

CHAPTER 13

****Chapter 13 Summary: Maundy Thursday, March 24****

The investigation into the double homicide in Enskede was formally assigned to Prosecutor Richard Ekström early on Maundy Thursday. A night duty prosecutor, recognizing the potential media frenzy, woke Ekström to handle the case, given his experience and meticulous approach to law. At forty-two, Ekström was noted for his sharp appearance and a career that began in Uppsala before progressing to the Ministry of Justice, where he focused on aligning Swedish law with EU standards. Despite perceptions of him as politically inclined, he distanced himself from party affiliations, though he was being monitored for potential higher office.

Upon briefing, Ekström learned the victims were a criminologist and a journalist—stirring significant public interest, especially since the journalist who discovered the bodies was Mikael Blomkvist from **Millennium** magazine, known for previously being involved in high-profile cases. Ekström quickly summoned Criminal Inspector Jan Bublanski, who, although on leave after a strenuous work period, was called back to manage the investigation. Bublanski, an experienced officer with extensive involvement in violent crimes, recognized the gravity of the situation immediately.

By 9:00 a.m., Bublanski gathered his investigation team, carefully choosing members based on their skills. He relied heavily on Sonja Modig for her imaginative and methodical approach to investigations, while acknowledging the strengths of his other team members. They deduced that the murders were executed with precision, showing no signs of a struggle or robbery—indicating that the killer was familiar with firearms. As they pieced together the timeline, they noted the lack of direct witnesses to the killer's escape.

Meanwhile, Blomkvist began searching through the deceased's work, meticulously backing up sensitive information, aware of the secrecy surrounding it. Bublanski received critical information from the National Forensics Laboratory confirming that the weapon—a Colt .45 Magnum—was registered to lawyer Nils Erik Bjurman, who was unreachable. The investigation revealed that Lisbeth Salander, a woman previously arrested but unknown to the victims, had her fingerprints on the murder weapon. This revelation linked her to the crime, raising questions about her connection to both the victims and Bjurman.

As the investigation progressed, discussions centered on Salander's tumultuous past, her guardianship under Bjurman, and the conflicting impressions of her abilities and stability. Ultimately, the police recognized the increasing urgency to determine her whereabouts and connection to the murder, marking a significant turning point in the investigation.