

I sit in the corner of ^{sweet} Cafe Angelique,
~~was~~ pretending to read a
newspaper article about the breeds of dogs.

I pretend that I am interested.

I pretend that I am relaxed.

I pretend that I can't see him
watching me.

I check my watch, shivering like an
autumn leaf gripping onto a branch.

As the little hand ~~to~~ ticks over

half past eight, I look ^{suddenly} up, as
though I was simply ~~admiring~~ ^{going to} admire
the view of the icy winter night.

But I look directly to him.

He stands, tall and proud, with his suitcase
held close and sunglasses tinted like the
windows of a plane. There, in amidst
the ~~icy~~ snowy night ~~at~~ ~~the~~, stood the
biggest bully of them all.

I nod at him, ~~to~~ ~~some~~ gesturing him to
join me.

He smiles devilishly and walks towards me. As he opens the door to Cafe Angelique and ~~the~~ flips and flips the sign on the door to closed, he smirks ~~at my~~ ~~look~~ first when he glances at me, as though he finds my weak, impoverished appearance amusing.

He sits down across from me without ~~word of any~~ ^a greeting and puts his suitcase on the desk, ~~pro~~ pushing ~~it~~ my newspaper down with it readily. ~~He~~ pulls out ~~the~~ ~~it~~ opens the ~~for~~ suitcase ~~it~~ and I flinch as the buckles snap open like crocodile mouths. He grins.

~~As he pulls out a piece~~

"Sign here doctor Bernard"

He says grimly, pulling out a ~~piece~~ document ~~and~~ ~~As~~ and thrusting it in front of my face. I grimace at the sight of ~~the~~ document ~~and~~ ~~it~~ its crisp white paper, stained graphed

with velvet black ink, steering its
purity.

~~And the~~ They had written it so simply.

'I, Doctor G. Bernard, give full
rights to the government of the United
States of America, to utilise my
research into the development
of atomic weaponry at their
free use''

To me, ~~the~~ it sounded more
like I was signing off to allow
~~the~~ a baseball company to use
my ~~to~~ baseball bat designs at
their free use. And I hated that
word 'utilise'. That word made
me think of kitchen appliances
like a ~~keel~~ my kettle or my
new toaster. It didn't say anything
about the end of morality for
all humankind. It didn't mention
anything about the harmful effects
of radiation. It didn't

say anything about the way it boils your internal organs from the inside out and sizzles your exterior, leaving you looking like a piece of beef jerky.

It didn't say anything about my severe contribution to the project, or my sleepless nights.

It didn't say anything about August 6th, ...

But I know that I will sign anyway. I've always known I was a man of science and not of morality.

~~The~~ I know it when I was nine, and I'd sit on the icy tiles of the kitchen floor as my mother cooked the lamb shanks and boiled the peels. I'd sit and ramble onto her about all the chemical reactions that were occurring as she was

doing so. I knew it when I'd sit on the bus home from school, reading a chemistry textbook and the kids behind me would

throw spitballs at me and put gum in my scruffed russet hair, but I loved my 'little boy' more than ~~which is why I will sign.~~

~~I will sign because it is not only the right thing~~

I could love them.

Which is why I will sign.

I look up to the man and he appears annoyed at ~~my~~ how long I was taking to sign the document. He took off his glasses ~~he~~ lastly and revealed grim - brown eyes. So dark you could barely see the pupil.

Snake eyes.

Nervous, I quickly picked out a black pen from my shirt pocket, checked it and scribbled my

having messy signature on the dotted line. When I ~~was~~^{am} finished, I veered back slightly ~~and~~ in complete awe.

That's it.

She handed over my 'little boy'.

B "Thankyou Dr, ~~It will~~
The funds to your lab will be addressed immediately."

As the man gets up and turns his back on me, like the bullies in high school, I think about what I will do with my life now that I'm free to do what I want with my research.

And most importantly -
I think about the people

of ~~flourishing~~ ~~A~~ ~~neighborhood~~
with extreme jealousy, bubbling within.

Oh, how beautiful to live
in a world you know absolutely
nothing about."

Handwriting practice area consisting of 25 horizontal lines.

