

Was

By Benjamin Herrington

He *was*-
Not is
Not will be
He *was*... 14 years old
We shouldn't have to refer to children
In the past tense but,
He *was*-
Full of potential never to be known
He *was*-
A kid being a kid, anywhere but here
He *was*-
The sum of the collection of the dreams of Caribbean immigrants
He *was*-
A motherless child in a wilderness of children who shared similar circumstance
He *was*-
Another number, a target, an object
He *was*-
Gunned down and left to die in vacant lot-
An act only justified by the police review board
He *was*-
A victim of the system that created and then destroyed him
He *was*-
Aquan Salmon, age 14, murdered by Officer Robert Allen on April 13, 1999
He *was*.