

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

Manon Steffan Ros



Manon Steffan Ros was born in Snowdonia and worked as an actress and musician before becoming a full-time writer. Manon has written over 23 books for adults and children in the Welsh language and has won the Wales Book of the Year for her adult fiction as well as being four-times winner of the Tir na n'Og Wales Children's Book Awards. She has also won Eisteddfod and National Theatre Wales awards for her script writing. She lives in Tywyn in north Wales with her sons.



Summary:

Dylan was six when The End came, back in 2018; when the electricity went off for good, and the 'normal' 21st-century world he knew disappeared. Now he's 14 and he and his mam have survived in their isolated hilltop house above the village of Nebo in north-west Wales, learning new skills, and returning to old ways of living. Despite their close understanding, the relationship between mother and son changes subtly as Dylan must take on adult responsibilities. And they each have their own secrets, which emerge as, in turn, they jot down their thoughts and memories in a found notebook – The Blue Book of Nebo.

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

It's about a mother and son and what happens to them when there's some kind of nuclear disaster—they don't quite know what and so neither do we- and everyone else disappears. They have to learn to survive without the basics of human comfort, and how to survive with no other people. It's a book about the mother/son dynamic, but there's a fair bit of joy in it too. I've heard it described by readers as a dystopia and an utopia, so I guess it reflects a lot on the reader too!

Where do you draw inspiration from?

People, always. I always start off with characters when I write, and so I find myself experiencing other humans with a huge degree of fascination. I'm quite awkward and shy socially, and am constantly amazed at how brilliant others are at interacting with one another! Places are also a constant source of information. I like walking, and sometimes a certain place just catches on my mind, and I have to write about it. It's not necessarily a place I know well, but I am interested in what creates atmosphere, the psychogeography of places.

In what way have libraries influenced you during your lifetime?

The impact of libraries is immeasurable. They democratise learning in a way nothing else does. I have no further education - I went straight to work after school - and I remember something clicking in my mind when I was in my late twenties, that I could learn anything for free via my library. There have also been times when I have gone to my local library to write, because it was warm and welcoming and had an internet connection. I realised then that libraries are sanctuaries. They certainly have been to me.



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