**The Time Machine: H.G.Wells**

**1: Introduction**

The Time Traiveller (fur sae it’ll be handy tae spikk o him) wis tellin us o a fyky maitter tae us. His pale blae een sheened an glimmered, an his ordnar pale face wis reid an steered up. The lowe brunt bricht, an the saft glamourie o the sheenin lichts in the lilies o siller catched the bubbles that skinklit an passed in oor glaisses. Oor cheers, bein his patents, bosied an straikit us raither than lattin us sat on them, an there wis thon braw efter-denner atmosphere, fin thocht rins graceful an free o the hinners o preecision. An he pit it tae us in this wey—merkin the pynts wi a lean forefinger—as we sat an lazily respeckit his earnestness ower this new puzzle (as we thocht it) an his creativity.

“Ye maun follae me cannily. I’ll hae tae owerturn ane or twa notions that are near aawye acceptit. The geometry, fur example, they larned ye at schule is foondit on a lee.”

“Isnae thon raither a muckle ferlie tae expeck us tae stert wi?” speired Filby, an argybargyin body wi reid hair.

“I dinna mean tae sikk ye tae accept onythin wioot rizzonable grun fur it. Ye’ll sune alloue as muckle’s I need frae ye. Ye ken of coorse that a mathematical line, a line o thickness *nil*, his nae real life. They larned ye thon? Neither his a mathematical plane. Thon ferlies are jist abstractions.”

“Thon’s richt,” quo the Psychologist.

“Nur, haein anely length, braidth, an thickness, can a cube hae a rael life.”

“There I objeck,” Filby reponed. “Of coorse a solid body can exist. An rael ferlies—”

“Sae maist fowk think. Bit wyte a meenit. Can an *instant* cube exist?”

“Dinna follae ye,” Filby remairked.

“Can a cube that disnae laist fur ony time at aa, hae a real existence?”

Filby becam thochtfu. “Clearly,” the Time Traiveller gaed on, “ony rael body maun hae extension in *fower* airt: it maun hae Length, Braidth, Thickness, an—Time. Bit throwe a natural dweebleness o the flesh, that I’ll explain tae ye in a meenit, we’re like tae owerluik thon fack. There are raelly fower airts, three that we caa the three planes o Space, an a fowerth, Time. There is, hoosaeiver, a trend tae draw an unrael distinction atween the former three airts an the hinmaist, because it happens that oor kennin meeves noo an again in ae airt alang the hinmaist frae the stert tae the eyn o oor lives.”

“Thon,” quo a verra young chiel, makkin the antrin ettles tae relicht his cigar ower the lamp; “thon’s . . . verra clear indeed.”

“Noo, it’s verra remairkable that this is sae widely owerluikit,” carried on the Time Traiveller, wi a slicht incam o cheerieness. “Raelly this is fit’s meant bi the Fowerth Dimension, tho some fowk fa spikk aboot the Fowerth Dimension dinna ken they mean it. It’s anely anither wey o luikin at Time. *There’s nae differ atween Time an ony o the three airts o Space bar that oor kenning meeves alang it*. Bit some gypit fowk hae got haud o the wrang pairt o thon notion. Ye hae aa heard fit they hae tae say aboot this Fowerth Dimension?”

“*I* hinna,” quo the Kintra Mayor.

“It’s jist this. Thon Space, as oor mathematicians hae it, is spukken o as haein three dimensions, that ye micht caa Length, Braidth, an Thickness, an is aywis definable bi referrin tae three planes, ilkie ane at richt angles tae the ithers. Bit some pheelosophical fowk hae bin speirin foo *three* dimensions in particular—foo nae anither direction at richt angles tae the ither three?—an hae even ettled tae bigg a Fower-Dimensional geometry. Professor Simon Newcomb wis tellin o this tae the New York Mathematical Society anely a month or sae syne. Ye ken foo on a flat surface, that his anely twa dimensions, we can shaw a pictur o a three-dimensional solid, an as weel they think that bi models o three dimensions they could shaw ane o fower—gin they could maister the perspective o the ferlie. See?”

“I think sae,” mummlit the Kintra Mayor; an, knittin his broos, he drappit intae a thochtfu state, his lips meevin as a body fa repeats mystic wirds. “Aye, I think I see it noo,” quo he efter a whylie, brichtenin in a rael fleetin mainner.

“Weel, I dinna mind tellin ye I hae bin at wirk on this geometry o Fower Dimensions fur a fair whylie. Puckles o ma results are fey. Fur instance, here’s a pictur o a chiel at echt years auld, anither at fifteen, anither at seyventeen, anither at twinty-three, an sae on. Aa thon are clearly bitticks, as it wir, Three-Dimensional picturs o his Fower-Dimensioned bein, that’s a fixed an uncheengeable ferlie.

“Scientific fowk,” gaed on the Time Traiveller, efter the devaul nott tae lat this be taen in, “ken verra weel that Time is anely a kinno Space. Here’s a weel likit scientific diagram, a weather record. Thon line I pynt oot wi ma finger shaws the meevement o the barometer. Yestreen it wis sae heich, yesterday nicht it drappit, syne this foreneen it raise again, an sae slicht upwird tae here. Surely the mercury didnae pynt oot this line in ony o the airts o Space generally kent? Bit o a certainty it pyntit oot sic a line, an thon line, sae, we maun jelouse, wis alang the Time-Dimension.”

“Bit,” quo the Medical Chiel, glowerin hard at a coal in the lowe, “gin Time is raelly anely a fowerth dimension o Space, foo is it, an foo his it aywis bin, regairded as somethin ither? An foo can we nae meeve in Time as we meeve aboot in the ither dimensions o Space?”

The Time Traiveller smiled. “Are ye sae siccar we can meeve free in Space? Richt an left we can gae, backwird an forrit free eneuch, an chiels aywis hae dane sae. I admit we meeve freely in twa dimensions. Bit fit aboot up an doon? Gravitation leemits us thonner.”

“Nae exactly,” quo the Medical Chiel. “There are balloons.”

“Bit afore the balloons, apairt fur antrin lowpin an the inequalities o the surface, man hid nae freedom o vertical meevement.”

“Still they could meeve a bittie up an doon,” reponed the Medical Man.

“Easier, far easier doon than up.”

“An ye canna meeve at aa in Time, ye canna win awa frae the present meenit.”

“Ma dear frien, thon’s jist far ye’re wrang. Thon’t jist far the hale warld hs gane wrang. We’re aywis winnin awa frae the present meenit. Oor mental lives, that are unseen an hae nae dimensions, are passin ben the Time-Dimension wi a uniform speed frae the cradle tae the mools. Jist as we should traivel *doon* gin we stertit oor existence fifty miles abune the Eirde’s surface.”

“Bit the great deefficulty is this,” brukk in the Psychologist.

’Ye *can* meeve aboot in aa airts o Space, bit ye canna meeve aboot in Time.”

“Thon’s the foon o ma muckle discovery. Bit ye’re wrang tae say that we canna meeve aboot in Time. Fur instance, gin I’m recaain a happenin verra clear I gae back tae the time o its happenin: I becam raivellt, as ye say. I lowp back fur a meenit. Of coorse we hae nae wey o bidin back fur ony length o Time, ony mair than a savage or a breet his o bidin sax feet abune the grun. Bit a ceevilised chiel is better aff than the savage in this wey. He can gae up agin gravitation in a balloon, an foo should he nae hope that ae day he micht be able tae stop or speed up his drift alang the Time-Dimension, or even birl aboot an traivel the ither wey?”

“Och, *thon*,” stertit Filby, “is aa—”

“Foo nae?” speired the Time Traiveller.

“It’s agin rizzon,” quo Filby.

“Fit rizzon?” speired the Time Traiveller.

“Ye can shaw blaik is fite bi argyment,” quo Filby, “bit ye’ll niver convince me.”

“Mebbe nae,” the Time Traiveller telt him. “Bit noo ye stert tae see the objeck o ma luikin intae the geometry o Fower Dimensions. Langsyne I’d a feint thochtie o a machine—”

“Tae traivel ben Time!” cried the Verra Young Chiel.

“That’ll traivel indifferent in ony direction o Space an Time, as the driver wints.”

Filby gied a lauch.

“Bit I hae experimental verification,” quo the Time Traiveller.

“It wid be remairkable handy fur the historian,” the Psychologist suggestit. “Ye micht traivel back an check oot the ordnar accoont o the Fecht o Hastins, fur instance!”

“Dae ye nae think ye’d draw attention?” speired the Medical Chiel. “Oor forebears wirnae guid at tholin anachronisms.”

“Ye micht win yer Greek frae the verra mou o Homer an Plato,” the Verra Young Chiel thocht.

“In thon case they’d o a certainty ploo ye fur the Little-go. The German scholars hae improved Greek sae muckle.”

“Then there’s the future,” quo the Verra Young Chiel. “Jist think! Ye micht invest all yer siller, leave it tae win interest, an hash on aheid!”

“Tae discover a society,” quo I, “biggit on a stinch communistic foun.”

“O aa the wud ootrageous theories!” stertit the Psychologist.

“Aye, sae it luikit tae me, an sae I niver spakk o it till—”

“Experimental verification!” cried I. “Ye’re gaun tae verifee *thon*?”

“The experiment!” cried Filby, fa wis growin harns-trauchelt.

“Lat’s see yer experiment onywey,” quo the Psychologist, “tho it’s aa styte, ye ken.”

The Time Traiveller smiled roon at us. Syne, aye smilin feintly, an wi his hauns deep in his trooser pooches, he wauked slawly ooto the chaumer, an we heard his bauchles shauchlin doon the lang wey tae his lab.

The Psychologist luikit at us. “I winner fit he’s got?”

“Some sleicht-o-haun plisky or ither,” quo the Medical Chiel, an Filby ettled tae tell us aboot a conjuror he’d seen at Burslem, bit afore he’d feenished his preface the Time Traiveller cam back, an Filby’s tale crined.

**II The Machine**

The thing the Time Traiveller held in his haun wis a glimmerin metallic framewirk, scarce bigger than a wee clock, an verra pernickity vrocht. There wis ivory in it, an a puckle see-throwe crystalline maitter. An noo I maun be clear, fur thon that follaes—unless his explanation is tae be acceptit—is an aathegither unaccoontable ferlie. He tuik ane o the wee octagonal brods that wir skittered aboot the chaumer, an set it afore the lowe, wi twa legs on the bass. On this brod he pit the mechanism. Syne he drew up a cheer, an sat doon. The anely ither objeck on the brod wis a wee shaded lamp, the bricht licht o which drappit on the model. There wir as weel mebbe a dizzen caunles aboot, twa in braiss caunlesticks on the mantel an a when mair in sconces, sae that the chaumer wis daizzlin lichtit up. I sat in a laigh airm-cheer nearest the lowe, an I drew this forrit sae as tae be near atween the Time Traiveller an the hairth. Filby sat ahin him, luikin ower his shouder. The Medical Chiel an the Kintra Mayor watched him sidieweys frae the richt, the Psychologist frae the left. The Verra Young Chiel stude ahin the Psychologist. We wir aa on the luik oot. It wis incredible tae me that ony kinno plisky, hooiver subtly thocht oot an hooiver glegly dane, could hae bin played on us unner thon conditions.

The Time Traiveller luikit at us, an syne at the mechanism. “Weel?” quo the Psychologist.

“This wee ferlie,” the Time Traiveller telt us, reistin his elbucks on the brod an pressin his hauns thegether abune the apparatus, “is anely a model. It’s ma plan fur a machine tae traivel ben time. Ye’ll takk tent that it luiks a thochtie skweejee, an that there’s a fey skinklin luik aboot this bar, as tho it wis in some wey unreal.” He pyntit tae the pairt wi his finger. “As weel, here is ae wee fite lever, an here’s anither.”

The Medical Chiel raise up ooto his cheer an glowered inno the ferlie. “It’s brawly vrocht,” quo he.

“It tuik twa years tae makk,” reponed the Time Traiveller. Syne, fin we’d aa copied the action o the Medical Chiel, he gaed on: “Noo I wint ye clear tae unnerstaun that thon lever, bein pressed doon, sens the machine skytin intae the future, an this ither reverses the meevement. Thon saddle represents the seat o a time traiveller. Sune, I’m gaun tae press the lever, an aff the machine will flee. It’ll vanish, gae intae future Time, an disappear. Hae a guid luik at the ferlie. Luik at the brod as weel, an satisfee yersels there’s nae pliskies. I dinna wint tae waste this model, an syne be telt I’m a leear.”

There wis a meenit’s devaul mebbe. The Psychologist luikit aboot tae spikk tae me, bit cheenged his mind. Syne the Time Traiveller raxxed oot his finger tae the lever. “Na,” qo he o a suddenty. “Len me yer haun.” An turnin tae the Psychologist, he tuik thon chiel’s haun in his ain an telt him tae pit oot his forefinger. Sae that it wis the Psychologist himsel fa sent furth the model Time Machine on its eynless trip. We aa saw the lever birl. I’m aathegither siccar there wis nae pliskies. There wis a braith o win, an the lamp lowe lowpit. Ane o the caunles on the mantel wis blawn oot, an the wee machine o a suddenty birled roon, becam feint, wis seen as a ghaist fur a secunt mebbe, as a wheech o feintly glimmerin braiss an ivory; an it wai gane—vanished! Apairt fur the lamp the brod wis nyakit.

Aabody wis seelent fur a meenit. Syne Filby said he was damnt. The Psychologist won ower frae his begeck, an o a suddenty luikit unner the brod. At thon the Time Traiveller lauched blythely. “Weel?” he speired, wi a myndin o the Psychologist. Syne, gettin up, he gaed tae the baccy jar on the mantel, an wi his back tae us stertit tae stap his pipe.

We glowered at each ither. “Luik here,” quo the Medical Chiel, “are ye serious aboot this? Dae ye raelly believe that thon machine his traivelled intae time?

“O a certainty,” the Time Traiveller reponed, booin tae licht a spill at the lowe. Syne he turned, lichtin his pipe, tae luik at the Psychologist’s face. (The Psychologist, tae shaw that he wisnae gyte, helpit himsel tae a cigar an ettled tae licht it uncut.) “Fit’s mair, I hae a muckle machine near feenished in thonner”—he pyntit tae the lab—“an fin thon is pit thegether I’m gaun tae hae a trip on ma ain accoont.”

“Ye mean tae say that thon machine his traivelled inno the future?” speired Filby.

“Inno the future or the past—I dinna, fur certain, ken which.”

Efter a whylie the Psychologist hid an inspiration. “It maun hae gane inno the past gin it’s gane onywey,” quo he.

“Fit wey?” speired the Time Traiveller.

“Because I jelouse that it hisnae meeved in space, an gin it traivelled inno the future it wid still be here aa this time, since it maun hae traivelled ben this time.”

“Bit,” quo I, “Gin it traivelled inno the past it wid hae bin veesible fin we cam first intae this chaumer; an last Thursday fin we wir here; an the Thursday afore thon; an sae furth!”

“Serious objections,” remairked the Kintra Mayor, wi an air o impartiality, turnin tae the Time Traiveller.

“Nae a bit,” reponed the Time Traiveller, an, tae the Psychologist: “Ye think. *Ye* can explain that. It’s presentation alow the threshold, ye ken, wattered doon presentation.”

“Of coorse,” quo the Psychologist, an reassured us. “Thon’s a simple pynt o psychology. I should hae thocht o it. It’s plain eneuch, an helps the paradox delichtfu. We canna see it, nur can we unnerstaun this machine, ony mair than we can unnerstaun the spoke o a wheel birlin, or a bullet fleein ben the air. Gin it is traivellin ben time fifty times or a hunner times faister than we are, gin it gets throwe a meenit while we get throwe a secunt, the impression it makks will of coorse be anely ae-fiftieth or ae-hunnerth o fit it wid makk gin it wisnae traivellin in time. Thon’s plain eneuch.” He passed his haun ben the space far the machine hid bin. “Ye see?” he speired, lauchin.

We sat an glowered at the teem brod fur a meenit or sae. Syne the Time Traiveller socht us fit we thocht o it aa.

“It souns plausible eneuch the nicht,” quo the Medical Chiel; “bit wyte til the morn. Wyte fur the common sense o the mornin.”

“Wid ye like tae see the Time Machine itsel?” speired the Time Traiveller. An syne, takkin the lamp in his haun, he led the wey doon the lang, drauchty lobby tae his lab. I mynd vividly the flichterin licht, his fey, braid heid in silhouette, the daunce o the shaddaes, foowe aa follaed him, bumbazed bit dootfu, an foo thonner in the lab we saw a larger version o the wee mechanism that we’d seen vanish frae afore oor een. Pairts wir o nickel, pairts o ivory, pairts hid o a certainty bin filed or sawn ooto rock crystal. The machine wis near feenished, bit the twisted crystalline bars lay unfeenished on the bench aside a when sheets o drawins, an I tuik ane up fur a better luik at it. Quartz it luikit tae be.

“Luik here,” speired the Medical Chiel, “are ye aathegither serious? Or is this a plisky—like thon ghaist ye shawed us the hinmaist Yule?”

“In thon machine,” quo the Time Traiveller, haudin the lamp alaft, “I inten tae explore time. Is thon plain? I wis niver mair serious in ma life.”

Nane o us richt kent foo tae takk it.

I catched Filby’s ee ower the shouder o the Medical Chiel, an he winkit at me solemn like.

**III The Time Traiveller Returns**

I think that at thon time nane o us aathegither believed in the Time Machine. The fack is, the Time Traiveller wis ane o thon chiels fa are ower clivver tae be believed: ye niver felt that ye saw aa roon him; ye aywis suspeckit some subtle haudin back, some sleekitness in ambush, ahin his clear honesty. Hid Filby shawn the model an explained the maitter in the Time Traiveller’s wirds, we should hae shawn *him* far less scepticism. Fur we wid hae seen his motives: a pork-butcher could unnerstaun Filby. Bit the Time Traiveller hid mair than a tooshtie o whimsy amang his makk, an we distrustit him. Ferlies that wid hae vrocht the fame o a less clivver chiel seemed pliskies in his hauns. It’s a mistak tae makk ferlies ower easy. The serious fowk fa tuik him serious niver felt richt siccar of his mainner; they wir somewey awaur that trustin their reputations fur joodgment wi him wis like riggin oot a nursery wi eggshell cheena. Sae I dinna think ony o us spakk verra muckle aboot time traivelling in the whylie atween thon Thursday an the neist, tho its fey potentialities ran, nae doot, in maist o oor harns: its plausibility, thon is, its practical incredibleness, the fey likelihood o anachronism an o oot an oot dumfounerment it suggestit. Fur ma ain pairt, I wis particular taen up wi the plisky o the model. Thon I mynd claikin aboot wi the Medical Chiel, fa I met on Friday at the Linnæan. He telt me he’d seen a simil’r ferlie at Tübingen, an pit unca stress on the blawin-oot o the caunle. Bit foo the plisky wis dane he couldnae tell.

The neist Thursday I gaed again tae Richmond—I jelouse I wis ane o the Time Traiveller’s maist constant veesitors—an, camin latchy, fand fower or five chiels already gaithered in his drawin-chaumer. The Medical Chiel wis staunin afore the lowe wi a sheet o paper in ae haun an his watch in the ither. I luikit roon fur the Time Traiveller, an—“It’s hauf-past sivven noo,” quo the Medical Chiel. “I jelpouse we’d better hae denner?”

“Far’s——?” I speired, nemmin oor host.

“Ye’ve jist cam? It’s unca fey. He’s unavoydably latchy. He sez in this note tae stert aff wi denner at sivven gin he’s nae back. Sez he’ll explain fin he cams.”

“It seems a peety tae lat the denner spyle,” quo the Editor o a weel-kent daily paper; an syne the Doctor rang the bell.

The Psychologist wis the anely body asides the Doctor an masel fa’d bin at the previous denner. The ither chiels wir Blank, the Editor afore mentioned, a certain journalist, an anither—a quaet, blate chiel wi a beard—fa I didnae ken, an fa, as far as ma owerluikin gaed, niver opened his mou aa evenin. There wis a wheen winnerin at the denner-brod aboot the Time Traiveller’s absence, an I suggestit time traivellin, in a hauf-jocose speerit. The Editor wintit thon explained tae him, an the Psychologist gied him a widden accoont o the “fey paradox an plisky” we’d seen thon day wikk. He wis in the mids o his spikk fin the yett frae the lobby opened slaw an wioot soun. I wis facin the yett, an saw it first. “Fit like!” quo I. “At last!” An the yett opened wider, an the Time Traiveller stude afore us. I gaed a skreich o begeck. “Guid sakes! min, fit’s adee?” speired the Medical Chiel, fa saw him neist. An the hale brod turned tae the yett.

He wis in an unca plicht. His jaiket wis stoory an yirdy, an straikit wi green doon the sleeves; his hair bumshayvelt, an as it seemed tae me greyer—either wi stoor an yird or because its colour hid raelly dwined. His face wis ghaistly pale; his chin hid a broon cut on it—a cut hauf-sained; his luik wis pykit an drawn, as bi strang hurt. Fur a meenit he dauchled in the yett, as gin he’d bin daizzled bi the licht. Syne he cam intae the chaumer. He wauked wi jist sic a hirple as I hae seen in fit sair gangrels. We glowered at him in seelence, expeckin him tae spikk.

He spakk nae a wird, bit cam painfu tae the table, an vrocht a meevement tae the wine. The Editor poored a glaiss o champagne, an pushed it tae him. He suppit it, an it seemed tae dae him guid: fur he luikit roon the brod, an the ghaist o his auld smile flichtered ben his face. “Fit the sorra hae ye bin daein, min?” speired the Doctor. The Time Traiveller didnae seem tae hear.

“Dinna lat me misfit ye,” quo he, wi a certain hubberin spikk. “I’m aa richt.” He dauchled, held oot his glaiss fur mair, an suppit it straicht aff. “Thon’s guid,” he telt us. His een grew brichter, an a feint colour cam intae his chikks. His een flichtered ower oor faces wi a certain dull likin, an syne gaed roon the hett an comfy chaumer. Syne he spakk again, still as it wir finnin his wey amang his wirds. “I’m gaun tae wash an rigg, an syne I’ll cam doon an explain maitters.... Save me a daud o thon mutton. I’m stervin fur a bittie o maet.”

He luikit ower at the Editor, fa wis a rare veesitor, an hoped he wis aa richt. The Editor stertit a speirin. “Tell ye sune,” quo the Time Traiveller. “I’m—fey! Be aa richt in a meenit.”

He pit doon his glaiss, an wauked tae the staircase yett. Again I remairked his hirplin wauk an the saft paddin soun o his fitfa, an staunin up in ma place, I saw his feet as he gaed oot. He’d naethin on them bit a pair o riven, bluid-merked hose. Syne the yett steekit ahin him. I’d hauf a thocht tae follae, till I myndit foo he mislikit ony cairry-on aboot himsel. Fur a meenit, mebbe, ma thochts wir oo-gaitherin. Syne, “Remairkable Behaviour o a Foremaist Scientist,” I heard the Editor spik, thinkin (as wis his wey his) in heidlines. An this brocht ma thochts back tae the bricht denner-brod.

“Fit’s the gemme?” speired the Journalist. “His he bin daein the Amateur Moocher? I dinna follae.” I catched the ee o the Psychologist, an read ma ain thochts in his face. I thocht o the Time Traiveller hirplin painfu upstairs. I dinna think onybody else hid taen tent o his hirplin.

The first tae recover aathegither frae this begeck wis the Medical Chiel, fa rang the bell—the Time Traiveller hated tae hae skiffies wytin at denner—fur a hett plate. At thon the Editor turned tae his knife an fork wi a grumph, an the Seelent Chiel follaed him. The denner wis restertit. Spikk wis exclamatory fur a wee whylie wi gaps o winnerment; an syne the Editor grew steered up in his ill faschence. “Dis oor frien eke oot his modest pey wi a crossin? or his he his Nebuchadnezzar whyles?” he speired.

“I feel certain it’s this maitter o the Time Machine,” quo I, an tuik up the Psychologist’s accoont o oor previous tryst. The new veesitors wir unca dumfounert. The Editor raised doots. “Fit *wis* this time traivellin? A chiel couldnae hap himsel wi stoor bi rowin in a paradox, could he?” An syne, as the notion cam hame tae him, he turned tae caricature. Hid they nae ony claes-besoms in the Future? The Journalist as weel, widnae believe at ony price, an jyned the Editor in the easy wirk o biggin scorn on the hale maitter. They wir baith the new kinno journalist—verra jocose, aff takkin young chiels.

“Oor Speecial Correspondent in the Day efter The Morn reports,” the Journalist wis spikkin—or raither skreichin—fin the Time Traiveller cam back. He wis riggit in ordinar evenin claes, an naethin save his haggard luik wis left o the cheenge that hid stertled me.

“Weel weel,” quo the Editor lauchin, “thon chiels here say ye hae bin traivellin intae the mids o neist wikk! Tell us aa aboot wee Rosebery, will ye? Fit’ll ye takk fur the lot?”

The Time Traiveller cam tae the place keepit fur him witoot a wird. He smiled quaet, in his auld wey. “Far’s ma mutton?” he speired. “Fit a treat it is tae powk a fork intae maet again!”

“Story!” skirled the Editor.

“Story be damned!” quo the Time Traiveller. “I wint somethin tae ett. I winna say a wird til I win some peptone intae my arteries. Thanks. An the satt.”

“Ae word,” quo I. “Hae ye bin time traivellin?”

“Aye,” reponed the Time Traiveller, wi his mou stappit, noddin his heid.

“I’d gie a shillin a line fur a verbatim quote,” the Editor telt him. The Time Traiveller pushed his glaiss tae the Seelent Chiel an rang it wi his fingernail; at thon the Seelent Chiel, fa’d bin glowerin at his face, stertit sudden, an poored him wine. The lave o the denner wis uncomfy. Fur ma ain pairt, sudden speirins keepit on risin tae ma lips, an I daur say it wis the same wi the ithers. The Journalist ettled tae saften the tension bi tellin anecdotes o Hettie Potter. The Time Traiveller gaed aa his attention tae his denner, an shawed the hunger o a gangrel. The Medical Chiel rikkit a cigarette, an watched the Time Traiveller throwe his eelashes. The Seelent Chiel luikit even mair clumsy than ordnar, an drank champagne regul’r an wi determination ooto sheer nervousness. At the hinnereyn the Time Traiveller pushed his ashet awa, an luikit roon us.

“I expeck I maun apologise,” quo he. “I wis jist stervin. I’ve hid a maist bumbazin time.” He raxxed oot his haun fur a cigar, an cut the eyn. “Bit cam intae the smokin-chaumer. It’s ower lang a tale tae tell ower greasy ashets.”

An ringin the bell in passin, he led the wey inno the nearhaun chaumer.

“Ye hae telt Thinggy, an Fit d’ye caat, an Fit’s his nemme aboot the machine?” quo he tae me, leanin back in his easy-cheer an nemmin the three new veesitors.

“Bit the thing’s jist a paradox,” spakk the Editor.

“I canna argy the nicht. I dinna mynd tellin ye the tale, bit I canna argy. I will,” he gaed on, “tell ye the tale o fit his happened tae me, gin ye like, bit ye maunna interrupt. I wint tae tell it. Sairly. Maist o it will soun like leein. Sae be it! It’s true—ilkie wird o it, aa the same. I wis in ma lab at fower o’clock, an since syne … I’ve lived echt days … sic days as nae human body iver lived afore! I’m near worn oot, bit I winna sleep till I’ve telt this maitter tae ye. Syne I’ll gae tae bed. Bit nae interruptions! Is it thon aa richt?”

“Aye aa richt,” spakk the Editor, an the lave o us echoed “Aye.” An wi thon the Time Traiveller stertit his tale as I’ve set it furth. He sat back in his cheer at first, an spakk like a trauchelt chiel. Efter, he grew mair steered up. In screivin it doon I feel wi muckle mair keenness the eeselessness o pen an ink—an, abune aa, ma ain eeselessness—tae set doon its quality. Ye read, I’ll jelouse, attentive eneuch; bit ye canna see the spikker’s fite, sincere face in the bricht cercle o the wee lamp, nur hear the soun o his voyce. Ye canna ken foo his luiks follaed the turns o his tale! Maist o us lippeners wir in shaddae, fur the caules in the smokin-chaumer hidnae bin lichtit, an anely the face o the Journalist an the shanks o the Seelent Chiel frae the knees doon wir lichtit. At first we keekit noo an again at each ither. Efter a whyle we stoppit daein thon, an luikit anely at the Time Traiveller’s face.

**IV Time Traivellin**

“I telt a wheen o ye last Thursday o the principles o the Time Machine, an shawed ye the actual ferlie itsel, near feenished in the wirkshop. There it is noo, a bittie traivel-worn, raelly; an ane o the ivory bars is crackit, an a braiss rail booed; bit the lave o’t is soun eneuch. I expeckit tae feenish it on Friday; bit on Friday, fin the pittin thegether wis near dane, I fand that ane o the nickel bars wis exactly ae inch ower short, an thon I’d tae get revrocht; sae the thing wisnae hale until this foreneen. It wis at ten o’clock the day that the first o aa Time Machines stertit its career. I gaed it a hinmaist dunt, tried aa the screws again, pit ae mair drap o ile on the quartz rod, an sat masel in the saiddle. I jelouse a suicide fa hauds a pistol tae his harns feels much the same winner at fit’ll cam neist as I felt then. I tuik the stertin lever in ae haun an the brake in the ither, pressed the first, an near richt aff the secunt. I seemed tae birl; I felt a widdendreme sensation o faain; an, luikin roun, I saw the lab exack as afore. Hid onythin happened? Fur a meenit I suspeckit that ma harns hid swickit me. Syne I notit the clock. A meenit afore, as it seemed, it hid stude at a meenit or sae by ten; noo it wis near hauf-past three!

“I drew a braith, set ma teeth, grippit the stertin lever wi baith hauns, an gaed aff wi a dunt. The lab grew hazy an gaed derk. Mrs. Watchett cam in an wauked, as if wioot seein me, tae the gairden yett. I jelouse it tuik her a meenit or sae tae cross the place, bit tae me she seemed tae sheet ower the chaumer like a rocket. I pressed the lever ower tae its extreme position. The nicht cam like the turnin ooto a lamp, an in anither meenit cam the morn. The lab grew feint an hazy, syne feinter an iver feinter. Tomorrow nicht cam black, syne day again, nicht again, day again, faister an faister still. An sweelin mummle filled ma lugs, an a fey, dumb bumbazement cam ower ma harns.

“I’m feart I canna share the fey feelins o time traivellin. They’re unca misfittin. There’s a feelin exack like thon ye hae on a switchback—o a helpless heidlang meevement! I felt the same awfu wytin, as weel, fur a nearhaun smash. As I pit on speed, nicht follaed day like the flappin o a blaik wing. The dim makk o the lab seemed sune tae faa awa frae me, an I saw the sun lowpin faist ower the lift, crossin it ilkie meenit, an ilkie meenit merkin a day. I jeloused the lab hid bin connached an I’d cam intae the open air. I’d a dim sicht o scaffoldin, bit I wis already gaun ower faist tae be kennin o ony meevin ferliess. The slawest snail that iver crawled hashed bye ower faist fur me. The skinklin chyne o derkness an licht wis unca painfu tae the ee. Syne, in the brukken derknesses, I saw the meen birlin faist ben her quarters frae new tae full, an hid a feint glisk o the cerclin starnies. Sune, as I gaed on, still winnin speed, the cheengin o nicht an day melled intae ae ongaun blaeness; the lift tuik on a winnerfu deepness o blue, a braw sheenin colour like thon o early gloamin; the yarkin sun becam a straik o a lowe, a daizzlin arch, in space; the meen a feinter flichterin ban; an I could see naethin o the starnies, save noo an again a brichter cercle flichterin in the blue.

“The lanscape wis misty an feint. I wis still on the braeside on which this hoose noo stauns, an the shouder raise abune me grey an dweeble. I saw trees growin an cheengin like plufferts o rikk, noo broon, noo green; they grew, spreid, chittered, an dwined awa. I saw muckle biggins rise up feint an braw, an pass like dwaums. The hale surface o the Eirde seemed cheenged—thawin an rinnin unner ma een. The wee hauns on the dials that shawed ma speed hashed roon faister an faister. Sune I notit that the sun belt sweyed up an doon, frae solstice tae solstice, in a meenit or less, sae that ma pace wis ower a year a meenit; an meenit bi meenit the fite snaa wheeched ower the warld, an vanished, an wis follaed bi the bricht, wee green o spring.

“The unpleisant feelins o the stert wir less sair noo. They melled at the hinnereyn intae a kinno hysterical steer. I remairked, forbye, a clumsy sweyin o the machine, fur which I couldnae accoont. Bit ma thochts wir ower kerfuffled tae takk tent o it, sae wi a kinno gyteness growin on me, I flang masel intae the future. At first I scarce thocht o stoppin, scarce thocht o onythin bit thon new feelins. Bit sune a fresh kirn o kennins raise up in ma harns—a kinno curiosity an there wi a kinno dreid—until at the hinnereyn they tuik me ower aathegither. Fit fey developments o humanity, fit winnerfu advaunces on oor basic ceevilisation, I thocht, michtnae appear fin I cam tae luik near intae the dim sliddery warld that raced an flichtered afore ma een! I saw muckle an braw biggins risin aboot me, mair massive than ony biggins o oor ain time, an yet, as it seemed, biggit o glent an rikk. I saw a richer green rin up the braeside, an bide thonner, wioot ony wintry devaul. Even ben the veil o ma dumfounerment the Eirde seemed verra bonnie. An sae ma thochts cam roon tae the maitter o stoppin.

“The fey risk lay in the likelihood o ma finnin some substance in the space that masel, or the machine, occupeed. Sae lang as I traivelled at a heich speed ben time, this scarce maittered: I wis, sae tae spikk, eased—wis skytin like haar ben the gaps o intervenin substances! Bit tae cam tae a stop meant jammin masel, molecule bi molecule, intae fitever lay in ma wey; meant bringin ma atoms intae sic close contack wi thon o the obstacle that a profun chemical reaction—mebbe a far-raxxin explosion—wid result, an blaw masel an ma gear ooto aa likely dimensions—intae the Unkent. This likelihood hid occurred tae me ower an ower whyle I wis makkin the machine; bit syne I’d blythely accepit it as an unavoydable risk—ane o the risks a chiel his got tae takk! Noo the risk wis fated, I nae langer saw it in the same cheerfu licht. The fack is that, insensibly, the hale feyness o aathin, the sickly jarrin an sweyin o the machine, abune aa, the feelin o ongaun faain, hid aathegither steered up ma nerves. I telt masel that I could niver stop, an wi a upsteerin o huff I sattled on stoppin straicht aff. Like an impatient gype, I rugged ower the lever, an incontinent, the thing gaed birlin ower, an I wis flung heidlang ben the air.

“There wis the soun o a knell o thunner in ma lugs. I micht hae bin stunned fur a meenit. A peetiless hail wis hissin roon me, an I wis sittin on saft girse afore the cowpit machine. Aathin still luikit grey, bit syne I remairked that the kerfuffle in ma lugs wis gaen. I luikit roon me. I wis on fit luikit tae be a wee lawn in a gairden, cercled bi rhododendron busses, an I saw that their mauve an poorple flouers wir drappin in a shouer unner the onding o the hailstanes. The stottin, dauncin hail hung in a wee cloud ower the machine, an drave alang the grun like rikk. In a meenitt I wis weet tae the skin. ‘Fine walcam,’ quo I, ‘tae a chiel fa’s traivelled coontless years tae see ye.’

“Syne I thocht fit a gype I wis tae get weet. I stude up an luikit roon me. A michty figure, carved it seemed in some fite stane, lowered feint ayont the rhododendrons ben the hazy doonpish. Bit aa else o the warld wis inveesible.

“Ma thochts wid be hard tae tell o. As the columns o hail grew thinner, I saw the fite figure mair distinck. It wis verra large, fur a siller birk-tree touched its shouder. It wis o fite merble, in makk somethin like a winged sphinx, bit the wings, insteid o bein cairried vertical at the sides, wir spreid sae that it seemed tae lichter. The pedestal, it luikit tae me, wis o bronze, an wis happpit wi verdigris. It chaunced that the face wis tae me; the sichtless een seemed tae watch me; there wis the feint shadda o a smile on the lips. It wis unca weather-tashed, an thon impairtit an unpleisant thochtie o blicht. I stood looking at it for a little space—half a minute, perhaps, or half an hour. It seemed tae advaunce an tae draw back as the hail drave afore it denser or thinner. At the hinnereyn I tuik ma een frae it fur a meenit, an saw that the hail curtain hid worn threidbare, an that the lift wis lichtenin wi the promise o sun.

“I luikit up again at the hunkerin fite shape, an the full bauldness o ma trip cam o a suddenty on me. Fit micht appear fin that hazy curtain wis aathegether drawn back? Fit micht nae hae happened tae men? Fit gin cooresness hid grown intae an ordnar passion? Fit if in this whyle the race hid tint its manliness, an hid grown intae somethin nae human, unsympathetic, an unca pouerfu? I micht seem some auld-warld savage breet, aa the mair dreidfu an scunnerin fur oor common likeness—an orra craitur tae be carelessly killt.

“Aaready I saw ither michty shapes—muckle biggins wi fyky parapets an heich columns, wi a widded braeside feintly creepin in on me ben the dwinin storm. I wis grippit wi a panic fleg. I turned terrifeed tae the Time Machine, an warssled hard tae rejig it. As I did sae the glents o the sun strukk ben the thunnerplump. The grey doonpish wis swypit aside an vanished like the treelipin claes o a ghaist. Abune me, in the strang blue o the simmer lift, some feint broon skirps o cloud birled intae naethin-ness. The muckle biggins aboot me stude oot clear an distinck, sheenin wi the weet o the thunnerplump, an pykit oot in fite bi the unthawed hailstanes haived up alang their coorses. I felt nyakkit in a fey warld. I felt as mebbe a birdie may feel in the caller air, kennin the erne wings abune will swoop. Ma fleg grew tae terror. I tuik a braith, set ma teeth, an again warssled forcie, wrist an knee, wi the machine. It gaed unner ma wud tyauve an cowped ower. It strukk ma chin hard. Ae haun on the saiddle, the ither on the lever, I stude pechin sair aa set tae moont again.

“Bit wi thon recovery o a faist get awa ma virr cam back. I luikit mair ill faschent an less fearfu at thon warld o the hyne aff future. In a cercular openin, heich up in the waa o the nearer hoose, I saw a boorich o fowk riggit in rich saft claes. They’d seen me, an their faces wir turned tae me.

“Syne I heard voyces camin nearhaun. Camin ben the busses bi the Fite Sphinx wir the heids an shouders o chiels rinnin. Ane o these cam oot in a pathie leadin straicht tae the wee lawn on which I stude wi ma machine. He wis a slicht craitur—mebbe fower fit heich—riggit in a poorple tunic, gerdled at the wyme wi a leather belt. Sandals or buskins—I couldnae makk oot fit—wir on his feet; his shanks wir nyaakit tae the knees, an his heid wis bunnetless. Takin tent o thon, I felt fur the first time foo hett the air wis.

“He strukk me as bein a verra bonnie an gracefu craitur, bit unca dweeble. His reiddish face myndit me o the mair bonnie kinno consumptive—thon fevered bonnieness o which we eesed tae hear sae muckle. At the sicht o him I o a suddenty won back smeddum. I tuik ma hauns frae the machine.

**V In the Golden Age**

“In anither meenit we wir stauin face tae face, masel an this dweeble craitur frae the future. He cam straicht up tae me an lauched intae ma een. The wint frae his luiks o ony merk o fleg strukk me at aince. Syne he turned tae the twa ithers fa wir follaein him an spakk tae them in a fey an verra sweete an liquid spikk.

“There wir ithers camin, an sune a wee boorich o mebbe eicht or ten o thon braw craiturs wir aboot me. Ane o them spakk tae me. It cam intae ma heid, unca eneuch, that ma voyce wis ower roch an deep fur them. Sae I shook ma heid, an, pyntin tae ma lugs, shook it again. He cam a step forrit, dauched, an syne touched ma haun. Syne I felt ither saft wee tentacles on ma back an shouders. They wintit tae makk siccar I wis real. There wis naethin in this at aa

fearie. Mairower, there wis somethin aboot thon bonnie wee fowk that brocht confidence—a gracefu douceness, a kinno bairnlike ease. An mairower, they luikit sae dweeble that I could pictur masel haivin the hale dizzen o them aboot like ninepins. Bit I vrocht o a suddenty a meevement tae warn them fin I saw their wee pink hauns powkin at the Time Machine. Blythely syne, fin it wisnae ower late, I thocht o a danger I’d forgotten afore, an raxxin ower the bars o the machine I unscrewed the wee levers that wid set it in meevement, an pit thon in ma pooch. Syne I turned again tae see fit I could dae in the wey o leid.

“An syne, luikin mair near intae their faces, I saw a wheen farrer rareities in their Dresden cheena type o bonnieness. Their hair, that wis uniformly curly, cam tae a sherp eyn at the neck an chikk; there wisnae the feintest thochtie o it on the face, an their lugs wir verra smaa. The mous wir smaa, wi bricht reid, raither thin lips, an the wee chins ran tae a pynt. The een wir large an douce; an—this micht seem egotism on ma pairt—I thocht even that there wis a kinno wint o the interest I micht hae expeckit in them.

“As they vrocht nae tyauve tae spikk wi me, bit jist stude roon me smilin an spikkin in saft curmurrin notes tae ain anither, I stertit the spikk. I pyntit tae the Time Machine an tae masel. Syne, dauchlin fur a meenit foo tae express Time, I pyntit tae the sun. At aince an unca bonnie wee body in chequered poorple an fite follaed ma meevement, an syne bumbazed me bi copyin the soun o thunner.

“Fur a meenit I wis dumfounert, tho the import o his meevement wis plain eneuch. The speirin hid cam intae ma harns faist: wir thon craiturs gypess? Ye micht hardly unnerstaun foo it tuik me. Ye see, I’d aywis jeloused that the fowk o the year Eicht Hunner an Twa Thoosan odd wid be unca afore us in kennin, art, aathin. Syne ane o them o a suddenty speired me a question that shawed him tae hae the intellectual level o ane o oor five-year-auld bairns—socht me, in fack, gin I’d cam frae the sun in a thunnerplum! It lat lowse the judgment I’d suspendit on their claes, their dweeble licht limbs, an dweeble luiks. A flow o disappyntment hashed ower ma harns. Fur a meenit I felt that I’d biggit the Time Machine eeselessly.

“I noddit, pyntit tae the sun, an gaed them sic a gran renderin o a thunnerplump as bumbazed them. They aa drew back a step or sae an booed. Syne cam ane lauchin tae me, cairryin a chyne o bonnie flooers aathegether new tae me, an pit it aboot ma thrapple. The act wis received wi melodious clappin; an sune they wir aa rinnin back an fore fur flooers, an lauchin haivin them on me till I wis near smored wi flooers. Ye fa hae niver seen the like can scarce pictur fit braw an winnerfu flooers coontless years o culture hid vrocht. Syne some body suggestit that their playthin should be shawn aa in the nearhaun biggin, an sae I wis led by the sphinx o fite merble, that hid seemed tae watch me aa the whyle wi a smile at ma bumbazement, tae a muckle grey biggin o frettit stane. As I gaed wi them the myndin o ma confident thochts o a profun grave an intellectual posterity cam, wi unstoppable lauchter, tae ma harns.

“The biggin hid a muckle entry, an wis aathegether o muckle makk. I wis naturally maist occupeed wi the growin boorich o wee fowk, an wi the muckle open yetts that gappit afore me derk an oorie. Ma general sicht o the warld I saw ower their heids wis a taigled heeze o bonnie busses an flooers, a lang negleckit an yet seggless gairden. I saw a nummer o heich spikes o fey fite flooers, meisurin a fit mebbe ower the spreid o the waxen petals. They grew skittered, as gin wud, amang the mirl o busses, bit, as I say, I didnae luik at them close at this time. The Time Machine wis left tint on the girse amang the rhododendrons.

“The arch o the yett wis brawly carved, bit naturally I didnae luik at the carvin verra nerra, tho I thocht I saw thochties o auld Phœnician decorations as I gaed ben, an it strukk me that they wir verra ill brukken an weather-tashed. A wheen mair brichtly riggit fowk met me in the yett, an sae we gaed in, masel, claithed in mochie nineteenth-century claes, luikin unca eneuch, trickit oot wi flooers, an encercled bi a birlin heeze o bricht, saft-coloured claes an sheenin fite limbs, in a tunefu furl o lauchter an lauchin spikk.

“The muckle yett opened intae a simi’lar sized haa hung wi broon. The reef wis in shadda, an the windaes, pairtly glazed wi coloured glaiss an pairtly unglazed, lat in a saft licht. The fleer wis vrocht o muckle blocks o some verra hard fite metal, nae plates nur slabs—blocks, an it wis sae far worn, as I judged bi the gaun back an fore o lang gaen generations, as tae be deep ruttit alang the mair eesed weys. Across the length wir coontless brods vrocht o slabs o polished stane, reistit, mebbe, a fit frae the fleer, an on thon wir howps o fruits. Some I kent as a kinno hypertrophied rasp an orange, bit fur the maist pairt they wir fey.

“Atween the brods wir skittered a muckle heeze o cushions. On thon ma guides dowpit thirsels, signin fur me tae dae the same. Wi a bonnie wint o ceremony they stertit tae ett the fruit wi their hauns, haivin peel an stakks, an sae furth, intae the roun openins in the sides o the brods. I wisnae laith tae follae their example, fur I felt droothy an hungeret. As I did sae I owerluikit the haa at ma leisur.

“An mebbe the ferlie that strukk me maist wis its mochy luik. The stained-glaiss windaes, that shawed anely a geometric pattern, wir brukken in mony airts, an the curtains that hung ower the laigher eyn wir thick wi stoor. An it catched ma ee that the neuk o the merble brod near me wis crackit. Hoosaeiver, the oweraa effeck wis verra rich an braw. There wir, mebbe, twa hunner fowk ettin in the haa, an maist o them, sat as near tae me as they could, wir luikin at me wi interest, their wee een sheenin ower the fruit they wir ettin. Aa wir riggit in the same saft, an yet strang, silky material.

“Fruit, bi the wey, wis aa their diet. Thon fowk o the hyne aff future wir strict vegetarians, an while I wis wi them, in spite o a wheen maet wintins, I’d tae be frugivorous as weel. Forbye, I fand efterwards that shelts, nowt, yowes, tykes, hid follaed the Ichthyosaurus intae extinction. Bit the fruits wir verra delichtfu; ane, in partic’lar, that seemed tae be in sizzon aa the time I wis thonner—a flooery ferlie in a three-sided husk—wis speecially guid, an I vrocht it ma staple. At first I wis bumbazed bi aa thon fey fruits, an bi the fey flooers I saw, bit eftir I stertit tae see their import.

“Hoosaeiver, I’m tellin ye o ma fruit denner in the hyne aff future noo. Sae sune as ma hunger wis a bittie eased, I decidit tae makk a strang tyauve tae larn the spikk o thon new chiels o mine. Clearly thon wis the neist thing tae dae. The fruits luikit tae be a handy thing tae stert wi, an haudin ane o thon up I stertit a heeze o speirin souns an meevements. I’d a rowth o a tyauve in convoyin ma meanin. At first ma ettles met wi a glower o begeck or ongaun lauchter, bit sune a fair-haired wee craitur seemed tae ken ma intent an repeatit a nemme. They’d tae blether an explain the maitter a lang whyle tae each ither, an ma first ettles tae makk the bonnie wee souns o their leid caused a rowth o rael, if unceevil, lauchter. Hoosaeiver, I felt like a dominie midst bairns, an cairriet on, an sune I’d twinty noun substantives at least that I kent; an syne I won tae demonstrative pronouns, an even the verb ‘tae ett.’ Bit it wis slaw wirk, an the wee fowk sune weariet an wintit tae win awa frae ma speirins, sae I set on, raither bi necessity, on lattin them gie their lessons in wee skirps fin they wir in the mood. An verra wee skirps I fand they wir afore lang, fur I niver met fowk mair lazy or mair easy trauchelt.

**VI The Sunset o Man**

“A fey thing I sune kent aboot ma wee hosts, an thon wis their wint o interest. They’d cam tae me wi gleg skirls o begeck, like bairns, bit, like bairns they’d sune stop owerluikin me, an stravaig awa efter some ither toy. The denner an ma bletherin sterts eyndit, I saw fur the first time that near aa thon fa’d encercled me at first wir gaen. It’s fey, as weel, foo faist I cam tae disregaird thon wee fowk. I gaed oot throw the yett intae the sunlicht warld again as sune as ma hunger wis satisfeed. I wis aywis meetin mair o thon chiels o the future, fa wid follae me a wee whylie, sklaik an lauch aboot me, an, haein smiled an wyved in a frienly wey, leave me again tae ma ain ploys.

“The calm o gloamin wis on the warld as I cam oot frae the muckle haa, an the scene wis lichtit bi the hett glimmer o the settin sun. At first maitters wir verra dumfounerin. Aathin wis sae aathegither different frae the warld I’d kent—even the flooers. The muckle biggin I’d left wis set on the brae o a braid river glen, bit the Thames hid meeved, mebbe, a mile frae its present airt. I resolved tae climm tae the tap o a knowe, mebbe a mile an a hauf awa, frae far I could get a braider view o this oor planet in the year Eicht Hunner an Twa Thoosan Sivven Hunner an Ane, A.D. Fur thon, I should explain, wis the date the wee dials o ma machine recordit.

“As I wauked I wis watchin fur ilkie impression that could possibly help tae explain the state o wracked glamourie in which I fand the warld—fur wracked it wis. A wee wey up the knowe, fur instance, wis a muckle howp o granite, bun thegether bi heezes o aluminium, a braid labyrinth o heich waas an crumpled howps, amid which wir thick howps o verra bonnie pagoda-like plants—nettles mebbe—bit winnerfu tintit wi broon aboot the leaves, an wioot stingers. It wis clear the connached leavins o some muckle biggin, tae fit eyn biggit I couldnae fin oot. It wis here that I wis fated, at a later date, tae hae a verra fey experience—the first hint o a still mair fey finnin—bit o thon I’ll spikk in its richt place.

“Luikin roon, wi a sudden thocht, frae a terrace far I dauchled fur a while, I saw that there wir nae smaa hooses tae be seen. It luikit like the single hoose, an mebbe even the hoosehold, hid vanished. Here an thonner amang the greenery wir palace-like biggins, bit the hoose an the cottage, that makk sic characteristic merks o oor ain English airt, hid gaen.

“‘Communism,’ I telt masel.

“An on the heels o thon cam anither thocht. I luikit at the hauf-dizzen wee fowk that wir follaein me. Syne aa at aince, I saw that aa hid the same kinno rigoot, the same saft hairless face, an the same quine-like roon-ness o limb. It micht seem fremmit, mebbe, that I hidnae taen tent o this afore. Bit aathin wis sae fremmit. Noo, I saw the fack plain eneuch. In claes, an in aa the differences o texture an bearin that noo merk aff the sexes frae each ither, thon fowk o the future wir alike. An the bairns luikit tae ma een tae be bit miniatures o their parents. I judged syne that the bairns o thon time wir verra mature, pheesically onywey, an I fand efterwards a rowth o pruif o ma thochts.

“Seein the ease an security far thon fowk wir leevin, I thocht that this close likeness o the sexes wis efter aa ye micht expeck; fur the virr o a chiel an the saftness o a wumman, the institution o the faimily, an the differentiation o darg is jist the need o an age o pheesical force. Far population is balanced an plentifu, ower muckle bairns becams an evil raither than a blissin tae the State; far violence cams bit rare an littlins are safe, there’s less need—fegs there’s nae need—fur an efficient faimily, an the specialisation o the sexes regairds their bairn’s wints disappears. We see some stert o this even in oor ain time, an in this future age it wis complete. Thon, I maun remind ye, wis ma thocht at the time. Later, I wis tae larn foo far it drappit short o the reality.

“Fin I wis thinkin on these maitters, ma een wir drawn bi a bonnie wee biggin, like a wallie aneth a cupola. I thocht in a fleetin wey o the feyness o wallies still existin, an syne restertit the threid o ma jelousin. There wir nae muckle biggins tae the tap o the knowe, an as ma waukin pouers wir evident mervellous, I wis sune left alane fur the first time. Wi a fey sense o freedom an adventure I hashed on up tae the tap.

“Thonner I fand a seat o some yalla metal that I didnae ken, bladdit in airts wi a kinno pinkish roost an hauf smored in saft fogg, the airm-rests cast an filed inno the makk o griffins’ heids. I sat doon on it, an I owerluikit the braid view o oor auld warld unner the sunset o thon lang day. It wis as swete an braw a view as I hae iver seen. The sun hid already gane ablow the horizon an the wast wis flamin gowd, touched wi some horizontal bars o poorple an crammosie. Ablow wis the glen o the Thames, far the river lay like a ban o polished steel. I hae already spukken o the muckle palaces skittered aboot amang the mirled greenery, a wheen in wrack an some still occupeed. Here an there raise a fite or siller biggin in the waste gairden o the Eirde, here an thonner cam the sherp upricht line o some cupola or obelisk. There wir nae busses, nae merks o ainership richts, nae merks o agriculture; the hale Eirde hid becam a gairden.

“Sae luikin, I stertit tae pit ma thochts on the ferlies I’d seen, an as it shapit itsel tae me thon evenin, ma thochts wir somethin in this wey. (Efterwards I fand I’d gotten anely a hauf truith—or anely a glisk o ae pairt o the truith.)

“It luikit tae me that I’d chaunced on humanity on the dwine. The reid sunset set me thinkin o the sunset o man. Fur the first time I stertit tae jelouse a fey result o the social tyauve in which we’re taen up wi eenoo. An yet, cam tae think, it’s a logical result eneuch. Virr is the ootcam o wint; security sets a premium on dweebleness. The wirk o impruvin the conditions o life—the true ceevilisin process that makks life mair an mair siccar—hid gane steidily ontae a climax. Ae triumph o a united humanity ower Natur hid follaed anither. Things that are noo jist dwaums hid becam projecks deliberate pit in haun an cairriet forrit. An the hairst wis fit I saw!

“Efter aa, the sanitation an the agriculture o eenoo are still in the basic stage. The science o oor time his attacked jist a wee depairtment o the airt o human ills, bit, even sae, it spreids its wirk verra steidy an persistent. Oor agriculture an horticulture connach a segg jist here an thonner an growe mebbe twinty or sae o halesome plants, leavin the greater nummer tae fecht oot a balance as they can. We improve oor best-likit plants an breets—an foo fyew they are—cannily bi weel-wyled breedin; noo a new an better peach, noo a seedless grape, noo a sweter an larger flooer, noo a mair handy breed o nowt. We makk them better gradual, because oor ideals are feint an cannie, an oor lear is verra smaa; because Natur, as weel, is blate an slaw in oor clumsy hauns. Some day aa this’ll be better red up, an still better. Thon’ s the drift o the watter in spite othe eddies. The hale warld will be cliver,larned, an wirkin thegither; things will meeve faister an faister tae the control o Natur. In the eyn, wycely an cannily we’ll reset the balance o breet an veggie life tae suit oor human wints.

“Thon reset, I jelouse, mau hae bin dane, an dane weel; dane forbye fur aa Time, in the space o Time ben which ma machine hid lowpit. The air wis free frae midgies, the yird frae seggs or foosht; aawye wir fruits an swete an delichtfu flooers; skinklin butterflees flew back an fore. The ideal o preventive medicine wis won. Ills hid bin blootered. I saw nae pruif o ony smittin ills durin aa ma bide. An I’ll hae tae tell ye eftir that even the ongauns o blicht an foosht hid bin profun affeckit bi thon cheenges.

“Social triumphs, as weel, hid bin won. I saw man hoosed in braw bields, brawly riggit, an as yet I’d fand them warsslin in nae darg. There wir nae merks o tyauve, neither social nur economical warssle. The shoppie, the ads, traffic, aa thon commerce that makk up the maitters o oor warld, wis gane. It wis natural on thon gowden evenin that I’d lowp at the notion o a social heiven. The tyauve o increasin fowk hid bin met, I jeloused, an fowk nummers hid stoppit tae grow.

“Bit wi this cheenge in state cams inevitabe adaptations tae the cheenge. Fit, unless biological science is a heeze o mistakks, is the cause o human lear an virr? Hardship an freedom: states unner which the eident, strang, an subtle survive an the weaker gae tae the waa; states that pit a premium on the leal frienship o capable men, on self-restraint, cannieness, an decision. An the core o the faimily, an the feelins that rise thonner, the wud jealousy, the douceness fur littlins, parental self-devotion, aa fand their justification an support in the nearhaun dangers o the young. *Noo*, far are thon nearhaun dangers? There’s a feelin risin, an it’ll grow, agin wadded jealousy, agin wud maternity, agin passion o aa sorts; unnecessar ferlies noo, an ferlies that makk us uncomfy, wud survivals, ill suitit tae a genteel an pleisunt life.

“I thocht o the pheesical slichtness o the fowk, their wint o lear, an thon muckle rowth o wracks, an it strengthened ma thocht o a perfeck owerpouerin o Natur. Fur efter the fecht cams Quaet. Humanity hid bin strang, forcie, an cliver, an hid made eese o aa its rowth o virr tae cheenge the states unner which it gaed on. An noo cam the reaction o the cheenged states.

“Unner the new states o perfeck comfort an security, thon reistless virr, that wi us is strength, wid becam dweebleness. Even in oor ain time a wheen trends an wints, aince necessar tae survive, are an ongaun soorce o failure. Pheesical bauldness an the luve o fecht, fur instance, are nae great help—micht even be hinners—tae a ceevilised chiel. An in a state o pheesical balance an security, pouer, lear as weel as the pheesical, wid be ooto place. Fur coontless years I jeloused there’d bin nae danger o war or lane violence, nae danger frae wud breets, nae dwinin smitt tae nott strength o makk, nae need o darg. Fur sic a life, fit we should caa the dweeble are as weel riggit oot as the strang, are indeed nae langer dweeble. Better riggit indeed they are, fur the strang wid be deaved bi a virr fur which there wis nae ootlet. Nae doot the braw bonnnieness o the biggins I saw wis the ootcam o the hinmaist steerins o the noo eeseless virr o man afore it sattled doon intae perfeck harmony wi the state unner far it bedd—the fleerish o thon triumph that stertit the hinmaist great peace. This his iver bin the weird o virr in security; it takks tae art an tae eroticism, an syne cam lazieness an dwinin.

“Even thon artistic steer wid at last dee awa—hid near deed in the Time I saw. Tae rigg thirsels wi flooers, tae daunce, tae sing in the sunlicht: sae muckle wis tint o the artistic speerit, an nae mair. Even thon wid dwine in the eyn intae a blythe lazieness. We’re keepit keen on the grindstane o pain an wint, an it seemed tae me that here wis thon hatefu grindstane brukken at last!

“As I stude thonner in the gaitherin derk I thocht that in this simple explanation I’d maistered the problem o the warld—maistered the hale secret o thon braw fowk. Mebbe the checks they’d vrocht fur the increase o fowk hid succeeded ower weel, an their nummers hid raither dwined than keepit steidy. Thon wid accoont fur the teem wracks. Verra simple wis ma explanation, an likely eneuch—as maist wrang theories are!

**VII A Sudden Begeck**

“Fin I stude thonner thinkin ower this ower perfeck triumph o man, the full meen, yalla an gibbous, cam up ooto an owerflow o siller licht in the nor-east. The bricht wee bodies stoppit tae meeve aboot ablow, a sounless hoolet flichtered by, an I chittered wi the jeel o the nicht. I settled on climmin tae far I could sleep.

“I luikit fur the biggin I kent. Syne ma ee traivelled alang tae the figure o the Fite Sphinx on the pedestal o bronze, growin distinck as the licht o the risin meen grew brichter. I could see the siller birk agin it. Thonner wis the taigle o rhododendron busses, blaik in the dweeble licht, an there wis the wee lawn. I luikit at the lawn again. A fey doot jeeled ma blytheness. ‘Na,’ quo I stootly tae masel, ‘thon wisnae the lawn.’

“Bit it *wis* the lawn. Fur the fite leprous face o the sphinx wis taewards it. Can you pictur fit I felt as this kennin cam hame tae me? Bit ye canna. The Time Machine wis gane!

“At aince, like a skelp ower the face, cam the likelihood o lossin ma ain age, o bein left eeseless in this fremmit new warld. The bare thocht o it wis a rael pheesical feelin. I could fin it grip me at the thrapple an stop ma braithin. In anither meenit I wis in a steer o fleg an rinnin wi muckle lowpin strides doon the brae. Aince I hytered heidlang an cut ma face; I tint nae time in stoppin the bluid, bit lowped up an ran on, wi a hett treetle doon ma chikk an chin. Aa the whyle I ran I wis sayin tae masel: ‘They hae meeved it a bittie, haived it unner the busses ooto the wey.’ Hoosaeiver, I ran wi aa ma micht. Aa the whyle, wi the kennin that whyles cams wi unca dreid, I kent that sic assurance wis gyte, kent instinctive that the machine wis meeved ooto ma finnin. Ma braith cam sair. I jelouse I ran the hale wey frae the knowe heid tae the wee lawn, twa miles mebbe, in ten meenits. An I’m nae a young chiel. I banned oot lood, as I ran, at ma unca glekitness in leavin the machine, wastin guid braith wi thon. I skreiched lood, an nane reponed. Nae a craitur seemed tae be steerin in thon meenlicht warld.

“Fin I reached the lawn ma warst flegs wir true. Nae a merk o the thing wis tae be seen. I felt feint an cauld fin I faced the teem airt amang the blaik taigle o busses. I ran roon it wudly, as gin the thing micht be happit in a neuk, an syne stoppit faist, wi ma hauns grippin ma hair. Abune me touered the sphinx, on the bronze pedestal, fite, sheenin, leprous, in the licht o the risin meen. It luikit tae smile tae mock ma wae.

“I micht hae soothed masel bi thinkin the wee fowk hid pit the mechanism in a bield fur me, hid I nae felt assured o their pheesical an kennin eeselessness. Thon’s fit scunnered me: the sense o some unsuspeckit pouer, throw fas intervention ma machine hid gaen. Yet, fur ae thing I felt better: unless some ither age hid vrocht its exack copy, the machine couldnae hae meeved in time. The set up o the levers—I’ll shaw ye the wey later—stoppit onybody frae ficherin wi it in thon wey fin they wir meeved, an it wis hid, anely in space. Bit syne, far could it be?

“I think I maun hae hid a kinno frenzy. I mynd rinnin forcie in an oot amang the meenlicht busses aa roon the sphinx, an stertlin some fite breet that, in the feint licht, I tuik fur a wee deer. I mynd, as weel, late thon nicht, threwshin the busses wi ma grippit neive til ma neives wir hurtit an bleedin frae the brukken twigs. Syne, sabbin an ravin in ma steered up o harns, I gaed doon tae the muckle biggin o stane. The muckle haa wis derk, seelent, an teem. I skytit on the roch fleer, an drappt ower ane o the malachite brods, near brakkin ma shin. I lichtit a spunk an gaed on bye the stoory curtains, o which I hae telt ye.

“Thonner I fand a secunt muckle haa happit wi cushions, far, mebbe, twenty or sae o the wee fowk wir sleepin. I hae nae doot they fand ma secunt appearance fremmit eneuch, camin o a suddenty ooto the quaet derkness wi unca souns an the splooter an fleerish o a spunk. Fur they’d forgotten aboot spunks. ‘Far’s ma Time Machine?’ I stertit, greetin like an angeret bairns, layin hauns on them an shakkin them up thegether. It maun hae bin verra fey tae them. A puckle lauched, maist o them luikit sair fleggit. Fin I saw them staunin roon me, it cam intae ma heid that I wis daein as daft a thing as it wis possible fur me tae dae unner the circumstances, in ettlin tae restert the feelin o fleg. Fur, rizzonin frae their daylicht weys, I thocht that fleg maun be tint.

“Straicht aff, I flang doon the spunk, an caain ane o the fowk ower in ma coorse, gaed hyterin ben the muckle ettin-haa again, oot unner the meenlicht. I heard skirls o fleg an their wee feet rinnin an hyterin this wey an thon. I dinnae mynd aa I did as the meen creepit up the lift. I jelouse it wis the unexpeckit natur o ma loss that steered me up. I felt eeselessly cut aff frae ma ain kind—a fremmit breet in an fremmit warld. I maun hae raved back an fore, skirlin an greetin on God an ma Weird. I hae a myndin o unca fooner, as the lang nicht o wae wore awa; o luikin in this unca placie an thon; o grippin amang meenlict wracks an touchin fey craiturs in the blaik shaddas; at the hinnereyn, o spauchlin on the grun near the sphinx an greetin wi oot an oot wae, even roose at the daftness o leavin the machine haein wore awa wi ma virr. I hid naethin left bit wae. Syne I sleepit, an fin I waukened again it wis full day, an twa spurgies wir stottin roon me on the girse nearhaun ma airm.

“I sat up in the caller mornin, ettlin tae mynd foo I’d gotten thonner, an foo I’d hid sic a profun sense o teemness an wae. Syne maitters cam clear in ma thochts. Wi the plain, rizzonable daylicht, I could luik maitters fair in the face. I saw the wud daftness o ma ongauns owernicht, an I could rizzon wi masel. ‘Pictur the wirst?’ I thocht. ‘Pictur the machine aathegether tint—mebbe wracked? It wis best tae be calm an cannie, tae larn the wey o the fowk, tae win a clear thocht o the kinno ma loss, an the wey o winnin materials an gear; sae that in the eyn, mebbe, I mich makk anither.’ Thon wid be ma anely hope, a puir hope, mebbe, bit better than wae. An, efter aa, it wis a bonnie an fey warld.

“Bit likely the machine hid anely bin taen awa. Forbye, I maun be calm an wyte, finn its hidin-hole, an win it back bi forceiness or bein sleekit. An wi thon I sclimmed tae ma feet an luikit aboot me, winnerin far I could wash. I felt foonert, stair, an traivel-manky. The caller mornin gart me wint tae be clean as weel. I’d worn oot me feelins. Mairower, as I gaed aboot ma day, I fand masel winnerin at ma unca steer owernicht. I vrocht a cannie owerluik o the grun aboot the wee lawn. I tint a time in whyle in speirins, convoyed, as weel as I could, tae sic o the wee fowk as cam by. They aa failed tae unnerstan ma meevements; a puckle wir simply unspikkin, a puckle thocht it wis a joke an lauched at me. I’d the hardest darg in the warld tae haud ma hauns aff their bonnie lauchin faces. It wis a gypit thocht, bit the deil born ooto fleg an blin roose wis ill reyned in an still socht tae takk advantage o ma bumbazement. The girse gaed better coonsel. I fand a rig torn inno it, aboot midwey atween the pedestal o the sphinx an the merks o ma feet far, on camin, I’d warssled wi the cowpit machine. There wir ither merks o meevin aboot, wi fey nerra fitprents like thon I could pictur vrocht bi a sloth. This direckit ma een tae the pedestal. It wis, as I think I hae said, o bronze. It wisnae jist a block, bit heichtly decoratit wi deep framed panels on ilkie side. I gaed an chappit at thon. The pedestal wis hollow. Owerluikin the panels cannily I fand them discontinuous wi the frames. There wir nae haunles or keyholes, bit mebbe the panels, gin they wir yetts, as I jeloused, opened frae inbye. Ae thing wis clear eneuch tae ma harns. It tuik nae verra great mental tyauve tae ken that ma Time Machine wis inbye thon pedestal. Bit foo it won thonner wis anither maitter.

“I saw the heids o twa orange-claithed fowk camin throw the busses an unner some blossom-brierin aipple-trees tae me. I turned smilin tae them, an cried them ower. They cam, an syne, pyntin tae the bronze pedestal, I ettled tae shaw ma wish tae lowse it. Bit at ma first meevement tae this they acted verra fey. I dinna ken foo tae convoy their luiks tae ye. Suppose ye wir tae makk an unca orra meevement tae a genteel-thochtit wumman—it’s foo she wid luik. They gaed aff as gin they’d gotten the hinmaist possible nestiness. I socht a swete-luikin wee chiel in fite neist, wi exack the same result. Somewey, his mainner gart me feel blate o masel. Bit, as ye ken, I wintit the Time Machine, an I socht him aince mair. As he turned awa, like the ithers, ma roose won the better o me. In three strides I wis efter him, hid him bi the lowse pairt o his claes roon the thrapple, an stertit ruggin him tae the sphinx. Syne I saw the fleg an grue o his face, an aa o a suddenty I lat him gae.

“Bit I wisnae threwshed yet. I duntit wi ma neive at the bronze panels. I thocht I heard somethin steer inbye—tae be expeck, I thocht I heard a soun like a keckle—bit I maun hae bin mistaen. Syne I tuik a muckle stane frae the watter, an cam an haimmered till I’d flattened a furl in the decorations, an the roost cam aff in poodery bitticks. The saft wee fowk maun hae heard me haimmerin in lood ootbrakks a mile awa on ilkie haun, bit naethin cam o it. I saw a boorich o them on the braes, luikin sleekit at me. At the hinnereyn, hett an trauchelt, I sat doon tae watch the placie. Bit I wis ower unsattled tae watch lang; I am ower Wastern fur a lang wyte. I could wirk at a darg fur years, bit tae wyte eeseless fur twinty-fower oors—thon’s anither maitter.

“I won up efter a whyle, an stertit waukin aimless ben the busses tae the knowe again. ‘Cannie,’ quo I tae masel. ‘Gin ye wint yer machine again ye maun leave thon sphinx alane. Gin they mean tae takk yer machine awa, it’s nae guid ye wrackin their bronze panels, an gin they dinna, ye’ll get it back as sune as ye can wyte fur it. Tae sit amang aa thn unkent things afore a puzzle like thon’s eeseless. Thon wey lies monomania. Face this warld. Lern its weys, watch it, be cannie o ower faist guesses at its meanin. In the eyn ye’ll finn clues tae it aa.’ Syne o a suddenty the humour o the situation cam intae ma harns: the thocht o the years I’d spent in larnin an warssle tae win intae the future age, an noo ma passion o wirry tae get ooto it. I’d vrocht masel the maist fyky an the maist eeseless trap that iver a chiel thocht up. Altho it wis at ma ain expense, I couldnae help masel. I lauched oot lood.

“Gaun throw the muckle palace, it seemed tae me that the wee fowk avoydit me. It micht hae bin ma fancy, or it micht hae hid somethin tae dae wi ma haimmerin at the yetts o bronze. Yet I felt rael sure o the avoydance. I wis cannie hoosaeiver, tae shaw nae consarn an tae nae chase them, an in the coorse o a day or twa things won back tae the auld fittin. I made fit progress I could in the leid, an mairower I pushed ma owerluikins here an thonner. Either I tint some subtle pynt or their leid wis unca simple—near aathegither biggit o concrete substantives an verbs. There seemed tae be fyew, if ony, abstrack terms, or smaa eese o figurative leid. Their sentences wir usually simple an o twa wirds, an I failed tae convoy or unnerstan ony bit the simplest propositions. I settled on pittin the thocht o ma Time Machine an the mystery o the bronze yett unner the sphinx, as muckle as possible in a neuko myndin, until ma growin kenin wid lead me back tae them in a nat’ral wey. Yet a certain feelin, ye micht unnerstaun, tethered me in a cercle o a fyew miles roon the pynt o ma camin.

**VIII Accoont**

“Sae far as I could see, aa the warld shawed the same rowth o richness as the Thames glen. Frae ilkie knowe I sclimmed I saw the same heeze o braw biggins, eynlessly varied in makk an style, the same gaitherin boorichs o ivergreens, the same flooer-wechtit trees an tree ferns. Here an thonner watter shone like siller, an ayont, the lan raise intae blae rowin knowes, an sae dwined intae the peace o the lift. A fey feature, that drew ma een, wis the sicht o puckles o cercular wallies, a wheen, as it seemed tae me, o a verra great depth. Ane lay bi the pathie up the knowe that I’d follaed durin ma first wauk. Like the ithers, it wis rimmed wi bronze, fremmit vrocht, an proteckit bi a wee cupola frae the rain. Sittin bi the side o thon wallies, an teetin doon intae the shafted derkness, I could see nae glisk o watter, nur could I stert ony reflection wi a lichtit spunk. Bit in aa o them I heard a certain soun: a dunt—dunt—dunt, like the duntin o some michty engine; an I fand, frae the fleerin o ma spunks, that a steidy current o air set doon the shafts. Mairower, I haived a skirp o paper intae the thrapple o ane, an, insteid o flichterin slawly doon, it wis at aince sookit faist ooto sicht.

“Efter a time, as weel, I cam tae link thon wallies wi heich touers staunin here an thonner on the braes; fur abune them there wis aften jist sic a flichter in the air as ye see on a hett day abune a sun-birssled beach. Pittin maitters thegether, I cam tae a strang notion o a braid system o unnergrun ventilation, fas true import it wis hard tae pictur. I wis at first like tae link it wi the sanitary gear o thon fowk. It wis an obvious thocht, bit it wis aathegither wrang.

“An here I maun admit that I larnt verra little o drains an bells an modes o convoyance, an the like conveniences, durin ma time in this rael future. In a wheen o thon veesions o Utopias an camin times which I hae read, there is a braid amoont o detail aboot biggin, an social arreengements, an sae furth. Bit while sic details are easy eneuch tae win fin the hale warld is held in a body’s harns, they’re aathegether ooto reach tae a rael traiveller amid sic maitters as I fand here. Pictur the tale o Lunnon that a negro, fresh frae Central Africa, wid takk back tae his clan! Fit wid he ken o railwey companies, o social meevements, o telephone an telegraph weers, o the Parcels Delivery Company, an postal orders an the like? Yet we, at least, should be willin eneuch tae explain thon maitters tae him! An even o fit he kent, foo muckle could he makk his untraivelled frien either unnerstaun or believe? Syne, think foo nerra the gap atween a negro an a fite man o oor ain times, an foo wide the time atween masel an thon o the Gowden Age! I wis awaur o much that wis unseen, an that addit tae ma comfort; bit save fur an ordnar notion o automatic organisation, I fear I can convoy verra little o the difference tae yer harns.

“In the maitter o sepulture, fur instance, I could see nae merks o crematoria nur ony hint o tombs. Bit it cam tae me that, likely, there micht be kirkyairds (or crematoria) somewey ayont the reenge o ma explorins. Thon, again, wis a speirin I deliberate pit tae masel, an ma ill faschence wis at first aathegither defeated on the pynt. The maitter bumbazed me, an I wis led tae makk a farrer remairk, that dumfounert me still mair: that auld an nae weel amang thon fowk there wir nane.

“I maun confess that ma pleisur wi ma first notions o an automatic ceevilisation an a dwinin humanity didnae laist lang. Yet I could think o nae ither. Lat me pit ma deefficulties. The wheen muckle palaces I’d explored wir jist bidin placies, muckle ettin-haas an sleepin chaumers. I could finn nae machinery, nae gear o ony kind. Yet thon fowk wir claithed in pleisunt fabrics that maun whyles nott renewal, an their sandals, tho undecoratit, wir unca fyky specimens o metalwirk. Somewey sic ferlies maun be vrocht. An the wee fowk shawed nae skirp o a creative skill. There wir nae shoppies, nae wirkshoppies, nae merk o imports amang them. They spent aa their time in playin doucely, in dookin in the watter, in makkin luve in a hauf-playfu wey, in ettin fruit an sleepin. I couldnae see foo things wir kept gaun.

“Syne, again, aboot the Time Machine: somethin, I dinna ken fit, hid taen it inte the hollow pedestal o the Fite Sphinx. *Foo?* Fur the life o me I couldnae pictur. Thon watterless wallies, as weel, thon flichterin pillars. I felt I nott a clue. I felt—foo’ll I pit it? Suppose ye fand a screivin, wi sentences here an thonner in braw plain English, an skirpit wi ithers vrocht up o wirds, o letters even, aathegither unkent tae ye? Weel, on the third day o ma veesit, thon wis foo the warld o Eicht Hunner an Twa Thoosan Sivven Hunner an Ane shawe itsel tae me!

“Thon day, as weel, I made a frien—o a sort. It cam aboot that, as I wis watchin some o the wee fowk dookin in a shalla, ane o them tuik cramp an stertit wauchtin doonwatter. The main current ran raither faist, bit nae ower strang fur even an ordnar sweemmer. It’ll gie ye an idea, mairower, o the fey wint in thon craiturs, fin I tell ye that nane made the slichtest tyauve tae rescue the dwinng greetin wee body fa wis droonin afore their een. Fin I jeloused this, I faist ruggit aff ma claes, an, wydin in at a pynt laigher doon, I catched the puir sowel an pued her safe tae lan. A wee rubbin o the limbs sune brocht her roon, an I’d the pleisur o seein she wis aa richt afore I left her. I’d gotten tae sic a laigh view o her kind that I didnae expeck ony thanks frae her. In thon, hoosaeiver, I wis wrang.

“Thon happened in the mornin. In the efterneen I met ma wee wumman, as I think it wis, as I wis returnin tae ma centre frae an exploration, an she met me wi skirls o delicht an gaed me wi a muckle garland o flooers—clearly vrocht fur me an me alane. Thon tuik ma thochts. Verra likely I’d bin feelin dowie. At ony rate I did ma best tae shaw ma pleisur in the giftie. We wir sune seated thegether in a wee stane bouer, thrang in blether, maistly o smiles. The craitur’s frienliness affeckit me exact as a bairn’s micht hae dane. We gaed each ither flooers, an she kissed ma hauns. I did the same tae hers. Syne I ettled tae spikk, an fand that her nemme wis Weena, that, tho I didnae ken fit it meant, seemed guid eneuch. Thon wis the stert o a fey frienship that laistit a wikk, an eyndit—as I’ll tell ye!

“She wis jist like a bairn. She wintit tae be wi me ayweys. She ettled tae follae me aawey, an on ma neist trip oot an aboot it gaed tae ma hairt tae weir her doon, an leave her at last, foonert an cryin efter me raither dowie. Bit the problems o the warld hid tae be maistered. I hidnae, I said tae masel, cam intae the future tae cairry on a wee coortship. Yet her wae fin I left her wis verra great, her murnins at the pairtin wir whyles byordar, an I think, aathgether, I’d as muckle tribble as comfort frae her luve. Nane the less she wis, in a wey, a verra guid comfort. I thocht it wis jist bairnie likin that gart her haud tae me. Until it wis ower late, I didnae richt ken fit I’d inflictit on her fin I left her. Nur til it wis ower late did I richt unnerstaun fit she wis tae me. Fur, bi jist seemin fond o me, an shawin in her dweeble, eeseless wey that she cared fur me, the wee dall o a craitur sune gaed ma return tae the airt o the Fite Sphinx near the feelin o camin hame; an I wid watch fur her wee body o fite an gowd sae sune as I cam ower the knowe.

“It wis frae her, as weel, that I larnt that fleg hidnae yet left the warld. She wis fleggit eneuch in the daylicht, an she’d the feyest confidence in me; fur aince, in a daft meenit, I vrocht threatenin grimaces at her, an she jist lauched at them. Bit she dreidit the derk, dreided shaddas, dreidit blaik things. Derkness tae her wis the thing maist dreidfu. It wis an passionate feelin, an it set me thinkin an owerluikin. I fand syne, amang ither things, that thon wee fowk gaithered intae the muckle hooses efter derk, an sleepit in boorichs. Tae gae amang them wioot a licht wis tae pit them inno a steer o fleg. I niver fand ane ooto yetts, or ane sleepin alane inbye yetts, efter derk. Yet I wis still sic a gype that I missed the lesson o thon fleg, an in spite o Weena’s wae, I insistit on sleepin awa frae thon sleepin boorachs.

“It tribbled her muckle, bit in the eyn her fey likin fur me won, an fur five o the nichts o our frienship, as weel as the hinmaist nicht o aa, she sleepit wi her heid pillaed on ma airm. Bit ma tale faas awa frae me as I spikk o her. It maun hae bin the nicht afore her rescue that I wis waukened aboot dawn. I’d bin restless, dwaumin maist misfittin that I wis drooned, an that sea anemones wir finnin ower ma face wi their saft palps. I waukent wi a yark, an wi a fey thocht that some greyish breet hid jist hashed ooto the chaumer. I ettled ta faa asleep again, bit I felt restless an uncomfy. It wis thon dim grey hoor fin maitters are jist creepin ooto derkness, fin aathin is colourless an clear, an yet aa rael. I raise, an gaed doon intae the muckle haa, an sae oot on the flagstanes afore the palace. I thocht I’d makk a vertue o wint, an see the daybrakk.

“The meen wis settin, an the deein meenlicht an the first fite o daybrakk wis mirled in a ghaistly hauf-licht. The busses wir inky blaik, the grun a dowie grey, the lift tint o colour an cheer. An up the knowe I thocht I could see ghaists. Three times, as I watched the brae, I saw fite bodies. Twice I thocht I saw a lane fite, puggie-like cratur rinnin raither faist up the knowe, an aince near the wracks I saw a wheen o them cariryin some derk body. They meeved faist. I didnae see fit becam o them. It seemed that they vanished amang the busses. The daybrakk wis still feint, ye maun unnerstaun. I wis feelin thon jeel, uncertain, early-mornin feelin ye micht hae kent. I dootit ma een.

“As the eastern lift grew brichter, an the licht o the day cam on an its skyrie colourin returned tae the warld aince mair, I owerlukit the view gledly. Bit I saw nae merk o ma fite bodies. They wir jist craiturs o the hauf-licht. ‘They maun hae bin ghaists,’ quo I; ‘I winner tae fan they’re datit.’ Fur a fey notion o Grant Allen’s cam intae ma heid, an I likit it. Gin ilkie generation dees an leaves ghaists, he argyed, the warld at last will get owercroodit wi them. On thon theory they wid hae grown coontless some Eicht Hunner Thoosan Years forrit, an it wis nae great winner tae see fower at aince. Bit the joke wis unsatisfeein, an I wis thinkin o thon bodies aa the mornin, til Weena’s rescue drave them ooto ma heid. I linkit them in some fey wey wi the fite breet I’d stertled in ma first forcie raik fur the Time Machine. Bit Weena wis a pleisunt substitute. Yet aa the same, they wir sune set tae takk a far deidlier haud o ma harns.

“I think I hae said foo much hetter than oor ain wis the weather o thon Gowden Age. I canna accoont fur it. It micht be that the sun wis hetter, or the Eirde nearer the sun. It’s ordnar tae jelouse that the sun’ll gae on cweelin steidy in the future. Bit fowk, unacquant wi sic thochts as thon o the younger Darwin, forget that the planets maun at the eyn faa back ane bi ane intae the parent body. As thon mishanters happen, the sun’ll bleeze wi mair virr; an it micht be that some inbye planet hid tholed this weird. Fitever the rizzon, the fack is that the sun wis far hetter than we ken it.

“Weel, ae verra hett mornin—ma fowerth, I think—as I wis luikin fur a bield frae the heat an glare in a muckle wrack near the muckle hoose far I sleepit an ett, there happened this fey ferlie. Sclimmin amang thon howps o stanes, I fand a nerra gallery, fas eyn an side windaes wir blockit bi faaen boorichs o stane. Bi cwanter wi the dazzlin ootbye, it seemed at first unca derk tae me. I entered it grippin, fur the cheenge frae licht tae blaikness vrocht skirps o colour sweem afore me. O a suddenty I stoppit enthralled. A pair o een, sheenin bi reflection agin the daylicht ootbye wir watchin me ooto the derkness.

“The auld instinctive dreid o wud breets cam on me. I grippit ma hauns an steidfaist luikit intae the glowering eebaas. I wis feart tae turn. Syne the thocht o the hale security far humanity seemed tae be bidin cam tae ma thochts. An syne I myndit thon fey fleg o the derk. Owercamin ma fleg a bittie, I gaed forrit a step an spakk. I’ll admit that ma voyce wis wersh an ill-controlled. I pit oot ma haun an touched somethin saft. At aince the een dertit sidieweys, an something fite ran bye me. I turned wi ma hairt in ma moo, an saw a fey wee puggie-like body, its heid held doon in a fey mainner, rinnin ower the sunlichtit airt ahin me. It hytered agin a block o granite, hytered aside, an in a meenit wis happit in a blaik shadda aneth anither howp o wracked masonry.

“Ma pictur o it is, of coorse, imperfeck; bit I ken it wis a dull fite, an hid fey muckle greyish-reid een; as weel as thon there wis fite hair on its heid an doon its back. Bit, as I say, it gaed ower faist fur me tae see distinck. I canna even say gin it ran on aa fowers, or anely wi its foreairms held verra laigh. Efter a meenit’s dauchle I follaed it intae the secunt howp o wracks. I couldnae finn it at first; bit, efter a whyle in the profun derk, I cam on ane o thon roon wallie-like openins o which I’ve telt ye, hauf steekit bi a drappit pillar. O a suddenty a thocht cam tae me. Could this Craitur hae gaen doon the shaft? I kinnlit a spunk, an, luiking doon, I saw a wee, fite, meevin breet, wi muckle bricht een that regairdit me steidfaist as it retreatit. It gart me grue. It wis sae like a human wyver! It wis sclmmin doon the waa, an noo I saw fur the first time a nummer o metal fit an haun rests makkin a kinno laidder doon the shaft. Syne the licht brunt ma fingers an drappt ooto ma haun, gaun oot as it drapped, an fin I hid kinnlit anither the wee monster hid gaen.

“I dinna ken foo lang I sat teetin doon thon wallie. It wisnae fur a whyle that I could persuad masel that the thing I’d seen wis human. Bit, gradually, the truith dawned on me: that Man hidnae bedd as ae species, bit hid cheenged intae twa distinck breets: that ma gracefu bairns o the Upper Warld wirnae the lane descendants o oor generation, bit that this fite, orra, nocturnal Ferlie, that hid glisked afore me, wis as weel heir tae aa the ages.

“I thocht o the flichterin pillars an o ma theory o an unnergrun ventilation. I stertit tae suspeck their true import. An fit, I winneret, wis thon Lemur daein in ma thocht o a perfeck balanced organisation? Foo wis it sib tae the lazy peace o the bonnie Owerwarlders? An fit wis happit doon thonner, at the fit o thon shaft? I sat on the edge o the wallie tellin masel that, at ony rate, there wis naethin tae be feart o, an that thonner I maun gae doon fur the answer tae ma deefficulties. An mairower I wis aathegither feart tae gae! As I dauchled, twa o the bonnie upperwarld fowk cam rinnin in their amorous sport ben the daylicht in the shadda. The male chased the female, haivin flooers at her as he ran.

“They seemed pit oot tae finn me, ma airm agin the cowpit pillar, teetin doon the wallie. It seemed it wis conseedered bad tae remairk on thon apertures; fur fin I pyntit tae this ane, an ettled tae spikk a speirin aboot it in their leid, they wir still mair veesibly pit oot an turned awa. Bit they wir interestit bi ma spunks, an I strukk some tae amuse them. I speired o them again aboot the wallie, an again I’d nae luck. Sae sune I left them, meanin tae gae back tae Weena, an see fit I could win frae her. Bit ma thochts wir already steered up; ma jelousin an ideas wir slippin an skytin tae a new finaiglin. I’d noo a clue tae the import o thon wallies, tae the ventilatin touers, tae the mystery o the ghaists; tae say naethin o a hint at the meanin o the bronze yetts an the weird o the Time Machine! An verra feint there cam a step tae the solution o the economic problem that hid bumbazed me.

“Here wis the new thocht. Plainly, this secunt species o Man wis subterranean. There wir three ferlies in particular that gar me think that its rare emergence abune grun wis the ootcam o a lang-continued unnergrun habit. In the first place, there wis the fite luik ordnar in maist breets that bide mainly in the derk—the fite fish o the Kentucky caves, fur instance. Syne, thon muckle een, wi thon pouer fur refleckin licht, are ordnar features o nocturnal breets—witness the hoolet an the kittlin. An hinmaist o aa, thon clear dumfounerment in the sunsheen, thon faist yet fummlin awkward flicht tae derk shadda, an thon fey cairriage o the heid while in the licht—aa reinforced the kennin o an unca sensitiveness o the retina.

“Aneth ma feet, syne, the Eirde maun be unca tunnelled, an thon tunnellins wir the hame o the New Race. The presence o ventilatin shafts an wallies alang the knowe braes—aawey, in fack, except alang the river glen—shawed foo universal wir its ramifications. Fit sae nat’ral, syne, as tae think that it wis in this artificial Unnerwarld that sic wirk as wis necessar tae the comfort o the daylicht race wis dane? The thocht wis sae plausible that I at aince acceptit it, an gaed on tae assume the *foo* o this splittin o the human species. I daur say ye’ll jelouse the makk o ma theory; tho, fur masel, I verra sune felt that it fell far short o the truith.

“At first, camin frae the problems o oor ain age, it seemed clear as daylicht tae me that the gradual braidenin o the present merely temporary an social difference atween the Capitalist an the Labourer wis the key tae the haleset oot. Nae doot it’ll seem unca eneuch tae ye—an unca incredible!—an yet even noo there’s existin matters tae pynt thon wey. There’s a tendency tae makk eese o unnergrun space fur the less ornamental eeses o civilisation; there’s the Metropolitan Railwey in Lunnon, fur instance, there’s new electric railweys, there’s subweys, there’s unnergrun wirkrooms an restaurants, an they grow in nummer. Clearly, I thocht, this tendency hid grown till Industry hid slawly tint its birthricht in the lift. I mean that it hid gane deeper an deeper intae mair an ever mair unnergrun factories, spennin a still-growin amoont o its time thonner, till, in the eyn—! Even noo, disn’t an East-eyn wirker bide in sic artificial weys as practical tae be cut aff frae the nat’ral surface o the Eirde?

“Again, the select weys o richer fowk—due, nae doot, tae the growin refinin o their lear, an the braidenin gap atween them an the roch violence o the puir—is already leadin tae the closin, in their interest, o conseederable pairts o the surface o the lan. Aboot Lunnon, fur instance, mebbe hauf the bonnier kintra is steeked in agin incamers. An this same braidening gap—that’s doon tae the length an expense o the heicher educational mainner an the growin ferlies fur an temptations tae refined weys on the pairt o the rich—will makk thon excheenge atween class an class, that promotion bi intermairriage that eenoo hauds back the splittin o oor species alang lines o social stratification, less an less aften. Sae, in the eyn, abune grun ye maun hae the Haves, chasin pleisur an comfort an bonnie, an ablow grun the Hae-naethins, the Wirkers growin gradual eesed tae the states o their darg. Aince they wir thonner, they wid nae doot hae tae pey rent, an nae a little o it, fur the ventilation o their caverns; an gin they widnae, they’d sterve or be smored fur arrears. Sae mony o them as wir sae myndit as tae be dowie an contermaschious wid dee; an, in the eyn, the balance bein permanent, the survivors wid becam as weel adaptit tae the states o unnergrun life, an as blyte in their wey, as the Owerwarld warld wir tae theirs. As it luikit tae me, the refined bonnieness an the etiolated peely wallieness follaed nat’ral eneuch.

“The muckle triumph o Humanity I’d dreamed o tuik anither turn in ma thochts. It hid bin nae sic triumph o moral lear an general wirkin thegither as I’d jeloused. Insteid, I saw a rael aristocracy, airmed wi a perfeckit science an wirkin tae a logical eyn the industrial system o eenoo. Its triumph hidnae bin jist a triumph ower Natur, bit a triumph ower Natur an the fella-man. This, I maun warn ye, wis ma theory at the time. I’d nae handy cicerone in the pattern o the Utopian buiks. Ma explanation micht be aathegither wrang. I still think it’s the maist likely ane. Bit even on this idea the balanced ceevilisation that wis at last cam maun hae lang syne passed its best, an wis noo far drappit intae foosht. The ower-perfeck security o the Owerwarlders hid led them tae a slaw meevement o crinin, tae a general dwinnlin in size, virr, an lear. Thon I could see clear eneuch already. Fit hid happened tae the Unnergruners I didnae yet suspeck; bit, frae fit I’d seen o the Morlocks—thon, bi the wey, wis the nemme bi which thon craiturs wir caaed—I could pictur that the cheenge tae the human makk wis even mair profun than amang the ‘Eloi,’ the bonnie race that I already kent.

“Syne cam tribblesome doots. Foo hid the Morlocks taen ma Time Machine? Fur I felt siccar it wis they fa hid taen it. Foo, as weel, gin the Eloi wir maisters, could they nae restore the machine tae me? An foo wir they sae unca feart o the derk? I gaed on, as I hae said, tae speir Weena aboot thon Unnerwarld, bit here again I wis disappyntit. At first she widnae unnerstaun ma speirins, an sune she refused tae repon tae them. She chittered as tho the topic wis untholable. An fin I socht her, mebbe a bittie wershly, she brakk intae greets. They wir the anely greets, except ma ain, I iver saw in thon Gowden Age. Fin I saw them I stoppit faist tae tribble aboot the Morlocks, an wis anely consarned in pittin thon merks o her human heirskip frae Weena’s een. An verra sune she wis smilin an clappin her hauns, as I solemnly brunt a spunk.

**IX The Morlocks**

“It micht seem fey tae ye, bit it wis twa days afore I could follae up the new-fand clue in fit wis clearly the richt wey. I felt an oorie shrinkin frae thon peelywally bodies. They wir jist the hauf-bleached colour o the wirms an ferlies ye sees pickled in speerit in a zoological museum. An they wir orra an cauld tae the touch. Likely ma shrinkin wis maistly due tae the brawer luik o the Eloi, fas scunner o the Morlocks I noo stertit tae unnerstaun.

“The neist nicht I didnae sleep weel. Mebbe ma health wis a bittie snorelled. I wis weyed doon wi wirry an doot. Aince or twice I’d a feelin o strang fleg fur which I could see nae rael rizzon. I mynd creepin sounless intae the muckle haa far the wee fowk wir sleepin in the meenlicht—thon nicht Weena wis amang them—an feelin reassured bi them bein thonner. It cam tae me even then, that in the coorse o a fyew days the meen maun pass throw its hinmaist quarter, an the nichts growe derk, fin the appearances o thon unpleisunt craiturs frae ablow, thon fitened Lemurs, thon new pests that hid replaced the auld, micht be mair plentifu. An on baith thon days I’d the reistless feelin o ane fa shirks a fatit darg. I felt certain that the Time Machine wis anely tae be gotten bi bauldly facin thon mysteries o unnergrun. Yet I couldnae face the mystery. Gin anely I’d hid a fier it wid hae bin different. Bit I wis sae awfu alane, an even tae sclimm doon intae the derkness o the wallie horrifeed me. I dinna ken gin ye’ll unnerstan ma feelin, bit I niver felt richt safe at ma back.

“It wis this reistlessness, this insecurity, mebbe, that drave me farrer farrer awa in ma explorin traivels. Gaun tae the sooth-wastwird tae the risin kintra that’s noo caaed Combe Wid, I saw hyne-aff, in the airt o nineteenth-century Bansteid, a muckle green biggin, different in makk frae ony I’d seen afore. It wis larger than the largest o the palaces or wracks I kent, an the façade hid an Oriental luik: the face o it haein the sheen, as weel as the feint-green tint, a kind o bluish-green, o a certain type o Chinee porcelain. This difference in aspeck suggestit a difference in eese, an I wis myndit tae cairry on an explore. Bit the day wis growin late, an I’d cam on the sicht o the placie efter a lang an trauchelsome traivel; sae I sattled on haudin ower the ploy fur the follaein day, an I gaed back tae the walcam an the bosies o wee Weena. Bit neist mornin I saw clear eneuch that ma ill fashence regairdin the Palace o Green Porcelain wis a bittie o self-swick, tae lat me tae jink, bi anither day, an experience I dreidit. I settled on makkin the descent wioot furrer waste o time, an stertit oot in the early mornin tae a wallie near the wracks o granite an aluminium.

“Wee Weena ran wi me. She daunced aside me tae the wallie, bit fin she saw me boo ower the tap an luik doonwird, she seemed unca misfittit. ‘Guid-bye, wee Weena,’ quo I, kissin her; an syne pittin her doon, I stertit tae feel ower the parapet fur the sclimmin heuks. Raither faist, I micht as weel confess, fur I wis feart ma smeddum micht dwine awa! At first she watched me in bumazement. Syne she gaed a maist sorrafu greet, an rinnin tae me, she stertit tae rug at me wi her wee hauns. I think her opposition gart me raither tae gae on. I shuik her aff, mebbe a bittie rochly, an in anither meenit I wis in the thrapple o the wallie. I saw her sair-made face ower the parapet, an smiled tae calm her. Syne I hid tae luik doon at the shoogily heuks tae far I grippit.

“I’d tae sclimm doon a shaft o mebbe twa hunner yairds. Gaun wis dane bi wey o metallic bars prowkin oot frae the sides o the wallie, an thon bein vrocht tae the wints o a craitur far smaaer an slichter than masel, I wis faist cramped an foonert bi gaun doon. An nae jist foonert! Ane o the bars booed o a suddenty unner ma wecht, an aamaist haived me aff inno the blaikness aneth. Fur a meenit I hung bi ane haun, an efter thon experience I didnae daur tae reist again. Tho ma airms an back wir sune verra painfu, I gaed on sclimmin doon the sheer drap wi as faist a meevement as could be. Keekin upwird, I saw the holie, a wee blue disc, far a starnie wis veesible, while wee Weena’s heid shawed as a roon blaik makk. The duntin soun o a machine ablow grew looder an mair unca. Aathin bar thon wee disc abune wis profunly derk, an fin I luiked up again Weena hid gaen.

“I wis verra misfittit. I’d some thocht o ettlin tae gae up the shaft again, an leave the Unnerwarld alane. Bit even fin I thocht this I cairried on gaun doon. At last, wi unca relief, I saw feintly camin up, a fit tae the richt o me, a thin loophole in the waa. Sweyin masel in, I fand it wis the hole o a nerra horizontal tunnel far I could lie doon an rest. It wisnae ower sune. Ma airms ached, ma back wis cramped, an I wis trimmlin wi the lang fleg o a faa. Aside thon, the unbrukken derkness hid hid a dowie effeck on ma een. The air wis full o the stoun an thrum o machinery pumpin air doon the shaft.

“I dinna ken foo lang I lay. I wis steered bi a saft haun touchin ma face. Stertin up in the derkness I grippit at ma spunks an, fast strikkin ane, I saw three booin fite craiturs sim’lar tae the ane I’d seen abune grun in the wrack, faist retreatin afore the licht. Bidin, as they did, in fit luikit tae me deep derkness, their een wir byordnar large an sensitive, jist like the een o ddep watter fishes, an they reflected the licht in the same wey. I hae nae doot they could see me in thon lichtless mirk, an they didnae seem tae hae ony fleg o me apairt frae the licht. Bit, sae sune as I strukk a spunk tae see them, they fled straicht aff, vanishin intae derk sheuchs an tunnels, frae far their een glowered at me in the feyest wey.

“I ettled tae caa tae them, bit the leid they hid wis apparently different frae thon o the Owerwarld fowk; sae that I wis left tae ma ain unaided warssles, an the thocht o flicht afore exploration wis even then in ma harns. Bit I said tae masel, ‘Ye’re in fur it noo,’ an, feelin ma wey alang the tunnel, I fand the soun o machinery growe looder. Sune the waas fell awa frae me, an I cam tae a muckle open airt, an strikkin anither spunk, saw that I’d gaen intae a muckle arched cavern, that streetched intae deep darkness ayont the reenge o ma licht. The view I hid o it wis as muckle as I could see in the burnin o a spunk.

“Of coorse ma myndin is feint. Muckle shapes like great machines raise ooto the mirk, an flang unca blaik shaddas, far fey ghaistly Morlocks sheltered frae the glare. The airt, bi the wey, wis verra stuffy an wechty, an the dweeble guff o new-shed bluid wis in the air. Some wey doon the mids o the airt wis a wee brod o fite metal, set wi fit seemed a meal. The Morlocks at least wir carnivorous! Even at the time, I mynd winnerin fit muckle breet could hae survived tae gie the reid jynt I saw. It wis aa verra indistinck: the wechty guff, the muckle unmeanin shapes, the ugsome bodies hunkerin in the shaddas, an anely wytin fur the derkness tae cam at me again! Syne the spunk brunt doon, an nippit ma fingers, an drappit, a wearsslin reid skirp in the blaikness.

“I hae thocht syne foo verra ill-riggit I wis fur sic an experience. Fin I’d stertit wi the Time Machine, I’d stertit wi the gyte thocht that the chiels o the Future wid o a certainty be hyne aheid o oorsels in aa their ferlies. I’d cam wioot airms, wioot medicine, wioot onythin tae smoke—whyles I missed tobaccae unca!—even wioot eneuch spunks. Gin anely I’d thocht o a camera! I could hae catched thon glisk o the Unnerwarld in a secunt, an owerluikit it at leisur. Bit, as it wis, I stude thonner wi anely the gear an the pouers that Natur hid gaen me wi—hauns, feet, an teeth; thon, an fower safety-spunks that still bedd twi me.

“I wis feart tae push ma wey in amang aa this machinery in the derk, an it was only with my last glimpse of light I discovered that my store of matches hid run laigh. I’d niver thocht til thon meenit that there wis ony need tae ration them, an I’d wasted near hauf the boxie in fleggin the Owerwarlders, tae fa a lowe wis unkent. Noo, as I say, I’d fower left, an fin I stude in the derk, a haun touched mine, lang fingers cam feelin ower ma face, an I sensed a verra unpleisunt guff. I thocht I heard the breathin o a boorach o thon verra dreadfu beins aboot me. I felt the boxie o spunks in ma haun bein saftly grippit, an ither hauns ahin me pykkin at ma claes. The sense o thon inveesible craiturs examinin me wis verra unpleisant. The sudden thocht o ma ignorance o their weys o thinkin an daein cam hame tae me verra strang in the derk. I skirled at them as lood as I could. They stertit awa, an syne I could feel them camin at me again. They clookit at me mair bauldly, fusperin fey souns tae each ither. I chittered forcie, an skirled again—raither discordant. This time they wirna sae sair feart, an they vrocht a fey lauchin soun as they cam back at me. I’ll confess I wis verra feart. I ettled tae strikk anither spunk an escape unner the bield o its glare. I did sae, an ekin oot the flichter wi a skirp o paper frae ma pocket, I made guid ma retreat tae the nerra tunnel. Bit I’d scarce entered thon fin ma licht wis blawn oot an in the blaikness I could hear the Morlocks reeshlin like win amng leaves, an pammerin like the rain, as they hashed efter me.

“In a meenit I wis cleuked bi mony hauns, an there wis nae mistakkin that they wir ettlin tae rug me back. I strukk anither licht, an wyved it in their daizzled faces. Ye can scarce pictur foo nauseatin inhuman they luikt—thon peely wally, chinless faces an muckle, lidless, pink-grey een!—as they glowered in their blinness an bumbazement. Bit I didnae bide tae luik, I promise ye: I retreatit again, an fin ma secunt spunk hid eyndit, I strukk ma third. It hid near brunt throwe fin I reached the openin intae the shaft. I lay doon on the edge, fur the stoun o the muckle pump ablow pit me licht heidit. Syne I felt sidieweys fur the projeckin heuks, an, as I did sae, ma feet wir grippit frae ahin, an I wis forcie rugged backwird. I lichtit ma hinmaist spunk … an it unchauncy gaed oot. Bit I’d ma haun on the sclimmin bars noo, an, kickin hard, I brukk awa frae the cleuks o the Morlocks, an wis faist sclimmin up the shaft, whyle they bedd keekin an blinkin up at me: aa bit ane wee vratch fa follaed me fur a fair wey, an weel-nigh won ma buit as a trophy.

“Thon climm seemed uneyndin tae me. Wi the hinmaist twinty or thirty feet o it a deidly nausea cam on me. I’d the greatest deefficulty in keepin ma haud. The hinmaist fyew yairds wis a frichtfu tyauve agin this feintness. A puckle times ma heid birled, an I felt aa the sensations o faain. At the eyn, hoosaeiver, I won ower the wallie-tap somewey, an hytered ooto the wrack intae the blinnin sunlicht. I drapped on ma face. Even the yird smelt swete an clean. Syne I mynd Weena kissin ma hauns an lugs, an the voyces o ithers amang the Eloi. Syne, fur a time, I passed oot.

**X Fin Nicht Cam**

“Noo, forbye, I seemed in a waur state than afore. Afore, except durin ma nicht’s grue at the loss o the Time Machine, I’d felt a ongaun hope o ultimate escape, bit thon hope wis duntit bi thon new discoveries. Afore I’d jist thocht masel held back bi the bairnlike simplicity o the wee fowk, an bi some unkent ferlies that I’d anely tae unnerstaun tae owercam; bit there wis an aathegether new element in the sickenin makk o the Morlocks—a somethin inhuman an coorse. Instinctively I hatit them. Afore, I’d felt as a chiel micht feel fa’d faan intae a pit: ma consarn wis wi the pit an foo tae win ooto it. Noo I felt like a breet in a trap, fas fae wid cam on him sune.

“The wae I dreidit micht bumbaze ye. It wis the derkness o the new meen. Weena hid pit this intae ma heid bi some at first fey remairks aboot the Derk Nichts. It wisnae noo sic a verra hard darg tae jelouse fit the camin Derk Nichts micht mean. The meen wis dwinin: ilkie nicht there wis a langer whyle o derkness. An I noo unnerstude some slicht wey at least the rizzon o the fleg o the wee Upperwarld fowk fur the derk. I winnert feintly fit orra coorseness it micht be that the Morlocks did unner the new meen. I felt gey siccar noo that ma secunt thocht wis aa wrang. The Upperwarld fowk micht aince hae bin the favoured aristocracy, an the Morlocks their doonpittit skiffies: bit that hid lang syne passed awa. The twa species that hid cam frae the evolution o chiel wir skytin doon tae, or hid already cam tae, an aathegether new relationship. The Eloi, like the Carlovignan kings, hid dwinnlit tae a mere bonnie eeselessness. They still ained the Eirde on sufferance: since the Morlocks, subterranean fur umpteen generations, hid cam at last tae finn the daylichtit surface untholeable. An the Morlocks vrocht their claes, I jeloused, an keepit them in their ordnar wints, mebbe throw the survival o an auld habit ofservice. They did it as a staunin shelt paws wi his fit, or as a chiel enjoys killin breets in sport: because auncient an depairtit wints hid stampit on the organism. Bit, clearly, the auld order wis already in pairt reversed. The Nemesis o the dweeble anes wis creepin on apace. Langsyne, thoosans o generations back, man hid thrust his brither man ooto the ease an the sunsheen. An noo thon brither wis camin back—cheenged! Already the Eloi hid begun tae larn ae auld lear anew. They wir becamin reacquant wi Fleg. An o a suddenty there cam intae ma heid the myndin o the meat I’d seen in the Unnerwarld. It seemed fey foo it floatit intae ma thochts: nae steered up as it wir bi the tide o ma meditations, bit camin in near like a speirin frae ootside. I ettled tae recaa the makk o it. I’d a feint sense o somethin kent, bit I couldnae tell fit it wis at the time.

“Yet, hoosaeiver helpless the wee fowk in the presence o their mysteerious Fleg, I wis differently vrocht. I cam oot o this age o ours, this ripe prime o the human race, fin Fleg disnae paralyse an mystery’s tint its terrors. I at least wid defen masel. Wioot mair devaul I decidit tae makk masel airms an a faistness far I micht sleep. Wi thon bield as a base, I could face thon fey warld wi some o thon bauldness I’d tint in jelousin tae fit craiturs nicht bi nicht lay exposed. I felt I could niver sleep again til ma bed wis safe frae them. I chittered wi grue tae think foo they maun already hae owerluikit me.

“I wanneret durin the efterneen ben the glen o the Thames, bit fan naethin that cam tae ma harns as inaccessible. Aa the biggins an trees seemed ower easy tae sic skeely sclimmers as the Morlocks, tae joodge bi their sclimmin up the wallies. Syne the heich pinnacles o the Palace o Green Porcelain an the sheeny glimmer o its waas cam back tae ma myndin; an in the evenin, takkin Weena like a bairn on ma shouder, I gaed up the knowes tae the sooth-wast. The distance, I’d coontit, wis sivven or eicht miles, bit it maun hae bin nearer eichteen. I’d first seen the placie on a weety efterneen fin distances are a thochtie lessened. Mairower, the heel o ane o ma sheen wis lowse, an a nail wis wirkin ben the sole—they wir comfy auld sheen I wore aboot inbye—sae that I wis hirplin. An it wis already lang by sunset fin I cam in sicht o the palace, silhouetted blaik agin the licht yalla o the lift.

“Weena hid bin fair delichtit fin I stertit tae ciarry her, bit efter a whyle she socht me tae lat her doon, an ran alang bi the side o me, whyles dertin aff on ilkie haun tae pick flooers tae stap in ma pooches. Ma pooches hid aywis bumbazed Weena, bit at the eyn she’d concluded that they wir an fey kinno vases fur flooery decoration. At least she made eese o them fur thon. An thon mynds me! In cheengin ma jaiket I fand…”

*The Time Traiveller dauchled, pit his hand intae his pooch, an seelent pit twa dwined flooers, nae unlike verra large fite mallas, on the wee brod. Syne he restertit his tale.*

“As the wheesht o evenin creepit ower the warld an we gaed ower the knowe tap tae Wimbledon, Weena grew trauchelt an wintit tae gae back tae the hoose o grey stane. Bit I pyntit oot the hyne aff pinnacles o the Palace o Green Porcelain tae her, an ettled tae makk her unnerstaun that we wir sikkin a bield thonner frae her Fleg. Ye ken thon devaul that cams on ferlies afore the gloamin? Even the win stops in the trees. Tae me there’s ayweys an air o wytin aboot thon evenin stillness. The lift wis clear, hyne awa, an teem apairt fur a fyew horizontal bars far doon in the sunset. Weel, thon nicht the wytin tuik the colour o ma flegs. In thon derklin calm ma senses seemed byordnar sherpened. I thocht I could even finn the hollowness o the grun aneth ma feet: could, indeed, near see throw it the Morlocks on their ant-knowe gaun here an thonner an wytin fur the derk. In ma virr I thocht that they’d receive ma incam intae their burrows as an act o war. An foo’d they taen ma Time Machine?

“Sae we gaed on in the quaet, an the gloamin deepened intae nicht. The clear blue o the hyne awa dwined, an ae starnie efter anither cam oot. The grun grew dim an the trees blaik. Weena’s flegs an her wearieness grew on her. I tuik her in ma airms an spakk tae her an pettit her. Syne, as the derkness grew deeper, she pit her airms roun me, an, steekin her een, tichtly pressed her face agin ma shouder. Sae we gaed doon a lang brae intae a glen, an thonner in the dimness I near wauked intae a wee river. Thon I wydit, an gaed up the ither side o the glen, by a nummer o sleepin hooses, an by a statue—a Faun, or some sic ferlie, *minus* the head. Here as weel wir acacias. Sae far I’d seen naethin o the Morlocks, bit it wis still early in the nicht, an the derker oors afore the auld meen raise wir still tae cam.

“Frae the broo o the neist knowe I saw a thick wid spreidin braid an blaik afore me. I dauchled at thon. I could see nae eyn tae it, either tae the richt or the left. Feelin trauchelt—ma feet, in partic’lar, wir verra sair—I cannily pit Weena doon frae ma shouder as I dauchled, an sat doon on the girse. I could nae langer see the Palace o Green Porcelain, an I wis in doot o ma direction. I luikit intae the thickness o the wid an thocht o fit it micht hide. Unner thon thick taigle o branches a body wid be oot o sicht o the starnies. Even gin there wis nae ither lurkin danger—a danger I didnae care tae lat ma imagination lowse on—there wid still be aa the reets tae hyter ower an the tree-boles tae strikk agint. I wis unca trauchelt, as weel, efter the steer o the day; sae I decided that I widnae face it, bit wid spen the nicht on the open knowe.

“Weena, I wis gled tae finn, wis faist asleep. I cannily rowed her in ma jaiket, an sat doon aside her tae wyte fur the meenrise. The brae wis quaet an teem, bit frae the blaik o the wid there cam noo an then a steer o leevin ferlies. Abune me sheened the starnies, fur the nicht wis verra clear. I felt a certain sense o frienly comfort in their glentin. Aa the auld constellations hid gaen frae the lift, hoosaeiver: thon slaw meevement that’s nae spied in a hunner human lifetimes, hid lang syne rearreenged them in unkent boorachs. Bit the Milky Wey, it seemed tae me, wis still the same chittered streamer o starnie-stoor as afore. Soothwird (as I joodged it) wis a verra bricht reid starnie that wis new tae me; it wis even mair braw than oor ain green Sirius. An amid aa thon daizzlin pynts o licht ae bricht planet shone couthie an steidy like the face o an auld frien.

“Luikin at thon starnies o a suddenty dwarfed ma ain tribbles an aa the worries o Eirdly life. I thocht o their unfaddomable distance, an the slaw siccar waucht o their meevements ooto the unkent past intae the unkent future. I thocht o the muckle precessional cycle that the pole o the Eirde makks. Anely forty times hid thon seelent revolution cam durin aa the years that I’d lived. An durin thon fyew revolutions aa the steer, aa the traditions, the complex organisations, the nations, leids, tales, hopes, even jist the myndin o Man as I kent him, hid bin swypit ooto existence. Insteid wir thon dweeble craiturs fa’d forgotten their heich forebears, an the fite Things o which I tude in terror. Syne I thocht o the Muckle Fleg that wis atween the twa species, an fur the first time, wi a sudden grue, cam the clear kennin o fit the maet I’d seen micht be. Bit it wis ower horrible! I luikit at wee Weena sleepin aside me, her face fite an starnie like unner the starnies, an furthwith set the thocht aside.

“Throw thon lang nicht I held ma thochts aff the Morlocks as weel as I could, an passed awa the time bi ettlin tae fancy I could finn merks o the auld constellations in the new mixtermaxter. The lift keepit verra clear, bar a misty cloud or twa. Nae doot I dovered whyles. Syna, as ma wyte wore on, cam a feintness in the eastwird lift, like the reflection o some colourless lowe, an the auld meen raise, thin an peaked an fite. An near ahin, an owertakkin it, an owerrinnin it, the daybrakk cam, pale at first, an syne growin pink an hett. Nae Morlocks hid cam near us. Forbye, I’d seen nane on the brae thon nicht. An in the safety o the new day it near seemed tae me that ma fleg hid bin unrizzonable. I stude up an fan ma fit wi the lowse heel swallt at the cweet an painful unner the heel; sae I sat doon again, tuik aff ma sheen, an haived them awa.

“I waukened Weena, an we gaed doon intae the wid, noo green an pleisunt insteid o blaik an fearie. We fand some fruit tae brakk oor fast. We sune met ithers o the deinty anes, lauchin an dauncin in the sunlicht as tho there wis nae sic thing in natur as the nicht. An syne I thocht aince mair o the maet that I’d seen. I felt siccar noo o fit it wis, an frae the boddom o ma hairt I peetied thon last dweeble leftowers frae the muckle flood o humanity. Clearly, some time in the Langsyne o human crine the Morlocks’ maet hid run dane. Mebbe they’d bedd on rattens an sic-like vermin. Even noo man’s far less finicky an choosy in his maet than he wis—far less than ony puggie. His tabboo agin human flesh is nae deep-seatit instinct. An sae thon inhuman sons o men——! I ettled tae luik at the maitter in a scientific speerit. Efter aa, they wir less human an mair hyne aff than oor cannibal forebears o three or fower thoosan years back. An the lear that wid hae made this state o maitters a torment hid gane. Foo should I tribble masel? Thon Eloi wir jist creashie nowt, that the eemock-like Morlocks keepit an preyed on—nae doot saw tae the breedin o. An there wis Weena dauncin at ma side!

“Syne I ettled tae save masel frae the horror that wis camin on me, bi regairdin it as a terrible punishment o human selfishness. Man hid bin blythe tae bide in ease an delicht on the wirk o his fellow-man, iad taen Necessity as his watchwird an excuse, an in the turnin o time Necessity hid cam hame tae him. I even ettled a Carlyle-like scorn o this soorafu aristocracy in dwine. Bit this wey o thocht wis eeseless. Hooiver great their intellectual doonfa, the Eloi hid keepit ower muckle o the human makk nae tae claim ma sympathy, an tae makk me a sharer in their doonfa an their Fleg.

“I hid at thon time verra feint thochts as tae the coorse I should pursue. Ma first wis tae win some safe bield, an tae makk masel sic arms o metal or stane as I could. Thon need wis urgent. In the neist place, I hoped tae finn some means o makkin a lowe, sae that I’d hae the weapon o a torch at haun, fur naethin, I kent, wid be better agin thon Morlocks. Syne I wintit tae arreenge some ferlie tae brakk open the yetts o bronze unner the White Sphinx. I’d in mind a batterin ram. I thocht that gin I could enter thon yetts an cairry a bleeze o light afore me I’d finn the Time Machine an escape. I couldnae think the Morlocks wir strang eneuch tae meeve it hyne awa. Weena I thocht tae takk wi me tae oor ain time. An turnin sic ploys ower in ma harns I pickit ma wey tae the biggin that ma fancy hid chusen as oor bield.

**XI The Palace o Green Porcelain**

“I fand the Palace o Green Porcelain, fin we cam tae it aboot noon, teem an faain intae wrack. Anely brukken shards o glaiss bedd in its windaes, an muckle sheets o the green facin hai faaen awa frae the roosty metallic framewirk. It lay verra heich on a girssy doon, an luikin nor-eastwird afore I gaed in, I wis bumbazed tae see a muckle estuary, or even creek, far I joodged Wandswirth an Battersea maun aince hae bin. I thocht syne—tho I niver follaed up the thocht—o fit micht hae happened, or micht be happenin, tae the leevin breets in the sea.

“The makk o the Palace pruved on owerluikin tae raelly be porcelain, an alang the face o it I saw a screivin in some unkent character. I thocht, raither daftly, that Weena micht help me tae owersett thon, bit I anely larnt that the bare thocht o screivin hid niver entered her heid. She aye seemed tae me mair human than she wis, mebbe because her affection wis sae human.

“Inbye the muckle valves o the yett—that wir ajee an brukken—we fand, insteid o the ordnar haa, a lang gallery lichtit bi mony side windaes. At the first glisk I wis myndit o a museum. The tiled fleer wis thick wi stoor, an a remairkable heeze o miscellaneous objecks wis happit in the same grey stoor. Syne I saw, staunin oorie an gaunt in the mids o the haa, fit wis clearly the boddom pairt o a muckle skeleton. I kent bi the oblique feet that it wis some extinck craitur efter the style o the Megatherium. The skull an the upper banes lay aside it in the thick stoor, an in ae place, far rain-water hid drapped ben a leak in the reef, the thing itsel hid bin worn awa. Farrer in the gallery wis the muckle skeleton wyme o a Brontosaurus. Ma museum notion wis richt. Gaun tae the side I fand fit luikit tae be slopin shelves, an dichtin awa the thick stoor, I fand the auld kent glaiss cases o oor ain time. Bit they maun hae bin air-ticht tae joodge frae the guid preservation o a puckle o their contents.

“Certain, we stude amang the wracks o some latter-day Sooth Kensington! Here, clearly, wis the Palæontological pairt, an a verra braw set oot o fossils it maun hae bin, tho the ongaun wey o dwine that hid binheld aff fur a whyle, an hid, throw the smitt o bacteria an fungi, tint ninety-nine hundredths o its virr, wis nanetheless, wi unca sureness tho wi unca slawness at wirk again on aa its treisurs. Here an thonner I fand merks o the wee fowk in the makk o rare fossils brukken tae bittickies or threidit in strings on reeds. An the cases hid in puckles o instances bin flittit—bi the Morlocks, as I joodged. The airt wis verra seelent. The thick stoor deident oor fitsteps. Weena, fa’d bin rowin a sea urchin doon the slopin glaiss o a case, sunet cam, as I glowered aboot me, an verra quaet tuik ma haun an stude aside me.

“An at first I wis sae bumbazed bi thon auncient monument o an intellectual age that I gaed nae thocht tae the possibilities it shawed. Even ma thochts aboot the Time Machine drew back a thochtie frae ma harns.

“Tae joodge frae the size o the placie, thon Palace o Green Porcelain hid a rowth mair in it than a Gallery o Palæontology; mebbe historical galleries; it micht be, even a librar! Tae me, at least in ma state eenoo, thon wid be far mair interestin than thon sicht o auld-time geology in dwine. Raikin aboot, I fand anither wee gallery rinnin transversely tae the first. Thon luikit tae be taen up wi minerals, an the sicht o a block o sulphur pit ma harns rinnin on gunpooder. Bit I could fin nae saltpetre; mairower, nae nitrates o ony kind. Dootless they’d vanished ages syne. Bit the sulphur hung in ma heid, an set up a train o thocht. As fur the lave o the intimmers o thon gallery, tho on the hale they wir the best preserved o aa I saw, I’d sma interest. I’m nae speecialist in mineralogy, an I gaed on doon a verra wracked aisle rinnin parallel tae the first haa I’d gaen intae. It luikit like thon pairt hid bin gaen ower tae natural history, bit aathin hid lang syne passed ayont kennin. A fyew wizzent an blaikent leftowers o fit hid aince bin stuffed breets, leavins o mummies in jars that hid aince held speerit, a broon stoor o depairtit plants: thon wis aa! I wis misfittit bi thon, because I should hae bin gled tae trace the cannie ficherments bi which the conquest o leevin natur hid bin gotten. Syne we cam tae a gallery o jist byordnar proportions, bit unca ill-lichtit, the fleer o it rinnin doonwird at a slicht angle frae the eyn far I gaed in. Here an thonner fite globes hung frae the reef—mony o them crackit an brukken—that suggestit that aince the placie hid bin artificially lichtit. Here I wis mair at ease, fur risin on ilkie side o me wir the muckle makks o big machines, aa unca roostit an mony brukken doon, bit puckles wir still fairly hale. Ye ken I hae a kinna weakness fur mechanism, an I wis myndit tae dauchle amang thon; the mair sae as fur the maist pairt they’d the cherm o puzzles, an I could make anely the feintist thochts at fit they wir fur. I hoped that gin I could solve their mysteries I’d finn masel wi pouers that micht be o eese agin the Morlocks.

“O a suddenly Weena cam verra near tae ma side. Sae faist that she stertled me. Hid it nae bin fur her I dinna think I should hae seen that the fleer o the gallery slopit at aa. [Fitnote: It micht be, of coorse that the fleer didnae slope, bit that the museum wis biggit intae the side o a knowe.—ED.] The eyn I’d cam in at wis fair abune grun, an wis lichtit bi rare slit-like windaes. As ye gaed doon the length, the grun cam up agin thon windaes, til at last there wis a pit like the ‘airt‘ o a Lunnon hoose afore ilkie ane, an anely a nerra line o daylicht at the tap. I gaed slaw alang, winnerin aboot the machines, an hid bin ower taen up wi them tae see the gradual dwinin o the licht, til Weena’s growin worries drew ma thochts. Syne I saw that the gallery ran doon at last intae a thick derkness. I dauchled, an syne, as I luikit roon me, I saw that the stoor wis less rowthy an its surface less even. Farrer awa tae the dimness, it luikit tae be brukken bi a nummer o smaa nerra fitprents. Ma sense o the closeness o the Morlocks restertit at thon. I felt that I wis wastin ma time in the academic owerluikin o machinery. I mynit that it wis already far gaen in the efterneen, an that I’d still nae weapon, nae bield, an nae wey o makkin a lowe. An syne doon in the deep blaikness o the gallery I heard a fey pammarin, an the same oorie souns I’d heard doon the wallie.

“I tuik Weena’s haun. Syne, strukk o a suddenty wi a thocht, I left her an turned tae a machine frae fit cocked oot a lever nae unlike thon in a signal-boxie. Sclimmin up the staun, an grippin thon lever in ma hauns, I pit aa ma wecht on it sidieweys. Bit Weena, desertit in the middle aisle, stertit tae greet. I’d joodged the virr o the lever weel, fur it snappit efter a meenit’s warssle, an I rejyned her wi a mace in ma haun mair than eneuch, I joodged, fur ony Morlock skull I micht encoonter. An I langed verra muckle tae kill a Morlock or twa. Verra inhuman, ye micht think, tae wint tae gae killin yer ain descendants! Bit it wis impossible, somewey, tae finn ony humanity in the things. Anely ma need tae takk tent o Weena, an kennin that gin I stertit tae slake ma drooth fur murder ma Time Machine micht suffer, stoppit me frae gaun straicht doon the gallery an killin the breets I heard.

“Weel, mace in ae haun an Weena in the ither, I gaed ooto o thon gallery an intae anither an still larger ane, that at the first keek myndit me o o an army chapel hung wi chittered flags. The broon an brunt cloots that hung frae the sides o’t, I sune saw as the crined lave o buiks. They’d lang syne drappit tae bitties, an ilkie bittie o prent hid left them. Bit here an thonner wir cruikit brods an crackit metallic grips that telt the tale weel eneuchh. Hid I bin a literary chiel I micht, mebbe, hae moraleesed on the eeselessness o aa ambition. Bit as it wis, the maitter that strukk me wi keenest virr wis the unca waste o darg tae which this dowie wudness o rottin paper testifeed. At the time I’ll admit that I thocht maistly o the *Pheelosophical Transactions* an ma ain seeventeen papers on pheesical optics.

“Syne, gaun up a braid staircase, we cam tae fit micht aince hae bin a gallery o technical chemistry. An here I’d nae a wee hope o eesefu finnins. Except at ae eyn far the reef hid drapped, thon gallery wis weel preserved. I gaed keenly tae ilkie unbrukken case. An at last, in ane o the raelly air-ticht cases, I fand a boxie o spunks. Verra eager I tried them. They wir perfeckly guid. They wirnae even sappy. I turned tae Weena. ‘Daunce,’ I cried tae her in her ain leid. Fur noo I’d a weapon agin the horrible craiturs we wir feart o. An so, in thon teem museum, on the thick saft bass o stoor, tae Weena’s unca delicht, I solemnly performed a kinno hame-vrocht daunce, fusslin *The Lan o the Leal* as blyhtely as I could. In pairt it wis a modest *cancan*, in pairt a step daunce, in pairt a skirt daunce (sae far as ma tail-coat alloued), an in pairt original. Fur I’m bi natur creative, as ye ken.

“Noo, I still think that fur thon boxie o spunks tae hae escaped the weir o time fur umpteen years wis a maist fey, as fur me it wis a maist lucky, maitter. Yet, fey eneuch, I fand a far unlikelier substance, an thon wis camphor. I fand it in a steekit jar, that bi chaunce, I jelouse, hid bin raelly hermetically steekit. I thocht at first that it wis paraffin wax, an brukk the glaiss accordin. Bit the guff o camphor wis unmistaen. In the universal dwine this volatile substance hid chaunced tae survive, mebbe ben mony thoosans o centuries. It myndit me o a sepia peintin I’d aince seen dane frae the ink o a fossil Belemnite that maun hae crined an becam fossilised millions o years syne. I wis aboot tae haive it awa, bit I myndit that it wis inflammable an brunt wi a guid bricht lowe—wis, in fack, a braw caunle—an I pit it in ma pooch. I fand nae explosives, hoosaeiver, nur ony means o brakkin doon the bronze yetts. As yet ma iron crowbar wis the maist helpfu thing I’d chaunced on. Nanetheless I left thon gallery fair delichtit.

“I canna tell ye aa the tale o thon lang efterneen. It wid nott a muckle tyauve o myndin tae recaa ma raikin aboot in aa the richt order. I mynd a lang gallery o roosty stauns o airms, an foo I dauchled atween ma crowbar an a hatchet or a sword. I couldnae cairry baith, hoosaeiver, an ma bar o iron luikit best agin the bronze yetts. There wis nummers o guns, pistols, an rifles. The maist wir a heeze o roost, bit mony wir o some new metal, an still fairly soun. Bit ony cartridges or pooder there micht aince hae bin dwined intae stoor. Ae neuk I saw wis birssled an brukken; mebbe, I thocht, bi an explosion amang the specimens. In anither airt wis a muckle rowth o idols—Polynesian, Mexican, Grecian, Phœnician, ilkie kintra on the Eirde, I’d think. An here, yieldin tae a strang urge, I screived ma nemme on the neb o a steatite monster frae Sooth America that partic’lar tuik ma fancy.

“As the evenin drave on, ma interest dwined. I gaed ben gallery efter gallery, stoory, seelent, aften wracked, the exhibits whyles jist howps o roost an lignite, whyles fresher. In ae placie I o a suddenty fand masel near the model o a tin mine, an syne bi the feyest accident I fand, in an air-ticht case, twa dynamite cartridges! I skirled ‘Eureka!’ an brukk the case blythely. Syne cam a doot. I dauchled. Syne, chusin a wee side gallery, I made ma trial. I niver felt sic a disappyntment as I did in wytin five, ten, fifteen meenits fur an explosion that niver cam. Of coorse the things wir makkie-ons, as I micht hae jeloused frae their presence. I raelly believe that hid they nae bin sae, I should hae hashed aff faist an blawn Sphinx, bronze yetts, an (as it pruved) ma chaunces o finnin the Time Machine, aa thegether intae naethin.

“It wis efter thon, I think, that we cam tae a wee open coort inbye the palace. It wis girssy, an hid three fruit-trees. Sae we reistit an refreshed oorsels. Near sunset I stertit tae conseeder oor poseetion. Nicht wis creepin on us, an ma happit hidie-hole hid still tae be fand. Bit thon tribbled me verra little noo. I’d in ma hauns a thing that wis, mebbe, the best o aa defences agin the Morlocks—I’d spunks! I’d the camphor in ma pooch, as weel, gin a bleeze wis nott. It seemed tae me that the best thing we could dae wid be tae spen the nicht in the open, proteckit bi a lowe. In the mornin there wis the winnin o the Time Machine. Fur thon, as yet, I’d anely ma iron mace. Bit noo, wi ma growin lear, I felt verra different tae thon bronze yetts. Up tae thon, I’d held back frae forcin them, maistly because o the mystery on the ither side. They’d niver strukk me as bein verra strang, an I hoped ta finn ma bar o iron nae aathegether eeseless fur the darg.

**XII In the Derkness**

“We cam ooto the Palace fin the sun wis still in pairt abune the horizon. I wis hodgin tae reach the Fite Sphinx early the neist mornin, an afore the gloamin I thocht tae push ben the wids that hid stoppit me on the traivel afore. Ma idea wis tae gae as far as I could thon nicht, an syne, biggin a lowe, tae sleep in the bield o its glimmer. Sae, as we gaed alang I gaithered ony kinnlin or dried girse I saw, an sune hid ma airms fu o sic smush. Aince wechtit, gaun forrit wis slower than I’d thocht, an mairower Weena wis trauchelt. An I, as weel, stertit tae suffer frae weariness as weel; sae that it wis full nicht afore we reached the wid. On the buss-thick knowe o its edge Weena wid hae stoppit, feart o the derkness afore us; bit an unca sense o oncamin calamity, that should mebbe hae gien me a warnin, drave me on. I’d bin wioot sleep fur a nicht an twa days, an I wis feverish an ill naturet. I felt sleep camin ower me, an the Morlocks wi it.

“Whyle we dauchled, amang the blaik busses ahin us, an feint agin their blaikness, I saw three hunkeret bodie. There wis scrub an lang girse aa aboot us, an I didnae feel safe frae sleekit oncam . The wid, I thocht, wis raither less than a mile ower. Gin we could win throw it tae the bare brae, there, as it seemed tae me, wis an aathegether safer bield; I thocht that wi ma spunks an ma camphor I could ettle tae keep ma pathie lichtit ben the wids. Yet it wis clear that gin I wis tae wyve spunks wi ma hauns I should hae tae leave ma timmer; sae, raither ill willin, I pit it doon. An syne it cam intae ma heid that I wid bumaze oor friens ahin bi lichtin it. I wis tae finn the unca gyteness o this proceedin, bit it cam tae ma harns as a mensefu meeve fur happin oor retreat.

“I dinna ken gin ye hae iver thocht fit a rare ferlie flame maun be in the absence o man an in a temperate climate. The sun’s heat is rarely strang eneuch tae burn, even fin it’s focused bi dyewdraps, as is whyles the case in mair tropical airts. Lichtnin micht blast an blaiken, bit it rarely gies rise tae a widespreid lowe. Dwinin vegetation micht whyles smuchter wi the heat o its fermentation, bit this rarely results in a lowe. In this decadence, as weel, the airt o lowe-makkin hid bin forgotten on the Eirde. The reid tongues that gaed lickin up ma howp o wid wir an aathegether new an fremmit thing tae Weena.

“She winti tae rin tae it an play wi it. I believe she’d hae flang hersel intae it hid I nae stoppit her. Bit I cached her up, an in spite o her warssles, breenged bauldly afore me intae the wid. Fur a wee wey the glimmer o ma lowe lichtit the pathie. Luikin back sune, I could see, ben the thrang stems, that frae ma howp o wid the bleeze hid spreid tae some busses nearhaun, an a curved line o flame wis creepin up the girse o the brae. I leuch at thon, an birled again tae the derk trees afore me. It wis verra blaik, an Weena clung tae me terrifeed, bit there wis still, as ma een grew eesed tae the derkness, eneuch licht fur me tae jink the stems. Owerheid it wis jist blaik, bar far a gap o hyne blue lift sheend doon on us here an thonner. I lichtit nane o ma spunks because I’d nae haun free. On ma left airm I cairried ma wee ane, in ma richt haun I’d ma iron bar.

“Fur a smaa wey I heard naethin bit the cracklin twigs unner ma feet, the feint reeshle o the breeze abune, an ma ain breathin an the stoun o the bluid-vessels in ma lugs. Syne I seemed tae ken o a pammerin ahin me. I gaed on wi a grue. The pammerin grew mair distinck, an syne I catched the same oorie soun an voyces I’d heard in the Unnerwarld. There wir clearly a wheen o the Morlocks, an they wir closin in on me. Mairower, in anither meenit I felt a rug at ma jaiket, syne somethin at ma airm. An Weena chittered forcie, an becam rael still.

“It wis time fur a spunk. Bit tae get ane I maun pit her doon. I did sae, an, as I fummlit wi ma pooch, a warssle stertit in the derkness aboot ma knees, aathegether seelent on her pairt an wi the same fey curmurin souns frae the Morlocks. Saft wee hauns, as weel, wir creepin ower ma jaiket an back, touchin even ma neck. syne the spunk scrattit an fizzed. I held it flarin, an saw the fite backs o the Morlocks in flicht amid the trees. I faist tuik a daud o camphor frae ma pooch, an set oot tae licht it as sune as the spunk should dwine. Syne I luikit at Weena. She wis lyin grippin ma feet an fair still, wi her face tae the grun. Wi a sudden fricht I booed tae her. She seemed scarce tae breathe. I lichtit the daud o camphor an flang it tae the grun, an as it split an fleered up an drave back the Morlocks an the shaddas, I booed doon an liftit her. The wid ahin seemed fu o the steer an mummlin o a muckle heeze!

“She seemed tae hae feintit. I pit her cannily on my shouder an raise tae gae on, and then there came a horrible realisation. In manœuvring with my matches and Weena, I had turned myself about several times, and now I had not the feintest idea in fit airt lay ma pathie. Fur aa I kent, I micht be facin back tae the Palace o Green Porcelain. I fand masel in a cauld swyte. I’d tae think faist fit tae dae. I settled on biggin a lowe an campin far we wir. I put Weena, still motionless, down upon a turfy bole, and very hastily, as ma first daud o camphor dwined, I stertit gaitherin wids an leaves. Here an thonner ooto the derkness roun me the Morlocks’ een sheened like carbuncles.

“The camphor flichtered an gaed oot. I lichtit a spunk, an as I did sae, twa fite forms that hid bin nearin Weena hashed faist awa. Ane wis sae blinned bi the licht that he cam straicht fur me, an I felt his banes grind unner the cloor o ma neive. He gaed a skreich o wae, hytered a wee wey, an drapt doon. I lichtit anither daud o camphor, an gaed on gaitherin ma bonfire. Sune I tuik tent foo dry wis some o the foliage abune me, fur since ma incam on the Time Machine, a maitter o a wikk, nae rain hid faaen. Sae, insteid o caain aboot amang the trees fur drappit twigs, I stertit lowpin up an ruggin doon branches. Verra soon I’d a chokin reeky lowe o green wid an dry sticks, an could ration ma camphor. Syne I turned tae far Weena lay aside ma iron mace. I ettled tae steer her, bit she lay like ane deid. I couldnae even satisfee masel whether or nae she breathed.

“Noo, the rikk o the lowe blew ower tae me, an it maun hae gart me wearie o a suddenty. Mairower, the rikk o camphor wis in the air. Ma lowe widnae nott mair timmer fur an oor or sae. I felt verra weariet efter ma tyauve, an sat doon. The wid, tae, wis fu o a oorie mummlin that I didnae unnerstaun. I seemed jist tae nod an open ma een. Bit aa wis derk, an the Morlocks hid their hauns on me. Haivin aff their grippin fingers I faist finnt in ma pooch fur the spunk-boxie, an—it hid gane! Syne they grippit an focht wi me again. In a meenin I kent fit hid happened. I’d sleepit, an ma lowe hid gane oot, an the wershness o daith cam ower ma sowell. The wid seemed fu o the guff o burnin timmer. I wis catched bi the thrapple, bi the hair, bi the airms, an rugged doon. It wis unca gruesome in the derkness tae finn aa thon saft craiturs howped on me. I felt as gin I wis in an ugsome wyver’s wab. I wis owerpouered, an gaed doon. I felt wee teeth nippin at ma neck. I rowed ower, an as I did sae ma haun cam agin mya iron lever. It gaed me smeddum. I warssled up, shakkin the human rattens frae me, an, haudin the bar short, I powked far I joodged their faces micht be. I could feel the sappy dooncam o flesh an bane unner ma cloors, an fur a meenit I wis free.

“The fey virr that sae aften seems tae cam wi hard fechtin cam on me. I kent that baith masel an Weena wir tint, bit I wis set on makkin the Morlocks pey fur their maet. I stude wi ma back tae a tree, sweyin the iron bar afore me. The hale wid wis fu o the steer an skreichs o them. A meenit passed. Their voyces seemed tae rise tae a heicher pitch o steer, an their meevements grew faister. Yet nane cam inbye reach. I stude glowerin at the blaikness. Syne o a suddenty cam hope. Fit gin the Morlocks wir feart? An hard on the heels o thon cam a fey thing. The derkness seemed tae growe luminous. Verra feint I stertit tae see the Morlocks aboot me—three blootered at ma feet—an syne I kent, wi unca bumbazement, that the ithers wir rinnin, in an eynless stream, as it seemed, frae ahin me, an awa throwe the wid in front. An their backs seemed nae langer fite, bit reiddish. As I stude gap moued, I saw a wee reid spirk gae wachtin ower a gap o starnielicht atween the branches, an vanish. An at thon I unnerstude the guff o burnin wid, the oorie mummle that wis growin noo intae a winny skreich, the reid glimmer, an the Morlocks’ flicht.

“Steppin oot frae ahin ma tree an luikin back, I saw, ben the blaik pillars o the nearer trees, the lowes o the burnin timmer. It wis ma first lowe camin efter me. Wi thon I luikit fur Weena, bit she wis gane. The hissin an cracklin ahin me, the explosive dirl as ilkie fresh tree burst inno flame, left smaa time fur reflection. Ma iron bar still grippit, I follaed in the Morlocks’ pathie. It wis a close race. Aince the lowes creepit forrit sae fast on ma richt as I ran that I wis ootflanked an hid tae strikk aff tae the left. Bit at the hinnereyn I cam oot on a smaa open space, an as I did sae, a Morlock cam hyterin tae me, an bye me, an gaed on straicht intae the lowe!

“An noo I wis tae see the maist unca an horrible thing, I think, o aa that I saw in thon future age. Thon hale airt wis as bricht as day wi the reflection o the lowe. In the mids wis a knowe, tappit bi a birsled hawthorn. Ayon thon wis anither airm o the burnin wid, wi yalla tongues already warsslin frae it, aathegether encerclin the airt wi a fence o lowe. On the brae wir some thirty or forty Morlocks, daizzled bi the licht an heat, an hytering here an thoner agin each ither in their bumbazement. At first I didnae realise their blinness, an strukk forcie at them wi ma bar, in a steer o fleg, as they can near me, killin ane an cripplin a wheen mair. Bit fin I’d watched the meevements o ane o them feelin unner the hawthorn agin the reid lift, an heard their maens, I wis siccar o their aathegither helplessness an wae in the glimmer, an I strukk nae mair o them.

“Yet ilkie noo an syne ane wid cam straicht tae me, settin lowse a chitterin horror that gart me faist tae jink him. At ae time the flames deed doon a thochtie, an I wis feart the orra craiturs wid sune be able tae see me. I wis thinkin o stertin the fecht bi killin some o them afore this should happen; bit the lowe breenged oot again brichtly, an I didnae. I wauked aboot the knowe amang them an jinkit them, luikin fur some merk o Weena. Bit Weena wis gane.

“At last I sat doon on the tap o the knowe, an watched thon fremmit ugsome heeze o blin breets raxxin back and fro, an makkin uncannie souns tae each ither, as the glimmer o the lowe fell on them. The furlin upcam o rikk streamed ower the lift, an throw the fey skirps o thon reid canopy, hyne as tho they belanged tae anither universe, sheened the wee starnies. Twa or three Morlocks cam hyterin intae me, an I drave them aff wi cloors o ma neives, trimmlin as I did sae.

“Fur the maist pairt o thon nicht I wis perswadit it wis a widdemdreme. I bit masel an skirled in a strang desire tae wauken. I duntit the grun wi ma hauns, an got up an sat doon again, an wannered here an thonner, an again sat doon. Syne I wid faa tae rubbin ma ee an caain on God tae lat me wauken. Three whyles I saw Morlocks pit their heids doon in a kinno grue an breenged intae the lowe. Bit, at last, abune the deein reid o the lowe, abune the streamin heeze o blaik rikk an the fitenin an blaikenin tree stumps, an the dwinin nummers o these dim craiturs, cam the fite licht o the day.

“I raikit again fur merks o Weena, bit there wir nane. It wis plain that they’d left her puir wee body in the wid. I canna say foo it relieved me tae think that it hid escaped the awfu weird tae which it seemed fatit. As I thocht o thon, I wis near meeved tae stert a massacre o the helpless vile craiturs aboot me, bit I stoppit masel. The knowe, as I hae said, wis a kinno island in the wid. Frae its tap I could noo makk oot ben a heeze o rikk the Palace o Green Porcelain, an frae thon I could win ma wey fur the Fite Sphinx. An sae, leavin the lave o thon damned sowels still gaun here an thonner an maenin, as the day grew clearer, I tied some girse aboot ma feet an hirplit on ower rikkin aisse an amang blaik stems that still throbbit inbye wi a lowe, tae the hidie-placie o the Time Machine. I wauked slaw, fur I wis near foonert, as well as crippit, an I felt strang sorra fur the horrible daith o wee Weena. It seemed an owerpouerin calamity. Noo, in this auld kent chaumer, it is mair like the sorra o a dream than an actual loss. Bit thon mornin it left me aathegither lanely again—verra alane. I stertit tae think o this hoose o mine, o this ingle, o puckles o ye, an wi sic thochts cam a langin that wis sair.

“Bit, as I wauked ower the rikkin aisse unner the bricht mornin lift, I vrocht a discovery. In ma trooser pooch wir still some lowse spunks. The boxie maun hae leaked afore it wis tint.

**XIII The Trap o the Fite Sphinx**

“Aboot eicht or nine in the morning I cam tae the same seat o yalla metal frae far I’d spied the warld on the evenin o ma camin. I thocht o ma early conclusions on thon evenin an couldnae haud frae lauchin wershly at ma confidence. Here wis the same braw scene, the same rowth o foliage, the same braw palaces an braw wracks, the same siller river rinnin atween its fertile braes. The bricht claes o the bonnie fowk meeved here an thonner amang the trees. Some wir dookin in the verra placie far I’d saved Weena, an thon o a suddenty gaed me a sherp stob o pain. An like blots on the lanscape raise the cupolas abune the weys tae the Unnerwarld. I unnerstude noo fit aa the brawness o the Owerwarld fowk happit. Verra pleisunt wis their day, as pleisunt as the day o the nowt in the park. Like the nowt, they kent o nae faes an vrocht fur nae wints. An their eyn wis the same.

“I murned tae think foo short the dream o the human intellect hid bin. It hid committed suicide. It hid set itsel steidfaist tae comfort an ease, a balanced society wi safety an permanency as its watchwird, it hid gotten its hopes—tae cam tae this at the hinnereyn. Aince, life an gear maun hae reached near absolute safety. The rich body hid bin certain o his wealth an comfort, the wirker certain o his life an work. Nae doot in thon perfeck warld there hid bin nae unemployed problem, nae social question left unsolved. An a muckle quaet hid follaed.

“It’s a law o natur we owerluik, that intellectual versatility is the compensation fur cheenge, danger, an tribble. A breet perfeck in harmony wi its environment is a perfeck mechanism. Natur niver appeals tae intelligence until custom an instinck are eeseless. There’s nae intelligence far there’s nae cheenge an nae need o cheenge. Anely thon breets hae intelligence that hae ttae meet a braid variety o wints an dangers.

“Sae, as I see it, the Upperwarld chiel hid drifted tae his dweeble bonnieness, an the Unnerwarld tae mere mechanical darg. Bit thon perfeck state hid wintit ae thing even fur mechanical perfection—aathegether permanency. It lukit like as time gaed on, the feedin o an Unnerwarld, hooiver it wis effectit, hid becam disjyntit. Mither Need, fa’d bin staved aff fur a fyew thoosan years, cam back again, an she stertit ablow. The Unnerwarld bein in contack wi machinery, that, hooiver perfeck, still needs some wee thocht ootside habit, hid likely keepit raither mair initiative, tho less o ilkie ither human makk, than the Upper. An fin ither maet deed oot, they turned tae fit auld habit hid lang time banned. Sae I say I saw it in ma last view o the warld o Eicht Hunner an Twa Thoosan Sivven Hunner an Ane. It micht be as wrang an explanation as mortal harns could makk up. It’s foo maitters luikit tae me, an as that I gie it tae ye.

“Efter the foonerments, steers, an terrors o the past days, an in spite o ma sorra, this seat an the peacefu view an the warm sunlicht wir verra pleisunt. I wis verra trauchelt an sleepy, an sune ma theorisin passed intae dwaumin. Catchin masel at thon, I tuik ma ain hint, an spreidin masel out on the girse I hid a lang an refreshin sleep.

“I waukened a bittie afore sunsettin. I noo felt safe agin bein catched doverin bi the Morlocks, an, streetchin masel, I cam on doon the knowe tae the Fite Sphinx. I hid ma crowbar in ae haun, an the ither haun played wi the spunks in ma pooch.

“An noo cam a maist unexpeckit thing. As I cam tae the pedestal o the sphinx I fand the bronze valves wir open. They’d sliddered doon intae grooves.

“At thon I stoppit short afore them, dauchlin tae gae in.

“Inbye wis a smaa chaumer, an on a raised pairt in the neuk o thon wis the Time Machine. I’d the smaa levers in ma pooch. Sae here, efter aa ma pernickity preparations fur the siege o the Fite Sphinx, wis a meek surrender. I haived ma iron bar awa, near sorry nae tae makk eese o it.

“A faist thocht cam intae ma heid as I booed tae the yett. Fur aince, onywey, I grippit the ongauns o the harns o the Morlocks. Haudin back a strang need tae lauch, I steppit throwe the bronze frame an up tae the Time Machine. I wis bumbazed tae finn it hid bin cannily iled an cleaned. I hae suspeckit since that the Morlocks hid even pairtly taen it tae pieces while ettlin in their dim wey tae ken its eese.

“Noo as I stude an owerluikit it, finnin a pleisur in the mere touch o the ferlie, the thing I’d expeckit happened. The bronze panels o suddenty sliddered up an strukk the frame wi a clang. I wis in the derk—trappit. Sae the Morlocks thocht. At thon I leuch blythely.

“I could already hear their murmurin lauchter as they cam tae me. Verra calm I ettled tae strikk the spunk. I’d anely tae pit on the levers an depairt syne like a ghaist. Bit I’d owerluikit ae wee thing. The spunks wir o thon partic’lar kind that licht anely on the boxie.

“Ye micht pictur foo aa ma calm dwined. The wee breets wir near on me. Ane touched me. I vrocht a swypin cloor in the derk at them wi the levers, an stertit tae sclimm intae the saiddle o the machine. Syne cam ae haun on me an syne anither. Syne I’d jist tae fecht agin their oncamin fingers fur ma levers, an at the same time finn fur the studs ower which thon fittit. Ane, mairower, they near won awa frae me. As it sliddered frae ma haun, I’d tae butt in the derk wi ma heid—I could hear the Morlock’s skull dirl—tae recover it. It wis a nearer thing than the fecht in the wid, I think, thon hinmaist tulzie.

“Bit at last the lever wis fixed an pued ower. The grippin hauns sliddered frae me. The derkness noo fell frae ma een. I fand masel in the same grey licht an stooshie I hae already spukken o.

**XIV The Farrer Veesion**

“I hae already telt ye o the seekness an steer that cams wi time traivellin. An this time I wisnae sat richt in the saiddle, bit sidieweys an in an unstable wey. Fur a fair time I held the machine as it sweyed an dirled, nae heedin foo I gaed, an fin I brocht masel tae luik at the dials again I wis bumbazed tae finn far I’d won tae. Ae dial records days, an anither thoosans o days, anither millions o days, an anither thoosans o millions. Noo, insteid o reversin the levers, I’d pued them ower sae as tae gae forrit wi them, an fin I cam tae luik at thon indicators I fand that the thoosans haun wis furlin roun as faist as the secunts haun o a watch—intae futurity.

“As I drave on, a fey cheenge creepit ower the luik o things. The stounin greyness grew derker; syne—tho I wis still traivellin wi prodigious velocity—the blinkin cheengin o day an nicht, which wis usually indicative o a slawer pace, returned, an grew mair an mair merked. Thon bumbazed me verra much at first. The cheengin o nicht an day grew slawer an slawer, an sae did the traivel o the sun ben the lift, until they seemed tae streetch ower centuries. At last a steidy gloamin broodit ower the Eirde, a gloamin anely brukken noo an syne fin a comet sheened ben the derklin lift. The ban o licht that shawn the sun hid lang syne disappeared; fur the sun hid ceased tae set—it jist raise an drappt in the wast, an grew iver braider an mair reid. Aa merk o the meen hid vanished. The cerclin o the starnies, growin slawer an slawer, hid gien wey tae creepin pynts o licht. At last, a whyle afore I stoppit, the sun, reid an verra large, dauchled motionless on the horizon, a braid dome glowin wi a dull heat, an noo an then tholin a meenits extinction. At ae time it hid fur a wee whyle glowed mair daizzlin again, bit it speedy revertit tae its sullen reid heat. I saw bi this slawin doon o its risin an settin that the wirk o the tidal drag wis dane. The Eirde hid cam tae rest wi ae face tae the sun, even as in oor ain time the meen faces the Eirde. Verra cannily, fur I myndit ma former heidlang faa, I sterted tae reverse ma meevement. Slawer an slawer gaed the cerclin hauns til the thoosans seemed still an the daily ane wis nae langer a mere haar on its scale. Still slawer, til the dim ootlines o a teem beach grew veesible.

“I stoppit verra saftly an sat on the Time Machine, luikin roon. The lift wis nae langer blue. Nor-eastwird it wis inky blaik, an ooto the blaikness sheened brichtly an steidily the pale fite starnies. Owerheid it wis a deep Indian reid an starnieless, an sooth-eastwird it grew brichter tae a glowin reid far, cut bi the horizon, lay the muckle hull o the sun, reid an still. The stanes aroon me wir o a wersh reiddish colour, an aa the merk o life that I could see at first wis the deep green vegetation that happit ilkie ootjuttin pynt on their sooth-eastern face. It wis the same deep green that ye see on widlan fogg or on the lichen in caves: plants like these growe in an ongaun gloamin.

“The machine wis staunin on a slopin beach. The sea streetched awa tae the sooth-wast, tae rise intae a sherp bricht horizon agin the wan lift. There wir nae breakers an nae waves, fur nae a braith o win wis steerin. Anely a slicht ily swall raise an drappit like a saft breathin, an shawed that the aybydaun sea wis still meevin an leevin. An alang the margin far the watter whyles brukk wis a thick scab o satt—pink unner the skyrie lift. There wis a sense o dowieness in ma heid, an I saw that I wis pechin verra faist. The feelin myndit me o ma anely experience o mountaineerin, an frae thon I joodged the air tae be mair rarefeed than it is noo.

“Hyne awa up the teem brae I heard a wersh skirl, an saw a thing like a muckle fite butterflee gae slantin an flichtering up inae the lift an, cerclin, disappear ower some laigh knowes ayon. The soun o its vyce wis sae waesome that I chittered an sat masel mair firm on the machine. Luikin roun me again, I saw that, rael near, fit I’d taen tae be a reiddish heeze o stane wis meevin slowly tae me. Syne I saw the thing wis really an ugsome partan-like craitur. Can ye pictur a partan as muckle’s thon brod, wi its mony shanks meevin slaw an uncertain, its muckle cleuks sweyin, its lang antennæ, like cairters’ wheeps, wyvin an feelin, an its stalked een gleamin at ye on either side o its metallic front? Its back wis corrugatit an stipplit wi ugsome bosses, an a green crust blotched it here an thonner. I could see the mony palps o its finicky mou flichterin an feelin as it meeved.

“As I glowred at thon seenister breet crawlin tae me, I felt a kittlin on ma chikk as tho a flee hid lichtit thonner. I ettled tae swype it awa wi ma haun, bit in a meenit it back back, an near straicht aff cam anither bi ma lug. I strukk at thon, an catched somethin threidlike. It wis drawn faist ooto ma haun. Wi a frichtfu qualm, I turned, an I saw that I’d grippit the antenna o anither monster partan that stude jist ahin me. Its coorse een wir jogglin on their stakks, its mou wis aa alive wi hunger, an its muckle unsome cleuks, merked wi an algal slivver, wir camin doon on me. In a meenit ma haun wis on the lever, an I’d pit a month atween masel an thon breets. Bit I wis still on the same beach, an I saw them clear noo as sune as I stoppit. Dizzens o them seemed tae be creepin here an thonner, in the dreich licht, amang the foliated sheets o deep green.

“I canna convoy the sense o awfu wrack that hung ower the warld. The reid eastern lift, the norwird blaikness, the satt Deid Sea, the staney beach crawlin wi thon orra, slaw-steerin monsters, the uniform pysonous-luikin green o the lichenous plants, the thin air that skaiths the lungs: aa addit tae an awfu effeck. I meeved on a hunner years, an there wis the same reid sun—a bittie larger, a bittie duller—the same deein sea, the same jeelin air, an the same heeze o yirdly crustacea creepin in an oot amang the green seggs an the reid stanes. An in the wastwird lift, I saw a curved pale line like a muckle new meen.

“Sae I traivelled, stoppin iver an again, in muckle strides o a thoosan years or mair, drawn on bi the mystery o the Eirde’s weird, watchin wi a fey fascination the sun growe larger an duller in the wastwird lift, an the life o the auld Eirde dwine awa. At last, mair than thirty million years later, the muckle reid-hett dome o the sun hid cam tae hap near a tenth pairt o the derklin lift. Syne I stoppit aince mair, fur the crawlin heeze o partans hid disappeared, an the reid beach, save fur its skyrie green liverworts an lichens, seemed deid. An noo it wis skirpit wi fite. A wersh cauld grippit me. Rare fiite flakes iver an again cam birlin doon. Tae the nor-eastwird, the glent o snaa lay unner the starnielicht o the derk lift, an I could see rowin taps o knowes pinkish fite. There wir fringes o ice alang the sea margin, wi drifting bergs farrer oot; bit the main expanse o thon satt ocean, aa bluidy unner the aybydan sunset, wis still unfrozen.

“I luikit aboot me tae see gin ony merks o breet life wis left. A certain fey wirry still keepit me in the saiddle o the machine. Bit I saw naethin meevin, in Eirde or lift or sea. The green sliver on the stanes alane testifeed that life wisnae extinct. A shalla sanbank hid appeared in the sea an the watter hid drawn back frae the beach. I thocht I saw some blaik objeck flappin aboot on this bank, bit it becam still as I luikit at it, an I joodged that ma ee hid bin mistaen, an that the blaik objeck wis merely a stane. The starnies in the lift wir unca bricht an seemed tae me tae glent verra little.

“O a suddenty I saw that the cercular wastwird ootlin o the sun hid cheenged; that a concavity, a bay, hid grown in the curve. I saw this growe larger. Fur a meenit mebbe I glowered stammygastered at this blaikness that wis creepin ower the day, an syne I saw tha an eclipse wis stertin. Either the meen or the planet Mercury wis passin ben the sun’s disk. Of coorse, at first I tuik it tae be the meen, bit there’s muckle tae gar me tae believe that fit I raelly saw wis the crossin o an inner planet passin verra near tae the Eirde.

“The derkness grew faist; a cauld win stertit tae blaw in freshenin wheechs frae the east, an the shooerin fite flakes in the air grew in nummer. Frae the edge o the sea cam a ripple an fusper. Ayont thon lifeless souns the warld wis seelent. Seelent? It wid be hard tae convoy the stillness o’t. Aa the souns o man, the bleatin o yowes, the sangs o birdies, the hum o gollachs, the steer that makks the backgrun o oor lives—aa thon wis ower. As the derkness grew, the eddyin flakes grew mair, dauncin afore ma een; an the cauld o the air mair jeelin. At last, ane bi ane, faist, ane efter the ither, the fite taps o the hyne aff knowes vanished inno blaikness. The breeze raise tae a maenin win. I saw the blaik central shadda o the eclipse swypin tae me. In anither meenit the fite starnies alane wir veesible. Aa else wis rayless an teem. The lift wis aathegether blaik.

“A horror o this muckle derkness cam on me. The cauld, that strukk tae ma marra, an the pain I felt in breathin, owercam me. I chittered, an a deidly nausea grippit me. Syne like a reid-hett bow in the lift appeared the edge o the sun. I got aff the machine tae recover masel. I felt licht heidit an nae up tae facin the return journey. As I stude seek an bumbazed I saw again the meevin ferlie on the shoal—there wis nae mistakk noo that it wis a meevin thing—agin the reid watter o the sea. It wis a roon thing, the size o a fitbaa mebbe, or, it micht be, bigger, an tentacles treetlit doon frae it; it luikit blaik agin the rowin bluid-reid watter, an it wis lowpin fitfu aboot. Syne I thocht I wis feintin. Bit the verra dreid o lyin helpless in thon hyne aff an awfu gloamin gaed me smeddum whyle I sclimmed on the saiddle.

**XV The Time Traveller’s Return**

“Sae I cam back. Fur a lang time I maun hae bin connached on the machine. The blinkin ongaun o the days an nichts wis restertit, the sun grew gowden again, the lift blue. I breathed wi mair freedom. The flichterin ootlines o the lan ebbed an flowed. The hauns furled backweys on the dials. At last I saw again the feint shaddas o hooses, the merks o decadent humanity. Thon, as weel, cheenged an passed, an ithers stertit. Sune, fin the million dial wis at zero, I slackenet speed. I stertit tae ken oor ain bonnie an kent biggins, the thoosans haun ran back tae the stertin-pynt, the nicht an day flappit slawer an slawer. Syne the auld waas o the lab cam roon me. Verra cannily, noo, I slawed the mechanism doon.

“I saw ane wee thing that luikit fey tae me. I think I hae telt ye that fin I set oot, afore ma speed becam verra heich, Mrs. Watchett hid wauked ben the chaumer, traivellin, as it luikit tae me, like a rocket. As I cam back I passed again ben thon meenit fin she crossed the lab. Bit noo her ilkie meevement luikit tae be the exack inversion o her previous anes. The yett at the laigher eyn opened, an she waukit quaet up the lab, back foremaist, an disappeared ahin the yett bi which she’d previously cam in. Jist afore thon I seemed tae see Hillyer fur a meenit; bit he passed like a glisk.

“Syne I stoppit the machine, an saw aboot me again the auld kent lab, ma gear, ma ferlies jist as I’d left them. I won aff the thing verra shakky, an sat doon on ma bench. Fur a wheen meenits I trimmlit forcie. Syne I becam calmer. Aroon me wis ma auld wirkshop again, exack as it hid bin. I micht hae sleepit thonner, an the hale thing hae bin a dwaum.

“An yet, nae raelly! The traivel hid stertit frae the sooth-east neuk o the lab. It hid cam tae rest again in the nor-wast, agin the waa far ye saw it. Thon gies ye the exack distance frae ma wee lawn tae the pedestal o the Fite Sphinx, intae far the Morlocks hid cairriet ma machine.

“Fur a whylie ma harns gaed still. Sune I won up an cam ben the lobby here, hirplin, because ma heel wis still painfu, an feelin sairly clarty. I saw the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the brod bi the yett. I fand the date wis fairly the day, an luikin at the timepiece, saw the oor wis near eicht o’clock. I heard yer voyces an the blooter o plates. I dauchled—I felt sae nae weel an dweeble. Syne I sniffed guid halesome maet, an opene the yett tae ye. Ye ken the lave. I washed, an ett, an noo I’m tellin ye the tale.

**XVI Efter the Tale**

“I ken,” quo he, efter a dauchle, “that aa this will be aathegither bumbazin tae ye, bit tae me the ae bumbazin thing is that I’m here this nicht in this auld weel kent chaumer luikin intae yer frienly faces an tellin ye thon fey adventures.” He luikit at the Medical Chiel. “Na. I canna expeck ye tae believe it. Takk it as a lee—or a prophecy. Say I thocht it up in the wirkshop. Conseeder I hae bin speculatin on the Weird o oor race, til I hae hatched this fiction. Takk ma tellin o its truith as jist a bittie o art tae enhaunce its interest. An takkin it as a tale, fit think ye o it?”

He tuik up his pipe, an stertit, in his auld ordnar mainner, tae chap wi it nervous on the bars o the grate. There wis a meenit’s still. Then cheers stertit tae craik an sheen tae scrat on the bass. I tuik ma een aff the Time Traiveller’s face, an luikit roon at his listeners. They wir in the derk, an wee skirps o colour swam afore them. The Medical Chiel seemed taen up in luikin at oor host. The Editor wis glowerin hard at the eyn o his cigar—the saxth. The Journalist ficheret fur his watch. The ithers, as far as I mynd, wir still.

The Editor stude up wi a maen. “Fit a peety it is yer nae a screiver o tales!” quo he, pittin his haun on the Time Traiveller’s shouder.

“Ye dinnae believe it?”

“Weel——”

“I thocht nae.”

The Time Traiveller turned tae us. “Far are the spunks?” he speired. He lichtit ane an spakk ower his pipe, puffin. “Tae tell ye the truith... I scarce believe it masel..... An yet...”

His ee drapt wi a mute speirin on the crined fite flooers on the wee brod. Syne he turned ower the haun haudin his pipe, an I saw he wis luikin at some hauf-hained scrats on his neives. The Medical Chiel raise, cam tae the lamp, an owerluikit the flooers.

“The gynæceum’s fey,” quo he. The Psychologist raxxed forrit tae see, haudin oot his haun fur a specimen.

“I’m drattit gin it isnae a quarter tae ane,” reponed the Journalist. “Foo ‘ll we win hame?”

“Eneuch cabs at the station,” the Psychologist telt us,

“It’s a fey maitter,” quo the Medical Chiel; “bit I certainly dinna ken the nat’ral order o thon flooers. Micht I hae them?”

The Time Traiveller dauchled.Syne o a suddenty: “Na ye canna.”

“Far did ye really get them?” speired the Medical Chiel.

The Time Traiveller pit his haun tae his heid. He spakk like ane fa wis ettlin tae keep haud o an idea that he’d tint. “They wir pit intae ma pooch bi Weena, fin I traivelled intae Time.” He glowered roon the chaumer. “I’m dashed gin it isnae aa gaun. This chaumer an ye an the air o ilkie day is ower muckle fur ma thochts. Did I iver makk a Time Machine, or a model o a Time Machine? Or is it aa anely a dwaum? They say life is a dwaum, a precious puir dwaum whyles —bit I canna thole anither that winna fit. It’s gyte. An far did the dwaum cam frae? … I maun luik at that machine. Gin there is ane!”

He catched up the licht faist, an cairriet it, fleerin reid, ben the yett intae the lobby. We follaed him. Thonner in the flichterin licht o the licht wis the machine siccar eneuch, squat, ugsome, an skweejee, a thing o braiss, ebony, ivory, an see-throw glimmerin quartz. Hard tae the touch—fur I pit oot ma haun an felt the rail o it—an wi broon skirps an merks on the ivory, an bitties o girse an fogg on the laigher pairts, an ae rail booed skweejee.

The Time Traiveller pit the licht doon on the bench, an ran his haun alang the spylt rail. “It’s aa richt noo,” quo he. “The tale I telt ye wis true. I’m sorry tae hae brocht ye oot here in the cauld.” He tuik up the licht, an, in total seelence, we gaed back tae the smokin-chaumer.

He cam intae the haa wi us an helped the Editor on wi his jaiket. The Medical Chiel luikit intae his face an, wi a kinna dauchle, telt him he wis sufferin frae owerwirk, at which he lauched hairty. I mynd him staunin in the open yett, skteichin guid-nicht.

I shared a cab wi the Editor. He thocht the tale a “ootricht lee.” Fur ma ain pairt I cudnae cam tae a deceesion. The tale wis sae fey an winnerin, the tellin sae rael an serious. I lay waukened maist o the nicht thinkin aboot it. I sattled on gaun neist day an see the Time Traiveller again. I wis telt he wis in the lab, an bein on easy terms in the hoose, I gaed up tae him. The lab, hoosaeiver, wis teem. I glowered fur a meenit at the Time Machine an pit oot ma haun an touched the lever. At thon the squat sturdy-luikin ferlie sweyed like a bough shakkin bi the win. Its instability stertled me unca, an I hid a fey myndin o the bairnhood days fin I eesed tae be forbad tae ficher. I cam back throw the lobby. The Time Traiveller trystit wi me in the smokin-chaumer. He wis camin frae the hoose. He’d a wee camera unner ae airm an a pyoke unner the ither. He lauched fin he saw me, an gaed me an elbuck tae shakk. “I’m unca eident,” quo he, “wi thon ferlie in thonner.”

“Bit is it nae some plisky?” I speired. “Dae ye raelly traivel ben time?”

“Raelly an truly I dae.” An he luiked straicht intae ma een. He dauchled. His ee wannert aboot the chaumer. “I anely wint hauf an oor,” he repoed. “I ken foo ya cam, an it’s awfu guid o ye. There’s a puckle magazines here. Gin ye’ll bide fur denner I’ll pruve ye this time traivellin up tae the hilt, specimens an aa. Gin ye’ll forgie ma leavin ye noo?”

I agreed, scarce takkin in syne the full import o his wirds, an he noddit an gaed on doon the lobby. I heard the yett o the lab yark tee, seatit masel in a cheer, an tuik up a daily paper. Fit wis he gaun tae dae afore denner? Syne o a suddenty I wis myndit bi an advert that I’d promised tae tryst wi Richardson, the publisher, at twa. I luikit at ma watch, an saw that I could scarce save thon tryst. I stude up an gaed doon the lobby tae tell the Time Traiveller.

As I tuik haud o the haunle o the yett I heard an skirl, oorily cut aff at the eyn, an a click an a dunt. A wheech o air birled roon me as I opened the yett, an frae inbye cam the soun o brukken glaiss faain on the fleer. The Time Traiveller wisnae thonner. I seemed tae see a ghaistly, fent body sittin in a furlin heeze o blaik an braiss fur a meenit—a body sae see-throwe that the bench ahin wi its sheets o drawins wis aathegither distinck; bit thon ghaist vanished as I rubbit ma een. The Time Machine hid gane. Save fur a doon drappin steer o stoor, the farrer eyn o the lab wis teem. A peen o the skylicht hid, it luikit, jist bin blawn in.

I felt an unrizzonable bumazement. I kent that somethin oorie hid happened, an fur the meenit couldnae think fit the fey thing micht be. As I stude glowerin, the yett intae the gairden opened, an the servant appeared.

We luikit at each ither. Syne thochts stertit tae cam. “His Mr. —— gane oot thon wey?” quo I.

“Na, sir. Naebody’s cam oot this wey. I wis expeckin tae finn him here.”

At thon I unnerstude. At the risk o disappoyntin Richardson I bedd on, wytin fur the Time Traiveller; wytin fur the secunt, mebbe still stranger tale, an the specimens an photies he’d bring wi him. Bit I’m stertin noo tae fear that I maun wyte a lifetime. The Time Traiveller vanished three years syne. An, as aabody kens noo, he’s niver cam back.

**Feenish**

Ye canna chuse bit winner. Will he iver return? It micht be that he swypit back intae the Langsyne, an cam amang the bluid-drinkin, hairy breets o the Age o Unpolished Stane; intae the abysses o the Cretaceous Sea; or amang the unca saurians, the muckle reptilian craiturs o the Jurassic times. He micht even noo—gin I micht makk eese o the phrase—be wannerin on some plesiosaurus-hauntit Oolitic coral reef, or aside the lanely saline seas o the Triassic Age. Or did he gae forrit, intae ane o the nearer ages, far chiels are still chiels, bit wi the riddles o oor ain time answered an its trauchlesome problems solved? Intae the manhood o the race: fur I, fur ma ain pairt, canna think that thon hinmaist days o dweeble experiment, bittie theory, an ordnar friction are fairly man’s eyndin time! I say, fur ma ain pairt. He, I ken—fur the question hid bin claikit amang us lang afore the Time Machine wis vrocht—thocht bit blythely o the Advauncement o Mankind, an saw in the growin howp o ceevilisation anely a glekit howpin that maun of coorse faa back on an connach its makkers in the eyn. Gin thon’s sae, it bides fur us tae bide as tho it wisnae sae. Bit tae me the future’s still blaik an teem—is a muckle ignorance, lichtit at a fyew casual placies bi the myndin o his tale. An I hae by me, fur ma comfort, twa fey fite flooers—dwined noo, an broon an flat an dweeble—tae shaw that even fin harns an virr hid gane, thanks an a mutual doucerness still bedd on in the hairt o man.