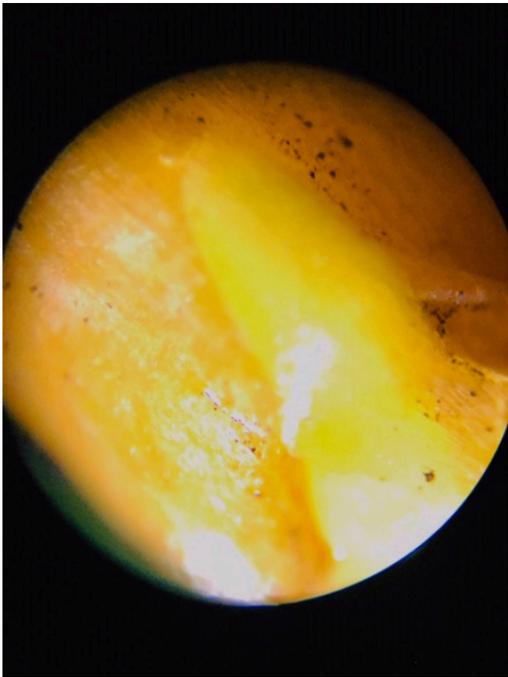


# DAILY BREAD

## “Grain of Hope : Slice of Heaven”

### GERMINATION



Plumule - the primary stem showing signs of green chlorophyll one week after sowing.

Last time I wrote that a grain of wheat is a seed, but strictly speaking it's a special kind of fruit called a **caryopsis**. The 'seed' is technically the tiny embryo or '**germ**' inside the grain (wheat germ), but it is fused with the pericarp (or fruit), so they are one structure.

Compare this with an apple where you eat the pericarp and spit out the separate seed.

A caryopsis is radically dormant and can remain so for perhaps

hundreds of years. Respiring, but only just.

**Germination** (sprouting of the 'germ' within the grain) breaks this fierce dormancy.

Germination is triggered by water, the wonder-substance in which all of life moves and has its being. Water soaks into the dormant grain and stimulates production of hormones, especially **gibberellins**, which unblock genes and stir the embryo into wakefulness.

This is followed by a cascade of dramatic activity: some controls are turned off and some woken up!

Nutrient stores are mobilised by enzymes; and hormones direct a transformation comparable to the metamorphosis of caterpillar to butterfly. Life passes from sleeping seed to a new plant actively engaged with the forces, energy and substance of the world around it.

#### Self-isolation: a Prayer

*'And makes one little room an everywhere.'*

John Donne

To undergo  
Its greatest transformation  
A plant must shrink to seed; the earth must turn  
A blank face to the sky.

From wind-dance  
And sun-splendour, stalk and leaf must plummet  
To a nucleus of survival  
Unseen

Barely respiring:  
As our lives contract  
To homes that well might feel like prison-cells,  
As the virus surrounds us

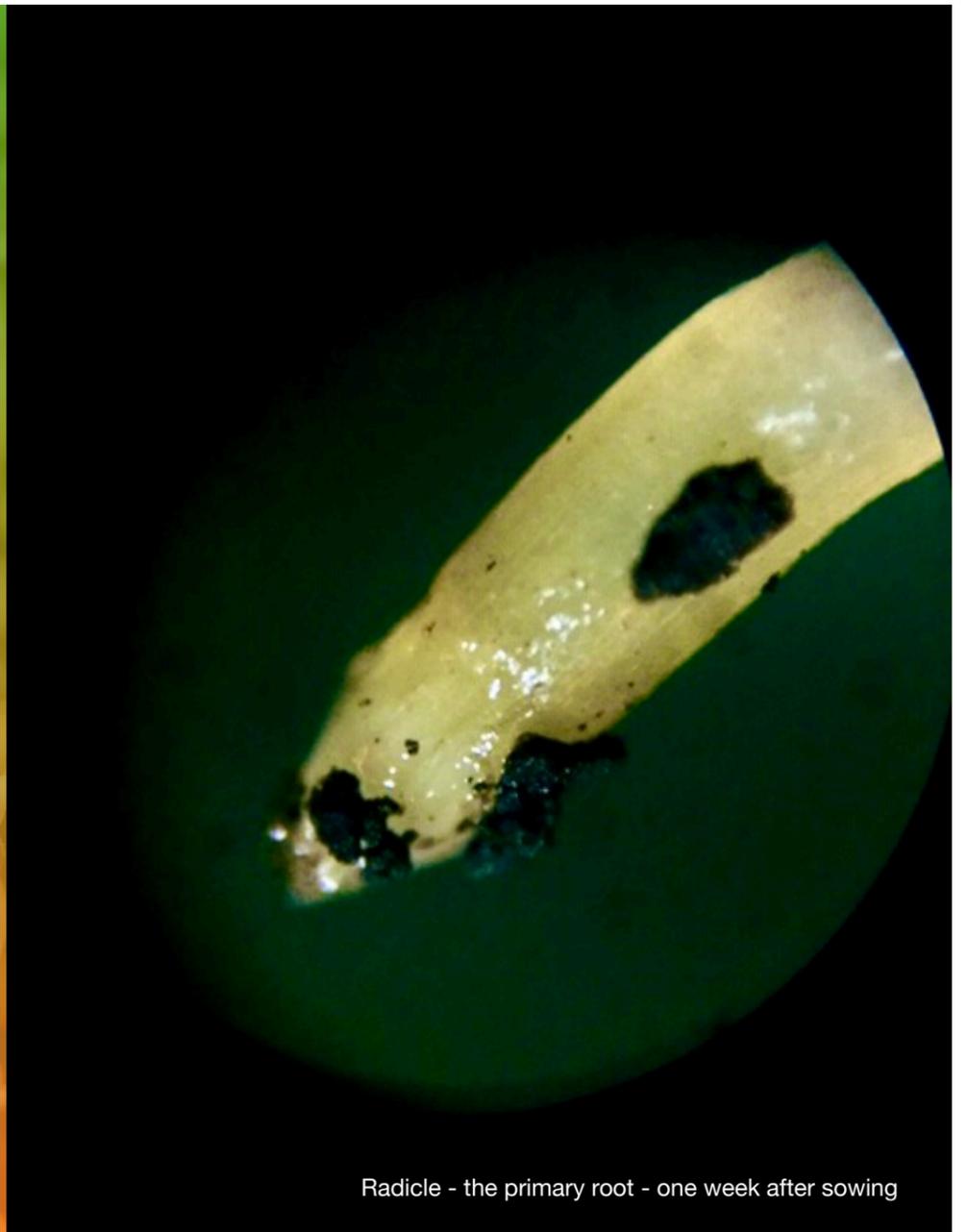
With dark,  
Squeezing our lives down to survival-state,  
Let each transform their home  
To a place of travel

Offering infinite paths  
To the God who is around us and within;  
May our stilled life  
Branch like a root

Reaching out  
In prayer for a traumatised world;  
May soul-potential  
Far too long dormant

Burst our protective mask-self  
To receive  
A Spirit-flow as powerful as the rain-drench  
That awakens the seed.

Diane Pacitti, 2020.



Radicle - the primary root - one week after sowing

