

Matthias Neeracher

## Death of a Capacitor

Point one two inches long  
you bestrode ground and VCC ever  
vigilant of ripples in the power supply,  
ready to throw your ten  
microfarads into the breach.

The merchant who'd sold me the  
instrument of your death  
assured me it would be perfect for you.  
The connector fit; he made off  
with his 95 cents oblivious  
to the color code of his wires.  
And I, too trusting, hooked up  
the reds and the blacks, plugged in  
the EL wire, the inverter, and,  
never giving the matter another  
thought, connected the power.

Twelve volts charge in, their reversed  
polarity exposing the fatal  
vulnerability of your kind.  
A brief flash, the tell-tale wisp  
of smoke, the sickening smell  
tell me all that I need to know

One stiff drink later I take stock:  
Your charred body is causing  
a short; brittled, it easily yields  
to a screwdriver. I ply the  
shell-shocked microcontroller  
with a new boot loader.  
And this time, when I plug in,  
the wire flickers alive  
with cold light, your absence  
inconsequential, your death  
neither sweet nor right.

January 2013