

Tina

the city cat

Illustrations by Jorge Macias





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TINA, THE CITY CAT
To Albin, who works with books



Tina is white. You can really tell she is white. She only has one little black hair on her back.


Well, that little black hair always hides, so Tina is the whitest cat you have ever seen.

For Tina, a city cat, mice-hunting is not an activity on her list of fun things to do.

But she hunts mice out of duty. She knows she should keep their home clean of mice, as well as take care of Albin. Tina always gossips and bad mouths the mice: “Those creatures are mischievous” Tina says: Twisting her mouth and closing her eyes, and in that instant her whiskers vibrate like electric antennas.

Less than a year ago, to Tina’s disappointment, The Big One came to live in their home, and that’s not all, Albin tells her: “Tinaaa, he is your brother”. That brother is the Big One. His name is Rufus, but The Usurper sure could be a





better name for him. “His only merit is, isss... to be a city dog,” Tina thinks. Not denying that the Biggie is a nice guy, he is sometimes a bit noisy and when he barks it seems like he is coughing. The baby dog, The Biggie, pretended—well it is better to say that he insisted—to play with Tina. The pretention or the insistence upsets her very much, and sets her on a very bad mood: “You know a city cat has her own ways and well... her manners,” Tina excuses herself after she stopped The Biggie with a slap on his face. “Tiiiiinaaaa he is only a baby and besides he is your brother.” “Huh. Sure. This baby is enormous. Much bigger than me.”

I am not trying to brag, but I am very flexible and it takes a lot of effort on my part: less napping and lots of exercise. Jump here and there to take care of my fitness.

Anyway, I’m glad I set the limits to the

Big One. It only took two or three slaps and only one of them with my famous and feared claws.

Rufus, yeah, The Biggie, he is a French mastiff a heavy weight one -“Impossible to imagine how enormous he is.” Tina gossips to her friends.

But as time goes by, Tina somehow gave up and sometimes accepts the company of The Biggie. There had been also some moments when she admits he is nice. Yesterday was one of these days. Rufus woke her up from her morning nap. Since then, he has become her ally.

He was barking and barking so loud. Tina had to wake up. “This Biggie really bugs me. I am sure he wants to jog. Just now! He just doesn’t get it! I am trying to relax after my yoga practice.” Tina complained and went back to relaxation.




It only took Tina one second to start dreaming that she was on a green meadow where she was running and jumping among flowers and chasing butterflies just for the pleasure of scaring them. After her Zen meditation practice, the one she finishes with a back cat stretching, Tina loves to dream about spring times.

But The Biggie keeps barking and barking and barking: “Tina wake up.” “Well, he is never going to stop it! How many times do I have to explain to him that I have my ways. Now, is this guy trying to bring our house down?” Tina, not yet fully awake, follows Biggie to the basement. A place...to tell you the truth, Tina only visits when she wants to frolic until she goes wild. “It could be my other me that stirs this longing for the jungle noises and allows me to become a Mexican jaguar”.


Tina does not know what is it with her,



An illustration at the top of the page shows the lower legs and feet of a dog, likely Rufus, in shades of brown and tan. To the right, the head of a gray cat with white outlines is visible, looking towards the left. The background is a dark, solid color.

but sometimes her savage nature sprouts,
and disagrees with the refined manners
of a girl city cat. When Tina visits the
basement she transforms herself into a
gray dusty cat. Sorry to say, but Tina just
can't avoid the wild call of the jungle. Tina
goes for the adventure, knowing that

Albin will remind her: "Tinaaaa, haven't
I told you: no playing on the basement.
Now you have to take a bath." Tina hates
bathing especially with oils and perfumes.
So she keeps hesitating. Would I, would
I not? But Rufus, The Biggie, insists. He
always does it. This dog knows how to
keep telling you what to do. Finally Tina
gets it! Yes! Something terrible, worse than
living with the Biggie, is going on. Then Tina

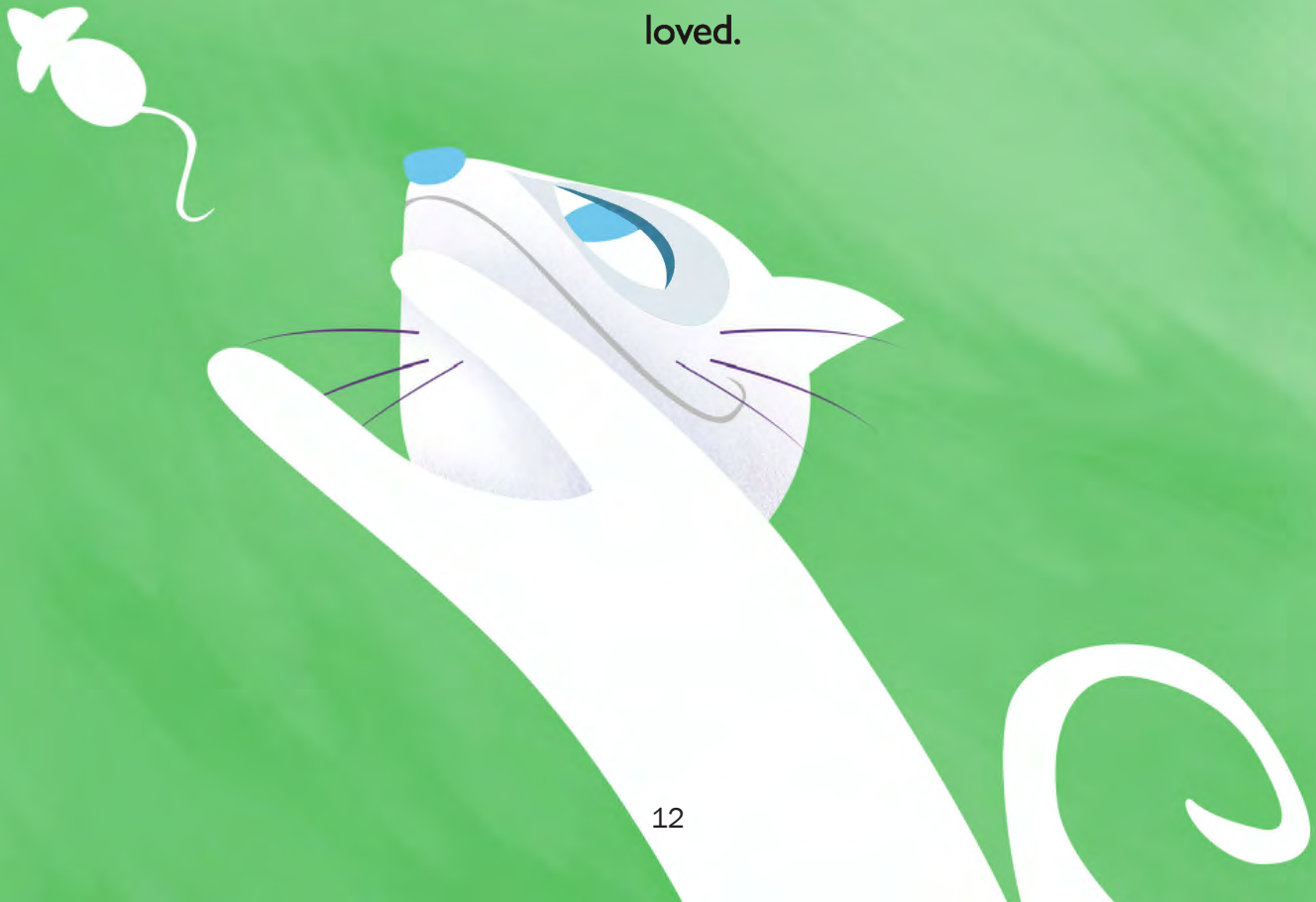


smells danger and her wild senses make her to react.

There is another one! How dare you! Just yesterday I had to hunt one of his relatives. Tina is now all alert and full of life. It happens that mice bring out the wild Mexican jaguar that a girl city cat keeps inside herself: "Umm"... These little creatures they just do not learn. Well, maybe they are hungry, curious, or our home sweet home calls them. Who knows what makes the mice dare to come back?

I do not know if it is luck or hunting talents? Could it be an inherited ability or a reflex? Who knows?" Tina hunted the mouse but on her second try he escaped. Well, he was not a small mouse. He was a full grown one. A big one. He might well be a poor honest father in search of food.

After that adventure Tina can tell Rufus is a very caring brother, who admires and loves Tina a lot. The way big sisters are loved.





Of course sometimes he is annoying, but it is because he has a lot of fun when Tina stretches and jumps with elegance.

Tina goes back to relaxation feeling that for a girl city cat she did an excellent job chasing the mouse away. Now she is thinking on a way to set an example to Albin. "This woman spends her days around books. She comes and goes every day with her papers and her bags. Let's hope that sometime she will learn to hunt a mouse. Every time she runs into one of these creatures she goes crazy. She steps on the chairs and terrified calls my name. I do not understand her, hunting mice is a piece of cake. I really hope that I can be a role model to Albin and maybe someday she will develop a taste for chasing mice away. It does not matter if the mouse is only a humble and starving library mouse".



