

# There Was a G.I. - January 1970

*by* Carl Santoro

There was a G.I. who  
wanted to write  
of tenderness...

but a party down  
the hall drowned  
his thoughts with  
drunken laughter.

There was a G.I. who  
wanted to write  
of love...

but a naked dancer  
in his room  
just threw up  
on his pillowcase.

There was a G.I. who  
wanted to write  
of joy...

but tonight a homesick comrade  
was hospitalized  
after slitting  
his wrists.

There was a G.I. who  
wanted to write

of brotherhood...

but a negro friend  
of his  
was beaten in  
the back of the brig.

There was a G.I. who  
wanted to write  
of peace...

but he saw  
his President  
shot apart like  
a stray mad dog.

There will always be a G.I.  
that always wants to write,  
that always encounters  
tenderness, love, joy,  
brotherhood and peace...

but because he is  
or was a G.I...

a little growth  
of hate  
will be the  
menacing cancer  
in his heart...

for a soldier  
never forgets.

