

## **BALLAD OF A SNIPER**

This is the way that it happened.

This is the way it was done.

The boy was the son of a hunter,  
and his father gave him a gun.

Each day until he was twenty  
he slowly perfected his aim.

It was something he did as a hobby,  
and his targets were never the same.

War came, and he went to the army.

They noticed how well he could shoot.

They trained him to fly with commandos  
and jump with a parachute.

His job was to pick off the leaders  
of enemy troops by surprise.

He tracked them like prey in his gunsight,  
and the crosshairs were surer than eyes.

By the time he became a civilian  
he thought he'd forget what he learned.

He tried to adjust to his family,  
but he left and never returned.

He went from one job to another  
but never could settle on one.

He felt that the world was against him,  
and all he could trust was his gun.

He locked himself high in a tower  
and targeted people below.  
They told him to throw down his weapon.  
His answer in bullets was no.

Debating his ultimate choices  
of yielding his rifle or not,  
he peered down the muzzle and kissed it,  
then reached for the trigger and shot.