

4 A NEW FACE

Chapter 4 of "The Monster Men" by Edgar Rice Burroughs unfolds as Professor Maxon and von Horn rush back to their compound, accidentally leaving the workshop door unlocked. This allows their latest creation, a human experiment designated as Number Thirteen, to explore the outside world for the first time. Enthralled by the natural beauty around him, Number Thirteen steps beyond his confinement into the vibrant life of the jungle.

His curiosity and wonder at the lush environment are soon intersected by a dramatic turn of events. Virginia Maxon, the professor's daughter, finds herself in peril, abducted by a misshapen creature, one of the earlier and less successful experiments. Number Thirteen instinctively comes to her rescue, demonstrating both his physical strength and an emerging sense of morality and protection.

The narrative takes a violent turn as Number Thirteen battles the creature, identified as Number One, showcasing not only his superior physical abilities but also a lack of experience that does not hamper his resolve. Despite his efficacy in combat, Number Thirteen is left with the dilemma of what to do with Virginia after rescuing her. His decision to carry her mirrors his understanding of care, though he is clueless about the broader implications of his actions.

Back at the camp, the search party led by von Horn and Sing, the faithful servant, discovers the aftermath of the battle, leading to a confrontation between von Horn and Number Thirteen. Misunderstandings fuel the conflict, highlighting the complex dynamics between the creator (Professor Maxon), his experiments, and the unforeseen consequences of playing God.

The chapter culminates in a tense moment where von Horn's aggression towards Number Thirteen is halted by Virginia's intervention, revealing her empathy and

compassion towards her rescuer, notwithstanding his origins. This segment of the story delves deep into themes of humanity, ethics, and the blurred lines between monster and man, foreshadowing future moral quandaries and the evolution of Number Thirteen's identity and his place within the human world.

