



A DARK SONG OF BLOOD

by Ben Pastor

(Bitter Lemon Press 2014 trade paperback London/
New York).

The third book in the author's excellent series featuring Major Martin Bora, an aristocratic officer in the German Army, takes place in German-occupied Rome from January 8 to June 4, 1944, the date of the withdrawal of German forces from the city. Bora is tasked with investigating three high-profile murders together with Roman police Inspector Sandro Guidi who had also worked with Bora in the prior novel, *LIAR MOON*. Bora becomes caught up in the power struggle between the German Army, the SS and the Gestapo while Guidi has to contend with competing factions within the Roman police as well as the Partisans and resistance. The Vatican also exerts its own power and influence over events.

The author masterfully describes the complexity of life in occupied Rome as well as the personal and opposing tensions experienced by Bora and Guidi as they struggle to solve the crimes. This is mystery fiction, a war story and a historical novel tightly woven together by a superb storyteller.