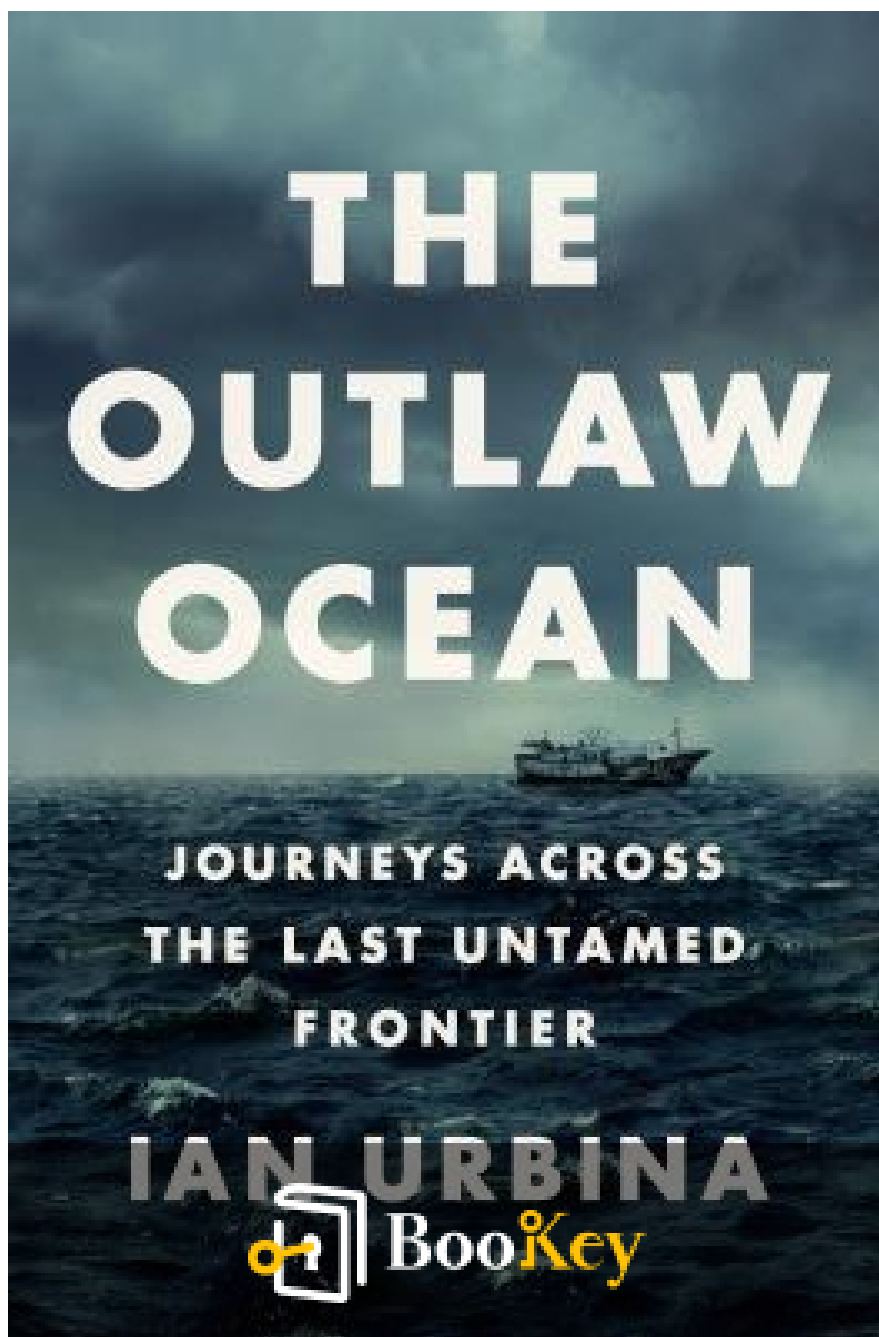


# The Outlaw Ocean PDF (Limited Copy)

Ian Urbina



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# **The Outlaw Ocean Summary**

Exploring the Untamed Lawlessness of the World's Oceans  
Written by New York Central Park Page Turners Books Club

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## About the book

In "The Outlaw Ocean," Ian Urbina embarks on an exhilarating expedition into the expansive and untamed regions of the world's oceans, illuminating a largely concealed reality marked by lawlessness and exploitation. Over five years of intense investigative journalism, Urbina exposes a shadowy landscape teeming with illicit activities, from human trafficking and piracy to the struggles of vigilante conservationists and the plight of stowaways.

Urbina's narrative unfolds through gripping personal stories, including close calls with potential mutinies and confrontations with the Vietnamese navy, providing a visceral connection to the lives of those who navigate these dangerous waters. These experiences reflect the broader themes of resilience and survival amidst pervasive criminality.

The book delves into the stark realities of the maritime economy, highlighting a complex web of crime that supports global industries and raises crucial questions about the absence of legal oversight in these watery frontiers. Urbina's exposé sheds light on a hidden world that operates outside the jurisdiction of established laws, where the stakes are incredibly high and where the harsh truth of a floating marketplace comes to life. Through this powerful account, readers gain insight into a chilling world where moral and legal boundaries blur, revealing the darker side of human enterprise on the ocean's vast stage.

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## About the author

In "The Outlaw Ocean," Ian Urbina delves into the murky legal and ethical waters of the world's oceans, investigating the rampant lawlessness and exploitation that characterize this vast and largely unregulated territory. Drawing from his experiences as an investigative journalist for The New York Times, Urbina intertwines captivating narratives with extensive research to highlight the often-overlooked challenges of maritime life.

The chapters unfold with a focus on the various actors who operate in these lawless waters—fishing crews trapped in cycles of exploitation, illegal fishing operations that threaten the sustainability of marine ecosystems, and the lack of enforcement against crimes such as human trafficking and environmental degradation. Urbina's work reveals the grim realities faced by migrant fishermen, many of whom endure abuse and peril as they seek livelihoods in a system that frequently turns a blind eye to their suffering.

As Urbina presents these harrowing stories, he also offers critical context about the darker aspects of globalization, illustrating how our interconnected world often masks hidden abuses. He emphasizes the urgent need for accountability and conservation, positioning these issues within the broader narrative of global environmental challenges. Urbina's commitment to investigative storytelling not only raises awareness but also calls upon readers to engage with the moral complexities surrounding the exploitation

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of the oceans, urging a collective effort toward greater transparency and responsibility in maritime governance.

Overall, "The Outlaw Ocean" serves as a powerful reminder of the need to confront the troubling realities that lurk beneath the surface of global trade and environmental policy, urging action and awareness to protect the world's oceans and the communities that depend on them.

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# Chapter 1 Summary: Storming the Thunder

## Chapter 1 Summary: Storming the Thunder

### Introduction

This chapter introduces the high-stakes operation led by Captain Peter Hammarstedt aboard the Sea Shepherd ship, the Bob Barker, as they embark on a mission to capture the illegal fishing vessel Thunder in the treacherous waters of Antarctica. This pursuit underscores the broader struggle against rampant illegal fishing and its implications for marine conservation.

### The Initial Discovery

After days of relentless search, Hammarstedt detects the Thunder on his radar, identifying it as a notorious poacher on Interpol's watch list. This discovery ignites a feverish chase, against the backdrop of the complexities of enforcing maritime laws in international waters, where illicit fishing runs rampant.

### The Stakes of Illegal Fishing

The chapter delves into the serious ramifications of illegal fishing,

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particularly the poaching of toothfish, a lucrative target. The Thunder's operations reportedly generated over \$76 million, illuminating the vast financial incentives driving such criminal activities. A combination of governmental apathy and convoluted maritime regulations creates a climate of impunity for these poachers.

## **Operation Icefish**

The Sea Shepherd initiative, known as Operation Icefish, is launched with the core mission of capturing the Thunder and illuminating the illegal fishing crisis. Utilizing advanced tracking technologies and collaborating closely with Interpol, Sea Shepherd aims to apprehend the Thunder while also documenting its illegal activities to ensure accountability.

## **Chase Dynamics**

As the chase unfolds, Hammarstedt and his crew confront perilous weather and challenging conditions. The Thunder employs evasive tactics, prompting Sea Shepherd to respond with strategies such as disrupting the poacher's fishing nets to maintain the pressure on them.

## **Confrontations and Communication**

Hammarstedt engages in tense communications with the Thunder's crew,

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employing both English and Spanish to confront them about their illegal fishing practices. This exchange illustrates the psychological tension of the pursuit, highlighting Hammarstedt's composed demeanor in contrast to the Thunder's crew's aggressive posturing.

## **Collaboration with Allies**

The situation escalates when the Atlas Cove, a legitimate fishing vessel, offers assistance to the Sea Shepherd. This collaboration marks a strategic pivot—rather than relying solely on direct confrontation, Sea Shepherd welcomes support from allies, highlighting the intricate web of interests against illegal fishing.

## **The Sinking of the Thunder**

In a climactic moment after 110 days of pursuit, the Thunder attempts to scuttle itself, likely attempting to eradicate evidence of its illegal activities. In a dramatic twist, the vessel ultimately sinks, prompting Sea Shepherd's crew to act swiftly, rescuing the Thunder's crew while securing crucial evidence of their wrongdoing.

## **Aftermath and Consequences**

The aftermath sees some of the Thunder's crew face legal consequences, but

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the challenges of prosecuting such crimes linger, exposing the systemic flaws in the regulation of illegal fishing. While some successes are acknowledged, the chapter concludes with a sobering reminder of the ongoing battle against maritime crime.

## **Conclusion**

As the chapter ends, Hammarstedt reflects on the profound impact of their mission, recognizing both the victories achieved and the fragility of maritime law enforcement. The Bob Barker crew readies themselves for future encounters, reiterating the relentless fight against illegal fishing that threatens the world's oceans.

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## Chapter 2 Summary: The Lone Patrol

### Chapter 2 Summary: The Lone Patrol

In this chapter, we explore the vast legal framework designed to protect marine environments and the significant challenges faced in enforcing these laws. The oceans are currently besieged by illegal fishing, contributing to a staggering \$20 billion black market for seafood. Notably, many fish stocks are nearing depletion, and alarming predictions suggest that by 2050, the weight of plastic in oceans may surpass that of fish. Countries like Palau, while abundant in marine resources, confront substantial economic hurdles, making the fight against illegal fishing particularly challenging.

Palau's commitment to marine protection began in 2006, marked by the establishment of a single patrol boat and a small team of eighteen police officers dedicated to monitoring its extensive exclusive economic zone. This area is vast due to Palau's geographical identity as an archipelago in the western Pacific, making it a prime target for poaching by foreign fleets.

In a significant step towards enhancing enforcement capabilities, researcher Bjorn Bergman from SkyTruth collaborated with Palauan authorities in January 2015. Utilizing satellite technology, they successfully intercepted the Taiwanese pirate fishing vessel, Shin Jyi Chyuu 33. The successful

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capture of this ship, which was found carrying hundreds of illegal shark fins, highlights Palau's determination and ingenuity in combating poaching, despite its limited resources.

Palau's strategic emphasis on marine conservation is underscored by its efforts to implement progressive laws, such as bans on bottom trawling and shark fishing. However, the nation grapples with ongoing threats from climate change, rising sea levels, and increasing severe weather events, which all put additional pressure on fish populations.

Although technological solutions, including Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) and Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), have been deployed to improve the efficiency of patrols, these systems are not foolproof. Poachers often exploit these technological inadequacies, making enforcement a challenging endeavor amidst the ocean's vastness and the sophisticated tactics used by illegal fishing operations.

Furthermore, the dynamic interplay between tourism and illegal fishing presents both an opportunity and a dilemma for Palau. While the rise of ecotourism boosts the local economy, it also escalates the demand for seafood, leading to pressure on local fish stocks. Consequently, some local fishermen resort to exploiting protected species to satisfy short-term economic needs, jeopardizing long-term conservation efforts.

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Amidst the struggle against illegal fishing, it is crucial to recognize the human element involved. Many crew members of poaching vessels are individuals driven by economic desperation, seeking opportunities in dire circumstances. This reality adds another layer of complexity to the enforcement of marine laws, as it necessitates addressing not only external threats but also the socio-economic vulnerabilities faced by those engaged in illegal fishing.

In conclusion, Palau's efforts to combat poaching illustrate a poignant and challenging battle against a global marine crisis. The intersection of illegal fishing, climate challenges, and the socio-economic context calls for a collaborative approach to marine conservation, highlighting the need for a unified response to ensure the sustainability of ocean resources worldwide.

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# Chapter 3 Summary: A Rusty Kingdom

### A RUSTY KINGDOM: Summary

## Introduction

The story unfolds with Paddy Roy Bates, a retired British army major who, in a bold move, established the micronation of Sealand on a dilapidated anti-aircraft platform in the North Sea. Motivated by a desire for sovereignty and self-governance, Bates faced numerous challenges as he sought to sustain Sealand as an unrecognized nation, grappling with the complexities of international law and legitimacy.

## The Birth of Sealand

On Christmas Eve in 1966, Bates seized the Roughs Tower platform, proclaiming it a principality called Sealand. This audacious declaration came in defiance of British authorities, as Bates aimed to challenge the BBC's monopoly over radio broadcasting by operating a pirate radio station from the platform.

## Sealand's Sovereignty Claims

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Bates took the notion of sovereignty seriously, creating symbols of nationhood, including passports and currency. However, the legal status of Sealand was murky due to Britain's inability to enforce laws beyond its territorial waters, complicating the legitimacy of Bates's claims and presenting unique jurisdictional challenges.

### **Daring Defenses and Intrigues**

Sealand faced numerous aggressive attempts at takeover from both British authorities and foreign nefarious actors. One notable incident involved a coup attempt by German businessman Alexander Gottfried Achenbach, who held Bates's family hostage. Despite these daring confrontations, the Bates family managed to defend their micronation, showcasing their resilience and commitment to Sealand's autonomy.

### **The Absurd Yet Serious Nature of Sealand**

The narrative of Sealand illustrates a unique aspect of offshore governance and libertarianism, compelling readers to reflect on what constitutes true sovereignty in international waters. Despite its absurdities, the Bates family adeptly navigated various challenges, affirming their status as an independent entity.

### **A Visit to Sealand**

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In October 2016, the author visits Sealand, engaging with Roy Bates's son, Michael, and grandson, James. The conditions on the platform are stark, marked by limited resources and a small resident community. This visit underscores Sealand's role as an unconventional yet poignant experiment in governance beyond traditional state control.

## **Failed Ventures and Future Prospects**

Sealand has made various attempts at commercial ventures, such as HavenCo, which aimed to create a safe haven for online content. Unfortunately, these initiatives faltered due to infrastructural limitations and connectivity issues, ultimately unable to secure a sustainable future.

## **Concluding Thoughts**

The tale of Sealand emerges as a testament to audacity and innovation against the constraints of international law. Existing in a nebulous realm between myth and reality, it encapsulates a quirky legacy reflecting libertarian ideals and the complexities of governance today. The Bates family continues to keep the spirit of Sealand alive through merchandise and public engagement, ensuring that its legacy endures, even as the physical platform rusts in the North Sea.

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## Chapter 4: The Scofflaw Fleet

### ### Chapter 4: The Scofflaw Fleet

This chapter delves into the harrowing conditions aboard the Oyang 70, a South Korean trawler that tragically sank in 2010, revealing deep-seated issues within the global fishing industry. Key themes include worker exploitation, regulatory failures, and a pervasive culture of silence that allows abuse to continue unchecked.

The Oyang 70, under the command of Captain Hyonki Shin, embarked on its final voyage in August 2010, targeting southern blue whiting. However, the vessel was old and riddled with safety violations, originally flagged as "high risk" by a New Zealand inspector. Faced with immense pressure to deliver a substantial catch, the crew, largely consisting of Indonesian fishermen, worked under harrowing conditions, often without respite and amid inadequate safety measures.

On August 18, disaster struck as the ship began taking on water, a situation exacerbated when the crew failed to heed warnings about an overloaded net. The refusal of Captain Shin to cut the net in response to the alarms sealed the fate of the ship and its crew.

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Crew members endured severe mistreatment, marked by insufficient food, deplorable living conditions, and physical abuse inflicted by Korean officers. Many crew members—bound by contracts they barely understood—feared for their jobs and thus remained silent about their plight. They often put valuable possessions at risk as collateral for their employment, trapping them in a cycle of exploitation.

The chapter criticizes the Sajo Group, the corporation that operated the Oyang fleet, which skirted accountability despite the incident's fallout. Public outrage prompted the New Zealand government to consider tightening regulations, yet the reality was that these measures often proved mere window dressing. The systemic issues of trafficking and abuse persisted in other forms, underscoring the industry's inherent flaws.

In the aftermath of the Oyang 70 disaster, numerous investigations unveiled a troubling pattern of worker exploitation and unsafe practices across the fishing industry. Survivors often faced intimidation and blacklisting, making their pursuit of justice challenging.

The chapter also references other incidents involving vessels from the same fleet, such as the Oryong 501, which succumbed to similar mismanagement and negligence. While there were some attempts to improve conditions on newer ships, the underlying problems of worker exploitation and corporate neglect remained pervasive.

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In conclusion, this chapter paints a stark picture of the commercial fishing industry, characterized by a relentless pursuit of profit at the expense of human life. Efforts to improve labor conditions frequently fall short due to systemic failures and a culture that prioritizes silence over speaking out, leaving many victims in a state of despair and powerlessness.

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# Chapter 5 Summary: Adelaide's Voyage

## Chapter 5: Adelaide's Voyage

### Maritime Law and High Seas

The high seas, located just beyond thirteen miles from any coastline, exist in a legal gray area where national laws lose their authority. This unusual realm is governed by a patchwork of international treaties and the laws of the nations under which ships are registered. This complexity often allows individuals like Rebecca Gomperts to maneuver through legal loopholes, creating opportunities for unconventional practices, such as providing medical care in international waters.

### Rebecca Gomperts and Women on Waves

Rebecca Gomperts is a pioneering Dutch doctor and the founder of Women on Waves, an organization that addresses the issue of abortion access by operating in international waters. By utilizing her ship, the Adelaide, she provides legal abortions to women from countries where such services are heavily restricted or illegal. Her mission is to empower women, aiming to overcome the barriers that restrict their bodily autonomy and rights.

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## **My Experience on the Adelaide**

In April 2017, I joined Gomperts on the Adelaide to gain insight into this unique aspect of maritime law. My previous experiences centered around maritime crimes, and I was drawn to explore the profound implications of legal restrictions on women's rights. The operations of the Adelaide highlighted a stark conflict between the absurdity of maritime laws and the serious, often life-threatening stakes for women seeking abortions. Despite their noble intentions, Gomperts and her crew frequently faced hostility and governmental pushback in the countries they visited.

## **Departure from Ixtapa**

As the Adelaide prepared to set sail from Ixtapa, the crew faced escalating weather challenges and the constant threat of surveillance by Mexican authorities. Amid mounting tension, the captain skillfully navigated the ship through treacherous waters, allowing the women on board to begin their journey into the realm of international law, free from the constraints of their home country's regulations.

## **Women Seeking Abortions**

The atmosphere aboard the Adelaide was charged with emotion, as the women onboard carried the weight of their critical need for safe abortion

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services. In Mexico, where conservative views dominate society, many women face dire consequences for seeking abortions, often resorting to dangerous and illegal methods. This historical context underscores the urgency of their mission.

## **A Reflection on Borders and Agency**

Conversations aboard the Adelaide prompted deep reflections on the arbitrary nature of borders and their implications for women's rights. Captain Bearden emphasized that bureaucratic divisions should not dictate a woman's autonomy over her own body. These discussions raised fundamental questions about legality, ethics, and the sovereignty of individuals in maritime settings.

## **The Laws of the Sea**

Gomperts's initiative highlights the complexities of maritime law, which often favors corporate interests over individual rights, subsequently limiting the ability of those harmed at sea to seek justice. The peculiarities of these laws reveal significant gaps, especially concerning reproductive rights and public health.

## **The Secrecy of Abortions at Sea**

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Due to the legal precariousness of their operations, the Adelaide's missions were cloaked in secrecy. Once they reached international waters, Gomperts provided medical consultations and abortion medications, starkly contrasting the legal entitlements individuals possess on land with the harsh realities imposed by restrictive laws.

### **Gomperts' Advocacy and Methods**

Gomperts views her work not as breaking the law but as navigating and leveraging existing laws for the benefit of women's rights. Her past experiences in reproductive health activism inform her approach, prompting broader discussions about abortion access and healthcare rights across the globe.

### **Confrontations with Authorities**

Despite maneuvering through various bureaucratic challenges, Gomperts consistently faced opposition from the Mexican government, revealing the uneven application of maritime laws and the tensions that arise when public health intersects with legal authority over women's rights.

### **Culminating Reflections**

The efforts of Women on Waves encapsulate the intricate relationship

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between maritime law, national policies, and the quest for bodily autonomy. Gomperts's mission not only challenges existing legal frameworks but also ignites critical conversations about reproductive justice within the broader societal and legal landscape. The complexities of her work serve as a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggles for women's rights and freedoms in various parts of the world.

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# Chapter 6 Summary: Jail Without Bars

## Chapter 6: Jail Without Bars

This chapter presents a compelling exploration of the paradoxical nature of life at sea, where the romantic ideals of freedom and adventure often collide with the grim realities of confinement and abandonment. It delves into the harrowing experiences of individuals trapped in maritime situations that portray the sea as both an escape and a prison.

The narrative begins with the introduction of the term "rafted," which refers to the fate of stowaways abandoned at sea—a consequence of tightened immigration laws. Shipping companies now press crew members to deal with stowaways, sometimes leading to the cruel practice of rafting, where uninvited guests are left adrift. Here, readers meet David Mndolwa and Jocktan Kobelo, two Tanzanians who stowed away on the vessel \*Dona Liberta\* and faced inhumane treatment as a result of their desperate situation.

Mndolwa and Kobelo's journey exemplifies the perils of stowing away, illustrating the dangers that lie beyond the romanticized surface of maritime adventure. The chapter captures their struggle for survival after being set adrift, emphasizing the harsh realities stowaways endure—including

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extreme temperatures, inadequate food, and the constant threat of death or long-term detention.

The chapter broadens its scope by presenting case studies of abandonment, highlighting instances like that of George Cristof, who was left stranded on the \*Dona Liberta\* without food or water. These accounts underscore a systemic neglect pervasive in the maritime industry, revealing a troubling disregard for human life.

Furthermore, the chapter examines the complexities of maritime law, shedding light on legal ambiguities that complicate capture and detention practices, particularly in contexts like the case of Ahmed Abu Khattala. It illustrates how the high seas present unique challenges to the legal frameworks governing the treatment of detainees, thereby heightening the sense of vulnerability for those caught in these situations.

The psychological impacts of life at sea also come to the forefront, as studies reveal that mariners suffer higher rates of depression and suicide compared to their land-based counterparts. The chapter explores the isolating and demanding culture of ship life, highlighting how the sea can exert a profound emotional and psychological grip on sailors.

Despite the alarming conditions faced by many seafarers, societal indifference thrives, and media attention remains scarce. This lack of

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urgency in addressing seafarer abandonment and mistreatment reflects broader societal issues of neglect and abuse within the maritime industry.

In conclusion, Chapter 6 encapsulates the duality of the sea, oscillating between the notions of freedom and captivity. As individuals like Mndolwa navigate these treacherous waters, their resilience and tribulations underscore the complexities of maritime existence, revealing a pressing need for awareness and change.

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# Chapter 7 Summary: Raiders of Lost Arks

## Summary of Chapter 7: Raiders of Lost Arks

### Introduction to Maritime Crime

Maritime crime is a multifaceted issue that extends beyond the infamous Somali piracy we often hear about. It involves various illegal activities such as theft, human trafficking, and illegal fishing. Investigative journalists like Ian Urbina have explored the nuanced world of piracy, revealing that it ranges from blatant acts of robbery to intricate schemes orchestrated by corrupt officials within ports.

### The Insight into Port Corruption

Urbina's investigation took a significant turn when he received an anonymous document titled "Port Scams" from Greece. This document shed light on various fraudulent activities, including ship theft, manipulation of fuel supplies, and sophisticated insurance fraud schemes. These revelations showcased the calculated and skilled nature of maritime crimes, highlighting a world where legal boundaries are often blurred.

### Max Hardberger: The Maritime Repo Man

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The narrative follows Max Hardberger, a prominent figure in the world of maritime repossession—a unique role akin to that of a traditional repo man, but on the high seas. He embarked on a covert mission in Greece, contracted by New York mortgage lenders to discreetly reclaim a ship named the Sofia from the port of Piraeus, which was mired in legal disputes stemming from its owner's debts. The situation was complicated by the conflicting interests of the ship's operators and their creditors, setting the stage for a high-stakes operation.

### **The High-Stakes Journey**

As the Sofia slipped away under the cover of darkness, the tensions aboard the vessel escalated. Hardberger had to delicately navigate a precarious situation, balancing the conflicting demands of the bankers eager to reclaim their investment and the ship's operators struggling to retain control. The crew's safety and their wages hung in the balance, with the captain facing the threat of legal consequences for following orders that led to potential civil disputes.

### **The Problems in Public Ports**

This chapter paints a stark picture of the rampant corruption prevalent in maritime ports, where local officials often exploit shipping operations

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through demands for bribes and unjust fees. Urbina's research illuminated the difficulties repo men face, revealing that even seemingly straightforward cases of repossession are fraught with bureaucratic obstacles and legal risks that complicate their efforts.

### **Tensions and Resolutions Aboard the Sofia**

The standoff over the Sofia's fate turned into a prolonged struggle resembling a war of attrition, lasting several days. Ultimately, a tenuous agreement was forged, allowing the ship to sail to Malta—but only after the operators were coerced into paying \$50,000, an amount they decried as extortion, while the bankers justified it as a necessary negotiation.

### **Conclusion: The Harsh Realities of the Crew**

While Hardberger successfully completed his mission, the conditions endured by the crew painted a grim picture. They faced harsh working conditions and went without their due wages, raising serious concerns about the human cost of maritime operations. Urbina concludes by reflecting on the wider implications of these incidents, emphasizing the often-overlooked struggles of individuals ensnared in the web of greed and corruption that permeates the maritime industry, thereby illustrating the real-life consequences behind the headlines of piracy and maritime crime.

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# Chapter 8: The Middlemen

## The Middlemen

### Overview

This chapter presents a heart-wrenching account of Eril Andrade, a Filipino fisherman whose suspicious death following recruitment by an illegal manning agency sheds light on the grim realities of the global fishing industry and its exploitation of vulnerable workers.

### Eril Andrade's Journey

In September 2010, Eril Andrade departs from his small village in the Philippines, seeking employment at sea with dreams of earning money to fix his mother's leaky roof. Tragically, after spending seven months aboard a Taiwanese tuna long-liner, his lifeless body is discovered, revealing signs of abuse and severe dehydration. An autopsy uncovers alarming inconsistencies regarding the cause of death, indicating that he endured injuries prior to his demise.

### Manning Agencies

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Andrade was recruited by Step Up Marine, an illegal manning agency based in Singapore known for its abusive practices. These agencies are crucial intermediaries in the recruitment process for fishermen, often imposing exploitative contracts and living conditions that leave workers vulnerable. Many fishermen are unaware of their rights or the potential dangers associated with their maritime work.

## **Philippine Export of Seafarers**

The Philippines stands as a significant exporter of maritime labor, with countless families relying on remittances sent home by seafarers. Despite government claims of protections, rampant exploitation, trafficking, and abuse are pervasive in the industry, exposing the grim reality behind the lucrative maritime labor market.

## **Abuse and Its Implications**

Crew members frequently report experiencing physical abuse and horrendous living conditions while on board fishing vessels. The existing regulatory frameworks inadequately protect these vulnerable workers, leaving them exposed to agencies like Step Up Marine. The complicity among governments, manning agencies, and foreign employers serves to perpetuate a troubling cycle of injustice.

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## Aftermath of Andrade's Death

In the wake of Andrade's death, legal actions against those responsible were minimal, with only a local recruiter facing prosecution. This lack of accountability underscores the systemic failures of the Philippine

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# Chapter 9 Summary: The Next Frontier

## Chapter 9: The Next Frontier

In this chapter, the author recounts a gripping expedition to the Amazon Reef off Brazil's coast, undertaken aboard a Greenpeace-affiliated submarine. This journey occurs amidst a heated conflict between environmentalists and oil companies vying for drilling rights, setting the stage for a broader discourse on ecological preservation versus industrial exploitation.

### Expedition Setup

As the author nervously boards the compact submarine, he reflects on the mission's purpose: to document the coral reef threatened by energy companies' drilling aspirations. This expedition, orchestrated by Greenpeace, seeks to bolster Brazilian scientists advocating for the reef's protection, showcasing their dedication to safeguarding this vital marine habitat.

### The Conflict

The Brazilian government's decision to allow oil companies to drill without fully appreciating the ecological ramifications highlights a significant

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conflict. The Amazon Reef, extending over 621 miles, represents not only a natural wonder but also a site abundant in biodiversity and minerals. This situation illuminates a larger, often overlooked issue: the unregulated and legally murky nature of seabed exploration, which presents both opportunities and dangers.

### **Lack of Knowledge and Authority**

The author emphasizes that many nations, including Brazil and the U.S., possess limited understanding of their ocean territories. This knowledge gap creates vulnerabilities, allowing powerful industries to spread misinformation and exert influence over environmental policies, essentially prioritizing profit over ecological health.

### **Environmental Concerns**

Amid discussions of offshore drilling, the narrative paints a stark picture of the threats posed to marine ecosystems—not only from drilling but also from the compounding effects of climate change and pollution. These factors exacerbate existing challenges for marine life, underscoring the urgency for protective measures.

### **The Importance of Corals**

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Through the expedition, the author develops a newfound appreciation for coral reefs, recognizing them as crucial habitats that support a myriad of marine species. He learns about the detrimental impacts of climate change, including coral bleaching—an alarming phenomenon that threatens the very existence of these ecosystems.

### **Diving into the Unknown**

The submarine's descent into the depths reveals vibrant, previously uncharted ecosystems brimming with life. Scientists on the expedition document new species, bolstering their argument against the oil companies' destructive plans. This wealth of biodiversity serves as a powerful testament to the ecological value of the waters they explore, deepening the stakes of the ongoing conflict.

### **Regulatory Success and Ongoing Challenges**

The chapter concludes on a cautiously optimistic note, as the Brazilian government temporarily suspends the oil companies' drilling rights—a win for the scientists and Greenpeace. Yet, the author expresses a somber awareness of the persistent threats posed by industrial interests and the pressing consumer-driven demand for fossil fuels, which complicate the path forward for environmental advocates.

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Ultimately, this chapter underscores the imperative of protecting marine ecosystems while illuminating the formidable challenges conservationists face in their quest against exploitation, revealing a narrative that intertwines ecological urgency with the intricate dance of power dynamics in resource management.

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# Chapter 10 Summary: Sea Slavery

## Chapter 10: Sea Slavery

This chapter delves into the harrowing realities of forced labor in the fishing industry, with a particular focus on the South China Sea and Thailand's fishing fleet. The rise of global seafood demand and a significant shortage of local mariners—estimated at around 50,000—have led to the alarming recruitment of migrants from neighboring countries, primarily Cambodia and Myanmar. Many of these individuals are trafficked, discarded like commodities, and sold into servitude, entering a grim world characterized by brutality and oppression.

As the narrative unfolds, we learn about Lang Long, a Cambodian victim of this modern form of slavery. Lang's story paints a stark picture of trafficking; he is captured, sold among fishing boats, and subjected to horrendous conditions at sea. His eventual rescue highlights a journey marked by violence, exhaustion, and the relentless struggle for hope—elements that many captives tragically share.

The chapter also emphasizes the tireless efforts of organizations like the Stella Maris International Seafarers' Center, whose volunteers risk everything to help free enslaved fishermen. The author recounts his sensitive

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engagements with survivors, revealing the profound emotional scars that linger long after their liberation. Each interview is a reminder of the psychological toll that such experiences impose on those who endure them.

Additionally, the author explores the darker sides of the human trafficking networks that ensnare these vulnerable individuals. Karaoke bars, often seen as innocuous entertainment venues, emerge as key hubs where trafficking takes root. Here, individuals can easily fall prey to exploitation, accumulating debts that tether them to their captors and entrench them deeper into the cycles of abuse.

Corruption and mismanagement are vital themes in this chapter as well. The failures of law enforcement and maritime authorities to effectively inspect and combat human trafficking are pointed out, highlighting a troubling complicity that undermines reform efforts. Discrepancies between official reports and the realities faced by workers illustrate systemic failures within Thai authorities, further complicating the battle against these injustices.

In conclusion, the author reflects on the ongoing challenges in addressing sea slavery, while also acknowledging the resilience of anti-trafficking advocates and the pressing need for comprehensive reforms. Though strides have been made in confronting labor issues within Thailand's fishing industry, deep-seated corruption and exploitative practices remain prevalent, thriving unnoticed within the global seafood supply chain. This chapter

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serves as a crucial reminder of the human costs behind our seafood consumption and the urgent need for awareness and action to eradicate such atrocities.

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# Chapter 11 Summary: Waste Away

## Chapter 11: Waste Away

### Introduction: A Neglected Ocean

The ocean is often perceived as an endless reservoir, capable of absorbing limitless waste without consequences. This misunderstanding fosters a culture where harmful materials—ranging from oil to chemicals—are carelessly dumped into the sea, neglecting the devastating impact on marine ecosystems.

### The Role of Chris Keays

Chris Keays, a young engineer aboard the Caribbean Princess cruise ship, uncovered a troubling truth: the vessel was equipped with an illegal waste discharge mechanism known as the "magic pipe." Rather than responsibly disposing of hazardous waste, the ship erroneously released it directly into the ocean. This illegal practice is indicative of a larger issue within the cruise industry, where cost-cutting measures often supersede environmental responsibility.

### The Cruise Industry's Contradiction

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Cruise ships are marketed as opulent getaways, yet they conceal a grim reality. Behind their glamorous images, many ships engage in environmentally harmful behaviors, including illegal waste dumping, which undermines their purported commitment to sustainability and cleanliness, showcasing a troubling hypocrisy in the industry.

### **Widespread Practices of Pollution**

Illegal dumping extends beyond cruise ships, with a long history of maritime pollution involving the disposal of everything from oil to chemical munitions. Although international regulations like MARPOL aim to curb such practices, violations are still rampant, often justified under various pretenses that deny accountability to ecological standards.

### **Modern Pollution and Its Origins**

Today's oceanic pollution largely stems from land-based sources, including plastics and chemicals that wash into the ocean. Additionally, air pollution, comprising substances like mercury and carbon dioxide, exacerbates the challenges faced by marine environments, resulting in multifaceted threats to ocean health.

### **Controversial Practices and Legality**

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Innovative yet contentious practices, such as ocean fertilization experiments by figures like Russ George, challenge the boundaries of environmental science. These unregulated experiments in international waters complicate the enforcement of environmental safeguards, signaling a critical gap in oversight.

### **The Challenges of Regulation**

While progress is being made in regulating marine pollution, rampant illegal dumping highlights the urgent need for strengthened enforcement. Existing loopholes and ambiguous regulations continue to allow harmful practices to flourish, undermining efforts to protect the ocean.

### **The Role of Whistleblowers**

Keays' courageous choice to report the Caribbean Princess' illegal discharges underscores the precarious position of whistleblowers in the maritime sector. Such individuals risk personal repercussions while potentially instigating crucial legal reforms, illustrating the complex dynamics of accountability in this industry.

### **Conclusion: Urgency of Ocean Protection**

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The pervasive nature of ocean dumping illustrates an urgent need for unified action against such destructive practices. If pollution persists unchecked, the ocean's ability to recover may be irreparably compromised, posing a significant threat not just to marine life but also to human societies that rely on the health of the seas.

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# Chapter 12: Fluid Borders

## Chapter 12: Fluid Borders

This chapter delves into the complexities of illegal fishing in Indonesia, underscoring the interplay between organized crime and national sovereignty. The narrative begins with a pivotal meeting in September 2016 between Ian Urbina and Susi Pudjiastuti, Indonesia's fisheries minister, at the Our Ocean Conference. Pudjiastuti argued for a broader understanding of illegal fishing, emphasizing its connections to organized crime and the increased need for regulatory enforcement.

Following this, Urbina's visit to Indonesia in May 2017 showcased the country's staunch measures against illegal fishing, notably under Pudjiastuti's leadership since 2014. Her tenure has seen a dramatic escalation in anti-poaching initiatives, including the sinking of over 200 foreign vessels—particularly targeting Chinese boats—as part of a strict no-tolerance policy.

Aboard the patrol ship Macan, Captain Samson and his crew were engaged in confronting illegal fishing activities. The Macan's patrol took an intense turn when it encountered a fleet of Vietnamese fishing boats operating in Indonesian waters. The crew pursued five vessels, employing warnings and

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gunfire to coerce the fishermen into surrender. Tensions flared further when a Vietnamese Coast Guard cutter intervened, resulting in a collision that sank one of the seized boats and placed crew member Mas Gun in jeopardy.

The situation escalated into a confrontation, with Samson's directives

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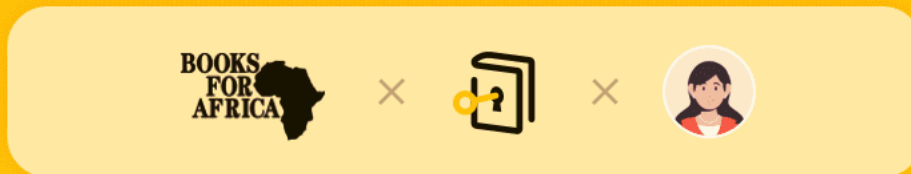




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# Chapter 13 Summary: Armed and Dangerous

## Chapter 13: Armed and Dangerous Summary

In this gripping chapter, the narrative begins with a chilling account of maritime atrocities, highlighted by a video capturing the execution of an unarmed man who had surrendered in the water, a victim of the merciless crew of a tuna long-liner. This gruesome evidence serves to underscore the escalating lawlessness and violence endemic to the fishing industry.

The chapter delves into a broader issue of accountability, revealing a grim reality where neither the perpetrators of violence nor their victims are identified. The lack of robust maritime laws and reporting mechanisms allows such heinous acts to go unpunished, raising questions about the motives behind these brutal killings. Experts suggest that these victims were likely fishermen, not pirates, implying a tragic misidentification in a climate where violence is pervasive.

As piracy surged in the early 2000s, the maritime industry responded with an influx of private security measures on merchant vessels, resulting in an arms race at sea. Armed guards have become commonplace, yet this blurs the lines between protection and aggression, with armed groups often engaging in violent protection rackets amidst intensifying competition for fishing

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grounds.

Compounding these issues is the challenge of collecting reliable data on maritime crime. The chapter highlights the significant discrepancies in reporting mechanisms that lead to severe underreporting of violent incidents, especially when compared to land-based crimes. In an effort to shed light on these issues, the author created a database tracking maritime crimes, revealing thousands of annual attacks, a majority of which disproportionately affect non-Western fishermen.

The rising demand for private security has led to the emergence of floating armories—vessels that stockpile weapons and house guards awaiting deployment. Reports of dire living conditions aboard these armories add to the ethical dilemmas faced by security personnel, forcing them to confront the morality of their roles in a contentious environment.

The investigation into the Taiwanese tuna long-liner linked to the shooting illustrates the complexities involved in bringing accountability to maritime crimes. The cultural hierarchies aboard these vessels complicate matters, contributing to a culture of silence around violence. However, new witnesses eventually emerge, indicating that the victims were likely innocent fishermen caught in the crossfire of a brutal economic landscape.

In a sobering conclusion, the chapter reveals a bleak cycle of impunity that

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characterizes maritime violence. Bureaucratic hurdles and the so-called maritime merry-go-round hinder efforts to hold offenders accountable, leaving families of victims without justice. The author emphasizes the urgent need for comprehensive reforms and accountability measures in the troubled waters of the maritime world, where violence continues to thrive unchallenged.

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# Chapter 14 Summary: The Somali 7

## Chapter 14: The Somali - Summary

In this chapter, the author undertakes a dangerous expedition off the coast of Somalia, accompanied by armed guards to explore the complex issues of illegal fishing and piracy in the region. Somalia, and particularly Puntland—a semiautonomous area—has been plagued by not only piracy but also terrorist threats and political instability, creating a perilous backdrop for their journey.

As they set out, hopes are high for a decrease in piracy, thanks to the establishment of local forces like the Puntland Maritime Police Force (PMPF) and the Somali Security Service (SSS). However, the author's optimistic view quickly diminishes when their fishing boat's engine fails, foregrounding the precariousness of both their situation on the tumultuous sea and the fraught political landscape of Puntland.

The author uncovers a troubling reality: local authorities, instead of protecting their own fishermen, are mired in corruption and have developed a troubling alliance with foreign fishing enterprises. This prioritization of foreign interests threatens the livelihoods of local fishermen and raises fears of a resurgence of piracy, as disenfranchised locals look for alternative

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means of survival in the face of systemic inequities.

During his investigation into the fishing industry, the author faces multiple layers of danger, including civil unrest among local leaders and growing suspicions regarding foreign exploitation. Alarmingly, it comes to light that the Puntland government is actively complicit in issuing questionable fishing licenses, particularly to a fleet of Thai vessels that are accused of both resource exploitation and crew mistreatment.

As the author navigates through this landscape of lawlessness and corruption, he reflects on the broader implications of these issues, recognizing that the plight of Somalia is intricately linked to global maritime practices. He challenges the simplistic narratives that depict clear heroes and villains in this chaotic scenario, emphasizing the multifaceted nature of the crisis.

The chapter concludes with the author's renewed commitment to investigate the situation faced by the crews aboard these foreign vessels, underscoring the ongoing challenges of corruption, neglect, and exploitation both onshore and at sea.

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# Chapter 15 Summary: Hunting Hunters

### Summary of Chapter 15: Hunting Hunters

## Introduction to the Antarctic Whaling Conflict

On November 18, 2016, the Japanese factory ship Nisshin Maru embarked from Shimonoseki, intent on hunting minke whales in Antarctic waters. This massive vessel, functioning like a floating slaughterhouse, is equipped for the rapid processing of whales, underscoring Japan's controversial stance of labeling these hunts as "scientific research," despite a global moratorium on whaling.

## Clashes Between Sea Shepherd and Japanese Whalers

In response to Japan's whaling activities, the conservation group Sea Shepherd launched efforts to disrupt the operation. Over the years, this conflict intensified into violent confrontations, with Sea Shepherd employing tactics such as deploying Zodiacs to block the discharge points of the Nisshin Maru, aiming to prevent the dumping of whale blood into the ocean.

## The State of Whaling in Japan

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Japan defended its whaling practices against global criticism by asserting that it only targeted abundant whale species and avoided those at risk of extinction. Nonetheless, critics highlighted Japan's financial backing of its whaling fleet via substantial subsidies, as well as the cultural significance of whale meat in Japanese cuisine.

## **The Broader Context of Ocean Governance**

This ongoing conflict raised significant concerns regarding the enforcement of anti-whaling laws in international waters. Without effective oversight, illegal activities, such as unauthorized mining and dumping, threaten marine ecosystems. Sea Shepherd positioned itself as a self-appointed guardian of maritime law, attempting to confront these challenges directly.

## **The Whaling Process**

Mark Votier's insights into the whaling process exposed its harrowing nature, detailing the transition from harpooning to butchering. The Nisshin Maru's advanced capabilities allowed it to process multiple whales daily, sparking serious animal welfare debates amidst the rising concern for marine conservation.

## **Operational Challenges for Sea Shepherd**

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As Sea Shepherd's Operation Nemesis unfolded, the organization faced significant hurdles in tracking the elusive Nisshin Maru across vast hunting grounds. High-speed vessels and reconnaissance flights were deployed, yet the harsh Antarctic conditions further complicated their mission.

### **The Inequity of the Contest**

The chapter illustrated the stark imbalances between Sea Shepherd and the technologically advanced Nisshin Maru, which significantly hindered conservation efforts. By early 2017, these mounting challenges prompted Sea Shepherd to reevaluate its strategies in light of heightened risks and new legal constraints resulting from Japan's anti-terrorism legislation, which escalated the stakes for environmental activists.

### **Conclusion**

This whaling conflict highlighted the deepening tensions between conservation efforts and entrenched whaling practices, exposing the complexities of ocean governance. Sea Shepherd's evolution from an activist group to a key player navigating the moral and legal ambiguities of maritime law underscored the challenges faced in protecting endangered species from the onslaught of industrial whaling.

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# Chapter 16: Epilogue: A Void

## Epilogue: A Void

The epilogue begins by contemplating the majestic whales that Meyerson sought to protect—ancient, colossal beings that embody both strength and vulnerability. These creatures serve as symbols of the ocean itself, a seemingly boundless entity that, while vast and resilient, faces pervasive threats from pollution, overfishing, and acidification.

This leads into an exploration of the ocean's paradoxical nature. Despite its immense expanse, the ocean is an interconnected entity, where diverse environmental issues entwine, often invisible due to bureaucratic indifference and inefficient governance. Here, we see the overarching truth: there is only one ocean, and it is marked by shared challenges.

The author reflects on his four-year journey documenting the "outlaw ocean," where he traversed the turbulent waters of piracy and modern slavery that continue to plague the seas. His observations emphasize a troubling reality: enforcement of maritime laws frequently seems dictated by industrial interests rather than humanitarian concerns. The struggle for justice at sea is complicated, often overshadowed by the insatiable demands of commerce.

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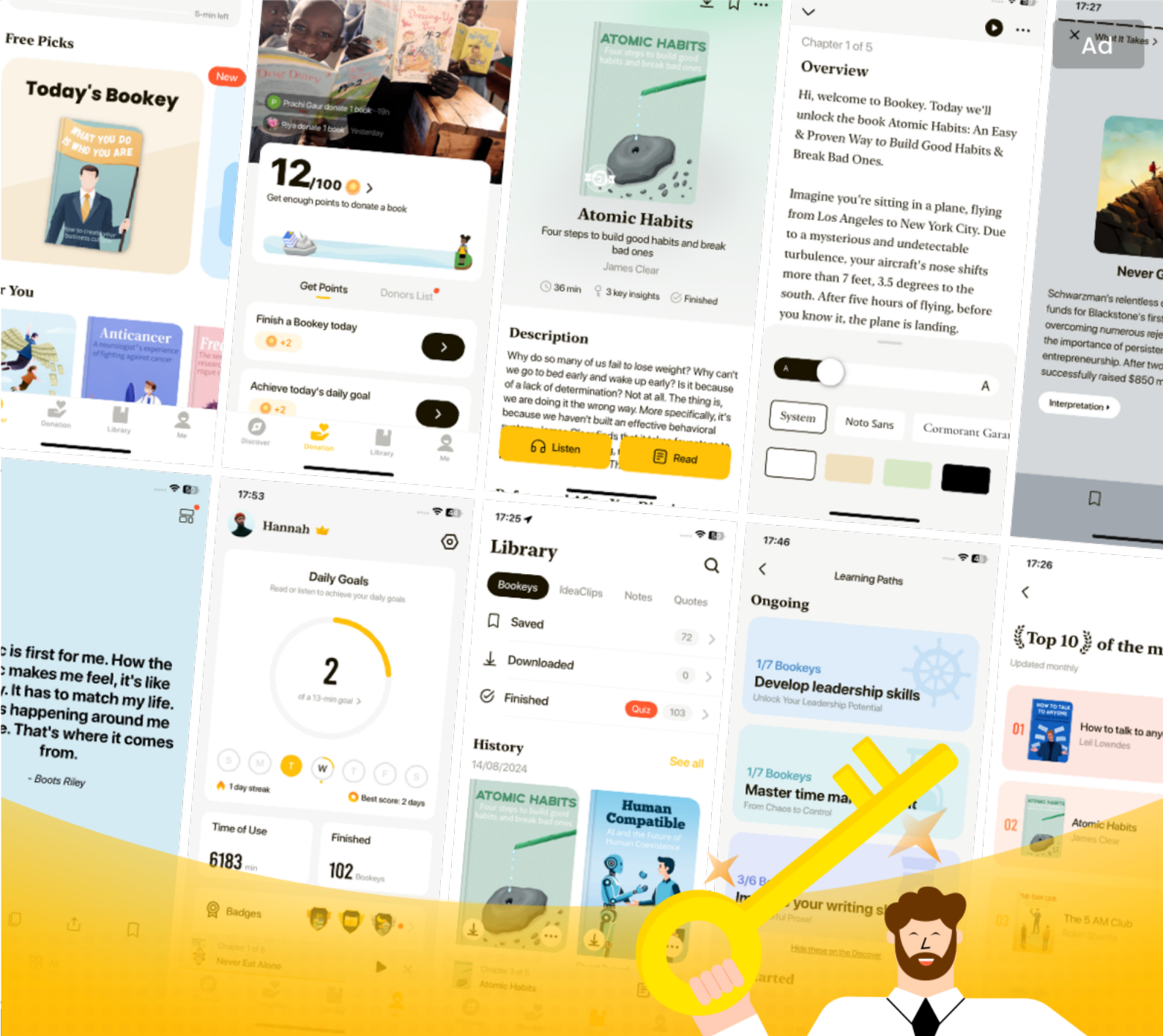
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In confronting the ocean's darker realities, the author also experiences its breathtaking beauty—vivid sunsets, bioluminescent plankton, and a diverse array of wildlife that ignite a sense of wonder. This stark contrast evokes a profound longing for the ocean despite the suffering that lurks beneath its

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# Chapter 17 Summary: Appendix: Reining in the Outlaw Ocean

## ### APPENDIX: REINING IN THE OUTLAW OCEAN

### #### Mitigating Offshore Mayhem

Addressing the myriad of illegal and damaging activities occurring offshore presents a significant challenge, paralleling the complexities of climate change. While individual actions may seem minor in impact, collective efforts can lead to substantial change. Individuals are encouraged to support organizations dedicated to combating abuses at sea, as well as to advocate for stronger laws and better enforcement measures.

### #### Protecting Mariners

Organizations such as Mission to Seafarers and Stella Maris play a critical role in assisting maritime crew members who face severe issues like abandonment, unpaid wages, and human trafficking. The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has broadened its efforts to include protections for workers in the fishing industry, amidst rising concerns over labor abuses. Investigative reports from various entities have shed light on these violations, spurring calls for policy reforms. Advocates argue that fishing vessels should dock more frequently to help detect forced labor practices and are pushing for bans or limitations on transshipment—that is,

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the transfer of fish between boats at sea.

#### #### A More Transparent Food Supply

As sustainable fishing practices gain importance, calls arise for the establishment of marine protected areas and the reduction of fishing fleet sizes. Greater transparency in seafood supply chains is now possible due to advancements in tracking technology. Retailers are increasingly evaluated on their ethical sourcing practices, leading some to consider implementing unique identifiers for fishing vessels. Consumers are urged to make responsible seafood choices, focusing on sustainable and American-caught varieties, while also remaining vigilant about potential labor abuses present in imported seafood.

#### #### Monitoring and Investigating Offshore Crimes

The current lack of accessible information regarding violence at sea underscores the urgent need for increased governmental oversight and public access to crime reports. Existing frameworks for monitoring could be expanded globally to enhance accountability. Advocates recommend ratifying international conventions aimed at improving worker rights and combating illegal fishing practices. Mandating tracking devices on fishing vessels is crucial for accountability, and initiatives like Global Fishing Watch are instrumental in monitoring illicit activities.

#### #### Conclusion

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Effectively regulating and enhancing conditions on the high seas is a multifaceted effort involving governments, non-profits, and consumer advocates. A comprehensive approach that includes stronger enforcement, improved transparency, and robust regulations is essential to resolve the various issues plaguing offshore activities and to safeguard the rights and welfare of those who work at sea.

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