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Opening extract from

The Savage

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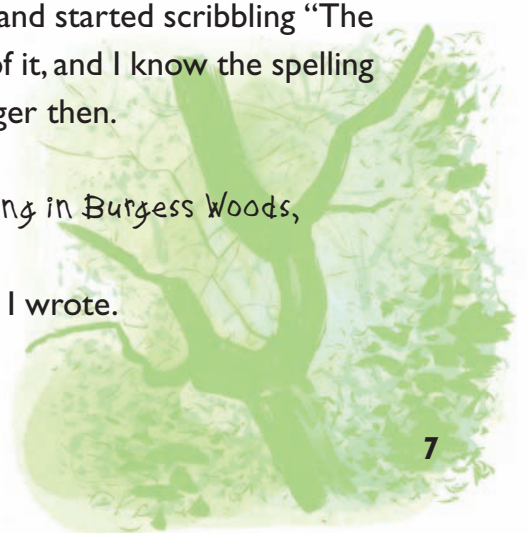
ONE

You won't believe this but it's true. I wrote a story called "The Savage" about a savage kid that lived under the ruined chapel in Burgess Woods, and the kid came to life in the real world.

I wrote it soon after my dad died. There was a counsellor at school called Mrs Molloy, that kept taking me out of lessons and telling me to write my thoughts and feelings down. She said she wanted me to explore my grief, and "start to move forward". I did try for a while, but it just seemed stupid, and it even made me feel worse, so one day I ripped up all that stuff about myself, got an old notebook and started scribbling "The Savage". Here's the first bit of it, and I know the spelling isn't brilliant, but I was younger then.

There was a wild kid living in Burgess Woods,

I wrote.



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He had no famly and he had no pals and he didn't know where he come from and he culdn't talk



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and he lived on beries and roots and rabbits and stuff like old pies that he pinched from the bins at the back of Greenacres Rest Home. He lived in a cave under the rooined chapel. His wepons were old kitchen nives and forks and an ax that he nicked from Franky Finnigin's alotment.





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Once I started writing the story, it was like I couldn't stop, which was strange for me. I'd never been one for stories. I couldn't stand all that stuff about wizards and fairies and "once upon a time" and "they all lived happily ever after". That's not what life's like. Me, I wanted blood and guts and adventures, so that's what I wrote. I set it all in our little town of Saltwell. I didn't show "The Savage" to Mrs Molloy. I didn't show it to anybody. It was my kind of story, just for myself.



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