

# GENRE GO ROUND REVIEWS

## **A DARK SONG OF BLOOD**

**Ben Pastor**

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In 1944 Rome, German Embassy Secretary Fraulein Magda Reiner falls from her apartment window to her death. Italian Police Inspector Sandro Guidi investigates although his superiors, fearing accusations of collaboration with the Nazis as the American military victory in Italy is assured rather soon, insist that National Confederation of Fascist Unions official Ras Merlo killed the now cremated woman.

As Guidi looks into the homicide, he begins to believe someone framed Merlo. Wehrmacht Major Martin Bora surprisingly reappears in his life to assist on the inquiry, which concerns the cop as he does not want to be associated with a German when the Americans take the city. Bora's wife Benedikta arrives to inform him she filed for divorce as the war ended their five year marriage.

While Bora feels gut punched though not shocked; at the boarding house where both reside Guidi meets and is attracted to Francesca Lippi. As the case turns even more complicated with additional killings and ties to the Vatican, Gestapo and other high

ranking Germans; Rome increasingly turns violent with the Resistance mounting bolder assaults.

The third Martin Bora WWII drama (see *Liar Moon* and *Lumen*) is an intriguing historical that uses a police procedural to enable readers to look inside the heads of those in Rome at a time when the Nazi control is almost over. Suffering from physical ailments and PTSD, Bora feels ancient due to being divided between his moral sense of right and wrong, and patriotism; while Guidi also wants to do the right thing but fears the consequences. Readers will relish this entry in one of the best WWII series.

*Harriet Klausner*