



The original Welsh version of this novel was the winner of the **Tir na n-Og Award for 2018**

– young adults’ book of the year.

Myrddin ap Dafydd is a publisher and poet and was the first Children’s Poet Laureate in Wales (2000-2001)

Title: **THE MOON IS RED**

ISBN: 978-1-84527-679-9

Price: £6.99

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Format: soft back, 128x198 mm, 200 pages

Publishing date: 25 June 2018

**Wholesaler: Welsh Books Council
01970 624151**

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*An award-winning novel for
young adults (25 June 2018) :*

The Moon is Red

**Families are cleared from their
lands to create a Bombing School
in Wales ...**

**Refugees fleeing the carpet
bombing of Gernika during the
Spanish Civil War ...**

**Two histories are tied in the lives of
these children ...**



When military authorities are at their worst, people can sometimes be at their best. This is a story of empathy, offering aid and the resilience to resist and survive.

The material is historical but the story touches on contemporary themes such as war refugees, the morality of civilian bombing and the democratic rights of people.

Recommendation for this novel :

“This is an outstanding novel with a gripping story which I found to be unputdownable.

The quality of the translation is excellent.

I would be very happy to recommend the publication of Moon is Red. Schools should be targeted as the novel offers a wealth of cross-curricular teaching opportunities – Welsh writing in English, history, and in particular Welsh history and also art appreciation as the bombing of Gernika is the subject of the famous anti-war painting by Pablo Picasso.”

“We lived at Tywyn Bach farm there ... until we moved to Craig Afon this morning. We were turned out ...”

“Oh! I’m so sorry to hear that, Megan. I’m jabbering on here and you’ve been turfed out of your home by these good-for-nothings.”

They fell silent. Megan looked at the earth-moving equipment and then across the fields and heaths towards Porth Neigwl.

“And that’s the way the planes will go to bomb the targets in Porth Neigwl?”

There are two stories in *The Moon is Red* – the story of Megan and the story of Miren. Megan’s story is about the fire on the Llŷn peninsula in 1936 and Miren’s story is about the aerial bombing of Gernika in the Basque country during the Spanish Civil War in 1937.

The link between the two stories begins with a fire in an old people’s home and when the residents are evacuated Megan Richards chooses to bring an old red, white and green flag with her. This flag triggers Megan’s memories and as she tells the story to Beca, her granddaughter, we read about the incidents leading up to the night of 8 September, 1936 when the bombing school in Penyberth was set on fire. Megan and her family were forced to move from their farm in Porth Neigwl to Rhydyclafdy village so that the army could exercise their shooting targets on the farm. She befriends Lydia Roberts, a young teacher who helps her to settle in the village.

In Miren’s story we move to the Basque country. We read about Miren, a 12 year-old girl who lives in Gernika and the atrocities she and the thousands of the Basque people suffered when General Franco’s army bombed and destroyed the beautiful city of Gernika on 26 April, 1937. Miren and her little brother, Anton and 4,000 children manage to escape on a boat sailing from Bilbao to Southampton. After disembarkation they are taken to a military camp outside the town where they lived in white tents. One day Miren hears that her tent and four others are being moved to the seaside town of Colwyn Bay in North Wales.

At the end the two stories are linked when Megan thought of a fantastic idea of inviting the Basque children from the home in Colwyn Bay for a week’s camping holiday to Rhydyclafdy in Llŷn. On the day they return to the camp in Colwyn Bay Miren gives Megan a Basque flag as a token of remembrance. A red, green and white flag in the same colours as the Welsh flag, a reminder as Megan says of ‘two small brave countries in a mad world.’

She reached the open square. She didn’t recognise her own town any more. She didn’t know the faces all around her. Fear and pain had transformed everyone ...

She stopped at a small fountain to bathe her eyes, which were smarting from the smoke, and took a sip of water.

She looked back at the blazing streets.

An injured woman, with her work uniform torn to shreds and blood across her forehead was hobbling towards her. It was her mother.