

SPECIAL

The Fillings

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Created by WCA media team

Health and wellbeing

Quiet Roots"

At the allotment,
they work side by side—
two hands, one hope.

The wind shifts.
She pulls her scarf close.
He cracks a soft joke
about the moody British weather.
She smiles, but her eyes say more.

They plant seeds
with care, not noise.
This is not home—
but it is safe
enough for something small to grow.

The soil doesn't ask questions.
It takes the coriander, the beetroot,
and gives them back
something green, something alive.

Health and wellbeing

Here,
pain softens into silence.
Letters with hard words
are left outside the gate.
Inside, there is only earth,
tools, and time.

The support they found—
a warm welcome
with no spotlight,
no labels—
gave them space to breathe.

They carry no signs,
no names.
Only quiet gratitude
and a small bag of vegetables
that feel like more than food.

Almost, they find peace.

Nala - Fellow Goodwill Ambassador – Allotment
site , May 2025

Health and wellbeing



Devi, one of our cherished founding members, planted this fuchsia with quiet dignity and heartfelt devotion. Her roots, like the blossom itself, run deep in the spirit of our community. May this living tribute bloom in honour of her grace, her laughter, and her unwavering presence—always remembered, always respected. By WCA Team . May 2025

Creative Writing

Title: A Warm Conversation at the Allotment Shed – Layla’s First Welcome English Session

At Women's Cultural Arena (WCA), we know that every journey begins with a first step—and sometimes that step is through the door of a quiet little shed surrounded by nature, with a kettle boiling and warm smiles waiting inside.

On a breezy Tuesday morning in High Wycombe, Layla and her husband joined us for their very first *Welcome English* session. Newly arrived in the UK, they were soft-spoken and a little nervous, but full of quiet determination to build a new life.

Inside the allotment shed, a table with tea, biscuits, seed packets, and paints set the tone—simple, safe, and human. Amira, one of WCA’s trusted Goodwill Ambassadors, welcomed them both with calm kindness.

Creative Writing

Amira: "Hello Layla! Hello—welcome. This is your first time, yes? We're so happy you're here. Would you like some tea?"

Layla (smiling nervously): "Yes... thank you. Tea is... warm."

Amira (handing her the cup): "Yes, it helps. Today is simple—just talk, listen, no pressure. This is your space to breathe. Okay?"

Layla: "Okay... I want learn... talk more. I am shy... but I try."

Amira: "That's so brave. Talking is learning already. You're doing wonderfully."

Layla: "My husband too... He want learn."

Amira (turning to him): "You're both very welcome. Everyone learns at their own pace. Today is about feeling comfortable."

Layla: "This is first time. I feel... scared before. But now, more... calm."

Creative Writing

Amira: "I'm glad. This is not a classroom. It's a safe place. We talk, laugh, sometimes paint. We call it talking therapy—but friendly."

Layla: "Therapy... like doctor?"

Amira (smiling): "Sort of—but here it's just people helping each other feel lighter. Would you like to paint how you feel?"

Layla: "Yes. Maybe... blue and yellow. Sky and sun."

Amira: "Beautiful. And maybe after painting, we learn five new words. What do you think?"

Layla: "Yes. I like 'hope'. I heard that word."

Amira: "'Hope'—yes, one of my favourites. Can you say it again?"

Layla: "Hope."

Amira: "Perfect. Every week, we'll meet here. Tea, talking, learning. Welcome English—one gentle step at a time."

Layla (softly): "Thank you. This feels... like a small home. But warm."

Creative Writing

Amira: "That's what matters. A warm place, kind words, and each other."

That day, Layla painted soft strokes of blue and yellow—small suns in an open sky. Her husband quietly joined a vocabulary game with another volunteer, exchanging words and smiles in equal measure.

For WCA, this first session was a reminder of why we do what we do: to create spaces of welcome where fear can soften and hope can grow.

Welcome English is more than a language session. It's a lifeline for those taking their first steps in a new country—offering creativity, conversation, and companionship in a place that feels like home, even on day one.

An authentic account presented in narrative form- By Shanthi , June 2025

Creative Writing

Title: *The Knowing of Coggins Forest*

Setting: *High Wycombe, Summer of 1976 — the hottest and driest on record, with yellowing grass, melting tarmac, and fraying tempers.*

Genre: *Psychological Mystery / Coming-of-Age Drama*

Chapter One: The Burn of the Earth

High Wycombe was wilting. August 1976 scorched the town like a curse, and Coggins Forest stood at its edge like a cool, defiant wound. Elliot James Carter walked toward it without turning back. He didn't run away. He *departed*.

Creative Writing

At fourteen, Elliot had a face full of fire—acne and defiance, eyes that didn't blink when challenged. People feared him without knowing why. Teachers flinched at his silences. Even the older boys, all puffed-up denim and swagger, avoided catching his stare too long. He never raised a fist, never raised his voice—but something about him unsettled people. Like he knew something that would burn them if spoken aloud.

His family said he was “troubled.” Neighbours called him “a little off.” But Elliot knew exactly what he was. In the forest, he wasn't a case or a caution. The trees respected him. They remembered him. They whispered his name like a ritual: *Elliot James Carter*.

That day, as the roads melted and arguments rang through brick walls, Elliot stepped into the shadow of Coggins Forest, where the heat softened and the

Creative Writing

soil welcomed. No note. No goodbye. Just the sound of the earth remembering his feet.

And then—he was gone.

Chapter Two: The Missing Bit

“Gone where?” his mother said, half-snarling at the kettle that wouldn’t boil. The heat had shorted the electricity again. She was slick with sweat, her housedress clinging like wet paper. “He’s probably up that bloody forest again. Thinks he’s some kind of creature.”

His father didn’t look up from the *Daily Mirror*, the page stuck to his forearm. “He’ll come back when he’s hungry.”

Julie, home from wherever she drifted these days, glanced out the front window. “I saw him leave.

Creative Writing

Early. Backpack. Looked like he wasn't coming back, to be honest."

No one answered her.

Malcolm tapped ash into a saucer and muttered, "He's not normal, that one. Gives me the creeps."

But by evening, when the garden gate hadn't clanged and his plate remained untouched, something shifted. Not panic. Just a queasy acknowledgement, like when you realise a fire's been smouldering in the attic for days.

His mother rang the police, voice tight. "No, he's not missing, he's... just not back yet. Yes, yes, he knows the forest. He's always known it. It's... the one place he's comfortable."

She paused.

Her voice dropped.

Creative Writing

“But you know... even the birds stop singing when he’s in there.”

Silence on the line. Then: “We’ll send someone out.”

Chapter Three: The Night Belongs to Me

The forest settled around him like an old friend pulling up a chair. Elliot crouched beneath the twisted limbs of an elm, clearing a patch of dry earth with a flat rock, shaping his temporary home. The heat still hung like a veil, but the shade offered breath. He peeled off his sweat-soaked shirt and let the cool moss press against his spine.

From the flap of his battered rucksack, he pulled the **radio**. It was heavy, scratched, and missing its back panel. But when he twisted the dial, it **crackled to life**, the local station humming through static—*Wycombe Sound*, thin and wavering but present.

Creative Writing

“Temperatures remain record-breaking. Authorities remind residents to stay indoors if possible—”

He turned it down, just enough to **feel** the human voice in the air. Not company exactly—more like proof the world still spun without him.

He chewed on dry bread, eyes scanning the canopy above. Shapes moved, but none of them scared him. He knew the night creatures. More than that—he **belonged** to them.

This was no accident. No tantrum or fleeing. This was a **crossing**.

He would sleep here, wrapped in bark and silence. He would listen. The world beyond the trees didn't use his name right. It was a weapon there, a joke.

But here—here it had **weight**. The leaves knew it. The ground remembered it.

Creative Writing

“Elliot James Carter,” he whispered aloud.

Somewhere in the dark, a fox barked once.

He smiled, and closed his eyes.

Chapter Four: Uniforms and Armpits

By the next day, the town’s worry had turned sour.

Two **local bobbies** showed up mid-afternoon, their polyester uniforms sticking to every curve of uselessness. One wore mirrored sunglasses too big for his face; the other had a moustache like a broken comb. They stood on the Carter’s scorched lawn, scribbling slowly into notebooks already damp with sweat.

“Lad’s what—fourteen?”

“Yeh.”

Creative Writing

“Troubled sort?”

“He’s just different,” Julie offered, folding her arms, instantly regretting it.

The officer snorted. “Lot of that going around.”

The conversation devolved fast. Elliot’s mum grew snappy; Malcolm laughed rudely when one of the officers asked if Elliot “maybe had a thing for running off with brown-skinned friends.” Samir’s name was mentioned, then discarded with a dismissive shrug.

The forest was barely mentioned—“He knows it,” they all said, like it was a living room he’d memorised.

“Can’t be that lost if he knows the place like the back of his hand, eh?” said the moustache, tapping his pen like a joke no one asked for.

Creative Writing

“Could be hiding,” the other added, lighting a cigarette directly under the “No Smoking” sign on the Carter’s porch.

By evening, the search consisted of one bored constable glancing at the forest entrance and writing *no trace visible*.

Inside the house, tempers boiled. Elliot’s mother slammed a saucepan. His father didn’t speak. Julie slammed a door. Malcolm laughed at nothing.

And in the background, the television hummed with **ABBA and heatstroke warnings**, pretending life still mattered.

Nobody said it, but they all **knew**: the forest had taken him. And it didn’t like to give things back.

Creative Writing

Chapter Five: Where the Forest Sleeps

The second night came with no hesitation. The sun bled out slowly behind the ridge, and Coggins Forest sighed into darkness like an old dog curling into sleep.

Elliot lay nestled in a bed of pine needles and moss, the trees breathing above him, their leaves whispering lullabies in a tongue only he could nearly understand. His transistor radio, now little more than a dull glow and occasional crackle, played him out like a bedtime hymn. He didn't miss the voices of his family. He didn't miss the fluorescent lies of kitchen lights and tepid meals. He felt the **beauty** of the isolation, pure and undisturbed.

The forest dreamt with him.

In his sleep, he floated through corridors of bark and fog, trees bowing gently as he passed. Somewhere, a

Creative Writing

buck stood on hind legs, watching him with a priest's approval. Beneath the roots, things moved—not to threaten, but to acknowledge.

He woke before dawn, the earth cool beneath his spine. The canopy above him still **snored**, leaves rustling in long, slow exhalations. Morning dew clung to his hair like a mother's hand.

He didn't feel small anymore. Something inside him had shifted. He was leaner. Sharper. His fear had receded like the tide.

He sat up, rubbed his face, looked around.

This wasn't hiding. This wasn't rebellion.

This was **becoming**.

His knuckles scraped against bark and didn't flinch. His stomach growled, but he ignored it. Hunger was a teacher now, not a threat.

Creative Writing

He walked deeper into the trees, barefoot, shirtless, nameless to the world beyond the thickets.

Elliot James Carter wasn't lost.

He was **arriving**.

Chapter Six: The Ones Who Stayed Behind

By the fourth day, the forest hadn't given up Elliot, and the town was getting nervous.

The search had become a ritual of failure. Fat constables in sweat-drenched uniforms trudged two feet into the undergrowth before declaring it "too dense" or "too hot for proper work." Their radios chirped nonsense. One of them got stung by a wasp and nearly called an ambulance. Another tripped on a root and blamed the council. They wrote reports. They ticked boxes. They **avoided the dark**.

Creative Writing

Back at the Carter house, the rot bloomed.

His mother had stopped brushing her hair. She sat by the sink, chain-smoking and listening for a knock that never came. Not Elliot. Not anyone. Just silence, and the slow percolation of guilt she refused to name.

His father snapped the aerial off the television in frustration, then taped it back on with trembling hands. He drank too much. Said too little.

Malcolm stopped pretending he cared. Julie tried to be helpful, but only managed to make everyone hate her more.

They were all **exposed** now. Their lives, their lazy cruelties, their cowardice. Without Elliot as the family scapegoat, the whole structure of their misery collapsed inward. The missing boy was the only real

Creative Writing

thing they'd had—and even then, they'd chosen not to see him.

Now, they saw nothing. Just their own reflection in the forest's still water.

The police, out of ideas, began asking questions soaked in assumption. Had Elliot been violent? Had he stolen things? Was he *mixed up* with something?

The real answer was simpler: they had **failed him**, and now the forest refused to return what they never valued.

Elliot was gone. And those left behind were just **rotting in their own heat**.

The trees watched. And remembered.

Creative Writing

Chapter Seven: The Beast in the Bracken

Elliot no longer counted days. Time in Coggins didn't move forward. It deepened. Thickened.

He woke with soil in his fingernails, dried blood on his ankle where a bramble had tried to claim him. He hadn't felt it. Pain belonged to the old world now.

He'd built a shelter—if you could call it that.

Branches, bark, ferns woven tight. Not for protection, but for identity. It wasn't a home. It was a **den**. And it smelled of sweat, moss, and something primal, like wet fur and rain-soaked earth.

The boy was gone. What remained was Elliot, **the forest's reflection**—sun-scorched skin, limbs lean and scratched, face gaunt, eyes feral. A boy doesn't become a man out here. He becomes something older than that.

Creative Writing

He didn't speak anymore. There was no need. Language was for pretending. Now he growled. Snorted. Listened. Moved like he belonged to the ground itself. Animals didn't flee him anymore. They observed. A stag watched him drink from the stream and didn't bolt. Birds sang after he passed, not before. Even the insects crawled over him like he was just another root in the dirt.

He ate what he could catch—rabbits, mostly. Berries. Roots. Hunger was constant, but it sharpened him, not weakened. Each kill was a ritual. No cruelty. No apologies. Only survival.

The forest whispered stories to him. Not in words, but in movement, in scent, in the way bark peeled like old skin. It told him he was meant for this. That the world beyond had lied.

Creative Writing

He understood now: he was never supposed to fit into tiled kitchens or school desks. He was made for **the thorns and the silence**. He didn't run away. He was **called home**.

And there was no going back.

Because Elliot James Carter was not missing.

He had **shed**.

And what rose in his place was something the world had no name for.

Chapter Eight: The Heat Has a Name

They found something.

Or so they said.

On the sixth day, the police emerged from Coggins Forest sweating like livestock, shirts translucent

Creative Writing

with effort, one of them missing a boot. The youngest officer—barely twenty—claimed he'd "seen eyes, red as fire, staring from the birch line." The others laughed, until he started to cry.

Back in town, the headlines dripped with melodrama: *WILD BOY HAUNTS WYCOMBE WOODS. COGGINS CREATURE SIGHTED. BEAST LOOSE IN BUCKS.*

The radio gave it breath. *"A heatwave hallucination or something more? Reports continue to emerge of a strange figure—bare-chested, barefoot, moving like wind through trees. Authorities urge residents to stay clear of Coggins Forest..."*

They didn't find Elliot.

They found bones. Animal bones. And a crude bow made of ash wood, twine, and sheer intention. They found a rough talisman of teeth and twigs hanging from a yew, spinning like a compass gone mad.

Creative Writing

The police insisted it was childish. A prank. But they didn't go back in.

The Carter family stared at the forest edge, their expressions now permanently soured by exposure. Julie muttered that he'd become "a devil." Malcolm claimed to see his face in puddles. Their mother just stopped speaking.

And deep in the forest, **he watched.**

Elliot—if he still answered to that name—stood at the edge of a glade, naked save for dirt and determination, breathing in the baked musk of summer. His eyes weren't red. They were clear. Unblinking. The colour of ash after fire.

He moved like myth now—fluid, uncatchable. A boy who had left behind the lies of flesh and name. Coggins had shaped him into its weapon and whisper. He was no longer a missing child. He was **a warning.**

Creative Writing

The trees bent toward him.

The creatures stilled for him.

He had become what they had always feared: a **shape-shifting beacon**, something purer than justice, more honest than family, and far more dangerous than law.

The forest had not taken Elliot.

It had **revealed** him.

And in the heavy summer breath of 1976, as radios crackled and rumour cooked on pavements, Coggins Forest held its secret with pride.

The beast was loose.

And he was **beautiful**.

Creative Writing

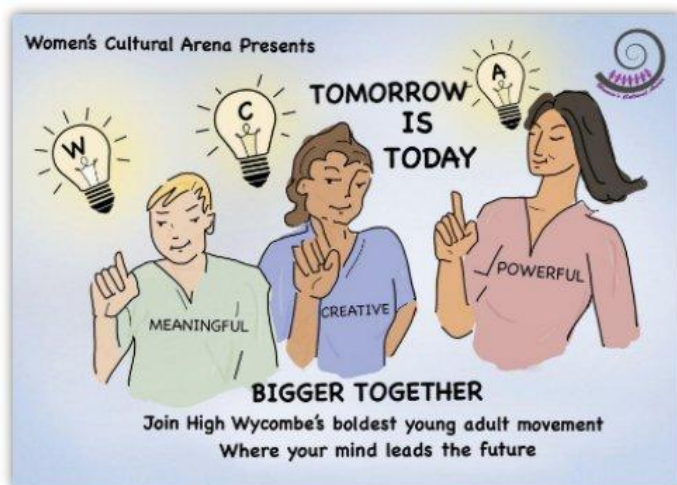
High Wycombe Herald, August 3rd, 1976

"Boy Likely Lured by Heat and Imagination"

Local lad Elliot Carter, 14, remains unfound after a week in Coggins Forest. Police suspect 'adolescent confusion' and excessive sun. Family reportedly "unwell" and under observation. Authorities advise calm. "He'll come home when he's hungry," chuckled Sgt. Bill Trent. Meanwhile, villagers avoid the woods. Just in case.

By NJ June 2025

Creative Writing



 **WOMEN'S CULTURAL ARENA**
(WCA) – Empowering People,
Inspiring Change, Cultivating
Potential, Strengthening
Communities ✨

📍 Join Us! Discover a movement
built on empowerment, wellbeing,
and social reinvestment.



📍 WCA's Locations – Eden Library ,
Oakridge Baptist Church premises,
All Saints Church premises ,
Desborough Castle Allotment site ,
Rye Park, Booker Rec Ground &
Various community spaces

📞 Contact Us – 07566 294012

🌐 Website – <https://womensculturalarena.org.uk>

✉ Email –
info@womensculturalarena.org.uk



Creative Writing

"New Thread, Same Heart"

We stitched the seams with shelter songs,
Held broken dreams where they belong,
But now the beat has found new drums,
In craft and paint, the future hums—
No longer bound by sorrow's lace,
We're sketching hope on younger face.

From battle cries and blanket nights,
To zines and light in neon bites,
We pass the torch to fresher fire,
To clay and code and wild desire—
A shift, not shame, from old to new,
We honour roots, but change the view.

Once every tale was steeped in grief,
A canvas torn, a falling leaf.
Now every hand can build again,
Not just survive—but shape, sustain.

Creative Writing

Art as armour, bold and bright,
No more just coping—this is flight.

Goodbye to labels worn too long,
To “damaged goods” and mournful song.

Hello to punk, to edge and flair,
To graf and thread and solar glare.
The streets still speak, but now they shout,
With colour loud and futures out.

We’re not erasing what was done,
But remixing it—sonic, spun.
From trauma’s cave to open skies,
We rise in dyes, in youthful eyes.
A charity, but charged with spark—
The welfare fades, the wonder’s stark.

By Project Team – 01st June 2025

Creative Writing



The Links page

All feedbacks, ideas and enquiries are welcome through

info@womensculturalarena.org.uk OR

<https://womensculturalarena.org.uk>

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Sociability and Fun



Thank you .

Media team, WCA

For your Diary

**Social Prescribing as the Norm
Just Come Along and Join In**
*(No Referrals / No Stigma – Everyone is
Welcome)*

At a Glance:

- **Weekly:** Community Allotment Engagements & Community Meal Sessions.
- **Monthly:** Creative Writing, Art Corner, and Storytelling at Community Tea Party Events.

For more information, please contact us:

 Email: info@womensculturalarena.org.uk

 Text: 07557440567

All are welcome to connect, share, and grow in a supportive and inclusive community!

For your Diary

 WOMEN'S CULTURAL ARENA (WCA) – Empowering People, Inspiring Change

✦ Cultivating Potential, Strengthening Communities ✦

At WCA, we are committed to investing in human potential, equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to foster personal growth and meaningful contribution to society. Through creativity, and shared experiences, we empower communities to thrive.

 Get Involved – Stay Connected & Inspired!

Scan the barcode to subscribe and receive the latest updates, events, and initiatives from WCA directly to your inbox.

 WCA's Locations – Eden Library , Oakridge Baptist Church premises, All Saints Church premises , Desborough Castle Allotment site , Rye Park, Booker Rec Ground & Various community spaces

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 Together, we nurture talent, inspire action, and create a more connected future. Join us today! 



For your Diary

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At WCA, we are committed to **investing in human potential**, equipping individuals with the knowledge, skills, and opportunities to foster personal growth and meaningful contribution to society. Through creativity, and shared experiences, we empower communities to thrive.

 **Join Us!** Discover a movement built on empowerment, wellbeing, and social reinvestment.

How We Make a Difference:

 **Therapeutic Art Sessions** – Express yourself through creativity, open to all ages (monthly at Eden Library & outdoors)

 **Community Wellbeing Chats** – Safe spaces for open discussion & encouragement (1st & 4th Tuesdays at Eden Library)

 **Youth Internship & Work Placement** – Building future leaders through skill development (Spring/Summer 2025, online & in-person)

 **Community Meal Gatherings** – Bringing people together through shared meals (on a weekly, fortnightly and monthly basis)

 **Community Friendly Fridge Service (CFF) : Food Redistribution & Sustainability Initiative** – Weekly access to essential surplus food thereby reducing waste & promoting greener living (self-referral, open to all)

 **Day Trips & Outdoor Activities** – Enriching social experiences for all (seasonal)

 **Community Allotments** – Growing fresh produce & fostering

For your Diary

wellbeing (weekly)

 **Digital Inclusion Support** – Bridging the technology gap by providing free SIM cards (weekly)

 **Social Prescribing Support** – Connecting individuals thereby enriching community activities (weekly)

 **Intergenerational Tea Parties** – Encouraging connection across generations (monthly)

 **Hygiene Essentials Kits** – Providing essentials hygiene products (weekly)

 **Meal Deal Service** – Providing sustainable ambient storage bags to support long-term food cupboard preservation (weekly)

 **Zoom Art Sessions** – Bringing creativity to you, wherever you are (monthly)

 **Green Bulletin** – Informing and engaging individuals in Green ecofriendly values (monthly)

 **SPECIAL Quarterly Magazine** – Celebrating community voices & creativity (quarterly)

 **Park Play Programme** – Encouraging well-being through fun, active outdoor sessions (weekly)

 **Green Futures Youth Leadership Programme** – Developing young changemakers (weekly)

FEW FACTS : Of the 92 clubs in the Premier and the English Football Leagues , Bromley FC are the only one to play their home games in the constituency of a Conservative [MP. @qikipedia,24th December 2024](#)

Sigmund Freud said he put his patients on a couch because he could not deal ‘with being stared at by other people for eight hours a day’. *Atlantic, 28th December 2024*