

April, 1956

by Gary Hardaway

The weeds were already in flower-
there were the small yellow ones
one could eat, the bunched, lilac-
colored ones, with round leaves
instead of blades, and the dandelions,
yellow still instead of spherical,
delicate and white.

I don't know why,
but I thought it might be fun
to pick some weedy flowers-
not the iris or tulips- and arrange
them in the shape of an egg-
a large, decorated egg.

I started in my own yard
but ran short of fine grained
yellow and lilac. I was sure
that Susan Chapman's parents
wouldn't mind, nor Susan, my one
year older girlfriend. I gathered
fistfuls of yellow, greens and lilac,
careful to avoid the ivy where,
my older brother said, black widows lived.
I'd seen the funneled webs he pointed out.

My egg mound grew
but needed a few more handfuls
to complete the oval and the patterns.
I eyed the Bullock's yard- no ivy,
no spiders, just the few clumps I'd need
to finish. The Bullocks were older

and had no kids. Our connection was polite but tenuous. I took a risk and hoped they wouldn't mind my flower theft.

I liked my egg. I thought it beautiful. I offered it up to Jesus- not the man on the cross, or the one in the Garden. The one before the Romans and High Priests, but not the baby in the manger. I pictured Jesus five years old, like me. Before the sorrow and the glory. I knew he smiled and blessed me. I felt no need to show what I had made to anybody else.

