

**JUL-SEP
2025
#6**

ILIAS

**'S
LETTER**

**FEATURING:
-NEW FONTS!
-NEW FORMAT!
-LIFE UPDATES
YOU WON'T
WANT TO MISS!**

contents:

This issue is divided chronologically, with one page being given to each week of the summer quarter. It is more of a diary-style format, and it was fun, but I will not do it this way again. It was helpful for keeping up weekly and not having to put the whole thing together at the end of the quarter, but I would rather group articles together by content rather than timeline.

corrections:

Due to space constraints, the spread "Movies Juno Watched + Liked" in vol. 5 of this newsletter contained no introductory material beyond the headline. I fear that some people may have thought I wrote those reviews, but they were all Juno! I have not (yet) seen any of the movies featured. In the future I will make more of an effort to provide her a proper byline.

JULY 1-6

the summer of chickpea salad sandwiches

The farmer's market near our house runs year-round on Sundays, which is very nice, but there is an Additional farmer's market on Tuesdays during the summer. It's in the same place and run by the same people, but there are different and fewer vendors and they give you a \$2 coupon if you ride your bike instead of the \$1 coupon you get on Sundays (and they are often out of coupons on Sundays). I mostly prefer it because it's a lot quieter - the Sunday farmer's market is pretty busy. I've been getting a "multigrain loaf" every week from Oxbow Bakery who have a stand there. It's a very fun loaf of bread because it's got a lot of seeds in it, which I love, and it's got sort of silly proportions.

I have been using it primarily for chickpea salad sandwiches, which recipe I've been experimenting with for a couple weeks. It is based on the tuna salad of my childhood, which included celery, carrots, and dill as the primary seasoning. [At least that is how I remember it.] I also made a very mustardy vinaigrette with red wine vinegar + olive oil in a mostly empty dijon mustard jar. The rest of the recipe though is just mayonnaise and salt + pepper + mix everything together in some quantity until it tastes right.

For the sandwich, I toast some bread + put a little mustard on it + then the chickpea salad fairly thickly (inevitable bc it's fairly thick), some slices of tomato that Juno brought home from ???, + then either a lettuce leaf folded to fit the bread or some spring mix (great texture but not every leaf is gonna stay on the sandwich. Sometimes I melt some cheese on the toast, but it's been fairly warm, so I am enjoying eating a cold/room temperature food. :)

JULY 7-13

font and ren faire

I spent a lot of this week working on a font based off the one I created in LibreOffice Draw for previous newsletter covers. I cleaned it up a lot in Krita, and then recreated all of the glyphs in FontForge, an extremely unintuitive piece of software if you, like me, have 0 graphic design background. The fact that I designed the font to include no curves did definitely help me a Lot in creating the paths. Also there's a series of extremely good tutorials on youtube created by a kid who looks to be maybe 12? The channel is called Michael Harmon, and the videos are 7 years old and if you're trying to use this one specific piece of software, I highly recommend it.

I think a lot about typography, but I learned a lot this week about fonts specifically and the way we render them on computers. That said, I am not going to use that font in future issues of this newsletter because my printer doesn't love doing large black shapes; it's much better at small detail work. I want to work with its strengths rather than struggling against its weaknesses. The Spring 2025 edition used the font, which I've called Blocks, for headers, and the .ttf file is available on my website at <https://countmein.neocities.org/fonts> where you can also see it used!

I have also spent a fair amount of time editing the website, so you could look at it if you wanted, though there is still Almost nothing there.

Juno and I went to a very small urban ren faire with our friend Gene this week and we looked at a bunch of neat things. It was mostly an art market at a brewery which are not my main interests, but there was a taco vendor out on the porch who was disappointed by the lack of interest in his vegan offerings, so I had a good time talking to him and reassuring him that they were very good. (They were!)

JULY 14-20



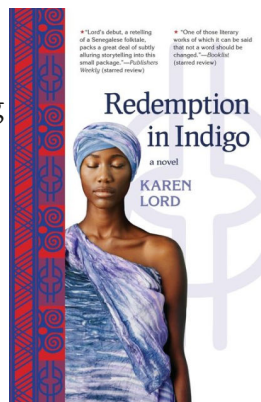
the scum-villain's self-saving system - mo xiang tong xiu

This one relies a little heavily on romantic leads not communicating with each other for my tastes. But this series was: fun. I'm not overly familiar with the genre, and I think I lost a fair amount from that. Historically I am not a huge fan of serialized fiction, and while this collected copy was definitely streamlined, it still had a meandering pace that I didn't find extremely satisfying. A lot of the humor, similarly, went over my head or just didn't land with me - I'm not the book's intended audience, and that's fine.

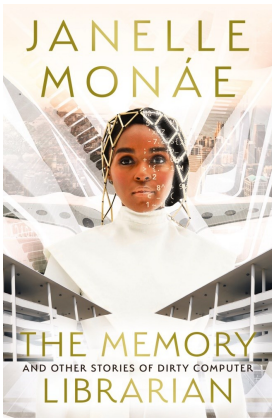
I am glad that I read this if only to understand what my friends are talking about. I'm also interested in it as a glimpse into a genre I don't usually read. I would read another similar title but only if it was, like this one, specifically recommended to me.

redemption in indigo - karen lord

This was really good. I enjoyed the sort of chaotic style of storytelling - jumping from one group of characters to another, referencing things that haven't happened yet, the narrator's personality coming through. It is fun and light and I enjoyed all of the characters and how they played against each other.



JULY 21-27



the memory librarian - janelle monae

I have once again done the thing where I assume that someone who is famous for not writing is not a good writer. My apologies 2 Mx. Monae, who is, it turns out, a very good writer.

These are short stories I guess but long ones. There's 5 of them in this book, and they are set in the same world, but different communities and cities and maybe even times.

They're just well constructed! They fit together interestingly! Characters struggle with relatable moral conundra. I don't know Exactly what is is, but this book has the thing that's been missing from sci-fi I've read recently. The je ne sais quois.

The short story format allows stories to have "bad endings" without making the whole book extremely depressing. Certainly, though, there are a lot of Heavy topics + I did take it pretty slowly.

Sometimes they do get a little cheesy in terms of everyone inherently knows strangers' pronouns. Our understanding of gender has frozen in place in the 2020s and nothing has changed since then. [It's unclear how far in the future these stories are set, but they've got hover roller blades + all the same words for gender that we have now.] But also? We're just having a nice time. I didn't necessarily mind it.

My one criticism is that the second story focused entirely on the question of whether or not non-binary women should be welcome in women-only spaces + I would have enjoyed some discussion of how trans women fit into that conversation.

Also I Love when a story is set in Chicago.

JULY 28-
AUGUST 3

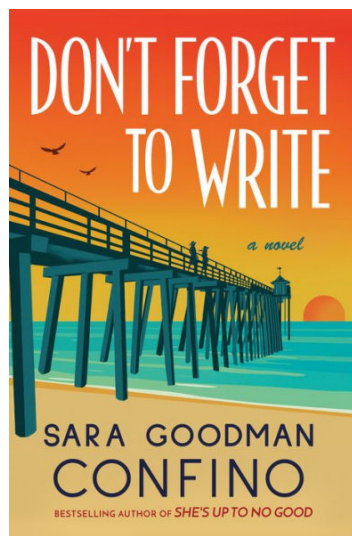
orthodontic disasters

This was a busy errands week. I picked up some perscriptions, got my bike serviced, had an exploratory orthodontics appointment where a dental student told me that my skeleton is shaped badly s.t. my bottom teeth are touching the top of my mouth + damaging the gums behind my front teeth. They want to give me braces about it, which I'm not Happy abt. They are estimating that it will be a two-year process, which sucks + I don't want to talk about it.

don't forget to write - sara goodman confino

This book was enjoyable! It could have spent more time in Philadelphia and less time at the shore, but I'll let it slide. I think "20-year-old rich girl leaving New York City for the first time" is a difficult character to render likable, and Marilyn is exactly as distractable as you'd expect. But I do like her! She's making bad decisions, but I like how she's consistent and stubborn and makes her own decisions. I dunno!

The pacing is a little unusual, but not bad. I'm not 100% convinced about the ending, but I think the book is fun + I would recommend it!



AUGUST 4-10

Juno had her turbinates reduced on Tuesday, which because she wasn't knocked out + they wanted someone to hang out with her, I got to watch all of. I cannot recommend the experience! They have the camera probe attached to a tv right over her head, so that the doctor and also I could see what he was doing. It was cool looking around inside her nose before they started the procedure, but once they started poking needles in there I was fairly queasy. There was a Lot of blood, and Juno got light-headed twice s.t. they had to stop and give her a break. She also reported the smell of burning flesh throughout the radiation portion, which was her least favorite part. It will be a month or so before we find out whether her breathing has been improved by the procedure, so fingers crossed.

This week I had a video call with my friend Alina about the project that is no longer our capstone. I had a bunch of questions for it about data organization best practices, and a bunch of updates on things that have happened since it moved to Germany. After that call, I did a bunch of work cataloging digital recordings as well as preparing our spreadsheets, etc. for recording digitized optical discs. I'm going to start digitization on a larger scale this month.

On July 12, I started tracking 4 tasks that I want to do every day: taking pills, showering, going outside, and doing dishes. This week was the first week I did all of those tasks every day, so big congrats.

AUGUST 11-17



Juno's parents came to Seattle this week, and we spent a lot of time with them. We had several nice meals at different restaurants, went for several hikes, and Juno went with them to the pop culture museum, which she enjoyed a lot!

We also went out to the Olympic Peninsula and did a hike in the Quinault Rain Forest, which was extremely beautiful and there was a hotel 3 miles into the 4 mile loop we did, so we stopped there and had some pizza and hung out by Lake Quinault for a couple hours probably which was very nice!



Here is a picture of me + Juno next to the world's largest Sitka Spruce.

It was also my first time swimming in the Pacific Ocean which is? Not all that Pacific! The waves go out so far and it is Loud.

AUGUST 18-24

rice cooker!

I have been working on cooking more and finding foods that I enjoy eating and are also easy to prepare. Right now I have been leaning on Korean banchan which is useful for being a bunch of individual pieces that I can prepare ahead of time and then combine with some rice when I am hungry. After talking with Juno about it for a while, I also got a rice cooker (Zojirushi NHS-06) from the thrift store which has been incredible. I had a rice cooker previously that my friend Paul gave me in college and I used regularly when I lived alone, but it collected condensation in a weird way + after we didn't use it for a year bc Juno always made rice in a pot, I agreed to get rid of it.

BUT NOW: I really struggle making rice, always have. My high school boyfriend made fun of me for it once + so I am also Sensitive about it. I have very detailed notes about Juno's process (which always works very well because she is extremely talented), but inevitably I cover it when it should be uncovered or don't turn the heat far enough one way or the other and it comes out under-done.

BUT NOW: I rinse the rice + put it in the pot + fill it with water up to the line + put the lid on + press the button + in like 20 minutes there is rice. It has been very helpful to have rice as a backup meal and to be able to just throw in some pickled daikon that lives in the fridge or greens that I dressed earlier in the week is game changing. The big complaint about our particular rice cooker seems to be that along with steam, some boiling starchy water comes out through the hole and around the lid while it's cooking, but I only ever make a cup at a time so it's not that bad, and it lives on top of the refrigerator, so when I put it away I just wipe down the table where I was using it. Certainly it is not a Perfect rice cooker, but it sure was \$12, so.

AUGUST 25-31

journaling and transcription

After several months of doing a very scrapbook-y style of journaling in some 50-page sketchbooks, I finally went back to my regular journal, and that has been nice. I like the bigger size and I like my regular journaling pen and I like the familiarity of it. That said, I am 30-ish pages from the end and I am Ready to be Done With It. I would like to start a new one. It's also hard-covered which makes it more difficult to carry around with me. I like journaling outside or at a restaurant by myself.

Another thing I've been doing is some audio transcription. I have an acquaintance who makes a podcast about solo roleplaying games and was struggling with keeping up with transcribing on top of editing them. I've been using Vosk, a transcription software that is free and open source. Given the price-point, I am very impressed by it. My standard for transcription is that I never want to rewind. If I can listen to five seconds, pause, make changes to the existing transcript, and then hit play again, it's So much quicker and I don't have to relisten to anything.

I'm having a lot of fun with it- the premise of the podcast is that three people play the same game and their playthroughs are edited together so you can see how different people play the same game. That makes it really interesting for transcription, because there isn't any talking over each other, and you get to focus on how different people's voices are represented in text. Some people speak in very complete sentences; some people run all their sentences into each other; some people repeat words while they're thinking about what to say next. And just listening to people talk I don't notice those differences, but when you're trying to write it down, it becomes obvious. I'm having a lot of fun with it!

SEPT. 1-7

driving lessons

Got a driver's permit back in November or December + proceeded to not book lessons bc I was Anxious + @ the place where I was doing them (where I took the test) the best move was to buy 10 1 hr lessons at once for like one Thousand dollars, which paralyzed me for 9 months BUT. Last week I found a different place (a lot less convenient, but whatever I'm Unemployed) that before I do anything else has me book a 1 hour Evaluation lesson for \$85 which is? So much more approachable + I scheduled that appointment for this week!

The lesson was Terrifying + very stressful + my instructor did not natively speak English + had a very flat affect so I was getting Very little feedback. He also ran me through the whole driving test which is a Wild thing to do on a first lesson? But maybe that's what the Evaluation is. I think I did a good job but also I think it's WILD that people do this regularly- what an absolutely terrifying action- imo no one should ever be doing this at more than 25 mph?? The car I was using was not new but was a hybrid and an automatic transmission + has a Park button? Also the reverse gear is achieved by pushing the gearshift forwards, while the neutral gear is achieved by pulling the gearshift back which imo is simply Terrible design. Also I understand that it is objectively easier to drive an automatic transmission but I do believe that a car shouldn't move if you're not pressing the gas? It Absolutely sucked + I will do 10 more of them + then take a test - one thing is that the permit is only good for one year?? So I Do need to pass this test before November 4, which Also absolutely sucks.

SEPT. 8-14

A year ago I determined that the bad feeling I was frequently having in my chest was heartburn, and I told my doctor this. They perscribed me Pepsid, and told my to ignore the twice per day instructions on the bottle and just take it when I started to feel acid-y. They also recommended I eat more smaller meals instead of fewer larger meals and not lie down immediately after meals, which has also been helpful. I experience the sensation a lot less using those two helpful hacks, and when I do experience it, the Pepsid helps a lot.

But SOMETIMES I think to myself "why am I experiencing *symptom* still; I decided I was gonna take a pill abt it several hours ago" + then remember that I decided 2 take a pill but then simply failed to do so. I also do this regularly with pain-killers. Cannot recommend it, but haven't figured out yet how to avoid it.

I had another driving lesson this week, and scheduled two more every week until mid-October when I will take the road test. This one went better - it was with an instructor whose pedagogical method involves a lot of praise, which helped me more than I care to admit. Still terrifying, definitely, and it is so far away and I missed my shift at the archives because that was the only time I could schedule the lesson for. So fifty-fifty still on whether the whole experience has been worth it, but... We'll see.



SEPT. 15-21

Back in December I taught myself how to crochet + made a bunch of these squares with the goal of making a blanket from them. I decided this week that I don't want to make any more squares, so I put the ones I had into a blanket pattern and sewed them together. This configuration left 3.5 squares left over, which I thought was pretty good, and I've unravelled and reused 1.5 of those already. It's a good size for a baby blanket, but I am maybe going to make the border larger than you normally would in order to make it a bit bigger because I am not a baby + want a slightly larger blanket!

SEPT. 22-28

cafe red

A quiet week. I did more driving lessons and had some doctor's appointments. Got a flu shot but need to call my insurance about a covid vaccine apparently. The driving lessons are going Fine. Juno has started coming down to Othello with me because there is a cafe near the train station she really likes. We go down about an hour early + sit on the patio and eat some pesto sandwiches. She has an espresso drink (She claims that espresso does not upset her stomach as much as coffee did, but not that it isn't a problem at all. I think though that because she's been so good about not drinking coffee, we can give her a pass on this one.) and I have a root beer + we hang out for a bit, then I go to my lesson and she sits on the patio for an hour reading or sending emails while I drive a car. And then I come pick her up from the cafe and we take the train home together! It has been very nice and prevents me from ruminating all the way there. And the pesto sandwich is really quite good!





colophon:

There are a couple new fonts in this issue of our newsletter – they're from the Justseeds Open Font Project, which "creates open-access fonts for activists, organizers, and movement designers." I'm specifically interested in their series where they adapt fonts found in historical posters and publications. It's a very cool project that I would encourage you to check out!

The ones I've used here (**DOCUMENTACION**, **madrid ml**, and **MADRID AMA**) are from their Antifascistas pack, which includes recreations of typography used in various feminist antifascist publications during the Spanish civil war. There's a lot of fun fonts in this pack, and Justseeds provides a specimen document that includes a lot of interesting information about them!

The cover text is in **BLOCKS**, the font I designed for this newsletter.

for a full-color digital version, please see:
countmein.neocities.org/zine

THANKS 4 READ- ING

please direct all feedback to

[redacted for online
publication]