Going South

Anderson Ferrell’s novel takes on family, heritage and death.

December 1, 1994 By Richard Perez-Feria

“If my daddy wants to shoot me, he’ll have to come here.” So begins Anderson Ferrell’s oddly alluring second novel, Home for the Day (Knopf/New York City). Though the specter of AIDS is always present, this novel is less about the disease than it is about a man coming to terms with his feelings for his father, his deep South roots and his life after the death of his long-time lover.

Often told in flashback after the burial of the hero’s lover, Ferrell paints a vivid picture of small-town life for a less than athletic little boy with the requisite overbearing father, tolerant mother and saintly grandmother. When recommending this book, cliches will be hard to avoid but somehow Ferrell manages an original telling of a story we have heard and read many times before.

Anderson Ferrell’s style is at once lyrical and blunt; ambitious and structured--it’s as if we’re being told a fantastic tale by a gifted storyteller. And, yes, that’s what I like about the south.

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