Dark Slumber

by Steffany Herndon

A poem that I wrote a while ago in response to the death of Michael Brown.

A few days ago, a young man died.  
Gunned down by his community’s protectors,  
despite his surrendering hands.  
His life is gone and no one has an answer.

Please wake up.

Unarmed and only 18  
He had his whole life ahead of him.  
Now his goal for attending college will forever be unreached  
because his only chance was taken from him.

Please wake up.

Why was he stopped? Did he provoke the cop?  
With every news report the story changes  
yet they refuse to criminalize the officer in question.  
Will you really let him get away with this?

Please wake up.

Our people are being picked off one by one  
either by a pale face or by our own.  
The senseless killing that plagues our community must stop.  
Ended by us, and us alone

Please wake up.

Stop expecting justice from the law.  
The law lies; wasn’t designed for “us” to have protection.  
Stop expecting the news to tell the complete truth.  
The only expectation you should have is them painting us with misconceptions.

Please wake up.

Folks are protesting, looting, rioting…  
Black folk are sick and tired of losing their men.  
The hand of the white man aiding in American genocide  
When will the murders end?

Please wake up.

We have to unite as a community and fight back.  
Find our own justice and make our own equality  
It is our God-given right to do so.  
This land owes us our pursuit of happiness, our life, and our liberty.

Are you awake yet?