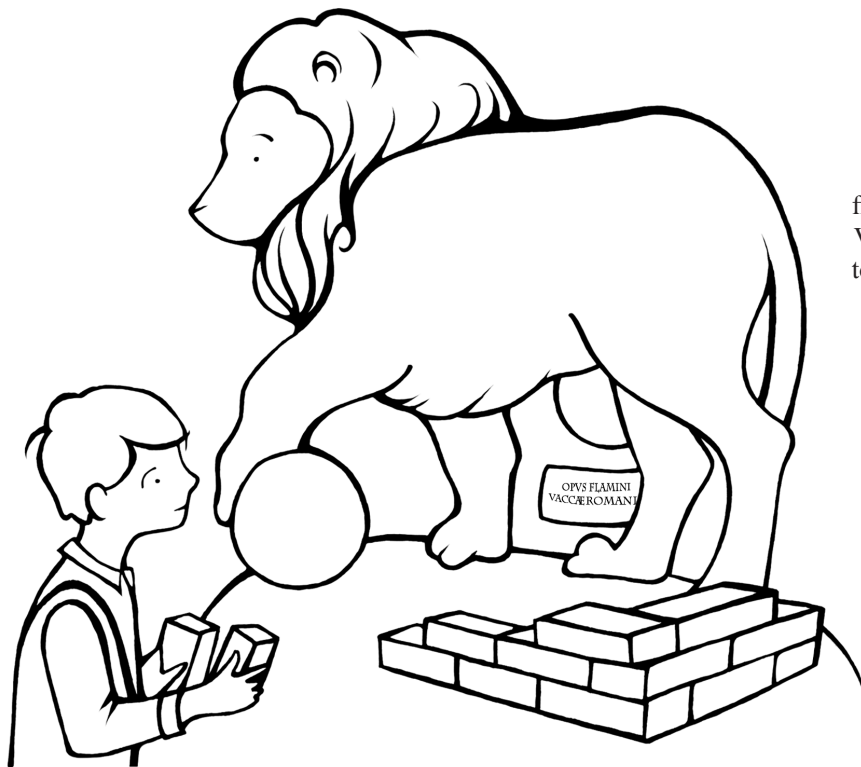


# RENATO AND THE LION

BY BARBARA DILORENZO

For more information, please visit:  
[www.renatoandthelion.com](http://www.renatoandthelion.com)

The Italian lion in *Renato and the Lion* is based on a real sculpture, carved in 1598 by Flaminio Vacca. This lion lives in Florence, across the steps from his friend—affectionately referred to as the Ancient Lion. The two lions guard the steps to the outdoor sculpture exhibit, the Loggia dei Lanzi. Together, they are known as the Medici lions, though they look very different from one another. Can you spot the artist's signature? It appears a few times in the book as well.



Most likely the lions were not protected during the war, as there were so many other important monuments to take care of—but records of exactly what was protected could have been lost in the great flood of 1966. In this story, Vacca's lion was important to Renato, which is why he worked so hard to protect him before he left Italy.

A lion is a symbol of protection. In nearby Venice, St. Mark's Lion was left uncovered in World War I to give hope to the people.

The American lion is also real, and guards the steps to the New York Public Library. The sculptor Edward Clark Potter created twin lions for the 1911 dedication of the library. Originally nicknamed Leo Astor and Leo Lenox after the library founders, their names changed again during the Great Depression of the 1930's. Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia nicknamed our lion Fortitude, and his twin, Patience.



The line artwork for this coloring page was designed by artist Christine Colpitts, modeled on artwork from the book. To find out more about Christine and her beautiful artwork, please visit: [www.clcuriouscreation.com](http://www.clcuriouscreation.com).