

SONIC
THE
HEDGEHOG™

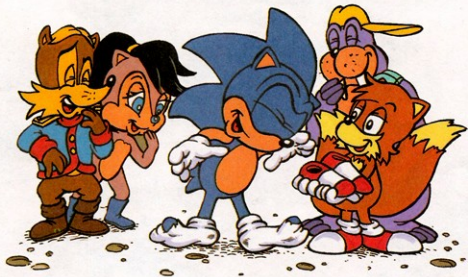
SONIC'S SHOES BLUES



a Golden Book.

Story by John Michlig
Illustrated by Art Mawhinney

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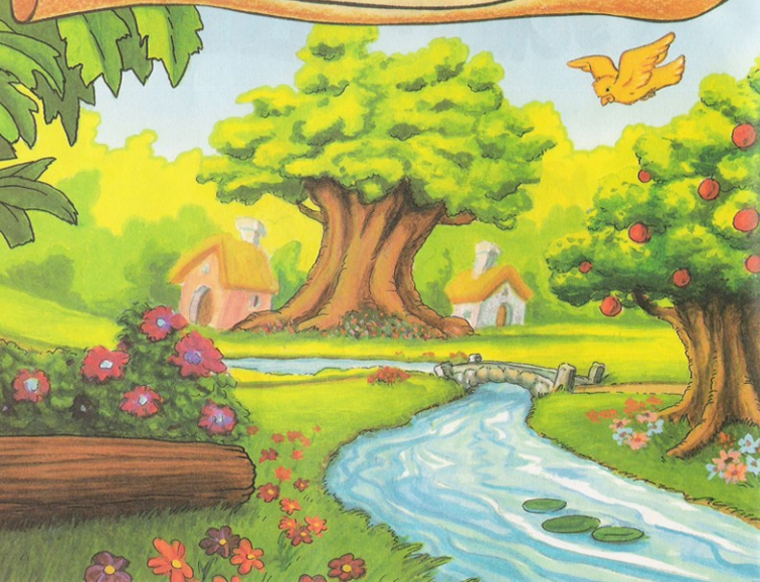


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Once upon a time, not too long ago, the planet Mobius was a clean, green wonderful place to live. The Mobians, as those who live on Mobius are called, lived in peace with each other and cared for the world they inhabited.

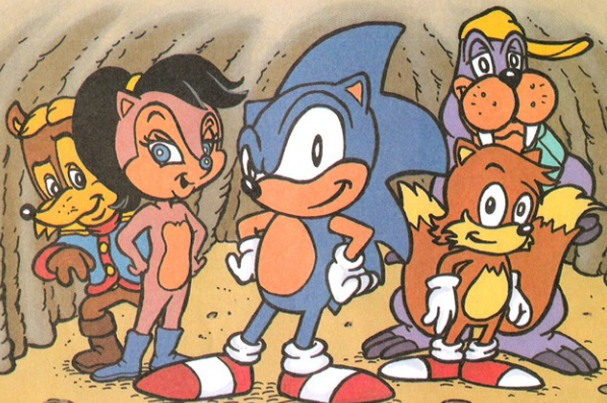


All of that changed with the arrival of the evil Dr. Robotnik and his gang of polluting robots. He took over as Dictator of the planet, ruling with an iron hand from his headquarters in the city of Robotropolis.

Of course, the Mobian people are not at all happy with life under the rule of Dr. Robotnik, especially since he makes them work around the clock in his smoke-spewing robot factories. They know that Dr. Robotnik doesn't care how big a mess he makes of Mobius ... just as long as he can stay in charge.



But the Mobians still have hope, for they know that hidden in the secret underground Knothole Village, a brave team of Freedom Fighters led by superfast and supercool Sonic The Hedgehog are fighting a constant battle to overthrow the evil Dr. Robotnik and his gang of diabolical robots. The Mobians know that someday the planet will be free again.



One morning, deep underground in the hidden Knothole Village, Sonic The Hedgehog yawned and stretched. He was eager to begin another day of making Dr. Robotnik's life miserable, so the heroic hog wasted no time getting out of bed.

"Today's the day I really drive superbogus Robotnik and his rotten robots up a tree!" Sonic thought to himself as he brushed his teeth superquick.

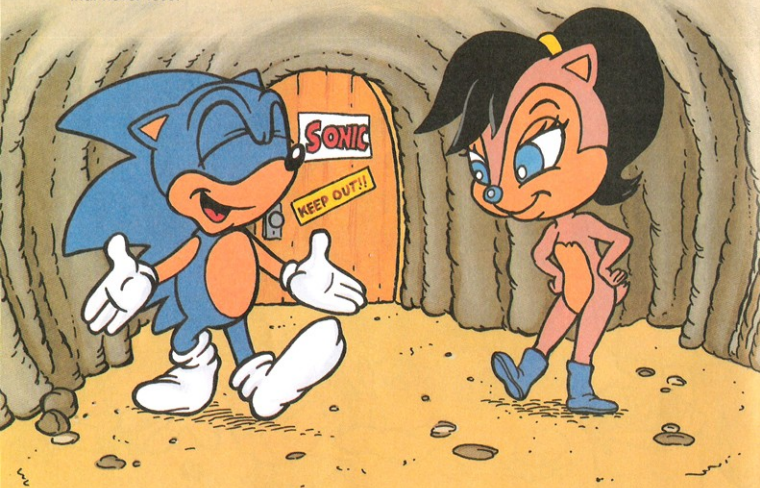


As he left his bedroom, Sonic met Princess Sally. "Where's Tails?" he asked impatiently. "It's time to harass the pants off Dr. Robotnik! I'd take you along, but this is a job too dangerous for a girl."

Ignoring Sonic's comment, Sally looked down at his feet, which were clad only in white socks.

"I think even a he-man like you will need to finish dressing before heading out on any 'too-dangerous-for-a-girl' mission," she said with a smile.

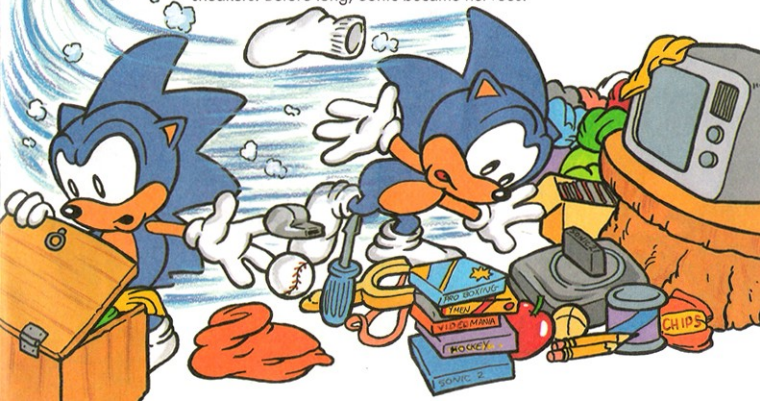
"Well, I ... Omigosh!" Sonic replied as he noticed his error. "I was in such a hurry to get into action that I forgot to put on my supercool red sneakers!" He quickly returned to his room to get them, known throughout Knothole Village as the shoes that never lose.



Once in his room, Sonic moved aside piles of clothes and comic books and went straight to the spot he last remembered seeing his sneakers ... but they weren't there!



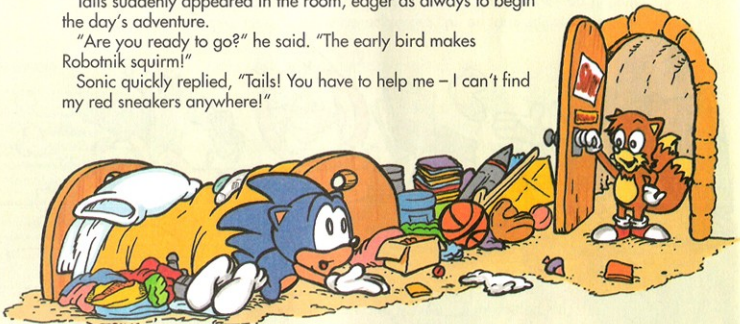
The heroic hedgehog hopped from place to place in the room, scattering his belongings this way and that as he searched frantically for the red sneakers. Before long, Sonic became nervous.



Tails suddenly appeared in the room, eager as always to begin the day's adventure.

"Are you ready to go?" he said. "The early bird makes Robotnik squirm!"

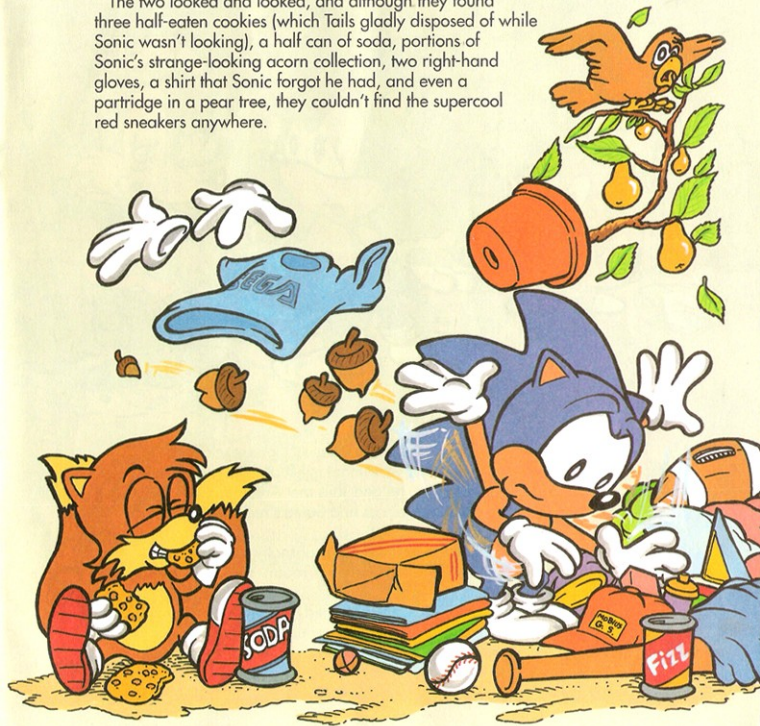
Sonic quickly replied, "Tails! You have to help me - I can't find my red sneakers anywhere!"

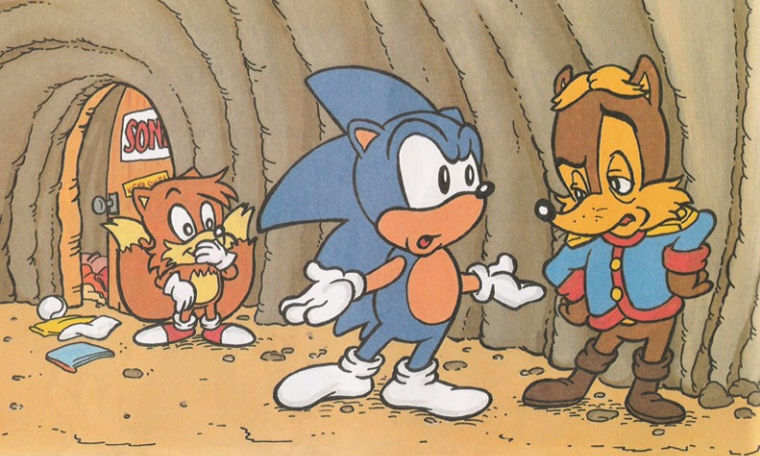


Looking around at Sonic's messy room, Tails could understand how even an *elephant* would get lost in there. But, because the small fox admired Sonic, he didn't say anything that might annoy Sonic about the need for better housecleaning.



The two looked and looked, and although they found three half-eaten cookies (which Tails gladly disposed of while Sonic wasn't looking), a half can of soda, portions of Sonic's strange-looking acorn collection, two right-hand gloves, a shirt that Sonic forgot he had, and even a partridge in a pear tree, they couldn't find the supercool red sneakers anywhere.





"We're going to have to search the entire village," Sonic exclaimed. "How can I be at my super-speedy best without my supercool red shoes?"

On their way out of Sonic's room, he and Tails met Antoine.

"Antoine!" Tails said, "You have to help us find Sonic's red sneakers. He can't find them anywhere!"

"I'm not surprised," Antoine replied in his typical snotty manner.

"Haven't I told you a hundred times to clean your room? You could lose an elephant in there."

Tails had to smile to himself, but suddenly turned serious when he saw that Sonic was not amused. In fact, Sonic was so worried about the situation that he couldn't even come up with a wisecrack for wimpy Antoine.

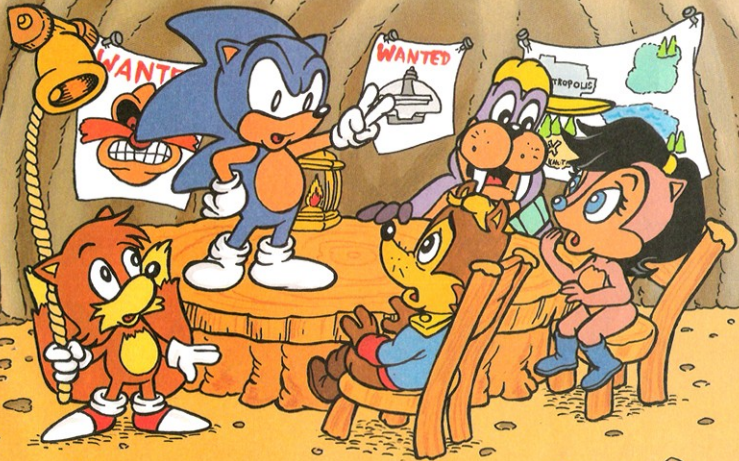
Sonic began to wonder if perhaps the sneakers were not lost at all – but stolen!

“Okay, time for a meeting!” Sonic exclaimed. Tails immediately began ringing the assembly bell.

Soon, all the Freedom Fighters were together in the Knothole meeting hall.

“I’ve called you all here because two things that are very important to me and my feet are missing,” Sonic began. “And I think someone in this very room may have something to do with it.”

The group looked at one another in shock.



"I think you've finally run into one too many brick walls," Sally said angrily. "Believe me, I'll be happier than you when we finally get some shoes back on those feet of yours - I haven't been able to breathe since you started walking around in your stocking feet."

Everyone laughed, but Sonic remained unusually serious. In fact, rather than firing back one of his usual lightning-quick wisecracks, he just waited for the group to finish enjoying Sally's joke before continuing.





"I'll put out the lantern for two minutes, and the person who took my shoes can place them on the table," Sonic said. "I won't even ask who took them."
And with that, he blew out the lantern and the room became pitch-black. Sonic counted to himself until he was sure two minutes had past...

...then re-lit the lantern.

When Sonic's eyes adjusted to the brightness around him, he saw that the room was empty except for a note on the table. It said: "If you don't trust us, then maybe you don't need us. We'll handle Dr. Robotnik without you."





Now Sonic was angry. He hopped off the table and scowled. "Fine!" he thought. "Even with a blindfold I'm better than all of them put together."

A little later, above ground, the rest of the fearless Freedom Fighters made their way toward the city of Robotropolis.

"This doesn't feel right without Sonic here to lead us," Boomer whispered. "He always seemed to know exactly what to do."

"...And he could lend a hand with this load ... argh!" Antoine whined.

"Well, he's nothing but a stocking-footed sap now," Sally said, although she secretly missed Sonic as well. "Besides, we have a job to do, Sonic or no Sonic." She gestured toward a tall pipe that spewed black smoke into the sky. "It's up to us to plug that giant smokestack with this big cork before it kills off the entire forest..."

"...and we can smoke out all the worker-bots inside and maybe find a clue to help us find Uncle Chuck, Muttski and Sally's father, too!" Tails added eagerly as he streaked ahead.



"Wait, Tails!" Sally yelled after him. "There may be..."
But before the feisty heroine could finish, Tails tripped over a wire that sprung several traps. In a split second, everyone found themselves ensnared!

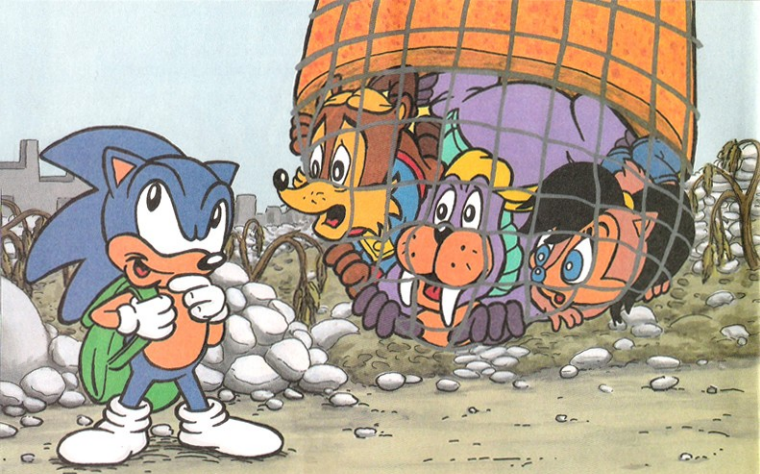


"Oh no!" cried Sally. "Robotnik and his creeps will be here any moment now!"

A low rumble could be heard in the distance. Dr. Robotnik was already on his way!

"This is all my fault," Tails said. "Like Sally always tells me - I have to learn to think before I act."





"...Or think before you accuse," said Sonic as he appeared from behind a tree with a basket of goodies.

"Even with my fabulous footwear lost, I'm too noble and heroic a hog to let my Freedom Fighter Friends down," Sonic said. "I can't help it - it's just the way I am. In fact, I can remember my Uncle Chuck telling me many times that..."

"Well, it's good to see you out and about," Antoine broke in from his cramped quarters, "but do you think you could get us out of here and finish your story later?"

"Oh sure," Sonic calmly replied. "But actually, I brought you all some gifts that you really need *right now*."

The trapped Freedom Fighters gasped and looked at each other in amazement.

"Can we do this another time?" Sally exclaimed.

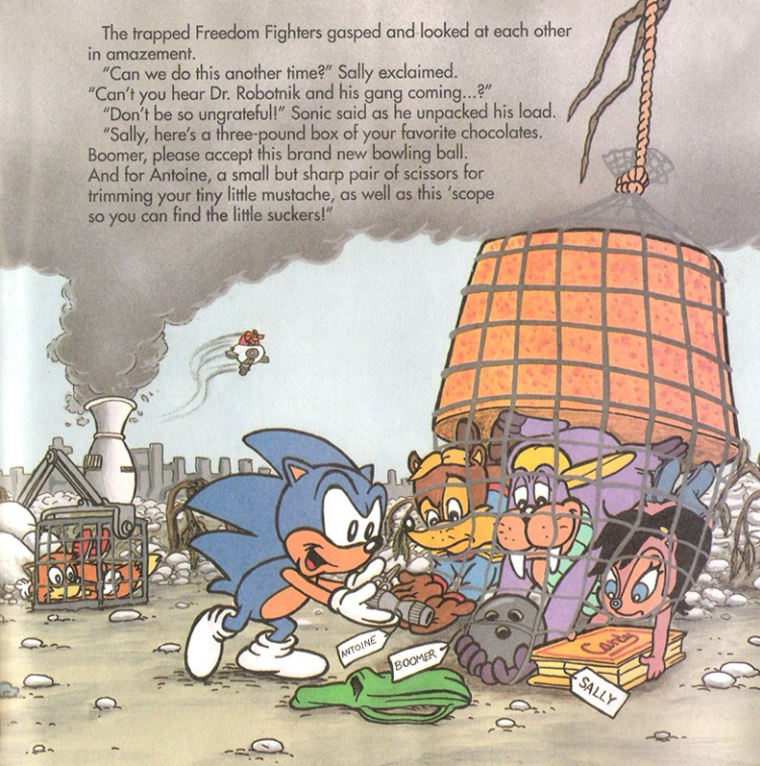
"Can't you hear Dr. Robotnik and his gang coming...?"

"Don't be so ungrateful!" Sonic said as he unpacked his load.

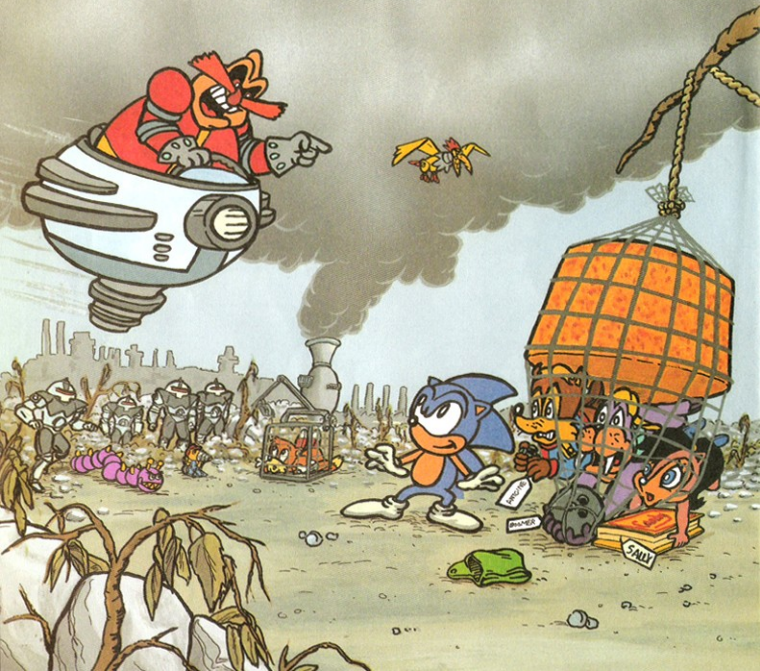
"Sally, here's a three-pound box of your favorite chocolates.

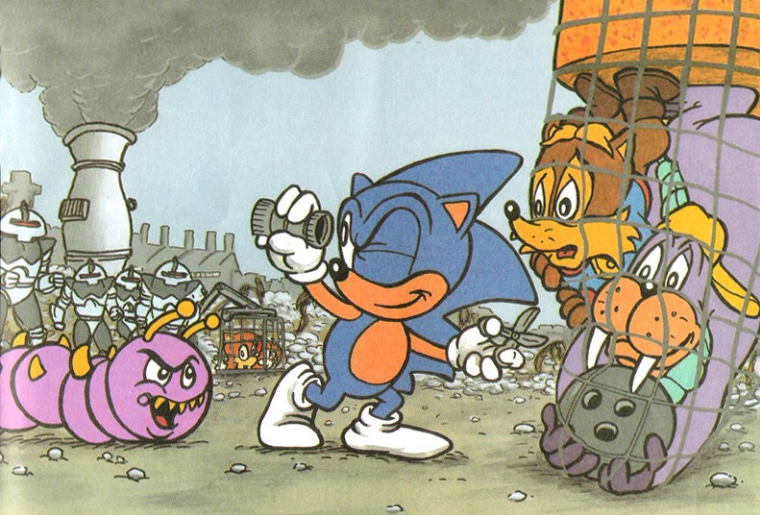
Boomer, please accept this brand new bowling ball.

And for Antoine, a small but sharp pair of scissors for trimming your tiny little mustache, as well as this 'scope so you can find the little suckers!"



Suddenly, Dr. Robotnik and his gang arrived on the scene. "So I have you all," the fiendish villain cackled, "as well as a stocking footed hedgehog. How does it feel to taste de-FEET! Ha-ha-HAA!"





The ensnared group was about to become frantic when Sonic calmly asked, "Antoine, may I borrow your nifty, brand new moustache trimmer and 'scope?"

Antoine handed them to him, and Sonic immediately cut a hole in the net.

"Ha-ha," laughed Caterkiller as he advanced on the heroes. "You may free some of your friends, but we'll keep the little two-tailed fox!"

"No you won't, oh wormy one!" Sonic replied, and freed his netted friends, which sent the big cork catapulting through the air, narrowly missing Dr. Robotnik in his hover-matic flying machine.

"HA! Your aim is off, hedgehog!" Robotnik snickered.

"Look again, chubby," answered Sonic.

Everyone turned to see the giant cork continue its flight, finally dropping right into the smoke-spewing chimney and plugging it with a *plop*.

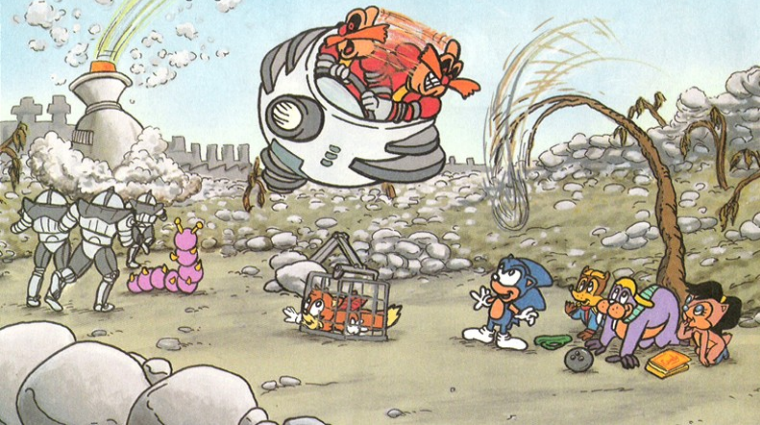
"Bullseye!" Tails shouted.

The smoke, having no place else to go, filled the building until the walls began to bulge.

"My beautiful factory!" Robotnik cried. "Everyone retreat! We have to save my beautiful factory!!!"

"Get your blocks and start over," Sonic snickered as he freed Tails, "and we'll wreck another one sooner than you can say 'Robotnik is balder than a cue ball.'"

"I'll get you yet, you goody no-shoes!" the foiled villain sputtered as he sped away with his gang.





The next day, Sonic invited the group to his newly tidied room.

"I hardly recognize the place!" Tails remarked.

"Well, I think I've learned that a little housekeeping can be a lot of help..."

Sonic confessed. "Because while I was cleaning, I found my supercool red sneakers under the sheets of my bed!"

"Well I hope you also learned that you don't need things like supercool shoes to be brave and clever," Sally advised. "Just like I don't need an expensive hair-do. You'd still have a crush on me even if I had a crew cut."

Sonic blushed, but then blurted out, "In your dreams!"

"And I suppose you're wondering why everyone got a present but you," Sonic said to Tails.

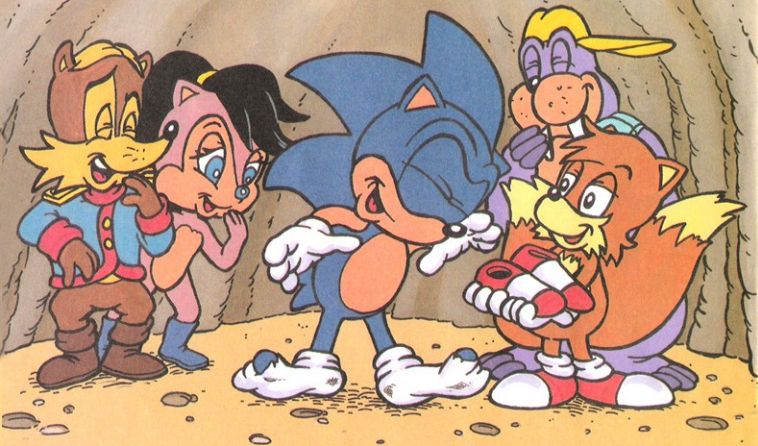
"Well ... maybe because I messed up again!" the small fox answered quietly.

"No," Sonic laughed, "it's because I wanted to give you my supercool red sneakers. If anyone could fill my shoes – though nobody really can – it would be you."

"Th-thanks, Sonic!" Tails said as he accepted the red shoes with a smile that stretched from pointed ear to pointed ear.

"Stay in the low gears at first," Sonic said.

"Now can anyone come with me to buy some new shoes? I've worn out three pair of socks!"



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