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Bay of Horses

In this half moon eye
of the world, Narvaez' men,
hungry and far from home, slit
their horses' throats, skinned
hide into water bags,
braided hair for ropes.
As the marsh ran red

they built rough barges to sail
back to Cuba, but foundered
in a storm off the Texas coast.
Cabeza de Vaca walked to Mexico.
Today I see Andalusian mares
in the clouds above Wakulla.
Their slaughter gone for naught.

Rick Campbell