Heading South along the Nebraska Border

David Ray
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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.