

# CHAPTER 12

On Maundy Thursday, March 24, Blomkvist finds himself exhausted after a recent emotional turmoil. After thanking Annika Giannini for her help, he takes a cab back to Nacka, reflecting on his complicated relationship with Berger, his long-time love interest. He acknowledges his past infidelity, which led to his divorce, while Berger's husband, Greger Beckman, accepted their affair as merely physical. Despite their arrangement, Blomkvist feels uneasy around Beckman, leading him to avoid the couple's home except for occasions where his absence would be noted.

Blomkvist arrives at Beckman's villa, where Beckman appears disheveled and surprised to see him. After asking for Berger, Blomkvist delivers the tragic news that Dag and Mia, close acquaintances, were murdered the previous night. This shocking revelation deeply affects both Berger and Beckman, with Berger struggling to comprehend the gravity of the situation.

Later that morning, Blomkvist and Berger enter the Millennium offices to relay news of the double homicide to their team, which includes Malm and Eriksson. As they listen to the morning news about Dag and Mia's deaths, the office atmosphere shifts to one of disbelief and sorrow. Eriksson breaks down, overwhelmed by the news, while Blomkvist addresses their plans regarding Dag's upcoming publication, expressing uncertainty about whether to proceed with it given the recent events.

As they discuss the possible motives for the murders, the team contemplates the connections Dag may have been uncovering in his work. They debate the risks associated with publishing their story, especially concerning powerful individuals who might want to suppress the truth. Blomkvist insists they cannot publish the material as initially planned, given the potential dangers involved.

The chapter concludes with Cortez arriving, shaken and confirming the news he heard on a taxi radio. Berger encourages the team to honor Dag's work and suggests they discuss postponing the publication date. As they strategize, they realize the necessity of remaining vigilant and coordinated in the aftermath of this tragic event, while Blomkvist feels the weight of the looming investigation.