

Erasing the Modern World

by Gary Hardaway

A previous story refashioned as poem

The electron butterflies
fluttered around the netted world.
Charmed anti-virals, everywhere.
Mated. Deposited unseen larvae, pole to pole.

An electromagnetic pulse
scrubbed the servers.
The clouds wisped and blew away, empty.
Markets lost what little mind they had.

Locks and lights went on and off
in spasms of erasure. Well-connected cars
went dead, mid-toll road. The web
with its harvest of fat flies vanished.

New flutes in the Andes sang first notes.
Papuan yams split skins, fire roasted.
The butterfly maker couldn't see it all
but watched the dark, dark wave

as it washed across his little bit
of Lincoln, Nebraska. His work was done.
His generator hummed. His lights came on.
He polished and loaded another gun.

