

red tide

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this florida day a pleasant oven
with its blue door cracked
mirage escapes hovering
at the junction
between sea and sky
sand is warmed glass

hermit crabs gather
at rare hot tub parties
with the neighbours
chat up new real estate ventures,
eyeing the right time to flip:
this niche a seller's market
despite the downturn

abandoned beach
the smell of mass murder slaps us in the face
red tide has blossomed
in the long throats of ocean locals
and quietly choked each one
off, gill by poisoned gill,
there, there
shhhh

evicted carcasses scattered
like blown-out tires along the Tamiami
various phases of decay
displayed and baking here:
bone racks and bloated bellies
cheek holes and fins

before our eyes
the nightmare spreads—
becomes the feasting seagulls'—
a time bomb of a fish fry
not enough skin left on this carnage
to hold even one last
dying wish