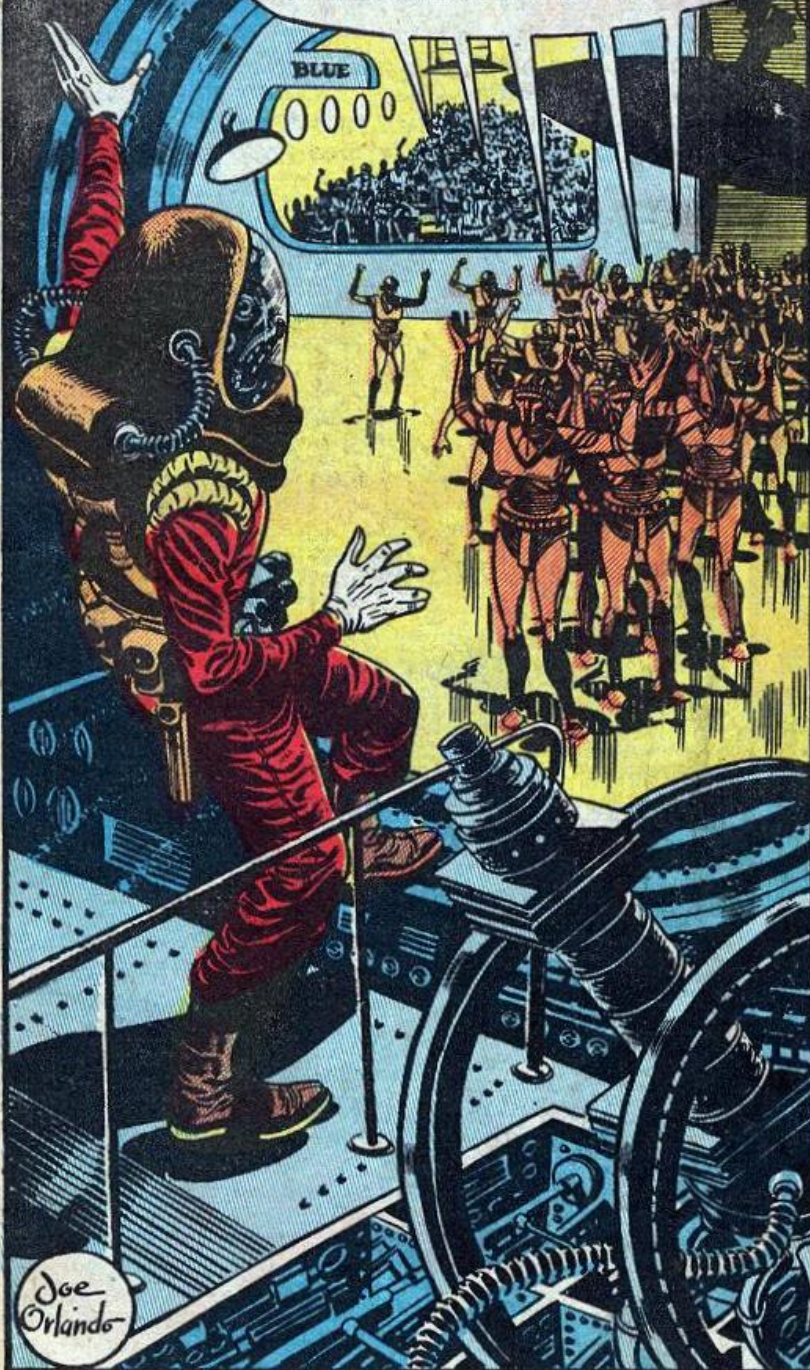


JUDGMENT DAY!

THE MAN ROARED DOWN FROM THE NIGHT SKY. HE'D COME FROM THE INFINITE VOID OF SPACE...ACROSS THE ENDLESS COSMIC VACUUM. HE'D COME FROM THE PLANET EARTH. HE'D COME IN A SHIP OF GLEAMING ALLOYS... BELCHING BLUE FLAMES AND YELLOW CLOUDS OF ATOMIC DUST. AND HE'D COME ALONE. HE STEPPED TO THE PORT AMID THE CHEERS OF THE ROBOT POPULATION.

WELCOME! WELCOME, EARTHMAN, TO CYBRINIA... TO THE PLANET OF MECHANICAL LIFE!



Joe Orlando

THE MAN STEPPED FROM HIS GLEAMING SHIP. HE STEPPED INTO THE ARTIFICIAL SUNLIGHT THAT FLOODED THE LANDING SITE. HE EXTENDED HIS HAND...

I AM TARLTON... FROM 'EARTH COLONIZATION'. I AM HERE TO INSPECT. ARE READY... WE ARE READY! WE HAVE LABORED LONG AND HARD TO PERFECT OUR SOCIETY. WE HAVE EXPERIMENTED AND DISCOVERED, PLANNED AND BUILT... ASKED AND ANSWERED. WE ARE READY...



TARLTON MOVED FORWARD THROUGH THE CROWD OF ORANGE ROBOTS THAT PRESSED AROUND HIM. HE STOPPED AND QUESTIONED ONE...

DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM? YOU ARE TARLTON... FROM EARTH! YOU ARE A REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR ORIGINAL CREATORS! IF YOU FIND THAT WE ARE READY, ALL OF THE WONDERS AND GREATNESS OF EARTH WILL BE OURS.



TARLTON NODDED. THE ARTIFICIAL SUNLIGHT DANCED ON HIS SPACE HELMET...

QUITE RIGHT. THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, WE PLACED A *SMALL HANDFUL* OF YOU UPON THIS PLANET. THIS *SMALL HANDFUL* WAS GIVEN THE *KNOW-HOW* TO BUILD *MORE* OF YOU...



WE LEFT YOU TO *YOURSELVES*. WE HOPED THAT *IN TIME* YOU WOULD DEVELOP A SOCIETY WORTHY OF *INCLUSION* IN EARTH'S GREAT *GALACTIC REPUBLIC*. AT THAT TIME ALL OF OUR *SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES*, OUR *GLORY*, WOULD BECOME YOURS...



COME, TARLTON. LET US SHOW YOU WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED! LET US SHOW YOU THAT WE ARE READY...

LEAD THE WAY...



THE SPACE-SUIT CLAD EARTH-MAN FOLLOWED THE ORANGE ROBOT PAST THE CROWD OF METAL ONLOOKERS TO A SLEEK-LOOKING LOW VEHICLE...

THIS IS KNOWN AS A MOBILE-CAR. IT WAS DEVELOPED QUITE SOME TIME AGO BY N-R-E-PHORD. IT OPERATES BY MEANS OF AN INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINE...

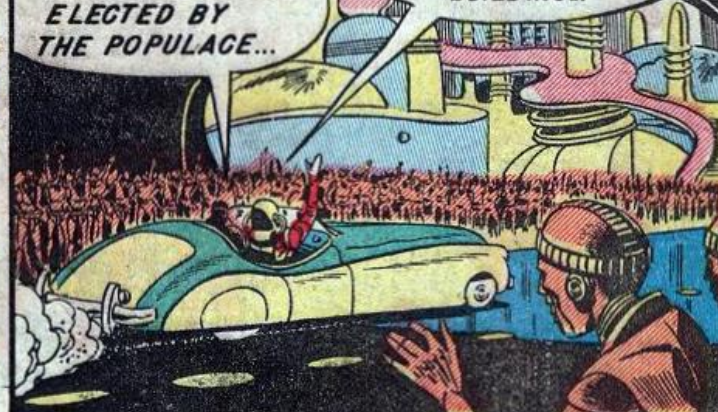
YES. GOOD! GOOD! TWENTIETH CENTURY LEVEL...



THE SPEEDY MOBILE-CAR SWEEPED THE EARTHMAN THROUGH A SHINING CITY, ALONG STREETS JAMMED WITH CHEERING ORANGE ROBOTS...

THIS IS OUR CAPITOL CITY! THAT BUILDING THERE IS OUR *HOUSE OF DELEGATES*... ELECTED BY THE POPULACE...

HMMM. INTERESTING. DEMOCRATIC RULE. VERY GOOD. AND THAT BUILDING...



THE EARTHMAN POINTED TO A LONG LOW STRUCTURE...

THAT BUILDING IS OUR *CONSTRUCTION LINE* AND *ASSEMBLY PLANT* WHERE OUR *POPULATION* IS MADE...

STOP HERE. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT...



THE MOBILE-CAR PULLED UP BEFORE THE PLANT, AND THE EARTH-MAN GOT OUT. HE FOLLOWED HIS ORANGE ROBOT-GUIDE INTO THE BUILDING...

THIS IS THE *PARTS DEPARTMENT*, WHERE OUR *UNITS* ARE *CONSTRUCTED*...

I SEE ONLY *ORANGE WORKERS*! WHAT ABOUT THE *BLUE ROBOTS*...



TARLTON'S GUIDE TURNED TO HIM SHAKING HIS HEAD...

OH! WE...WE *MAKE ONLY ORANGE* ROBOTS HERE. THE *BLUE* ROBOTS, SHALL WELL... I'LL TAKE YOU TO *THEIR* PLANT *LATER...* I SEE. NOT. THESE MODELS WILL BE *EXACTLY* LIKE THE *ORIGINALS...* WE GO *ON...*



THEY MOVED FROM THE PARTS SECTION TO THE FINAL ASSEMBLY LINE...

HERE, THE *SKELETONS* ARE CONSTRUCTED. THE *ORIGINAL ALLOY* IS *STILL USED*.

NATURALLY!



THEY MOVED ALONG THE ASSEMBLY LINE...

HERE, THE *INTERNAL UNITS...* MOTORS, MAGNETS, RELAYS, POWER SUPPLIES, AND SO FORTH... ARE *INSTALLED...*

NO *IMPROVEMENTS* ON THE *ORIGINAL DESIGN*, I SEE ...

NO! WE DARED NOT *ATTEMPT* IT. THESE MODELS WILL BE *EXACTLY* LIKE THE *ORIGINALS...*

AND THIS IS THE *SHEATHING* STAGE ...



YES. HERE THE *ORANGE OUTSIDE SHELLS* ARE *ATTACHED...*

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE *FINISHED ROBOT?*



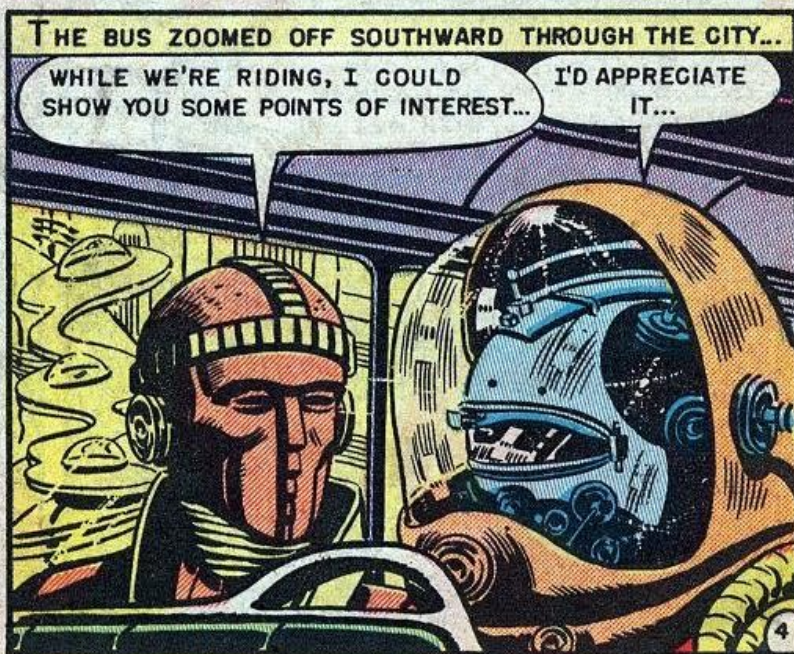
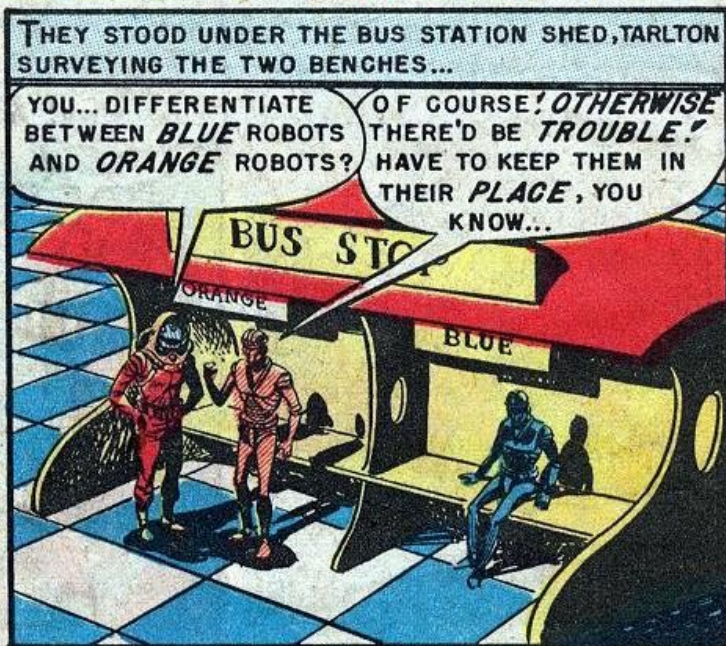
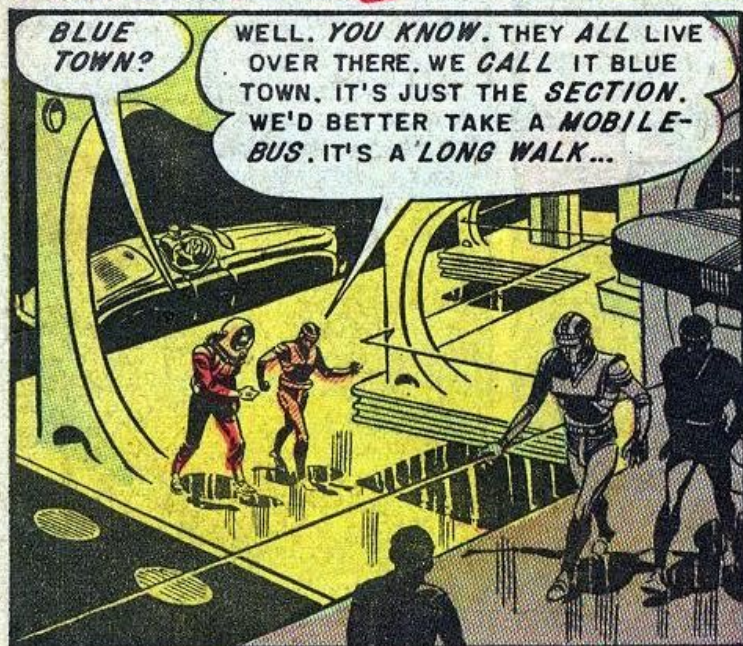
HE IS *TESTED*, THEN PLACED IN THE '*EDUCATOR*', WHERE HIS *MECHANICAL BRAIN* IS *CHARGED* WITH ALL *KNOWLEDGE AVAILABLE* TO *OUR SOCIETY...*

AND THEN...?

HE BECOMES A *MEMBER* OF *THAT SOCIETY*. *FIRST*, HE MUST *WORK ON THE ASSEMBLY LINE* FOR A *SHORT PERIOD...*

GOOD. *RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD PROPAGATION.* *GOOD...*





THEY SPED PAST A LARGE IMPOSING STRUCTURE. OUTSIDE A LINE OF ORANGE ROBOTS WAITED PATIENTLY...

A **RECHARGING STATION!** THERE OUR POWER UNITS ARE SUPPLIED WITH **ENERGY** WHEN THEY **NEED** IT...

SIMILAR TO A RESTAURANT FOR HUMANS, I SEE...

SOON THE MOBILE-BUS ENTERED A SEEDY SECTION OF THE CITY. THE BUILDINGS NO LONGER SHINED. THE STREETS WERE CROWDED WITH BLUE ROBOTS...

AND THIS... IS **BLUE TOWN?**

YES. THERE'S THE PLANT... THE **BLUE ASSEMBLY PLANT!**



TARLTON AND HIS ROBOT GUIDE ALIT FROM THE MOBILE-BUS AND IT SPED OFF...

YOU'D BETTER GO ON IN ALONE, TARLTON. I'LL WAIT OUT HERE!

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN *IN* THE BLUE PLANT?



THE GUIDE SHOOK HIS HEAD...

NO! I HARDLY EVER EVEN **COME** TO BLUE TOWN.

COME *IN* WITH ME. I **WANT** YOU TO. IT MIGHT PROVE **INTERESTING**.



TARLTON MOVED INTO THE BUILDING, HIS ORANGE GUIDE FOLLOWING SHYLY. A BLUE ROBOT CAME TO MEET HIM...

ALLOW ME TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE APPEARANCE OF OUR PLANT, TARLTON. OUR FUNDS ARE LIMITED.

I UNDERSTAND...



THE BLUE ROBOT GUIDED TARLTON INTO THE PARTS DEPARTMENT...

THIS IS WHERE OUR **UNITS** ARE **CONSTRUCTED**.

NOTICE, MY FRIEND. THEY USE THE **SAME ALLOY** IN THEIR PARTS AS YOU DO.

I... I SEE...



...THEN ON TO THE ASSEMBLY LINE...

NOTICE THE **INTERNAL UNITS**, MY FRIEND. THE **SAME DESIGNS**, THE **ORIGINAL DESIGNS**. NO **IMPROVEMENT!** NO **DIFFERENCE!** **EXACTLY LIKE YOURS!**

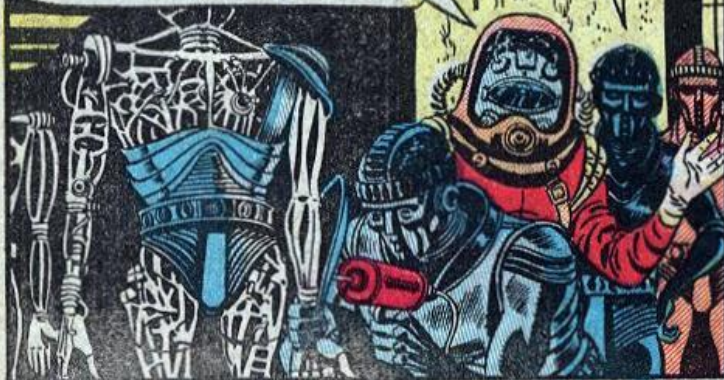
WE...WE KNOW THAT TARLTON...



AND FINALLY TO THE SHEATHING STAGE...

IT IS ONLY *HERE*, MY FRIEND, WITH THE *BLUE SHEATHINGS*, THAT A *DIFFERENCE* CAN BE *DETECTED*. BUT THE *SHEATHINGS* ARE ONLY *OUTSIDE COVERINGS*. THE *INSIDE STRUCTURES* ARE NO *DIFFERENT* THAN YOURS...

THE *SHEATHINGS* *MAKE* THAT *DIFFERENCE* TO THE *ORANGE ROBOTS*, TARLTON!



IT LIMITS US TO *MENIAL JOBS*... SENDS US TO THE *REAR* OF *MOBILE-BUSES*... PLACES US IN *DIFFERENT RECHARGING STATIONS*... FORCES US TO LIVE IN A *SPECIAL SECTION* OF THE CITY...

AND WHEN A *BLUE ROBOT* IS *COMPLETED*. THEN WHAT...?



HE IS *TESTED*, THEN PLACED IN THE '*EDUCATOR*', TARLTON. ONLY *THIS* *EDUCATOR* IS A '*BLUE*' *EDUCATOR*! IT HASN'T THE *ADVANTAGES* OF THE '*ORANGE*' *EDUCATOR*...

TELL ME, MY FRIEND...

...WOULD YOU DENY THAT THE *DIFFERENCES* BETWEEN YOU AND THE *BLUE ROBOTS* ARE *TAUGHT*... IN YOUR '*EDUCATOR*'?

I...I COULDN'T DENY THAT, TARLTON.

THE '*EDUCATOR*' IS THE PARENTS AND THE RELATIVES AND THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE SCHOOL ALL ROLLED INTO ONE, EH?

I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND THOSE WORDS, TARLTON.



NO! I GUESS YOU WOULDN'T! YOU SAID BEFORE THAT THIS WAS A *FREE ENTERPRISE SOCIETY*. THAT AFTER AN *ORANGE ROBOT* SERVES ITS TIME ON THE *ASSEMBLY LINE*, THAT IT IS *FREE TO FOLLOW ITS OWN CHOICE OF ENDEAVOR*...

I...I SAID THAT, YES.

THAT OF COURSE, DOES NOT INCLUDE THE *BLUE ROBOTS*, EH? *THEIR CHOICES OF ENDEAVOR ARE LIMITED*...

YOU ARE *LECTURING ME* AS THOUGH ALL THIS WERE *MY FAULT*, TARLTON! THIS *EXISTED* LONG BEFORE *I WAS MADE*! WHAT CAN *I* DO ABOUT IT? I'M ONLY *ONE ROBOT*!



I AM *SORRY* MY FRIEND! NO. WAIT, YES. I *KNOW* YOU ARE ONLY *ONE* ROBOT. THAT IS WHY I AM AFRAID THAT *CYBRINIA* IS NOT YET *READY* TO JOIN THE GREAT GALACTIC REPUBLIC...



TARLTON MOVED OUT OF THE BLUE ASSEMBLY PLANT THROUGH BLUE TOWN. THE ORANGE ROBOT HURRIED AFTER HIM...

WHY, TARLTON? WHY AREN'T WE READY?

ASK *YOURSELF* THAT, MY FRIEND! TELL YOUR *FELLOW ROBOTS* TO ASK *THEMSELVES* THAT QUESTION!



TARLTON MOVED FAST. THE ROBOT CLANKED AFTER HIM...

IS...IS THERE ANY *HOPE*, TARLTON? *FOR US?*

OF COURSE THERE IS!



TARLTON STOPPED BELOW HIS GLEAMING ROCKET...

OF COURSE THERE'S *HOPE* FOR *YOU*, MY FRIEND. FOR A WHILE, ON *EARTH*, IT LOOKED LIKE THERE WAS *NO HOPE!* BUT WHEN MANKIND ON EARTH LEARNED TO *LIVE TOGETHER*, REAL PROGRESS FIRST *BEGAN*. THE *UNIVERSE* WAS *SUDDENLY OURS*.

...AND WHEN *WE* LEARN TO LIVE TOGETHER...



THE UNIVERSE WILL BE *YOURS TOO*. GOOD-BYE, MY FRIEND!

GOOD-BYE, TARLTON.



THE SHIP ROARED UP INTO THE NIGHT SKY. IT ROARED INTO THE INFINITE VOID OF SPACE...INTO THE ENDLESS COSMIC VACUUM! IT ROARED TOWARD GLORIOUS EARTH...



AND INSIDE THE SHIP, THE MAN REMOVED HIS SPACE HELMET AND SHOOK HIS HEAD, AND THE INSTRUMENT LIGHTS MADE THE BEADS OF PERSPIRATION ON HIS DARK SKIN TWINKLE LIKE DISTANT STARS...



THE
END



NO. 18
MAR.-APR.

LN 10



10¢

WEIRD FANTASY

IN THIS ISSUE:
E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY
RAY BRADBURY
AMERICA'S TOP SCIENCE-FICTION WRITER!

