

After Taking the Wrong I-480 Out of Omaha

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instead of a quick hook up to I-29 towards Kansas City we ended up off the highway onto some local road wounded with construction for many miles. Rand McNally promised we would find a toll bridge back to 29 if we kept straight towards Plattsmouth, but

when we got there, no signs showed the way to recover the interstate. I first found direction from the tired woman behind the Quik-Trip counter: lefts and rights leading to the old, unmarked truck route, she promised, would take us to the Toll, but somehow we missed a turn

ended up at the town square, mostly closed for Sunday, where a young couple pointed out how we'd gone wrong. The Toll Bridge, \$1.25 one way, was as rusty as the old man who took our money as if awakened from our dream, surely the first business he'd had for hours. Even the mighty Missouri looked

nondescript in Plattsmouth, Nebraska, its brown waters gently waving at us from below. Still there was no sign for I-29 after we were off the old structure. But we feigned faith, found what we sought some miles later. Later still, some research uncovered that prairie town as the boyhood home of

Raymond Chandler, author of *The Big Sleep*, and other marvelous mysteries, someone I thought had gotten all his darkness from London and Los Angeles, someone who, ages 2-7, also might have sought an escape, though Plattsmouth featured no signs admitting that either, while

we looked for that only bridge out of town.