

Protomen

"Breaking Out"

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Joe:

The city doesn't know what's coming,
She doesn't feel the heat.
The city won't know what hit her,
What knocked her out into the streets.
The city is thinking that it's over,
And she's already fast asleep.
So I'm breaking out of here tonight.
I am ready.

We're given only what we need,
Only the chance to survive.
And even then, it's a coin toss,
A roll of the dice.
There's gotta be something better,
Something that feels more alive.
So I'm breaking out of here tonight.
I'm breaking out of here.

You've got to feel it girl,
Feel the wind pick up.
It feels like something's gonna change,
But there's no use putting it in drive
If all the wheels are stuck.
There's somethin' wrong here,
Like this whole city wants to scream,
But no one makes a sound.

But, you've got to feel it, baby.
So I'm going to find out what it is
And I'm going to tear it down

[Joe turned to a girl who'd been ignoring him all
Night, leaned in, and whispered in her ear.]

The engine's running, baby.
We don't have time for goodbyes.
I know you can't come with me.
I see that look in your eyes.

So kiss me fast

Cause there's no time to lose.
Leave the light on
I'll come back for you.
When everything is said and done,
I swear I'm gonna make it right.
I'm breaking out of here tonight.

[Joe leaned in and stole a quick kiss from the girl.
She smiled and made a move to slap him but he was
Already out of reach. He kicked the door open and tore
Out into the dark streets. Fire in his blood. He didn't
Know exactly where he was going. Only that he was
Moving. And moving was something.

The slight breeze against his forehead meant that
Something was changing. He raised his voice, crying
out
Against the quiet, constant hum of the city. From the
Windows high above the streets, a few concerned
women
Called out to him to keep his voice down. For his own
Sake. For all their safety.]

I'm so tired of giving up.
I am so tired of giving in.
You wake up knowing things should change,
Not knowing where to begin.
This city won't say where she's going,
And she won't speak of where she's been.
So I'm breaking out of here tonight...

[Without noticing where he was heading, he'd reached
His home - or his former home - his mother's house.
She'd vanished three years ago. He hadn't been back
Since. His father had been gone now for nearly ten.
Heading around back, he made a straight line for a
Small workshop, set apart from the house.

His father's motorbike was there. A relic. A gas engine
Bolted to an iron frame. He kicked the engine a few
Times and the bike roared to life. As he turned onto
The street and opened the throttle - the sound of
Combustion savaging the silence of the night air - he
Could almost make out the sound of the collective gasp
Let out by the neighborhood. He could almost imagine
Window after window opening above the street line.
Frightened face after frightened face leaning out into
The bright glow of the streetlamps. Timid voice after
Timid voice telling him, speaking in unison.

A chorus of fear.]

Human Choir:
Don't turn your back on the city

[Joe ignored the voices. He thought perhaps he was the
Only one who hadn't turned his back. He kicked the
Shifter.]

Joe:
Say a prayer for all
The children still sleeping.

[3rd gear.]

Say a prayer for all the fathers
Who still remember.

[4th.]

Say a prayer for all the girls
Who've learned to stand up.

[5th.]

Say a prayer for all the boys
Who won't surrender.

Sometimes I just want to drive
Until the streets run out.
I want to burn until there's
Nothing left to burn about.
This city's waiting for a better day.
When I get back there will be hell to pay.
But, if I'm the only one left standing,
I will not be afraid to fight.
I'm breaking out of here tonight.

I feel a fever coming on me,
Burning out of control.
And I hear nothing but the static.
For years now there's been nothing
But the static on the radio.
If you can hear my voice outside these walls,
If you can hear me sending out this message tonight,
Then break the silence, send a signal back.
I'm coming, all I need is a little guiding light.
... If you can hear me.

Human Choir:
Don't turn your back on the city...

Joe:
If you can hear me...
Don't turn your back on the city.

[Store fronts gave way to warehouses.
Warehouses to abandoned factories.
Factories to the slums of the city.

He'd followed the line of the electric rail for almost
An hour. The outskirts. A place to which men now rarely
Ventured. The dark streets flickered under failing
Street lamps. Away from the machines. Away from the
People trying to keep him silent. He should be feeling
Free. He wasn't. He was feeling something else. A
Wariness. A hesitation. Joe let off the throttle. As
His father's bike slowed to a crawl, he understood that
Feeling he'd had ever since he'd decided to leave the
City. That hesitation he'd felt was the knowledge that
He was being watched. Watched when he kissed the
girl
At the bar goodbye. Watched when he left his mother's
House. Watched even now... Miles from the heart of the
City.

A face in the shadows...

He stopped the bike in the middle of the street,
Silenced the engine, and lowered the kickstand. There
Was no traffic. No metal footsteps patrolling the
Streets. But the familiar sound of the telescreens
Reached even here. Joe stood watching the face on the
Screen. It babbled incessantly, but said nothing.

Over the sound of the screen, Joe heard footsteps, slow
And deliberate, echoing from the darkness of the
Alleyway. Kneeling down, Joe placed one hand on the
Street beside him, the other reached for the knife in
His boot. He recalled the stories the children of the
City loved to repeat about the red-eyed assassin.
"Light's Monster," they called it. The footsteps
Emerged from the darkness of the alley and into the
Uneven glow of the flickering street lights. Joe stood,
His hand loosening its grip on the knife.

It was a gray-haired man.

Joe was about to speak when the old man lifted a finger
And pointed past him, into the darkness. Joe turned to
See a single red light pulsing from the depths of the
Alleyway behind him.]

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