

# 17 999 PRISCILLA

The chapter captures a moment of convergence and revelation, starting with Lieutenant May's arrival on the banks near Professor Maxon's location, seeking to arrest Doctor Carl von Horn. The officer from the U.S.S. New Mexico, part of the Pacific Fleet, explains their journey, ignited by disturbing findings on Maxon's island and fueled by tales of a quest involving whites seeking a kidnapped girl, and mentions of monstrous beings led by a giant white man. Despite these intriguing hooks, their primary mission was to apprehend von Horn, a target of naval interest for years.

Upon understanding von Horn is missing, Lieutenant May determines to continue the search, with Maxon and his party boarding the cutter for protection. During their pursuit, they encounter one of von Horn's Dyak companions, leading them to a grim discovery: von Horn's headless body, lying across a chest believed to contain treasure. The irony unfolds as Maxon reveals the chest's true contents to be books on biology and eugenics, juxtaposing human greed against intellectual pursuit. Amidst this, they resolve to leave the chest buried, a symbol of cause for suffering and crime.

As the New Mexico departs from Borneo, private dialogues unfold, particularly between Virginia and Bulan (Townsend J. Harper Jr.), reflecting on their gratitude for leaving the island and their love story, bound by extraordinary circumstances. Bulan's identity crisis and fears about his past—possibly being a criminal or having loved another—are laid to rest with the realization sparked by a seemingly nonsensical phrase from his delirium, revealing his true identity and bringing memory back. The story of how Bulan ended up on Maxon's island is touched upon—driven by an infatuous love, marked by persistence and a journey spanning half the world, only to end up as a key figure in a saga stretching beyond anticipation.

This chapter indulges in closure, unveiling mysteries and aligning paths crossed under the strangest banners—of love, identity, and the human condition, painted against the backdrop of the fierce, untamed wilderness of Borneo.