

## A LETTER

## Objectives

- to introduce the Roman method of giving dates
- to provide additional examples of deponent verbs in the story in order to prepare for full discussion of deponent verbs in the next chapter
- to review the uses of *quam*

## The Story

1. Cornelia's letter to Flavia tells of the fire and of Eucleides' recent encounter with the robbers, thus recapping these themes of the hazards of life in the city. Coincidentally, the day before Cornelia wrote this letter her father received a letter from a certain Valerius, who is introduced here and who will become increasingly important for Cornelia as the stories progress. The letter in this chapter is pivotal, looking both backward to Cornelia's childhood friend and forward to her husband.

2. Latin expressions for various dates are given in the vocabulary list. Explain these when dealing with the Forms section on Dates, (pp. 88-91).

3. More deponent verbs are used in the story and given in the vocabulary: *morātus est* (8), *regressus est* (8), *proficiscētur* (9), *secūtī sunt* (18-19), and *cōnātus est* (19) (*cōnsecūtī sunt*, which appears in line 20, has already been encountered in the previous chapter). Full discussion of deponent verbs will be found in the next chapter.

4. Have students deduce *vulnerārē* (21).

5. Call attention to place clues, which will be treated formally in Chapter 39:

*Brundisiī* (4) "at Brundisium"

*Rōmam* (5, 9, 11, and 24) "to Rome"

in *Bīthyniā* (7) "in Bithynia"

in *Italiām* (8) "into Italy"

*Brundisiūm* (8) "to Brundisium"

*Brundisiō* (8) "from Brundisium"

The context of each sentence, the general sense of the passage and, in particular, the verbs within each sentence, provide clues to the meaning of the place expressions (and students should be taught to pay attention to each of these clues), but it is not too early to point out that the accusative indicates place to which, the ablative expresses place from which, and a form that looks like the genitive singular shows place where (all with names of cities; contrast in *Bīthyniā*, line 7).

6. Different translations are often necessary for the perfect tense, e.g., *morātus est* (8), *he has stayed*, but *secūtī sunt* (18-19), *they followed*.

7. Note the ablative of degree of difference with a comparative adverb: *multō libentius* (10).

## 8. Structures:

- a. Interrupted sentences;

... *Eucleidēs noster, ab urbe domum rediēns, duōs hominēs... exeuntēs vīdit.* (17-18); *Qui hominēs, ubi Eucleidēm cōspexērunt, statim eum secūtī sunt.* (18-19)

- b. Linking *qui*: *Qui hominēs....* (18)

- c. Balance: *Quō celerius currēbat ille, eō celerius currēbant hominēs.* (19-20)

9. This is a useful passage to illustrate how pieces of information pertaining to a noun and its participle are often placed between the noun and the participle, e.g.:

- a. *Haec epistula ā Valeriō prīdiē Idūs Octōbrēs scripta Rōmam post vīgintī diēs advēnit!* (5-6). The words between *epistula* and *scripta* tell us by whom and when the letter was written, whereas *Rōmam post vīgintī diēs* tells us where and when the letter arrived.

- b. ...*Eucleidēs noster, ab urbe domum rediēns, duōs hominēs ē popīnā quādam exeuntēs vīdit.* (17-18) In this example, the words *ab urbe domum* go closely with *Eucleidēs...rediēns*, whereas the words *ē popīnā quādam* go with *hominēs...exeuntēs*.

Compare the following arrangement:

Ā praedōnibus correptus ac fūstibus percussus, gravissimē vulnerātus est. (20-21) In this example, the phrase *ā praedōnibus* goes with *correptus*; *fūstibus* goes with *percussus*; and *gravissimē* goes with *vulnerātus est*.

If students are trained to analyze phrases, clauses, and sentences in this way when dealing with simple examples, they will find less difficulty in handling complicated Latin periods. = complex sentences

10. Besides commenting on the form of the Roman letter, also discuss the Roman postal system. The system for conveying the Emperor's mail has already been alluded to earlier, in Chapter 13, where the Cornelii had the unfortunate encounter with the *tabellārius*, and in "Eavesdropping" (Chapter 21). The delivery of letters between private individuals was a much more haphazard affair. If it was known that someone was to be traveling to another part of the country, or even abroad, it was common for friends to entrust the person with mail for friends or associates in that place or along the route.

For more information (and excellent illustrations) on correspondence between private individuals, see *Roman Life*, "Travel and Correspondence," pp. 304-313.

## Lectio:

Cornelia Flaviae S. D.

Hodie Nonis Novembribus illam epistulam accēpī quam tū scripsisti Kalendīs Novembribus. Eam iterum iterumque lēgi, quod tē maxime dēsiderō. Quam celeriter tua epistula hūc advēnit! Quīnque modo diēbus! Heri aliam epistulam Brundisiī scriptam accēpit pater meus. Haec epistula a Valerio pridie Idūs Octōbrēs scripta Rōmam post vīgintī diēs advēnit!

Valerius, ut scis, est adulēscēns pulcher et strēnuus qui cum patre suo diū in Bīthyniā morātus est. Nunc in Italiam Brundisium regressus est. Brundisiō Idibus Novembribus proficiscētur et Rōmam a. d. iii Kal. Dec. adveniet.

Quam libenter eum rūrsus videbō! Sāne tamen multō libentius tē videbō ubi tū Rōmam venies! Tum tē libentissimē nōs omnes accipiēmus.

In epistulā tuā multa rogabas de periculis urbanis. Abhinc trēs diēs in īsulā quādam magnum incendium vīdimus. Nihil miserabilius umquam vīdi. Quamquam enim maior pars incolarum ē periculō effugit, māter et duo liberī quos in tertio tabulatō cōspeximus effugere nō poterant. Eheu! Hī miseri flammīs oppressi sunt. Ubi dē illā mātre et liberī cōgitō, valde commoveor.

Heri vesperī Eucleides noster, ab urbe domum rediens, duos homines ē popinā quādam exeuntēs vīdit. Qui homines, ubi Eucleidem cōspexerunt, statim eum secutī sunt. Eucleides effugere cōnatūs est, sed frūstrā. Quo celerius currēbat ille, eo celerius currēbant homines. Facile eum cōsecutī sunt. O miserrimum Eucleidem! A praedonibus correptus ac fustibus percussus, gravissimē vulnerātus est. Vix quidem sē domum traxit.

Sed dē periculis satis! Hodie māter pulcherrimam mihi pallam ēmit, quae mihi valde placuit. Sed tristis sum quod lānam semper trahō. Tristissima autem sum quod tē nō video. Fortasse tū Rōmam cum patre venies. Nōnne tū patri hoc persuadēbis? Tē plūrimum dēsiderō. Scribe, sis, quam saepissimē. Vale!

Vocabulary List A

1. Kalendae, ārum F. Pl. The Kalends - 1st day of the month
2. Nonae, ārum F. Pl. The Nones - 5th or 7th day of the month
3. Idūs, Iduum F. Pl. The Ides - 13th or 15th day of the month
4. ab urbe conditā (A. U. C.) from the foundation of the city in 753 B. C.
5. condō, condere, condidī, conditus to found, establish

Declension of the hinge dates:

Kalendae	Nonae	Idūs
Kalendarum	Nonarum	Iduum
Kalendis	Nonis	Idibus
Kalendas	Nonas	Idus
Kalendis	Nonis	Idibus

Vocabulary List B

1. S. D. ( salūtem dicit ) sends greeting
2. S. P. D. ( salūtem plūrimam dicit ) sends fondest greetings
3. Nonis Novembribus on November 5
4. Kalendis Novembribus on November 1
5. -que enclitic conjunction for and ( a very elegant way of saying "and" )

N. B. This enclitic is added to the last item in a series.  
e. g. In Foro Aureliam, Cornēliam, et Sextum video

or

In Forō Aureliam, Cornēliam, Sextumque video

6. hūc Adverb of \_\_\_\_\_ here, to here, hither

N. B. This word is used with verbs of motion to a place.

The three "here"s"

hic here - used with verbs of non-motion ( or rest )

e. g. Maneō hic.

hinc from here, hence - used with verbs of motion from a place

e. g. Eximus ex fossā. We are going out from here/ We are getting out of here.

huc ( to ) here, hither

e. g. ( to your dog) Venī huc, Fido!

7. Brundisii At Brundisium
8. prīdiē Adv. + Acc. on the day before
9. prīdiē Idūs Octōbrēs On October 14
10. vīgintī 20

Vocabulary List C

1. adulēscens, adulēsentis C. young person

i-stem because \_\_\_\_\_

adulēscēns	adulēscēntēs
adulēsentis	adulēscēntium
adulēscēntī	adulēscēntib⁹s
adulēscēntem	adulēscēntes
adulēscēntē	adulēscēntib⁹s

2. morātus est he ( has ) stayed  
 3. regressus est he ( has ) returned  
 4. Idibus Novembrib⁹s on November 13

5. proficiscētur he will set out

6. a. d. iii Kal. Dec. = ante diem tertium Kalendas Decembres on November 29

7. libenter Adv. of \_\_\_\_\_ gladly ( libentius, libentissime )

8. rūrsus Adv. of \_\_\_\_\_ again

N. B. This word means again in the sense of anew, afresh, to restore things to a previous condition or merely a second time.

e. g. incipere rūrsus scholās clavichordiī...

to start piano lessons again after a lapse of time

9. sānē Adv. certainly, of course

10. qui hominēs which/those men

N. B. The use of qui in the phrase Qui hominēs ... ( in line 18 ) is what is called the linking qui, i. e., relative pronouns in Latin may even link sentences paragraphs rather than merely clauses as in English.

Vocabulary List D

1. secutī sunt they followed

2. cōnātus est he tried

3. vulnerō, -āre, -āvī, -ātus to wound

4. quo celerius.....eo celerius The faster.....the faster

5. tristis, e sad ( tristior/ius, tristissimus )

6. sis ( si vis ) if you wish, please

7. persuādeō, persuādere, persuāsi, persuāsus to make something ( Acc. ) agreeable to someone ( Dat. ); to persuade s. o. of s. t.

N. B. The dative of person with this verb and with others so far: noceo \_\_\_\_\_ faveo \_\_\_\_\_  
 placebo \_\_\_\_\_ crēdo \_\_\_\_\_

e. g. Nonne tu patrī hoc persuādebis? Won't you persuade your father of this?  
 dat. acc.

8. eo die on that day

9. ad Kalendas Graecas until the Greek Kalends

10. audāx, ( audācis ) bold - 1 termination adj. ( audācior/ius, audācissimus )

M. + F.	N.	M. + F.	N.
audax	audax	audaces	audacia
audācis	audācis	audācium	audācium
audāci	audāci	audācibus	audācibus

etc.

Correspondence:A. Classical:

## 1. Salutations:

- a. S. D. ( salūtem dīcit ) - sends greetings
- b. S. P. D. ( salūtem plurimam dīcit ) sends fondest greetings

aliae salutatōnes:

Cicerō pater suāvissimae filiae Tulliolae S. D.  
 Cicero matri optimae et suāvissimae sorori S. P. D.  
 Tullius Tironi humanissimō et optimō S. D.  
 Cicero Bruto salutem  
 Brütus Ciceroni salutem

## 2. Closings:

- a. Vale b. Cura ut valeas c. Ama nōs et vale d. Da operam ut valeas;
- hōc mihi gratius facere nihil potes e. Valebis mēque, ut a puerō fēcisti,
- amabis f. Cura, si mē amas, ut valeas g. Cura ne in morbum incidas
- h. Valete, mea desideria, valete i. Etiam atque etiam vale
- j. Tē oro etiam atque etiam, mī carissime frater, ut valeas
- k. Tu velim tuam et Tulliolae valētudinem cures
- l. Valetudinem tuam curā diligenter m. Iterum iterumque vale
- n. Fac valeas

B. Neo-Latin1. Initiō epistulae - salutations

Patri et matri: a. Cārissime b. Optime c. Plūrimum observande pater  
 d. Suāvissima atque optima māter e. Carissima et dulcissima  
 f. Perpetuō amore veneranda mater ( matercula ) g. Mī pater  
 h. Mea mater h. Cārissimis parentibus

Fratribus, sororibus, amicīs: a. Optime b. Optatissime  
 c. Optime et dulcissime d. Suavissime e. Carissime frāter ( amīce )  
 f. Suavissima g. Unice cara soror h. Fidēlissima et dulcissima sororcula  
 i. Mī amīce j. Mī Henrīce k. Dulcissime rērum l. Sodālis cārissime  
 m. Cārissime Paule

Magistris et clāriōribus virīs: a. Clārissime Domine b. Summe colende vir  
 c. Eruditissime Praeceptor d. Artis medicīnae expertissime Domine  
 e. Lēgum peritissime Domine f. Vir omni laude dignissime  
 g. Reverende Domine, vir clārissime h. Reverendissime Domine

2. In fine epistulae - closings

- a. Tuus b. Tuus totus c. Tuus tōto corpore et animō d. Tui amantissimus  
 ( cupidissimus, observantissimus ) e. Tibi obsequens f. Tui grato animo
- g. Tibi addictus ( dēdītus, dēvōtus ) h. Tui studiosus
- i. Amicissimus tuus j. Ut rectē valeas k. Vale in Domīno
- l. Cupio tē valēre in Christo m. Opto ut valeas in Domino
- n. Incolumem tē et memorem mei Christus Dominus tueatur omnipotēs
- m. Vale et mē diligē, sicut ego tē diligō n. Vale et mē Deo ēnīxē commenda
- o. Vale mēque Deo habeas commendātum
- p. Scripsi currente calamo r. Ignosce et vale
- s. Valē et scītō mē semper ad obsequia tua paratissimum fore
- t. Deus te diu incolumem servet. u. Tui observantissimus
- v. Vale quam optimē et diutissimē
- w. ( ad Praesidem ) Diu te nobis ac Reipublicae sospitem velit esse  
 Dominus Iesus.
- x. ( ad summum Pontificem ) Tuis sanctissimis prōvolūtus pēdibus tuam mihi  
 paternam apostolicam benedictionem imploro.

DATES:The three hinge dates

Kalendae, arum F. Pl. 1st day of the month  
 Nōnae, Nonarum F. Pl. 5th day of the month ----7th  
 Idus, Iduum F. Pl. 13th day of the month ----15th } for March, May, July, + October

- A. If the date was one of the three major days mentioned above, the Romans used the Abl. Pl. and the name of the month ( in adjectival form ) in the Ablative Plural.

e. g. Kalendī Aprīlibus ( 1st )	Kalendī Martiīs ( 1st )
Nōnīs Aprīlibus ( 5th )	Nōnīs Martiīs ( 7th )
Īdibus Aprīlibus (13th )	Īdibus Martiīs (15th )

- B. If the date was immediately before one of the three major days, the Romans used:

1. p̄idie ( the day before ) as a preposition
2. the name of the day in the Accusative Case
3. the name of the month in agreement with the day - the month as an adjective

e. g. February 28th/29th	P̄idie Kalendas Martias	P̄id. Kal. Mart.
April 4th	P̄idie Nōnas Aprīles	P̄id. Nōn. Apr.
April 12th	P̄idie Īdūs Aprīles	P̄id. Id. Apr.

- C. Any other day of the month was reckoned by counting forward to the nearest of the three hinge dates and including the both the date of departure and the hinge date in the counting. The ordinal number thus derived was in the Accusative Singular following ante diem. The formula concluded with Kalendas, Nōnas, or Īdūs and the name of the month in the accusative plural in agreement.

e. g. February 27th = ante diem tertium Kalendas Martias ( not a leap year )

N. B. Generally the Romans abbreviated the formula so that it read:

a. d. III Kal. Mart. = February 27

- D. Months and adjectival forms of the months ( All months are MASCULINE )

Iānuārius, ii M.	Iānuārius, a, um	Martius	September
Februārius, ii M.	Februārius, a, um	Martii	Septembri
Martius, ii M.	Martius, a, um	Martio	Septembri
Aprīlis, is M.	Aprīlis, e	Martium	Septembrem
Maius, Maii M.	Maius, a, um	Martio	Septembre
Iunius, ii M.	Iunius, a, um		
Iulius, ii M.	Iulius, a, um		
Augustus, i M.	Augustus, a, um		
September, bris M.	September, bris, bre		
October, bris M.	October, bris, bre		
November, bris M.	November, bris, bre		
December, bris M.	December, bris, bre		

N. B. Aprilis, September, October, November, December are months of the third declension; the other seven are 2nd declension nouns.

Dates in Neo-Latin

e.g. March 17th

diē + ordinal + month in the genitive

diē septimō decimō Martii

Ordinal numbers

primus, a, um	sextus decimus
secundus, a, um	septimus decimus
tertius, a, um	duodevicesimus
quartus	undevicesimus
quintus	vicesimus
sextus	vicesimus primus ( or primus et vicesimus )
septimus	vicesimus secundus
octavus	vicesimus tertius
nonus	vicesimus quartus
decimus	vicesimus quintus
undecimus	vicesimus sextus
duodecimus	vicesimus septimus
tertius decimus	duodētricesimus
quartus decimus	undētricesimus
quintus decimus	tricesimus
	tricesimus primus

**Iānuārius, -a, -um** (named after Janus, the god of gates and doorways)**Februārius, -a, -um** (from Februa, -ae, f, a purificatory offering)**Martius, -a, -um** (named after Mars, the god of war)**Aprilis, -is, -e** (meaning unknown; perhaps Etruscan in origin. Varro, writing about the Latin language in the 1st century B.C., and suggesting an etymology now generally regarded as false, commented, . . . putō dictum, quod vēr omnia aperit, *De lingua latina* VI.33)**Māius, -a, -um** (perhaps derived from the name of an old deity, Māius, related etymologically to the adjective *magnus*)**Iūnius, -a, -um** (named after Juno, wife of Jupiter and queen of the gods)**Iūlius, -a, -um** (named after Julius Caesar; previously this month was named Quintilis, -is, -e)**Augustus, -a, -um** (named after Augustus, the first Roman emperor; previously this month was named Sextilis, -is, -e)**September, -bris, -bre** (the seventh, later the ninth, month)**Octōber, -bris, -bre** (the eighth, later the tenth, month)**November, -bris, -bre** (the ninth, later the eleventh, month)**December, -bris, -bre** (the tenth, later the twelfth, month)The Roman Calendar for the month of MayMay 1st Kalendīs Maiīs

2nd a. d. VI Nonas Maias  
 3rd a. d. V Nonas Maias  
 4th a. d. IV Nonas Maias  
 5th a. d. III Nonas Maias  
 6th Prīdiē Nonas Maias  
 7th Nōnīs Maiīs  
 8th a. d. VIII Idūs Maias  
 9th a. d. VII Idūs Maias  
 10th a. d. VI Idūs Maias  
 11th a. d. V Idūs Maias  
 12th a. d. IV Idūs Maias  
 13th a. d. III Idūs Maias  
 14th Prīdiē Idūs Maias  
 15th Idibūs Maiīs

May 16th a. d. XVII Kalendas Iūniās

17th a. d. XVI Kalendas Iūniās  
 18th a. d. XV Kalendas Iūniās  
 19th a. d. XIV Kalendas Iūniās  
 20th a. d. XIII Kalendas Iūniās  
 21st a. d. XII Kalendas Iūniās  
 22nd a. d. XI Kalendas Iūniās  
 23rd a. d. X Kalendas Iūniās  
 24th a. d. IX Kalendas Iūniās  
 25th a. d. VIII Kalendas Iūniās  
 26th a. d. VII Kalendas Iūniās  
 27th a. d. VI Kalendas Iūniās  
 28th a. d. V Kalendas Iūniās  
 29th a. d. IV Kalendas Iūniās  
 30th a. d. III Kalendas Iūniās  
 31st Prīdiē Kalendas Iūniās

4. Students will be interested to know that our ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth months were once the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth Roman months, because the Roman year formerly started in March. In doing Activity 38d of the language activity book, students are sent to the encyclopedia to find out more about changes made in the calendar. This activity takes its place along with other work with ordinal numerals in Chapter 38.

5. In converting years designated according to Christian reckoning to the Roman system, one subtracts from 754 (not 753) because of the Roman inclusive system of counting (compare the counting of days back from the "special days," in which the "special day" itself is counted).

#### **FRONTIER LIFE IV: HELGA'S SPINNING pp. 93-5**

Spinning and weaving were very important activities in antiquity. According to *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, "on the tomb of a virtuous Roman matron, the crowning words of praise were 'Lanam fecit'."

Of the many legends and myths involving spinning, perhaps the most vivid involved the trio of goddesses known as the Fates. As Kenneth McLeish succinctly describes the Fates on page 173 of *Myths and Legends of Ancient Rome*, © 1987, Longman Group Ltd.:

They were among the oldest and most respected powers in the universe, feared even by the gods.

They sat with distaffs, spinning a thread of life for every being in the world. Clotho began each thread at the moment of birth. Lachesis drew it out for the duration of each life, and Atropos snipped it with scissors at the moment of death. The Fates' decision about the length of each life was irrevocable, and no other being in the universe, not even Jupiter, could change it.

In his *Metamorphoses*, Ovid recounts the tale of the duel fought between the goddess Minerva (Pallas Athena) and Arachne, a mortal whose skill at the craft was so great it aroused the jealousy of the goddess. Later in the course, students will read a version of this story from the *Metamorphoses* (see Chapter 45, Review X, Exercise Xf).

Have students discuss and interpret the significance of spinning and weaving, both as a practical activity and as a metaphor. Encourage a student to do a report on the Fates, or on the myth illustrated below.

#### **Illustration**

In the *Odyssey* (Book 2) Homer tells how Penelope, wife of Odysseus, kept a crowd of suitors at bay during Odysseus' long absence by promising that she would marry one of the suitors after she finished weaving a magnificent burial cloak (shroud) for her father-in-law, Laertes. She would work all day at the weaving, and then each night undo all the day's work.