Fresh Pasta with Braised Quail (adapted from Marcella Hazen's *Marcella Cucina* via epicurious)

Serves 4

4 whole quail, washed and dried
salt and pepper
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 shallot, minced
½ stalk celery, minced
½ medium carrot, minced
1 fresh sage leaf, minced
6 rosemary leaves (remove from 1 sprig), chopped very fine
½ cup dry white wine
1 roma tomato, diced small
1 pound fresh pappardelle or fettuccine
½ cup (1 ounce) freshly grated parmesan cheese, plus more for serving

1. Season the quail generously with salt and pepper. Heat a large not-nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil and quail, and cook without moving for 3-4 minutes, until well browned. Flip the quail; continue to cook until all sides are browned, propping the quail against the sides of the pan if necessary. Transfer the browned quail to a plate.

2. Reduce the heat to medium and add the vegetables and herbs; cook, stirring constantly, until they are fragrant and lightly browned, 1-2 minutes. Add the wine and use a spatula to scrape up any browned bits on the bottom of the pan. Reduce the heat to medium-low, return the quail to the skillet, and cover. Cook, turning occasionally, for 20 minutes. Add the tomato, cover, and cook for another 20-25 minutes, adding water as necessary to keep the pan from drying out, until the meat can easily be removed from the bones.

3. Remove the quail from the pan and shred the meat, discarding the bones. If desired, reserve the drumsticks with their meat for garnish.

4. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the pasta until just tender, 2-4 minutes or according to package instructions. Drain, reserving ½ cup of pasta cooking water.

5. Add the shredded quail meat, pasta, ¼ cup pasta cooking water, and parmesan to the pan with the sauce. Toss the contents together until well mixed, adding more pasta water if necessary to loosen the sauce. Serve immediately, topped with additional parmesan and the reserved drumsticks.