

By RUDYARD KIPLING

THE OUTLAWS \*

*Through learned and laborious years  
They set themselves to find  
Fresh terrors and undreamed-of fears  
To heap upon mankind.*

*All that they drew from Heaven above  
Or digged from earth beneath,  
They laid into their treasure-trove  
And arsenals of death,*

*While, for well-weighed advantage sake,  
Ruler and ruled alike  
Built up a faith they meant to break  
When the fit hour should strike.*

*They traded with the careless earth,  
And good return it gave ;  
They plotted by their neighbour's hearth  
The means to make him slave.*

*When all was readied to their hand  
They loosed their hidden sword  
And utterly laid waste a land  
Their oath was pledged to guard.*

*Coldly they went about to raise  
To life and make more dread  
Abominations of old days,  
That men believed were dead.*

*They paid the price to reach their goal  
Across a world in flame,  
But their own hate slew their own soul  
Before that victory came.*

*Rudyard Kipling*

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