



The Time Machine

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Characters Discussed

The Time Traveler, who exhibits his Time Machine one evening after dinner. The next week, his guests arrive for dinner but do not find him home. Informed that they are to proceed without him, they sit down to dinner. Later, their host arrives, dirty and limping. He has traveled to the year 802,701, the time of the sunset of humanity. He tells his guests what he found. The people, weak, rounded creatures about four feet high, are vegetarians called Eloi, living in enormous buildings. Underground live the predatory Morlocks, apelike creatures also descended from humans. They were responsible for the disappearance of the Time Machine, but the Time Traveler says he managed to get it back and take off as the Morlocks sprang at him. Then, after quick and horrifying excursions ahead millions of years to the distant future, when the sun is dying and the earth is enveloped in bitter cold and deathly stillness, he hurried back to the present. The next day, the Time Traveler silences his friends' doubts by departing again on his Time Machine; he does not return, and his friends can only wonder what mishap has made him a lost wanderer in time.

Weena, a girl of the Eloi. The Time Traveler saves her from drowning, and she becomes his friend and guide. After sightseeing, they find that they have walked too far to return that night. They build a fire on a hill to keep away the dark-loving Morlocks, but later the Time Traveler wakes to find the fire out and Weena missing.

Bibliography:

Bergonzi, Bernard, ed. *H. G. Wells: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1976. Two critical essays on *The Time Machine*. One addresses the novel as myth, the other as prophecy. Readable and informative.

Costa, Richard Hauer. *H. G. Wells*. New York: Twayne, 1967. Multiple references to *The Time Machine*, with critical references. A good starting place.

Hammond, J. R. *H. G. Wells and Rebecca West*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991. Associates the novel with the writer's scientific understanding of the human species and with his interest in a fourth dimension. Illustrated. Bibliography.

Hammond, J. R. *H. G. Wells and the Modern Novel*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988. Finds Wells a deserving and overlooked, innovative writer. One analytical chapter calls *The Time Machine* a "watershed in the coming of modernism." Appendix, notes, bibliography, and index. Evocative, scholarly, readable.

Wells, H. G., Julian S. Huxley, and G. P. Wells. *The Science of Life*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1934. Describes Wells's study of science and his consequent understanding of human life.

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