

The Techni-Crusader #8 - "Sonic Boom"

Written by Steven Bland

During the night, two weeks ago, in Los Angeles, California, a criminal broke into a research lab, managing to get past all of the alarms and night watchmen. His objective was to steal an experimental armored suit which had a large stereo speaker on the chestplate. Soon, he reached the room where the armored suit was kept.

There it is, he thought. The Soundblast armor - - right within reach.

As he walked toward the suit, he was startled by a small rat which suddenly got in his way.

"YAAHHH," the criminal exclaimed.

Soon, the criminal heard footsteps coming in his direction.

Uh oh, he thought. Someone's coming. Gotta act fast.

Thinking quickly, the criminal immediately donned the experimental suit as fast as he could.

Once he was completely suited up, a heads-up display came into view for him inside his faceplate and a cybernetic interface was established between him and the armor.

Once the night watchman arrived on the scene, he saw the criminal who was already clad in the armored suit.

"ALL RIGHT! FREEZE," the guard exclaimed. "TAKE THE SUIT OFF AND PUT YOUR HANDS UP!"

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"I don't *think* so," the armored criminal said as he reached for the guard's gun. Grabbing it, he crushed it like it was paper.

"Nighty-night," the armored criminal said as he punched out the guard.

"UNNHH," the guard moaned, before he lost consciousness.

Turning toward a nearby wall, the armored criminal aimed his chestplate's large stereo speaker at it. At his cybernetic command, the speaker fired a powerful blast of sonic waves at the wall, making a large hole.

"NOTHING'S GONNA STOP SOUNDBLAST NOW," the armored criminal crowed as he escaped through it. Once he was outside, Soundblast cybernetically activated the armored suit's boot jets and took off into the sky.

Over the next few days, Soundblast began a career as a mercenary-for-hire, taking jobs that often involved demolition and hits on people. One day, a female executive at HamelCo in New York City had heard of Soundblast through news reports on television and articles in the newspapers and on the internet.

"Hmmm," she mused. "This mercenary who calls himself Soundblast is very impressive. I just might find a use for him someday."

In the present day, television sets everywhere showed news footage of armed forces attacking all over America.

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"This is incredible, folks," one newscaster announced. "Soldiers from every branch of our armed forces have suddenly turned against us and our entire nation."

"Fighter jets from Edwards Air Force Base are firing upon and laying waste to downtown Los Angeles, California," a second newscaster reported.

"The U.S. Army is attacking the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C.," a third newscaster reported. "But this new superhero, Patriot Prime is on the scene, doing what he can to avert this catastrophe."

"The Marines are attacking the United Nations Building in New York City," a fourth newscaster reported. "And, at the same time, Ellis Island is under attack by the Navy."

In one part of New York, Nellie North, who was working at Garrett Laboratories when she heard the television news reports, changed into her Sprintress costume and sped to Washington, D.C to assist Patriot Prime.

In another part of New York, the Blue Mantis, accompanied by Fire Opal flew toward the United Nations Building while their new ally, Leonard Larvan, with his swarm of robotic bees and a modified Mortimer flew toward Ellis Island.

Kevin Chase was one of those people watching the news.

"Oh my," Mrs. Chase said. "What has happened to make our armed forces turn against us so suddenly?"

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"I don't know, Mom," Kevin answered. "But, I feel like I have to get out there and do *something.*"

"Okay, son," Mrs. Chase said. "But be careful."

"I will, Mom. I promise," Kevin said before leaving the house.

Once he was outside, he mentally commanded the Zeotronix on his wrist to sheathe him in his green and silver powered bio-armor. Once his transformation into the Techni-Crusader was complete, he cybernetically activated his boot jets and took off.

"Zimbor, Barylen," the Techni-Crusader said. "It's crazy. The whole country's under attack by our own Armed Forces."

"Indeed. But, luckily, other superheroes are doing what they can to help. In fact, as the news reports on your television stations on Earth stated, Patriot Prime is taking care of the Army in Washington, DC. He will soon get an assist from the Sprintress," Zimbor answered. "The Blue Mantis and Fire Opal, are dealing with the Marine Corps at the United Nations Building, while someone with a highly-advanced humanoid robot and a swarm of robot bees are dealing with the Navy at Ellis Island."

"So that leaves Edwards Air Force Base," the armored superhero said. "Can you use the Omni-Key to open a portal that will take me there?"

"Consider it done," Zimbor said.

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Soon, a portal opened for the Zeotronix-armored superhero and he went through it. In an instant, he arrived in the skies of downtown Los Angeles where he found the fighter jets firing missiles at buildings. The citizens who were on the streets were fleeing in terror. Another portal opened and a ship piloted by Zimbora and Barylen also arrived, but it hovered in mid-air.

"Do what you can," Zimbora told him. "Barylen and I will see about getting you some assistance. And we will also use our advanced equipment to analyze the Air Force pilots."

"Roger," Techni-Crusader said. "And thanks."

Unknown to the armored superhero, he was watched from far away by a powerful and malevolent female presence.

This armored interloper is one of those accursed superheroes who, like Gale-Force, are daring to defy me and interfere with my well-laid plans, she thought. I must send someone to teach him a lesson.

Elsewhere, Soundblast received a call via his helmet communications systems. The call was from an unknown woman.

"Soundblast," the voice said. "I have a job for you. I want you to head for downtown Los Angeles to eliminate the Techni-Crusader! And I will pay you two million dollars!"

"You got it," Soundblast said as he took off.

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Meanwhile, back in downtown Los Angeles, the Techni-Crusader was using his helmet-mounted laser to destroy the missiles that were being fired by the attacking fighter jets.

I'm vaporizing as many of those missiles as I can, he thought. In seconds, he had vaporized the first few missiles, but more were soon fired. The Techni-Crusader scrambled as quickly as he could to vaporize them. He managed to do so, but was starting to tire.

I can't keep this up. I'll never be able to get them all, he thought.

Soon, he heard a voice over his helmet communications system.

"Techni-Crusader," the voice said. "This is Troy! My fellow Radonian police officers are coming to help you!"

"Thank you, Troy," the Techni-Crusader said.

Soon, Troy and an army of his fellow Radonian police officers in their ships arrived on the scene to help stop the fighter jets from doing any more damage. The Radonian ships fired their disintegrator beams at more of the fighter jets' missiles.

Now that Troy and his friends are here, I can take five and catch my breath, the armored superhero thought as he descended toward ground level. Then, I'll be back.

Upon landing, the Techni-Crusader was suddenly attacked by a powerful sonic blast. He turned around and saw Soundblast, who had just arrived on the scene.

"WHO ARE YOU?" The armored superhero asked.

"I'M *SOUNDBLAST*," answered the armored criminal.

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"AND I'M TAKING YOU DOWN," Soundblast added as he projected powerful sonic waves from the large stereo speaker on his chestplate at the Techni-Crusader.

"AARRGGHHH," the Zeotronix-armored superhero cried out in pain.

Meanwhile, the Techni-Crusader's cries were picked up by the communications system in Troy's ship.

"TECHNI-CRUSADER," Troy cried out. "HANG ON! I'M ON MY WAY!"

"I have to help our friend. Continue to destroy the missiles and protect everyone," Troy told his fellow Radonian officers over his ship's communications system as he broke away from them and flew off to aid the armored superhero.

On the ground, Soundblast continued his sonic barrage against the Techni-Crusader.

"Right now, Techni-Crusader, your eardrums are shattering and your brain is turning to mush," Techni-Crusader," the armored mercenary said. "But, pretty soon, your internal organs will rupture and your bones will be reduced to powder!"

Arrrggghhh! I - - can't - - take - - much more - - of this! The - - sound waves - - are so - - painful - - and powerful, the armored superhero thought. But - - I've got to do - - *something*.

"Hey - - Soundblast," the Techni-Crusader said as he struggled to get up. "Do you - - take - - requests?"

"How - - about," he said as he aimed the palm of his right hand at Soundblast.

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"THE - - SOUNDS OF - - *SILENCE*," the armored superhero said as he fired a pulse bolt from that palm at the armored criminal, rendering him unconscious. Soon, the Techni-Crusader started losing consciousness as well.

Approaching the fallen superhero, Troy's ship hovered and sent a tractor beam toward him. The tractor beam lifted the Techni-Crusader off the ground and into Troy's ship. With the armored superhero safely inside, the hatch closed behind him.

The Techni-Crusader started to come around.

"Are you all right, my friend?" Troy asked.

"Yeah, thanks. My ears are still ringing, though," the armored superhero answered. "However, I was able to power through Soundblast's barrage of sound waves long enough to render him unconscious with one of my pulse bolts."

"My fellow Radonian officers are still trying to stop your planet's Air Force without hurting them," Troy said.

"I think I have an idea," the Techni-Crusader said. "Can you use your ship's tractor beam to pull Soundblast in?"

"Yes," Troy said.

"Then do it," the armored superhero said.

Troy activated his ship's tractor beam and aimed it at Soundblast, pulling him toward the ship.

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"We have him," Troy said. "The tractor beam is pulling him towards us."

"Great, Troy," the Techni-Crusader said. "Once we have him, radio your fellow officers and let them know we're going to rejoin them. And, let them know that, we have a new weapon. But, in order to use that new weapon, we'll have to have your ship hover and hold it steady, because I'm going to take him up to the top of its roof."

Soon, the unconscious Soundblast was a few inches closer.

"Here he comes," the armored superhero said.

The armored criminal was soon within reach.

"I have him," the Techni-Crusader said as he grabbed the armored criminal and pulled him inside. "And he's still unconscious, too."

Troy used his ship's communications systems to radio his fellow officers.

"This is Troy," the Radonian officer told his men. "My friend, the Techni-Crusader and I are rejoining you. And we have a new weapon to help us deal with the entranced fighter jet pilots."

Troy's ship flew off and, after rejoining the other Radonian ships, stopped in mid-air and hovered

"We are here, Techni-Crusader," Troy told his armored ally. "But, what is our new weapon?"

"Soundblast, himself," the Techni-Crusader answered. "Open the hatch."

Once Troy opened the hatch, the armored superhero flew out of it with Soundblast in his arms and took the unconscious mercenary to the ship's roof.

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"What do you have in mind?" Troy asked over the Techni-Crusader's helmet communications system.

"I'm going to hot-wire the large stereo speaker on Soundblast's chestplate and, hopefully, use it to incapacitate those pilots," the armored superhero answered.

The Techni-Crusader immediately got to work hot-wiring the large stereo speaker on Soundblast's chestplate. He was successful.

"Troy! I've *done* it," the armored superhero told his ally. "I've succeeded in hot-wiring Soundblast's stereo speaker!"

"Now, I'll aim it, and him, at the fighter jets," the Techni-Crusader said.

Doing just that, The Zeotronix-armored superhero then hot-wired the large stereo speaker on Soundblast's chestplate. The powerful sonic waves emanating from it caused the pilots inside the jets to experience excruciating pain.

"It's *working*," an elated Troy told his ally over the latter's helmet communications systems. "Well done, my friend."

Unable to cope with the pain from the barrage of sonic waves, the fighter jet pilots lose consciousness and the Techni-Crusader ceased Soundblast's sonic barrage. However, the jets themselves were unable to stay in the air.

"Uh oh," the Zeotronix-armored superhero said. "With the pilots unconscious, their jets will crash to the ground."

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"Not to worry, Techni-Crusader," Troy assured his ally before communicating with his fellow Radonian officers.

"We must use our tractor beams on the fighter jets," Troy told them. "To lower them safely to the ground so that the pilots inside won't be harmed."

Troy and his fellow Radonian officers used their ships' tractor beams on the fighter jets to gently bring them down. Once the jets were safely on ground level, the Radonian ships deactivated their tractor beams and landed next to them. Once Troy and his fellow officers left their ships, they opened each of the jets' cockpits.

The pilots regained consciousness.

"They're coming around," the Techni-Crusader told Troy and the other Radonian officers.

"What happened?" One of the pilots asked.

"You don't remember firing missiles from your jets at people on the streets of downtown Los Angeles?" The Zeotronix-armored superhero asked.

"We do remember, but we also regret it," the pilot answered. "We didn't want to do it, but some strange force seemed to take control of all of our brains."

Then, the Techni-Crusader got a message from his helmet's communications system. The message was from Zimbor.

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"He's telling the truth, Techni-Crusader," Zimbora said. "When Barylen and I scanned the pilots, we detected a faint dark-red aura around each of them. The auras affected the inhibition centers of their brains. Those auras have just faded away and are now gone."

"Did you and Barylen do anything to make them go away?" The Techni-Crusader asked.

"No," Zimbora replied. "The dark-red auras were magical in nature. And, even *our* advanced science is unable to affect magic."

"Well, at least the pilots are back to normal now," the Zeotronix-armored superhero said.

The Techni-Crusader turned to Troy.

"I'd like to thank you again for your help," the Zeotronix-armored superhero told him.

"Anytime, my friend," Troy said as he and the Techni-Crusader shook hands. "And if you ever need our help again, don't hesitate to ask."

"Thank you," said the Zeotronix-armored superhero.

Troy and his fellow officers turned toward their ships and walked toward them. Once they were inside their crafts, the Radonian officers took off.

"Take care," the armored superhero said as he watched them fly.

"Ready to head for home?" Zimbora asked the Techni-Crusader.

"Not yet, Zimbora. There's just one more loose end to tie up," the Zeotronix armored superhero said, before turning his attention to and walking toward the unconscious Soundblast.

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"I'd better deliver Soundblast to the authorities," the Techni-Crusader said as he picked up the armored criminal.

Minutes later, the Techni-Crusader flew away from a maximum security prison in Los Angeles.

"Soundblast is stripped of his armor and safely behind bars, Zimbor," he said over his helmet's communications system. "It turned out his battlesuit was a prototype he stole from a research lab, which will soon be getting the suit back."

"Well done," Zimbor said.

"Thanks," said the armored superhero. "Now, I'm ready to portal home."

"Of course," Zimbor replied as he opened the portal that led to the Techni-Crusader's house in Rego Park, Queens.

Once the Zeotronix-armored superhero was through the portal, it closed up behind him. Then, at his mental command, his armor unsheathed his body. Kevin soon hurried inside his house.

Once inside, he saw his mother watching the news on television and soon watched with her.

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"All of America can rest easy now," the television reporter said. "The Army, Air Force, Marines, and Navy are all back to normal. It was revealed that they were all under some strange spell. Thankfully, that spell is now broken. The country is safe, thanks to superheroes like the Techni-Crusader, the Sprintress, Patriot Prime, the Blue Mantis, Fire Opal, the unnamed man with the robot and the robot bees, and Gale-Force, who was accompanied and aided by a hulking green-skinned human-elephant hybrid."

Kevin and his proud mother smiled.



THE END



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