

## *The Engineer*

A shy, quiet man is he, although he can be loud and boisterous,  
No stranger to the arcane magic that others view as mysterious,  
That stuff we call science and mathematics and other such things  
That we cannot fathom, even if we accept what each of them brings.

He is not so good being with others unless they be such as he -  
Perhaps it is because he imagines things others of us cannot see -  
Or maybe it is because deep down he considers us all beneath him.  
I don't know, nor do I care, for he is after all a modern jinn.

Bridges, buildings, marvelous tools, toys, even an airplane -  
He conceives, designs, builds, tests, and perhaps builds again.  
Striving for perfection, failure is but a nuisance to be pulled apart,  
As he painstakingly creates for us the benefits of his arcane art.

I once dreamed of being like him, for I wanted to be able to know  
All the things that I thought that such a man as he must show  
Mastery over, and the ways of controlling those mysterious forces  
That gives him such power, and I wanted control over those sources.

Now I too am an engineer, and I have become what I dreamed to be.  
I, too, am quiet, for I realize now the responsibility given to me.  
Should I fail to do my craft well, be careless, omit a small detail, then  
Others could be harmed, or die, and this is the engineer's greatest sin.

-- *The Engineer* © Leonard Yarbrough, 1996