

8 THE SOUL OF NUMBER 13

The chapter begins with a tempest hitting the ship *Ithaca* just as it clears the reef around the harbor it had been anchored in for months. Despite the efforts of Bududreen, the ship's captain, and his crew, the *Ithaca* soon becomes a hopeless wreck under the fury of the storm. Below deck, Virginia Maxon, a frightened young woman, braces for the worst. When the ship strikes a reef and crashes, she is thrown into a state of despair, believing her end is near. Meanwhile, on deck, Bududreen and his crew face the storm, ultimately being swept away by the waves.

The narrative then shifts to a being known only as Number Thirteen, who struggles with his identity and purpose. Created by Professor Maxon, Number Thirteen is dissatisfied with his existence, believing himself to be soulless until he decides that his feelings for Virginia give him a soul. After the storm, he discovers he is not alone; other human-like creatures, also creations of Professor Maxon, are with him. They are unwelcome by the Professor, and Number Thirteen decides to leave with his "brothers," seeking a new place where they can live in peace.

Their escape is interrupted when they come across the shipwreck scene from earlier. Number Thirteen and his companions witness the aftermath of the storm and the wreckage of the *Ithaca*, now a shelter for Virginia who is hiding from the intruding native Dyaks led by the malevolent Rajah Muda Saffir, intent on looting the ship. Number Thirteen, driven by his desire to save Virginia, whom he loves, orchestrates a daring rescue with his grotesque crew, fighting off the Dyaks and ultimately trying to save Virginia, who has been captured by Muda Saffir's men.

The chapter vividly depicts the chaos and the desperate fight on the *Ithaca*. Number Thirteen's leadership and strength showcase his heroism, contrasting sharply with the fearful and superstitious Dyaks. The rescue mission is fraught with danger, leading to a

tense confrontation on the seas as Number Thirteen and his crew pursue the kidnappers in a stolen prahu.

What follows is a series of intense battles as Number Thirteen and his "monstrous" crew face off against the Dyaks in efforts to rescue Virginia. Despite their lack of understanding and experience with boats and the sea, their sheer determination and Number Thirteen's newfound purpose drive them forward. The chapter ends with Number Thirteen successfully taking command of a boat, setting out to save Virginia with a fierce resolve, highlighting his transformation from a lab-created oddity to a determined, soulful hero.



Summaryer

In this harrowing chapter, themes of identity, creation, and the innate desire for meaning and connection are explored through the adventures of Number Thirteen and his crew. Their journey is not just a physical one across treacherous waters but also a metaphorical voyage towards self-discovery and the realization that what makes one human is not the manner of their creation but the depth of their emotions and bonds with others.