

**L. RON  
HUBBARD**



GREED

GALAXY  
P R E S E N T S

# GREED

**I**T can be said with more than a little truth that a society is lost when it loses its greed, for without hunger as a whip—for power, money or fame—man sinks into a blind sloth and, contented or not, is gone.

There were three distinct classes of men who made up the early vanguard into space—and they were all greedy.

First were the explorers, the keen-eyed, eager and dauntless few who wrenched knowledge from the dark and unwilling depths of the universe.

Next were the rangers, called variously the “space tramps,” “space nuts” and “star hobos,” who wandered aimlessly, looking, prospecting, seeing what was to be seen and wandering on.

And last were the exploiters, the hardheaded, quick-eyed and dangerous few who accomplished, according to a standard and learned work of the times, the “rape of space.”

Each had his hunger. The explorer wanted knowledge and fame and he often laid down his life in an effort to attain them. The space tramp wanted novelty, change, adventure and sojourns in the exotic humanoid societies or solitudes in the wastes. The exploiter wanted gems and gold.

Hard words have been used against these last and it has been charged that their depredations in the first days of conquest

committed ravages upon new planets which hundreds of generations could not repair.

George Marquis Lorrillard, sometime lieutenant in the United Continents Space Navy—that pitiful handful of space guards—was an exploiter. The savage libels leveled at him in his days are leveled even now. In the kindest histories, he is “not quite nice.” And yet this man broke an impasse of Earth nations which threatened the future of all space conquest and planted the first successful colony in the stars.

He wanted wealth and he made no secret of it. A lean, hardy, ice-eyed man, Lorrillard knew his own desires and he attained them. Lesser men were afraid of him and yet, when one reviews the evidence, he never gave his own kind reason.

Often savage, always decisive and abrupt, George Marquis Lorrillard looms like a giant among his kind. He attained his goals. His fortune, wrested from brutal and inhospitable worlds, at one time amounted to twice the entire national debt of the United Continents and when it was at last dispersed in the reading of his will, it nearly wrecked Earth’s economy.

But if one seeks to envision him as a palm-rubbing skinflint, cowering behind underlings, one is wrong. Even if that is the impression vengeful historians seek to give, nothing could be further from truth. He commanded his own ships. He fought his own fights. And he died in the act of personal conquest in the stars.

Not too long after exploration had begun in earnest, men found that there was wealth to be had amongst the alien

worlds. All they saw, then, was the portable wealth, the fabulous jewels and precious metals and elements, which lay either already mined in the hands of hapless humanoids or was to be had by the merest skimming of the virgin ground. Some of the tales told in these times are not exaggerations. It is actually true that there was an entire mountain of solid gold on Durak and that there was a ruby measuring eighty feet in diameter on Psycho. The humanoids of Darwin of Mizar used solid silver for paving. And into a thousand worlds went the exploiters, close behind the explorers, to extract their due with pick and gun. They fought animals, humanoids, men and absolute zero—some died and some received their pay.

Few had thought of colonies at this time. Overpopulation on Earth was serious, but the first efforts with Mars had proven so pale that thoughts of new human worlds were few. Earth, as always, was too engrossed in her own travails to think much, as an entire society, about the stars.

An invention had disrupted affairs entirely. And it was a sudden and stopping thing. Heretofore, nearly all research had aided space conquest but now, abruptly, the problems of the universe had to wait. The Asian government had triumphed.

For many a long year there had been a single Earth, all properly patrolled and controlled by a single government. And the researches had become private affairs. Long sleep had lulled the salons, and the armor of their army and navy was almost sunk to rust. In the last year before the political

cataclysm, the total United Nations appropriation for defense was less than one-tenth its expenditure for education, a thing which, while pretty, is not practical. And for a long, long while, the Asiatic races had slept.

Earth had, as we all know, several human races. But her most energetic were the Oriental and the Occidental. And the Occidental ruled and the Oriental endured. A country which had been called Russia had almost triumphed once. And then it had failed. Although ostensibly white, it was actually Oriental. Sunk into what it considered a trying servitude to the Occidental races, Asia struggled behind her hands and at length, with the One-Earth government grown feeble, struck with suddenness.

The wounds of a forgotten war had festered into a new invention. It was privately done. And it outstripped all the means of offense which could be employed against it.

It was a simple contrivance. We would call it very elementary now. But to Earth it came as a stunning reversal of affairs. It was a “cohesion projector.” By using the force which keeps electrons and atoms together, rather than the force which blows them apart, space itself could be made into a solid wall. In an instant then, from a single generator, a column several hundred feet in diameter could be projected upwards for several thousand miles. It was not an elementary force screen such as those in early use to repel missile rockets. It was a solid, if invisible, wall. With a slightly greater frequency, it could have made matter, but they did not know that then and, indeed, did not find it out for another five hundred years.

With cunning handicraft, the Asian races, under the

direction of the ex-federation of Russia, constructed their thousands of generators, passed them secretly to proper points for installation and suddenly announced, with the murder of all the United Nations garrisons within the boundaries of Asia, that they were free from the remainder of the world.

A dozen violent attacks against the rebels ended in defeat for the United Nations. The remaining political entities outside this barrier formed the United Continents under the direction of a major country in North America.

At first no one supposed that any great harm would come of this. The Asians knew better than to attack such excellent missile weapons as the United Continents had, and the United Continents had learned with cost not to attack the cohesion barriers of the Asians. Earth was in a fine state of deadlock and consequent intrigue, and stayed that way for many years.

It was into this strange situation that George Marquis Lorrillard was born. He went to the United Continents Naval Academy, was graduated in the center of his class, was given a minor warship assignment and was forgotten about as a cog in the machinery of government. In due time, unnoticed in general but always admired by his divisions for his athletic skill and competence, he became a lieutenant and was placed in command of an outer-space patrol vessel, the *State Sahara*.

Only then did he astonish anyone. He attacked the Asian cruiser *Changrin* in the area of Betelgeuse and shot it to such small bits that he experienced trouble afterwards finding out its right name.

Returning to Earth, he reported with aplomb the

circumstances of the engagement. The United Continents and the Asians had not been at war for a decade. They had pursued their way in space without a clash because there was, after all, a lot of space. There had been tales brought back from time to time of white prospectors being robbed and murdered by Asian military units or vessels, but no action had been taken. The general idea was that any man fool enough to cruise space for any purpose did so at his own risk.

George Marquis Lorrillard not only reported—he gave forth a new doctrine, “The Freedom of Space.” Heretofore there had been spheres of activity. There were no colonies as such; there were only isolated mines and occasional garrisons and patrols to keep the humanoids in hand.

George Marquis Lorrillard brought to an astonished world some news. The mortality of mines in the strange worlds was not coincident with the risings of humanoids or the happening of cataclysms. The loss of small freighters was only rarely due to collision and mechanical failure. The Asians were establishing fortresses on most of the habitable worlds in easy cruise from Earth and they would soon control space.

People had said it before. But there had not been a bloody fight involved. Lorrillard made front page with his own personal story, “HOW THE *CHANGRIN* WAS BEATEN.”

It was an engaging tale. The *State Sahara*, a moldy old cruise vessel, had come upon the *Changrin* in the act of blowing the Gay Mistake Mining Company of Detroit off the face of New Kansas. The *Changrin* had landed to scoop up a few tons of bar iridium and had barely got into the sky again when the *State Sahara* struck.

It was one of those single-ship duels which were so dear to everyone's patriotic heart before big fleet battles usurped the glory of single action. The *Changrin*, being ten times the weight of the *State Sahara* and with a million foot-pounds a second more firepower, had almost won. And then, with his last erg of charge in the gun condensers, Lorrilard had nailed the enemy through and through.

For two or three days it looked like a war with the Asians, but at length everyone decided not to risk it. Lorrilard became excited and said that white superiority in space was glimmering and almost gone and that his government was stupid. They *let* him resign from the Navy.

The Gay Mistake Mining Company of Detroit suddenly presented him with half the iridium he had recovered for them. The Hot Boy Exploit Company, which owned gem deposits on thirty worlds, gave him a check for five million dollars. The August Tart Interests handed him a medal which turned out to be worth twenty millions, being a pie-plate diamond from one of their space mines. And George Marquis Lorrilard presented a very innocent face to an astonished political front. He had not solicited anything or proposed anything—he said.

But in a letter to Jacob Unser, a man much interested in the destiny of white men in the universe and a later partner in crime, Lorrilard said, "I consider that forts are a sort of trap. However, all we can do is place a new Earth out there for a base and operate from it to defend. We cannot afford a patrol navy. We need a raiding base."

Evidently he tried it. There are no records in existence



which give any kind of picture of what they did attempt. But there are a few hints.

Lorrillard seems to have tried an inferior sort of cohesion barrier, lacking the answer to an Asian type. And behind its supposed safety, on a new world approximating Earth, yet nearer to wealthier planets, he tried to plant a colony which would maintain itself and support a patrol fleet.

However it was attempted, it failed. Some thirty-eight billion dollars and eighteen thousand lives were squandered in the effort to plant that colony—only to have the Asians wipe it out. This is known because a contemporary used the figures to prove that the planting of colonies in space “is folly which would be attempted only by such a hothead as Lorrillard, the cashiered naval officer.”

Other brutal opinions and a government distaste for him—for the Asians could invent weapons at will now behind their barrier, and a war would be a chancy thing—drove Lorrillard back into space.

He went at it hard-eyed now, an avowed exploiter. He pretended all the swashbuckle and the dollar-conscious conversation of your true man of greed. But one wonders if he was not hiding a rather large dream.

He began to raid exposed Asian points. At least fifty other men like him were beginning to engage themselves in this sport now. And Lorrillard became famous or, as his government said, infamous. They apprehended an Asian war as a result of such raids. The Asians apparently apprehended nothing

but Lorrillard and his friends. And they rapidly fortified their areas in the outer worlds.

But it seems very peculiar, if historians of the period are right, that nothing was actually done to stop this raiding. Lorrillard landed and departed within United Continent territory at will. He banked fantastic sums, wet, as the Moscow press screamed, “with Asian blood,” and went forth for others.

He used up several space vessels in the next fifteen years and his losses in personnel were sometimes high. And yet his recruiting was easy indeed. He maintained at his own expense a laboratory in the Andes for research on weapons, battle methods and, fruitlessly, on cohesion.

Two other efforts were made in space to plant colonies which would act as strong points in rival to the Asians, both efforts private and both of them wiped out to a man. And although the United Continents officially shuddered on Earth, diplomatic relations with Asiana were politely maintained. No Asian army dared issue forth from that screen on Earth to attack the superior missiles and arcs of the United Continents, and no missile could penetrate Asia. And the blood continued to flow in space.

The name of George Marquis Lorrillard, as the years went on, became something that Asian mothers used to frighten their offspring into obedience, quiet or sleep. He was forty-six now, in the prime of youth in those times, a wise, cunning fighter who had risen far above mere law.

And the incident happened which brought him to Stella

and started the chain reaction which was to end the deadlock. He was primed with new theories about cohesion barriers, loaded with new weapons and hungry for new gold.

He was familiar with Stella.

It had eight continents and was two-thirds covered by salt oceans, which is an approximation of Earth.

In age it had passed through its great mammal period and was entered upon man.

Yes; Man.

Not Homo sapiens, of course, but a very near approach, differing mainly in that he was blue. This humanoid had developed fire weapons, could work rudimentary electricity, had flight of a sort and built cities of considerable extent. He stood about two and a half meters tall, had a brain capacity of a comparative nature to pre-space man and was developed culturally into political entities.

His planet was amusing to rovers and of no value to exploiters. It was almost entirely lacking in precious metals and stones and in radioactive fuels. Therefore, it had been written up as something intriguing for the Sunday papers and otherwise left alone. Many space tramps harbored there, but inbreeding was eugenically impossible and the race stayed the way it was.

Probably colonization would have continued an entire fiasco for the next ten thousand years if it had not been for Stella.

Occasional Asian raids were made on the place to gather slave labor, but the undertaking was dangerous, no matter the value of these creatures to the Asians in extorting minerals

from the infinity of worlds. The Asians, therefore, established a sort of super-state on Stella, not interfering with its politics but supporting several fortresses keyed by a main stronghold on a central continent.

Asian mine ships began to harbor there and build up financial reserves which it would be necessary to report to Asiana, and the Asian governor, a man named Kolchein, grew quite sleek. But he erred in setting up a cohesion barrier much larger than he needed and wider than any raider would suspect.

The *Sudden Sunday*, one of the exploiters, ran into this screen at an altitude of two hundred miles, tripped and crashed. As its mission was the peaceful one of landing to repair a depleted crew with Stellan converts, Lorrillard considered it a hostile act.

Perhaps he had never forgiven the Asians for certain actions they had taken against him while he was taking actions against them. Perhaps he was vengeful on account of Peter Gault, the skipper of the *Sudden Sunday* and Lorrillard's friend. Perhaps he sympathized with the relatives of the dead in the city the *Sudden Sunday* had destroyed in crashing. However that may be, it was common knowledge in those times that several hundred billions in cached Asian loot rested under the protection of Kolchein. And Lorrillard's Andes lab had lately sent him a large box.

Lorrillard, in the *Angel's Dance*, a little cruiser of nineteen hundred metric tons and armed with scarcely a foot-pound

for every thousand foot-pounds in the Asian fortress, set down on Stella.

He had a bully-boy crew of two hundred, five bucko officers, and a dozen technicians. His human odds were therefore a million to one against the Stellans and a mere hundred to one against the Asians. So he sent a polite note, carried on a dagger point, to the chief mandate of the Stellan Union of Countries, and actually expected a written reply. But they did not write. A Stellan tank corps flew in at eventide and began to bang away at the *Angel's Dance*.

Some of Lorrillard's hard certitude diminished. Space tramps had been at work with know-how for a hundred years amongst the Stellans and an already considerable culture could protect itself effectively with a thing it called a "hand atomic weapon"—an obsolescence on Earth but a gruesome thing to breast nonetheless.

He lost eight men before he nailed the last remnants of the tank corps to their turrets and left them for the vultures. The attack angered him and an amazed Council of Countries dredged up the contents of their arsenals at the sight of the blue head of the tank corps commander, wrapped up in a big leaf and pinned into a package with his largest medal.

But Lorrillard was quite able. He wasn't there when the newly mustered army arrived—he was waiting a thousand miles up with his fingers on his radiative meteor disintegrators. He did not much like to do it. Things often happened which were unpleasant when the beams, usually fanned out about a ship to wipe out space dust ten thousand miles around and

about, were concentrated into one package and aimed at anything as solid as Stella.

Also, it was illegal.

The Stellan army was blackening the plains below and Stellan high-altitude stratosphere battleplanes were raking back and forth in hopes. Lorrilard briefly thanked them for avoiding the Asian main fortress so wide—it was on the north central plateau of another continent—and sighed over the release button.

“I only asked them to attack the Asians with me,” Lorrilard said to his chief mate, Roseca.

“Then they are more scared of the Asians,” said Roseca.

“You mean the Asians,” said Lorrilard, “are requiring them to fight. Well, here’s for eternity!”

The button went down.

An area two hundred miles in diameter, and comprising all the plain below, smoked, bucked, buckled and caved in. An ocean of molten rocks gushed forth. The beam penetrated the crust of Stella, ate through and reached the liquid core. The guts of the planet gurgled forth. Three-quarters of a million Stellans, the pride of the race, eddied as memories in the scarlet writhe.

A lookout crisply sang: “City on two o’clock quarter.”

Lorrilard looked at the city through his booster glasses, adjusted them for a smaller field and saw humanoids twisting through the streets, running raggedly and unsuccessfully between great gouts of walls coming down.

A lookout sang: “Seaport at nine o’clock. Tidal wave.”



*The beam penetrated the crust of Stella, ate through and reached the liquid core. The guts of the planet gurgled forth.*