

Beneath a Scarlet Sky

p. 418 – 459 Covers a very gruesome end to the war in Italy.

What you need to know about the plot:

Pino's cousin Mario is shot and killed in cold blood on the sidewalk and accused wrongly of being a Fascist by a burglar disguising the fact he just wants to steal his watch.

Dolly and Anna were not able to make it to Innsbruck. Instead, they are taken away by the Partisans. Pino discovers them with 8 other people about to be executed at the Castle Sforzesco. Anna screams out that she is just a maid and to please not shoot her. Pino, scared for his own life and guilt by association, stands in silence. Dolly and Anna are then shot and killed and Pino is devastated, crushed with guilt.

Pino is discovered by the crowd that he knew Anna. They chase after him and he escapes into the Duomo. Racked with guilt and devastating sorrow, he goes to the roof of the church and plans to jump. He is stopped by Cardinal Schuster.

Cardinal Schuster reassures Pino that faith comes and goes but always comes back and that he had a right to fear for his own life. He talks him down from the roof and sends him home with a blessing.

Pino returns home to tell his family the news of Mario. His father and uncle insist that they go to the cemetery to claim the body for the family to bury properly. The three men have to hunt for him among too many unclaimed dead Milanese.

Pino finds Mario's body but his uncle finds Anna's. Pino is devastated and doesn't want to leave Anna a second time. His father and uncle insist that she would not have wanted Pino to die too and that he must leave her.

Pino finally leaves with his father and uncle but at 3 am is woken with so much guilt that he tries to return to claim Anna's body for burial. He discovers she's already been taken away for cremation and blessing. In his grief, he runs into the American Major Knebel who convinces him to join him at the Piazzale Loreto to discover what happens to Mussolini.

The bodies of Mussolini and his mistress who were executed earlier by the Partisans are put on display for the public to desecrate in vengeance. Pino is horrified and disgusted by the behavior of the public and continues to fear for his own life because of his association with the Nazis.

Knebel asks Pino and his friend Carletto to do something dangerous to help the US. He doesn't say what it is but that they will be heroes. The boys agree and Knebel tells them to meet him at 3 am on May 1 with a car.

