



## Dragon's Gate (Golden Mountain Chronicles, 1867)

By Laurence Yep

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### Dragon's Gate (Golden Mountain Chronicles, 1867) By Laurence Yep

In 1867, Otter travels from Three Willows Village in China to California -- the Land of the Golden Mountain. There he will join his father and uncle.

In spite of the presence of family, Otter is a stranger among the other Chinese in this new land. And where he expected to see a land of goldfields, he sees only vast, cold whiteness. But Otter's dream is to learn all he can, take the technology back to the Middle Kingdom, and free China from the Manchu invaders.

Otter and the others board a machine that will change his life -- a train for which he would open the Dragon's Gate.

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## Dragon's Gate (Golden Mountain Chronicles, 1867) By Laurence Yep Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This 1994 Newbery Honor Book, a prequel to Dragonwings, tells of 14-year-old Otter's 1865 emigration from China and subsequent travails in California. Ages 10-up.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 6-10-Yep uses the lively storytelling techniques of his "Dragon" fantasy-adventure novels to re-create a stirring historical event-here, the construction of the transcontinental railroad. *Serpent's Children* (1984) and *Mountain Light* (1985, both HarperCollins) described the political and natural disasters that led to widespread famine in 19th-century Southern China. *Cassia* and *Foxfire*, the "Serpent's Children," came from a long line of revolutionaries. *Foxfire* followed his dreams across the sea to the "Golden Mountain," California, where he earned enough money to revitalize his village. *Dragon's Gate* opens in China with *Foxfire* making a triumphant visit home. Otter, Cassia's adopted son, who tells the story, worships his uncle and longs to follow him back to the Golden Mountain. Granted his wish at last, Otter finds *Foxfire* working on "Snow Tiger," a mountain in the Sierra Nevada range, where Chinese laborers strive to hew a tunnel through solid rock. Appalled by the living conditions and disillusioned with his uncle, Otter must struggle to survive racial prejudice, cold, starvation, the foreman's whip, and the dangers of frostbite and avalanche while trying to reconcile his ideals and dreams with harsh reality, and to find his place in a strange land. Combining believable characters with thrilling adventure, Yep convinces readers that the Chinese railroad workers were indeed men to match the towering mountains of the west. Because the first few chapters, set in China, may be a bit confusing to children who have not read the previous two books, this will likely need booktalking.

*Margaret A. Chang, North Adams State College, MA*

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From Kirkus Reviews

Yep illuminates the Chinese immigrant experience here and abroad in a follow-up to *The Serpent's Children* (1984) and *Mountain Light* (1985). After accidentally killing one of the hated Manchu soldiers, Otter (14) flees Kwangtung for the "Golden Mountain"; he finds his adoptive father Squeaky and Uncle *Foxfire* in the Sierra Nevada, where thousands of "Guests" are laboriously carving a path for the railroad. Brutal cold, dangerous work, and a harsh overseer take their toll as Squeaky is blinded in a tunnel accident, *Foxfire* is lost in a storm, and other workers are frozen or half-starved. By the end, toughened in body and spirit, Otter resolves never to forget them or their sacrifices. *Foxfire* and Otter consider themselves only temporary residents here, preparing for the more important work of modernizing their own country while ridding it of Manchu, Europeans, and, especially, the scourge of opium. America is a dreamlike place; English dialogue is printed in italics as a tongue foreign to most of the characters; and though Otter befriends the overseer's troubled son, such social contact is discouraged on both sides. In a story enlivened with humor and heroism, Yep pays tribute to the immigrants who played such a vital role in our country's history. Explanatory note; reading list. (Fiction. 11-14) -- Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

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From reader reviews:

**Paula Mendoza:**

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**Robert Crawford:**

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