

# Chapter 15

Chapter 15 of *The Girl Who Played with Fire* opens with Malm returning home, feeling drained and emotionally heavy after a taxing day at work. Upon entering his apartment, the spicy aroma from dinner greets him, providing a brief moment of comfort. He embraces his boyfriend, Arnold Magnusson, and engages in light conversation. However, the mood shifts as Arnold brings up a shocking development—a murder investigation involving their friend Dag, who had worked alongside them. This news deeply unsettles Malm, and as he shares his grief and shock over the loss of his friend, the gravity of the situation becomes apparent, signaling a turning point in their lives.

Meanwhile, outside the police press office, Cortez experiences frustration due to the lack of information surrounding the investigation. His efforts to get answers lead him to discover that a former researcher of Blomkvist's has been identified as a suspect. Determined to seek clarification, Cortez reaches out to Prosecutor Ekström, but his inquiries are met with resistance and evasion. This lack of transparency increases the tension surrounding the case, leaving both Cortez and the public in the dark about the details and motives behind the murders. As the investigation remains clouded, it becomes clear that essential answers are being withheld, which only heightens the sense of urgency and confusion surrounding the case.

In another part of the investigation, Holmberg reflects on the disturbing crime scenes where the bodies of Mia Johansson and Dag Svensson were discovered. The excessive bloodshed and brutal methods of the killings make the situation even more chilling. After the bodies are removed, Holmberg methodically begins his investigation of the apartment, carefully documenting everything he finds. However, despite his thorough search, he finds no concrete evidence that might explain the motives behind the horrific killings. This investigation, while meticulous, only serves to add more questions



without providing any clear answers, highlighting the complexity of the case and the uncertainty that plagues the investigation.

The investigation shifts focus to Salander, particularly her relationship with Miriam Wu, who is linked to the murders. Officers debate whether Johansson's thesis on human trafficking may have triggered danger for both Johansson and Salander. This line of thinking introduces a potential connection between Salander and the murders, complicating the investigation further. The officers' discussions suggest that Salander's past, including her relationships and her involvement in sensitive topics, may have contributed to the series of events leading to the murders. This shift in focus brings Salander's character and past actions into sharper scrutiny, adding layers of intrigue to the case and complicating the investigation.

As the investigation intensifies, Prosecutor Ekström holds a press conference and announces that Salander is now a suspect in the murders. Journalists press for more details, eager to understand the evidence behind the allegations and the possible motives. Blomkvist, affected by the events and the accusation against Salander, reflects on their shared past and the complexity of her involvement in the case. He struggles with the idea that she could be involved in such violence, despite his loyalty to her. Blomkvist, however, is determined to uncover the truth. He believes that before any conclusions can be drawn about her involvement, it is essential to hear her side of the story, which he feels is missing from the public narrative.

The chapter concludes with Blomkvist, weighed down by worry for Salander, resolving to pursue the truth. He is exhausted but remains steadfast in his determination to uncover the real story behind the murders and the involvement of everyone connected to the case. Blomkvist's commitment to finding answers and understanding Salander's side of the situation becomes the driving force of the chapter. As he sets out to uncover the truth, the stage is set for deeper revelations and the continued unraveling of a complex and emotionally charged case. The chapter leaves readers anticipating the next step in Blomkvist's search for clarity, while the tension surrounding Salander's involvement continues to grow.