

# 5 TREASON

In "Treason," Chapter 5 of "The Monster Men," intrigue unfolds as von Horn, no longer loyal to Professor Maxon, schemes to win Virginia Maxon's affection and inheritance. Virginia becomes fascinated by Number Thirteen, the young giant who saved her, sparking jealousy in von Horn. Amidst his plotting, von Horn decides to disillusion Virginia about her father's experiments, revealing the island's grotesque creations are her father's doing, aiming to replace humanity's flawed nature. He shocks Virginia by telling her of her father's plan to wed her to one of these creatures, particularly Number Thirteen, once his education is complete.

Von Horn tries to position himself as Virginia's protector, suggesting escape to Singapore for safety and marriage. Meanwhile, the Malay mate, Bududreen, driven by greed and fear, contemplates mutiny, exploiting the crew's superstitious fears of the island's monsters. Von Horn uses his disillusionment strategy on Number Thirteen, suggesting he is no more than a laboratory accident without a soul, igniting an identity crisis in the young giant. He insinuates to Number Thirteen the necessity of stopping Professor Maxon's experiments, even if it requires drastic actions.

Von Horn then aligns with Bududreen, planning a mutiny to escape the island with Virginia and a valuable chest, under the guise of protecting her from her father's madness. They plan to leave that night, securing the Ithaca for their escape. Von Horn assures a concerned Professor Maxon of taking Number Thirteen for walks to alleviate his disturbed behavior, masking his true intentions. The chapter closes on von Horn's conflicted emotions as he edges closer to betrayal, revealing the depth of deception and moral ambiguity surrounding the island's inhabitants.