



## **A Dark Song Of Blood**

**BEN PASTOR**

*Giles Morgan*

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Major Martin von Bora has been ordered to investigate not one but three murders. A daunting prospect at the best of times Bora has been given his orders during the final days of the Nazi occupation of Rome in early 1944. As the allies close in on the Italian capital Bora must divide his attention between his military duties and solving the mystery of the murders. The first murder involves a German embassy secretary who has fallen to her death in mysterious circumstances. The others involve a Cardinal and a Roman society lady who have both been found dead at her apartment. Bora must work alongside Inspector Sandro Guidi of the Italian police in order to find the truth behind these crimes.

Although both men find themselves in dire circumstances working under terrible pressures incredibly Rome is still the scene of glamorous and debauched parties organised by the feuding factions of the SS, Gestapo and the German Army. Bora is also simultaneously undergoing a personal crisis as his marriage finally crumbles under the pressures of war.

Still nursing painful physical wounds from an earlier Partisan attack in Italy, Bora finds his sense of duty and emotional stamina tested to their limits.

Under suspicion by the SS of having aided in the escape of Jewish prisoners and being targeted by the Italian partisans he is in constant danger of being shot by both sides.

This is the third in the Martin Bora series by Ben Pastor and like its predecessors *Lumen* and *Liar Moon* is compelling and richly detailed. The external destruction of war is paralleled by the inner traumas of characters caught in an increasingly desperate and near apocalyptic situation. Once again Pastor succeeds in telling a complex and harrowing story that sensitively explores the moral grey areas of war.