

TABULA RASA

by Anthony Alvarez



I want silent serene night streets . . .
No more fights in the humid summer heat
I want violence to stop
I want stricter cops
I want peace so that all can be free
I want authority figures to say what they mean and mean what they say

I want a handshake to mean something.
I want the word FAMILY to mean something.
I want LOVE to mean something
I want a politician's word to stay as honest as he promised the week before he was elected
I want people to unlearn their horrible learned behaviors
I want to lessen light pollution so the night sky we can see
I want our libraries to stay open so we can learn to feed our heads and learn that real life is not about
"The Test."
I want to explain utopia to this world
Why can't we find honest leaders who will set excellent examples and find solutions?
And see a million smiles on a million children's faces
I want to feel safe walking in the darkest of places
I want all bad neighborhoods to be good
I want a better environment, one we're proud to call ours
I want a sign
I want to see a change
Like turning to a new page
A clean slate
I want answers
Not excuses
I want answers.

Anthony's poem is from the second anthology of the Teen Writer's Guild of Frankford High School in Philadelphia due out in spring '07. It is filled with urban stories, poetry, raps, and essays and promises to be even better than their first book, "What we want to Tell You."