

Hymn of Breaking Strain

He went over it in his head, plate by plate, span by span, brick by brick, pier by pier, remembering, comparing, estimating, and recalculating, lest there should be any mistake; and through the long hours and through the flights of formulae that danced and wheeled before him, a cold fear would come to pinch his heart...

Text: Rudyard Kipling, 1935, alt.

Music: Leslie Fish, 1983

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arr. Kenan Schaeffkofer, 2021

Em

D C

1 The care - ful	text-books	mea - sure
2 But in our	dai - ly	deal - ing
3 The pru-dent	text-books	give it
4 We on - ly	of Cre -	a - tion
5 Oh, veil - ed,	se - cret	Pow - er,

(Let all who build be - ware!)
with stone and steel, we find
in ta - bles at the end:
(Oh, luck - ier bridge and rail)
whose paths we seek in vain,

Em

D C

1 the load, the shock, the pres-ure
2 the gods have no such feel - ing
3 the stress that shears a riv - et,
4 a - bide the twin dam - na - tion:
5 be with us in our hour_

ma - ter - i - al can bear.
of guilt for hu - man - kind.
or makes a tie - bar bend,
To fail and know we fail.
of ov - er-throw and pain;

Em

C D Em

1 So when a buck - led gir - der
2 To no set gauge they make us,
3 what traf - fic wrecks mac - a - dam,
4 Yet we— by which sole to - ken
5 that we— by which sure to - ken

lets down a steel cas - cade,
for no laid course pre - pare,
what con - crete should en - dure.
we know we once were gods—
we know Thy ways are true—

Fm

C D Em

1 the blame for loss, or mur-der
2 and pres - ent - ly o'er - take us
3 But we, of Eve and A - dam
4 take shame in be - ing bro-ken,
5 be cause of be ing bro-ken

is on the ma - ker laid.
with loads we can - not bear:
have no such lit' - ra - ture,
how - ev - er great the odds.
may rise and build a new

D

D/A

Ob

the ma - ker, not the made!
too mer - ci - less to bear.
to warn us or make sure!
the bur - den of the Odds.
stand up and build a - new.