

# Peppercorns

*by Gary Hardaway*

## **Free Will!**

The will is free.  
Everything else is extra.  
Food and fashion- extra.  
Hearth and house- extra.  
Spouse and offspring- extra.  
If all the extras get to be too much,  
cut back.  
Too much, still?  
Cut back again.  
If you cut and cut  
and it's still too much,  
opt out.  
Remember- the will is always free.

## **Table for One, Easter Morning**

Time expunges sex  
and leaves you only gender.  
Distinguishing organs  
shrink and dry,  
identifiable  
though vestigial.  
Fertile bodies eye  
the space you occupy,  
impatient for disappearance.

## **Asocial Drinker**

To drink alone is never fun.  
It just exacerbates “alone”  
and leaves the wits  
in cabernet stains  
on the off-white carpet.

### **True Colors**

The official hues of Texas  
are red, white and blue,  
like the lone star flag.  
How very hopeful and French.

The true hues of Texas, though  
run the full range of one-  
from aged bone beige  
to deep shit brown.

### **The View from Mt. Olympus Goes on Forever**

I am diseased  
like everyone doing time-

all of us sentenced  
to time and dying.

The timeless no doubt  
find us all amusing

with our morning jogs  
and antioxidants

our memorial parks  
and term life policies

spiced with double indemnity  
against an accidental death.

