

The Fracture Mechanic

By Stormy Weathers

He is a fracture mechanic.
And cracking is his art.
He doesn't want to build airplanes.
He'd rather take them apart.

He is working in the shadows,
Always practicing his art.
"The secret," he says, "to making it work
Is knowing where to start."

"You can't just start from anywhere.
It needs a field to grow.
So I look for places where the stress is high,
And I start by taking it slow."

"I look for ragged edges,
Or an inside corner that's tight.
That's where I can get a crack to grow
With all the loads in flight."

Beware the fracture mechanic.
Don't give him an open door.
Keep the edges smooth and the corners round
Or else you'll learn what for.

Don't let the crack get started.
Don't beckon him in,
Beware those nasty places
Where the cracking can begin.

The fracture mechanic is watching
And waiting for his cue.
So, if you're building airplanes,
This warning is for you.

Or if you're a maintainer,
Be wary in your role.
For a fresh new dent or a careless scratch
Can start to take its toll.

The fracture mechanic stays alert.
He never takes a nap.
So do your best to keep him out.
Don't let him spring his trap