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TO CERTAIN ORTHODOX BRETHREN BY ROBERT E. HOWARD

You say all things were made for you - then prove it, on your crowns.

Go curb the tides that break your ships, the floods that sink your towns,

Go bid the winds to stay their drought, the rains to stay their rust.

Go naked in the northern ice, unscathed in desert dust.

Speak to the demon of the frost and bid him bend his knee.

Lift up your hand as a ruler should and halt the falling tree.

Stand in the charging tiger's path and stop him in career;

If all earth creatures are your slaves, what need of bow or spear?

Announce your lordship in the face of the serpent's fetid breath,

Mayhap he'll sink his scaly coils and sheathe the hidden death.

Yea, ye are men and masters all, the rulers of the world,

Save when the reeling oceans rise, the earthquake's blows are hurled.

- Go tell your tale to the bones of those the hippo tramped in mire.
- Ashes of those attest your rule, who loosed the god of fire.
- There bides no man in all the world may hide the leprous curse.
- Yea, ye are men and more than men, Lords of the universe.
- This truth your priests and elders rant, with vain and haughty breath;
- Let them go forth and prove their worth, aye, chain and shackle Death.