



Thirteen

By Richard K. Morgan

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The future isn't what it used to be since Richard K. Morgan arrived on the scene. He unleashed Takeshi Kovacs—private eye, soldier of fortune, and all-purpose antihero—into the body-swapping, hard-boiled, urban jungle of tomorrow in *Altered Carbon*, *Broken Angels*, and *Woken Furies*, winning the Philip K. Dick Award in the process. In *Market Forces*, he launched corporate gladiator Chris Faulkner into the brave new business of war-for-profit. Now, in *Thirteen*, Morgan radically reshapes and recharges science fiction yet again, with a new and unforgettable hero in Carl Marsalis: hybrid, hired gun, and a man without a country . . . or a planet.

Marsalis is one of a new breed. Literally. Genetically engineered by the U.S. government to embody the naked aggression and primal survival skills that centuries of civilization have erased from humankind, Thirteens were intended to be the ultimate military fighting force. The project was scuttled, however, when a fearful public branded the supersoldiers dangerous mutants, dooming the Thirteens to forced exile on Earth's distant, desolate Mars colony. But Marsalis found a way to slip back—and into a lucrative living as a bounty hunter and hit man before a police sting landed him in prison—a fate worse than Mars, and much more dangerous.

Luckily, his “enhanced” life also seems to be a charmed one. A new chance at freedom beckons, courtesy of the government. All Marsalis has to do is use his superior skills to bring in another fugitive. But this one is no common criminal. He's another Thirteen—one who's already shanghaied a space shuttle, butchered its crew, and left a trail of bodies in his wake on a bloody cross-country spree. And like his pursuer, he was bred to fight to the death. Still, there's no question Marsalis will take the job. Though it will draw him deep into violence, treachery, corruption, and painful confrontation with himself, anything is better than remaining a prisoner. The real question is: can he remain sane—and alive—long enough to succeed?

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. This stellar new stand-alone from Morgan, known for his compelling future noir thrillers (*Altered Carbon*, etc.), raises tantalizing questions about the nature of humanity. Future governments have used genetic manipulation to create subhumans twisted to fit specialized tasks. Normal people are intrigued as well as repulsed, but they instinctively dread variation thirteen, an aggressive, ruthless throwback to a time before civilization. When a thirteen escapes from exile on Mars and apparently goes on an insane killing spree, Carl Marsalis, a soul-weary freelance thirteen hit man, is hired to help track him down. Morgan goes beyond the SF cliché of the genetically enhanced superman to examine how personality is shaped by nature and experience. Marsalis is more empathetic than the normal people around him, but they can see him only as an untrustworthy killer. At the same time, surveying corrupt, fractured normal society, the novel questions whether the thirteens are just less successful at hiding their motives. Without slowing down the headlong rush of the action, the complex, looping plot suggests that all people may be less—or more—than they seem. (July)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Winner of the Philip K. Dick Award for *Altered Carbon* (see below), his debut novel, and the author of successful follow-ups *Broken Angels* (**** July/Aug 2004) and *Woken Furies*, as well as the stand-alone *Market Forces* (***) May/June 2005), Richard K. Morgan and his characters are hardly strangers to violent dystopias. *Thirteen*, published simultaneously in Britain as *Black Man*, tackles some difficult issues, including race and identity. The result is perhaps less compelling than some of Morgan's previous work, and the novel could have been shorter. Still, the author can hardly be accused of simply retreading familiar ground. *Thirteen* is a solid effort for Morgan's devotees, as well as a good read for fans of military sci-fi with a twist.

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Carl Marsalis, a genetically engineered soldier (a "variant thirteen"), is busted out of jail to help track down a serial murderer who escaped from the Mars colony and crash-landed a spaceship into the ocean--but not before killing and eating everyone onboard. Now the psychopath is on a rampage, slaughtering seemingly unconnected innocents with no apparent reason or pattern. Partnered up with a female Colony Initiative investigator, Carl soon learns that finding his prey will take him to places he would rather not visit and will teach him things about his own past that he would rather not know. Published in England and Canada under its original (and more appropriate) title, *Black Man*, this is another spectacular blending of noir and SF from the author of the Takeshi Kovacs series. It's set in the early years of the twenty-second century, and behind its science-fiction facade it's a keenly observed story of prejudice, of a man separated from the rest of humanity by his physical appearance and his genetic makeup. Morgan's vision of the world a century from now is rather bleak, but it seems to be a reasonable extrapolation from today's social/religious/political trends. The prose, as always, is hard-edged and often violently graphic, and the dialogue punchy and realistic. In Morgan's future, people act and talk pretty much like they do today--and they certainly curse like they do today. Similarities in tone and substance to the genre-bending works of Philip K. Dick and (to a lesser extent) William Gibson are surely not accidental, although Morgan is no imitator. He's too good for that. *David Pitt*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Edward Crosley:

The event that you get from Thirteen may be the more deep you searching the information that hide into the words the more you get considering reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to recognise but Thirteen giving you excitement feeling of reading. The author conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by anyone who read the idea because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your current vocabulary increase well. Making it easy to understand then can go with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We highly recommend you for having that Thirteen instantly.

Marsha Bridges:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style with this era globalization. With reading you can get a lot of information that will give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world could share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. Lots of author can inspire their own reader with their story or their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the publications. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book that exist now. The authors nowadays always try to improve their talent in writing, they also doing some study before they write for their book. One of them is this Thirteen.

Milan Allen:

A lot of people always spent all their free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them friends and family or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun in your case. If you enjoy the book that you simply read you can spent all day long to reading a book. The book Thirteen it is quite good to read. There are a lot of people who recommended this book. We were holding enjoying reading this book. When you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore simply to read this book out of your smart phone. The price is not very costly but this book possesses high quality.

Susan Bondurant:

Some people said that they feel bored when they reading a book. They are directly felt it when they get a half elements of the book. You can choose the particular book Thirteen to make your own personal reading is interesting. Your personal skill of reading skill is developing when you just like reading. Try to choose straightforward book to make you enjoy to see it and mingle the impression about book and reading through especially. It is to be very first opinion for you to like to available a book and study it. Beside that the book Thirteen can to be your new friend when you're truly feel alone and confuse in what must you're doing of their time.

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