

# Deliberate

By Amy Uyematsu

So by sixteen we move in packs  
learn to strut and slide  
in deliberate lowdown rhythm  
talk in a syn/co/pa/ted beat  
because we want so bad  
to be cool, never to be mistaken  
for white, even when we leave  
these rowdier L.A. streets—  
remember how we paint our eyes  
like gangsters  
flash our legs in nylons  
sassy black high heels  
or two inch zippered boots  
stack them by the door at night  
next to Daddy's muddy gardening shoes.

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