A FIRST LATIN ADVENTURE

Iulius and the Cat’s Secret

1. A tiny new friend. Meet Iulius, a boy at Vindolanda, and Minimus, a talking mouse.



MINIMUS

Quis es?

IULIUS

Egō sum Iulius.

IULIUS

Vindolandae sumus!

Minimus: Who are you?
Iulius: I am Iulius.
Iulius: We are at Vindolanda!

Give Minimus a tiny squeaky voice.

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2. An island fit for a goddess

A shallow puddle becomes a miniature island adventure. Flavia joins the game.



IULIUS

Īnsulam aedificō. Labōrō!

FLAVIA

Egō sum dea!

Iulius: I build an island. I work!
Flavia: I am a goddess!

Pretend to build the island with your hands.

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3. The magnificent toy spear

Rufus plays the farmer. Iulius shows off a wooden toy spear. Someone spots its ribbon...



RUFUS

Agricola sum!

IULIUS

Hastam habeō!

MINIMUS

Hastam videō!

Rufus: I am a farmer!
Iulius: I have a spear!
Minimus: I see a spear!

Who is watching the red ribbon?

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4. Gone!

Iulius puts the toy down. A moment later, it has vanished. Minimus spots a clue.



IULIUS

Ubi est hasta?

IULIUS

Hastam nōn videō!

MINIMUS

Vibrissam videō!

Iulius: Where is the spear?
Iulius: I do not see the spear!
Minimus: I see Vibrissa!

Point to the clue in the picture.

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5. Splash, splash!

They follow Vibrissa towards the tiny puddle. She seems very busy.



IULIUS

Festīnō! Clāmō!

STORYTELLER

Vibrissa in aquā ambulat.

MINIMUS

Et egō festīnō!

Iulius: I hurry! I shout!
Vibrissa walks in the water.
Minimus: And I hurry!

Run your fingers along the page like little feet.

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6. The cat has an answer

Flavia asks a sensible question. Vibrissa gives a very silly answer.



FLAVIA

Vibrissa, feles es.

FLAVIA

Ubi est hasta?

VIBRISSA

Egō cantō!

Flavia: Vibrissa, you are a cat.
Flavia: Where is the spear?
Vibrissa: I sing!

Sing the cat’s line in your best meowing voice.

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7. The secret bridge

Vibrissa makes a bridge with the toy spear! Minimus crosses the puddle to the island.



IULIUS

Hastam videō!

STORYTELLER

Vibrissa hastā labōrat.

MINIMUS

In īnsulā sum!

Iulius: I see the spear!
Vibrissa works with the spear.
Minimus: I am on the island!

Was Vibrissa being naughty, or was she helping?

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8. A very good cat

After the crossing, Iulius gets his toy back. Time for a cuddle and a victory song!



IULIUS

Hastam habeō. Vibrissam amō!

MINIMUS

Et egō!

FLAVIA

Cantō!

RUFUS

Et egō!

Iulius: I have the spear. I love Vibrissa!
Minimus: And I do too!
Flavia: I sing!
Rufus: And I do too!

Choose your favourite character and say their line again.

VOCABULARY APPENDIX

Our word collection 1 / 2

All 40 agreed entries, including words to revisit after the story.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Minimus	the mouse
Lepidina	the mother
Flavius	the father
Flavia	the daughter
Iulius	the son
Rufus	the little child
Candidus	a slave
Corinthus	a slave
Vibrissa	the cat
mater	mother
pater	father
fīlia, -ae, f.	daughter
fīlius, -ī, m.	son
infans	little child
servī	slaves
feles	cat
quis es?	who are you?
sum	I am
es	you are (singular)
sumus	we are

Noun entries give an ending and gender: m. = masculine; f. = feminine. The story uses changed endings when a sentence needs them.

VOCABULARY APPENDIX

Our word collection 2 / 2

All 40 agreed entries, including words to revisit after the story.

LATIN	ENGLISH
estis	you are (plural)
Vindolandae	at Vindolanda
aedificō	I build
agricola, -ae, m.	farmer
amō	I love, like
ambulō	I walk
ancilla, -ae, f.	slave-girl
aqua, -ae, f.	water
cantō	I sing
clāmō	I shout
dea, -ae, f.	goddess
egō	I
et	and
fēmina, -ae, f.	woman
festīnō	I hurry
hasta, -ae, f.	spear
incola, -ae, m./f.	inhabitant
īnsula, -ae, f.	island
īra, -ae, f.	anger
labōrō	I work

Noun entries give an ending and gender: m. = masculine; f. = feminine. The story uses changed endings when a sentence needs them.

VOCABULARY APPENDIX

A few little helpers

Five extra dictionary entries let the adventure tell a clear, simple story.

habeō	I have
videō	I see
ubi?	where?
nōn	not
in + ablative	in / on (where something is)

Familiar words in a new shape

est	is; another form of sum
ambulat	walks; from ambulō, I walk
labōrat	works; from labōrō, I work
īnsulam	island, as the thing being built
hastam	spear, as the thing seen or held
Vibrissam	Vibrissa, as the cat seen or loved
aquā / īnsulā / hastā	water / island / spear in the ablative

Et egō! literally means “And I!” In the last scene, English naturally says “And I do too!”

FOR THE GROWN-UP

Tiny changes, useful meanings

Enjoy the adventure first. Try just one of these examples on a later reading.

Nominative: who or what?

Vibrissa in aquā ambulat.

Vibrissa walks in the water.

Vibrissa is the one walking. In Ubi est hasta? (Where is the spear?), hasta is also nominative.

Accusative: what does someone see, have or love?

Hastam videō. Vibrissam amō.

I see the spear. I love Vibrissa.

Hastam is the thing seen; Vibrissam is the cat loved. Īnsulam aedificō means I build an island: īnsulam is the thing built.

Ablative: where? or with what?

In aquā. In īnsulā. Hastā.

In the water. On the island. With the spear.

In takes the ablative here because it tells us where. Hastā, without a preposition, tells us what Vibrissa uses. The long ā matters.

Keep it playful

Read one or two scenes at a time. You read the storyteller; let your child choose a mouse or cat voice. Cover the English only if that feels fun. Pointing, guessing and joining in all count.

Vindolandae means “at Vindolanda”; it is a locative form, kept as a familiar phrase. The cat’s name is unchanged when Flavia speaks directly to her. This is a new imagined adventure using the familiar characters.