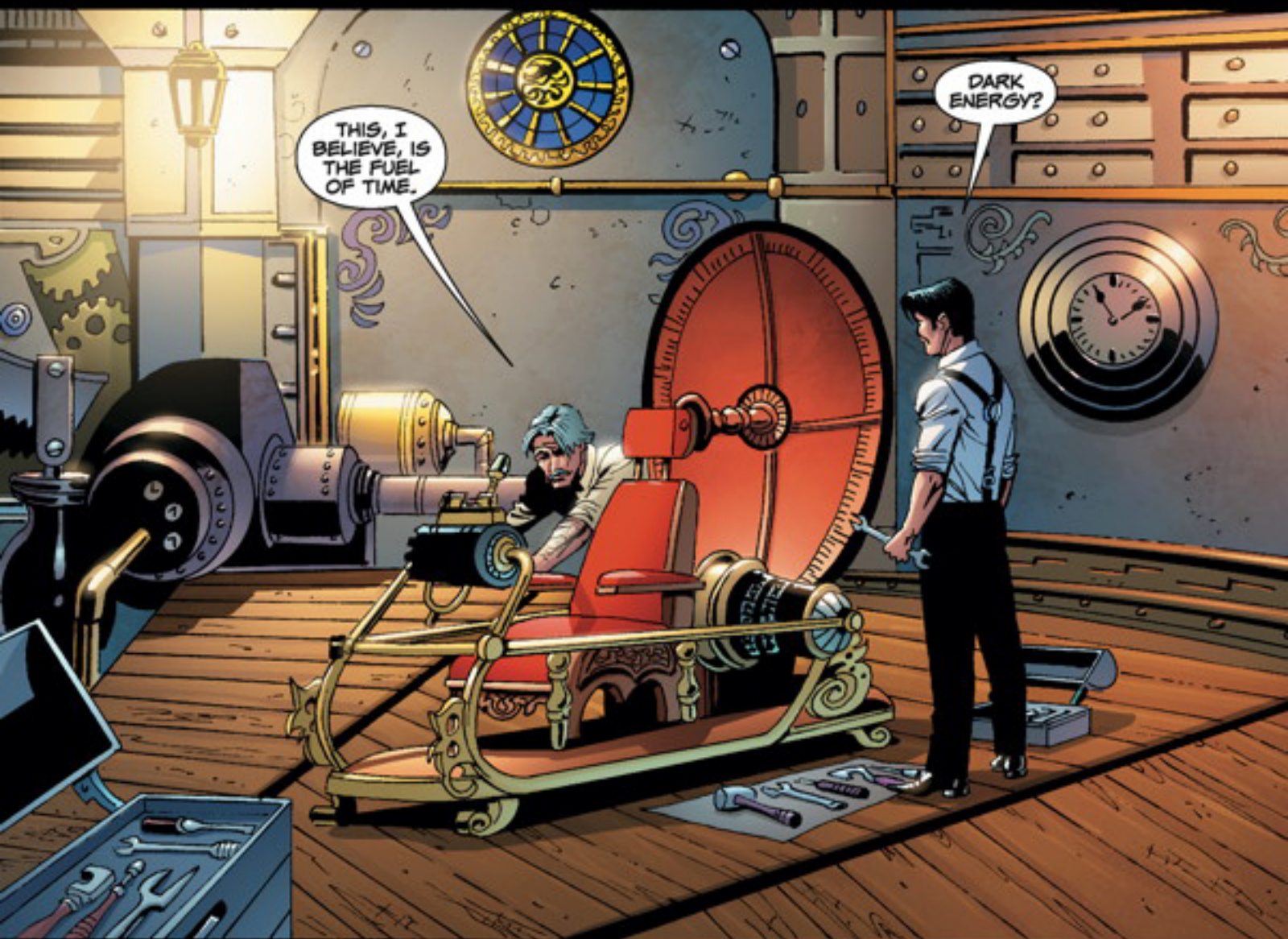





THINK OF THE UNIVERSE AS AN OCEAN, SUFFUSED WITH A "FLUID" OF SORTS. A *QUINTESSENCE*, THE GREEKS CALLED IT, THAT, UNSEEN AND UNFELT, SURROUNDS AND CONNECTS ALL THINGS. EVEN US, HERE AND NOW.



THIS, I BELIEVE, IS THE FUEL OF TIME.

DARK ENERGY?



THAT'S... WHAT I CALL IT...

YOU, MY AMERICAN FRIEND, HAVE SOMETHING OF A *GRIM STREAK*. WHAT AN UNPLEASANT PHRASE.



CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL. YOU SURPRISE ME. I THOUGHT I ALONE HAD DEDUCED ITS EXISTENCE.

IT IS, I CONJECTURE, THE MOST ABUNDANT THING IN THE UNIVERSE. I'VE FOUND INDICATIONS THAT, WHILE NORMALLY DIFFUSE, AT TIMES IT COLLECTS AND CONGELS INTO, FOR WANT OF A BETTER TERM, LOCALIZED "WELLS."



MY MACHINE IS DESIGNED TO SIPHON FROM THESE WELLS AND FLOW THE QUINTESSENCE THROUGH ITS STRUCTURE.

BY CONTROLLING THE DIRECTION AND FORCE OF THIS "FLUID" THROUGH THE MACHINE, WE MIGHT THEN CONTROL OUR OWN MOVEMENT THROUGH TIME.



I REGRET MY DESIGN ALLOWS FOR BUT ONE PASSENGER.

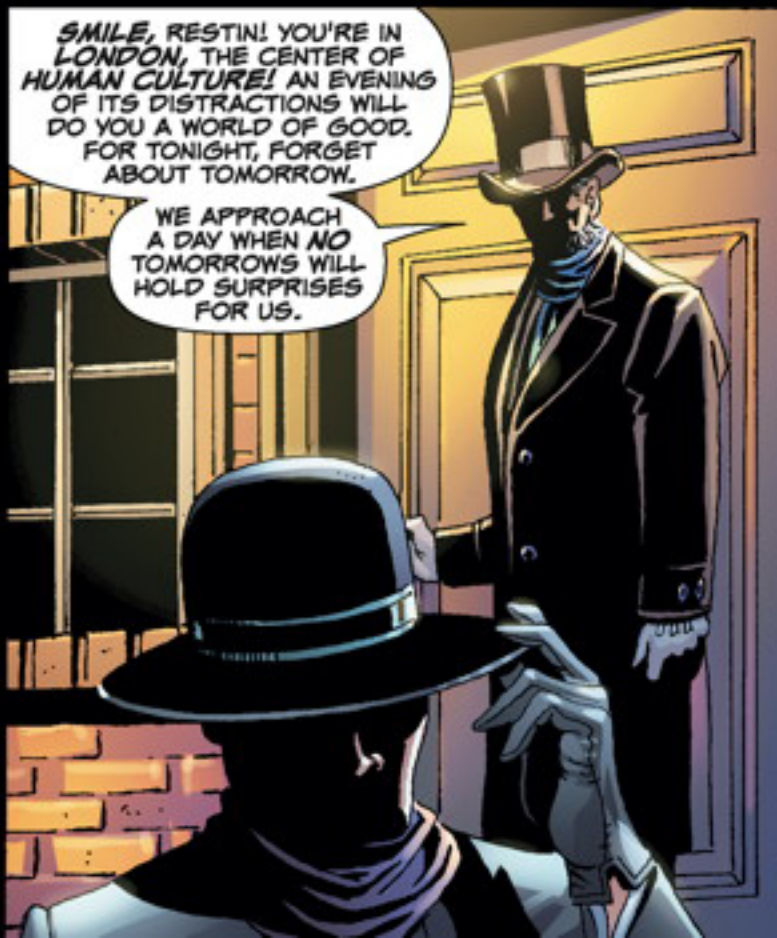
NOT A PROBLEM. YOU'RE THE FATHER OF TIME TRAVEL. THE MAIDEN VOYAGE SHOULD BE YOURS.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT A THRILL IT IS JUST TO BE ABLE TO SAY I WAS HERE.



NONETHELESS, OUR FURTHER BUSINESS MUST WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW. FRIEND HERBERT AWAITS ME FOR DINNER, AND I HAVE RECENTLY DISAPPOINTED HIM FAR TOO OFTEN.

SHALL WE PICK UP HERE TOMORROW...?



SMILE, RESTIN! YOU'RE IN LONDON, THE CENTER OF HUMAN CULTURE! AN EVENING OF ITS DISTRACTIONS WILL DO YOU A WORLD OF GOOD. FOR TONIGHT, FORGET ABOUT TOMORROW.


WE APPROACH A DAY WHEN NO TOMORROWS WILL HOLD SURPRISES FOR US.




SO YOUR MYSTERIOUS WORK GOES WELL, YET YOUR APPRENTICE CONTINUES TO DISTURB YOU?

NOT PRECISELY, HERBERT. I CONFESS ON HIS ARRIVAL I INSTANTLY FELT AN INEXPLICABLE...LET US SAY KINSHIP WITH HIM.

HIS WORK HAS BEEN DILIGENT, HIS INSIGHTS INVALUABLE. WHEN HE CLAIMS TO HOLD ME IN HIGH REGARD, I FULLY BELIEVE HIM SINCERE.




STILL, I CANNOT TRUST HIM. HE HIDES SOMETHING FROM ME. I FEAR ULTERIOR MOTIVES.

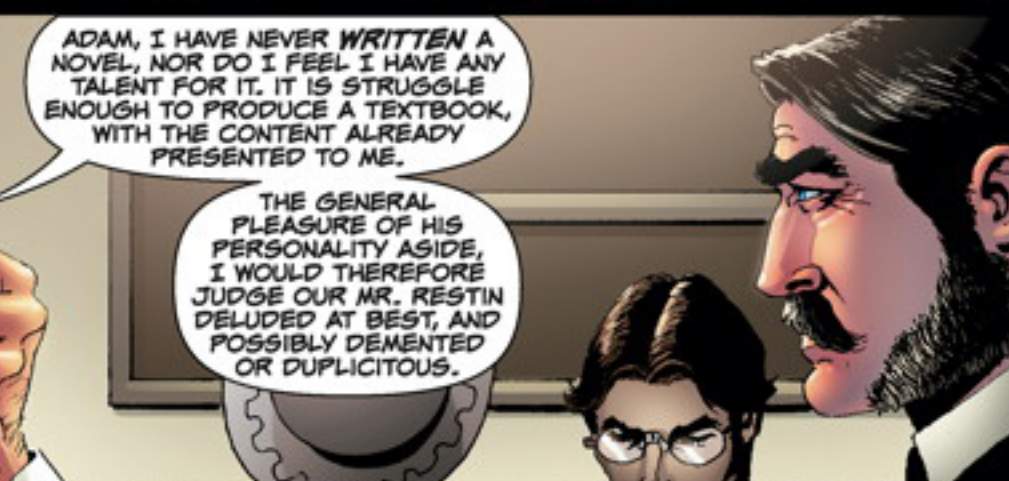


THE BOY IS ODD, NO DOUBT OF THAT. IN OUR ONE MEETING, HE GUSHED OVER ME LIKE AN AWESTRUCK SCHOOL-BOY UNEXPECTEDLY ENCOUNTERING A WAR HERO.


IN THE NEXT BREATH HE BEGINS TO PRAISE MY NOVELS, OF ALL THINGS, THEN GOES ABRUPTLY SILENT.



ADAM, I HAVE NEVER WRITTEN A NOVEL, NOR DO I FEEL I HAVE ANY TALENT FOR IT. IT IS STRUGGLE ENOUGH TO PRODUCE A TEXTBOOK, WITH THE CONTENT ALREADY PRESENTED TO ME.




THE GENERAL PLEASURE OF HIS PERSONALITY ASIDE, I WOULD THEREFORE JUDGE OUR MR. RESTIN DELUDED AT BEST, AND POSSIBLY DEMENTED OR DUPLICITOUS.



AND YET... THERE IS AN ELEMENT TO THIS I HAVE NEVER MENTIONED. MOST WOULD, IN TRUTH, CONSIDER IT MADNESS.

HERBERT, WHATEVER YOU MIGHT THINK, DO YOU SWEAR TO KEEP THIS CONVERSATION IN THE UTMOST CONFIDENCE?

OF COURSE! HAVE WE NOT ALWAYS PLAYED FAIR WITH EACH OTHER, ADAM? WHAT COULD EVEN MAKE YOU FEEL THE NEED TO ASK?



I BELIEVE MR. RESTIN TO BE BUT PART OF A VAST MOSAIC.

HIS IS THE **SECOND** STRANGE VISITATION I HAVE HAD. THE FIRST IS THE STRANGER BY FAR.



ANOTHER? WHY DID YOU NEVER TELL ME?



UNTIL THE AMERICAN APPEARED, I WAS UNCERTAIN IF I HAD NOT BEEN DREAMING.

ON A SWELTERING AUGUST NIGHT TWO YEARS GONE, WHILE ALONE IN MY HOME, I WAS AWAKENED BY THE MAD, SAVAGE WAIL OF A WILD BEAST.

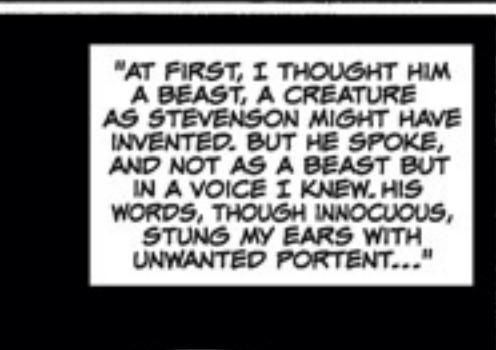


"THE CACOPHONY QUICKLY SUBSIDED, BUT I COULD NOT SHAKE THE SENSE THAT *SOMETHING* WAS NOW IN THE HOUSE.



"THERE IN MY STUDY I FOUND THE INTRUDER, CONSULTING, OF ALL THINGS, MY CALENDARS. I CONFESS TERROR GRIPPED ME. I COULD NOT FLEE. I COULD NOT CONFRONT HIM...

"CAUTIOUSLY, I CREPT DOWNSTAIRS, TO FIND TO MY ALARM THE DOOR TO THE GARDEN FLUNG OPEN, AND BEYOND IT A LARGE CAGE THAT FORMERLY HAD NOT BEEN THERE.



"AT FIRST, I THOUGHT HIM A BEAST, A CREATURE AS STEVENSON MIGHT HAVE INVENTED. BUT HE SPOKE, AND NOT AS A BEAST BUT IN A VOICE I KNEW. HIS WORDS, THOUGH INNOCUOUS, STUNG MY EARS WITH UNWANTED PORTENT..."



WHERE IS RESTIN?

"THEN HIS EYES SNAPPED UP TO GAZE BALEFULLY INTO MINE, THOUGH HE COULD NOT HAVE SEEN ME THERE-- AND I KNEW THAT FACE!



"TO MY SHAME, I FAINTED THEN. WHEN I NEXT AWOKE, IT WAS MORNING, AND I WAS IN MY BED, WITH MAN, BEAST, CAGE, AND ALL TRACES OF INTRUSION VANISHED."



TWO YEARS TOO EARLY! HOW CAN THIS BE?



NOW THAT YOU HAVE HEARD MY STORY, WHAT IS YOUR VERDICT? AM I MAD? WAS IT A DREAM? OR IS SOME OTHER ACTION IN MOTION, AND WE MERELY CAUGHT IN ITS WAKE?



HE SAID "RESTIN"? AND INDEED HAD YOUR FACE, IF MARGINALLY OLDER?

THIS IS LUDICROUS. IMPOSSIBLE. IF TRUE, IT WOULD MEAN THE EXISTENCE OF DOPPELGÄNGERS, OR...



EXACTLY. TIME TRAVEL. TRULY PREPOSTEROUS. YET I HAVE WITNESSED IT, AND MORE.

THANK YOU, HERBERT. I HAVE ACCOMPLISHED MUCH THESE PAST TWO YEARS, AND THIS CONVERSATION HAS FIRMED MY RESOLVE.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, ADAM?



YOU MUST EXCUSE ME NOW. I HAVE MUCH TO DO, AND ONLY A SHORT WHILE.

I MUST GO BEFORE MR. RESTIN'S RETURN.

YOU MAKE NO SENSE. GO WHERE? YOU ARE LEAVING LONDON?



NO, I SEE NO WAY TO LEAVE LONDON.

SHOULD WE NEVER MEET AGAIN, KNOW THAT YOU WERE ALWAYS MY TRUEST FRIEND, AND YOU ALONE I TRUSTED.

ADAM, YOU FRIGHTEN ME NOW.



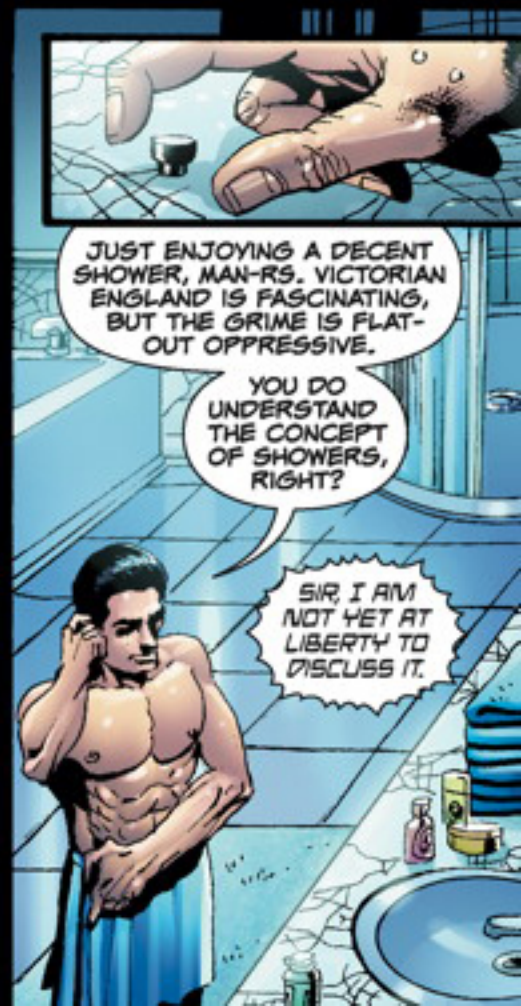
NO NEED FOR THAT. DINE AT MY HOME TOMORROW EVENING, AND ALL WILL BECOME CLEAR.

YOU SHOULD WRITE NOVELS. IT WOULD SUIT YOU.



MASTER RESTIN? YOU WISHED TO BE NOTIFIED OF THE TIME.


ARE YOU THERE? AM I DISTURBING YOU?



JUST ENJOYING A DECENT SHOWER, MAN-RS. VICTORIAN ENGLAND IS FASCINATING, BUT THE GRIME IS FLAT-OUT OPPRESSIVE.

YOU DO UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT OF SHOWERS, RIGHT?

SIR, I AM NOT YET AT LIBERTY TO DISCUSS IT.



MAN-RS,
YOUR "DISEMBODED
VOICE FROM NOWHERE"
ACT IS ALREADY OLD.
ARE WE EVER GOING
TO MEET?

AND IF
WE DO, ARE YOU
EVER GOING TO
ANSWER MY OTHER
QUESTIONS?

I'M SURE
SOME DAY ALL
THIS WILL COME
TO PASS, YES.

AT THIS TIME,
I AM INSTRUCTED TO
ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS
AND REJECT OTHERS.
ASK WISELY.

INSTRUCTED?
WHAT ARE YOU,
SOME KIND OF
ROBOT?

MAN-RS?

WE DON'T USE
THE TERM "ROBOT"
ANYMORE, SIR.
THEY'RE AUTOMATON
AMERICANS NOW.

OKAY, WE'LL
PUT THAT ON
THE LIST OF
QUESTIONS YOU
WON'T ANSWER.
WHAT ABOUT
ADAM'S TIME
MACHINE?

WHY DOES
IT ONLY
TRAVEL IN TIME
WHEN THE TIME
CASTLE CAN
TRAVEL IN SPACE
TOO?

THOUGH TRAPPED
IN EARTH'S GRAVITATIONAL
FIELD, THE CASTLE INTERRUPTS
GRAVITY IN MICROSECOND
BURSTS, ALLOWING SPATIAL
MANEUVERABILITY.

THE TIME
MACHINE IS THE
ORIGINAL MODEL.
QUANTUM GRAVITY
WAS A CONCEPT
UNAVAILABLE TO
ADAM DAVE. THE
ROOK INCORPORATED
THIS CONCEPT INTO
THE CASTLE.

THE
ROOK? WHO'S
THE ROOK?

YOU ARE,
SIR. BY THE
WAY, THIS ALSO
BELONGS TO
YOU NOW.

WHAT THE HELL WAS
MY PREDECESSOR? AN
ANTIQUES COLLECTOR?

HEADING
BACK TO LONDON
1890 NOW, AND I DON'T
APPRECIATE BEING
"REWARDED" LIKE
A TRAINED BIRD
LEARNING A NEW
TRICK.