

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

Written by Steven Bland

On a Wednesday morning, forensic scientist Noah Spencer, police officers Scott Vernon and Robert Loomis, and a humanoid robot emerged from a police van that was parked outside Queens Metropolitan High School. After Officer Vernon brought out a big gun, he, Officer Loomis, Dr. Spencer, and the humanoid robot headed for the school's football field. Dr. Spencer was nervous and both Officers Vernon and Loomis noticed.

"You okay, Noah?" Officer Loomis asked the forensic scientist as all three men and the robot entered the football field. In the center of the field was a solid steel reinforced safe.

"Yes, Dr. Spencer. All of the props are in place," answered one of the two officers.

"Yes. This is a very big demonstration. I just hope everything goes smoothly," Dr. Spencer said.

"*Relax*. What could *possibly* go wrong?" Officer Vernon asked.

"Yeah, I suppose you're right," Dr. Spencer replied.

"Good," Officer Vernon said. "Now, let's get ready."

Inside the school's halls, Kevin Chase, his best friend Zack Spencer, and their fellow students walked toward the exit.

"Hey, Kev. Are you ready for that demonstration of that new robot police officer prototype that's taking place on the football field today?" Zack Spencer asked.

"You bet," Kevin replied. "A robot police officer *could* be kinda cool."

Steven
Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"My dad built it, and he's gonna be the one demonstrating it," a smiling Zack said. "*With* the help of two of New York's Finest, of course."

Soon, Kevin, Zack and their fellow students were outside and walking toward the football field. Once they were at their destination, they saw their teacher, Anthony Layton, Dr. Spencer, his robot creation, and Officers Vernon and Loomis on the field, as well as a solid steel reinforced safe in the center. Kevin, Zack, and the other students took their seats in the bleachers.

"Kids, we're fortunate enough today to have Dr. Noah Spencer, and Officers Scott Vernon and Robert Loomis from One Police Plaza," Mr. Layton said.

"Thank you, Mr. Layton," Dr. Spencer said before turning his attention to the gathered students.

"Thank you all for coming, kids," Dr. Spencer said. "My name is Dr. Noah Spencer. I'm a police scientist at One Police Plaza. I am here to show you all my creation, ALEX, the future of law enforcement. His name is an acronym for Automated Law Enforcer Experiment."

"He is *much stronger* than a normal human being," Dr. Spencer continued.

"To demonstrate his awesome strength," Dr. Spencer added before directing the student's attention to ALEX and the solid steel reinforced safe. "ALEX will punch a hole through this solid steel reinforced safe."

Soon, the robotic prototype easily accomplished the feat before the eyes of the impressed students.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"ALEX is also *virtually invulnerable* and, in addition to having awesome strength, he also has *incredibly fast reflexes*," Dr. Spencer continued. "To *prove* it, Officer Vernon will fire explosive shells at him. *And*, to prevent casualties and collateral damage, ALEX will catch as many ricochets as fast as he can."

Dr. Spencer turned his attention to Officer Vernon, who had his gun ready.

"Are you ready, Officer Vernon?" Dr. Spencer asked. Officer Vernon nodded.

"Then, fire away," Dr. Spencer said.

Officer Vernon fired the explosive shells at ALEX. As the shells bounced off his body, the humanoid robot used his incredibly fast reflexes to successfully catch all of the ricochets. The students were all very impressed.

"*Also*, ALEX is equipped with telescopic and infrared lenses which give him enhanced vision as well as a hypersensitive audio system that gives him enhanced hearing," Dr. Spencer told the students. "And *that* concludes the demonstration. I will now take any questions you may have, regarding ALEX."

One student, a young boy with black hair, raised his hand. Dr. Spencer immediately noticed him.

"Yes, young man," Dr. Spencer said.

"What's ALEX made of?" The student asked.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"ALEX is made from a special metal alloy that I created from a meteor that I had found," Dr. Spencer answered. "It's what enables him to withstand anything. Because of that, he can handle the hazardous duties that ordinary police officers can't."

"Next question," Dr. Spencer said. He looked around and saw another student, a young boy with brown hair, who had his hand raised. The police scientist pointed to him.

"Does he turn off?" The student asked.

"No, but he *does* recharge for three hours a day," Dr. Spencer answered.

"Next question," Dr. Spencer said. He looked around and saw another student, a young girl with blond hair, who had her hand raised. The police scientist pointed to her

"How can ALEX be properly prepared for any situation, especially when so many things can happen at random?" The blond-haired girl asked.

"ALEX's computer brain has data based on the thought processes of our finest police officers." Dr. Spencer answered.

"One more question," Dr. Spencer said. He looked around and saw another student, a young girl with red hair, who had her hand raised. The police scientist pointed to her.

"Yes?" Dr. Spencer asked

"Will there be *any more* like ALEX in the future?" The red-haired girl asked.

"Well, for right now, ALEX is *one of a kind*. But, who knows? There just *might* be more like him." Dr. Spencer answered.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"And that *concludes* our demonstration. Thank you so much for coming," Dr. Spencer said.

All of the students left, except for Zack and Kevin, who went over to talk to Dr. Spencer.

"Awesome demonstration, Dad," Zack gushed.

"Thank you, son. Who's your friend?" A beaming Dr. Spencer asked.

"This is my friend, Kevin Chase," Zack said proudly as he introduced his father to Kevin, who extended his hand for a handshake.

"Nice to meet you, Kevin," Dr. Spencer said as he shook Kevin's hand. The police scientist soon noticed the Zeotronix on Kevin's wrist.

"*Interesting* watch, Kevin," Dr. Spencer said. "*Where* did you get it?"

Uh oh, a panicking Kevin thought. I have to think fast, but I have to play it cool. Can't let him know that it's really a piece of alien technology that can encase me in a suit of powered armor.

"It's from *Japan*, sir," Kevin answered.

"*Very nice*. Well, I'd better get going," Dr. Spencer said. "And you boys will want to get to your next class, too."

"Right, dad," Zack said. "See you."

Zack and Kevin soon leave to go to their next class. Then, Dr. Spencer leaves with Officers Vernon and Loomis.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

Later that night, a group of delinquents were vandalizing a neighborhood in Manhattan. Some were breaking windows while others were throwing eggs. Suddenly, ALEX arrived, catching the attention of the young hoodlums.

"Defacing public property is a *serious* crime," ALEX said. "You are *all* under arrest!"

"Well, whaddaya know?" said the first delinquent. "This hunk'a junk's workin' for *the Man*!"

"Yeah," said a second delinquent. "Let's teach it a *lesson*!"

Soon, the delinquents were throwing rocks and eggs at ALEX, but they had no effect on him. However, the robot's internal circuits were damaged and it started malfunctioning.

With lightning-fast reflexes, ALEX quickly drew his gun and fired explosive shells at the delinquents, killing them. Hiding nearby, a terrified onlooker was watching and recording the incident. Meanwhile, in the distance, a nearby police officer, who had heard the commotion, came to investigate.

"*What's* going on here?" The officer asked.

"These three punks were vandalizing public property and they had just attacked me earlier," ALEX answered. "But, they *shouldn't* be any trouble now."

Upon seeing the slain criminals, the police officer was appalled. Then, he turned his attention back to ALEX.

"Y-YOU *KILLED* THEM," the police officer exclaimed.

"No, I brought them to justice," ALEX said coldly.

Steven
Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"THIS *ISN'T* JUSTICE! IT'S *MURDER*! AND MURDER IS *AGAINST THE LAW*," exclaimed the police officer before drawing his gun.

"YOU WERE CREATED TO *SERVE AND PROTECT*, NOT MURDER AND THREATEN," exclaimed the police officer as he aimed his gun at the robot.

"I have a *new* mission: the *elimination* of criminals," ALEX responded coldly. "*All* criminals!"

"YOU'RE A *DISGRACE* TO THE FORCE!" The police officer exclaimed.

"If you're not part of the *solution*, officer," ALEX said as he grabbed the officer by his shirt.

"YOU'RE PART OF THE *PROBLEM*," ALEX exclaimed before he hurled the police officer away from him. The terrified onlooker had finished recording the incident and posted it on YouTube.

Landing several feet from the robot, the police officer got out his radio and turned it on.

"Captain, ALEX offed three juvenile delinquents who were vandalizing public property and thought *nothing* of it," the officer reported. "He's too dangerous. He needs to be *stopped*. *NOW*!"

Later, at police headquarters, Dr. Noah Spencer was watching news reports containing the YouTube video of ALEX's incident while Police Chief Stern was talking with the officer who was assaulted by ALEX.

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"According to a video that was taken by an innocent bystander tonight, ALEX, the New York Police Department's prototype robot police officer, was seen gunning down and murdering three vandals and then assaulting a nearby police officer, who had just arrived the scene and tried to stop him. And, *instead* of feeling safe, the citizens feel *just* as threatened," the news reporter said.

Police Chief Stern burst in.

"This is *great*! This is *just great*!" Police Chief Stern said angrily. "Our robot ALEX is out of control and killing criminals!"

Police Chief Stern turned to Dr. Spencer.

"And, since *you* created that hunk'a junk, Spencer, their blood is on *your* hands!"

"Don't worry," Dr. Spencer assured the chief. "We *can* stop ALEX *before* he can kill anyone else."

"*How?! There's not a blasted thing* we can do to *stop* him," Police Chief Stern argued.

"*Yes, there is,*" Dr. Spencer said.

"*No, there isn't,* Noah," Police Chief Stern protested. "Have you forgotten that ALEX is *virtually indestructible?! You covered every inch* of him with a special alloy that *you* created from a special meteorite, *remember?!?*"

"*Not every inch,*" Dr. Spencer said with a smile. Puzzled, Police Chief Stern looked at him.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"You see, I gave him a *secret weak spot*: a main ordinary chip on the *back of his neck*. The weak spot was in case he were to turn *against* mankind or fall into the *wrong* hands," Dr. Spencer said. "Hit that chip with a *precisely* placed shot, and ALEX will be *destroyed*."

"What are you *waiting* for? Call a SWAT team and let them know *what* and *where* ALEX'S weak spot is," Police Chief Stern said.

"Yes, sir," Dr. Spencer replied.

Dr. Spencer immediately dialed the phone number for the SWAT team and waited for an answer. Soon, he got one.

"Captain Rhodes? This is Dr. Noah Spencer," the police scientist said. "ALEX is on a *rampage* in Manhattan, but he *has a weak spot*. Aim for the *main chip* on the *back of his neck*! I *repeat*, aim for the *main chip* on the *back of his neck*!"

"Got it," Captain Rhodes answered.

The call was ended and Dr. Spencer hung up.

Meanwhile, in his bedroom at his home in Rego Park, Queens, Kevin Chase was also watching the news report that was featuring the YouTube video of ALEX gunning down and murdering the vandals and assaulting the police officer who had tried to stop him.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

Oh, man, that's *ALEX*, the prototype robot officer that Dr. Spencer demonstrated for us this afternoon, Kevin thought. *ALEX* was created to *make the city safe*. Instead, he's making it a *dangerous* place to live in. *Everyone* in New York *fears* him now. I've got to stop him *before* he can do *any more* harm.

Kevin leaped out of his chair and ran outside to a secluded area, where he mentally activated his Zeotronix, which instantly garbed him head-to toe in his silver-and-green suit of powered bio-armor. Activating his boot jets, Techni-Crusader took to the sky.

Later, in a rundown neighborhood, two men wearing baggy jeans, T-shirts, ratty sneakers, and baseball caps were buying illegal guns from a couple of arms dealers. One of them had blond hair, the other had brown hair. The two dealers were wearing jeans, and hoodies with the hoods over their heads.

"I'm *tellin'* ya, man," said one of the arms dealers. "With *this baby*, you can *wipe out* an *entire* city block!"

"*Niiice*," said the blond-haired buyer as he smiled and looked over the weapon.

Suddenly, *ALEX* arrived on the scene.

"YOU ARE *ALL* UNDER ARREST," the robot announced. "YOU HAVE THE *RIGHT* TO REMAIN *SILENT*!"

Steven
Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"Ah, *geez*, the trade's gone *sour*," said the first dealer. "IT'S A *COP*!"

"*WORSE!* IT'S A *ROBOT COP*," exclaimed the second dealer before he and the first dealer got out their guns and started shooting.

"I have the right to *defend myself*," ALEX said as he drew his gun. "A right which *supercedes* yours!" Then, the robot gunned down the dealers.

"YOU RUINED *EVERYTHING*," the blond-haired buyer angrily told ALEX as they aimed their guns at him

ALEX then fired his gun at the buyers.

"*HIT THE DIRT*," the brown-haired buyer told the blond-haired as they ran for cover. They hid behind an alley wall.

"HAVE YOU *BLOWN A GASKET* OR SOMETHING?!" The blond-haired buyer shouted to ALEX before getting out a police badge. Both buyers showed their badges to the robot.

"WE'RE *UNDERCOVER COPS*," the angry brown-haired buyer told ALEX. "AND YOU JUST INTERFERED WITH OUR *STING* - - AND *MURDERED* THE PERPS!!"

"No, I *ensured* the city's *safety*," ALEX said coldly.

"THE *DEVIL* YOU DID," the blond-haired undercover cop exclaimed before drawing his gun and aiming it at ALEX, who moved menacingly toward him.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"I'M *WARNING* YOU," exclaimed the blond-haired undercover cop as he immediately fired his gun at ALEX. However, the bullets bounced off.

"And *I'm* warning *you*," ALEX said coldly as he drew his gun and aimed it at the blond-haired undercover cop. The brown-haired undercover cop jumped on ALEX, but the robot knocked him into a nearby brick wall, rendering him unconscious. "Assaulting a police officer is against the law!"

"YOU'RE *NOT* A POLICE OFFICER," exclaimed the blond-haired undercover cop.

ALEX fired his gun at the blond-haired undercover officer, but the Techni-Crusader arrived just in time to get in front of him. Using his photonic energy shield, the armored hero blocked the explosive shells. Then, he fired an intense laser beam from his helmet at ALEX's gun, rendering it useless.

Techni-Crusader turned his attention to the undercover officer he had saved.

"Get out of here, *now*," said the Techni-Crusader. "*I'll* handle our tin-plated pal, here."

"You *got* it, Techni-Crusader," said the blond-haired undercover cop as he went over to his partner to pick him up. Then, carrying his unconscious partner, the blond-haired undercover cop left.

"And *good luck!*" He said.

ALEX pulled out a slab of pavement and hurled it with incredible speed at the Techni-Crusader, who barely dodged it with his own incredibly fast reflexes. Then, ALEX, moving with blinding speed, seized the armored hero in the grip of a bear hug.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

C-Can't breathe! He's - - crushing - - me! Techni-Crusader thought. Everything's - - spinning!
I'm - - blacking - - out!

Suddenly, the SWAT captains and their teams arrived on the scene with their armed weapons at the ready. They tried to hit ALEX'S weak spot, but the robot moved too quickly for them. In the process, ALEX released the Techni-Crusader. Turning his back on the armored hero, the robot turned his attention to the SWAT cops.

"He's *too fast* for us, sir," one of the SWAT cops told his captain.

"We've got to hit his weak spot, that main chip on the back of his neck! We've got to hit it, or *die trying*," The SWAT captain said. A dazed Techni-Crusader overheard him.

A main chip on the back of his head, huh? Techni-Crusader thought, still reeling from ALEX's bear hug. I just need to *find it*, while those SWAT cops can *still* keep him busy,

The armored hero quickly tried to find ALEX's weak spot, but he soon found it.

BINGO! Techni-Crusader thought. I'll only get *one shot* at this, and it *has* to be *perfect*, but I've got to move *fast*!

Using the superhuman reflexes provided to him by his armor, the Techni-Crusader quickly fired a lightning-fast pulse bolt at the back of the robot's neck. The pulse bolt found its mark and hit the main chip. ALEX was defeated.

Soon, Dr. Spencer arrived on the scene and saw the Techni-Crusader.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"I came as *soon* as I could. How *are* you?" Dr. Spencer asked the Techni-Crusader.

"I'm fine," Techni-Crusader answered. "And ALEX is *no longer* a threat to humanity."

"*Thank goodness!* I truly *apologize* for the damage ALEX caused," Dr. Spencer said. "But, in a way, I saw it coming."

"You did?" The armored superhero asked.

"Well, it's lucky that I found out about ALEX'S weak spot after overhearing the SWAT cops mentioning it when they got here. Handy piece of information, that. It was *also* lucky that I was able to *use* that information and stop him," Techni-Crusader said.

"Yes, when I created ALEX, I gave him the weak spot in the back of his neck, in case he were to ever *turn against us* or to fall into the hands of *crimelords*," Dr. Spencer said. "All I ever *wanted* was for ALEX to *assist* the police. I never anticipated that his circuitry could be or have been damaged internally."

"I'm very sorry," Techni-Crusader said. "I *truly* am."

"Well, this is *all for the best*," Dr. Spencer said. "ALEX was meant to spare the life of a police officer, but now I realize that *every* member of the police force would have *handed their lives over* to him and become *too reliant* on him. Instead of *assisting* the police, ALEX would have *replaced* every one of them."

"Dr. Spencer?" Techni-Crusader asked. "I'd like to talk to you in private."

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"Sure," the police scientist replied. The armored superhero then led the police scientist to a secluded area which they went into.

At his mental command, the Techni-Crusader's armor unsheathed his body revealing his identity as Kevin Chase to Dr. Spencer. Kevin then showed the Zeotronix to the police scientist.

"*This device* is what turns me into the Techni-Crusader," Kevin revealed. "It's called the *Zeotronix*."

"*How* - - and *when* did you get this?" Dr. Spencer asked.

"The Zeotronix was created by an alien named Zimbor and it came to Earth in a rocket. It landed behind the bleachers at Queens Metropolitan High where I was sitting and reading about King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table," Kevin answered. "I went to investigate. When I opened the rocket's door, I saw the Zeotronix and it literally jumped on and attached itself to my right wrist. It's been there ever since."

"*Amazing*," Dr. Spencer said.

"But, you *must* keep it a secret," Kevin warned. "*No one* must know about it. *No one*."

"Your secret's *safe* with me," Dr. Spencer said with a smile.

"Thanks. And, as the Techni-Crusader, I can help you, if you and the cops ever run into *supervillains* or *monsters*," Kevin said.

Steven

Bland

The Techni-Crusader #4 - "ALEX"

"Thank you, Kevin," Dr. Spencer said. "But, you'd better head home now. It is a school night."

"Sure," Kevin said with a smile before mentally commanding the Zeotronix to again outfit him in his silver and green powered bio-armor. Once he was fully armored, the Techni-Crusader activated his boot jets and flew off, as Dr. Spencer looked up at him and smiled.

THE END

- 16 -

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