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## Combing the Everglades

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Dig in the marsh, brother,  
and show us what you've found.

I'll make my home where I find sun belts and plump pies  
glowing near high noon with confectioner's sugar.  
I find him somewhere in the swamp where he pushes  
through the mud, squirting irresistibly uncomfortable  
between toes. He barely speaks, selfishly.  
He says he found a map.  
Nothing to do with me he says.  
I reminisce with him of when I taught him to drink beer,  
dark amber bock the tarnish of the water.  
Which is more significant?

I ask him if he ever believed in the Bible. He said 'no.'  
I ask him if the ground he stands on is my home. He said 'no.'  
Could it be? 'No.'  
That's not a map, brother. 'Fuck you, asshole.'  
I was just saying.  
'Deal with your own affairs.'

Wavy hair beneath the gallons of muck,  
alligators fading under.  
One takes a bite of my brother's calf.  
He's not happy but continues his dig. It's only blood.

You're naïve, brother,  
you'll find nothing there but new dry ground  
to make wet with the rushing waters.  
I'll build my home in a place where the sun still bounces  
off the surface, and doesn't absorb to die like shrapnel.  
'We'll see,' he says, and swims arrogantly.

In my head he's dying, covered in mud,  
face down as his back becomes caked and grey  
in the midday heat.  
Some fucking treasure.

Fall into the marsh in line,  
lay down next to your coffinmate,  
he's waiting for you.  
So orderly in life.  
So orderly in death.

Where dig, brother?  
why, brother?

--Scott Barsotti '03