

## Extract 1

The sound of his parents arguing downstairs rumbled through the house, low like thunder. Charlie closed his book. He couldn't concentrate.

Darkness had fallen outside and the street light outside Charlie's window was making uncanny shadows on his bedroom wall.

The silhouettes of the tree branches looked a little too much like log-clutching witches' fingers for Charlie's liking. So, quick as a flash, he sprang out of bed and pulled his curtains together.

It was there and then that it first happened.

It began with a twitching in his eye. Charlie froze to the spot, feeling his eyelid blink manically. His eye had twitched before, when he'd been tired, but this felt different somehow. It felt like somebody had just plugged him into a wall socket. The twitching spread to his other eye, and both eyes were blinking and twitching.

A feeling burst through the whole of his body, like he'd just been shot through an electrical wire, like he was the electricity.

Every part of his body fizzed and hummed. The fizzing and humming became stronger, until he felt like he was on fire, but a fire inside of a never-ending tube, squeezed and vibrating.

His skin felt extraordinary. Alive. He looked at his arm and, with some considerable alarm, saw that hair was sprouting out of every part of his skin.

[11] [SEP] Weirdly the room was growing larger too.

But no, Charlie realized, the room wasn't growing larger – it was him who was shrinking!