

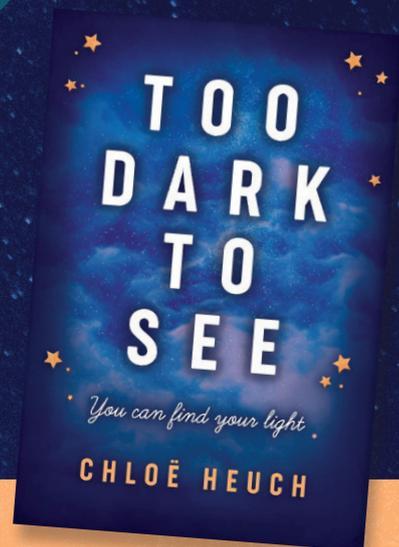
Each month we will focus on an inspiring author based in or writing about Wales! You'll have an introduction to their latest book, what inspires them to write, and any advice they have for young writers!

Get to know

Chloë Heuch



Chloë Heuch lives near Pwllheli on the North Wales coast with her partner, two children, her psychopath cat and the dog. She has a Creative Writing MA from Lancaster University. Presently she divides her time between her children, her writing and teaching teenagers. *Too Dark To See* is aimed at Young Adult readers (14+), and is her first novel.



Summary:

After the death of her mother, 16-year-old Kay is on a mission to self-destruct, risking her friendships, her school work and herself in her drive not to feel anything. Needing to save money, her father moves them out of town to Blackmoss Mountain, where

Kay feels more isolated than ever. But she finds new freedom in this barren landscape, befriendng the semi-wild ponies that live there, and meeting Siôn, the son of the farmer who owns the ponies, who is also roaming the mountains to escape home.

What inspired you to write this book?

I lost my mum to cancer as a teenager. Losing my mum felt like the worst thing that could happen to me. Through the fictional character, Kay, I wanted to explore what happens next after the worst thing; how we can be strengthened and grow through tragedy and loss. A lot of teenagers and young people I meet have similar fears, of death, losing loved ones, and they are still things as a society we don't talk about enough. I have a passion for the natural world too. A beautiful wild landscape, and the wildlife that inhabits it, are integral to the book.

Tell us a little about the story you've created.

Kay's mum dies at the start of the story. She ricochets from bad experience to bad experience, trying to escape feelings, that threaten to overwhelm her. When she meets Siôn, and the semi-wild ponies on Blackmoss mountain, she finds a sense of freedom and peace. They begin an intense relationship, until the ugliness of his reality threatens their happiness.

What do you hope readers will take away from this story?

Despite starting with grief, I wanted the book to be about love and about hope. I would be happy if readers enjoy the love story and the drama of the book. It would be very special if it helped some young people relate to the messy stuff of Kay's life. In a world of social media that demands perfection, Kay is not perfect. But she is brave. It is still hard to talk about death and dying. Our culture still finds that difficult despite it being a universal experience. Some young people don't have a safe adult they can talk to about sex and relationships, maybe reading about Kay's experiences could help in some way.



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