

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.

