

the twelve, again

In this chapter, Ivar urgently interrupts the narrator's work to inform them that Werryck, who is suffering from a severe migraine, has requested their presence. Overdosed on shadows, Werryck's quarters are dark and stifling, reminiscent of "cheese sweating in a warm room." When the narrator begins to play the bass guitar, Werryck, despite his pain, shows a rare moment of calm, indicating an unusual receptiveness instead of his typical agitation.

As Werryck eventually falls asleep, his exhausted state marks a stark contrast to a vibrant life; he appears weary and withered, symbolizing his declining strength. The tranquility shatters with the arrival of Tom Skint, who announces that they are leaving the ship, prompting Werryck to rise, despite his discomfort. As they proceed through the corridors, Werryck stumbles but remains determined.

On deck, Skint demands for everyone to return to their quarters, yet the crew seems oblivious to the urgency of the situation. A heavy rain begins to fall, revealing a lurking tension among the security guards as Marcel emerges, seemingly having authority despite his janitorial appearance. Skint's attempts to enforce order grow increasingly futile as members of the crew begin vacating the ship without heed to the lockdown.

As tension escalates, the guards disarm against the backdrop of a chaotic standoff. Skint fires his weapon, hitting an innocent guard and apparently wounding Marcel. A chaotic struggle ensues, culminating in Skint being thrown overboard after a confrontation with the narrator. This act signals a change in power dynamics as the crew rises against former authority, fueled by adrenaline and desperation.

In the ensuing pandemonium, Werryck, despite his agonizing condition, aids in the liberation of imprisoned crew members. As chaos unfolds, Hazel, a figure among the crew, tries to rally everyone as they contemplate the uncertainty of leaving the ship for the cruiser in the rainy night. The narrative balances moments of crisis and solidarity, culminating in a sense of emerging hope despite overwhelming challenges.

The chapter closes on the protagonist's emotional turmoil as they part from familiar faces, processing the unfolding upheaval while remembering those who opt to remain in the tangled remnants of their previous lives. The air is charged with desperation and the bittersweet nature of liberation.