

I heard a sound like a laugh – but perhaps I was mistaken. Then I got a big stone from the river and hit the metal until I had flattened part of the decoration. The little people could hear the noise a kilometre way in all directions, but they did nothing.

'I saw a crowd of them on the hillside, looking at me in a frightened way. At last, hot and tired, I sat down to watch the place. But I was too impatient to watch for long. I could work at a problem for years, but I was unable to wait, inactive, for twenty-four hours.

'I got up after a time and began walking aimlessly through the bushes towards the hill again. "Patience," I said to myself. "If you want your machine again, you must leave that pedestal alone. If they intend to take your machine away, it won't help if you destroy their metal panels. If they don't, you will get it back when you can ask for it."

"Face this world. Learn its ways, watch it, be careful of guessing its meaning too quickly. In the end you will find an answer to it all." Then suddenly the humour of the situation came into my mind: the thought of the years I had spent in study and work to get into the future age, and now my impatience to get out of it. I had put myself into the most hopeless situation a man could ever imagine. I couldn't help laughing at myself.

## Chapter 7 Ghosts

'Going through the big palace, it seemed to me that the little people were staying away from me. Perhaps it was my imagination, or because I had hit the metal panels. I was careful, though, to show no worry and not try to catch any of them, and after a day or two the situation got back to normal.

'I decided to put any thought of my Time Machine and the

mystery of the metal doors as much as possible in a corner of my memory. I hoped that in the end, growing knowledge would lead me back to them in a natural way. But you can understand why I stayed within a circle of a few kilometres around my point of arrival.

'As far as I could see, all the world seemed to be like the Thames valley. From every hill I saw the same large numbers of fine buildings, all very different in material and style, and the same kinds of trees and bushes. I soon noticed, though, a number of wells in the ground. Several of these, it seemed to me, were very deep. One lay by a path up the hill, which I had followed during my first walk. Like the others, it had a top made of metal, interestingly decorated and protected by a little roof from the rain.

'Sitting by the side of these wells, and looking down into the darkness, I could see no sign of water or any reflection when I lit a match. But in all of them I heard a certain sound like the beating of a big engine. I also discovered, from the flames of my matches, that air was going down into them. I threw a piece of paper down into one and, instead of falling slowly, it was at once pulled quickly out of sight. I couldn't imagine what these wells were for.'

'And I must say now that I learned very little about many parts of the life of these people. Let me describe my difficulties. I went into several big palaces, but they were just living places, great dining-halls and sleeping apartments. I could find no machines of any kind, but these people were dressed in fine cloth that didn't seem very old, and their shoes, though undecorated, were very well made.'

'But the people didn't seem to make things themselves. There were no shops, no factories, no signs that they brought things in from other places. They spent all their time playing gently, swimming in the river, falling in love in a half-playful way, eating

fruit and sleeping. I couldn't see how or where things were produced.

'But something had taken the Time Machine into the pedestal. Why? I couldn't imagine. Suppose you found something written in English, with here and there some words that were completely unknown to you. Well, on the third day of my visit, that was how I felt about the world of 802,701.

'That day I made a friend – a kind of friend. As I was watching some of the little people playing in a shallow part of the river, one of them was suddenly pulled away by the water. The river there could run quite quickly, but not too quickly for a swimmer of normal ability. It will give you an idea, therefore, of the weakness of these people, when I tell you that none tried to help the one that was in such danger.

'When I realised this, I quickly took off my clothes and, walking into the water at a place lower down, I caught her and brought her safely to land.

'She soon began to feel better and I saw that she was all right before I left her. I had such a low opinion of her people by then that I didn't expect any thanks from her. I was wrong about that, though.

'This happened in the morning. In the afternoon I met my little woman as I was returning from a long walk, and she greeted me with cries of happiness and gave me some flowers. Perhaps because I had been very lonely I did my best to show I was happy with the gift. We were soon sitting together and deep in a conversation, mainly of smiles.

'The woman's friendliness affected me exactly as a child's would. We passed each other flowers and she kissed my hands. I did the same to hers. Then I tried to talk, and found that her name was Weena. That was the beginning of a strange friendship, which continued for a week and ended . . . as I will tell you!

'She was exactly like a child. She wanted to be with me

always. She wanted to follow me everywhere, and on my next journey around the area I walked fast and tried to leave her behind. She gave up at last, calling after me rather sadly. But the problems of the world had to be solved and I hadn't, I said to myself, come into the future to start a relationship.

'She was, though, a very great comfort. When it was too late, only when it was too late, I clearly understood how badly she felt when I left her, and what she meant to me. By seeming fond of me, and by showing in her weak way that she cared for me, the little person soon gave my returns to the place of the white sphinx almost the feeling of coming home. I used to watch for her when I came over the hill.

'From her, too, I learned that fear had not yet left the world. She was fearless enough in the daylight, but she hated the dark shadows. Darkness to her was the one thing to be frightened of. It was a very strong emotion, and I started thinking and watching.

'I discovered then, among other things, that these people got together in the great houses after dark and slept in groups. I never found one outside, alone. And if I entered the room without a light, I made them very afraid. But I was such a fool that I missed the lesson of that fear, and although it made Weena unhappy I slept away from the others.

'It worried her greatly, but in the end her feelings for me won. For five of the nights of our friendship, including the last night of all, she slept with her head on my arm. But my story is running away from me as I speak of her.

'On the night before I met her I was woken very early in the morning. I had slept badly, dreaming that I was under water, and that fish were touching my face. I woke suddenly and with the odd feeling that a greyish animal had just rushed out of the room.

'I tried to go to sleep again, but I felt uncomfortable. It was

that grey hour when things are just appearing from the darkness, but are still unreal. I got up, went down into the great hall and out onto the stones in front of the palace. I thought I would go and watch the sun come up.

'The moon was going down, and the dying moonlight and the first light of day were mixed in a pale half-light. The bushes were inky black, the ground a dark grey, and up on the hillside I thought I could see ghosts. Three times I saw white figures and twice I thought I saw a single white animal running quickly on two legs.'

'Near the ruins I saw a group of them carrying a dark body. They moved quickly and it seemed that they disappeared among the bushes. The light was still unclear, you must understand. I was experiencing that cold, uncertain, early-morning feeling you may know, and I doubted my eyes.'

'As the eastern sky grew brighter, and the light of day brought stronger colours to the world again, I watched the hillside closely. But I saw no more white figures. I thought about them all morning – or at least until I had to get Weena out of the river. I connected them in some way with the white animal I had touched in my first mad search for the Time Machine. It was more pleasant to think about Weena, but these ghosts would soon take much stronger control of my mind.'

## Chapter 8 Morlocks

'I think I said how much hotter the weather of this Golden Age was than our own. I can't explain this. It is usual to think that the sun will continue cooling in the future. But people forget that the Earth must also, in the end, fall back closer and closer to the sun.'

'Well, one very hot morning – my fourth, I think – as I was

trying to get away from the heat and the strong light in a large ruin near the great house, a strange thing happened. Climbing among those piles of stones, I found a narrow room, whose end and side windows were closed by falling stones. After the light outside, it seemed very dark to me. I entered it, feeling my way with my hands.'

'Suddenly, I stopped and held my breath. A pair of eyes, made bright by the reflection of the daylight outside, was watching me out of the darkness.'

'I felt the old natural fear of wild animals as I looked into those angry eyes. I was afraid to turn. Then I thought how safely people appeared to be living. And then I remembered their strange terror of the dark.'

'Trying to control my fear, I took a step forwards and spoke. My voice was strong but shaking. I put out my hand and touched something soft.'

'At once the eyes moved to the side and something white ran past me. I turned, as my heart beat even faster, and saw an odd-looking figure, its head held down in a strange way, running across the sunlit space behind me. It ran into a large stone, fell to one side and in a moment was hidden in a black shadow under another pile of stones.'

'It went too fast for me to see clearly, but I know it was a dull white and had strange large greyish-red eyes. Also, there was fair hair on its head and down its back. I can't say whether it ran on four legs or only with its arms held very low. After a few seconds I followed it into the second pile of ruins.'

'I couldn't find it at first, but after some time in the deep darkness I saw one of those round well-like openings that I have told you about, half-closed by a large fallen stone. A sudden thought came to me. Had the thing disappeared down the well?'

'I lit a match and, looking down, saw a small white moving



*It stared at me as it climbed down.*

creature with large bright eyes. It stared at me as it climbed down. Now I saw for the first time a kind of metal ladder down the side of the well. Then the light burned my fingers and fell out of my hand, going out as it dropped. I lit another but the horrible little creature had disappeared.

'I don't know how long I sat staring down that well. Time passed before I could make myself believe that I had seen something human. But slowly I began to understand the truth: that humans hadn't stayed as one species, but had become two different animals. My pleasant children of the Upper-world weren't alone.'

'And what, I wondered, was this creature of the dark doing in my idea of a perfectly organised society? What was its relationship with the calm laziness of the beautiful Upper-world people? And what was hidden down there? I sat on the edge of the well telling myself that there was nothing to fear and that I must go down to find the answer. But I was very afraid to go! As I sat there, two of the Upper-world people came running across the daylight into the shadow. The male followed the female, throwing flowers at her as he ran.'

'They seemed upset to find me looking down the well. I understood that it was bad behaviour to look down these holes, because when I pointed to this one and tried to make a question about it in their language, they grew even more upset and turned away. But they were interested in my matches and I struck some to amuse them. I asked them again about the well, and again I failed. So I soon left them, intending to go back to Weena and see what she could tell me.'

'But my mind was already working. I now had an idea of the importance of these wells, of the mystery of the ghosts, of the meaning of the metal panels and what had happened to the Time Machine! And I also had the beginnings of a solution to the economic mystery that had worried me.'

'Here was my new idea. Clearly, this second human species lived underground. There were three things especially which made me think this. First, there was the white skin common to most animals that live largely in the dark. Then there were those large eyes, like those of a cat. Finally, its confusion in the sunshine, how it ran into the stones, the strange way it held its head – all these things made me believe that its eyes weren't used to the light.

'Under my feet, then, there must be many tunnels, where these people lived. The wells, which carried air to them, were all along the hillsides – everywhere, in fact, except along the river valley. Their great number showed how many tunnels there were. It seemed natural, too, to believe that the underground people made things for the comfort of the daylight people. The idea was so sensible that I accepted it at once, and then thought about how humans had turned into two species.

'Starting with the problems of our own age, it seemed clear to me that the widening of the social difference between the worker and the manager explained the whole situation. Even now we can see the beginnings of this. We have begun to make use of underground space – we have railways, underground workrooms and restaurants, and these are becoming more common.

'It was clear, I thought, that workers had begun to go underground into larger and larger factories, spending more and more of their time there, until, in the end –!

'Also, the increasing difference between the social classes made marriage between them less and less frequent. So above the ground now were the Haves, looking for pleasure and comfort and beauty, and below ground the Have-nots, the workers, changed by the demands of their jobs.

'When they were there, they had to pay rent, and not a little of it, for the air coming to their homes. If they refused, they would die. If they couldn't live in this way, they would also die. In the end, everyone living underground would be used to the

conditions of their life, and as happy in their way as the Upper-world people were.

'This, I must warn you, was my explanation at the time. It may be completely wrong but I still think it is the best one. But I think this way of life had worked better in the past. The Upper-world people had become too safe, and so had become smaller, weaker and less intelligent.

'I didn't yet know what had happened to the underground people. But I could imagine that the changes to the Morlocks – that, I discovered later, was their name – were even greater than the changes to the Eloi, the ones I already knew.

'Then came worrying doubts. Why had the Morlocks taken my Time Machine? I felt sure they had taken it. Why, too, if the Eloi were in control, could they not get my machine back for me? And why were they so terribly afraid of the dark? As I have said, I questioned Weena about this Under-world, but I learned nothing from her.

'At first she didn't understand my questions and later she refused to answer them. The whole subject seemed too unpleasant. And when I asked her again, perhaps a little loudly, she began to cry. They were the only tears, except my own, that I ever saw in that Golden Age.

'When I saw those tears, I stopped worrying about the Morlocks. I lit a match and very soon she was smiling again.

## Chapter 9 Underground

'It may seem odd to you, but it was two days before I could find out more about the Morlocks. I felt a strange fear of those pale bodies. They were just the same colour as the things one sees in jars in a museum and they were horribly cold when you touched them. I knew I could only get to the Time Machine by going

underground. But I couldn't do it. I was so alone, and even the idea of climbing down into the darkness of the well frightened me.

'The next night I did not sleep well. Probably my health had suffered a little. I was confused and unhappy. Once or twice I had a feeling of great fear for which I could see no definite reason. I remember walking noiselessly into the great hall where the little people were sleeping – that night Weena was among them – and feeling more comfortable in their company. I realised that the moon was in its last quarter and the nights were growing darker, and that there might be more appearances of those unpleasant creatures from below. And on both these days I had the restless feeling of someone who is trying to escape a duty. I felt that I could only get the Time Machine back if I understood these underground mysteries. But I wasn't brave enough to solve the mysteries, and I never quite felt safe.'

'These worries drove me further and further in my walks around the country. Going south-west towards the higher country, I saw, far away, an enormous building. It was larger than the largest of the palaces or ruins I knew, and the front was pale green. The difference in appearance suggested a difference in use, and I thought about going to look around. But it was growing late so I decided to wait until the following day, and I returned to Weena's welcome.'

'But the next morning I realised that my interest in the Green Palace was just helping me to delay an experience I was afraid of. I decided that I would go down without wasting any more time, and walked in the early morning towards a well near the ruins.'

'Little Weena danced beside me to the well, but when she saw me bend over the opening and look down, she seemed upset. "Goodbye, little Weena," I said, kissing her, and then I began to feel over the edge for the metal steps.'

'At first she watched me with surprise. Then she gave a most

heartbreaking cry and, running to me, began to pull at me with her little hands. I think her fear made me braver. I shook her off and in another moment I was inside the well. I saw her frightened face over the top and smiled to make her feel better.'

'I had to climb down a well perhaps two hundred metres deep. There were metal bars all the way down, but these were made for a person much smaller and lighter than I was and I was quickly tired by the climb. And not simply tired! One of the bars bent suddenly under my weight and almost threw me off into the blackness below. For the moment I hung by one hand, and after that I didn't dare to rest again.'

'Although my arms and back were very painful, I continued climbing down as quickly as possible. Looking up, I saw the opening, a small blue circle, where Weena's head was round and black. The noise of a machine grew louder. Everything except that little circle above was very dark, and when I looked up again she had disappeared.'

'I was in great discomfort and thought of going up again. But I continued to climb down. At last, with great happiness, I saw, half a metre to the right of me, a thin opening in the wall. Pulling myself in, I found it was the start of a narrow tunnel in which I could lie down and rest. It was not too soon.'

'I lay there, I don't know how long, until I felt a soft hand touching my face. Quickly getting to my feet in the darkness, I pulled out my matches. I struck one and saw three white figures moving quickly back, away from the light. Their eyes, unusually large from living in darkness, were like those of deep-water fish, and reflected the light in the same way. I have no doubt they could see me and they didn't seem to have any fear of me, only of the light.'

'The thought of running away was still in my mind, but I told myself that the job had to be done. As I felt my way along the tunnel, the noise of machinery grew louder. Soon I came to a

large open space and, striking another match, saw that I had entered an enormous underground room. It stretched into total darkness beyond my light.

'Great shapes like large machines rose out of the darkness, and made strange shadows in which I could see the shapes of Morlocks hiding. The air wasn't very fresh and there was a faint smell of fresh blood. Some way down the central path was a little table of white metal, covered with food. So the Morlocks, at least, were meat-eaters!

'Even at the time, I remember wondering what large animal still lived to produce the red piece of meat that I saw. Then the match burned down to my fingers and fell, a moving red spot in the darkness.

'I have thought since then how very badly-prepared I was for such an experience. When I had started building the Time Machine, I had had the stupid idea that the people of the future would certainly be far ahead of us in all their inventions. I had come without weapons, without medicine, without tobacco, even without enough matches.

'I didn't even think of bringing a camera, so I couldn't take a picture of that Under-world, to examine later. I stood there with only the weapons that nature had given me – hands, feet and teeth – and the four matches that I had left.

I was afraid to push my way in among all this machinery in the dark, and then I discovered that I had almost finished my matches. I had never thought that there was any need to save them and I had wasted almost half the box surprising the Eloi. Now I had four left, and while I stood in the dark a hand touched mine and cold fingers began feeling my face.

'I thought I could hear the breathing of a crowd of those horrible little creatures around me. I felt the box of matches in my hand being gently pulled away, and other hands behind me pulling at my clothes. I shouted as loudly as I could.

'They jumped back, and then I could feel them coming towards me again. They took hold of me more strongly, whispering odd sounds to each other. I shook violently and shouted again. This time they weren't so worried, and they made a strange laughing noise as they came back at me.

'I was horribly frightened. I decided to strike another match and escape under the protection of its light. I did so and, keeping the flame burning with a piece of paper from my pocket, I moved quickly into the narrow tunnel. But I had just entered this when my light was blown out, and in the blackness I could hear the Morlocks hurrying after me.

'In a moment I was held by several hands, trying to pull me back. I struck another light and waved it in their faces. You can't imagine how horribly inhuman they looked in their blindness and surprise. But I didn't stay. I moved back again and when my second match went out, I struck my third. It had almost burned down when I reached the opening into the well.

'I lay down on the edge and felt for the metal bars. As I did so, my feet were held from behind and I was violently pulled backwards. I lit my last match . . . and it went out. But I had my hand on the bars now and, kicking violently, I got myself free of the hands of the Morlocks and quickly climbed up the well. They stayed, afraid of the light, all except one little one who followed me for some way, and almost got my shoe as a prize.

'That climb never seemed to end. In the last eight or ten metres of it, a terrible feeling of sickness came over me. I had the greatest difficulty holding the bars. Several times I thought that I might fall. At last, though, I got over the top of the well, and walked shakily out of the ruin into the blinding sunlight.

'I fell on my face. Even the earth felt sweet and clean. Then I remember Weena kissing my hands and ears, and the voices of others among the Eloi. Then, for a time, I remember nothing.

## Chapter 10 A Place to Live

'Now I seemed in a worse position than before. Until then, except during my night of madness over the disappearance of the Time Machine, I had felt that in the end I would escape. But that hope was shaken by these new discoveries. I had been worried by the thought of unknown forces which I could beat when I understood them. The situation was different now. There was something sickening about the Morlocks – something inhuman. Before, I had felt like a man who had fallen into a hole: my worry was how to get out of it. Now I felt like an animal which had been caught, whose enemy would come to him soon.'

'That enemy was the darkness of the new moon. Weena had put this fear into my head by some things she said, which at first I didn't understand, about the Dark Nights. Now I could guess what the coming Dark Nights might mean. The moon was getting smaller and each night there was a longer time of darkness. And I now understood a little of the Eloi's fear of the dark. I wondered what terrible things the Morlocks did under the new moon.'

'The Eloi had probably been the managers and the Morlocks their servants, but that situation had changed a long time before. The two species were moving towards, or had already arrived at, a completely new relationship. The Eloi were still allowed to own the world, because the Morlocks, underground for so long, now found the daylight impossible. And the Morlocks made their clothes, I thought, and did other necessary things for them, perhaps because an old habit of service had continued.'

'But clearly, the end of the Eloi's power was coming closer. And suddenly I thought of the meat I had seen in the Underworld. I tried to remember its shape. I had a feeling it was something familiar, but I hadn't recognised it at the time.'

'The little people could do nothing about their fear, but I was made differently. I came out of our age, this best time for humans, when fear doesn't make us helpless. I at least could defend myself. Without further delay I decided to make myself weapons and a safe place where I could sleep. From there, I could face this strange world with some of that confidence. I had been slow to realise what creatures could harm me night after night. I felt I could never sleep again until my bed was safe from them. I shook with fear to think how they had already examined me.'

'I walked during the afternoon along the valley of the Thames, but found nowhere that seemed safe. All the buildings and trees seemed easy for such good climbers as the Morlocks to get into, judging by their skill at entering and leaving their wells. Then the Green Palace came into my mind. In the evening, carrying Weena like a child on my shoulders, I went up into the hills towards the south-west. The distance, I had thought, was eleven or twelve kilomètres, but it was probably nearer thirty.'

'I had first seen the place on a wet afternoon when things in the distance seemed nearer. In addition, the heel of one of my shoes was loose, so I couldn't walk well. And it was already long past sunset when I came in sight of the palace, dark against the pale yellow of the sky.'

'Weena had been very pleased when I began to carry her, but later she wanted me to put her down. She ran along by my side, occasionally going off to pick flowers to put in my pockets. Weena had been unsure of the purpose of pockets, but had decided that they should be filled and decorated with flowers. And that reminds me! While changing my jacket I found . . .'

The Time Traveller paused, put his hand into his pocket and silently placed two dead flowers on the little table. Then he went back to his story.

'As the quiet of evening spread over the world and we moved

over the top of the hill towards Wimbledon, Weena grew tired and wanted to return to the house of grey stone. But I pointed to the Green Palace, and tried to make her understand that we were looking for a safe place there.

'You know that quietness that comes before dark? In that calm my senses seemed to sharpen. I thought that I could almost see the tunnels in the ground under my feet – that I could see the Morlocks going here and there and waiting for the dark. In my excitement I imagined that they would see my arrival in their homes as an act of war.

'So we continued and the evening turned into night. The ground grew difficult to see and the trees turned black. Weena's fears and her tiredness grew. I took her in my arms and talked to her. Then, as the darkness grew deeper, she put her arms round my neck. Closing her eyes, she tightly pressed her face against my shoulder.

'So we went down a long hillside into a valley, and there in the poor light I almost fell into a little river. I walked across this and went up the opposite side. I had seen nothing of the Morlocks, but it was still early in the night. The darker hours before the moon came up hadn't yet arrived.

'From the top of the next hill I saw a thick wood spreading wide and black in front of me. I stopped at this. I could see no end to it, either to the right or the left. Feeling tired – my feet, especially, were very painful – I carefully lowered Weena from my shoulder as I stopped, and sat down on the grass. I could no longer see the Green Palace, and I wasn't sure of my direction.

'I looked into the thickness of the wood and thought of what it might hide. In there, we might be out of sight of the stars. Even if there were no other waiting danger, there would still be many things to fall over and walk into. I was very tired, too, after the excitement of the day, so I decided that I wouldn't face it, but would spend the night on the open hill.



*I pointed to the Green Palace.*

'Weena, I was glad to find, was asleep. I put my jacket round her and sat down beside her to wait for the moon to rise. The hillside was quiet and empty, but from the black of the wood came, now and then, the sound of living things. Above me the stars shone, because the night was very clear, and I felt a sense of friendly comfort from their lights. All the familiar old ones had moved in the sky, rearranged in new groups during countless human lifetimes.

'As I looked at all these stars, I suddenly felt that my problems were smaller. I thought of their distance, and their slow movements out of the unknown past into the unknown future. And in my time travelling forwards, all the activity, the traditions, the organisations, the nations, languages, literature, hopes, even the memory of humans as I knew them, had totally disappeared. Instead, there were these weak people who had forgotten their great history, and the white Things of which I was so afraid.

'Then I thought of the great fear between the two species. I thought about the meat that I had seen. And for the first time I understood what it might be. But the thought was too horrible! I looked at little Weena sleeping beside me, her face white under the stars, and put the thought from my mind.

'Through that long night I kept my mind off the Morlocks as well as I could. I passed the time by trying to find signs of the old groups of stars in the sky. No doubt I slept a little. Then, as time passed, there came a soft light in the eastern sky and the old moon came up, thin and pointed and white. And close behind, and stronger, came the light from the sun.

'No Morlocks had come near us. In fact, I had seen none on the hills that night. And in the confidence of the new day it almost seemed to me that I had been wrong to be afraid. I stood up and found my foot with the loose heel was painful, so I sat down again, took off my shoes and threw them away.

'I woke Weena and we went down into the wood, now green

and pleasant instead of black and unwelcoming. We found some fruit there to eat for breakfast. We soon met other Eloi, laughing and dancing in the sunlight. And then I thought again of the meat that I had seen. I felt sure now what it was and with all my heart I pitied them.

'Clearly, at some time in the past, the Morlocks hadn't been able to find enough food. Possibly they had lived on rats and similar animals. Now the Eloi were like fat cows, which the Morlocks kept and hunted. And there was Weena dancing at my side!

'I tried to think more scientifically, and less emotionally. Perhaps this was a punishment for human selfishness. Some people had been happy to live from the work of others. They had said this was necessary, and in time it had become equally necessary for the workers to eat them. But this attitude was impossible. It didn't matter how unintelligent they were, the Eloi still looked human. I understood their situation and I felt their fear.

'I had at that time no clear ideas about what I should do. I thought I could find a safe place and make myself some weapons out of metal or stone. Next I hoped to find a way of making fire, so I would have the weapon of a torch. I knew that nothing would work better against these Morlocks. Then I wanted to find a way of breaking open the metal panels under the white sphinx.

'I felt that if I could enter those doors and carry a light in front of me I would discover the Time Machine and escape. I couldn't imagine that the Morlocks were strong enough to move it far away. I had decided to bring Weena with me to our own time. And thinking about plans like these, we walked towards the building which I had chosen as our home.

## Chapter 11 The Green Palace

I found the Green Palace, when we came to it at about midday, to be empty and falling into ruin. The glass in its windows was broken and large pieces of green material had fallen off the walls onto the ground. It stood high on a grassy hill and, looking towards the north-east before I entered it, I was surprised to see a large river where I thought Wandsworth and Battersea had been in the past. I thought then of what had happened or might be happening to the living things in the sea.

'Along the front of the palace I saw writing in an unknown language. I thought, rather foolishly, that Weena might help to understand this, but I only learned that the idea of writing had never entered her head. She always seemed to me, I imagine, more human than she was, perhaps because her love was so human.'

Inside the large door – which was open and broken – we found, instead of the usual hall, a long room lit by many side windows. At first look I was reminded of a museum. The floor was thick with dust, and an interesting collection of strange objects was covered in grey dust too. Then I noticed, in the centre of the room, the bones of a large animal. They lay on the floor in the thick dust, and in one place, where the rainwater had come through the roof, some had almost been destroyed.

'This made me feel sure that I was in a museum. Going towards the side I found shelves and on them I found the old familiar glass cases of our time. They had kept the air out; the objects inside were still in good condition.'

'I continued walking and found another short room running across the end of the first. This appeared to be full of rocks, in which I had little interest, so we didn't stop. The next room appeared to be about natural history, but everything had changed so much that it was unrecognisable. A few blackened things which had been animals many years before, a brown dust of dead

plants, that was all! I was sorry about that, because I wanted to know how people had learned to control nature.'

'Then we came to an enormous room, which was very badly-lit. Every few metres, white glass balls hung from the ceiling – many of them broken – which suggested that the place had had electric lighting. On either side of me were large machines, all in bad condition and many broken down, but some still quite complete. I wanted to stay among these because I could only make guesses at what they were for. I thought that if I could learn to understand them, I would have powers that might be useful against the Morlocks.'

'Suddenly Weena came very close to my side, so suddenly that she surprised me. I woke out of my dream and then noticed that the floor of the room went downhill. I had come in at an end that was above ground, and had a few tall thin windows. As you went down the room, the ground came up against these windows, until finally there was only a narrow line of daylight at the top.'

'I had moved slowly, thinking about the machines, and had been too interested in them to notice that it was getting dark. Then Weena's increasing nervousness made me realise that the room ran down into thick darkness. I stopped and, as I looked around me, I saw that the dust was thinner there. Further away towards the darkness, it appeared to be broken by a number of small, narrow footprints.'

'I felt that I was wasting my time looking at this machinery. I remembered that it was already late in the afternoon and that I still had no weapon, no safe place and no way of making a fire. And then down at the far end of the room I heard the sound of footsteps and the same strange noises I had heard down the well.'

'I took Weena's hand. Then, getting a sudden idea, I left her and turned to a machine on which there was a long metal bar. Climbing up, and taking this in my hands, I put all my weight on

it sideways. It broke after a few seconds, and I rejoined Weena with a weapon in my hand. It was heavy enough, I thought, to break the head of any Morlock I might meet. And I wanted very much to kill a Morlock or two. I wanted to go straight down the room and kill the ones I heard. I didn't do this, though, partly because I also wanted to stay with Weena – and to get back to my Time Machine.

'Well, with the metal bar in one hand and Weena in the other, I went out of that room and into another even larger one, which was full of old books. These had fallen to pieces and none of the words could be read. I'm not a great writer, so didn't spend too long thinking about this waste of time and energy, but I did think sadly of my own seventeen papers on scientific subjects.

'Then, going up the wide stairs, we came to a room that had perhaps been a science room. And here I had some hopes of finding something useful. Except at one end where the roof had fallen down, this room was in good condition. I went quickly to every unbroken case. At last, in one of them, I found a box of matches. Very excited, I tried them. They were dry and perfectly good.

'I turned to Weena. "Dance," I said to her in her own language, because now I really had a weapon against the horrible creatures that we were afraid of. And so, in that broken-down museum, on the thick, soft carpet of dust, to Weena's great happiness, I danced a slow dance, singing a song as well as I could. Partly the dance was from different countries, partly it was my own invention – because I am naturally inventive, as you know.

'It was strange that this box of matches had lasted for so many years, but it was very fortunate for me. And I also found something even less likely – a jar containing a number of candles. I broke it open, put these in my pocket and left that room very happy.

'I can't tell you all the story of that long afternoon. I would

have to think hard to remember what I saw in the correct order. I remember a long room filled with guns, and although some were still in good condition, I could find no bullets. In another place was a large collection of stone and metal gods – Polynesian, Mexican, Greek, Roman, from every country on Earth, I think. And here I couldn't help writing my name on the nose of a stone god from South America that I really liked.

'As evening came, my interest level fell. I went through room after room: dusty, silent, often ruined. Some things were just piles of broken material; some were in better condition. In the end we came to a little open square. It had grass and three fruit trees, so we rested there.

'Towards sunset I began to think about our situation. Night was getting closer and my safe hiding place still had to be found. But that worried me very little now. I had with me, perhaps, the best of all defences against the Morlocks – I had matches. I had the candles in my pocket too, if more light were needed.

'It seemed to me that we should spend the night in the open, protected by a fire. In the morning I could try to get the Time Machine. To do that, at that time, I had only my metal bar. But now, with my growing knowledge, I felt very differently about those metal panels. I had never thought they were very strong, and I hoped that the metal bar would be heavy enough to do the job.

## Chapter 12 Fear of Fire

'When we came out of the palace, the sun hadn't completely gone down. I wanted to get through the woods before it was dark, and to reach the white sphinx early the next morning. My plan was to go as far as possible that night and then build a fire and sleep in the protection of its light. So as we went along I collected sticks and dry grass, and soon had my arms full.

'Because of this, we walked more slowly than I had expected, and also Weena was tired. And I began to suffer from sleepiness too, so it was night before we reached the wood. On a bushy hill at the edge of it, Weena wanted to stop, afraid of the darkness in front of us. But a strong feeling of danger, that I failed to see as a warning, made me continue. I had been without sleep for a night and two days, and felt ill and bad-tempered. I felt sleep coming on me, and the Morlocks with it.

'Then, among the black bushes behind us, and dark against their blackness, I saw three figures close to the ground. There was long grass all around us and I didn't feel safe from them. The forest, I thought, was about a kilometre across. If we could get through it to the open hillside, that, it seemed to me, was a much safer resting-place.

'I thought that with my matches and my candles I could keep my way lit through the woods. But I knew that I wouldn't be able to hold my firewood too. So, rather unwillingly, I put it down. Then it came into my head that I would surprise the Morlocks behind us by lighting it. I soon discovered how stupid this was, but at the time it seemed a good way of protecting our backs.

'I don't know if you have ever thought what an unusual thing fire must be where there are no people and where the climate is cool. The sun's heat is not often strong enough to burn plants, even when it shines through a drop of water, as sometimes happens in hotter places. Lightning may start small fires, but they don't usually spread very far. In this future time, the way to make fire had been forgotten in the world. The red tongues climbing my pile of wood were completely new and strange to Weena.

'She wanted to run to them and play with them. She almost threw herself on the fire, but I held her back. Then I picked her up and, although she fought against me, I walked forwards into

the wood. For a short distance the light from my fire showed us the way. Looking back, I could see, through the many trees, that from my pile of sticks the fire had spread to some bushes. Now a curved red line was coming slowly up the grass of the hill.

'I laughed at that, and turned again to the dark trees in front of us. It was very black and Weena held on to me in fear, but there was still, as my eyes got used to the darkness, enough light for me to walk around the trees. Above us it was simply black, except where a piece of blue sky shone down on us here and there. I struck none of my matches because I had no hand free. With my left arm I carried my little friend; in my right hand I had my metal bar.

'For some time I heard nothing except the breaking of dry wood under my feet, the low sound of the wind above, my own breathing and the beat of my heart. Then I seemed to hear soft footsteps around me. I kept moving. The footsteps grew louder and then I heard the same strange sounds and voices I had heard in the Under-world. There seemed to be several of the Morlocks and they were getting closer. In fact, in another minute I felt one of them pull at my coat, then something on my arm. Weena shook violently and then stopped moving.

'It was time for a match. But to get one I had to put her down. I did so and, as I searched in my pocket, a fight began in the darkness around my knees, with no sounds from her and some strange bird-like noises from the Morlocks. Soft little hands, too, were moving over my coat and back, even touching my neck. Then the match caught fire and I saw the white backs of the Morlocks running away through the trees. I quickly took a candle from my pocket and prepared to light it.

'Then I looked at Weena. She was lying with her face to the ground, holding my feet and not moving. With a sudden feeling of fear I bent down to her. She seemed almost unable to breathe. I lit the candle and placed it on the ground, and as the flame

grew it chased away the Morlocks and the shadows. I bent down and lifted her. The wood behind us seemed full of the movement and voices of the Morlocks.

'She seemed to have fainted. I put her carefully on my shoulder and stood up, and then there came a horrible thought. While lighting my match and helping Weena, I had turned myself around several times and now I had no idea which direction to go in. I might be facing back towards the Green Palace.

'Now I was cold with fear. I had to think quickly what to do. I decided to build a fire and stay where we were. I put Weena, still not moving, down against a tree. Very quickly, because my candle was burning low, I began collecting sticks and leaves. Here and there, out of the darkness around me, the Morlocks' eyes shone like jewels.

'The candle burned down and went out. I lit a match and as I did so, I saw two white shapes that were moving towards Weena. When the light shone, they ran quickly to get away. One was so blinded by the light that he came straight towards me and I felt a bone break when I hit him with my hand. He cried out in pain, walked with difficulty for a short distance and fell down. I lit another candle and continued building my fire.

'After some time, I noticed how dry some of the leaves were above me; since my arrival a week before, no rain had fallen. So instead of looking around among the trees for fallen sticks, I began jumping up and pulling down branches. Very soon I had a smoky fire of green wood and dry sticks, and could put out my candle. Then I turned to the place where Weena sat beside my metal bar. I did what I could to make her wake up, but she seemed almost dead. I couldn't even decide whether or not she was breathing.

'Now the smoke of the fire surrounded me and suddenly I felt terribly tired. My fire wouldn't need any more wood for an hour or two, so I sat down. The wood was full of quiet noises that I



*I saw two white shapes that were moving towards Weena.*

couldn't understand. I seemed just to close my eyes for a minute. But then everything was dark and the Morlocks had their hands on me.

'Throwing off their fingers, I quickly felt in my pocket for the matchbox and – it had gone! Then they took hold of me again. In a moment I realised what had happened. I had slept and my fire had gone out. I felt the fear of death. The forest seemed full of the smell of burning wood. I was caught by the neck, by the hair, by the arms, and pulled down. It was unbelievably horrible in the darkness to feel all these soft creatures lying on top of me. There were too many of them, and I fell to the ground.'

'I felt little teeth biting at my neck. I turned over and as I did so, my hand touched my metal bar. It gave me strength. I fought hard to get back on my feet, shaking off the human rats. Holding the bar against my body, I pushed where I thought their faces might be. I could feel the softness of bodies and my hits, and for a moment I was free.'

'I felt the strange happiness that so often seems to come with hard fighting. I knew that both I and Weena were finished, but I decided to make the Morlocks pay for their meat. I stood with my back to a tree, moving the metal bar from side to side in front of me.'

'The whole wood was full of the movement and cries of the Morlocks. A minute passed. Their voices seemed to rise to a greater level of excitement and their movements grew faster. But no more came within reach. I stood staring into the blackness.'

'Then suddenly hope came. Were the Morlocks afraid? And soon after that, I noticed a strange thing. The darkness seemed to grow lighter. I began to see the Morlocks around me – three half-dead at my feet. Then I recognised, with great surprise, that the others were running from behind me and away through the wood in front. And their backs seemed no longer white, but reddish.'

'As I stood there, my mouth open in surprise, I saw a little cloud of smoke move across a small area of starlight between the branches and disappear. And then I understood the smell of burning wood and the quiet voices growing now into a great noise. I understood the smoke and the reason for the Morlocks' speed.'

'Stepping out from behind my tree and looking back, I saw, through the nearer trees, the flames of the burning forest. It was my first fire coming after me. I looked for Weena, but she was gone. The sounds of the fire behind me, the crashing noise as each new tree caught fire, left little time to think. With my metal bar still in my hand, I followed in the Morlocks' path.'

'It was a hard race. Once the flames moved forwards so quickly on my right as I ran that they got ahead of me and I had to move away to my left. But at last I came out of the trees into a small open space, and as I did so, a Morlock rushed towards me. He ran blindly past me and straight into the fire!'

'And then I saw the most strange and horrible thing, I think, of all that I saw in that future age. This whole space was as bright as day with the light of the fire. In the centre was a small hill, surrounded by burned bushes. Beyond that was another arm of the burning forest, with yellow tongues of flame already coming from it, completely surrounding the space with a ring of fire. On the hillside were thirty or forty Morlocks, blinded by the light and the heat, running here and there against each other in their fear.'

'At first I didn't understand their blindness and struck angrily at them with my bar, in terror, as they came close to me. I killed one and hurt another. But when I had watched the movements of one of them under the bushes against the red sky, and heard their cries, I understood their total helplessness and pain in the strong light and I hit no more of them.'

'But now and then one ran straight towards me, frightening

me so much that I got out of his way. At one time the flames became a little less bright and I was afraid the awful creatures would be able to see me. I was even thinking of beginning the fight by killing some of them before this happened, but the fire started up again and I stopped myself. I walked around the hill among them and kept out of their way, looking for a sign of Weena. But Weena was gone.

'At last I sat down on the top of the little hill and watched this strange group of blind creatures feeling their way here and there. They made inhuman noises to each other, as the heat from the fire affected them. The smoke rushed up and blew across the sky, and through the occasional spaces in it, the little stars shone. Two or three Morlocks ran into me and I fought them off with my hands, shaking as I did so.'

'For most of that night I felt that I was having a bad dream. I bit myself and screamed to make myself wake up. I hit the ground with my hands and got up and sat down again. I walked around, and again sat down. Then I started calling to God to let me wake.'

'Three times I saw Morlocks put their heads down in great pain and rush into the flames. But at last, above the dying red of the fire, above the great clouds of black smoke and the whitening and blackening trees, and the decreasing numbers of Morlocks, came the white light of the day.'

'I looked again for signs of Weena, but there were none. It was clear that they had left her poor little body in the burning forest. I can't describe how glad I was that it hadn't been eaten. As I thought of that, I wanted to kill the helpless Morlocks around me, but I managed to control myself.'

'The hill, as I have said, was a kind of island in the forest. From the top of it, I could now see the Green Palace through the thin smoke, and from that I could work out my direction to the white sphinx. And so, leaving the last of the Morlocks running and crying, I tied some grass around my feet and limped across

smoking grass and burnt wood, still hot inside, towards the hiding-place of the Time Machine.

'I walked slowly, because I was very tired and my feet were painful. I was so sorry about the death of little Weena. It seemed such a terrible thing. Now, back in my own room, it feels more like the sadness of a dream than a real sadness. But that morning I felt very lonely again – terribly alone. I began to think of this house, of this fireside, of some of you, and with these thoughts came a great need to return.'

'But as I walked over the smoking ground under the bright morning sky, I made a discovery. In my trouser pocket there were still some loose matches. The box had broken open before it was lost.'

### Chapter 13 A Fight for the Time Machine

'At about eight or nine in the morning I came to the same seat of yellow metal from which I had looked at the world on the evening of my arrival. I thought of my first ideas about this future world on that evening, and I couldn't stop myself laughing at my confidence.'

'I was sad to think how short the dream of human intelligence had been. It had tried to make a comfortable, fair and safe society. It had succeeded – and had then led to this. We forget the law of nature – that change, danger and trouble make us think harder. Nature never asks the brain to work until habit and feeling are useless. There is no intelligence where there is no change and no need of change.'

'So as I see it, the Upper-world people had moved towards their weak prettiness, and the Under-world to hard work. But it seemed that as time passed, the Upper-world had stopped feeding the Under-world. And when other meat failed them, the people