

OF THE LATE Harrington Hunter Hollister it must be said that he was very rich, that he had sired a beautiful man-chasing redhead and that he was a Hemingway fanatic. When he died, in 2068, I ended up with his money, his newly divorced daughter and his Hemingway collection.

"As my latest and absolutely *last* husband, I want you to have everything," Cecile Hollister told me, wrinkling her attractively freckled nose. "Daddy adored you."

"I adored Daddy," I said, trying for sincerity.

She handed me a rolled parchment.

papa's planet

their small world was dominated by one of the most fascinating men who ever lived—but there is no predicting just what will turn a woman on

fiction By WILLIAM F. NOLAN

"What's this?" I asked.

"A deed to Papa's Planet. I've never been there, but Daddy told me all about it. That's where we're spending our honeymoon."

"We are?"

"You want to see your property, don't you?"

"I guess so."

"We'll leave tomorrow."

Cecile had a way with men.

We left tomorrow.

. . .

Five million miles out from Mars, we turned sharp left and there it was: Papa's Planet—a big (continued on page 182)



papa's planet (continued from page 131)

gray ball of matter floating below us.

"What the devil's *down* there?" I asked.

"You'll find out. Strap in. Here we go."

We made a fine soft-point landing (Cecile could handle a Spacer like a pro) and, when the rocket smoke cleared, I saw a big, wide-chested fellow in khaki hunting clothes approaching us. He was bearded, grizzled, with suspicious eyes. And he carried an elephant gun.

"You critics?" he demanded.

"Nope," said Cecile. "I'm the daughter of Harrington Hollister and this is my new husband, Philip."

"OK, then," said the bearded man, pivoting. "I'm hunting critics. See any, give me a yell."

"Will do," said Cecile. And to me: "C'mon. Pamplona should be right on the other side of the mountain. We can catch the running of the bulls."

"Who was the aggressive, bearded guy?"

"Papa, of course. It's his planet."

• • •

Running along next to me, just in front of the bulls, a strong-looking guy thumped my shoulder and yelled, "This is swell, isn't it!"

"Yeah, swell!" I yelled back, sprinting to catch Cecile. "Who's the guy back there, yelling?"

"Papa," she told me. "Only he's a lot younger, naturally. This is 1923. Hey, let's cut through this side street. I want to see Paris."

Paris was right next to Pamplona, and Cecile looked radiant walking down the Rue de la Paix. "I'd like to meet Gertrude Stein," she said. "Maybe we can have lunch with her."

A big guy with a mustache pounded past us in a half crouch, feinting at the air with left and right jabs. He was

dark-haired, tough-looking. "Hi, Daughter," he said to Cecile.

"Hi, Ernie," she called back.

He padded away.

"Wait a damn minute," I said. "Who was *that*?"

She sighed. "Papa, naturally. Only nobody calls him Papa in Paris. Too early. Wrong period."

"Just how many Papas *are* there?"

Cecile stopped and wrinkled her nose. "Well, let's see . . . at least twenty that I know of, and I'm no expert. That was Daddy's department."

"And they're *all* here?"

"Sure." She pointed. "Just beyond Paris, across the Seine, is Oak Park, Illinois—which is next to Walloon Lake, Michigan. That's two Papas right there, one for each place. Both are *boy* Papas, of course. One goes to Oak Park High and the other goes trout fishing on the lake."

I nodded. "We've got one here—and another in Pamplona. And there's the one we met near the rocket."

"That was the African one," she said.

"Then there's the one in New York with the hairy chest who keeps standing Max Eastman on his head in the corner at Scribner's. And the Papa in the hills of Spain covering the Civil War and the one skiing in Switzerland with Hadley and the one on the Gulf Stream in the Pilar—Daddy dug out a lovely Gulf Stream and I can't wait to see it—and there's the one getting shot in the kneecap somewhere in Italy."

"Fossalta di Piave," I supplied.

"That's the place," she said, pushing back a strand of delicious red hair. "And there's the Papa in Key West and the one in Venice and the one boxing in the gym in Kansas City. How many is that?"

"I've lost count," I said.

"Anyway, there are *lots* more," said Cecile. "Daddy had his whole factory in Des Moines working overtime for six months, including weekends, just to supply all the Papas."

"Probably one camped out by the big Two-Hearted River."

"Sure. And another in Toronto, working for the *Star*."

I raised an eyebrow. "Must have cost your dad plenty."

"It was a tax write-off," she said. "Nonprofit. Besides, he had this big empty planet just going to *waste* up here."

"But—building Paris in the Twenties and the streets of Pamplona and the bull rings of Spain—and all of Africa—"

"He didn't build *all* of Africa," Cecile corrected me. "Just the important part around Kilimanjaro, where we landed."

"Don't the Papas get mixed up, bump into each other?"

"Never. Each Papa has his assigned place and that's where he stays, doing what he was built for. The Pamplona Papa just keeps running with the bulls



"You were on Madison Avenue once. How would you convince them we're winning?"

and the African Papa keeps hunting critics."

"Your father sure didn't stint."

"When Daddy did a thing, he did it right," she agreed. "Now let's go have lunch with Miss Stein and then visit Venice. Daddy said they did a marvelous job with St. Mark's Square."

Papa was drinking alone at a table near the Grand Canal when our gondola passed by, and he waved us over.

"You smell good, Daughter," Papa told Cecile. "You smell the way good leather you find in the little no-nonsense shops in Madrid when you know enough not to get suckered into the big shops that charge too much smells."

"Thanks, Papa," said Cecile, giving him a bright smile.

"I always enjoy the Gritti here in Venice," said Papa, "and ordering a strong lobster who had much heart and who died properly and having him served to you by a waiter you can trust with the fine good bottle of Capri near you so you can see the little green ice bubbles form on the cold glass."

He poured us wine. We all saluted one another and drank. The sun went down and the wine made me sleepy.

When I awoke, Cecile was gone.

I said goodbye to Papa and went out to look for her.

She wasn't at Key West, or on the Gulf, or anywhere in Spain, or in Billings, Montana (where Papa was recovering from his auto accident). I finally found her in Paris. On the Left Bank.

"I've fallen in love," she declared. "You can go on back to Earth and forget me."

I shrugged. Cecile was hardly steadfast; as her fourth husband, I realized that. "Who is he?"

"I call him Ougly-poo. That's my special love name for him. He just adores it."

"He isn't human, is he?"

"Of course not!" She looked annoyed. "We're the only *people* on Papa's Planet. But what difference does that make?"

"No difference, I guess."

"He's divine." She smiled dreamily, wrinkling her freckles. "Kind of a classic profile, soft, sensitive lips, exciting eyes. . . . He gave me this autographed picture. See?"

I looked at it. "You're sure?"

"I'm sure," she said.

"OK, then," I said. "Bye, Cecile."

"Bye, Philip." She threw me a kiss.

I walked back to the rocket through a sad, softly falling Hemingway rain. I didn't blame Cecile. The fellow was handsome, witty, brilliant, famous. All the things I wasn't. Girls weren't inspired to call me Ougly-poo.

But then, I wasn't F. Scott Fitzgerald.



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