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Still prime

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Still Prime

A Thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements

for the degree Master of Fine Arts

in

Writing

by

Allison Moreno

Committee in charge:

Professor Cristina Rivera-Garza, Chair  
Professor Ben Doller  
Professor Ruben Ortiz-Torres  
Professor Anna Joy Springer

2012



The Thesis of Allison Moreno is approved and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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Chair

University of California, San Diego

2012

## DEDICATION

*For my grandmother who said I could be anything,  
even a writer.*

*For Elizabeth—you are still here in so many ways.*

*For Raeizon—Hi, love. Thanks for everything.*

*For my parents who have given so much love and support.*

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Still Prime

by

Allison Moreno

Master of Fine Arts in Writing

University of California, San Diego, 2012

Professor Cristina Rivera-Garza, Chair

*Still Prime* by Allison Moreno is a collection of work that experiments with sound and rhythm while breaking down traditional notions of grammar and syntax. Also, each poem has borrowed from a source text, a song, found language, or some set of rules or restraints. Each poem is in conversation with the relationship between process and product. *Still Prime* is an exploration of identity in terms of race, class and gender, but also of personhood—of our potential and our limitations as human beings.

REVISION



*revision*

We were born with Tagalog on our tongues. Ink breathing Babayin onto paper.  
*Fight that fucking rain.* We are crafters of alphabet. A syllable is a song. *We speak!* A letter is an image is a poem. And language is the zombie apocalypse.  
To be the culture or the petri dish that *falls mainly on the plain.* *Bahala na.* Let it be. *Bahala na.* It is in God's hands. *Bahala na.* Whatever. We often assume we must let. Allow the letting and yet there is more.

*ba*

Ba. Ba, as in *ba-ba-black sheep*. As in three bags and *yessir*. As in bathwater. Ba is for *babae*, meaning woman. You know, ba, for breasts. As in they should be this size. That upside down heart thing. A crybaby's bucket. Ballet and baby dolls. Ba is really for *babaylan*, a high priestess. Heal a village. Here me. Hear me roar. Ba is for out of body. Out body: that which is bought. That which is bot. Hot poker branding. The *babaylan* burns sage. And what is at stake but burning. And we are our breasts. Out burning. Burn, burn barrier. Stab a barking bitch barred and barren. This is the song of the *ba*.

*ha*

And we say ha for a number of reasons. Ha, as in exhale. Releasing breath and be reassured we are indeed. Connective tissue. What some might call the space between yin and yang. Ha, and how typical a reference. Ha-ha, sometimes the only possible sound permitted in response to certain remarks. Laugh as if the markers are washable. As if we are halfway through our journey before realizing there is no home. Ha is the amount you have left when collecting things in a jar. Quarters, pebbles, green glass shards.

*la*

A note to follow so. To belt out and maintain a strong diaphragm. And it is strong because it is phallic. Slipping his fingers around the hilt of his sword, a man laughs at his ability to so easily lull. Alarm plotting. Like a loving lapdog pinning points in the men who are pillows. La is for lack of lolly-gagging and the sensation that we are locked together in a room. La is being lost in the knowing and often considering stabbing and dragging the rest of them along.

*bahala*

*Bahala na.* Let it be. *Bahala na.* It is in God's hands. *Bahala na.* Whatever. All we consider connected by a single breath. Yin exhale yang. To fuck and forget. To fuck up. Bare feet on a balance beam. Tip toe on a straight line just to light a match in the rain. A pair of buckets and a bent back. By the strength of our shoulder blades. *Bahala.* Do you want to be all? To bitch and to bear. *Bahala.* Let nothing. *Bahala.* There are but my hands. *Bahala.* Say something.

*starting point*

As river residents. As tag alongs. As they stream dreaming cradled in the arms of Uncle Sam I Am. I do not like green eggs and spam. Rock the little devil children and teach them how to speak. Snip their language like a wire hanger. And by God, straighten it out. *The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.* Repeat. Explain. Forgive 'em Lord, they know not. Knotted ropes on backsides. *Speak!* And be moved by this necessary wind. Let its sweeping clean savage trace. *The rain in Spain* and begin by taking this last name. Filling and falling in the lines of this place will push you up the next rung. *Speak!* And speaking line and lineage will earn you a ticket out of the cage. Sign here. Signage is significance.

## BOXES, BABIES, BODIES

*foundbaby*

found a baby in a box one  
middle of the night found  
baby “over there”

woman rang doorbell and  
“ran off into the night” into  
the middle of it the night found  
baby the woman “oh, a baby!”  
in a cardboard box the

child “wrapped in clean towels”  
the night in a cardboard box with  
tags torn off though the box the  
clue: Panasonic but clean towels but

“Baby Doe” but child abandoned  
but cardboard box in the middle  
of the night what mother their child  
the box what mother  
a daughter  
a newsreel  
an anchor  
named John Culea said  
she “ran off” but  
the baby in a box

her November would have  
a name so the night wrapped  
in clean towels adopted a baby



the family to follow so "Baby Doe"  
to become what walking a woman a  
mother but years  
but poems  
but baby in a box

*box study revisited*

what cardboard as fabricated  
for packaging the term  
may refer of heavy paper-like  
corrugated the meaning  
depending on locale, construction  
and personal choice this story  
a particular Panasonic fan box  
holding with something and setting a box on  
a doorstep one November a night in San Diego

and digress a moment for recurring  
the *balikbayan box*  
a return to one's homeland box  
and a law the resurgence  
of overseas of free to send gifts and this story  
of food, toys and clothes and this story  
this story a baby to put as a Panasonic  
fan box is a place to put a baby

*product description*

given madonna, there's boom—most coverage the struggles  
 good white parents wishing to unfortunate children  
     of color some touches exported

unwanted some even addresses sensational few  
 why available place what come with just  
     healthy white hard to expensive  
 so the world—turn like madonna  
 idea their families they're saving but toll  
     through intimate globalization  
 finally in the find a view that pulls  
 grafts new from around  
     the world tackle inhabit connects

the countries importing them poor  
 of color removed rather than ultimately are  
     they unseat that encompasses reproductive

*real hooked*

hooked my balloon to a red anchor or  
maybe it was a red anchor shaped  
balloon who can tell our plight what we  
do to hold sky in the tiny cage of our  
hands how might we better clouded when  
every string is a shackle we

have hidden ribbons in our hair like  
rosettes like broom when running  
in the house until we are carried off the  
way the window is her only wanted place  
want real as a roof

*gertrude*

*“out of rapid same question”* out comes and we captured  
and cored the seekers so many none voice which  
contained what jesting has travelled so suffered have thirst  
been questions grown less and have always been clever the  
creature no worse than learning

*crawl*

And they crawled out of boxes like creatures with their eyelids full and unfolded under the impression they would befriend the stretch of skin as they befriended those brown and bordered. And the sun had never been welcomed before as they had grown accustomed to the dark of the box. Though it may be, like crabs, they crawl with those boxes clinging to their backs an extension, or even a home as true as a vital organ.

*discretion*

Or would you rather sew yourself into a corset? Conjure that connective tissue from the tips of your sparking fingertips. To still walk with fans over faces. Still your eyes in the walking. And sent to the corner to consider. Allow the voices to coagulate. The current that pushes. And skirts. Swallow curtsy and sit carefully. And when you sit, you sit like a boy. You are such. Your spread. Your elbows on a table. Slumped the chair.

*dainty*

There is this amazing pastry from a bakery I like to go to. It's called a Jesuit. I don't know what that name has to do with anything, but it's around three dollars and well worth the money. It's a puff pastry filled with custard, topped with meringue and almonds. Plated perfection. And when you bite into it, it flakes and the whole damn thing falls apart.



*body*

My body walls push thinning walls in body around body in. Gone. Don't drink that probably shouldn't eat can't sleep that way. Body not belonging to you and not you belonging but god damn you're popping. Humongous body as a room is there room for that body whose room don't dilate enough. Room thinning and when I come back we will look enough room tell your body to make. And as the curtain cuts your body in half tell me if you can feel that wait. Thin tingle pricks what is that on my chest but knife knowing. And her body pushing my body out body. Don't fall asleep on that table suture this room is too cold metal table this cold metal room no room for your sleep and the cries are cold. You are a shell on a table. You are an empty room thinning and your cold metal skinning you'll feel like you're falling. Your job is to lie as your body lies. And it is lying now. Just as that thin line on your body is an exit.

*push*

And when you think of pushing, push pennies and pencils. And your body remembers moments, your muscles remember. Your body lies. Kiss your knees. You're a sight for sore toes. P.inch. Think pencil. Think as think. Pain pennies. Push five, not enough. Ten might. Be visible. Fifteen. Or twenty might be. The point at which people. Start to worry. Push pounds and the thick. They say thick. And you run. And in pushing you are counting, nothing but gone. Drop pennies in a pond. And push.

## A WRITING MANUAL

1.

like clockwork

like buzzer

rewarding those who say nothing beautifully

ten minutes the minutes to

fidget of quiet less genius

the quiet less stellar

and why shouldn't we woman up

the place

the room a bit cold a bit difficult speak

a bit looking with doubtful with judgment

their answer

their best

and my chair electric

an ivy tongue key

must be called a league

and why smarter when we sit

speaking circles around tables

2.

there is a clock and a buzzer and  
bonus points for those who say nothing most beautifully  
tending to minutes the one who fidgets  
the littlest genius  
the quietest mouth  
and why women this place in  
a room this cold and the difficult speech  
with looking with downfall and junk  
the best answers  
my hair eclectic  
my tongue could be key  
but must be called  
and all this talking I'd cough up in the corner

3.

Like clockworking the buzzer-to reward those who say nothing beautifully. Ten minutes the fidget of the quiet less genius. Can we woman up the place? The room a bit cold a bit difficult speak. A bit looking with doubtful with judgment. Their answer must always the best. My chair electric. An ivy tongue key. Must be called a league.

1.

to be captivating  
as shopping cart  
as blackberry syrup  
would be as inviting the tiny pink pulls

I'd just like to hug the dog and not die

can one be a feminist and still love an apron?  
the knives accounted for  
tell me your tricks to test oil

to be the girl with the cleaver  
to not measure anything out

I'd just like to avoid my head in the oven

those who would water and immediate regret  
those who could fight with a wooden spoon and win

2.

To be captivating as shopping cart as blackberry syrup.  
Would be as inviting the tiny pink pills. I'd just like  
to hug the dog and not die. Can one be a feminist  
and still love an apron? The knives accounted for.  
Tell me your tricks to test oil. Those who would  
water and immediate regret. Those who could fight  
with a wooden spoon and win.



## COMPOSITIONS

What do poems taste like? Can they be blended and sucked through a straw?  
Like a broken umbrella. Burnt cookies. And your split apart shoes. That you  
cannot just sit on a bicycle--when stopping you must put one foot on the ground.  
This is the sound of it all falling. All of our stories the stories apart. It's that  
moment of side stepping crowd and you throw your scarf on the floor. And you  
curled up asleep in your driver's seat as to stop putting your foot on the ground.

She was a dancer. Dried up plans and worn slippers. Have slippers to run far away. Dangled shoes on a door six years disappeared. No comforts the paces and pirouettes the dark shadow a mirror. Let holding the bar and the arches your foot. Foot curves away and worn. The watching had too. The arc the narrative sweeping.

She carried heaps on her back as a warrior crosses deserts and mountains.  
Arrives a door and there. There being a man maybe never been but there a  
moment a moment turned page. A moment that may missed and would be never.  
The lines a phrase and keeps underneath feels falling and falling for. What lists  
and living for given and torn up letters. Hopefully and hope fully but what lives  
there a moment. Saw knowing sorted the breathing envelopes sent. Pictured on a  
train. On a moving platform. Not pain not key not green light. Not brick mazes  
the ivy a statue in a circus. Would circus. Would circle us. What music circled  
his guitar named Cleopatra. Patterned after. How heaving this would. Would  
something to write about to. A series of legendary and clay to remember. To  
ever.

Little girls on bikes. Little girls with scissors cut hair to hide  
in a hamper. Little girls. Be little with little to think the  
dangerous. What happened to us. And this year. A year  
and little left. Would remember how to laugh that way. Unwinding  
to care so few unafraid. To be laughed at. At home in the  
spaces far from. Letting hair long. Like bicycle rides cloudy out  
shapes. The backyard birds of paradise. Sliding in stockings the wood  
floor in the hall. The dresses high shoulders and lace. Ladders  
to you we climb ladders to linger up. Where were you the night.

Had a nice time in a park once walking on one walk a lot of  
water. Targeted gentleman. Once wore a suit been dealt bad  
hand because. And it's always because. Never stood under  
trees because. Never liked these places because. Played because.  
Can't be here coughing into cupped hands. Hand me that wrench  
or hammer. Half fixed. He had to dump them in the river. And  
keep walking. Found her in the water eyes half fixed to the sky.

We do this many times and in laughter  
wonder if there will ever be moments empty. Emptied  
bottles and water draining in the sink. Smear ink and  
in listening as we lie on the asphalt. From where I am  
across streets might be cities where we were different people.  
New and wanting not to be a visitor withheld from. Worth  
leaving would be washing away above waisted. In this  
worth we were multiplied in value. Not believing in  
ashes but in windows to crawl into. Where lying is only a  
relation to bed. Where bed frees from knots. Leading lights  
into the room for us to capture in jars.

Take handfuls of sky though sticky sweet from morning had  
once travelled from edges. Given bitters and pieces. A cloud  
of clinging whispers blown as blades of grass. Levitating in  
the evening try running along lines of laundry as so many  
before us. Twisted under and unzipped. Unthink a Winter  
in July. Today we own shows of everything your good.  
Today tumbles by. Today trips upward. Today kings and  
treasures. Today on. Today on.



Come reap on forgotten boxes. Roll bots into pockets of fire swift and get quick.  
Run gunning for given quarters the arcade. I am made of ginger root sting throats  
with me. Grabbing organs offered up to gobs. I bother. Bought her black market  
bought mother trade. Convicted a victor seven seconds an alleyway. Lean in.  
Weigh an elephant in warehouse. Braided and bent cradle.

Even the rocks would shatter like glass though the windows  
this home built good enough even me who deserve.  
And rid world would be place to better bring a girl I  
dream said she was tiny kinds of beautiful. And sun closed  
eyes a day we sat grass growing between fingertips. Trees  
shaking for miles as if smiling would swing here awhile.  
And the little boy running be best of the days that felt  
apart. A long time this coming would everything the  
whisper the shade and something too sweet. A tiny hand  
grips a finger. The flutter a year. Feet that don't sink in the  
sand. The window print.

For bent little lilies, tiny hands on a button. Now  
several lucid comings back and alive. Back the underground  
the away pull flame. I flickered showing rather clicked  
and snippets of film on a reel. Here tell of my tunnel a  
shelter. They say hideaway and light turns but turn blue  
in the sun. To teach to breathe if before begin feeling  
to. And wrong says not better but want been falsely  
answered needed only a back something to stand on.

Come skinny and sinking been a year my mine my  
mind my and my kind and happened here told fine  
and balanced a lotus flower. Who fights and behind  
who fall of feathered mind my mire my my single  
mile and salted wrecked. The rooms a moment, the  
toe the kind of minutes are fined. We circled this  
place and patient we placeless of bridges who love  
crossing behind.

These changes wasted word save better better way. Bet and wait  
for my call. Clutching wizard down dragging. Pretend.

Thoughts off darkest destination. The rest dredges. Could  
just register. Just pretend. Gotten a lot of great. Would grief have  
me be better wasted.

Keep your body still. Keep will or keep vices if heard right.  
I shake stillness with how knowing would rounded see it full  
and take nervous feeling and real like dying. Like paranoia  
through the floor. Tell speeds, method and fortunes. Can't  
you see that you're fine and floating will sky and the  
keeping for newness to harness and kept.

You were witch with below and war paint. Please  
be able. Be angle. Behave well. Are we bandits? Our  
eyes are bandaids to be able and fought. And the  
weather went mostly where hills happen and withering  
flower how home. Blow down the clock half hopping  
to finish lines.

Forget tense and which do we sense to say  
the words to arrange to miss to send again.  
Upward, rugged outage and excellent this  
before slippage on smile a recipe to birth a phrase.  
Make chance walk away a day another pace.  
Build up hold on see the marks and squeeze a face.  
Problems shy to find know what speak  
to like far, to lie and live  
say it so missing looking one day.



Some spirits and saying the seeing in wide eyes but mine  
and awful in the shade of often yet stirring. They  
sing if even a signature of sameness dwindle in  
destination the soaring and after the sky the seeds to rise.  
So full and undeserving of the shoulder. Cold but untouched  
this time will be ours to show how sick of symptoms. Someone  
said that there will be days will be days will be days be days.  
Here earth offered a sum a better destination. Will have  
will have and haven't heaven.

Afraid that image could ruin. Afraid thinking image but isn't  
captured quite. And linger image of ruin a white dress and a dance.  
Have dance and will be. They will say we will be. And won. Half  
sleeping warm toes to look. Toast to the look of our toes in the  
sheets. Sheets ruffle and the audience clapping. And but wandering  
a real image to real be real real. Where we left off was whispered  
one evening as if rain. Stranger to see but those things.

Like a toaster. Like sliced bread. And in meaning to call forth that which is both buried and new. Uncovered in covers and lying in bed brought to surface. Waited for and arrived ear to fingertips. From air to this. And demand explanation. Demand answer. And clear be clear but here must be a bit clearer near the shore. Had been there once and may return but not. Not now for now now beckons to be collected in a bucket. A bucket that once was a box. Boxy girl became barefoot. And back here is a walk from home.

STILL PRIME

*poem for math rock*

no one said easy said belief speak  
speak easy and then  
only catching often and several  
criminal nights and times that could sever  
be the bodies in the river  
be children in boxes  
be some be and being and butcher them  
whatever says and can't can't ever remember  
why rules and why measured  
capture this  
after we run  
run into and  
caught in the  
come back  
the cuffs  
our ankles  
keep holding and pushing  
in a room that can push back  
sleeping and starving  
can be happy in a trailer  
in a boarded up bedroom  
in a canyon  
sleep on it  
sleep on it  
nobody no body nobody thought there  
would be blood here bloody ears  
nobody  
and we'd be fishing for hours on the tracks  
kids on bicycles have it all if we

will never be anything be good we  
just wanted good enough to come knocking  
how many of us would have doors opened  
stepping into it and sold  
our futures and trash bins  
little bonfires  
guitars in closets smell just like burnt pages  
and parents sew victory  
given give in get in through a window while  
young and good enough energy  
given hurtle will grow and kick down and  
the kick running with rhythm on our heels  
honor deals and make proud  
the best when no one watching but  
they will hear you  
they will hear you  
the day will heal you  
again and  
again and again will  
feel different this time on the outskirts hitting cliffs  
that we jump  
no choice but to jump and  
the little voices all the little voices  
looking back and remembering the little girl  
who lost herself in a room of washed up scholars  
the fathers who don't know their sons from the mailman  
and the mailman who rushed to the  
scene of the accident  
a mangled car and he assured us  
she never even knew what

to remind that too young

we are taken

taken and

still prime

*waisted*

We have been waisted in that most uncomfortable spilling we call a muffin. And the coffee pouring scone munching pout, a bipolar witch living in my brain. Cover me. Dress me disappearing. To love and live in the corners of a mouth. A cuddly creature. A vacuum. The drooling. The melon. A plump confession: *I just want*. Plug up the drain and sit awhile in your butterbath. Evaporate. Erasure, though tiring yields.

We fool. And our able to fool ourselves. A little slip and zip and a quick inhale. The hideaway whale demands instant results. The solution, my dear, is the shortest time gap of consume and its opposite. Run until malfunction. Tighter now. Breathe less. If only shave a little could save a little girl stuck in a funhouse mirror. Every bite is a blow. A demon you will never catch. We too often alternate.



*gleaming*

this safe sweetly cluster  
from the edge but suddenly keep  
leaping

slouches then slips  
fist not wrist is  
weren't

I liberated  
apple pie

this is the whole  
damn world if  
tick-tock indicates

gleaming the  
world

laughs crunch upon  
the walk what paths  
radiate where I  
stand

I am hub  
I look up  
and the spins into  
the earth I lift  
and shoot

I want to my body  
grown to beneath  
when you think  
body shake voice

I wind and war

my head is glass  
man move might  
shatter

*cutting*

stay here in the cutting  
cut across through here in a  
line staystay in the cutting and  
once once we feel it as we felt before  
she was here and wasn't  
she hums and there  
the metal sings to us in  
the morning and the engine  
startstarting and bringing  
back up the cutting is  
here again

and sudden running to get to a place somewhere  
less sinking

would running the answer  
though cutting too  
close never can protect  
criminals must that be the  
door what we are to be  
stolen and cut like a cookie  
like paperdoll snowflake the chasechase  
if snaking could save us  
from chopping down trees  
I mean buildings I mean  
blowing up things

and we are sinking this  
bad enough say the cuffs

and we climb the restraints  
we burn to staystay in the cutting

*disposal*

I could have crawled crab legged into  
the room felt a room with no air  
but this how I sit in it  
how I bend backward in sync  
and I speak as if trained  
if uploaded  
I even scream on command

but today will feel broken chair hole in the wall  
today will feel  
severed and severely lucid  
and only in stupors would logic  
would reason  
would tray table in locked and upright position  
how many dirty sheets in the dark  
how big is that basket  
how dark is the hall

I could have followed directions  
burned knee caps on carpet  
but this is how I walk  
how I catch nails in my jaw  
and I speak uncaged  
I am loaded  
I scream

*cyborg diaries*

can you tastetaste metal the  
tin hits your teeth can you  
freeze the membrane flesh around  
feelings feelfree  
here

and here as it were safe

can you rubrub legs like  
grasshopper can you hum  
add hum drumming  
pound pounding me in  
drum me intelligible  
drum me better  
drum the same way as everyone else  
because we school  
we told to playplay this way  
a drum that was  
the sound and we broke it

puncture it  
bleed it outout  
skin sack ruffles  
wind and the generator  
hum to give new guts  
the sacking  
seeking little cyborg  
of a girl

would it be better if I caved

was born in a factory  
and boxed up like a toy  
like winding  
like marching  
like tap tap the monkey a drum  
like aroundround the ballerina  
like battery  
like dependent

me better be metter  
this way rightright  
if steel if concrete is still a cage  
if smile if art still rat maze and  
swallow rat or be swallowed

likelike this should I  
supposed to wave I mean write

*my holes*

they put tiny holes in my  
wrist and filled them  
with ink do you often  
leave the house that way? with all  
your naked holes?

so I compared my holes to yours  
I read somewhere feeding  
babies is like spackling  
we spackle like hell  
we practice  
and they'll claim my holes  
aren't nearly black or  
deep enough  
that my holes are not  
welcome here

they pulled him out  
through the hole they  
made in me  
at night I lie awake in the  
hole and it tells me my  
nice is a hole  
"that scares you?"  
well that's a hole too

hole regurgitate hole  
burn throat  
flushfood



flushfat  
dive in and spit out

you've told me this story  
before but I act like I  
am a hole my mother my  
cardboard box

once I had a needle  
in my breast so  
they could take a  
little hole on the  
sixth try they pulled it out  
"hello, hole" it grows in me

when your hole grows up  
it will want to be  
a scientist  
a classical musician  
an electrician  
a paleontologist  
a fire fighter

it will want to have a  
baby before marriage  
and move in with its  
boyfriend

and to crawl inside her  
mouth would be especially

holey would be  
the closet you'll ever get to her  
better than to hold hands or to hug

that some holes appear  
the unfairness that a hole  
is written off  
is not taken seriously  
is not considered smart  
not institutionally dug

you can tell a hole to  
go home but it is home

*legs*

a ceremonial gesture of  
splendor my legs are  
splendid and our coins  
half spent. what change  
we here connected by a  
passage. the power placed  
atop these columns we  
column. we colonize. the  
fabric of natural space is  
an enclosure. a tiny sealed  
envelope. the art is in  
carrying. I am toe to  
ceiling. I am deriving the  
hold of this rooftop and.  
we apparatus. a right a  
unit of. until pillar.  
and solidify the spectrum  
of structure less holy.  
a bridge made of stairs.  
we scale. invite to climb  
but slowly. to beam the  
meaning up. a beam we  
balance in the corners  
of rooms. we must bodied  
believe in. the ambient  
light the lens written  
fiction. better description.  
and often justified  
arranged most important

supported. to stand at  
varying distance to dictate  
distance purchase instant.  
I hold up a bank a building  
hold. suitable to sway while  
standing. we circular.

## AUTHOR'S NOTE

Each poem in this collection comes from a particular source text or uses a set of rules or restraints. For example, the first section, *Revision*, was based on an alphabet exercise in which the poems, *ba*, *ha*, and *la*, revolve around the sound and meaning of specific characters of the ancient Filipino script, Babayin. The poem, *product description*, came off of Amazon.com in reference to a book about adoption—while *real hooked* uses language from Sandra Cisneros' *House on Mango Street*. The section entitled *Compositions*, was an experiment with music: each poem was written to a particular song, sometimes incorporating lyrics and sometimes not.

For a more complete list of songs and reference materials—please interact with me and my work at:

[allimoreno.com](http://allimoreno.com)