

Heading South Along
the Nebraska Border · *David Ray*

World's biggest ball of twine's in Kansas, true—
and pyramids near Cairo, Illinois,
are late and made with tricks, but hardly fake;
and at Sioux City, edge of Iowa,
there's a steep hill of pure cowdung, and bull.
But for attractions for the tourist, best
we found this trip were tall brown bullrushes
growing within a sheltered vale of weeds.
You and the girl broke and blew the cloud-white
seed, holding your sceptre, your flagellum,
as if you'd stopped to be of aid, priestess
and her helper, joining with your ritual
the very stuff of nature, sky to earth.
Far over us the silent bombers sailed.
Beyond the hill, a giant earthen pot
steamed, part of that lazy, low-key whimper
that ends our world, now or in two decades,
meanwhile dusting half the land with fallout.
In innocence you blew away the fluff
while I beheld two girls of Egypt back
to stand deep in Nebraska's marshy reeds
beneath a sky not painted in a tomb
but stitched with jet trails thick from nothing but
a falcon-headed god who's doubly lord
of all the states and of Helipolus.