

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG™

In Robotnik's Laboratory



MARTIN ADAMS

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THE
HEDGEHOG

**IN ROBOTNIK'S
LABORATORY**

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THE SONIC STORY SO FAR

There was a time when Mobius was a peaceful world. And the Green Hill Zone was the most peaceful and pleasant and generally all-round cool place to hang out on the entire planet.

Mobius's inhabitants were, and are, talking animals of all types. The hippest, streetwiest dude of all was, and is, a hedgehog named Sonic.

And of course it just had to be Sonic who stumbled into the laboratory of Mobius's only human, the kindly but absent-minded Doctor Kintobor.

Dr K was perfecting a device – the Retro-Orbital Chaos Compressor – to attract all the evil on Mobius and contain it within six emeralds he called the Chaos Emeralds (neat name, Doc). He found the time to help boost Sonic's already radically fast footwork, too, and with the help of a special pair of drop-dead cool red trainers, Sonic exceeded the speed of sound. And he turned blue, of course.

Sonic superspeeded all over Mobius, searching for the Grey Emerald that would neutralize the evil contained in the Chaos Emeralds. But before he found it, Doctor

Kintobor's absent-mindedness brought disaster to the whole planet as he entered faulty data into the ROCC. The device exploded, releasing the Emeralds, scattering protective golden rings across the length and breadth of Mobius, and transmogrifying Kintobor into his exact opposite: the evil, power-crazed, obese and egg-loving Doctor Robotnik.

Robotnik's influence reached across the entire planet. Once-verdant landscapes were transformed into polluted wastelands. The evil Doctor's robots scoured the land for animals to imprison, and in particular for the one super-fast hedgehog who has the power to foil his plans – Sonic.

And Sonic has foiled Robotnik's plans – at least twice, by the time you read this book. But Robotnik is ineggshaus-tibly, eggasperatingly resilient. Once again, he's back. And that means trouble for Mobius in general, and for hedgehogs with red trainers in particular.



1

WHERE'S THAT PIG?

'Home sweet home,' sighed a tired hedgehog as he dumped his carryall on the ground. 'We had one neat holiday but, dude, I'm pooped.'

'It was brill! That TurboTronic Barrel Train ride was the grooviest thing I've been on in a long time,' replied a still-excited Tails. Sonic could see his foxy friend's twin tails begin to twirl and frowned at him. Sonic wasn't too happy, because his glorious blue spines were looking just a little bit droopy from tiredness, and that was a bummer. How could a hedgehog look drop-dead cool with droopy spines? He needed some nachos and cola to put some pizzazz back into them, and he needed them fast.

'Yeah, well, don't tell me, I was there. Save it for Sally and Porker and the others. Hope they got our postcards,' Sonic said. 'Let's delay the unpacking and get some serious relaxation in. Like, let's slap in a video and stuff our faces, little dude.'

Sonic needed a lot of food. Ever since Dr Ovi Kintobor had helped him become the planet Mobius's first truly

Supersonic hedgehog, Sonic needed to eat a lot to keep his whizzing metabolism going. If Sonic wasn't thinking about how cool his spines looked, and whether his red super-fast trainers were really clean, he was thinking about his stomach. So, barely waiting for their luggage to hit the floor, the two sped off in search of some food.

Three hours later, a very satisfied pair of friends looked out over the wreckage of crisp and tortilla-chip packets and a half-dozen empty cola bottles. Sonic's feet were starting to twitch now. He wanted to *do* something.

'Okay, now that we've satisfied our truly awesome hunger with that little snackette, I vote we go find our friends and party on with some holiday stories. Besides, I wanted to see if Porker got that Exploding Luminous Custard Bomb we sent him.'

'Well, why don't we wait 'til it's dark and see if we can see him glowing?' Tails sniggered.

Sonic laughed. 'Nah, I can't wait. Let's go over now and – hey, I've got an idea . . .'

If you'd been there, you might well have spotted the telltale signs that a totally bodacious trick was about to be sprung. Two furry tail-tips were sticking out from under the sheet Tails had over his body, while Sonic looked out from around a tree next to Porker Lewis's bright green front door, camera poised for a totally awesome photo opportunity. Tails was going to be the Green Hill Zone's first Ghostly Custardgram. He'd practised his spooky 'Oooooooooohhhh' wailing ghost noises until Sonic couldn't stand it any more, and he had one seriously large custard pie in his quivering right hand ready to throw. All it needed now was for Porker to open the door. Which he wasn't doing. As you might imagine, Tails was getting impatient. He knocked again, more loudly this time.

'Delivery for Mr Lewis! Come and get it!' Tails readied himself for launching once more, but there was no reply.



Bang, bang, bang! 'Come on Porker! We know you're in there!' Still no reply came from inside.

'Maybe he's over at Sally's,' the disappointed fox called to Sonic. 'We can try a second delivery.' Sonic was getting really twitchy now, and he nearly hit supersonic racing over to Sally Acorn's place. Close behind him, Tails almost fell over his feet, what with a billowing sheet round his legs and not being able to see too well through the somewhat hastily positioned eye-holes he'd cut out of it, but he got there just as Sonic banged on the door.

'Yoo hoo! Special delivery dudes! Truly excellent despatch for Mr Porker Lewis!' And *still* no reply.

Tails pulled the sheet off his head. 'Hey, Sonic, this is getting boring. Where are the guys?'

Sonic was tapping his foot now, a sure sign he was getting seriously bad vibes. Half an hour later, after a whirlwind tour of Green Hill Zone which had left Sonic's trainers almost sizzling, Tails and Sonic were reunited outside Porker's place, only to tell each other that none of their friends were to be found. No Porker, no Sally, no Johnny Lightfoot pacing his racing outside his home, no Flicky the Bluebird snooping from the branches. Tails's custard pie was beginning to collapse.

'Ugh! Icky,' moaned the fox as he wiped dribbling custard from his paws. 'Let's give this one up, Sonic. Please!' Big brown eyes pleaded with his friend to let him drop the pie. This wasn't any fun any more.

'Well. . . .' Sonic was thinking. That wasn't something he cared for, being a hedgehog of action. But, since they were back outside Porker's door and the pie was for him, it seemed a bodacious idea to rig up a little trap with the pie over the door, just in case their piggy friend came back soon.

Sonic opened the door. Inside, the place was a mess. That wouldn't have worried him with any other of his friends. They were almost as messy as he was. But Porker

was a real clean guy. He was always the one who tidied up the crisp packets and burger trays from Sonic's house when he came over to play cards with him. 'You may like living in a pig sty, Sonic,' he would joke, 'but I certainly don't!' Porker's place had never looked like this. Even Porker's playing cards – and he was very fussy about them, because he hated losing a card from a pack – were strewn all over the place.

Tails surveyed the wreckage. 'Well, at least he got our postcard,' he said sadly as he turned it over with his foot. It was a very nice view of the ice-capped purple mountains of Spring Yard Zone. Sonic and Tails hadn't *entirely* ruined it with their scrawled cross and the pencilled message, 'We wuz 'ere!' on the front. The fox turned to his friend with a really worried face. 'Sonic, do you think that Porker's been pignapped?'

'I don't know, little dude, but this looks totally heinous to me. Let's check out somewhere else.' First stop had to be the nachos bar. That's where their friends would often meet up and besides, Sonic was getting hungry again.

'I haven't seen Porker for three days,' said the chicken behind the counter as he passed a small mountain of soda and nachos over on a tray. Sonic ripped open the nachos pack and started to shovel them down his throat. For now, he could let Tails do the talking.

'What about Sally or Johnny? Hey, what about Chirps? Jeepers, he's your cousin, isn't he?'

The chicken looked thoughtful. 'Funny enough, I haven't seen any of them for three days. Except for Tux. He was here yesterday. He had a Half-Pound Haddock Bendyburger with triple fries and a Chocolate Double Soda Supreme.'

Sonic's eyes lit up. That was partly because he'd learned that at least one of their friends was still around. It was mostly because he was licking his lips.

'Brill! Well, buddy, let's go find us one wicked penguin!' cried Tails.



'In a minute, Tails. Um, I think I can handle one of those chocolate sodas first.'

Along the way to Tux's, Sonic and Tails found out that Sally Acorn's place was every bit as messed up as Porker's. That *really* worried them, because Sally was even tidier than Porker most of the time. But it wasn't as worrying as what happened to them at the shoreline by Tux's house.

Tux's door was wide open and there were signs of a struggle throughout the room. The most alarming sign was that the fridge was open and there weren't any fish inside. Whoever had taken Tux away had taken his fish as well. When the Bad Guys even descend to fishnapping, things are *serious*.

'Hey, Sonic!' Tails gasped. 'Someone's spelt out the word "HELP" in fridge magnet letters on the door. I wonder what that means. Sonic?'

Sonic was sniffing the air. His spines were beginning to bristle with a familiar tingling sensation. 'Can you smell something, little dude?'

Tails sneezed. 'Um, um, like fish?'

'No, stupid. *Concentrate*.'

Tails sniffed frantically. 'Oh yuck! Awful! It smells like . . .'

'Yeah, totally gross. It smells like rotten eggs. Now, we both know what that means – hey! Gimme the camera quick!'

Tails had forgotten that he'd been carrying around the Superbinocular Infrascanning Video camera all this while. Thanks to the incredible technology on Mobius, it was only the size of a very small burger box. (This advance was perhaps less successful than the makers had hoped, for every time he got hungry Sonic tended to grab it and try to get a cheeseburger out of it.) Tails took it from around his neck and passed it to the impatient hedgehog, who squinted one eye shut and looked through the rangefinder.

'Oh no! Heinous to the max! It's an Egg-o-Matic! One of Robotnik's flying ships and . . . Eh?'

Sonic was confused. The speck flying off in the distance just disappeared. Well, it didn't really disappear. What had actually happened was that the robot flying the ship engaged Dr Robotnik's new eggsperimental Chaos-Shift Warp Compressor Drive and the ship entered one of the Warps of Confusion high above the planet. However, apart from Robotnik only an out-and-out genius could have known this and, though he's no dummy, Sonic isn't an out-and-out genius either.

'Hmmm,' Sonic pondered. 'I guess Robotnik must have invented a new Chaos-Shift Warp Compressor Drive and that ship has just vanished into a Warp of Confusion. What a bummer.'

Look, it was just a lucky guess, OK?