

CHAPTER 19

Blomkvist devoted Wednesday to diving deep into Svensson's materials, particularly anything related to Zala. He unearthed a folder labeled on Svensson's computer containing documents he examined, which included references to Irina P. and a police contact named Gulbrandsen. Unfortunately, Gulbrandsen was away, leaving Blomkvist no closer to confirming any leads.

From an autopsy report, Blomkvist learned that Irina P. had met a gruesome end, and the police's assumption was that the killer was one of her clients. The connection Svensson seemed to imply between Irina P. and Zala intrigued Blomkvist, prompting him to question why Svensson had filed Irina under Zala, though he found no definitive links.

As he sifted through the documents, Blomkvist realized that Zala resembled an elusive figure in the criminal underworld, with notes indicating a lack of credibility and proper sourcing. Doubts crept into his mind regarding Salander's innocence, despite the loyalty he felt for her, especially given her pivotal role in saving his life and career. Despite having knowledge of her significant hacking theft, he remained determined to help her if she were caught, as he believed in her goodness.

Meanwhile, he discussed his investigative plans with Berger, revealing a list of individuals he needed to interview. She offered him her BMW with the condition that he carry Mace for protection given the level of potential danger he might encounter. In response to her concerns, Blomkvist assured her he had a plan for safety, revealing that he had carried Mace from Salander's belongings.

Blomkvist and Modig shared insights on the whereabouts of Svensson's computer, noting that an apparent break occurred on the day of the murders. As the narrative of the plot unfolds, Blomkvist discovers a new lead when a phone call results in a meeting with Björck, who had a connection to Svensson's research, stirring suspicion towards Goggles, a dubious hooker called Miriam Wu, and ultimately leading him towards Zala's lingering shadow in their investigation.

Throughout these events, Blomkvist grapples with the moral implications of his actions against individuals who may have abused others, pointing to a thread of corruption within the system he investigates .