

diaper. It was ugly, it was a super-polluter, it was plastic. It was cheaper to make the body out of plastic than out of metal. A lot more people can afford to have a car if it is made out of plastic, you see. They might have been able to achieve the goal of everyone having a car if they had just made one that you drove by running your feet on the ground like the Flintstones' car.

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Anyway, so they made these "smoke-spewing," plastic cars and it is sort of a runabout. That means it ran about the distance from East Germany to West Germany. And that was about it. Now these things are being found abandoned all over western Germany (well, I guess you could call it western Germany; West Germany is no more but it is the part of Germany that used to be West Germany). So anyway, these things are being abandoned all over. And the government has to figure out what to do with them. Now when you find one of our cars abandoned, at least there is someone who wants it. The body is made out of metal that is worth money. You can recycle the metal from the body of one of our cars. If you make a car out of plastic nobody wants it when it dies. It's like bottles made out of plastic. In non-troglodyte states that have a deposit on soda bottles, there is an intrinsic value on the empties and they go someplace rather than being left on the roads. There is someone willing to buy back what is left over. But cars and bottles made out of plastic with little intrinsic worth just end up decorating the scenery.

So what the government wants to do is burn the abandoned Trabants. Except when you burn them they give off toxic gas. I mean, this car is a real prize. This thing makes the Yugo look like a Porsche. So what are they doing? Are you ready for this? They have bred a special bacteria that eats Trabants! These little beauties like nothing better than eating a tasty, succulent, plastic car. Take a hundred pounds of this plastic and they can eat it down to only two pounds of stuff that even bacteria can't stomach. I don't know what they do with those two pounds. Maybe they can breed another bacterium to tell the first one it is leaving the best part uneaten.

And what a great precedent this sets. You got something you don't want, you just breed some creature that eats it. How about a

gourmet of a bacterium that eats the pins out of new shirts and also is fond of the pink scum that New Jersey water seems to leave behind? What are the chances we could get a bacterium that eats washing machine lint?

Now my question would be: what does a Trabantivorous bacterium have for dessert when there are no more Trabants?

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People sometimes forget that the oldest profession in the world is ... journalism: the snake in the Garden of Eden carried accurate information about the Tree of Knowledge, and in spite of the appearance of being a down-to-earth kind of guy, is still considered poisonous."

-- Samuel Hauser, Journalist, 1968