

# Dan's Letter™

"Please...let me introduce you to my mind...one article at a time."



## FROM THE DESK OF DAN ANDERSON

### The Joy at Being Bad

Some people are exceptionally bad at bowling. The kind of bad where the ball veers into the gutter the second it leaves their hand. The kind of bad where knocking down a single pin feels like a victory.

And yet, they love it.

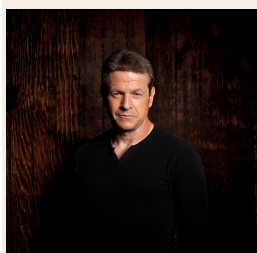
There's something undeniably fun about the neon lights, the crashing pins (even if they belong to another lane), and the shared laughter over ridiculous attempts.

The pressure to be good fades, replaced by the simple joy of playing without expectations.

Society often emphasizes mastery, but psychology suggests that embracing activities without the need for perfection builds resilience, strengthens connections, and encourages creativity.

The freedom to be bad at something—and enjoy it anyway—removes stress and fosters genuine fun.

So why not embrace the experience? Whether it's singing off-key, dancing awkwardly, or attempting a sport with no natural talent, joy doesn't come from being the best—it comes from simply allowing the fun to happen.



*Dan A.*



If heaven had a food court, it would probably look a lot like Mercato Centrale. Nestled in the heart of Florence, this buzzing marketplace is where diets come to die, waistbands loosen, and taste buds experience true enlightenment. Forget counting calories—this is a place where food is an art form, and every bite tells a story (sometimes a messy, sauce-covered one).

With two floors of culinary temptation, Mercato Centrale offers everything from classic Italian comfort food to deep-rooted local delicacies. Whether you're a casual eater, a dedicated foodie, or just someone who enjoys chewing, here are five dishes that will redefine your relationship with food.

**1. The Sandwich That Bites Back: Lampredotto.** Some sandwiches are safe. Some are comforting. And some, like lampredotto, demand respect.

Florence's most iconic street food is this sandwich filled with slow-cooked cow stomach. Stay with me now...it's herb-infused, melt-in-your-mouth tender, and ridiculously flavorful.

How to eat it: Ask for it dipped in broth for extra juiciness. Top it with the market's famous spicy green sauce.

Where to get it: *Bambi Trippa e Lampredotto*, a family-run spot that's been perfecting tripe sandwiches since 1890.

Continued on page 2...

**2. The Most Luxurious Burger You'll Ever Eat:** Made from Chianina cattle, a 2,000-year-old Tuscan breed, this isn't just a burger—it's the king of burgers.

What makes it special: The beef is ultra-marbled, farm-raised, and grilled to juicy perfection. Add cheese, beer-fried onions, and their signature sauce for the full effect.

Where to get it: **La Toraia**, a second-floor stall that turns high-end steak into burger brilliance.

**3. Pasta – Because, Well...It's Italy:** Mercato Centrale is a pasta lover's dream, offering everything from squid ink tagliatelle to handmade fusilli.

What to expect: Fresh, bronze-dyed pasta (meaning it's got that rough texture that holds sauce beautifully), changing daily based on the season's best ingredients.

Where to get it: **Famiglia Michelis**, where pasta is made the old-fashioned way, with just the right bite. Grab a bag of their dried pasta to take home.

**4. Pizza: Name a better food.** I'll wait...Florence might not be Naples, but that doesn't mean you won't find insanely good, wood-fired, Neapolitan-style pizza at Mercato Centrale. The kind with a slightly charred, chewy crust, fresh tomato sauce, and just the right amount of gooey, melty mozzarella.

Why it's special: The dough is hand-stretched. The ingredients are simple but perfect. And the oven? Hot enough to make you question physics. The result? A masterpiece that disappears from your plate faster than you thought possible.

Where to get it: **Romualdo Rizzuti**, a pizza wizard who somehow makes dough, tomatoes, and cheese taste like pure happiness. He bakes around 1,000 pizzas a day, and yes, you need to be part of that statistic.

**5. Sfogliatella – The Messiest, Most Worth-It Pastry:**

A crispy, flaky, seashell-shaped delight, sfogliatella is as fun to eat as it is impossible to keep off your clothes.

Why you need it: The filling—sweet ricotta, semolina, and citrus cream—melts into buttery, paper-thin layers of pastry.

Where to get it: **Sabato Sessa**, a family-run pastry shop that's been baking Naples' finest sfogliatella since 1930.

**Final Thought: Pace Yourself, or Regret It Later.**

Mercato Centrale is not a place to be rushed. It's a place to wander, taste, sit, eat, and repeat. Think of it as a food safari, where every stall offers a new adventure, and every bite brings you closer to true Italian happiness.

So go forth. Eat boldly. And for the love of all things delicious, come hungry.

## The Mental Boost of Nature Walks

Life can get overwhelming, but one of the easiest and most effective ways to clear your mind is as simple as stepping outside. Nature walks have been shown to significantly improve mental health by reducing anxiety, easing symptoms of depression, and lowering stress hormone levels—often in as little as 20 minutes.

Spending time outdoors provides a mental reset, helping improve focus and clarity. Research suggests that both children and adults experience increased attention spans and reduced symptoms of attention-related disorders after spending time in natural settings. If your mind feels scattered, a walk among trees and fresh air might be the best way to regain concentration.



Walking itself is also a mood booster. The physical movement triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural "feel-good" chemicals. Combine this with the calming effect of nature, and you have a natural recipe for relaxation and stress relief.

Another bonus? Nature walks often create opportunities for social connection. Whether you go with a friend, family member, or a walking group, the shared experience fosters a sense of community.

Knowing how beneficial nature walks can be, it's worth making them a habit. Getting outside is a simple yet powerful way to support mental well-being.



# Gems of Deception

## A Victor Sage Mystery

by Dan Anderson

### Chapter 13

#### The Reckoning

The sun had long since dipped below the horizon, leaving only the faint silver glow of moonlight to illuminate King's Chapel. The wind stirred the ivy along its weathered stone walls, whispering through the eaves like ghosts of the past. A place of old rites, forgotten vows, and now—a confrontation long in the making.

Victor Sage strode through the chapel doors, his footsteps echoing against the cold flagstone floor. To any observer, he was alone—but appearances, as always, were deceiving. Clara Simmons and a discreet team of watchers remained hidden beyond the chapel's perimeter, their eyes keen for any sign of treachery. Beneath his jacket, unseen but ever within reach, a slim, finely honed dagger rested sheathed behind the collar—an unspoken contingency should the night take a dangerous turn.

A row of ancient pews lined the nave, their dark wood polished by time. Beyond them, flickering candlelight framed the altar in a dim glow, shadows dancing along the vaulted ceiling. And in the midst of it all, standing in perfect stillness, was Desmond Deveraux.

He stepped forward from the darkness, his silhouette cast long by the candle flames. Clad in a tailored coat, his hands tucked neatly behind his back, he exuded an air of quiet supremacy—a man who believed himself untouchable.

"You arrived," Deveraux murmured, his voice smooth, expectant. "I had no doubt."

Victor's grey eyes remained steady. "Your invitation was difficult to ignore."

Deveraux smirked. "An invitation? No, Mr. Sage. This is a reckoning. A final conversation between two men who understand history not as something written, but something engineered."

Victor did not bite. He simply watched, waiting.

Deveraux gestured around them. "Do you know why I chose this place? Your precious Lady Hawthorne's ancestors once buried their dead beneath this very floor, while mine—my people—were stripped of their land, their honor, their place in history." His gaze flicked toward the candlelit altar. "Now, it seems only fitting that the last remnants of the Hawthorne legacy will be buried here as well."

Victor remained unmoved. "You speak of legacies while behaving like a common thief."

Deveraux chuckled. "A thief? No, Sage. A thief takes for gain. What I have done—what I will continue to do—is reclamation. And you? You represent the other side. The one that upholds stolen



history as law.”

Victor's posture did not waver. “You misunderstand me.” He took a step closer. “History is not decided by those who steal artifacts and scrawl riddles in the dark. It is defined by those who uncover truth, no matter how inconvenient. That is what I do.”

Deveraux studied him, his smirk fading into something sharper. “Which is precisely why I chose you.”

A flicker of calculation passed through Victor's mind. *This meeting isn't about the brooch.*

Deveraux continued, his voice lowering. “Of all the minds that could have pursued me, yours was the only one that mattered. This has never been about the emerald brooch, Mr. Sage. It has been about you.”

Victor's pulse slowed. He had anticipated this—to an extent. Deveraux was not merely a man seeking vengeance. He was a man seeking a challenge. And Victor, it seemed, had been selected as his adversary.

“So the brooch is merely bait,” Victor observed.

Deveraux tilted his head. “Not quite. It is...leverage.”

He reached into his coat pocket and withdrew something—a small, folded parchment. He extended it toward Victor, his expression unreadable.

Victor did not move. “I assume this is another of your games.”

Deveraux smiled. “Naturally.”

Slowly, Victor took the parchment and unfolded it. The handwriting was meticulous, each letter of the initial words carved with precise, deliberate strokes:

***If you are the mind I believe you to be, you will know where to find it.  
Midnight tomorrow. Or it is lost forever...***

There was no signature. None was needed.

Victor exhaled slowly. This was Deveraux's challenge.

“Interesting,” Victor murmured. “You claim the brooch is yours by right. Yet here you are, hiding it like a stage magician.”

Deveraux's expression flickered with something close to amusement. “And you, Mr. Sage, are my audience. You have until midnight tomorrow. If you fail, the brooch disappears.”

Victor considered him, his mind already dissecting the clues. This was not a simple taunt—it was a calculated move. A challenge, yes, but also a test.



He glanced back at the parchment. The wording was deliberate. Not *where it is hidden*, but *where to find it*.

*It meant the real use of the brooch had already been set into play.*

And that was always the true game.

Victor lifted his gaze. “And if I succeed?”

Deveraux’s smirk returned. “Then you will have proven yourself worthy of the pursuit.”

A silence stretched between them. Outside, a gust of wind howled through the chapel’s rafters, rattling loose bits of debris.

Victor’s fingers tightened around the parchment. Deveraux had set the stage, but Victor would dictate how the final act played out.

He took a step back. “Very well. We play by your rules—for now.”

A flicker of something unreadable crossed Deveraux’s face. He inclined his head slightly. “Then, until tomorrow.”

Without another word, he stepped back into the shadows—and was gone.

Victor did not move. He listened. The chapel had swallowed Deveraux whole, leaving only the flickering of candles and the weight of the challenge in Victor’s hand.

From the moment Deveraux slipped into the night, the pursuit had begun.

Clara and the watchers moved swiftly, trailing him through the shadows beyond the chapel. He prided himself on vanishing unseen, but tonight, every step was marked, every movement watched.

This was no longer just a game of riddles—it was a contest of minds. And for the first time, Victor was ahead.

(To be continued...)

**Missed a chapter?** - [Tap here for the Kindle version and audiobook.](#)



**King’s Chapel** looms under the cold gaze of the moon—a forgotten relic where history and the future now collide. Its crumbling stone walls bear silent witness to the confrontation unfolding within. Flickering shadows dance through shattered windows, whispering of secrets long buried. Here, amidst the decay, a battle of wits will determine the fate of the emerald brooch—and the past itself.



## How to Get Your Marketing Message in Front of the Right People



Last month, we talked about crafting a bold, clear marketing message that makes your business the obvious choice. But even the best message won't work if the right people never see it.

Marketing isn't just about what you say—it's about where and how you say it. If your message isn't reaching your ideal customers, you're leaving money on the table.

### Know Where Your Customers Are Looking

Many business owners assume that if they put their message "out there," customers will find them. That's not how marketing works. You need to meet your customers where they already are.

For example, a landscaping business won't get customers by posting random social media updates. But homeowners **do** notice yard signs in their neighborhood, read community newsletters, and ask for recommendations in local Facebook or Nextdoor groups. A well-placed postcard in their mailbox can be just the push they need.

A carpet cleaning business works the same way. People with stained carpets aren't waiting for a social media ad to remind them—it's when they spill something that they go searching. If you show up in Google search results or send a well-timed reminder postcard, you're the one they'll call.

Your job is to figure out where your ideal customers look for services like yours and make sure your marketing message is there.

### Use Multichannel Marketing

The best businesses don't rely on just one marketing method. They use multiple ways to stay in front of customers.

1. **Direct Mail** – A flyer or postcard is hard to ignore when it arrives at the right time.
2. **Google Search & SEO** – If your business doesn't appear when someone searches for your service, you're missing potential customers.
3. **Community Groups & Social Media** – Engaging in local Facebook or Nextdoor groups keeps you visible.
4. **Referral Programs** – Happy customers will send you more business if you give them a reason to.

When customers see your business in multiple places, they remember you when they need you.

### Stay Consistent

Marketing isn't a one-time effort—it's about repetition. The more people see your message, the more likely they are to take action.

If you're mailing flyers, send them regularly. If you're on social media, post consistently. If you're asking for referrals, follow up. Stay in front of customers, and they'll come to you when they're ready to buy.

### What's Next?

Now that you know how to get your message in front of the right people, the next step is making sure they take action. In the next article, we'll talk about **how to create offers that customers can't ignore**.

Stay tuned—because your perfect customer is waiting for the right message at the right time.



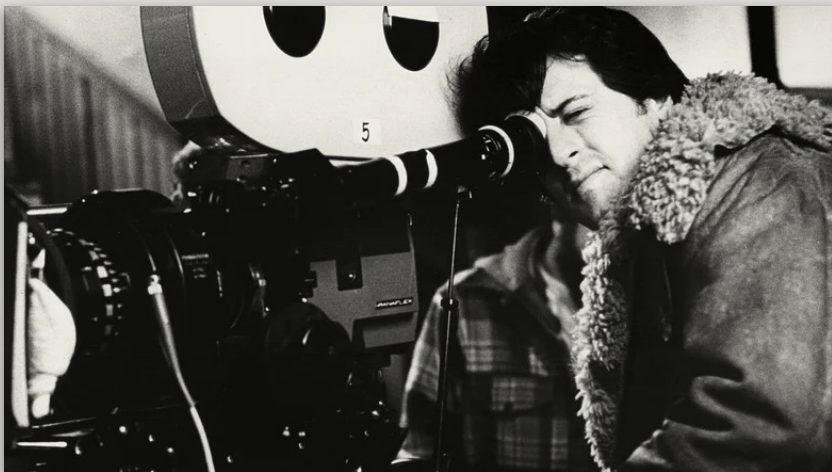
# What They Didn't Tell You

Once upon a time, a spirited Sicilian immigrant named Frank stepped off the boat in America, determined to seize fame in show business. He had big dreams, and his talents, while not top-tier, burned brightly enough to snag him a spot in the footlights. Then he met Jacqueline, a warm-hearted dancer with a grin that could outshine the bulbs of the Diamond Horseshoe marquee. Their mutual ambition brought them to the bustling streets of New York City, but bright lights quickly gave way to the harsh reality of a cold-water flat in Hell's Kitchen. Rent was cheap, morale was high, and Frank swore they would make it big any day now.

When Jacqueline got pregnant, their precarious finances forced them to seek care in the charity ward of a hospital. Standing anxiously at the registration desk, Frank wondered if his wife and their baby would be okay under such circumstances. The nurse nodded, but the future had already prepared a curveball for baby Michael. During delivery, a nerve in his face was accidentally damaged, leaving the left side partially paralyzed. His eyelids drooped, his lower lip sagged, and his speech developed a charming, if unintended, slur. Despite the heartbreak, Frank and Jacqueline resolved to leave the gloom of Hell's Kitchen behind, working tirelessly so their little family could start fresh in Maryland.

Years later, they'd saved enough to open a small business near Washington, D.C. While this new life provided more opportunities, Michael still battled the teasing of classmates who thought his face looked funny and his speech sounded off. He often hurried home in tears, asking why he had to be so different. Jacqueline comforted him gently, reminding him that real strength thrives where others least expect it. Little did anyone know, Michael's distinctive features would one day become his greatest asset.

Driven by an unyielding desire to prove himself, Michael embraced acting. Auditions exposed him to countless rejections, but the confident spark in his heart never dimmed. Soon, the very traits that once made him an easy target—the drooping lid, the crooked smile, the muffled diction—evolved into a one-of-a-kind signature. Hollywood eventually took notice, and so did audiences. That kid born in a humble charity ward grew up to become Michael...Sylvester Stallone, the man who graced the screen as Rocky and countless other iconic characters. His mix of raw grit and heartfelt vulnerability showed the world that a so-called weakness could indeed be a superpower.



Today, audiences worldwide recognize Stallone's distinct voice and intensity. Yet behind this persona is a family's resolve. This underdog story isn't about overcoming challenges; it's about transforming obstacles into momentum. In the end, the fighter from Hell's Kitchen whose face—and heart—proved unforgettable.

**Now you know what they didn't tell you.**

## DETAILING MASTERY



SCAN OR TAP BELOW FOR VIDEO



Tap here

### Slash Your Drying Time with Chemical Guys HydroSlick – The Ultimate Water Repellent Hack!

Tired of spending more time drying your car than actually driving it? You're not alone. Without the right protection, water clings to your paint like that one friend who never takes the hint to leave.

But here's the game-changer—Chemical Guys HydroSlick. This ceramic coating doesn't just make your car shine like a showroom beauty; it repels water so fast, it's practically allergic to moisture.

In this video, we show you how to clay your ride and slap on HydroSlick for insane water beading and lightning-fast drying. Less time wiping, more time enjoying that flawless finish. No streaks, no smears, just a slick, protected surface that laughs in the face of rain.

So, if you're ready to level up your car care game and say goodbye to the drying struggle, hit play and watch this magic unfold. Your future self (and your towels) will thank you!



## TAKE A BREAK!

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Tap here

FOR INTERACTIVE PUZZLE

Solution on page 9



### Mexican Frittata with Poblanos

#### Ingredients

8 large eggs  
 ¼ cup vegetable oil  
 1 cup chopped white onion  
 2 poblano chiles (about 11 oz), charred, sweated, peeled, stemmed, seeded, and cut into strips  
 3 tbsp milk  
 ¾ tsp kosher or coarse sea salt, or to taste  
 1 lb red potatoes, peeled, diced, boiled for 5 minutes, and drained  
 Pinch of freshly ground black pepper, or to taste  
 ½ tsp ground allspice  
 ¾ cup diced queso fresco (about 4 oz)

#### Instructions

Preheat the broiler. Heat oil in a broiler-proof skillet over medium heat. Sauté onions until soft, then add poblanos and cook for 3 minutes. In a bowl, whisk eggs, milk, and ¼ tsp salt until foamy.

Add potatoes, remaining salt, pepper, and allspice to the skillet. Cook for 6–8 minutes until tender.

Pour egg mixture over potatoes, stirring gently for 2–3 minutes. Sprinkle with queso fresco.

Broil for 3–4 minutes until puffed and golden. Slice and serve warm or at room temp. Enjoy!



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## Northern Islands 4K | Drone | Faroe, Lofoten & Senja



In the remote north, where the sea meets towering cliffs, a world of rugged beauty unfolds. Steep peaks rise from glassy fjords, their reflections merging sky and water. Mist drapes over winding trails, leading to hidden villages where time slows. Vibrant harbors hum with quiet life, while black sand beaches whisper of ancient tides. Here, nature's artistry remains raw and untamed, a spectacle captured in stunning 4K. A journey not just through landscapes, but through the soul of the wild, calling to those who seek the extraordinary. Scan or tap the QR code for the video.



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