

Easter egg - VIA DEI LEONI

When I was in Florence doing research for this book (courtesy of my book advance - thank you Viking!) I stumbled upon a street named Via Dei Leoni. With a little digging, I learned that for a few centuries lions (and other exotic animals) were kept in the heart of Florence. They were housed in the Palazzo Vecchio, and exercised on the street that now bears the name, Via Dei Leoni. The lion is a special symbol for Florence, so although you won't see live lions in the city today, there are statues everywhere. When I illustrated this scene of the lion whisking Renato away from danger, I couldn't resist putting in a small street marker for Via Dei Leoni.