

VIRGINIA STATE PENITENTIARY BLUES

There is a moment of sunlight, Walt,
That becomes your Paumanok ocean
Sound outside my window--
Enough of the woman, the salty womb
To soothe, to not yet wake
To the steel and concrete cells
Where I still groan in Eric,
Willie, Leroy, Waddell, Yahya,
Porfirio, Dukes, Bannan,
Robinson, Melton and others
Who have murdered, raped, stolen
Once and on. All of us and you Walt,
Brothers shovelling the dark past.

In this sunlit room, they loafe
With me and you, its sea large
Enough to clean our mortal wound.