

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