

Hope Rides Alone

The Protomen

No one was left who could remember how it had happened
How the world had fallen under darkness
At least no one who would do anything
No one who would oppose the robots
No one who would challenge their power
Or so Dr. Wily believed...

There is a skyline in the distance. A brilliant and bright city with building after building crowded into a dense and industrious center. The city is closer now. Rushing past the buildings to the base of one crumbling high-rise. The first story passes by. The second now, and with more speed. There is a blur of windows and brick. Eighteen... Nineteen...

Twenty floors above the dark streets of the city, Dr. Light lived in a run-down tenement
An eccentric and brilliant man
Light was a loner, a thinker, a man of ideas
Ideas forbidden in Wily's society
The society for which he worked
The society in which he lived
The society that he would set free
And so Light worked, far into the night, when the watchful eyes of Wily's robots weren't upon him
He'd set his skillful hands to the task of creating a device to bring about a change, to create a machine to bring freedom, to create a man to save the world
Twelve years Light worked and on a cold night in the year 200X, Protoman was born
A perfect man, an unbeatable machine, hell-bent on destroying every evil standing between man and freedom, built for one purpose, to destroy Wily's army of evil robots. Ready, willing, prepared to fight

The streets, the arteries of this metropolis, run with bodies. Crowding together, they flow out of the city, toward a superstructure east of town. A factory. A fortress. Glancing at it the facade resembles the face of a skeleton. Smoke pours from the stacks high above the outer wall. The gates are open. A figure stands in the light before the entrance. Perfectly still, he waits. The crash of metal destroys the silence. One by one the Robots step forward, step into the light

Cutman
Gutsman
Elecman
Bombman
Fireman
Iceman
Proto
Attack!

The violence is surreal. Metal against metal, the sound is deafening. For most, the reaction is automatic. Hands cover ears. Mothers reach to cover eyes of terrified children. The blows are quick and precise. This is Protoman. Dealing death without remorse, without hesitation, and still, the fight is unbalanced. One against so many. Protoman fights without fear of defeat, although it is inevitable. The men keep their distance, straining to see every crushing blow through the smoke that has surrounded the ongoing battle. The din stops abruptly. Unsettlingly

And as the smoke cleared!

Wily rose above the countless robots remaining. Protoman was wounded, low on energy, struggling to remain standing as Wily ordered the final attack
The death of Protoman

The crowd had gathered there to watch him fall, to watch their hopes destroyed

They watched them beat him, they watched them break him, they watched his last defense deployed

There was not a man among them who would let himself be heard

But from the crowd, from their collective fear, arose these broken words:

We are the dead

We are the dead

What have we done? (We are the dead)

What will we do? (We are the dead)

Where will we turn? (We are the dead)

Is there nothing we can do? (We are the dead)

How did it come to this? (We are the dead)

How did we go so wrong? (We are the dead)

We are the dead (We are the dead)