

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 kilometres, 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