

# 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.

