

Easter Egg - Patience and the New York Public Library

When I first walked to the New York Public Library, and saw the magnificent lion sculptures on the steps, I was moved by their elegance. So in this story about a beloved lion in Italy, I had to echo a beloved lion in New York City. The lion pictured here is Patience.

What didn't make it into the book was the map room in the library with a giant globe—echoing a map room in the Palazzo Vecchio overlooking Vacca's lion (Renato's lion). In the Italian map room, there is an even bigger globe. I wanted to draw these two illustrations, one in Italy and one in New York, with the map rooms as the background—echoing each other. But despite the coincidence which would have been visually fun, the illustrations felt forced, so I let them go.

I also discovered that the lions were being restored in 2004, around the time that Renato would have been a grandfather. I wanted that to echo his preservation of his lion in Italy, but again, it was too much. So I let it go. But it's a fun detail to know.