

# How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb #7

*by* James Claffey

In a floral garland, under the shadow of a forty-foot tall bamboo stand, a single rain cloud stuck over a far mountain. The tools are wrapped in tissue paper, secured in a padded metal box, encrypted. Seven clumps of gardenia blossom in a riot of perfumed glory, their leaves a pink purple hemorrhage. In only one corner of the space, a rusted truck idles in dust, wheels cemented in place. A B-52 bomber fell to earth in the soft rain of a 1950s morning, a house burning down, adjacent to the only public swimming pool in the town. The directions are confusing to read, as burnt paper flitters down from the sky; embers, disintegration, indecipherable. Put the tools carefully on the ground to the right of the workspace and attach a numerical value to each one in order to know which was used when, and for how long. This is no time for those of a religious persuasion. No. This is that moment when the inversion of a tea cup might help shed some light on future decisions. What are the chances of a successful marriage?

