

The Time Machine

Stage play by Marc Zakian Based on the novel by: H.G. Wells

Revisions October 15th

Set in 1895

Characters:

Horatio Tripp: The Time Traveller, a charismatic inventor in his 30s. Upper Middle class public school educated, English gent.

Arthur FILBY: Horatio's eccentric friend. Mid 30s. Another clubbable English Gent.

Jane Eagle: A sceptical, quick-witted journalist. Mid 20s. Educated.

Professor Albenstein: Eccentric, Academic. Logical. 50s. Russian. Sometimes makes mistakes in English.

Mrs Hawkins: Horatio's opinionated housekeeper. 50s.

Miss Anastasia Brown: a modern Victorian woman

Young Arthur – FILBY's Son. Aged 8.

In the Future

Horatio

Wenna - Eloi

Lorin – Eloi - Idealist.

Nann - Eloi - New age. Pacifist

Morlocks - Victorian Zombies

Morlok Overmind

Scene 1: The Lecture on Time

The Royal Society lecture hall. Evening. Audience comes in.

Film : newspaper headlines from late Victorian Britain.

The PROFESSOR can't find his way through the curtains, nor through the auditorium, bumps into people who are taking their seats. Goes from one end of a row to the other, as if he is getting to his seat, but he exits the row – he does not have a seat. as He tries to get up onto the stage the wrong way.

JANE EAGLE is in the front row. She wears the colours of the suffragists. ANATASIA BROWN helping to organise the event, helps seat people but gives up on helping the Professor who seems helpless. As the lecture is about to start ANATASIA BROWN takes her seat a few rows back.

Lights up on stage. **HORATIO TRIPP** *ascends the podium. FILBY joins him. Tripp clears his throat, commanding attention. FILBY bangs gavel for attention.*

FILBY:

Gentlemen and Lady. Pray silence. Welcome to the Royal Society. It gives me great honour to present your distinguished speaker. Mr Horatio Tripp.

HORATIO:

Ladies and gentlemen of the Royal Society— fellow seekers of truth gathered here tonight. We are here to discuss the very fabric of existence. The mystery of time itself.

I ask you, what is time? A river flowing only one way? A flat page with two dimensions? Or an open book ready to take us in any direction.

[To Eagle] Madam. From your reporters pad I assume you are that rare species, a *lady* journalist. Are you ready to witness the chains of time broken?

EAGLE:

I am here to write about the truth Mr Tripp. And so far all I have heard is bagatelle of words. The clock ticking on the wall is a simple reminder that we cannot get away from the present moment.

HORATIO:

That is just where you are wrong Miss. Where the whole world has gone wrong. We can get away from the present moment.

EAGLE:

If you continue to speak but show us nothing, we shall all wish ourselves away from this very moment.

HORATIO:

I would never want away from *your* honoured presence Miss.

FILBY:

It's all terribly exciting. I said to Horatio, it would be most thrilling if we could...go back. Back and stop the great tragedies of history: the fire of London, the assassination of President Lincoln. Or find Shakespeare's lost play. I should go

back and meet Mozart and Leonardo and there is one date I would return to...

PROFESSOR *[cuts off FILBY]*

Gentlemen, gentlemen, this is more hot air than balloon. Now it is true that mathematical theory allow us to imagine time much like the dimensions of space. And we could hypothesise a fourth dimension.

FILBY

A fourth dimension? I find hard to cope with just three!

PROFESSOR

But science tell us ... is entirely impossible. The laws of physics forbid it. A man cannot step forward or backward in time any more than he can swim to the moon.

FILBY :

It's fly old boy !

HORATIO:

Prepare to change your mind. Under here is what will bring us to the fourth dimension. To manipulate the very fabric of matter...behold

He pulls back the cloth to reveal a scale model of a glittering metallic machine, the size of small clock. Delicately made. Inlaid with transparent crystalline substance and a saddle seat.

HORATIO:

This is a scale model for a machine to travel through time. This lever, when pressed over, sends the machine into the future, and this other reverses the motion. This saddle is the seat of a time traveller

PROFESSOR:

A saddle? Are we travelling into the future with horse? How much horsepower does your machine have? (laughs at his own joke)

HORATIO:

In one moment, I am going to press this lever, and the machine will depart. It will vanish, pass into destiny and disappear. Look carefully and satisfy yourselves there is no trickery.

PROFESSOR AND EAGLE WALK AROUND THE TABLE. EAGLE puts forth her finger towards the lever.

HORATIO:

No. *[to journalist]* Miss...

EAGLE:

Eagle.

Lend me your hand. Put your forefinger here.

She hesitates Horatio guides Eagle's hand to the lever.

HORATIO

Push it, Miss Eagle. You will send it into the voyage of time.

She presses. Lights jump. A breath of wind, and the lamps go dark. The sound of the time machine. The little machine suddenly swings round, became indistinct and is gone. The audience gasps and then bursts into cacophony of shouts.

HORATIO *[grabs the gavel, bangs and shouts over audience noise]*

Gentlemen *[to journalist pointedly]* and lady. Remember this day, you are the witnesses to the first ever time travel.

PROFESSOR :

Well, blow me down with a chicken!

FILBY:

Do you seriously believe that that machine has travelled into time?

HORATIO: Certainly. The future or the past—I don't, for certain, know which. But this is a moment for posterity.

EAGLE: *[waving her notes in the air]*. This story is going straight to the editor.

She leaves in a hurry.

HORATIO: Tell him to hold the front page.

PROFESSOR:

Time waits for everybody.

Suddenly there is another whirring and the lights fritz again. The small time-travelling machine reappears on screen. But rather than glistening it is charred, burned and smoking. Again, the audience is in chaos.

HORATIO AND PROFESSOR gather round the smoking machine

PROFESSOR

Looks like your time machine is chips Mr Trip!

HORATIO :

Toast Professor.

PROFESSOR :

No thanks young man, I have eaten.

FILBY: *[looks at machine]* Hmm. I am not sure travelling to the future is a terribly good idea Horatio.

HORATIO: Science is not for the timid FILBY. I have a full-size machine nearly finished in my laboratory. When that is complete, I will take a journey myself.

Scene 2

Horatio workshop. In the middle of the room is the full-size time machine

MRS HAWKINS is dusting - more vigorous than precise. She reaches the desk and picks up his diagrams so she can clean. Reads the title.

MRS HAWKINS *[to herself]:*

I don't know what kind of scientific nonsense he is up to, but if it ends with another explosion, I won't be cleaning it up. (reads Horatio's notes). A machine to travel in time. He's been at this for a lifetime.

She puts the diagram down. She looks at the room. The machine. The dust beneath it.

MRS HAWKINS:

Time machine. More like a machine for gathering dust.

HORATIO enters, sees this, stops short as he sees her cleaning the handle that she gives accidental nudge. There is a slight judder in the room.

HORATIO:

Please don't touch the handle.

She returns the lever to its exact position. A pause.

MRS HAWKINS:

I was cleaning it.

HORATIO:

Yes, thank you but it's very delicate and it's nearly complete

She resumes dusting.

MRS HAWKINS:

Well Good luck to you Mr Tripp. I could certainly do a with a time machine so as I'd 'ave enough hours to keep this place clean and take care of 'im indoors and me little ones.

HORATIO:

I appreciate your hard work Mrs Hawkins.

MRS HAWKINS:

Time is a plenty. For those that can afford it.

She continues dusting. She starts to clean a picture frame with a photo it. It is Horatio with FILBY and young boy.

HORATIO:

Careful!

The picture frame starts to fall, Horatio catches it.

MRS HAWKINS:

Oh, I am so sorry Mr Tripp, I know how precious this...I never knocked it before, I don't know what I was thinking.

HORATIO:

No harm done.

MRS HAWKINS:

You all look so happy in that picture.

HORATIO:

It was exactly a year ago today.

MRS HAWKINS:

I don't know how Mr FILBY manages, losing a son. And poor little Arthur was your godson, too. You must miss him.

HORATIO:

I do. We all do, every day.

The doorbell rings.

MRS HAWKINS:

I'll let 'em in.

She answers the door offstage.

FILBY ENTERS. He is wearing a black tie and armband. He sees Horatio looking at the picture.

HORATIO:

Oh hello, FILBY, you didn't need to come... I was thinking...that you might not want to join us today... with the anniversary of Arthur's accident. You must be...

FILBY: *[a beat. Fills the awkward silence]*

Life goes on Horatio. *[referring to machine]* Is this it?

HORATIO: Yes. Four years work. Isn't she splendid. A machine to break the walls of time.

FILBY: Yes. Horatio do you think... if you went back...into the past...you could...well.. would it be possible to change things?

HORATIO: I don't know old chap. But if I could..

The doorbell rings, the big Clock ticks at 10am. In comes the PROFESSOR.

HORATIO:

Ah, welcome. Ye of little faith! I give you the full-size time machine. See here Professor, I added nickel to the mechanism and it is ready to begin its career.

PROFESSOR:

Nickel? Really Mr Tripp? What's next, powering it with puff of steam to blow you up the stars?

HORATIO:

Mark my words, that humble nickel's conductivity is the spark of genius.

PROFESSOR:

Traversing time? If you breaking the law of physics Mr Tripp, I will eat my hat.

HORATIO:

Whatever happens, I am ready to take a step into an unknown world.
[he climbs onto the machine] I imagine a man holding a pistol to his skull feels much the same curiosity about what comes next.

HORATIO grips the lever, with trepidation but resolve. He pushes it forward. We hear the time machine sound FX. A rapid ticking clock sound.

FILBY and the PROFESSOR moving quickly – FILBY adjusts his hat, PROFESSOR opens his newspaper, then suddenly freeze to statues – lights dim on them. The big Grandfather Clock in the room is at 10h. A bird flying past the window freezes. Horatio jumps out the machine, takes the paper from the PROFESSOR and puts it under FILBY's arm and puts FILBY's hat into the PROFESSOR'S mouth. HORATIO chuckles to himself. Back to the machine. He 'lands' back Victorian time. The clock makes a large noise as it clocks only one single minute later. HORATIO looks at the clock, pleased. Then suddenly the trio step back, startled. The bird continues flying. Lights stabilize, and the hum fades. HORATIO slumps slightly, disoriented, gripping the chair.

FILBY:

Horatio! Are you alright?

HORATIO:

The sensations of time travelling....are somewhat uncomfortable.

PROFESSOR splutters as he pulls the hat from his mouth. FILBY is unhappy to see his newspaper is now in the possession of the PROFESSOR.

PROFESSOR:

Nothing happened. You're still here. We are all still here.

HORATIO:

The clock. It has jumped forward a moment.

PROFESSOR:

Impossible! It must be broken. It did not jump.

HORATIO:

No. The clock is correct. Time moved, but only for me. You stood still, frozen in your moment, while I... slipped forward.

(seeing the Professor splutter) Did you find his hat tasty old fellow? (chuckles to himself). Time is a river, but only the traveller feels its current. This world will stay unchanged, unless we dare to move it along.

FILBY:

Can you imagine it, Horatio? Back to breakfast time for an extra muffin?

PROFESSOR:

Oh No. He must not eat extra muffin. If you change the past from the future it will shatter the continuum. Our whole world could break. Niet Muffins.

HORATIO:

I have had a glimpse of a brave new world. Now I will see it all.

FILBY:

You will come back to us, old chap. We can't miss bridge night at the club.

HORATIO:

I'll try, my friend. For now, the adventure begins.

He turns the lever on the machine. Once more everything in the room freezes. The clock, FILBY, PROFESSOR.

Scene 3. 802,701 A.D.

Time Machine Sound FX. Screen on the machine displays the date.

On the screen a snail moves backwards like a jaguar. Time travels backwards as the Moon passes thought sky faster as seasons change.

We slow down, back a few years to 1890. We see Horatio, Filby and his son age about five posing for the photo on the fishing trip. Horatio fires the cable on a large wooden frame camera, flash. Then we see Horatio giving Arthur a piggy back. Suddenly we see Filby's son in the water and they are trying to rescue him.

It's too much for Horatio, so he turns the lever forward.

We pass through Victorian society, horses to steam trains to cars to flying cars. Mechanical clocks to digital clocks. Old phones to mobile phones, cash machines to computers, human to cyborgs and robots. Nuclear war, the Planet destroyed by global warming and a second ice age. And now a world reborn in 802,701 A.D.

The time machine appears in a lush, verdant landscape. The air is warm, and the scenery is idyllic but tinged with neglect.

Amidst all this is giant statue - the Morlok Overmind that we will meet later. Surrounded by overgrown gardens and crumbling structures.

A once-grand civilization now in decay. There are beautiful artifacts from Victorian England.

Horatio steps out of the time machine. He hears a noise behind him, turns. Nothing. Then another noise.

HORATIO:

Who's there?

Another rustle. HORATIO turns, hand on his machine, peering into the shadows. The ELOI enter. They move playfully, like children, led by WENNA, who carries a garland of strange flowers.

Two ELOI sing notes in harmony, with simple words "tree", "fruit", "people happy".

HORATIO:

Creatures... human, yet not. Who are you?

The ELOI surround HORATIO, laughing softly, their voices melodic. WENNA steps forward, offering the garland.

WENNA:

Greetings.

HORATIO:

Greeting to you. What's your name?

WENNA:

Wenna.

HORATIO:

Wenna? A fine name. I'm Horatio... friend. Who are you? What is this place.

WENNA:

We are Eloi, we are the people. This is home.

HORATIO:

Yes, but what country are we in?

WENNA:

Country?

HORATIO:

Is this England, the United States? Russia?

WENNA:

Home.

HORATIO:

Il understand that this is your home. Now I come from London.
England. So what do you call this place? Where are we?

WENNA:

All home

*The ELOI drift away singing again their strange song. WENNA
watches them go makes to follow — then looks back at HORATIO.
She hesitates... steps back to him.*

HORATIO:

They leave so soon? But you... you stay. Friend.

WENNA:

Horatio friend.

HORATIO:

Yes.

WENNA:

Food?

HORATIO:

Absolutely. It is a long time since I have eaten. More than you can
imagine. I am intrigued to find out what people eat in future.

Scene 4.

HORATIO sits at the table, surrounded by ELOI, who nibble fruit and laugh softly. WENNA, beside him, offers a large, vibrant fruit. The ELOI play a game where one hides a grapefruit from another. Hard to tell if the Eloi believes the fruit has disappeared or if he is just playing along. Their naivety is shocking.

HORATIO:

This is a fine spread. *(holding the fruit, impressed)* A fruit this size would win a prize where I come from. *(to WENNA)* What is it called?

WENNA:

Good fruit! Eat!

HORATIO:

Yes, it is good. But... where does it come from? Who grows it?

NANN ELOI 2:

It grows, friend. The trees make food, the rivers water. We have what we need.

HORATIO:

No farmers to plant the fruit? And who harvests the food?

LORIN ELOI:

No need. The land gives for all. Nothing more is needed.

HORATIO:

And you have no leaders? No government to oversee this?

NANN ELOI 2:

Why would we need rulers? We share what we have. We are all free.

HORATIO:

Incredible... a people without order, yet no hunger. No country, no leaders, no money? Like Eden before the fall. *[He glances at LORIN]* But what if you want to change something? What if you disagree?

NANN ELOI 2:

We believe in peace. No masters.

HORATIO:

Well, whoever grows this, the fruit is good. *[Looks at the table]*. And what kind of meat do you have?

LORIN ELOI:

Meat?

HORATIO:

Yes. Beef. Mutton. *[they look at him bemused]* Cows, do you have cows?

The ELOI look confused.

HORATIO:

What animals do you kill and cook for food?

NANN ELOI 2:

Killing for food is bad.

HORATIO:

Well. Yes I suppose... *[he has no response; their logic is correct]*. This fruit is excellent.

The ELOI wander off. Wenna stays with Horatio.

HORATIO:

Do you have books.

Like this. *[he pulls out his notepad].*

WENNA:

Horatio. Follow.

She leads him to a cave. An ageing library sign hangs on the wall

HORATIO:

Yes books. Literature. *[approaches a shelf, touching moulding dust-covered books].* Aristotle. Archimedes. Hippocrates.

WENNA:

Old things.

HORATIO:

These are treasures—history, medicine, science.

[Opens the book, and it crumbles to dust in his hands, falling like ash].

Turned to dust. All dust!

HORATIO grabs another book, then another, each disintegrating.

HORATIO:

All knowledge... gone! The wisdom of centuries, poetry, philosophy

WENNA gently takes the remains of a book from HORATIO's hands, cupping the dust so it does not fall.

WENNA: [beat]

Horatio sad?

HORATIO: (softening)

Wenna. This...this is what made us human.

[he indicates the cover of Newton's Principia, barely intact on a shelf]

This book was written by Isaac Newton. He explained how our world turns around the sun. How you and me, how we are all on a planet flying through space.

[he indicates the dust on the floor, what is left of Shakespeare's first folio]

And Shakespeare... he gave us poetry. Words to understand everything.

"The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, the great globe itself shall dissolve and, leave not a rack behind."

[He lets the last flakes of paper fall]

Is this what happened. Everything gone. Nothing left behind.

WENNA watches him, then gently cups the fallen dust in her hands so it does not scatter further.

WENNA *[quietly]:*

Old things... still matter?

HORATIO:

Yes, Wenna. They matter more than anything.

SOUND EFFECT: A low, eerie growl from the cave's depths. WENNA startles, whispering.

WENNA:

Dark!

The statue shadow darkens through the opening, a faint drone rising.

HORATIO:

What's that?

WENNA:

Friend, go!

She tugs him toward the cave exit. Together they move out of the cave with the 2 other Eloi who are terrorised by the shadows behind them. One of the Eloi slips

[sound FX we hear the Mortach language. Drak-ul Eloi-th Vra-th]

HORATIO:

He's fallen. (goes to help him)

WENNA:

No. Horatio. We go.

Something unseen on the screen a figure in the shadows drags away the fallen Eloi. Wenna and the other Eloi move out of the cave.

HORATIO:

We can't leave him.

He goes to other Eloi to try and get them to help. They shrug him off.

WENNA:

No good. Gone. Come, come

They exit the cave and go out into the open air. The danger gone, the Eloi return to playing and singing their strange high pitch tunes. As if nothing really happened. Horatio is mystified and disturbed by the Eloi.

**We hear the Mortach language and English "Food for us good".
Vra-ul Ven'k-th Vrok**

Scene 5

Lights dim to cool moonlight. The stage is shadowy, with the statue silhouette dominating and glowing upstage. WENNA sits making a daisy chain. HORATIO kneels nearby, gathering sticks into a pile, glancing nervously at the cave mouth and the statue.

HORATIO:

What was that in the cave, Wenna? What's down there?

WENNA:

Dark. Bad things.

HORATIO:

They took one of your people.

WENNA:

Yes. Gone now.

HORATIO:

But who took him?

WENNA:

Bad things. Morlok. They come. Night.

HORATIO nods adding the final sticks to the pile. He takes the lamp from the Time Machine and with his box of matches lights it. The bright light surprises WENNA.

We hear Lumina Krivath "bright danger"

HORATIO:

It's just a match. You try one.

He shows WENNA. She fumbles, then succeeds.

We hear "Too Bright Danger" Zhar Lumina Krivath

The campfire fire crackles to life; flames rise, casting dancing shadows. She makes shadow shapes, and claps. HORATIO joins her briefly, sharing a happy moment. He makes shadow puppets. She laughs.

Wenna:

Light keeps bad things away.

HORATIO:

I'm sorry for your friend.

WENNA:

Mor-lok take Eloi. But we happy. Not sad

WENNA places the daisy chain gently around HORATIO's neck, smiling and touching his arm. Firelight glows on her face.

HORATIO:

That's beautiful, Wenna. I've never seen flowers like this in my world.

WENNA smiles. But Horatio is not giving up on finding out what happened.

HORATIO:

The Morloks, why do they attack the Eloi?

WENNA takes HORATIO by the hand, leading him toward a second cave opening. They carry the lantern revealing a grim pile of ELOI skeletons. HORATIO horrified.

We hear the Morlocks muttering "Zek Zek" (near near).

HORATIO:

These are Eloi. The Morloks?

WENNA nods again, mimicking an eating gesture.

HORATIO:

Oh my God...

WENNA:

Morloks eat Eloi. We know.

They return to the fire. WENNA spreads a soft mat of leaves and flowers. They lie down side by side, facing the flames. WENNA places her hand in HORATIO's, he squeezes it gently.

WENNA:

Horatio... your world... Eng..?

HORATIO:

England.

WENNA:

What is it like?

HORATIO:

Well, I live on the edge of a hill overlooking the river in a city called London. There are millions of people. Streets full of workers, shoppers, horses and carriages, people going to theatres and concerts.

WENNA:

Concerts?

HORATIO:

Big shows with beautiful music. And plays. Great ones by Shakespeare, the man whose book was in your old library. Comedies, tragedies,

WENNA:

Love stories.

HORATIO:

"Did my heart love 'till now? Forswear it, sight!
For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night".

WENNA:

Beautiful words.

HORATIO:

Yes. You would enjoy it. The whole play is full of beautiful words. It's the story of a young boy Romeo, and a girl Juliet who are in love.

WENNA:

What happens to them.

HORATIO:

They come from two different families who are at war.

WENNA:

The families fight?

HORATIO:

Yes. So, Romeo and Juliet can't be together.

WENNA:

Many people fight in your world?

HORATIO:

Yes... we have wars.

WENNA:

Do people always have food?

HORATIO:

Not always. Some go hungry. [beat] But nobody eats other people.
[beat]

WENNA:

You have special person in your world. Children?

HORATIO:

I have...had a godson

WENNA:

What is God?

HORATIO:

What is God! Now that's a question. [That he not going to answer]
My great friend FILBY. His son was like a son to me.

WENNA:

He is waiting for you?

HORATIO:

Well, no. He fell in a river. We...I.. couldn't save him. [he looks at the
time machine]

*SOUND of distant Morlok growl fades. The statue looms in shadow
beyond the firelight. HORATIO and WENNA settle for the night. The
Time Machine stands silently in the back.*

We hear Drak-ul Thul "take machine"

Scene 6

We see FILBY, the PROFESSOR unfreeze from the positions when we left them. The clock tells 18h30.

We see them sitting looking at the space where the time machine was.

FILBY.

But where he has gone to.

PROFESSOR

This is just illusion. Some trick. He is play seek and hide with us.

[starts looking behind curtains. Nothing]

FILBY.

He's gone isn't he PROFESSOR. We've been sat here waiting for hours.

What's that?

From outside the window there is a rally. A group of suffragists. They look out to see Eagle standing on a stage rallying a bunch of mostly women. Some men booing.

Eagle: Ladies. This article in today's Evening Record newspaper was supposedly written by William Palmer. Do you know who wrote it. I did. The work done by a woman, stolen by a man. Until we have the vote, we will never have our rights.

Chants. "Votes for Women" We hear the March of the Women song.

FILBY.

It's Miss Eagle. She is quite the bluestocking.

PROFESSOR [looking]

Are you blind FILBY. Her stockings are red.

FILBY.

No PROFESSOR. I mean she is [looks at him, he clearly does not understand]. Never mind. [shouts] Good luck Miss Eagle. I will toast your efforts with a glass of Horatio's sherry.

PROFESSOR [looking]

You make her into toast because of her stockings?

FILBY.

No, Bluestockings is nickname for educated women Professor. Who are interested in science, you should appreciate that.

PROFESSOR

A woman in science is like monkey on bicycle. They peddal but they will never know where they are going.

FILBY

I should say Ms Eagle gives every appearance of knowing exactly where she is going. She is determined that women will have the vote.

PROFESSOR

The day women get the vote I will...let me get this correct... "eat my hat"

FILBY

You said that about time travel...and it looks like you were wrong.

FILBY AND THE PROFESSOR FREEZE.

SCENE 7

Night turns to day. The sun comes up. HORATIO wakes. WENNA is still sleeping. He looks at her fondly. Turns around and realises.

HORATIO: My machine—

WENNA: (wakes up looking) Gone?

HORATIO: It's been moved.

He moves around the stage searching.

WENNA: Horatio angry?

HORATIO: No. Well yes actually yes. It's gone.

WENNA: You need machine?

HORATIO: Yes, Wenna, I need it. So, I can go back to my world.

WENNA: Horatio not happy here?

HORATIO: Wenna this [indicates the two of them] makes me happy. But I don't belong here, this is not my world. I am not Eloi.

He studies the ground.

HORATIO: Look — it's been dragged along here. To this cave.

[Horatio grabs a stick and lights the torch from his oil lamp]

WENNA: Mor-lok in there.

HORATIO: And so is my time machine. [beat. He is going in. She hesitates] You don't need to come with me. I think it is probably better you don't.

WENNA: Wenna stay with Horatio.

They step into dark tunnel, lamplight flickering. Mechanical noises echo, ventilation hums, distant metallic clanks. Morlok phrases.

WENNA: Bad noises.

Suddenly torch goes out; MORLOKS rush between.

WENNA: Horatio!

HORATIO: Leave her!

He runs after her, past hooks and Eloi bodies stored like cattle.
Wenna held by two live Morlocks. Crowd on film. Horatio thrusts
match-flame; they scatter; Wenna free.

HORATIO: Wenna! Quickly—

He pulls her away, stops at faint rhythmic glow.

2 Morlocks and Wenna stage left; Morlocks whimper and move away
from light; they skulk around Time Machine stage right.

HORATIO: Look...

There is Time Machine surrounded by Morlocks prodding levers.

HORATIO: They're going to destroy it.

WENNA: No.

Horatio.

Morlok tugs brass panel. Horatio sees many more Morlocks.

WENNA: Too many.

Lamp flickers, Horatio hits lamp, works again.

One Morlok drags Time Machine off stage right.

WENNA: Horatio come! Come now!

They run, Morlocks swarm.

HORATIO reaches exit shaft. H and Wenna run in circle through
tunnels/caves, return above ground. He pushes bodies into shaft as
temporary barrier. They scramble out.

Faint grey light.

Burst out into daylight as Morloks screech.
He pushes bodies into shaft as temporary barrier.
They scramble out.
The MORLOKS SCREAM.
HORATIO and WENNA collapse outside, gasping.
For a moment, neither speaks. WENNA looks back towards the cave.
WENNA: Morloks gone?
HORATIO: For now.
He looks at the burning remains of the muslin. The fire begins to die.
WENNA: Eloi safe. We have food.
HORATIO looks at her. Eat. Sing. Love?
WENNA smiles.
WENNA: Yes.
HORATIO: But that didn't save your friend.
A beat.
WENNA looks down.
HORATIO: And it won't save the others.
WENNA: What can we do?
HORATIO looks towards the distant Palace of Green Porcelain.
HORATIO: I don't know. Yet.
He looks back towards the Eloi.

SCENE 8

The PALACE OF GREEN PORCELAIN. WENNA leads the ELOI into the decaying museum-like building. They wander inside, fascinated by the strange objects and statues around them. The ELOI settle together on the floor. They begin to sing their strange, high-pitched song. Eat. Sing. Love WENNA sits among them. HORATIO watches. For a moment, the Palace feels almost peaceful. The singing continues. HORATIO looks at the ELOI — at their innocence, their happiness, their complete lack of understanding of the danger around them. He takes a breath.

HORATIO: You probably know I come from another time — the past. The singing gradually fades The ELOI turn towards him.

HORATIO: A world very different from yours.

A beat.

HORATIO: Let me tell you something that happened back then. For you, thousands of years ago. In our time, like yours, there were also different types of people...

LORIN ELOI: Morloks and Eloï?

HORATIO: No. Different names. One group lived on a great land across the sea. In a warm place, a kind of paradise, like this place. But they had no weapons, no power, no machines. Another group lived far away, in many smaller places. They had weapons.

He indicates to Wenna who strikes a match and lights the oil lamp. She shows it off to them. The Eloï are amazed.

HORATIO: Fire. Metal. Machines. The people from the machine country went in boats to the paradise and took its people from their homes.

LORIN ELOI: What for? Why?

HORATIO: They forced them to work. Made them harvest food and fabric for clothes. They were treated badly. Used as labour.

NANN ELOI 2: Like Mor-lok use Eloi. Bad.

WENNA: [rallying the group] Eloi not want Mor-lok take more of us.

NANN ELOI 2: No. We don't want more taken.

HORATIO: Yes. And the situation changed back then, the people from the warm paradise, they began to fight back. That is why I have brought you here. To ask you to join together, to fight. To use these fire sticks to stop the Morloks.

We have found this—

[Wenna pulls out a chunk of camphor.]

I think it is from my world. Something that survived here from my time.

LORIN ELOI: What is it? [takes a piece, licks it, recoils]

HORATIO: No, no — it's not food. It's camphor. Watch.

Wenna puts a stick on the camphor and then lights it from the oil lamp. It flares brightly. Gasps from the Eloi.

HORATIO: With this, the Morloks will run from you. You can stop them. When you live in imagined safety... you do not grow strong. Together, we can go into their caves and show them you will fight back. We...you can stop the Morloks.

The Eloi look doubtful.

LORIN: Kill Morloks

NANN ELOI 2: We have food here. Killing is bad

HORATIO: Yes, killing is bad, but..

LORIN: People die?

NANN ELOI 2: Eloi don't want to die.

HORATIO: Every day the Morloks take some of you.

NANN ELOI 2: We have what we need.

HORATIO: You must act, or the Morloks will continue to devour you!

NANN ELOI 2: We do not harm anyone, friend. We do not kill. There must be another way.

HORATIO: Another way? They hunt you while you do nothing.

NANN ELOI 2: Then we protect, not attack. Live in peace.

[they make to leave. Wenna stands and blocks them]

WENNA: No more Eloi die. [she lights a flare]. Now we have this we can stop Morlok.

NANN ELOI 2: [to Horatio and Wenna] Can you be sure fighting ... your fire will stop the Morloks.

HORATIO: No, we can't be sure, but...

LORIN: Peace is better.

The Eloi look at each other in agreement then drift away. Horatio calls after them.

HORATIO: Please don't leave. This is your chance to stop the Morloks killing you. (frustrated) It's hopeless. Why won't they save themselves?

WENNA: Eloi do not fight. Afraid.

HORATIO: Or... too comfortable to care.

Scene 9.

It is night. Wenna and Horatio have settled down to sleep. In the background we hear a buzzing then the strange Morlock language as if straight into our brains and then translated.

Thrash-ven'k Zhulak
(We see the talebearer)

Thrash-ven'k Vrok-Ishtrak
(We see the light warrior)

Velirak-ak Ven'k
(The past has returned)

Drak-ul Ven'k Krath
(Bring him below)

The giant statue changes as if commanding a force.

Morlok hands reach up from below. Horatio, his sleep disturbed, suddenly wakes to find himself enveloped in Morlok hands as they pull him down.

WENNA wakes to see him pulled into the underworld. She screams.

WENNA:

Nooo. Horatio.

Scene 9 **rewrite 15/10**

The Morlok underworld. The command-and-control bunker. HORATIO sits on the floor in the middle of the stage. Shifting between the screens is the OVERMIND, the master Morlok controller. He is an indistinct figure, his shape like the Stalin statue. His voice is translated from Mortach into English so that HORATIO can understand. A harsh, unreal sound.

HORATIO:

What do you want with me?

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Grak-thul! Vrok-tor'ka! Drak-vrak-th!

You build machines. You carry fire. You would destroy our existence.

HORATIO:

You exist because you kill the Eloi. You should be destroyed, for humanity.

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Xerith-ven'k? Velirak-luminath-thak?

Is this your message from the past? Your perfect world?

[HORATIO says nothing.]

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Zhulak-krath-th, Vrakul-zhorak-th.

Where workers live below, digging underground to serve the masters. Where history is written in bodies. Empires and dictatorships.

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Vrakul-zhulak-th!

While you trapped us beneath, we grew strong.

HORATIO:

The Morloks were once human?

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Ven'k-velirak-th krath-ul. Lumina-th-xerith-th Eloi-shk-velirak-ak.
Zhukar-th vrath-ak. Krath-th xruk-ul shuk-vrath-th. Krath-th zhulak-
krath-th xrath-ul.

All of us were human once. But in their paradise, in light, the Eloi
became innocent, simple. They forgot everything they knew.

Without sunlight... we became hunters. In the dark we remembered
the knowledge of civilisation.

HORATIO:

You became flesh-eating monsters.

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Drakulven-th vrakul-th?

And that is all you see. Look!

*[On the screens: a collage of history, knowledge, science and
medicine.]*

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Grathul-th Tharvok-th krath-th.

We read your books. Every achievement of your world is with us.
Every understanding part of our knowledge.

HORATIO:

And you turn it to death. You have no knowledge of humanity, of
kindness and love.

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Dravok-th krath-th. Zhorak-th krivath-th.

Everything can be understood. Given enough centuries.

*[On the screens: HORATIO and FILBY fishing. FILBY's son falls into the
water. The funeral. HORATIO comforts FILBY.]*

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Velirak-th krovath-th..

We know of your love. We have studied it. It did not save the boy. It just brought pain. Just like "Eat. Sing. Love" will never save the Eloi.

HORATIO: It is better to love than hate.

OVERMIND (Mortach):

[The Morlocks sound the alarm.]

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Intrusion detected. Eloi female has entered.

HORATIO:

Her name is Wenna.

And she is braver than all of you.

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Ishvra-shulk? Zhorak-th krivath-th.

Bravery is inefficient. Just another way to death.

[HORATIO starts to run.]

OVERMIND (Mortach):

Thrivak-zhulak! Torvak-th vrakul-th.

Run, traveller. This world belongs to us.

Ven'k-th thrivak-zhulak!

The Human thinks he can escape.

Scene 10

Wenna has entered the Morlok underworld. She has brought a back sack of supplies. H and Wenna use camphor to lay fire traps, connecting each chunk of camphor with string to make fuses.

HORATIO:

OK. Let the Morloks taste fire. Run the fuse along the tunnel. When they follow us— the whole place burns.

(BLACK OUT).

The camphor ignites, flames crackling along the string. MORLOKS screech and recoil.

WENNA:

Run!

They sprint through the tunnels (same as before) leaping over debris. The faint light of the time machine glimmers ahead, next to the statue.

HORATIO:

My machine!

HORATIO leaps onto the time machine, gripping the lever.

The Morloks start to gather like zombies. We hear their chatter in Mortach. But the light of the machine makes them hesitate.

A brilliant light bursts forth, causing the MORLOKS to recoil and retreat.

HORATIO:

Wenna! Climb on. Come with me!

WENNA:

No... not my world.

HORATIO:

There are no Morloks in my world.

WENNA:

A world of machines and war.

HORATIO:

A world of music, concerts, Shakespeare.

[She hesitates]

WENNA:

Take this. Horatio

She presses an Eloi flower into his hand.

WENNA:

No forget.

HORATIO: (nodding) *HORATIO gives her the flare and the lamp. She holds it precious to her. He activates the machine. Light swells. He disappears.*

WENNA stands firm in the cave as the Morloks approach and she turns to them. To face her enemy. Black out.

Scene 11

Horatio's time machine travels. He goes further into the future. Into a world of heat and destruction.

Too hot, too dystopian. So, he reverses, back past the Morlok and Eloi. It is the reverse of the sequence we saw when he travelled into the future.

And reverses back to the accident with FILBY's son. Confusion as Horatio ducks into the water to try and pull him up

HORATIO: (*seeing FILBY's son struggling in the water*)

No... I can't let him—

V/O

PROFESSOR: Every choice you make is a risk to continuum. Some things... some people... are not meant to be changed.

But this time Horatio intervenes. He yanks young Arthur Filby onto the river bank and starts beating on his chest to get the water out.

Horatio's laboratory, 1895. The same he left. Same time showing on the clock. A thunderclap of energy. Light flares. The Time Machine reappears sparking, winding down.

HORATIO is thrown from the saddle, collapsing centre-stage. Around him the same group that were there when he left in the same positions

FILBY:

Good Lord—Horatio! You look in pretty poor shape, old chap!

Horatio can you hear me?

HORATIO:

Wenna...? (reaches toward Jane's face)

FILBY: *(slightly confused by his gesture).*

It's FILBY old chap.

Horatio struggles to sit. He is pale, bruised, exhausted.

FILBY:

Where the devil did you get to? There are burn marks all over the floor and your machine looks a bit worse for wear.

HORATIO:

I've been... far. Farther than any man has ever gone. I have seen our world turned into heaven and hell.

PROFESSOR:

Poor man, he's bubbling.

FILBY: *(aside to PROFESSOR).*

I say PROFESSOR, the chap's been knocked on his head. Give him a moment to come to his senses.

HORATIO:

I saw people underground killers, eating humanity.

PROFESSOR:

I think we can see what's happen to you: you've lost your mind. You vanish for a moment with some parlour-trick contraption and then reappear with a cock-in-bag story about cannibals. Look at clock on the wall.

FILBY:

Hate to say it, old boy, but the PROFESSOR's right. We haven't moved from this room. Time hasn't budged. Though I'll admit... I do feel rather like it ought to be lunchtime.

PROFESSOR:

Your machine has proved nothing. You cannot cross though time.

HORATIO: (reviving)

I tell you it has proved *everything*. That if we do not care for our world if we divide ourselves into masters and labourers—into those who live above and those driven below— the world will rot. Our civilisation will split, break, devour itself. I have seen it.

FILBY :

Sounds like you've had a bad dream old chap.

HORATIO:

It was no dream.

Horatio has an idea. He reaches into his coat.

HORATIO:

PROFESSOR... you pride yourself on knowing every species of plant in Britain.

PROFESSOR:

Indeed, I lecture at the Royal Botanical Society.

HORATIO:

Tell me, then what is this?

He places the flower Wenna gave him on the table. Everyone stares.

FILBY:

Good lord, did you take up gardening during your adventures Horatio?

HORATIO:

It was given to me by a very brave person.

The PROFESSOR bends to examine it

PROFESSOR:

Well, it is obvious that this is just a...well it is.... This... this is.... impossible.

FILBY:

Knock me down with a feather. There are some things that even the great PROFESSOR can't explain. [to Horatio]. So glad to see you came back old chap, Arthur will be so excited to see you. Arthur come in here.

HORATIO (to himself)

Arthur?

FILBY:

Yes. Arthur

HORATIO:

Your son?

Commented [DG1]:

FILBY:

Yes. Your godson. That blow to your head has knocked you for six.

Arthur on screen says, 'Dad can we go fishing'.. Maybe have this at the end of the scene. So, if can fade to black ..we don't have long of him standing still.

HORATIO: [overcome with joy

Oh, my lord. It worked. Its Arthur! Filby! [hugs FILBY]. Arthur!

FILBY is mystified but goes along with Horatio's emotion.

PROFESSOR: It's too much for him, I think he misplaced his marbles.

FILBY:

I think you should rest up.

Scene 12 – Back at the Royal Society [rewrite 15/10]

Lecture hall. HORATIO at the podium. Victorian style lantern show of ruined cityscape, overgrown with vegetation. The Morlok/OVERLORD/Stalin statue. HORATIO has drawn this.

On stage the Flower from the future in a small vase on the podium.

FILBY calls attention with the gavel. As in earlier scene.

Lights on HORATIO at the podium, EAGLE near side stage, PROFESSOR seated to one side.

HORATIO:

Ladies and gentlemen, a few months ago I demonstrated my time machine here at the Royal Society. Many were sceptical. Well tonight I bring you the future.

On our lantern show you see what our world will become in the year 802,701 if we do not act.

I have seen the sunset of mankind. Not a single catastrophe... not a war... not a plague...but a surrender.

[Pauses]

This is the world we will inherit if we continue to believe our comfort is security. Comfort will become decay and we will divide.

Humanity will become two species: victims above, evil below.

I give you the future, the Eloi. And the Morloks. Our overlords.

Pictures on screen

Not enemies by nature... but enemies by our making.

[someone in audience or

VOICE OVER : This is nonsense. You want us to stop progress Mr Tripp, and go back to the stone age?

EAGLE:

I too like you was a sceptic. But I have seen the evidenced.
Witnessed his machine travel into the ether. I can tell you that
Horatio's story is the most important one for our time. But if the
testimony of a journalist is not enough, particularly for some of you
a female journalist. Hear the words of a distinguished PROFESSOR.

Light up on flower.

PROFESSOR:

This flower, ladies and gentlemen, is no ordinary bloom. It is like
nothing else we see in our time. It has amazed our greatest
botanists. I must admit I doubted him, but here is the evidence that
Mr Horatio Tripp went to another world, *to another time. But as
you our esteemed audience know, there are consequences, if you
change the future, we cannot know how that will change the
present.*

*[Horatio looks concerned, has he changed the future to damage the
preent, so he moves on quickly]*

HORATIO:

This flower is a remnant of beauty from a world gone dark. Where
all understanding and philosophy is replaced by fear and
cannibalism

[new slides, a world destroyed]

With my machine I travelled beyond that dark world, millions of
years into the future saw our planet destroyed not by war, not
disease, but stripped of life.

This is what will happen if we do not care for our world.

Money and machines cannot preserve us. Only foresight and responsibility. I beg you. The choice is ours. Only must save our world.

Scene 13 **tweak 15/10**

HORATIO stands in his laboratory. It is exactly as it was in Scene 1. Morning light. The Time Machine IS waiting.

He crosses to the desk and places the flower gently on the table. He writes a note. Folds it. Leaves it beside the flower.

Horatio walks to the shelf. Takes a copy of Shakespeare's plays -and tucks it into his pocket.

He climbs into the Time Machine. It hums, brightens, begins to vibrate and disappears.

[Silence]

The door opens. FILBY enters.

FILBY:

Well, old bean I thought I heard you rattling around in here. We've got lunch at the club and chef does brisket on Wednesdays and... ... Horatio? Horatio! Where the devil—?

*He sees the flower and the note on the **table with the flower**. He kneels, picks them up, staring in disbelief.*

FILBY:

Oh... good Lord. Well, looks like lunch is off. As they say. Time waits for no man.

[We need a transition here. Film here of Horatio travelling into the Future.

Scene 14 **rewrite 15/10**

Filby goes to front of stage. He holds up the newspaper, and we see the text on screen.

I have here an article written by our friend, one of our country's first female journalists, Jane Eagle, who brought the news of Horatio's scientific adventures to the England and the world.

I want to read it to you.

"Horatio Tripp travelled where no man has gone before. To seek out future civilisations, to go to the final frontier of mankind.

He left us a message - that our world is precious, and its future is fragile. And he left the present to try and save the future".

And here I have a letter to us all from Horatio. His last letter. These are his final words to our time

FILBY: My dear FILBY. By now you will know that I have once more gone back to the future. This time I will not be returning. Forgive me for missing our lunch, old chap. But I have left my best bottle of port for you to toast me at our club. After all these years of friendship it's hard to think that we will never meet again. You and Arthur will always be in my thoughts, I am glad... beyond words... that the boy is safe. But there is somebody in the future whose fate I cannot leave to chance.

[HORATIO arrives in 802,701. WENNA turns, sees him, and runs to him. They embrace—soft, dreamlike. We should not be sure if this is real or not].

FILBY words run into Horatio voice

HORATIO (V.O.): If this is truly our future, then we stand at the beginning of a path that leads to darkness. But the future is not fixed. It depends on what we do— today.”

Lights dim to nothing. A single light falls on the flower left on the desk.

Then, we hear the sound we associate with time machine.

The flower wilts.

On the three screens the face of the Overlord.

Into that space on the stage where the flower was comes:

Morlock (ACTOR) comes on stage and walks towards the audience.

The Morlocks have travelled back in time. Evil has gone back to the past.

VOICE OVER: Mortack Grak-ar tor’ka krath-vor.

Translation. “This world will be mine.

BLACK OUT

END