



Free for readers

The Villa d'Oro *Welcome Letter*

*A letter, a recipe,
and a first look at what's coming next.*



FROM SIOBHAN EVERLEIGH

Author of the Villa d'Oro novels — set in Tuscany, written from Sweden



— ONE —

A letter from *Siobhan*

Hello, you.

Thank you for finding your way here. I'm going to assume you arrived a little tired. Most of the people who find Villa d'Oro do.

I wrote the first of these novels — *The Light That Stayed* — after watching too many capable people, myself included, wake up one day and realise the life we'd carefully built didn't fit any more. Not dramatic-movie-wrong. Just quietly suffocating. The way a sweater you loved at twenty-three feels strange at forty-three.

Emma was the first to walk up to that villa. Then Sofia, who had built something beautiful and was terrified of losing it. Then Fiona, who had spent thirty years making herself smaller than she was. Then Kate, who inherited a cottage and a question she hadn't known to ask. Then Annika, who had to learn that hands can hold more than a scalpel. The sixth woman is on her way now — I'm writing her story as you read this.

I wanted to send you something to mark your arrival. Not a sample chapter — those are everywhere. Something more like the gift bag you'd find on your pillow if you actually *were* arriving at the villa. A recipe from Giulia. A whispered hint about who's coming next. The playlist is in the works — I'll send it along in a later letter, once Giulia has finished arguing with me about whether Verdi belongs on it.

"Welcome. Sit. Eat. Stay as long as you like."

That's the line I keep returning to. It's what Giulia would say to you, if you turned up at the kitchen door. I hope this small pack carries some of that feeling.

I'll write again now and then — when there's a new book, when something interesting catches my eye about creativity or starting over, when I want to share a piece of Tuscany. Never often enough to be a chore. Always something I'd actually want to read myself.

With warmth,

Siobhan

Stockholm, with Milo at my feet



— TWO —

Giulia's

Pasta al Pomodoro

Giulia would tell you this is not really a recipe. A recipe is what you write down when you don't trust yourself yet. This is just dinner. Cook it on a Sunday when the windows are open and you have nowhere to be.

"Olive oil first. Then garlic. The other way is for tourists." — Giulia

YOU WILL NEED — SERVES 4

- ◆ 400g spaghetti (or whatever long pasta you have)
- ◆ 800g good tinned San Marzano tomatoes — whole, not chopped
- ◆ 4 cloves garlic, peeled, lightly crushed with the flat of a knife
- ◆ 6 tbsp good olive oil (the bottle you keep for finishing, not the one for frying)
- ◆ A small handful of fresh basil leaves — torn, not chopped
- ◆ Salt. More than you think.
- ◆ Parmigiano-Reggiano to finish, grated at the table

THE METHOD

1. Warm the olive oil in a wide pan over a low flame. Add the garlic. Let it whisper, not sizzle. You want it to perfume the oil, not brown. Three or four minutes.
2. Tip in the tomatoes with their juice. Break them up with the back of a wooden spoon — gently. Add a generous pinch of salt. Simmer for twenty minutes, stirring now and then. The sauce will reduce, deepen, and stop tasting of tin.
3. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a roaring boil. Salt it like the sea. Cook the pasta one minute less than the packet says.
4. Drain the pasta but save a mug of the cooking water. Tip the pasta into the sauce. Toss. Add a splash of pasta water if it looks tight. The sauce should cling, not pool.
5. Off the heat. Tear in the basil. Drizzle with the remaining olive oil. Serve immediately, in warm bowls. Pass the parmigiano at the table.

"If someone offers to help — let them. The pasta tastes better when it's been made by two."



— THREE —

First look — *Something Worth Keeping*

Five women have arrived at Villa d'Oro now. Emma, Sofia, Fiona, Kate, Annika. Each carrying something they hadn't quite named. Each leaving with something they hadn't known to look for.

The sixth is on her way. Her name is Beatrice Ferretti, and she is an archivist who has been telling herself she is fine for fourteen months — which is, as she puts it to herself on the Wednesday train from Rome, either a personal record or a clinical condition.

She is not arriving at the villa for the first time. She came here eight years ago. She has not been back since. She has also not let herself think about that, until now.

*"She came here to put something down.
Nobody puts something down in three weeks."*

Sofia has hired a restorer from Lucca to investigate what might be a hidden fresco under the plaster of the east corridor. Giulia has unearthed forty-one journals in the attic — kept by guests of the villa over four decades — and thinks Beatrice might want a look. Beatrice has packed two coats, three shirts, her university pen, and a single framed photograph she has not let herself unwrap yet.

Something Worth Keeping is about the work of returning. About what gets uncovered when you start carefully scraping at a wall, or a journal, or a life. About the slow, patient business of restoration — and the man from Lucca who knows how to do it.

It will be the sixth Villa d'Oro novel. I'm aiming for autumn 2026.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

I'll write to you when there's a cover reveal. Then again when the book is up for pre-order — newsletter readers get the first 48 hours at the launch price before anyone else. Then once more on release day. Three emails. That's all.





Until then —

Make the pasta. Read a book that surprises you. Stay curious.

Welcome to Villa d'Oro.

— *Siobhan* —