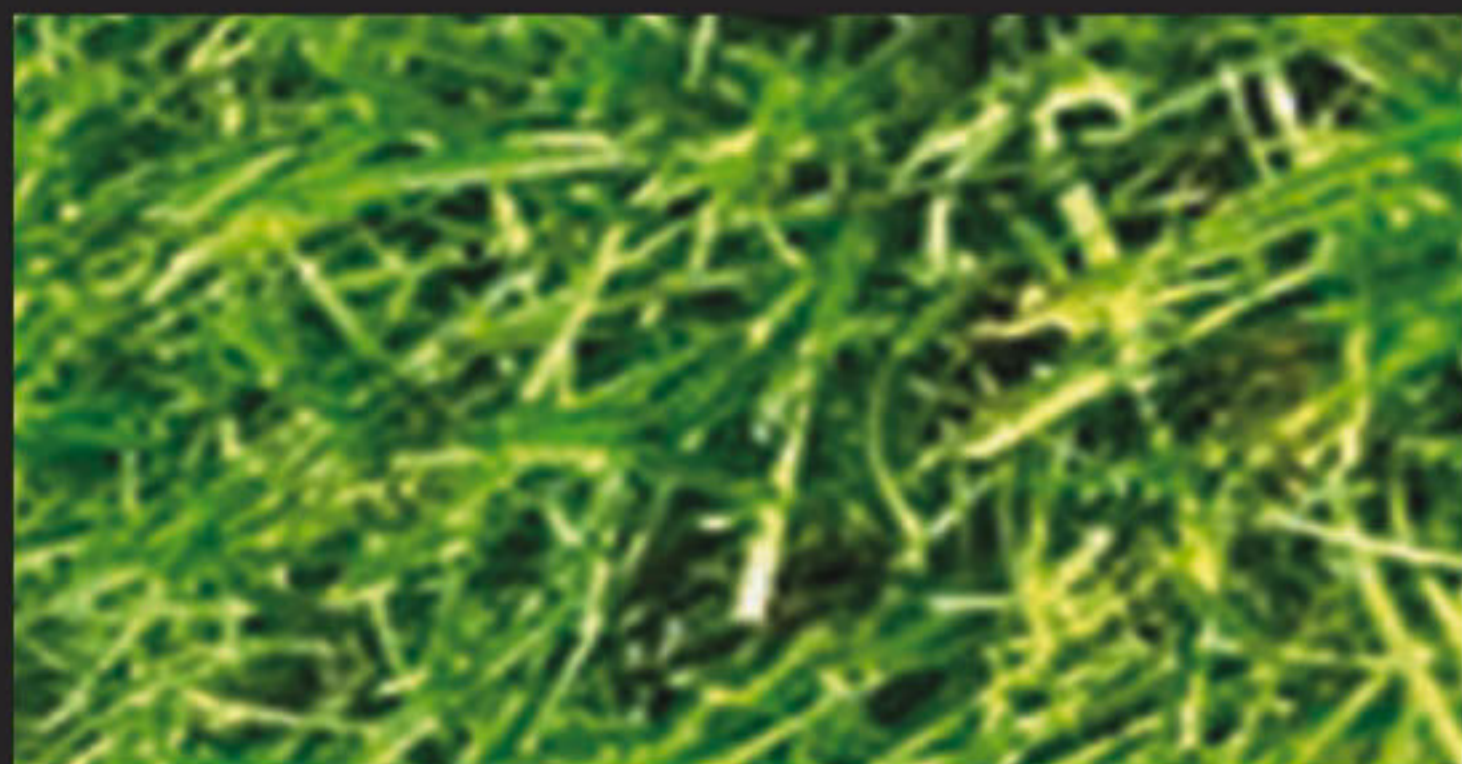
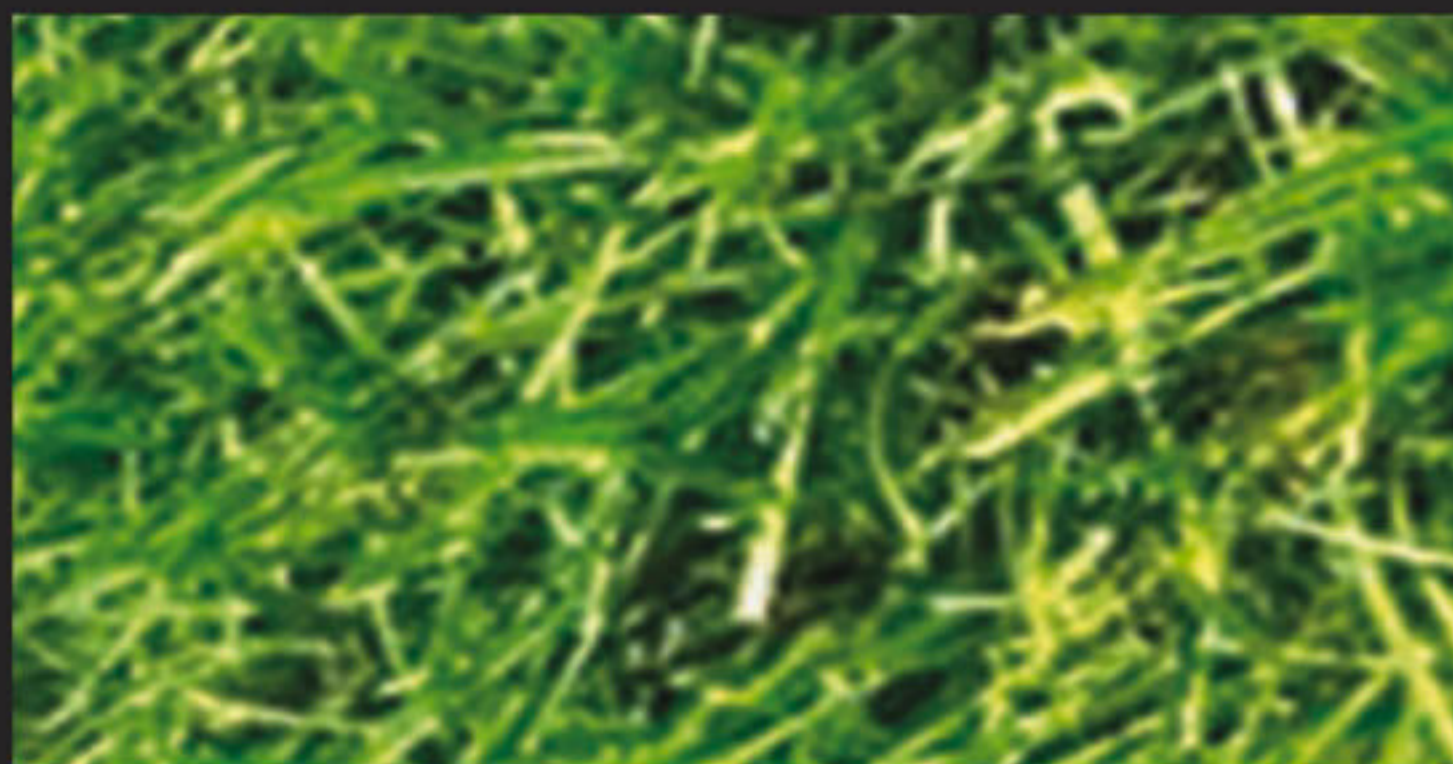


**BEING A VEGAN**



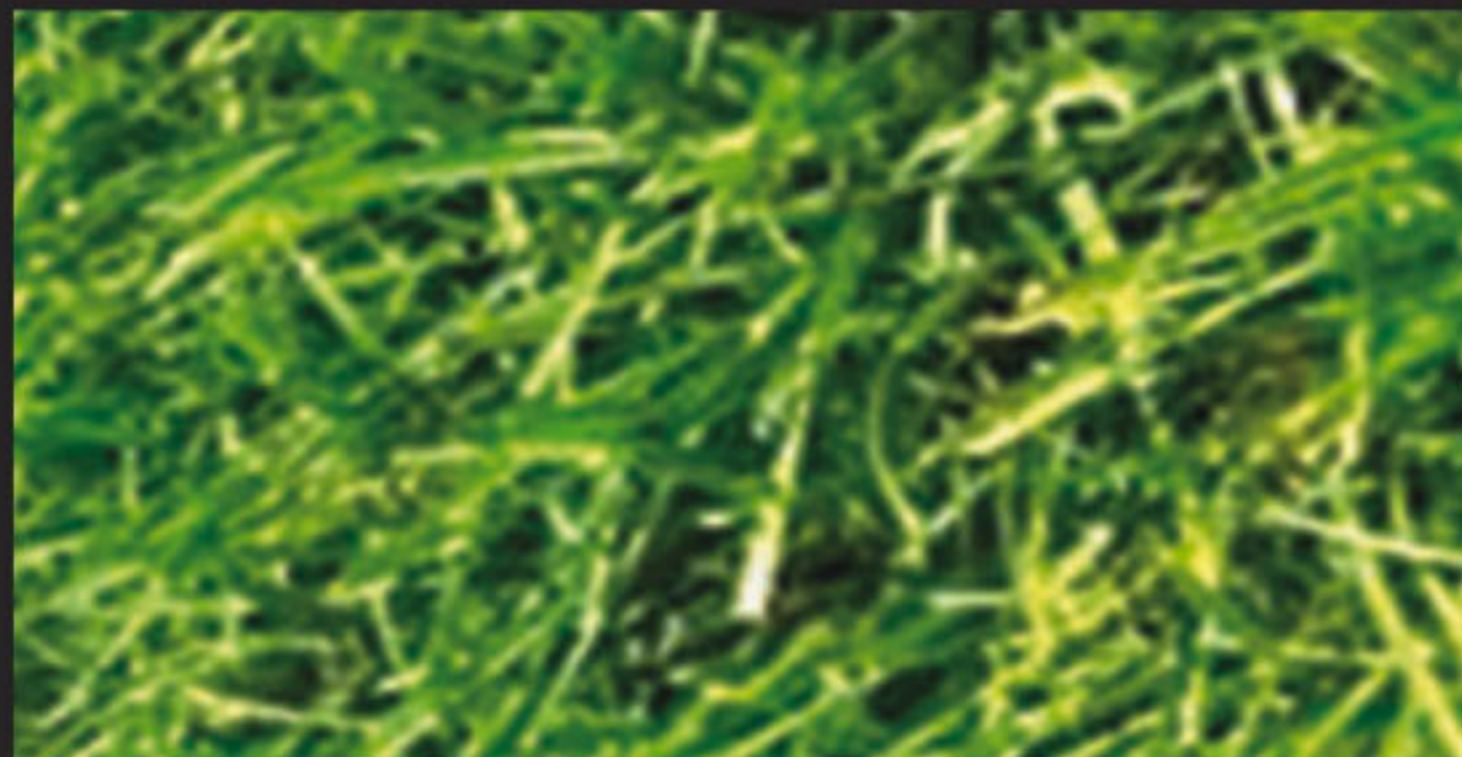
What my friends think I eat



What my mom thinks I eat



What society thinks I eat



What my boss thinks I eat



What cows eat



What I actually eat

# BEING VEGAN FOR A WEEK

ZARIN RAYHANA

**DAY 1**

I wake up early since this is the big day. It is time to become a vegan for good. Pretty confident about my willpower, I stroll into the kitchen and treat myself to a vegetable sandwich. Even though it doesn't appeal to me any more than a piece of cardboard, I keep chewing robotically. "Being vegan is the new fad," I remind myself. It will help me shed weight fast. After working a while on my homework, my stomach starts churning, and it isn't even lunch time yet. Grabbing an orange, I stream through a list of vegan inspirational quotes. Stuff like "Veganism is not a sacrifice. It is a joy" pops up and I find myself sarcastically agreeing. And oh, how could I even forget to update a status on Facebook about finally going vegan? Lots "Oh"s and "Wow"s instantly come up. I have salad and stir fried broccoli for lunch. Mom freaks out when she realizes that I'm eating nothing other than veggies, and lectures me, big time. Finally, I go to sleep skipping dinner.

**DAY 2**

I'm already starting to feel positive about myself. My friends, however, are hell-bent on convincing me to give up my resolution. As we head out for lunch, most of them deliberately order fried chicken and chicken *tikkas* and offer them to me with devilish glints in their eyes. I refuse and get myself some spaghetti. After returning home, I start watching a movie, but it isn't long before my phone starts beeping. Looking at the screen, I already predict what's going to happen the next half an hour. It's my grandma. And it's time for another lecture.

**DAY 3**

My feelings today are pretty similar to how Hogwarts students felt after Voldemort eventually died. A mixture of grief and relief. Looking into the refrigerator, I real-

ize that I need to make a trip to the supermarket. Instead, I tell Mom to buy some vegetables on her way home from work. Then I make my own brunch. It is time I start gagging at how tasteless my tongue feels. Hence, I add a bunch of spices to my half boiled food and try to feel satisfied. It doesn't work. I even try to work out a little bit, but I feel drained of energy. Mom comes home empty-handed, and I feel like banging my head against a rock. For dinner, I have rice and vegetables.

of girls come up to me and ask how it feels to go without chicken for long. Okay, this is not really going well. I had expected them to rather find it an act of courage. I eat a whole vegetable pizza for dinner because my stomach needs the flavor. Before going to sleep, I take a look at myself and realize my complexion looks relatively duller than usual. The glow on my face is gone. Googling, I realize that vegan diets don't provide lots of protein.

on my wall. The stomach ache is extreme. I had been told that vegetables ease constipation but oh well...

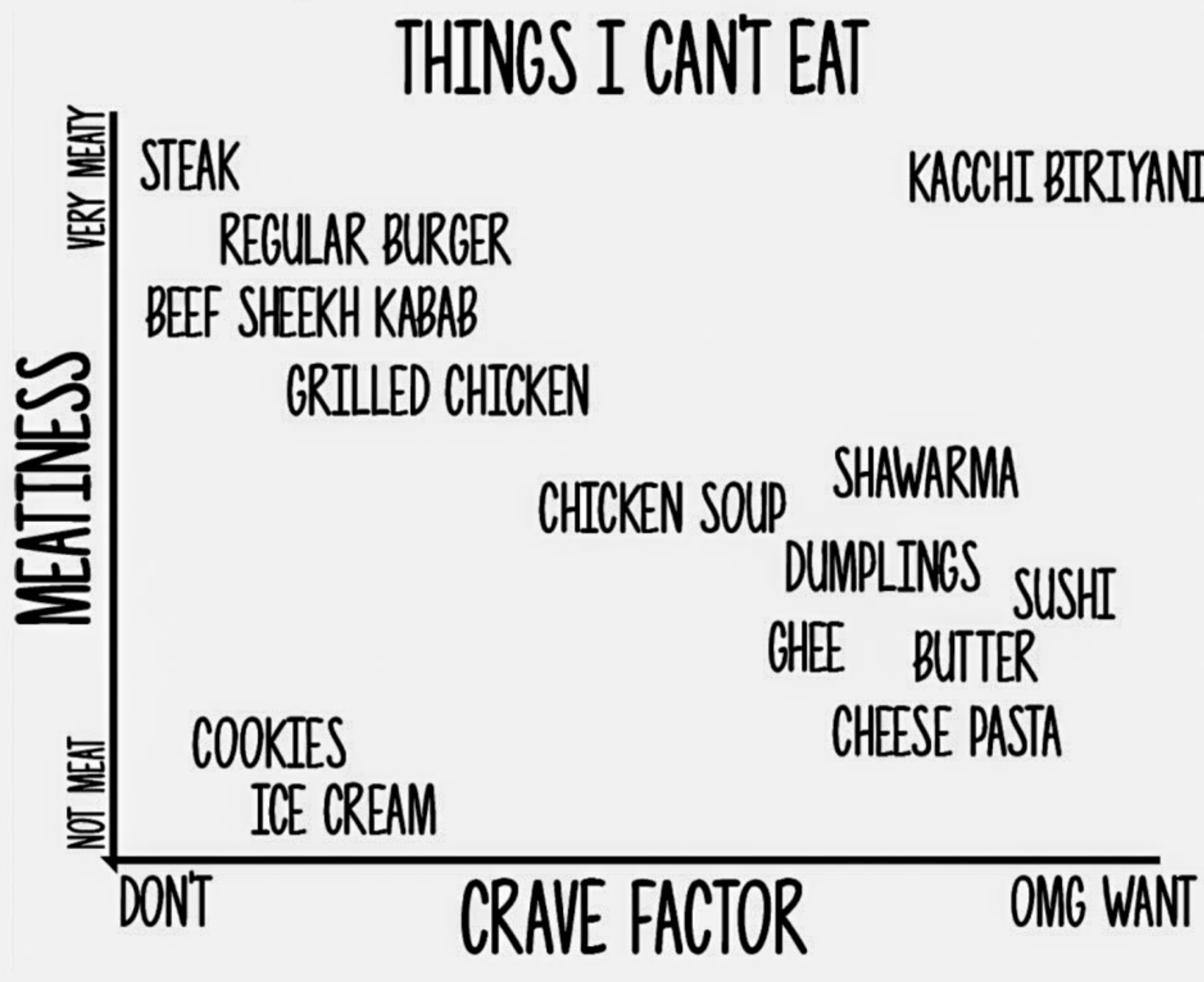
**DAY 6**

I'm eating more fruits today so I'll get my glow back. My body's coping really badly without meat, my appetite is almost gone. Even the internet isn't helpful in providing any tasty vegan recipes. Admit it people, if you are a meat lover and you go almost a week without it, you will also feel like something is missing from life. Considering the fact that the longest I've stuck with my resolution is not more than a week, I know I can't live as a vegan. Especially when my Mom is not bringing home any vegetables. I can't waste all my money on them. Plus, what benefit did it do to me anyways? It upset my stomach, worsened my skin and made me weaker. My cheeks have started to look hollow, which makes me look older. Despite that, I decide to give it one more shot.

**DAY 7**

My cousins have come over and the entire house is on cloud nine from the smell of chicken barbecue and steak. I can already feel patience slipping away from me. Those are my favorite food items. I've already gone through so much and I really don't want extra. It isn't long before I land my fingers on the BBQ and start eating like a caveman who's never eaten cooked food before. Then I delete my Facebook post, hoping nobody will remember. Now, I know you are rolling your eyes at me, vegans, but you are used to your eating habits and I appreciate your determination. It's just that I can't do it anymore because my body is too primitive to adapt to an herbivorous diet.

*Zarin Rayhana is a self-aggrandizing ambivert who ponders over philosophical epiphanies during rainy evenings and waits for her crush to jump straight out of her favorite novel. Treat her with novel suggestions at ericaavianazarin@gmail.com*



**DAY 4**

There are practically no vegetables in the refrigerator and Mom says she's not planning on buying any. No big deal. I decide to stick to my resolution and buy discounted vegetables from the supermarket with my pocket money. After my classes are over, I scroll through internet for some more vegan inspirational quotes. A group

**DAY 5**

My biggest childhood fear was of suppository, and that is why I'm overly thankful for having *Avolac* in my house today. My savior. I cannot be any more grateful to the people who have discovered the uses of lactulose for the human body. I search it on Google but I cannot find anything specific. Just let me get a hold of their names once, I will have a poster of them