

The Time Machine by: H. G. Wells

1. lurid: "lightened up with red or fiery glair"
2. derelict: "abandoned; deserted; forsaken"
3. zenith: "highest point or state; culmination; climax"
4. indolent: "disliking work; lazy; idle"
5. flaxen: "pale yellow"
6. precocious: "developed earlier than usual"
7. edifice: "large or imposing building, such as a cathedral, palace, or temple"
8. Nebuchadnezzar: "a very large bottle for alcoholic liquor that holds about 4 gallons"
9. anachronism: "the act of putting a person, thing, or event in some time where it does not belong"
10. adroitly: "skillfully"
11. fecundity: "fruitfulness; productivity; fertility"

The story begins in England on a Thursday of 1895 A.D.

The characters in the book are:

"The Time Traveler"; Filby (an argumentative person with red hair);
the "Psychologist";
"the very young man";
the "Provincial Mayor";
the "Medical man";
the Narrator;
Blank (Editor of a well known daily paper);
the "Doctor";
a "Journalist";
the "Silent Man";
and Weena (an Eloi).

The story begins with guests of the Time Traveler sitting around a table after dinner. The Time Traveler mentions that geometry is founded on a misconception. Filby finds that hard to believe. The Time Traveler explains that a mathematical line with no thickness has no real existence and a mathematical plane with no thickness also has no real existence. The Psychologist agrees with him. The Time Traveler then says that a cube with only length, breadth, and thickness cannot exist. For any material thing to exist, it must exist in four dimensions:

Length, Breadth, Thickness, and Duration. Time is just another measurement of space.

The Time Traveler says that scientists have been trying to construct a model of the 4th dimension but that they have been looking at it all wrong. He then shows his guests different pictures of the same man at different stages of his life and says that those pictures were 3-dimensional representations of his 4-dimensioned being, and then restates his belief that time is a kind of space.

The Medical Man asks why, if time and space are one in the same, we can move freely in space but not freely in time, to which the Time Traveler replies that we can't move up and down with total freedom. The Medical Man then asks why we can't escape from the present, to which the Time Traveler replies that we are always moving away from the present. The Psychologist says that one can move about in space but not in time, but the Time Traveler replies that it might be possible to move about in time as well. Filby is again very skeptical.

The Time Traveler reports that he has conceived of a machine that could travel anywhere in time or space. His guests start thinking of all the things that they could do if they had access to such a machine.

The Time Traveler shows his guests a delicate mechanism. His guests sit around a table near a fire. The Time Traveler talks about his machine and makes sure that no one would think he is using trickery. He then asks the Psychologist to pull the little lever on the contraption. As the Psychologist does, the machine becomes a blur and disappears. The Time Traveler mentions that he is almost done working on a full-sized time machine. Filby asks if the little machine has gone into the future, but the Time Traveler is not sure whether it has gone into the future or the past. The guests then conjecture in which direction of time it went. The Psychologist says that they can't see the time machine for the same reason that one can't see the spokes of a bike wheel when it is moving or a bullet when it is flying.

The Time Traveler shows the unfinished time machine to his guests, but the Medical Man thinks that it may be a hoax. Nevertheless, the Time Traveler informs them that he plans to explore time with it.

The Narrator doesn't trust the Time Traveler because he is too clever to be believed. None of the guests discuss time traveling between then and the following Thursday. The Medical Man says that he once saw something similar to the disappearance of the model but does not know how it was done. That Thursday, the Time Traveler is late and the Medical Man is to begin dinner without him, as he does. The Psychologist is telling the Editor about the mechanism when the Time Traveler comes in. His clothes are dirty and dusty and smeared with green. His hair is disordered and seemingly greyer. His face is pale and he has a half-healed brown cut on his chin. He walks with a limp to the table and sits. He drinks some wine and then says he would go and change his clothes; he will then tell his story upon his return. He returns in evening clothes. He eats hungrily. He mentions that he has been time traveling. He and his guests head to the smoking room to hear his story.

He begins by saying that since 4:00, he has lived 8 days. His face is very sincere. He had finished the final touches on the time machine that morning and tested it at 10:00 AM. After he started it, he IMMEDIATELY stopped it because of the strange feeling it gave him. He checked the clock and it was 3:30 PM; he started it again and the room became dark. A woman walked into the room and it appeared that she was moving at a lighting quick speed. He pushed the lever as far as it would go. Day became night and night became day. The room got very faint. A strange murmur filled his ears. The Time Traveler felt like he was in a helpless headlong motion. He felt the weird anticipation of an unstoppable crash.

His laboratory fell away from view, probably having been destroyed. He could see the sun streak across the sky every minute. He had a faint glimpse of stars circling the sky. As he got faster, day and night became a continuous grey. The sky appeared an amazing deep blue. He saw trees grow, turning from green to brown and back again. He saw them grow, spread, and die. He saw buildings rise up. He saw the sun, which was now a continuous arch, sway from solstice to solstice. The landscape turned snow white then green again.

He wanted to stop to see the new buildings rising around him, to see the advancements made by the civilization. He decided to slow down and stop, but he had to be careful so as not to stop in a time where something else was occupying the space where he was stopping. He

decided to go ahead and stop, but he stopped too quickly and was thrown off his machine. He was in a garden and hail was coming down. It was the year 802,701 A.D. He stared at a statue as that was all he could see between the hail and rain. He began to fear what he might see when the storm would stop. When it did, he could see buildings in the distance. He was setting his time machine upright when he hit his chin, and some 4-foot-tall creatures in colorful robes with leather belts and sandals came running up to him.

The creatures showed no fear. They talked to each other in a strange language. They tried communicating with the Time Traveler. They felt him to make sure he was real, and they started to feel the time machine—but the Time Traveler motioned to them not to. He unscrewed the levers so that nothing could set it going through time. They had curled hair, small ears, small, bright red mouth with no lips, a chin that came to a point, and large eyes. The Time Traveler tried to communicate with them. He pointed to the time machine and, to express time, pointed to the sun. He had hoped that the people of this time would be extremely intellectual, but he dismissed that hope when one of the creatures asked him if he came through the thunderstorm. He decided to let them believe that he had.

Then they started giving him flowers to put around his neck. The flowers were of a breed that he had never seen before. They decided to take him into a building. The creatures in this building all sat on cushions between 1-foot tall tables covered in fruit. They were obviously vegetarians, for that is all they ate. As he ate, he noticed that the building seemed very dilapidated. The white stone blocks that made up the floor were worn down, the stained glass windows were broken in many places, and the curtains were very dusty. There were about 200 creatures eating in the hall, all watching the Time Traveler.

All horses, cattle, sheep, and dogs were extinct. The fruit was good. The Time Traveler decided to attempt to learn to speak the language of these creatures. Due to their short attention spans, the Time Traveler decided that the lessons should be in little doses and only when they feel like it. As soon as they were no longer amazed by the Time Traveler, they stopped following his every move, and went on to whatever it was that interested them at that time.

The Time Traveler decided to go for long walks. As he walked and observed, he found a great heap of granite and aluminum, a labyrinth of crumbled walls and flowers. He noticed that he was unable to distinguish the gender of these creatures when clothed. He noticed what looked like a covered well. On a hill, he watched the sun set, noticing that the earth appeared to be one large garden.

His basic thought of mankind was that they improved things so much that there was no need to not be lazy. There were no gnats, no weeds, no fungus, and no disease. There were great shelters, fine clothes, no social or economic troubles, no traffic, no commerce, and the population seemed to have stopped its level of increase.

The Time Traveler returned to the building, looking for a place to sleep, to find that his time machine was missing! He became afraid that he might be stuck there, maybe forever. He wasn't sure whether to believe that the creatures could have moved it, given their physical and intellectual weaknesses. He knew that they had not used it for the purpose of time traveling because he had the lever to control it. He entered the building and proceeded to the second hall where the creatures lay sleeping on cushions. He woke some of them up to see if they knew where the time machine was, but the scared little creatures didn't seem to know what he was talking about. He temporarily gave up for the night and went to sleep.

The Time Traveler considered the worse: if it was destroyed, he would have to live then and there until his death. He contemplated that he should learn the customs of these creatures.

He noticed some narrow footprints where he had left the time machine. He then observed the base of the statue: it was very decorated and had panels on the sides. He discovered that the base was hollow, but could not get inside. He figured that his time machine was inside, and asked one of the creatures if it was possible to open the panels. It walked away as though it had been insulted. He asked another and got the same response. A third did the same and, as he began to walk off, the Time Traveler pulled him back, but let go when he noticed that the creature was scared. The Time Traveler banged on the panels with his fist, at which point he thought he heard something inside. He banged on it with a rock. With no success, he decided to leave the statue base alone. The creatures had been avoiding him, probably due to his loud hammering

with the rock, but in a day or two, they started treating him the same again.

He went back to trying to learn the creatures' language. They mostly used concrete substantives and verbs. Their sentences were very simplistic.

The Time Traveler went on observing the landscape and kept noticing the same circular wells of a very great depth. He was unable to see any reflection of water in the wells. In these wells he would here a *thud-thud-thud* like the beating of an engine. There was a down current of air being pulled into these "wells." He realized that it was some sort of subterranean ventilation system.

Among the creatures, the Time Traveler noticed no sanitary systems or place to keep their dead. He also noticed no aged or infirmed among the people of these times. The halls that he explored were exclusively used for eating and sleeping. He saw no machinery or appliances, yet the clothes of these people were in very good condition. These creatures did not seem creative enough to make such items. The only things these creatures did were play, bathe in the river, playfully make love, eat fruit, and sleep.

One day, the Time Traveler was observing some of the creatures bathing when one got a cramp and started to drift downstream. Anyone who could swim could easily have saved her, but NONE could swim. Quickly, the Time Traveler ran and saved her. She was very grateful and later made a garland of flowers for him. She was very childlike and they sat together exchanging flowers. Her name was Weena. She followed him as much as she could. Even though it seemed like a childish affection, every time the Time Traveler would return from an exploration of his surroundings, he would be looking for her. She was fearless of him. She was fearless in the daylight but she was scared by the night and by dark things and by shadows.

The creatures stayed inside when it was dark and they slept in large droves. The only one who didn't sleep with the group was the Time Traveler. But he finally, after some days, gave in and slept with the group. One night, some time before this, he was awoken and thought he saw some grey animal run out through the door. He went outside to watch

the sunrise. Up on the hill he saw some hairy, ape-like animals, but he was unsure if he really saw anything because of the dark.

It was much hotter in this time than it was back in his time. One day, the Time Traveler was seeking shade from the heat. He entered a narrow gallery. It was really dark and his eyes had not yet adjusted. Then he saw the reflection of eyes watching him. Overcoming his fear, the Time Traveler spoke, but received no response. He reached out his hand and felt something soft. He saw a queer little ape-like figure, but then couldn't see it again because it was back in the shadows. It was dull white with greyish eyes and flaxen (pale yellow) hair on its head and back. The Time Traveler saw a well in the gallery and considered that the hairy creature may have gone down. As the Time Traveler tried to go down the well (which had a ladder-like object in it with which he could climb down), he saw what looked like a human spider. He used a match to see, but it burned out. He lit another but it was gone. He realized that, it too, was a descendent of mankind, just like the creatures with whom he ate and slept.

Humans had differentiated into two animals, the above-ground ones and the below-ground nocturnal ones. The below-ground ones had a severe problem with bright light. The Time Traveler theorized that the under-creatures' work is what provided the above-creatures with what they needed.

At this point, the Time Traveler tells his guests that the above-creatures were the "Eloi" and the below-creatures were the "Morlocks."

The Time Traveler asked himself why the Morlocks would have his time machine. He asked Weena about the Morlocks until it made her cry, at which point he cheered her up by lighting a match.

The Time Traveler decided to see what was down the well. As he entered, Weena tried to pull him out but he shook her off. She looked worried, so the Time Traveler gave her a smile to give her reassurance. Half-way down the well, he felt something soft and lit a match. He saw three creatures run away from him. They had very large eyes. Once he reached the large opening in the bottom, he lit another match, with which he could see some machinery. The smell of freshly shed blood was in the air. He saw a table with meat in it. The Morlocks were strictly carnivores.

Because he thought that the civilization of the future would be extremely advanced, he came to this point in history unprepared. He had no weapons, no medicine, nothing to smoke, and was without enough matches. He thought to himself that he should have at least brought a Kodak, with which he could take a picture of the underground and truly observe his surroundings at a later time. He only had four matches left.

The Morlocks started to feel him in the darkness. He was forced to light some of his matches to keep them off of him so that he could escape. By the time he reached the tunnel, he had used his last four matches. While he climbed the well, they were tugging at his legs and one even got his boot. Finally, he reached the top.

The Time Traveler inferred that the Morlocks provided the Elio with clothes and took care of their habitual needs. He started to wonder how he could protect himself from the Morlocks, who were probably angered now by his intrusion.

The Time Traveler and Weena went for a walk. They came across a Palace of Green Porcelain. As they walked, Weena put some flowers into the Time Traveler's pockets. At this point in his story, the Time Traveler takes the flowers out of his pocket and shows it to his guests.

It had been getting dark and Weena had fallen asleep. The Time Traveler decided to wait for the sun to rise. He was near a wooded area which he did not intend to enter that night.

The moon began to rise and the dawn came. No Morlocks had approached them in the night. Weena awoke and they entered the now-brightly-lit woods. They ate some fruit there.

Then, in the woods, he saw the same kind of meat that he had seen underground. The Morlocks ate the flesh of the Eloi. The Eloi were nothing more than cattle to Morlocks.

Once they reached the Palace of Green Porcelain, they entered. Inside was a gallery with its floor covered in dust. There were some broken dinosaur bones hanging around, proving this to be an old museum. While in the gallery, they noticed a dark area of the room and heard a noise

from that direction. Morlocks were there. The Time Traveler broke a long lever off of an old machine to use as weapon if needed. They left that area of the building. Upstairs, in an airtight case, he found a box of matches. He also found a crowbar he could use to break open the panels on the base of the statue. They left the palace before the sun set.

As they went through the woods, the Morlocks started to close in on them. With a match, the Time Traveler lit a piece of camphor that he had gotten from the museum. The Morlocks ran to hide from the light. In the struggle, they got turned around. He decided to make a campfire and stay there until the morning.

He had been awake for two days and, unintentionally, fallen asleep. He woke a few hours later to find the fire burned out and the Morlocks all over him. He reached for his box of matches, but they had been taken. But he was able to grab the iron lever and hit the Morlocks that came after him. Then he began to see them, and just in time to see them run away. A forest fire had started.

Since the woods were on fire behind him, he had to run in the same direction as the Morlocks. Finally, he reached a clearing. He looked around for Weena but could not find her. He became sure that she had died in the fire.

Daylight came and the Time Traveler started heading back to the statue and its base. As he walked back, he discovered that some matches had fallen into his pocket. As the Time Traveler returned, he was surprised to find that the panels had already been opened. The time machine was inside. He stepped inside. As he did, the panels slid closed. He was again in the dark. We tried to light a match but was unable without the box. The Morlocks started tugging at him again. He sat on the seat of the time machine and hurried to screw in the levers with which he could travel through time. He pulled the lever and again started time traveling, leaving the Morlocks in their place of time.

He realized that he had started going even farther into the future. As he went, the greyness grew darker. Although he kept moving faster and faster into the future, the distinction between day and night became clearer, more distinct, and slower. The Earth's revolutions slowed to once every century until they stopped completely. The moon was now

gone, and the circling of stars grew slower. The Sun had grown very large and red. The Time Traveler had reached the year 30 million A.D. He decided to return back to his own time.

Most of the Time Traveler's guests leave very skeptical. But the Narrator is unsure whether TO believe him or NOT to believe him.

The Narrator returns to the home of the Time Traveler the next day.

The Time Traveler enters his laboratory with a camera and a knapsack with him. The Narrator had decided to tell the Time Traveler that he had to leave but, when he enters, the Time Traveler and his time machine are gone. The Narrator decides to wait for the Time Traveler to return.

Three years has now passed, and nobody has seen the Time Traveler since.