

Protomen

"How The World Fell Under Darkness"

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[The movement started slowly at first, but soon
Expanded exponentially into every part of life. The old
Commuter train that bore Light to his exile was bought
And the track scrapped and recycled to make way for a
Shining electromagnetic bullet train. Sleek and silver,
It tore through the city like a volt across a wire, and
As quickly as it moved, the city was transformed
around
It.

Beneath the hammers of Wily's new army of metal
Workmen, buildings were razed to the ground, leveled
in
A single morning. New foundations were laid in the
same
Afternoon. Structures, metal frames piercing the
Clouds, were erected before nightfall. Glass and steel
Wrapped the frames before the sun rose the next day.
Then the armies of machines would move onto the next
Task. Never stopping. Never slowing. Never resting.

Morning after morning, the men and women of the city
Awoke to find a bright new world. Everything was
Remade. Made better. Made brighter. The streets were
Swept. The undesirables, the homeless, the criminal
Element of the city, systematically vanished.

The single screen on top of the tower sent out signals
To the now hundreds of satellite screens. The factories
Were fully automated. The mines run entirely by
Machine. The men that found themselves suddenly
living
Lives of leisure crowded the bars, slowly imbibing the
Generous severances they'd received, not so much as
a
Single I'll word grumbled towards their replacements.
The city was a bright and shining beacon of light... a
Steel-plated heaven.

Years passed.

A generation grew up within the metal arms that
Embraced the city. The older generations never told
Them what the city looked like before the machines.
Why

Would they? What good could come from telling the
Children of the type of dark, filthy, and dangerous
World that men create when left to their own devices?
That once men slaved away deep inside the earth,
Risking death for the sake of survival. That once
women
Left their children, still asleep in their beds, to
Grind away mindless hours in the factories, sacrificing
Family to secure necessities.

This new world was so perfect that it seemed
dangerous
To speak of the old world. As if this new city, sprung
From a sea of darkness, was balanced on a single
point,
Teetering on a crucial ignorance. It seemed that any
Misstep, any wrong word, could topple the city, sinking
It back in the sea, that dark abyss of human suffering,
Leaving them with nothing. After all, they were not the
Creators of this world. They were merely the recipients
Of a gift. A gift given to them by a single man and his
Countless steel hands. And just as easily as it was
Given, couldn't it be taken away?

An unspoken fear dangled above the heads of every
man
And woman. Keeping them silent. Keeping them safe.

Even so, rumors started. Ghost stories of a demon. A
Beast with a single red eye. He that would pluck you
From your bed at night if you were found with a
Dissenting word on your tongue. Mothers told children
To stay close as they traveled through the streets,
Keep a smile on their faces, and never speak I'll of the
Machines.

A generation grew up inside the metal hands that
gently
Cirled the neck of the city. Some of them grew up
Hating the city, fearing the machines. There was one
Boy in particular. His name was Joe.]

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