

Paul Tran

[He picked me up]

He picked me up
from school
on Wednesdays.

I ran like wild seriola
into the waves.
The car smelled

like Heineken
and unprotected sex.
I wasn't afraid.

I plunged deeper
and deeper
into the water,

my light-up sneakers
exploding blue,
then red,

then white. We crossed
El Cajon Boulevard
and drove

through the heart
of City Heights,
mine ululating

with child-desire.
He rolled down
the windows



Paul Tran

and said he loved me.
The words dissolved
in September's heat.

Smooth Jazz 98.1
played my favorite song.
It was Toni Braxton.

It was me
asking my father
to say it again.

