

CHAPTER 27

On a beautiful spring day, Blomkvist drives Berger's car towards Nynäsvägen, looking for peace in his cabin in Sandhamn. He arrives early for a meeting with Björck and decides to have coffee and read the papers. Blomkvist is keen to gather concrete information about Zala and meets Björck, who appears more confident than before. Björck offers information about Zala but sets the condition that he must remain anonymous in the publication "Millennium." Blomkvist agrees, knowing the gravity of Björck's request, which could have implicating consequences for him.

After a brief negotiation, Blomkvist makes it clear that he expects full disclosure in return for maintaining Björck's anonymity. Björck reluctantly agrees but insists on absolute confidentiality. As they shake on it, Blomkvist decides he can cope with the ethical implications of his decision; after all, Svensson has already documented Björck's story.

Later, the drama unfolds as Strängnäs police receive calls about two wounded men near a cabin belonging to the deceased lawyer Nils Bjurman. Amidst a busy day filled with police investigations, the officers rapidly recognize the potential link to Lisbeth Salander. The situation escalates when Inspector Bublanski, who is occupied in a meeting, is informed about the ongoing developments.

Elsewhere, the police encounter significant evidence, including the identification of a body, Kenneth Gustafsson, a local criminal known as the Vagabond, and also find a suspect, Sonny Nieminen, at the scene. The officers deduce that two biker gang members suffered injuries, connecting them to a violent confrontation.

Meanwhile, Lisbeth, having just escaped from a chaotic situation at Bjurman's cabin, joyfully navigates a Harley-Davidson motorcycle. She experiences an adrenaline rush reminiscent of amusement park rides before deciding to leave the bike and proceed toward Stockholm.

Back with Blomkvist, he reflects on Björck's revelations about Alexander Zalachenko, the former GRU agent who had defected to Sweden during the Cold War. Blomkvist learns about Zalachenko's complex past and the governmental decisions that allowed him to remain in Sweden. As he pieces together the narrative, he begins contemplating meeting with another key figure, Holger Palmgren, for further insights.

In a tense conclusion, Blomkvist contemplates the precarious web surrounding Zalachenko's existence while Björck broods over his newfound alignment with a dangerous history, considering the impending risks of associating with someone like Zalachenko.