

A Soldier's Silent Night

T'was the night before Christmas, he lived all alone,
In a one-bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney, with presents to give,
to see just who in this dwelling did live.

I looked all around, a strange sight to see,
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stockings on the mantel, just boots filled with sand.
On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

Medals and badges, awards of every kind,
a sobering thought, came alive in my mind.
This house was different, it was dark, it was dreary.
I had found the home of a soldier,
I could see that most clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,
curled up on the floor in this one-bedroom home.
His face was so gentle, the room in such disorder.
Not at all how I pictured a Canadian Soldier.
Was this the hero, of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho, a floor for a bed?

Then I realized the other families that I saw this night,
owed their lives to soldiers, who were willing to fight.
In the morning round the world, children would play.
Grown-ups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.
But they all enjoy freedom, each month of the year,
because of soldiers like the one lying here.

I couldn't help but wonder how many lay alone,
on a cold Christmas Eve, in lands far from home.
The very thought brought a tear to my eye.
I dropped to my knees and I started to cry.

The soldier awakened, I heard his rough voice,
"Santa, don't cry, this life is My choice.
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more.
My life is my God, my country, my Corps."

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep,
but I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.
I kept watch for hours so silent and still,
as both of us shivered from the cold night's chill.

I didn't want to leave him on that cold dark night,
this guardian of honour, so willing to fight.
Then, the soldier rolled over, and in a voice soft and pure,
He whispered, "Carry on, Santa, it's Christmas Day, all's secure."
One look at my watch and I knew he was right,
Merry Christmas my friend, may God bless you this night.