

## Coal Dust and Dreams

The Story of a Girl and Her Pit Pony in the Coal Mines of Wales

by M.J. Evans



Young Adult - Coming of Age

209 Pages

Reviewed on 04/01/2024

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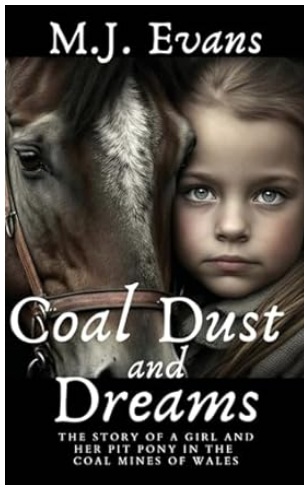
## Book Review



**Reviewed by Emily-Jane Hills Orford for Readers' Favorite**

Life is never what it seems. For young Bethan, it's filled with uncertainty. Her father works with the pit ponies in the Welsh coal mines. When a pony is injured, he brings it home for Bethan to nurse back to health. It is during one of these ventures that Dobbin, an injured pit pony, enters her life. On her eleventh birthday, all she wants is to sit on the recovered Dobbin's back, to have a short ride. A bond develops that will help the young girl when her father is injured, and she has to leave school to work in the mines to help support the family. In M.J. Evans' *Coal Dust and Dreams*, Bethan works her magic with the pit ponies, particularly Dobbin, but she never loses sight of her dreams to return to school and get an education that will help her leave the grueling mine work behind.

M.J. Evans' middle-grade novel, *Coal Dust and Dreams: The Story of A Girl and Her Pit Pony in the Coal Mines of Wales*, is a marvelous work of historical fiction that will teach young readers about the valuable work of pit ponies and those who cared for them. The story begins with a grandmother telling her granddaughter the story about pit ponies. The story that evolves is full of memories as the grandmother relives her own childhood. As the plot unfolds, young readers will learn about the sad state of pit ponies and miners, the abuse that both pit ponies and miners faced, and the rampant discrimination against women in the workforce, particularly in the mines. The story also tells of Bethan's determination to continue her education, even when faced with all the adversities that life dishes out. A simple, yet powerful story.



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## Author Biography



M.J. Evans is the amazon best-selling, award-winning author of middle-grade, and young adult books. Her favorite genre's are fantasy and Historical fiction, most of which are about horses or horse fantasy creatures. "Coal Dust and Dreams" is her twenty-fourth book. She lives in Colorado with her husband, horses and standard poodle. She splits her time between writing and playing with her horses and grandchildren. Mrs. Evans was the recipient of the 2024 Colorado Authors' League Lifetime Achievement Award.