

MINI ME.

You have forgotten me. Why? Is it because I am so small, or is it because I am an immigrant, not made in your precious Watford? I'm going to tell you a story, but not a story as you understand it as writers. My STOREY is different. It's about what I have had to do to get to the top. When I was created there were many others who turned their back on me.

'You are not good enough,' they would say. 'You are not the right colour. But don't worry. You will have your place, as we all do, in the hierarchy of life. So, I did my best. I wanted to attract people to me, as you would do, if you were me.

That was before I moved, of course. 'Your best chance in life will come when you find a ring,' I was told. But where was that ring? I was from the Midlands, but they told me the opportunities were 'Down South', so I was driven to come here. This is where I found my ring – Watford ring road. People had argued for years about whether the direction should be that of a clock, or whether they should go against the grain and be anti-clockwise. Who really cares when you are not going anywhere, but round and round and round in circles, leading to who knows where?

Anyway, the sort of discrimination I was born into still existed in Watford, wonderful place that it is, with such famous characters as Elton John himself, pushing the boundaries of what is accepted by others.

I did not feel accepted. I was still 'little old me'. But who am I? The clue is in the name, they say, but if you met me, you would know it is also in my appearance.

Let us go back to the beginning. I said to you that I was going to tell you a STOREY. I have not finished yet. After a life of being forgotten, for the first time in my existence, I was the one who remembered, was seen, when others had deliberately been avoided.

And who is my hero? A man who has brought us together tonight, a man who can be identified by his accent, someone who has brought together Black and White in his favourite shirt, the Black and White stripes of his football team, Newcastle United. You know who I am talking about: David, David Elliott.

But who am I and how did David bring me to your attention, when others had forgotten me? Did you not guess when I said to you that I was going to tell you about a STOREY? My STOREY is a multi-storey, a car park.

And who am I? I am Mini, the one who was created a long way from here, someone who was looked down upon by all the Rolls Royces and BMWs that parade our streets. I am the blue Mini who, when my hero, David Elliott, waited for all the others to disappear from the scene, was left alone, shielded from the spotlight in the multi-storey car park in Watford.

Thank you, David for introducing me, and thank to David's audience for noticing me, for talking about me, and giving me a presence in this beautiful town called Watford.

Written by Chris McDermott at a writing session written by David Elliott for Watford Writers on the subject of Watford, and inspired by a picture presented he presented to us. The story was written in about twenty minutes. Chris wonders if the story has multi-layers, just as the car park does.