

## Chapter 1: Boy

He waited. Hidden by dusk and the garden bushes against the bark of an oak tree. Watching. The spot gave him full view of the house and gravel driveway. Worrying about being seen felt weird.

Perfect had been alive with the news of Doctor Eugene Brown's arrival for weeks. The doctor would help. Boy knew it, more than he'd ever known anything. He just had to get to the man before he changed.

As night closed in, George and Edward Archer strode by and mounted the stone steps to the house. The place lit up and Boy watched them move around inside.

Suddenly light darted across the grass by his feet and Boy pulled back further into the shadows. A silver car crunched along the driveway towards him and stopped. His heartbeat quickened. The engine purred to silence.

The large door of the house opened and the Archer twins stood silhouetted in the light from the hallway. As Boy watched, statue still, a shiver danced down his spine.

A man got out of the driver's seat; a woman from the passenger's side. He hadn't imagined the doctor would have company. The woman looked nervous, staring across the roof of the car at the man. He smiled awkwardly at her then walked towards the twins, greeting them with a handshake. The woman followed and the four of them disappeared inside.

Boy ventured a little out of the shadows, stopping short as the doctor called, "Violet. Come in from the car, pet, it's chilly out there." The back door of the car opened a little, then quickly slammed shut as a breeze rustled the leaves above him.

Boy held his breath and pulled back into hiding. The car door swung open again, and this time a small, frightened girl dashed out across the gravel towards the house.

Boy couldn't help laughing. She sped up, jumped the steps and rushed in through the front door, banging it shut behind her and plunging the yard back into darkness.

The car door hung open and Boy pushed it shut as he edged closer to the kitchen window. He just caught sight of the girl sliding into the room.

He sat down by the steps to wait. Night rolled on. The Watchers would be patrolling soon and he couldn't be caught outside the walls again. He'd come back in the morning, early, and speak to the doctor then.

He took one last look in the window. The girl sat between her mam and dad - a proper family. Something inside him stung as he thumbed the rub-worn note in his pocket.